

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.

Present: Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, G Perry, M Morgan, D Grossmith, R Kendall, R Shaw, M Eastwood, S Leader, A May, N Farrell and D Jemmett.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager – OM) and seven members of the public.

The Parish Council held a minute's silence in remembrance of Nigel Stevens who passed away recently. Nigel was a Parish Councillor from May 2011 until he stood down at the last election in May 2023. The Clerk commented that he will be remembered as a Councillor that was never afraid to express his views. He was Vice Chairman for three years and during his time on Council served on the Plans Advisory Committee Recreation and Open Spaces Committee and Village Amenities Committee. He was incredibly knowledgeable in planning matters and played a key role in the production of both Henfield Neighbourhood Plans. The funeral will take place at St Peter's Church on 14th July at 12.30pm.

It was all agreed to move items 8, 9 and 11 to directly after the Open Forum.

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr C Simmonds and Cllr Sarah Payne (West Sussex County Council - WSCC).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6th JUNE 2023 INCLUDING THE AMENDMENT CIRCULATED ON 23rd JUNE 2023**

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) Road Works Update

Information regarding the road works was circulated the day after the previous meeting. It was noted that SGN and WSCC have put out "no parking" bollards in Church Street but that these are not enforceable so local residents have been moving them and parking in the road as normal. It was suggested to feedback on the difficulties to WSCC via Cllr Payne as there does not appear to be any further action that can be taken to ease the congestion during the 15 weeks of road closures.

It was also noted that a working group meeting suggested by Cllr Jones in item 7 of the minutes had not taken place.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) The Launch of the Electric Car Club

There was a successful launch of the scheme which will station electric cars for hire at four locations in the village. There has also been some discussion with clubs and societies to see whether they would like to use the cars as well as private individuals.

b) The 'Get Involved' Event Update.

This was a well-attended event and lots of positive feedback was received. 54 clubs and societies attended, there was lots of interest and many new members and volunteers were signed up. It is hoped this might become an annual event.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

A member of the public requested to speak under items 8 and 9 as a representative of Henfield Community Partnership (HCP).

Cllr Potts drew attention to two brown Patterdale terriers that are missing from Sakeham Farm. Any information can be reported to himself or the Clerk.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

Items 8 and 9 were then discussed.

6. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

The Chairman requested that Cllr Payne raises the issue of the gas mains works and the recently circulated consultation on electric car charge locations for Henfield as there was some concern that the locations chosen are already heavily congested with parked cars. It was noted that these locations had been requested by residents and that Horsham District Councillors had been approached previously who had also raised concerns.

7. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Eastwood reported that Councillors have been attending committee meetings and are being brought up to speed on the local plan. A day has been spent visiting the larger potential sites. Cllr Eastwood has met with the Sheddars and an architect who are looking to make a planning application for the Tanyard Barn. He has also arranged a meeting with Steve Hawker from Horsham District Council (HDC) on the 20th July at 10am to discuss an overall playing field strategy. Nominated representatives were asked to attend.

Cllr Potts reported that the Leisure Centre has seen a drop in revenue from Sharky's due to the recent hot weather, so are negotiating lower but more frequent loan repayments to HDC. He encouraged all to respond to the Climate Action Survey which opened on the 26th June. This has been shared on social media. He reported that a new Wellbeing Centre has been opened in Horsham which can advise on courses, classes and other services. He also reported that HDC are in discussions regarding the purchase of Bramber Brooks which could connect with the Wilder Horsham and Weald to Waves projects. It was also confirmed that there is currently no criteria or approved solution yet for water neutrality but an implementation plan is being worked on. HDC have a full-time officer working on it.

8. PRESENTATION BY HENFIELD LEISURE CENTRE TO UTILISE THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND TO CONSTRUCT A MEZZANINE FLOOR WHICH WILL BE USED TO CREATE SAFE SPACE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Leisure Centre declined to present but suggested answering Councillors questions. A proposal was circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr May asked whether the Leisure Centre (LC) had conducted any research with the age group targeted, 10 to 14 years. The LC replied that they had not; the idea was brought to them by Henfield Community Partnership (HCP) and that it seemed logical as there is already a Kids' Club located there for primary aged children and they are Ofsted registered. Cllr May asked whether any alternative uses had been considered if the space was not used by children and young people. The LC responded that it could be used for spin classes or a yoga studio but that they would consider other alternatives.

Cllr Eastwood stated that the original idea for safe space had come from St Peter's School governors who had concerns that primary aged children were going home to empty houses. He added the younger children in this age group are considered a priority.

Cllr Farrell asked what times the space would be open. The LC suggested 4pm to 6.30pm as that reflects their current opening hours for the primary age group. They would consider

opening at the weekend and school holidays. She also asked how many users they were anticipating; they replied 20 to 30 children.

The Chairman asked if there had been any consideration given to running costs. The LC commented that they realise that children would need to be supervised and that there could be additional staff costs however there is no current plan on how to address this. HCP commented that this is a capital only project.

Cllr Perry asked whether a charge would be made to attend. The LC replied that the plan is in early stages and this had not been decided, however they would prefer not to exclude children that were not able to pay.

Cllr Shaw commented that the Leisure Centre has a good track record in delivering projects but asked for assurance that the project will be professionally managed and funds fully in place before commencing. HCP commented that the project is supported by HCP and will be run closely with HDC and will go through a rigorous tender process with HDC Procurement.

Cllr Leader commented that all operating costs should be considered and factored in and recommended a feasibility report.

Cllr Morgan commented that he is still uncomfortable with the proposal as research from the Children and Young People Committee has suggested that the facility will not be used by the teenage group and that the problem will be ongoing. The project will be an advantage for the LC but will not fulfil the need that the Children and Young People Committee have identified. He added he would have preferred the funds were used to support the Youth Club. Cllr Eastwood responded that he had met with the Youth Club to suggest that they shared space with the Football Club but that this had been declined. He added that the Youth Club are not currently able to open after school as a commercial nursery uses the space until 6.30pm.

The Chairman commented that lots of options had been considered and that HDC have made the decision based on what they decided fitted the criteria of the bid. She added the fund represents a significant investment in the village which is welcomed.

Cllr May asked why the Scout Community Centre could not benefit from the fund. It was explained that the Scout Community Building project has already advanced too far to be considered a new project. Cllr May commented that the fund has been used in other areas for refurbishments to existing buildings.

Cllr Perry commented that in her view, the age group most likely to use the room would be 10 to 13 and recommended that further additional provision for the 13 to 16 age group is actively considered.

9. **MOTION: TO SUPPORT THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING BEING UTILISED TO CONSTRUCT A MEZZANINE FLOOR AT THE HENFIELD LEISURE CENTRE WHICH WILL BE USED TO CREATE SAFE SPACE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**
It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Eastwood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED 11 in favour with 1 abstention** to support the UK Shared Prosperity Funding being utilised to construct a mezzanine floor at the Henfield Leisure centre.

Four members of the public left the meeting.

Item 11 was then discussed.

10. **HENFIELD SCOUT COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE**
The Clerk reported that the Rampion grant has now been reinstated but that there has been no reported progress on the Garfield Weston grant or the loan note scheme, therefore the Council are not in a position to be able to release any funding. It was noted that the cladding is now finished.

11. **TO CONSIDER CO-OPTING UP TO TWO COUNCILLORS FROM THE APPLICATIONS RECENTLY RECEIVED**

The Clerk confirmed that there were five applications received for two vacancies. Each Councillor will receive two votes and there may need to be more than one round of voting with the candidate with the lowest number of votes being removed from ballot papers. It was noted that Councillors do not have to vote or could use only one vote if they wished. Ballot papers were handed out and returned folded to the Clerk and OM for counting and checking. **Adrian Davey and Josh Potts were duly elected**, both having received an absolute majority in the first round of voting. They both signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

12. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(A) **Finance, Risk & Change Governance**

- (a) Summary of £24,971.05 Expenditure from 1st June – 30th June 2023.
Noted by Council.

Cllr Eastwood selected Jack Mowing £200 for the monthly in-depth audit.

Cllr Jones reported that the Council had taken the decision to move to invest in banks with ethical principles and an account has been set up with the Charity Bank and an application submitted to the Unity Trust Bank. Following a recommendation from the Internal Auditor to spread risk among Council bank accounts to take advantage of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. There has also been an internal transfer of funds to a new account with NatWest to take advantage of better interest rates.

Cllr Eastwood referenced the items 9 and 16 from the most recent FRC minutes, commenting that although he was fully supportive of the Skate Park improvements he would prefer finding an alternative source of funding in order to avoid taking money out of the Kings Field Trust when the current value is lower than it has been in the past. He suggested that the £50,000 required for skate park improvements could be met with £30,000 from the S106 agreement with Barratts (subject to approval from HDC) and the remaining £20,000 with a mix of £5000 from Parish Council reserves, £5000 from CIL money and the remainder by repurposing part of the Children and Young People's budget. The Chairman commented that the Children and Young Peoples budgets also needed to cover the impending ROSPA inspections and any recommended works as well as potential improvements to the play areas to bring them up to Green Flag standard. The budget for Sussex Clubs for Young People (who have now closed) has already been repurposed for Youth Activities. It was noted that this cannot be agreed as there is no motion on the agenda. Following brief discussion, Cllr Jones asked Cllr Eastwood to prepare some recommendations which can be considered by the Finance, Risk and Change Governance Committee.

(B) **Plans Advisory**

Cllr Shaw advised there has not been a recent meeting, but that there is a busy agenda for this Thursday.

(C) **Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that there had been a useful discussion with the football club and some discussion on trees management in the Sand Pit.

(D) **Village Amenities**

Cllr Morgan commented that there is a meeting tomorrow.

(E) **Children & Young People**

Cllr Farrell reported that there is an upcoming skate board competition on 23/7/23 and that the Street Art wall will be installed shortly, with thanks to Sussex Police for donating £600 for the materials. She reported on the very successful Get Involved event, commenting that the Art Club and the Bell Ringers would be very pleased to offer some activities and

opportunities for young people. She also reported on a visit that she made to Steyning Grammar School to talk to children from all age groups about the committee's progress so far and plans and ideas for the future. She added that the young people were particularly excited about the planned improvements to the Skate Park and potential pump track. There were several young people who would also like to be involved with a youth forum which could meet on a more regular basis. Attendance at the Super Mario film event was low but it was felt this could have been due to the hot weather and half term.

(F) **Museum**

Cllr Morgan mentioned there has been no recent meeting.

(G) **Joint Commons**

Cllr Eastwood reported that the next meeting will be on the 27th July. In the meantime he has met with a ranger from HDC at Broadmere and compiled a long list of works. It is hoped that some of this could be undertaken with the Community Payback team. He also reported that a sink hole has appeared on Henfield Common. Heras fencing has been erected and it is hope that Southern Water will attend to investigate. The bund will be cut next week as there are some issues with visibility. The grass on the Common will be left a while longer.

13. **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Grossmith reported that a planning application has been submitted by the Leisure Centre for the Padel tennis courts. The Lawn Tennis Association are now only prepared to loan 60% of the cost. Other funding options are being explored but there is no anticipated problem with this.

Cllr Perry reported that SH2030 are holding a presentation at the Haven next Wednesday with the Project Officer from the Knepp estate, who will be updating on the Weald to Waves project.

Cllr Eastwood reported that the HALC AGM will be held on the 26th July and will be followed by a face to face meeting with the CEO and leader of HDC.

Cllr Leader reported that the Henfield Community Partnership AGM is on the 14th September and that more committee members would be welcome. It was agreed to promote the AGM on social media. She added that there is an Artisan Market this weekend.

14. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

Two PCSO's were in attendance and commented that they have no particular concerns in Henfield. There has been an increase in noise nuisance and bonfire complaints due to windows being open in hot weather. They continue to attempt to mediate between neighbours on these issues. PCSO Foster explained that he will have more availability for Henfield going forward and will be increasing foot patrols. He also continues to engage with young people and mentioned that he is receiving positive feedback on the work of the Children and Young People Committee. They are appreciating being listened to and said 'well done'. His colleague reported that there have been complaints received regarding the blocking of the High Street by delivery lorries. It is understood that works are taking place to improve the loading area behind the Sainsbury's store for large HGVs but that often there are also smaller vans causing an obstruction. PCSO Foster added that although he has no powers of enforcement, he also regularly speaks to drivers parked on the zig zag lines outside One Stop and will report repeat offenders to the traffic team..

15. **ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

None.

16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 5th September 2023.

Meeting Closed 8.41pm.

