

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th September 2023
at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.**

Present: Cllr E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, R Kendall, M Morgan, D Jemmett, G Perry, N Farrell, A Davey, D Grossmith, S Leader, J Potts and C Simmonds.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and Cllr S Payne – West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs M Eastwood, R Shaw and A May.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4th JULY 2023**

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

The Chairman also reported that a complaint had been received from Henfield Youth Club regarding a statement that had been made at the previous meeting which was recorded in the minutes, suggesting that they had declined an offer of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund bid. They stated that this was inaccurate, as they had declined only to share a facility with the Football Club. The Youth Club had added that they are supportive of the Leisure Centre project and agreed that there was a lack of after-school provision for secondary-aged children.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) Kings Field Charity Commission Application

This has been approved, but we are still following up S106 funding. Cllr Morgan has referred to Steve Hawker and forwarded to Cllr Potts to follow-up with Horsham District Council.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman thanked Councillors for their patience and assistance with organising committee membership following the co-option of two further Councillors.

The Chairman reported that members of the Plans Advisory Committee (PAC) had attended a meeting with Woods Mill due to their concerns that the Woods Mill House, a heritage site dating back to Norman times, is being put up for sale, because the Sussex Wildlife Trust intend to relocate the Charity. It was a useful discussion and a chance to ask questions. The Committee will keep a watching brief on the progress of the sale.

She also thanked Cllr Leader for organising the social event in August.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Payne highlighted the launch of the Career Hub in conjunction with Brighton and Hove City Council, news about the prevention

assessment team and the Gatwick northern runway application. She will make sure that Steyning Grammar School is included in the Career Hub programme.

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Councillor Potts reported that the Business Climate Action Survey is now open until the 30th of October and encouraged Councillors to promote this among business owners. He stated that there was nothing to report on the Local Plan, although there may be some news following a meeting this week that he and Cllr Shaw will be attending at the Steyning Centre. He is also dealing with several noise complaints about a recent religious festival held at the Wiston Estate. He and the Operations Manager will be attending a meeting on Monday with Horsham District Council (HDC) regarding the application to vary a S106 agreement to fund skate park improvements, as the process appears to have changed and the Parish Council were not informed; guidance given several months ago appears not to have been correct. He will also be discussing issues surrounding water neutrality in relation to the Leisure Centre's application for padel tennis courts on the Kings Field.

8. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE PROCEDURE FOR THE FORMATION OF WORKING GROUPS**

A document was circulated prior to the meeting and the Chairman invited questions or comments, of which there were none. She explained that the procedures had been drawn up along similar lines to other local Parish Councils and that the Finance Risk and Change Committee (FRC) had discussed them at length to ensure they are relevant to Henfield.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Potts, **SECONDED** by Cllr Morgan and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the procedure for the formation of working groups.

9. **MOTION: TO APPROVE A THREE YEAR AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES BY MULBERRY & CO**

Mulberry & Co have provided the Internal Auditing services for a number of years. They have charged the same price since 2010, £60 per hour plus mileage at 45 per mile. They are now increasing the cost to £65 per hour, but have offered to fix this for 3 years. Cllr Jemmett asked if there was a break clause; there does not appear to be. However it was agreed that due to the good ongoing relationship this was low risk.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve a three year agreement for the provision of internal audit services by Mulberry & Co.

Cllr Simmonds added his congratulations to the Clerk for the outcome of the recent external audit.

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(A) Finance, Risk & Change Governance

(a) Summary of £23,962.45 Expenditure from 1st July – 31st July 2023 and £25,365.55 Expenditure from 1st August – 31st August 2023.
Noted by Council.

(b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks – July & August.
July – Cllr Grossmith selected Business Stream, Rothery Pavilion Water Supply.
August – Cllr Davey selected EDF, Coopers Way Power Supply.

(c) Budgets for 2024/25, Bearing in Mind the Business Plan Goals.
All committees were asked to start thinking about and discussing budgets for 2024/25.

Cllr Jones also advised that it has been agreed by FRC to continue oversight of the Biodiversity Working Group and that she will report on its meetings to Full

Council. She also reminded Councillors that any outside communication using a Parish Council email must copy in the Parish Office.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Grossmith reported that a recent meeting had been cancelled due to a lack of agenda items.

(C) Recreation & Open Spaces

Cllr Perry reported that a substantial financial contribution had been agreed for further tree-planting in verges and that the Committee had been looking at the contribution of the Works Officer team.

(D) Village Amenities

Cllr Morgan reported that the Committee would be discussing the Cemetery lights, which having been installed in 2019 at a cost of £16,000, had already failed due to water ingress. It is likely that some assistance will be needed from FRC. Cllr Davey offered to advise as a qualified electrician.

(E) Children & Young People

Cllr Farrell reported that a Youth Co-ordinator has now been appointed. The street art wall is now in position and looks great, partly due to a very successful evening organised by the Youth Club. She also thanked the Youth Club and Tom from Tic Tac Skate School for organising a very successful and well-attended Skate Jam. She added that the Committee will be considering holding a similar event for scooter riders. Cllr Davey offered to assist.

(F) Museum

Cllr Potts reported that there had been lots of interesting ideas discussed at a recent meeting and that he would be meeting with the former Museum Committee Chairman to discuss potential grant applications. He would also be having discussions with the Curator at Horsham Museum and hoped that Henfield could host a future meeting of the Horsham Museums Group.

(G) Joint Commons

Cllr Perry reported that the input of, and cooperation with, the Horsham District Council Ranger was working very well. She had visited Broadmere Common recently and assisted volunteers with clearing risings on the Common. The Committee is also considering various options to address the issues of parking for Common residents.

11. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES

a) The Henfield Hall Annual General Meeting

Cllr Jones reported that the first AGM of the new CIO has now been held. Former trustees stood down and most re-stood for election. Peter Sheppard has been elected Chairman and Cllr Jemmett is the new Treasurer. The Clerk has checked with the West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) on whether there is a potential conflict of interest. WSALC confirmed that as long as an interest is declared when appropriate and that Cllr Jemmett does not take part in any discussion on contractual matters between the Henfield Hall and the Parish Council, then there is no problem. The Chairman and Cllr Jones are also trustees.

The Chairman reported that she attended a recent meeting of the Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC), where Cllr Eastwood was re-elected Chairman. This meeting was followed by a meeting with HDC at which a number of useful presentations were given, including by the Planning Department. There was also a discussion about the further sites that may be needed as the Local Plan will extend beyond the term of most of the District's Neighbourhood Plans, leaving a potential shortfall. She added that the HDC Leader is planning to visit Henfield soon.

Cllr Grossmith reported that the Leisure Centre are in some financial difficulty as the good weather has meant that income from Sharkeys has fallen. They have arranged to restructure

their loan repayments to HDC in order to improve immediate cash flow and are looking at several alternative uses for the main sports hall. The Chairman reminded all that the Leisure Centre is a charity and not funded by the Council. Cllr Grossmith also reported that the padel tennis application is progressing. A bat survey will be needed as well as a water neutrality statement. Cllr Potts is assisting with this.

The Chairman reported that the Youth Club are now a CIO and will be having their AGM on 25th September. Cllr Leader reported that Henfield Community Partnership are having their AGM on 14th September.

Cllr Kendall reported that he had attended a meeting of the Friends of Henfield Medical Centre, where discussion had taken place on the intention by the partners to sell the Woodlawn Surgery in Partridge Green. It was noted that the Cowfold Surgery do also have a branch in Partridge Green. Flu vaccines will commence soon at Henfield Medical Centre, but it is unclear whether COVID boosters will be offered there or elsewhere.

12. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk reported that there had been a useful visit from Chief Constable Jo Shiner and three other officers, although the presence of the marked police car had meant that there were no cars parked on the zig zag lines outside One Stop. However, the officers conducted some spot checks and pulled over several drivers for not wearing seat belts, not having insurance and one in possession of drugs. There were also several drivers pulled over for speeding. Following the meeting it is hoped that there will be a proposal forthcoming to address the matter of parking on the zig zags, which may include replacing the bollards.

The Parish Office continues to have regular visits from the PCSO, who also attended the Skate Jam. It was commented that he has an excellent relationship with the local young people.

The Chairman reported that Cllr Simmonds will be the new police liaison representative; he will discuss this role with Cllr Jones who held it previously.

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

Cllr Potts reported that there will be a Meet and Greet with Andrew Griffith MP on 20th October; details will follow.

Cllr Perry reported that she has used the electric car supplied by Community Transport Sussex, and considered it a very good service.

Cllr Leader thanked the Clerk for the very useful budget training sessions.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 3rd October 2023.

Meeting Closed at 7.47pm.