



## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Meeting of the Village Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 10.30am at the Henfield Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs Morgan (Chairman), D Jemmett, J Jones, R Kendall and R Shaw

**In Attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager - OM) and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator – PA).

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

There were none.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllr Leader.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

These were approved and signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

1. Community Transport Sussex – Trustee from Henfield – Cllr Kendall said that he had heard nothing more and Cllr Jones wondered whether they had contacted SH2030 for a volunteer. The Chairman said he would speak with Cllr Perry.

2. Ongoing Verge Maintenance – The Chairman confirmed that the responsibilities were between the Recreation & Open Spaces Committee (ROS) and the Village Amenities Committee (VA) and that he was speaking with Cllr Perry (as Chair of ROS) next week.

He had previously suggested that land owned by the Parish Council and anything outside the built up area could be looked after by ROS and all other areas are looked after by VA. He re-iterated that he was very happy for wild flower areas to be established in suitable places and suggested that the Swales by the Link Road was one but that he felt the main entrances to the village should reflect a neat and tidy appearance with regular mowing of the grass. The Clerk said that it was necessary to be mindful of the works team and make sure they were aware of which areas were being planted in advance of the planting and give thought to what additional work might be entailed for them cutting grass because of the planting. He also said that they were often asked to mow verges that looked overgrown when either HDC or WSCC contractors had not maintained the area well enough. Cllr Kendall said that he also felt that the entrances to the village and the verges along the main road should be kept neatly; he also felt that the Parish Council should come to a decision about the overall policy on planting trees and bulbs and which verges and green areas were suitable.

Cllr Shaw said that he was aware of the need to weigh look and feel against environmental conditions and said that long grass during no mow May made it very difficult to collect dog mess. He suggested that even if the grass was left unmown it should be possible to cut a yard wide strip in the middle for walkers. Cllr Kendall said he thought there were two main issues – who is responsible for the area and the need for areas to be presentable. The Chairman said he would come back to this committee once he had met with Cllr Perry. Cllr Shaw said that he would be very happy to sit on a working group if one was set up to discuss the finer details and Cllr Jones said that she thought a working group would be a good idea.

3. Outdoor water bottle filling station – The OM said that nothing further had been done since HDC had indicated that this project would not be one they would consider for a grant. It was agreed that the OM would take this back to CYP Committee.

4. Trip Hazards on Church Street – The Chairman said that some work had been carried out, although Cllr Jemmett said that the pavement was very slippery when wet. The Chairman said that the pavement outside Martyn Lodge has sunken and the Clerk agreed to take some photos and send to WSCC.

**ACTION POINT:** The Clerk would take photographs of the pavement and submit to WSCC.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

#### **OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

#### 5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman said that on investigating further he believes that both bus shelters in the north of the village are HPC property. He also noted that the notice board in the bus shelter on the Wantley Hill side is Saxon Weald owned and that he had advised Cllr May of this.

#### 6. **CONSIDER BUDGETS FOR NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR**

These were agreed by all.

#### 7. **CONSIDER RESIDENT REQUEST TO RENT LAND AT SOUTH OF LEISURE CENTRE CAR PARK, REAR OF 8 & 9 KINGS FIELD.**

It was agreed that if the Landlord had wanted to purchase the land concerned then the Parish Council would have considered that but that the Council would not want to rent the land to tenant.

**ACTION POINT:** The Clerk to notify the resident of this decision.

#### **PUBLIC PATH DIVERSIONS**

8. The Chairman confirmed that the details had been sent out to all councillors earlier. The Clerk said that he had contacted WSCC and they had confirmed that the system relied on the Landowner collating any responses from neighbours and that there is a possibility that this may be open to abuse. It was agreed that if a request came into the office it would be sent to PAC in the first instance and if necessary to either ROS or VA if appropriate.

#### 9. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

The Chairman said that these had undergone some repainting by the Community Payback Team and that they looked in a much better condition. The Clerk said that he thought that the Works Team may need to clear away spilt paint after the work had been completed.

#### 10. **CEMETERY**

1. Cemetery Regulations – The Chairman said that he and OM had looked at the standard form for memorials and the suggested amendment had been circulated, he said that the main problem was that the next of kin did not always seem to be aware of the rules and that the form should be returned to the office having been signed by the next of kin to confirm that they were aware of the regulations. It was agreed by all that the new format was an improvement and should be used in the future.
2. Transfer of Ownership – The OM said that she had prepared a new webpage to explain what needs to happen. All agreed that it was very helpful.
3. Replacement Lighting – The Clerk said that he had still not heard anything having chased several times. He said he would chase again. It was confirmed that the end results may be that new lights will have to be installed and the Parish Council may have to pay a second time.

#### 11. **STREET SCENE**

1. Memorial Bench – The Chairman confirmed that blacksmith has the details but the bench is unlikely to be made until next year. Cllr Jones said that 2<sup>nd</sup> February might be a good date for its installation as this was the anniversary of the late Queen's accession to the throne.
2. Drop down bollards for Village Square – The OM confirmed that until the new bench was installed the bollards would have to wait. The Chairman said that it was likely that three bollards would be needed and that these would be plain black. When everything was installed the cycle rack could also be moved
3. Library Planting Beds – The Chairman said that his meeting was not able to go ahead as planned but had been rescheduled for the next day.

12. **CLERK'S REPORT**

1. Financial update – The Clerk confirmed that VA expenditure is 69.9% of budget and 66.7% of the year has elapsed, stating that the committee is likely at this point to come in on budget. He also said that cemetery income stands at 84.3% of budget and that November was a very quiet month. The Chairman said that the Christmas lights had not been switched on when promised at 4pm on 30<sup>th</sup> November but were turned on at 7pm on 1<sup>st</sup> December just as Christmas evening was coming to an end. Cllr Jones said that she had noticed some lights appear to have sections not working and that it might be time to consider new lights for next year. The OM agreed to look in the new year at the existing company as well as others. Cllr Kendall queried whether there was enough money in the budget and the Clerk said £7,500 with another £2,200 potentially being added in 2024-2025 budget. Cllr Shaw said that the lights in Horsham were very good and wondered who organised these. The OM agreed to look into it.

**ACTION POINT:** The OM to look at the purchase and storage of new Christmas lights early in the New Year for next Christmas.

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

There were none.

14. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

10<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30am.

Meeting closed at 11.20am.

Meetings planned for 2024 are as follows:- 10<sup>th</sup> January, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> October and 13<sup>th</sup> November.