

Hatley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Hatley Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th March 2021

In attendance remotely via Zoom video/telephone conference call technology: Cllr M Eagle (Chair), Cllr M Astor (Vice Chair), Cllr N Jenkins, Cllr H Nickerson, Cllr A Pinney, County Cllr S Kindersley (arriving late), District Cllr H Williams, Clerk to the Council K Wilde and 5 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence: None.
2. Interests:
 - i. Declarations of interest: None.
 - ii. Dispensation applications: None.
3. The **Parish Council resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 19th January 2021. The minutes will be signed by the Chair at the next possible opportunity.
4. Matters arising: Cllr Jenkins confirmed that South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) had notified the Parish Council of permission being granted for the retention of both public telephone boxes in Hatley. The Clerk advised that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has ordered eight trees to replace those being removed from East Hatley. They are due for planting by the end of March.
5. Questions from the public: It was questioned whether the hedge on the corner of the East Hatley junction will be cut back further to improve visibility when looking left towards Gamlingay to join the main road. The Clerk advised that the landowner had previously refused to take the hedge back further as it was an integral section of the hedge boundary. The Chair offered to speak to the landowner to see how this can be resolved.
6. Councillor reports:

District Cllr Williams explained that the Thakeham planning proposal for a large development across South Cambridgeshire villages will be considered in the usual way by SCDC Planning. Details about the District Council's budget were shared. It was stated that the Zero Carbon aspirations are not supported because of accumulative borrowing over the past four years. Support is available for local residents who may be struggling as a result of the Covid pandemic, with referrals to be made to Cllr Williams.

County Cllr Kindersley was not available at this time. (See his report following Minute 9).
7. Churches:
 - i. St Denis'

Cllr Jenkins shared a report with Councillors ahead of the meeting which noted the restoration of the plasterwork inside the chancel of St Denis' as well as what has been taking place in the churchyard. Acknowledgement was given to County Cllr Kindersley for granting an easement on his land to access the churchyard. The display boards are presently stored in the Village Hall, being available for use by the Parish. The grant provider for the restoration work has agreed that the work can be completed after the deadline set in the terms of the grant. Thanks were given to Peter Mann and Joyce Denby for liaising with and assisting the contractors on site for the renovations. Cambridgeshire Flora Group is due to visit the churchyard this month. The diseased elm tree and horse chestnut trees have not been removed as permission had not been received from the Parochial Church Council before the nesting season started.

- ii. Hatley St George

Cllr Astor advised that no progress has been made with any of the required tasks or improvement projects as they continue to await decisions from the Parochial Church Council. It was noted that there are various grants available to religious buildings at this time. However, at present no-one is investigating grants or offering to complete applications on behalf of Hatley St George Church. Peter Mann offered to send the online link for the grants to Cllr Astor, to be forwarded to the Revd Hilary Young. Cllr Astor stressed that it is still unknown exactly what is needed for the Church, as the Parochial Church Council must make its decision on this first. Cllr Astor will discuss this with the Revd Hilary Young.
8. Planning:
 - i. The Parish Council received notice from SCDC, for information only, under reference S/4601/17/CONDA for the submission of details required by conditions 3 (Materials), 4 (Hard and Soft Landscaping), 5 (Contamination), 6 (Archaeology), 7 (Surface and Foul Water Drainage), 10 (Biodiversity), 12 (Carbon Emissions), and 17 (Demolitions) of planning permission S/4601/17/FL, Moat Farm, East Hatley, SG19 3HY. No comments were made.
 - ii. There were no other planning items or updates to note.
9. Litter: A letter has been received from a resident concerned about the significant amount of litter in the parish, which they cleared from some stretches of the highway in Hatley St George on a few occasions. The resident proposed that signage could be used to discourage littering by reminding people passing through the parish that fines can be charged against those caught littering. It was agreed by the Parish Council that it would be difficult to enforce fines for littering and it is unlikely that drivers would take notice of this signage. The Clerk confirmed that Highways would not recommend the use of signage for a number of reasons provided. The Chair suggested that the community litter pick could take place more than once a year. This was supported by the other Councillors. A provisional date was agreed for Sunday 28th March at 10.00 am, subject to picking equipment being available from SCDC. **Clerk to action.** It was suggested by District Cllr Williams that an increase in community litter picking events can help to discourage littering. Cllr Jenkins advised that if people are seen dropping litter they can be reported to SCDC and they could receive a £150 fixed penalty notice or taken to court and fined up to £2,500.

(6. continued) County Cllr Kindersley joined the meeting and was invited by the Chair to give his report. The Council had met earlier today, discussing plans for the designation of the Fens as a biosphere. The budget was agreed, with a 1.99% increase in general spending. The budget also included a 1% increase in adult social care and 1.99% increase for the fire service. Preparations are under way for the elections in May for County Councillors, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Mayor for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The census is due for completion on 21st March. A new Chairman of East West Rail was appointed today and the next consultation on the route alignment is imminent. CCC, via MP Anthony Browne, has met with the rail minister to demonstrate the poor work by East West Rail (EWR) to-date. EWR is due to respond. There is concern that the Minister for Housing has been overruling the Planning Inspectorate for large developments, as this may also have some bearing on the Thakeham proposal. CCC is recruiting social workers. Cllr Nickerson enquired whether any progress has been made with the Highways department relating to the Parish Council's desire to reduce the speed limit to 30 mph. It was agreed that this would be discussed further outside of the meeting.

Cllr Kindersley left the meeting.

10. Mobile phone network:
The Chair shared her recent findings on the reliability of the mobile phone network, which seemed to improve initially following O2's reported work at the nearby mast but has not been consistent in recent weeks. The Clerk advised she has also received reports from workers in Hatley St George that they still struggle to obtain a phone signal both at home and across the parish. It was agreed that as the issues remain the next step would be bring this to MP Anthony Browne's attention and seek his assistance. **Clerk to action.**
11. Speeding and reducing the speed limit:
Options for progressing the speed limit project were discussed. The Clerk advised that the most cost-effective route would be to apply for Local Highway Improvement (LHI) initiative funding in July as this includes a feasibility assessment by Highways at no cost. Cllr Nickerson has written to the Police and Crime Commissioner in an attempt to involve the police in the local speeding problem but has so far been passed around without a satisfactory outcome. Cllr Nickerson was concerned that the minutes of October 2013 had stated that the Parish Council would proceed with reducing the speed limit but that this had not been actioned. The Clerk agreed to investigate this statement and report back at the next meeting, as it did not agree with her recollection of decisions and events at that time. It was agreed the Clerk and Cllr Nickerson should liaise outside of the meeting to prepare for the LHI application. **Clerk and Cllr Nickerson to action.**
12. Play Area:
- i. The play area was inspected by the Chair earlier today. A brick that had been placed on the bin lid was removed from the play area by the Chair. The bin lid will be tethered to the bin so that it cannot be thrown about. Laurence Drake was thanked for his offer to undertake this task. The Clerk advised that the new netting is due to arrive next week and she will hand this over to Cllr Nickerson for the repair work. The Chair will try to organise rope for securing the new netting. **Chair and Cllr Nickerson to action.**
 - ii. The Clerk shared options for a new litter bin with the Councillors ahead of the meeting. It was agreed that the current bin remains fit for purpose and now that the issue of it not having a lid has been resolved there is no need to consider a replacement.
 - iii. No other updates or action points were discussed.
13. Public Access Defibrillator:
- i. The Clerk confirmed that the logbook details have been received up to the end of February.
 - ii. The sensor light has new batteries and all items in the first aid kit have been checked by the Clerk and remain in date. No further action is required at this time.
14. Hatley Village Association:
- i. There has been no further progress on the toilets project. The National Lottery Community Fund is not open to us because the National Lottery Awards for All grant has already been paid to the Parish Council for this project. Other grants require upfront payment by the Parish Council, which is not affordable. The Clerk stated that the Village Hall misses out on some grants and on the recent Covid funding by SCDC because it is a Parish Council run facility rather than one run by a charity. Cllr Jenkins advised that improvements cannot be made to the toilets if a disabled toilet is not included in the plans.
 - ii. A new Government fund has been announced, which will be available via local authorities, specifically for fully accessible 'Changing Places' toilet facilities in public places. The fund appears to stipulate that an adult-sized changing table should be included in any projects, which would make it another non-starter. The project leader will liaise with SCDC to ascertain whether the current toilets project could be eligible for this grant. It was agreed to wait to hear from SCDC before considering whether to

- approach MP Anthony Browne about the barriers against applying for funding for much-needed improvements to make the hall accessible to all. Thanks were given to the project leader, Peter Mann, for his hard work and commitment.
- iii. The outdoor coffee mornings may resume in May but this is to be reviewed and will be weather dependent.
15. Hatley Village Hall:
- i. The hall will require a thorough clean ahead of use by SCDC in May. Cllrs Eagle, Nickerson and Pinney all agreed to share the workload.
 - ii. The first use of the hall will be by SCDC for the elections on Thursday 6th May. The Clerk confirmed that SCDC has carried out a risk assessment for polling stations. A one-way system will be in place and queueing may arise due to the limitations on the number of electors that can be inside the hall at one time. The hall will need to be vented and electors will be encouraged to bring their own pencils. Peter Mann offered to put such details on the parish website.
 - iii. The fire extinguisher annual service has taken place, as has the annual boiler service.
16. Correspondence:
The Parish Council has been invited to help 'Grow Gamlingay' to find suitable land on adjoining parish boundary for its tree growing project. The Chair expressed her disappointment that, as the Parish Council does not own any land, support cannot be given to their worthwhile project. It was noted that there are ongoing tree planting projects across the Hatley Park Estate. **Clerk to respond.**
17. The **Parish Council resolved** to appoint LGS Services to undertake the internal audit for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.
18. Finance:
- i. The **Parish Council resolved** to approve the following payments:
 - *Abacus Oil Experts* – Village Hall annual boiler service – £144.00
 - *Fire & Safety Solutions Ltd* – Village Hall annual service and equipment – £201.00
 - *ICO* – Annual renewal of Data Protection fee – £35.00
 - *CAPALC* – Annual subscription and DPO membership – £217.68
 - *M R L Astor* – Village Hall water rates – £40.36
 - *K Wilde* – Salary payments March and April
 - *K Wilde* – Overtime January to February – £101.84
 - *K Wilde* – Reimbursements for purchases January to March – £124.06
 - ii. The Clerk gave a brief summary of the cost implications and benefits should the Parish Council's bank account services be transferred from Barclays' Community Account to Unity Trust Bank. Unity Trust Bank is the preferred banker for many councils because services and electronic banking are tailored towards local government requirements. It was agreed that further comparisons would be investigated to include other banking service providers, with the aim of reaching a decision at the Parish Council meeting in July.
19. NALC's guidance for the return of public meetings:
The regulations allowing for remote meetings by parish councils, introduced last year following coronavirus legislation, expire on 7th May. The Parish Council discussed the possible risks of hosting the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual General meeting of the Parish Council inside the Village Hall, being scheduled to take place on Tuesday 18th May. As the Covid restrictions for indoor social gatherings are not due to be lifted until late June at the earliest, it was agreed that it would be sensible to move the meeting date ahead of 7th May. NALC is lobbying for an extension to the expiry date for remote meetings but the outcome may not be known in time to reorganise a meeting. The **Parish Council resolved** to bring the two meetings forward to a new date of Tuesday 4th May 2021 to

allow for the meetings to be held on a virtual basis via Zoom videoconferencing technology.

20. Time and date of the next meeting: **Annual Parish Meeting is due to be held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th May 2021, to be immediately followed by the Annual General Meeting of Hatley Parish Council.**
21. The meeting was closed at 9.51 pm.