

Hatley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Hatley Parish Council held in Hatley Village Hall on Tuesday 18th March 2025

PRESENT: Cllr Micky Astor (Chair), Cllr Samantha Abbasi (Vice Chair), Cllr Harold Nickerson, Cllr Peter Hayward, Clerk to the Council Kim Wilde, District Cllr Heather Williams (arriving late) and four members of the public.

ACTION BY

1. TO ELECT A CHAIR
Cllr Abbasi proposed Cllr Astor and this was seconded by Cllr Nickerson. Cllr Astor expressed his thanks and accepted the role as Chair.
2. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR, IF REQUIRED
Not required. Cllr Abbasi remains the Vice Chair.
3. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE
Cllr Astor signed the Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Clerk.
4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Received from County Cllr Sebastian Kindersley.
5. INTERESTS
 - i. Declarations of interest: None received.
 - ii. Dispensation applications for items on this agenda: None received.
6. PREVIOUS MINUTES
The **Parish Council resolved to approve** the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Hatley Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st January 2025 and they were signed by the Chair.
7. MATTERS ARISING
The Clerk advised that no further action has yet been taken relating to new grass matting by the football goalpost in the playing field, or the search for a new hall caretaker.
8. OPEN MEETING FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS QUESTIONS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL
A member of the public wanted to share an update on the 'No HGV' survey that was referred to in the County Councillor's notes last month, advising that such a policy would not affect deliveries and vehicles to local businesses, and that only 4 responses have yet been received.
The same member of the public wanted to provide an update on the Tiger On Demand bus service, stating that the South Cambs area is quite small but it may be extended to include the Trumpington Park and Ride area, to help people needing to travel to Addenbrookes Hospital. Another member of the public interjected to state this bus service is a waste of money and does not

Clerk

comply with GDPR regulations. Another member of the public and the Clerk spoke up to say they had used the service and it was great. Another stated it would be useful if it linked with a local train station.

A member of the public shared news of her intention to organise the perambulation walk again in May or June. This time it would be without the involvement of the Parish Council, however permission will be sought from the various landowners once again.

Information was requested by a member of the public about who made the parish notices boards, as one is needed for St Denis' Church. The information was provided by the Clerk.

A member of the public advised there had been a break-in at a property in East Hatley and urged people to remain vigilant. The same member of the public also shared details of the PCSO visit that is due to take place at the Connect Café in the Gamlingay Ecohub on 28th March, if people wish to meet the PCSO to raise questions. The same member of the public was concerned about the young trees that have been cut down on the back of the verge at the junction of East Hatley and asked whether the Parish Council could try to obtain free trees from the District Council to make up for the loss. The Chair reminded her the verges belong to County Council.

The Chair suggested that in future many of the above mentioned updates would be better shared with the community via the parish website or the local Facebook pages, as the Parish Council meeting offers a very limited audience to receive such updates, and this section of the meeting is for questions to the Parish Council relating to council business.

9. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Cllr Williams was not yet present. Her report was provided later in the meeting.

10. PARISH COUNCILLORS

- i. The Clerk confirmed the signing of the Acceptance of Office by Cllr Astor on 21st January 2025.
- ii. The Clerk confirmed the resignation of Paul Kraus from the Council as of 27th January 2025. The Cllr Astor gave thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to Paul for his work as Parish Councillor and his time as Chair.
- iii. The Clerk confirmed the conclusion of the period for the calling of a by-election to fill the vacant seat as of 20th February 2025. A new notice has been published to advertise the councillor vacancy and to provide details on the co-option process.

11. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S SURVEY

The Councillors and Clerk discussed the few services they have dealings with at the District Council and agreed that on the whole, based on those limited points of contact, service levels had become slightly affected in terms of response times. As there has been a lack of planning applications in recent years it is impossible to measure how those services levels have been impacted. Following the discussion the **Parish Council resolved to delegate** the completion of the online survey to the Chair and Clerk outside of the meeting, based on the points that were discussed in the meeting. In summary, the Parish Council agreed that whilst it is not against the concept of a flexible approach to staffing or a four day working week, this is more appropriate and suitable to small private businesses and not a large local authority that answers to and is paid for by the public.

Cllr Astor
/Clerk

12. CAPALC'S AFFILIATION PACK 2025-26
The **Parish Council resolved to approve** the renewal of the affiliation pack, which includes fees to NALC, CAPALC and the DPO membership.
13. INTERNAL AUDITOR SERVICES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR END 31.03.25
The **Parish Council resolved to approve** the Clerk's recommendation for LGS Services Ltd to undertake the internal audit once again.
14. INCOME RECEIVED 01.01.25 TO 28.02.25
Thirteen receipts related to hall hire fees and the remainder of the receipts related to the HVA and monthly coffee morning events. The reconciliation of the finances to 28.02.25 was overlooked in error as an agenda item. However, the Clerk had prepared the work and shared copies ahead of the meeting of the cashbook and bank statement up to 28.02.25. The Parish Councillors accepted the reconciliation of the finances to 28.02.25 and it was signed by the Chair. The usual quarterly bank reconciliation (to 31.03.25) will be covered in the year-end work and the annual audit.
15. PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL
The **Parish Council resolved to approve** the following payments:
- i. *K Wilde* – Overtime payment for January and February
 - ii. *H M Revenue and Customs* – PAYE for overtime payment
 - iii. *K Wilde* – Reimbursement for security deposit paid to Octopus Energy – £28.21
 - iv. *Fire and Safety Solutions* – Village Hall annual fire inspection – £67.20
 - v. *Abacus Oil Experts* – Village Hall annual boiler service – £218.88
 - vi. *D Gillett* – Village Hall hire damage deposit to return – £50.00
 - vii. *K Wilde* – Reimbursement for postage stamps – £26.40
 - viii. *S Kemp* – Cleaning services at the Village Hall – £60.00
 - ix. *K Wilde* – Salary payments for March and April 2025
 - x. *H M Revenue and Customs* – PAYE for March and April 2025
 - xi. *CAPALC* – Annual affiliation fees – £231.56
 - xii. *O2* – Mobile phone February and March 2025 – £22.19 monthly by D/D
 - xiii. *e.on Next* – Village Hall electricity final bill to 25.01.25 – £38.65 by D/D
 - xiv. *BT* – Village Hall broadband January and February 2025 – £35.94 monthly by D/D
 - xv. *Octopus Energy* – Village Hall electricity 25.01.25 to 28.02.25 – £21.50
 - xvi. *The Kintribe Ltd* – Window cleaning at the Village Hall – £25.00 paid from Petty Cash
16. HATLEY VILLAGE ASSOCIATION
- i. The Clerk read aloud the report provided by the HVA, including details of the Quiz Night held in February. The event made a loss due to a lower than expected turnout and a higher level of spending on prizes. It is hoped the uplift in prizes will encourage greater participation at the next quiz event.
The Chair asked the Clerk to feed back a 'well done and keep it up' to the three HVA members in recognition of their continued efforts.
 - ii. The Clerk provided a summary of the HVA finances.
17. HIGHWAYS AND SPEEDING
- i. The Clerk advised that the expected date for the Local Highways Improvement Scheme work to take place in Hatley is 28th and 29th April, pending the approval of the order to close the road on these two

days. A notice is expected to be issued to all residents once the road closure dates are approved.

- ii. Cllr Nickerson confirmed having spoken with the latest Speedwatch Coordinator, who would like to visit Hatley in due course to see what assistance can be given. Cllr Nickerson has suggested this visit takes place after the speed limit has reduced to 30 mph. Cllr Nickerson
- iii. The Clerk reminded all that there is shortage of volunteers to help with the relocation of the speed monitoring sign. A few new names were suggested and the Clerk will contact them all in due course to see what can be arranged. The Clerk will check how the speed limit settings can be adjusted so that it works in line with the new local speed limit in May. Clerk

A member of the public commented on the forthcoming road closure and asked whether the residents will still have full access through the village. The Clerk advised that this would usually be the case and will confirm once more information is available. Clerk

18. PLANNING

The Councillors noted the recent news that South Cambs District Council no longer has a 5 year housing supply and how that might encourage planning applications that fall outside of the village framework.

19. VILLAGE HALL

- i. The Clerk provided a summary of recent hall hire and future bookings, noting there are now 3 regular hirers and income is now much higher than previously expected.
- ii. The Clerk gave a brief update on the County Council's search for venues to facilitate a local preschool setting in order to meet the expected needs of Gamlingay residents. The Parish Council agreed the recent increase in bookings and regular hirers suggests the hall should remain to be first and foremost a community building rather than a pre-school setting. The Clerk and Councillors need not spend any further time investigating a change of use to a preschool setting. The Councillors had expected County Council to have greater involvement in such a project but the onus was in fact on the Parish Council to find a suitable childcare business to let the hall to. They also noted the significant amount of additional work this would have created for the Clerk on an ongoing basis, as well as greatly altering the look and feel of the hall for other hirers outside of pre-school hours. The Clerk will update County Council of the Parish Council's latest decision. Clerk
- iii. The Clerk shared details of a letter of complaint relating to the amount of condensation on the floors and walls at the recent HVA Quiz Night. The author considered this to be a health and safety risk and questioned why, when this was discussed a year or so ago at council meetings, this issue has not been addressed. The Clerk advised the Parish Council that since the letter has been received she has been monitoring the hall on a regular basis, both when there are hirers and when the hall is not used. There has not been a repeat of that issue in the past few weeks so it still cannot really be explained, and at this time there is no issue to resolve. The problem had not arisen during much of the previous year either, having been checked regularly by various volunteers before and after hirer. The Clerk will continue to closely monitor for condensation issues. It was agreed the air vents should be checked to ensure they are clear and the Clerk should

purchase two yellow health and safety signs relating to slippery floors, so they can be used by hirers if the situation arises when the hall is used. The hall volunteers know to keep the porch area doors and toilet doors open to allow the air to circulate, as the toilets are now fully tiled and have double glazed windows.

Clerk

- iv. The Clerk shared details of recent maintenance at the hall, including repairs to the toilet locks, the new thermostat being fitted, and a deep clean taking place throughout the hall. New issues to note include an increasing amount of damage to the paintwork inside the main hall, caused by hirers sticking things to the walls, and the safety cord has been pulled down from the ceiling once again. There are warning notices in place until this can be repaired. The carpet would benefit from a clean at some point too. The clerk is keeping an eye on the misuse of the outside bin and will order the car park signage soon.

Clerk

District Councillor Williams arrived at the meeting and was invited to discuss her report, which included:

- a) News from the recent budget meeting and increase in council tax.
- b) The consultation on the 4 day working week which closes in 4 days.
- c) Local government reorganisation into a unitary authority and its expected impact on the county and district councils. It is expected there would be no structural changes to parish councils however the allocation of funds may impact access to grants, and some services may see reduced funding.
- d) New figures released by the Government has resulted in the District Council losing its 5 year housing supply status
- e) The election campaign has seen some unpleasantness amongst parties and therefore people are being urged to fact-check before reaching a decision.

At this point questions were raised and discussed relating to the impact of the unitary authority on other elections and the precept/grant issues. District Cllr Williams suggested that parish councils should adopt a policy on requests for grants so they can be prepared for a possible influx of requests for grant funding by local groups, when funds are no longer on offer via the higher authorities. The Clerk noted this.

Electoral boundaries may also be impacted and this in turn may affect the ability of representatives to know and relate to the needs of the broader area they represent.

There were no further questions and thanks were given by the Chair. District Cllr Williams left the meeting.

20. PLAY AREA

- i. The Clerk received the monthly inspection reports for the play equipment from Cllr Astor in January and Cllr Abbasi in February. It was noted that extra cable ties are needed for the posters on the waste bin, which Cllr Nickerson offered to action. Also, the ground in the goal area has dried out and therefore this might be a good opportunity to consider laying some matting. The Clerk needs to ensure the suggested matting will be suitable and will investigate and advise as soon as possible.
- ii. The Councillors were given print outs to consider for a range of designs and costings for replacement play towers. Cllr Nickerson questioned whether the existing long slide could be attached to a new tower so that it is not wasted. The Clerk didn't think this would be possible but will investigate. There was no standout design and the

Clerk

- costs appear to be very high, so the Clerk will need to look for grant funding opportunities once a design is selected. The Councillors agreed to contact the Clerk by the end of the month with their preferred designs. Clerk / All Cllrs
- iii. The Clerk explained that the football goalpost netting had been cut down by the fire service when they successfully freed a stag's antlers from the netting last month. The Councillors had differing views on whether the netting should be replaced and initially suggested the goals be left bare. A member of the public wished to express the request by her children for the nets to be returned so they can play football again. The Clerk reminded the Councillors how the pros and cons of the netting was discussed prior to the football goalpost being purchased in March 2023. At that time the Councillors viewed the health benefits to local children as outweighing any risks to wildlife. It was agreed it is not feasible to remove the nets when not in use, as this is impossible to monitor as they are used freely at all times like the rest of the play equipment. The Clerk suggested the goalpost will offer no benefit to the children if it remains in place without netting and would see the expenditure wasted. The Councillors considered all of the points raised and the **Parish Council resolved to replace** the netting once advice has been sought on how to minimise the risks to wildlife. Clerk
- iv. There were no other matters to consider.
21. PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATOR
- i. The record book update has been received by the Clerk. The Chair expressed his thanks to the co-ordinator of the Defib Group for overseeing the volunteer group and the record keeping of their inspections.
- ii. There were no other matters to consider.
22. CLIMATE ACTION
- It was again noted that funding is available for electric car charging points but the Clerk reminded the Councillors that it had agreed to not take on more than one project at a time, as the Clerk cannot give unlimited hours to the Council and is already exceeding her contracted hours most months. It was agreed the play area project continues to take priority.
23. COMMUNITY LITTER PICK
- The Clerk confirmed the equipment has been delivered for the community litter pick which is due to be held at 10.30am on Sunday 23rd March 2025. The Clerk will also provide a map of the parish to be placed with the equipment at the Post Office, so that people can mark off the section where they are picking, to avoid duplication of areas by those who may arrive later. Clerk
24. CHURCHES
- i. St Denis' Church
- A report was shared with the Parish Council ahead of the meeting. A member of the public commented that it was the right decision to not take the organ that was offered, due to the damp nature of the building
- ii. Hatley St George Church
- No update was received. The Chair will make contact with Reverend regarding a leaking gutter. Chair

25. WEBSITE

- i. The Parish Council discussed the transfer of the '.gov.uk' email address to a new service provider and agreed the Webmaster should proceed with the transfer without further delay.
- ii. The **Parish Council resolved upon the temporary exclusion** of the press and public from meeting proceedings, under Section 1 of the *Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960*, as the business about to be transacted is considered to be prejudicial to the public interest. The press and public are hereby instructed to withdraw from the meeting room whilst matters pertaining to item 25.iii. are discussed.

All member members of the public left the meeting.

- iii. The Clerk shared details of the response from Pixsy relating to the previous use of a photo on the website and the Parish Council agreed on action to be taken to conclude this matter.

Clerk

26. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00pm on Tuesday 20th May 2025, followed immediately by the Annual General Meeting of Hatley Parish Council.

27. MEETING CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 9.03pm.