

# Hatley Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Hatley Parish Council held on Thursday 3rd September 2020

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, District Cllr H Williams (late arrival), Clerk to the Council K Wilde and 4 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence: County Cllr S Kindersley.
2. Interests:
  - i. Declarations of interest: None.
  - ii. Dispensation applications: None.
3. The **Parish Council resolved** to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th July 2020. The minutes will be signed by the Chair at the next possible opportunity ahead of the next meeting.
4. Matters arising: Cllr Jenkins gave notice of the expected date for the reopening of New Road, Gamlingay.
5. Questions from the public: Cllr Pinney requested details of the payments to Cllr M Eagle for arranging the Zoom meetings. The Clerk confirmed that three payments of £14.39, totalling £43.17, are being paid for meetings held on 14th July, 3rd September and the meeting due to be held on 20th October. Thanks were given by M Lack for the advance notice put up in East Hatley by the farming landowner warning of the harvesting start date. Cllr Eagle suggested that now might be a good time to reconsider opening the Village Hall and agreed, with the help of the Clerk, to investigate what action and assessments are required. It was suggested that the Village Hall Management Group could open the hall if all government guidance could be met, with formal approval by the Parish Council at its next meeting. It will be imperative that the hall volunteers are willing to provide key holder and cleaning duties.

District Cllr Williams joined the meeting.

6. Planning:
  - i. The Parish Council was due to discuss planning application **S/3309/18/NMA**, being a non-material amendment to the approved application for Barn Farm, East Hatley, SG19 3JA for an agricultural worker's dwelling. District Cllr Williams provided an update that during the afternoon the Planning Officer had contacted the Agent to advise that the proposed amendments could not be classed as non-material. Therefore a full application or variation of conditions would need to be submitted by the Agent to allow the proposed changes to be determined. The Parish Council agreed that this agenda item was no longer valid and no further comments were made.
  - ii. Cllr Jenkins advised that the Government's consultation on planning, 'Planning for the future' is now running, with a closing date of 29th October. Cllr Jenkins suggested this could be considered at the next ordinary meeting in October.

District Cllr Williams left the meeting.

7. Speeding:
  - i. The drafted parish survey for the proposed reduction of the speed limit in Hatley was finalised, with the Parish Council agreeing to increase the font size and to include a 'comments' section to allow residents to add alternative suggestions for traffic calming solutions. Cllr Jenkins requested that the Parish Council also considers the inclusion of a reduction of the speed limit in East Hatley from 30 mph to 20 mph. This request was not supported as the situation in East Hatley is more manageable, being predominantly used by residents and regular service providers. This differs from the main highway through Hatley St George which has a significant volume of traffic which is passing through from neighbouring parishes. It was agreed the surveys would be delivered during the coming weekend and would be collected by Councillors during the week commencing 21st September. Completed surveys can also be deposited at the Post Office. Cllr Pinney and M Ward will continue to research speeding problems in other villages and share ideas and solutions.
  - ii. The Clerk had intended to share recent speeding data but there were technical issues when attempting to retrieve data from the sign. The Clerk is awaiting assistance from the manufacturer to resolve the issue.
8. The Clerk shared correspondence received from residents objecting to BT's proposal to remove both public phone services in Hatley which is out for consultation until 30 September. The Clerk also shared details of previous responses submitted by the Parish Council which had objected to the removal of this service. A discussion took place concerning the financial feasibility for BT to continue to provide a service where there is no call income and it was questioned whether the service is still considered to be vital in the absence of reliable mobile phone networks, especially in times of emergency. Cllr Jenkins advised that the Hatley St George public phone was disconnected in error by Openreach in May this year and is listed to be reinstated. It was also noted that the East Hatley phone does not provide an income as it is available for emergency calls only. The **Parish Council resolved** to object to the proposal to remove both public phones based on the same objections raised during the 2019 consultation. An additional objection would be noted relating to the recent increase in domestic abuse and coercive control. It was agreed that a phone line outside the home could serve as a lifeline to victims of these crimes.
9. Village Hall
  - i. The project leader of the Toilets Project recommended that the Parish Council considers separating the parts of the project to allow work to commence without further delay on the installation of handrails, which will improve access by steps at the front of the hall. Funds are available for this portion of the work but not for the full project which includes a refurbishment of the foyer and toilets. A further grant application will be submitted to enable the full project to be completed. The **Parish Council resolved** to accept the recommendation, thereby reversing a previous decision to accept the quotation of a contractor for the full Toilets Project.
  - ii. The project leader shared details of various suppliers and the respective costs to purchase the handrail equipment. The **Parish Council resolved** to proceed with the project leader's recommended supplier. A discussion took place regarding options for the installation work and the **Parish Council resolved** to proceed with the labour and services of a Hatley resident for a maximum charge of £100.00.

- iii. The project leader of the Toilets Project will seek new quotations for the remainder of the project when the required funds are available. The contractor that was previously approved by the Parish Council will be included to allow for an updated quotation.
10. Website
- i. The 'Wave' online website testing programme has been used to identify major problems on the Hatley website which may cause access difficulties for some groups of disabled users. Issues relating to colour contrasts will be resolved as soon as possible, switching to white text on a black background in some areas, whilst the shade of green used on the header may need to be darkened. Next steps were discussed and the **Parish Council resolved** to use the services of Federation Design to ensure that all aspects of the Website Accessibility regulations have been tested and remedied as far as possible.
  - ii. It was agreed that with immediate effect a statement would be added to the website advising users to contact the Clerk should they have any access issues or requests for access improvements. There is a legal requirement to publish a detailed Website Accessibility Statement on the website by 23rd September. The Clerk has created a draft statement which has been shared with all members of the Parish Council. It will be reviewed and amended by both Cllr Jenkins and the webmaster before being published online. It was agreed that the webmaster would recommend how frequently the site should be tested, based on the frequency of new material being added to the website. This will be confirmed in the statement.
11. The Chair gave an update on the ideas that were raised during the July meeting for possible Zero Carbon Community Grant projects. The suggestion by a landowner for an oak woodland area inside the parish has made no progress. The Chair had communicated the comments and questions raised by the Parish Council but there has been no reply. Cllr Astor's suggestion of wildflowers along the edge of the footpath that links East Hatley with Hatley St George was approved by the Parish Council but a grant application will not be required for this purpose. Cllr Astor explained that volunteers will need to help clear the pathway before green hay containing seeds can be spread. The work would take place in the coming month. It was noted that Gamlingay Parish Council would be discussing their project ideas for the ZCCG on the 8th September. A further suggestion from a Gamlingay resident involving the planting of local trees via community groups to achieve a necklace of copses around the parish of Gamlingay was of some interest and therefore contact will be maintained.
12. Cllr Pinney advised that he has received a personal apology from the person who had wrongly raised a complaint on social media about the behaviour and action of a male Parish Councillor during a local incident involving a cyclist and horse riders. This was a case of mistaken identity and the complaint was removed within a few hours of posting. Cllr Nickerson questioned whether all male councillors should have received the same apology but agreed to let the matter rest, as did the Parish Council.
13. Finance:
- i. The Clerk shared the forecast income and expenditure details in comparison with the budget for 2020-21. There has been no income from Village Hall hire fees or any monies raised by the Hatley Village Association due to Covid-19 regulations which have kept the hall closed to date. The Clerk recommended that the Parish Council fully scrutinises any non-essential expenditure. The Clerk estimated that expenditure would remain closely in line with income from the precept, through the avoidance of non-budgeted expenditure.

- ii. The **Parish Council resolved** to approve the following payments:
- *M Eagle* – 3 x Zoom online meeting fees (14th July, 3rd Sept, 20th Oct) – £43.17
  - *LGS Services* – Internal Audit – £90.00
  - *K Wilde* – Reimbursement for the Namesco website domain renewal fee – £52.79
14. Time and date of next meeting was agreed as 7.30 pm on Tuesday 20th October 2020.
15. The meeting was closed at 9.15pm.