

HATHERSAGE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk – Ms Maura Sorensen, Heart of Hathersage, Main Road, Hathersage, Derbyshire, S32 1BB

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Minutes of the meeting of Hathersage Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 June 2024, 7.30pm

Councillors present: Jane Marsden (Chair); Alex Campbell; Bridget Hanley; W Hanley; Tim Hill; James Marsden; Rosie Olle; Heather Rodgers; James Shuttleworth; Nick Williams

In attendance: Chris Cave (RFO); Maura Sorensen (Clerk); DDDC Cllrs Peter O'Brien (*part*) and Simon Ripton (*part*); members of the public Suzanne Howard, Cathy Woodcock, Elaine Sleight, Ruth Mason

028/24 Apologies for absence **received** from Cllrs Martin Bloor, Steve Dempsey, Peter Rowland; and from the police (a report had been shared).

029/24 To **decide** any variation in the order of business. In relation to agenda item 14.1 (Pool staff concerns report and recommendations), Cllr Williams referenced the absence of Cllr Bloor, co-author of the report, and asked if Cllrs would agree for Cllr Williams to proxy vote on behalf of Cllr Bloor, on the recommendations – **unanimously agreed by Cllrs**.

*The Clerk had sought advice – including from DALC - on the matter of a proxy vote prior to the meeting however no definitive advice had been provided in time for the meeting. Subsequently DALC confirmed ‘there cannot be a vote by proxy at a Parish Council meeting as it is a vote of Councillors present at the meeting’. In minute 041/24.1 Cllr Bloor’s **support** for the recommendation on Duty Supervisor pay is noted; no proxy vote is counted.*

030/24 **Declaration of Members Interests** – minute 031/24 b) and discussion of reinstatement of a bin on Baulk Lane, Cllr James Shuttleworth noted a potential interest as landowner [of fields adjacent to Baulk Lane]. Minute 031/24 b) – Cllrs James and Jane Marsden noted the police report on theft of a battery from an electric fence on farmland was from their farm.

031/24 **Public Participation**

a) A period of not more than ten minutes for members of the public and Members of the Council to comment on any matter.

The four members of the public in attendance were all Oddfellows Road residents and had come to the meeting to flag Oddfellows Road residents parking problems. Noted those residents had no off-street/dedicated parking. Noted parking was a concern village-wide but flagged additional pressures on Oddfellows Road with some users of the pool, the Memorial Hall and the playing field looking to park there. Noted the siting of the Fire Station on Oddfellows Road and the impact of parking on access/egress of emergency vehicles.

Residents expanded on the impact [on them] of visitor parking particularly at times with high numbers of visitors - including a reluctance to move their cars at weekends knowing they were unlikely to regain the space; and damage to their cars. Confirmed they had already flagged the matter with DCC Highways, with DDDC Cllrs, and with MP Sarah Dines.

Reference made to a previous parking survey conducted by the Parish Council which had included a question related to resident parking schemes. The Oddfellows Road residents suggested the question/s had been ‘somewhat woolly’ and that the survey had not clearly outlined resident parking scheme options and pros/cons.

Potential solutions were flagged including allocation of (paid for) parking spaces in Oddfellows Road car park (as is the case for some Station Road residents). Noted this would have to be proposed to/ discussed with DDDC. Noted the Parish Council was looking at small pockets of land – potential parking sites - in and around the village – which might, to some extent, alleviate village-wide parking problems. The Chair also referenced a longer-term initiative on village improvements in which traffic management measures would form a part. Reference was made to previous Parish Council discussions about a holistic approach – not just in Hathersage, but across the Hope Valley – to traffic management and parking (and visitor management). Noted the need for all stakeholders (PDNP; local authorities; others) to be involved in this initiative; Cllr W Hanley noted he was pushing PDNP to take

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a lead on this (in his role as a PDNP Parish Member).

Cllr Peter O'Brien noted Oddfellows Road residents had regularly flagged their parking issues with him. He commented that he did not, currently, see a holistic solution to the problem however he suggested there may be scope for a residents parking scheme (RPS). Highlighted that at least 90% of the residents in any proposed RPS would have to express support before it could be progressed any further. Cllrs noted there may be other Hathersage roads/streets where 90% of residents would support an RPS.

Next steps - to be discussed further at the next meeting of the Parish Council Transport Committee including consideration of conducting a Hathersage RPS survey; and liaison with DDDC about provision of dedicated parking spaces for Oddfellows Road residents.

The Oddfellows Road residents left the meeting.

- b) If the Police Liaison Officer, a County Council or District Council Member is in attendance they will have an opportunity to raise any relevant matter.

DDDC: Cllr O'Brien noted thanks for HPC support (in principle) for provision of a bench on Station Road.

Reinstatement of the Baulk Lane [dog] bin: the Chair and Cllr Rodgers reported on a meeting with DDDC Officers on 3 June noting it had been frustrating. Officers had noted all dedicated dog bins are being removed in the longer-term. Officers had reiterated that Baulk Lane was an unadopted road on private land therefore no bins should be sited there. Both Cllrs had challenged this and had made some alternative suggestions/solutions e.g. HPC provision of a wheeled bin on the Lane. Officers had rejected all suggestions but had suggested DDDC would consider provision of another Big Belly bin in the village if the Parish Council could identify a suitable site. Noted there is an issue where the mouth of the Big Belly bin gets jammed with material but the bin itself is nowhere full; queried how this could be monitored/addressed.

Cllr O'Brien expressed disappointment with the DDDC Officers position on provision of a bin on Baulk Lane and noted he intended to flag the matter with the relevant DDDC Director. Cllr Shuttleworth flagged that there had been an increase – in relation to the withdrawal of the dog bin on Baulk Lane - in the volume of dog poo [bags] deposited in the adjacent fields. DDDC Officers had noted they had not received related complaints from residents; Cllr O'Brien suggested this should not be necessary, where residents flag concerns directly with Cllrs.

Cllrs O'Brien and Ripton left the meeting.

Police: a late report had been shared with details of crimes recorded in the past month – two instances of theft – one from a holiday cottage; one theft of a battery from an electric fence on farmland. Report also referenced issuing of parking tickets to cars parked dangerously on the B6001 near Leadmill Bridge. Flagged that enforcement of the majority of parking offences are the remit of Local Authority Parking Enforcement Officers rather than the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

032/24

Confirmation of Minutes

- .1 Minutes of the HPC meeting of 7 May 2024 were **confirmed** and actions arising from the minutes **noted**.
- .2 Minutes of extraordinary meeting of 28 May 2024 were **confirmed**.

033/24

PDNPA, DCC, DDDC matters; and related reports from community groups

- .1 **PDNPA – oral report/update from Parish Member Cllr W Hanley.** Cllr Hanley referenced the May Board meeting and matters discussed. Cllr Hanley had flagged transport concerns and the need for a holistic approach across the Hope Valley. He noted some PDNP reluctance to take a lead on this, further noting he would keep pressing the matter. Cllr James Marsden suggested there should be more PDNP funding for national and regional lobbying on these sorts of major issues impacting communities. Cllr Hanley noted he also intends to press PDNP on its approach to supporting provision of local affordable housing.
- .2 **DCC** – suggested convening a meeting with Cllr Alasdair Sutton in due course.

034/24

Parish Council General Power of Competence (GPC): a query had arisen from a request for information by External Auditor PKF who had noted that, this year, they were asking for specific documentation applicable to Councils who hold GPC. The Clerk had found no evidence that the Parish

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Council had previously formally applied for/adopted GPC. Noted advice was awaited from DALC on the implications of a parish council having/not having GPC e.g. whether GPC is necessary before a parish council could purchase a speed camera.

DALC subsequently advised 'if the council has not voted to take on GPC at the annual meeting of the council in May 2023 or at a meeting later than that then it does not have GPC. To take it on, the Clerk needs to hold CILCA (or equivalent) and there needs to be a two thirds electoral mandate i.e. two thirds of Councillors were elected to the position (even if that is elected unopposed). Then the Council simply needs to resolve to take on GPC'.

035/24 **Village improvements, and potential future funding opportunities:** notes of a meeting between Cllrs, a DDDC Officer and a representative of the Ashbourne Town Team had been circulated. The Chair reiterated the point she had made while members of the public were in attendance about the Parish Council looking for volunteers with relevant skills/background/experience to support this initiative. Suggested HPC needs to agree some clear, high-level proposals before seeking/inviting volunteers. Confirmed the core working group taking this initiative forward was Cllrs Jane Marsden, W Hanley, Tim Hill, Rosie Olle, Heather Rodgers and Nick Williams.

036/24 **Parish Rooms rent review: to consider.** At the May HPC meeting it had been noted a Parish Rooms rent review had been due in March. Rent review terms were noted i.e. that the review was not linked to consumer price index (CPI) or retail price index (RPI). Agreed that the RFO produce a baseline figure linked to CPI from which a new rent rate can be negotiated. RFO had noted (in the Treasurer's Report) that the CPI for March 2019 was 107.0% and for March 2024 133.0%; noted current rent was £7,750pa and that a CPI-linked increase would be an annual rent of £9,633. In further discussion Cllrs suggested this increase did not in any way reflect current market rates. **Agreed** an appropriate rate would be £13Kpa **ACTION - Clerk to liaise with the RFO on correspondence to the owners of the veterinary practice proposing an increase to £13K.** Cllrs suggested rent reviews needed to be more frequent.

037/24 **Financial Matters:**

- .1 **Received** the RFO's Report.
- .2 Accounts for payment totalling £80,538.59 including £6,170.55 VAT were **approved** for payment. RFO flagged an apparent increase in charges for bus shelter cleaning (not flagged in advance with HPC).
- .3 **Noted** account scrutiny arrangements and approved signatories (Cllrs Alex Campbell from the agreed schedule; and either Cllr Jane Marsden and/or Heather Rodgers to substitute for Cllr Bloor), to approve and pay wages and any urgent items between this meeting and the July 2024 meeting.
- .4 **Cash balances:** RFO noted more than half of HPC monies in Unity Trust – not earning as much interest/return as other accounts. Cllrs endorsed moving some monies; **unanimously agreed** to move £300K from Unity Trust to NatWest liquidity managers' account.
- .5 **Pool gas contract:** to **consider** options. The RFO had circulated details of contract options provided by the Parish Council energy broker. Reaffirmed that Crown Energy set no minimum or maximum take-up. Cllr W Hanley proposed signing up to the three-year Crown Gas contract; seconded by Cllr Rodgers and **unanimously agreed** (Cllr Hill and Cllr Rodgers to sign the contract on behalf of HPC). RFO noted the Heart of Hathersage (HoH) electricity contract would be up for renewal at the end of September **ACTION - quotes to be considered at July HPC.**
- .6 **Parish Council Insurance:** Gallagher's had advised the RFO that in respect of property insurance it was not important under which heading items were included and suggested a schedule of all items to be insured be deposited with them. **ACTION - RFO to share a draft list with Cllrs for comment/input.** Cllr W Hanley noted this would be particularly helpful in relation to calculating pool assets and depreciations. RFO noted details of the Shuttleworth Lamp electricity supply/costs were awaited.
- .7 **Cllr expenses: consider** and **agree** how Cllr expenses can be claimed / paid. Cllrs referenced regular costs e.g. in printing meeting papers. Noted options – an annual allowance/claim or fixed monthly allowance **ACTION - Clerk to research practice at other parish councils.**
- .8 **2023-24 Internal Audit Report:** the RFO had shared the certificate showing that the internal auditor had raised no matters.

- .9 **Opus dispute:** the RFO had shared an **update** on the response from the Ombudsman and further advice sought from DALC. Confirmed there had been no recent follow-up from Opus/Opos. **Agreed** to await advice from DALC and to not pursue further communications with Opus/Opos for the time being.

038/24 **Committees and Working Groups:** to **receive** minutes *where meetings have been held since the previous month's full Council meeting*; **consider** recommendations; **note** actions
Committee meetings schedule

- .1 To **formally endorse** the proposal (from the May HPC meeting) to schedule meetings of the Leisure Amenities and Facilities Committee and the Transport Committee on the same evening – meeting priority to alternate monthly – **unanimously agreed** [agreed to trial this approach for six months, to the end of 2024].
- .2 To **consider** not holding committee meetings in August, and December – **unanimously agreed to trial this**.

039/24 **Leisure, Amenities and Facilities Committee:** **received** minutes of the meeting of 14 May 2024.

- .1 **Brook House and Right of Access arrangements:** Cllrs **noted** LFAC recommendation and **considered** a formal request from the property owner including a request for an additional £1K towards his legal fees, and time taken.

Agreed the LFAC recommendation to pay an amount of £2.5K to cover some of the costs of lease payments made by Mr Mee since 2007. It was **not agreed** to pay £1K towards Mr Mee's legal costs/time **ACTION – Clerk and RFO to liaise on correspondence to Mr Mee.**

040/24 **Swimming Pool Committee:** **received** minutes of the meeting of 21 May 2024.

041/24 **HR Matters**

- .1 **Pool staff concerns** – to **consider** the outcomes of an investigation by Cllrs Martin Bloor and Nick Williams; and to **consider report recommendations**. Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of 28 May had been shared and agreed.

Cllrs considered four report recommendations:

Duty Supervisor pay - recommendation 'as a gesture of good faith, and without prejudice, a backdated payment of £13.50 per hour be paid to Duty Supervisors for the hours they worked (as Supervisors) from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024'. Cllrs noted this should be considered a one-off discretionary payment and an indication of the Parish Council's appreciation of Duty Supervisors' patience, and support, while the new role was being considered and agreed.

Unanimously agreed a one-off discretionary payment based on supervisor hours worked over a six-month period ACTION – RFO to calculate hours (and related discretionary payment); Clerk to draft correspondence to Duty Supervisors. The support of the absent Cllr Martin Bloor, for this recommendation, was noted.

Communications – recommendation - that hard copies of HPC and SPC minutes be filed in a folder in the pool office. The Clerk noted copies of minutes can be printed on the printer in the pool office; all staff can access download committee minutes from the website; and the Clerk routinely emails SPC minutes to all pool staff and can do likewise with HPC minutes.

Governance (SPC) – recommendation - that SPC Cllr membership be reduced in size and that a pool staff representative (*suggested this should be a Duty Supervisor*) and a pool user group representative be included in the membership with standing agenda items for reports, from both. Pool staff representative to be paid for their time attending the meetings. Cllrs had previously noted options for regular pool staff SPC input including inviting Duty Supervisors occasional attendance to update on progress in areas of special interest. Current pool staff engagement with initiatives e.g. the Pool Improvements Working Group had been flagged. Some practical and pragmatic issues with pool user representation had also been flagged. Further highlighted that governance and management of the pool is a significant responsibility for a relatively small Parish Council and Cllr membership of SPC needs to reflect that.

Cllrs noted advantages in pool staff SPC membership and **agreed** representation be shared between two of the Duty Supervisors.

Governance (HRC) – recommendation - that HRC be disbanded and replaced by a remuneration committee comprising the HPC Chair, SPC Chair, LFAC Chair, two Cllrs and the RFO (in an advisory capacity). Cllrs had already flagged that HRC covers a much broader remit than pay – and that an alternative mechanism to consider these matters would have to be identified if HRC were to be disbanded. RFO noted previous advice that parish councils *should* have a Human Resources Committee, to ensure compliance with all employment legislation. **Unanimously agreed to retain HRC in its current format; flagged that all HRC recommendations are presented to full HPC.** Noted SPC and LFAC Chairs sit on HRC.

- .2 **Confidential staffing matters for Parish Council consideration** *as these minutes concern named individuals the related minutes are confidential.*

042/24

Footpaths Report – received.

043/24

IT - including the HPC website; social media

- .1 **Cllr IT devices** – provision of electronic notebooks/other device to Cllrs for use exclusively for Parish Council business. Cllr W Hanley noted he would enquire with PDNP about the costs of their provision [of devices]; Clerk will query the matter with DALC **ACTIONS for Cllr W Hanley and the Clerk.**
- .2 **Clerk phone** – provision of a mobile phone (and new phone number) – **agreed** the Clerk should have a dedicated phone. The Clerk referenced contract or SIM-only options **ACTION – Clerk to liaise with RFO on setting up a contract.**

044/24

Clerk's Report/Correspondence: noted updates/items shared since the May 2024 meeting including:

- DDDC Local Plan
- Flood Workshop (13 June)
- PDNP Parishes Day (12 October) – Cllrs Jane Marsden and Heather Rodgers to attend **ACTION – Clerk to book places.**
- Road Closure

045/24

Village Matters

- .1 **Hathersage News:** news/items for inclusion in the next issue - road closures; an article on guided walks.

046/24

Memorial Hall: there had been no meeting of the Memorial Hall Management Committee since HPC last met.

047/24

Noted DALC circulars and other items circulated since the May 2024 meeting.

048/24

Date and time of next meeting – 2 July 2024; apologies from Cllrs B Hanley and W Hanley **noted.**

Meeting closed at 22.07 a meeting of the King George's Field Charity was held directly after the closure of the Parish Council meeting.