

WEST HATCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of the West Hatch Parish Council held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 29th September 2020

20/15 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Councillors: Read (Chairman), Harrison-Sleap, Kerr, Lodge, and Middleton

Apologies: Cllrs Bray and Knight,

Public: Cllr J Thorne (SCC), 4 parishioners

20/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

20/17 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held remotely on 23rd July 2020, were approved as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

20/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- **Memorial to Dougal Clark (19/58)**

The commemoration plaque is in the process of being arranged.

20/19 PARISHIONERS' FORUM

Mr Wheatley raised an issue with regard to the management of the Parish Website. Previously the Clerk had used the LiveWriter programme to post directly to the website but this programme is no longer available. To date, Mr Wheatley has posted information onto the website on behalf of the Clerk but this is not a sustainable solution.

After discussing possible options, it was agreed that the Clerk would acquire sufficient technical knowledge, assisted by Mr Wheatley, to use WordPress directly to make the posts.

A parishioner voiced concerns that as most of the information coming from the Parish Council was online and via email, those parishioners without computer access were at a disadvantage. It was agreed that the Clerk would resume posting the agendas and minutes on the Noticeboards in addition to the website and should any parishioner require a paper copy of information posted on line, this would be available. Anyone wishing to receive information in this way should contact the Clerk.

20/20 REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

The report from John Thorne, SCC Councillor had been circulated previously to the members.

Points of interest included the Somerset Climate Emergency Relief Fund, where £1m has been earmarked for projects that can improve or delay the effects of climate change. Grants are available to Parish and Town Councils for projects in the range of £5000-£75000.

20/21 TO CONSIDER WHAT ACTION THE PARISH COUNCIL SHOULD TAKE TO RESTORE THE PARISH FINGERPOSTS.

Following a question raised by a parishioner, the Council agreed that in principle it was committed to restoring the Parish Fingerposts. Two parishioners had previously attended a restoration course run by SCC but no further progress has been made.

It was agreed that a working party would be established comprising Carrie Fletcher (parishioner), David Lodge and Martin Middleton. Mike Biccard would also be invited to join.

The condition of the fingerposts in the Parish will be assessed with a view to drawing up programme of works to be carried out over several years as finances allow.

20/22 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – UPDATE

Two proposals have been submitted to the Secretary of State who will make the final decision.

One Somerset- a proposal from SCC for a unitary authority. Details can be found at:

www.onesomerset.gov.uk.

Stronger Somerset – a proposal submitted by the four District Councils recommending two smaller unitary authorities, a separate trust to administer children’s services and a combined authority overseen by a Mayor of Somerset.

Details can be found at:www.strongersomerset.co.uk.

The Council understands that SALC (The Somerset Association of Local Councils) will be drawing up a comparison of both proposals and the Clerk will monitor that this is received.

20/23 TO CONSIDER WHAT ACTION THE PARISH COUNCIL CAN TAKE WITH REGARDS TO VEHICLES DRIVING AT INAPPROPRIATE SPEEDS.

The Council considers that in recent months the number of vehicles travelling at inappropriate speeds through the Parish has increased, due in part to the increased number of delivery vans in the Parish, whose drivers are unfamiliar with the local roads. In addition there are more cyclists and walkers using the lanes, increasing the need for good hazard awareness from drivers.

A Parish wide reduced speed limit would be welcomed and it was agreed that a formal request for a reduced limit would be submitted to SCC.

20/24 TO CONFIRM RECEIPT OF THE BURIAL GROUND GRANT.

The Clerk confirmed that £210 has been received from SWT as a burial ground grant and will be passed onto to West Hatch PCC.

20/25 FORMAL EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

It was **resolved** to make the following payments:

a) Clerk's Salary (Jan-June)	£286.00
b) West Hatch PCC	£ 210.00
c) J Eyers – Memorial Tree (min 20/04)	£ 66.49

20/26 PLANNING MATTERS

One planning application has been received since the previous meeting
Ref 47/20/0009 – Application for the existing change of use to domestic curtilage at Hillcrest, West Hatch

The Council agreed to support this application with the condition that no development should be permitted on the newly designated domestic land for a period of time.

20/27 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS OR REPORT FOR INFORMATION

- **Climate Emergency Relief Fund**

As mentioned by the County Councillor, funds are available for Parishes to fund projects that will improve or delay the effects of climate change. Parishes may join together and submit a joint application if required.

- **Somerset West and Taunton Newsletters**

The District Council have been producing weekly newsletters which the Clerk has circulated via the Village Network email system. It was agreed that the newsletters were a useful source of information and should continue to be circulated. A copy is also published on the West Hatch Parish website.

- **Release of animals into the wild by the RSPCA**

Bel Deering, the Manager of the West Hatch Wildlife centre gave the Council some information regarding the release of wild animals into the vicinity.

Of the animals that attend the Rescue Centre, only 45% are released into the wild and often not in the local area. Only certain species are released and in the past five years, the majority of wildlife released have been birds.

Ms Deering confirmed that only 4 foxes have been released in the local area within the last 18 months and no badgers have been released. Badgers will only be released in the Parish if they originate from the area.

A fairly high number of Roe Deer have been released in the area and this is because they can't be easily transported from the site when they are ready for release.

20/28 TO CONSIDER DATE AND FORMAT OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 24th November at 7.30pm via Zoom.

The Finance Working party will meet on 17th November to discuss the budget for 2021/22

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm