

HATHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HATHERTON PARISH COUNCIL held at Hatherton Parish Rooms, Four Crosses, Hatherton on Thursday 17TH July, 2025 at 6.00p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr. R. W. Perkins, Cllr. Mrs. S. Tomlinson, Cllr. A. J. McGlue, Cllr. J. Webb and County Councillor C. Large.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

CO-OPTION OF CLLR. JOHN WEBB

Cllr. R. W. Perkins welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting and proceeded to advise all present how pleased he was to be able to announce that the Parish Council now had a full complement of Councillors. The Parish Council's latest recruit had now been co-opted onto the Parish Council, signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct adopted by Hatherton Parish Council.

Cllr. J. Webb was welcomed to the Parish Council and took his place for his first meeting.

WELCOME TO COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRIS LARGE

The Chairman took this opportunity to introduce Councillor Chris Large to the Parish Council following his election as the County Councillor for Brewood Division of South Staffordshire.

Cllr. Large advised the Parish Council that he was very pleased to be in attendance on this occasion and gave members a brief précis of his background which included the history of his background of 30 years in business transformation. This was noted by Members.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present on this occasion.

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Mrs. M. Willetts, Cllr. E. J. Smith, Cllr. P. Hammonds and Cllr. L. J. Ashley.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was proposed by Cllr. A. J. McGlue and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. S. Tomlinson that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May, 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman. It was carried.

3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion. Cllr. A. J. McGlue advised the meeting that he would need to declare an interest in any planning application with which he was professionally associated and located within the Parish of Hatherton. This interest would be declared as a permanent interest and also individually recorded when necessary.

Cllr. R. W. Perkins declared an interest in the item relating to the suggested merger of Saredon and Hatherton Parish Councils in his capacity as a member of Saredon Parish Council. Cllr. Perkins advised the meeting that he would be able to provide background information to this proposal, however, would be unable to take part in any vote thereon. This was noted by Members.

6.0 MATTERS ARISING

6.1 VILLAGE GATEWAY SIGNS

Councillor J. Webb advised the meeting that it was his intention to have gained permission to dig in the highway verge and carry on with this task in the near future. The Clerk advised Cllr. Webb that any additional charge involved in expediting this matter would be covered by the Parish Council. This was noted.

The Clerk was make contact with the Contractor selected to provide the gateway signs and attempt to secure a guarantee that the price would remain the same as the original quotation. This was noted by Members.

6.2 REPLACEMENT FURNITURE

Cllr. Mrs. S. Tomlinson advised the meeting that she had now carried out considerable research on this matter and was still concerned at the costs involved. The Parish Council also considered the solution of having the existing chairs steam cleaned. This was also noted. Cllr. J. Webb also had a number of suggestions in this regard which included re-upholstery of the existing chairs and Cllr. Mrs. S. Tomlinson and Cllr. J. Webb agreed to liaise with each other in pursuit of solution.

The Clerk advised the meeting that during the period between meetings, in consultation with the Chairman, the Parish Council had kindly allowed 30 of its chairs to be loaned to the Chezfest Organisation. The Chairs were required for an event held by the Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley Running Club. The event was held on 5th July 2025 and was a great success.

Cllr. J. Webb had kindly delivered the chairs to the Running Club and these were presently being stored safely in the Great Wyrley Carnival safe compound in Cheslyn Hay. However, as Members will remember the Parish Council had previously discussed discarding quite a percentage of the chairs at The Parish Rooms as their storage took up a great deal of usable space and were not actually being used. This prompted the Chairman to suggest that the chairs could be donated to Chezfest for a small fee.

The Clerk enquired of Members what figure the small fee suggested might amount to. Following discussion Members agreed to small fee of £100. The Clerk was to make this suggestion to Mr. Ashley Perry.

CLERK'S NOTE

The Clerk advised the meeting that the following agenda items were all held in abeyance at the present time awaiting a detailed report from Cllr. J. Webb.

Cllr. R. W. Perkins had now attended a site meeting with Cllr. Webb and a report on the issues was expected in the near future. This was noted by Members.

6.3 REPLACEMENT OF KITCHEN UNITS

Cllr. J. Webb advised the Parish Council that Benchmark would be attending to measure up the kitchen and he expected to be able to present an acceptable quote along with various kitchen model choices to Members by the next meeting of the Parish Council. This was noted.

6.4 PLASTERING – WCs

Cllr. J. Webb gave the Parish Council a complete update on the situation with regard to the refurbishment of the ladies WCs. Currently, the idea being pursued was to use Aquapanelling to treat the walls, instead of re-plastering and Cllr. Webb will also be reporting on this matter at the next meeting of the Parish Council. This was noted by Members.

6.5 UNPLEASANT ODOUR IN PARISH ROOMS

Cllr. J. Webb also advised the meeting that it had been discovered that a drain in the disabled toilet had been covered over without being sealed first. This situation when added to the fact that when the drain left the building itself it fell into a dip; and because of the little use of the building itself this left water standing in the dip which in turn created a very unpleasant odour. This matter was yet to be resolved.

6.6 EDGING OF PARISH ROOMS CAR PARK

The items referred to above are all expected to be resolved within the coming three months. This was noted by Members.

6.7 INSTALLATION OF SPEED INDICATION DEVICE

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Speed Indication Device had now been delivered to the Parish Rooms and was awaiting installation at Straight Mile in the near future. This was noted by Members. Cllr. J. Webb was hoping to have the go ahead to carry out these works in the near future. Cllr. R. W. Perkins felt that should this matter be expedited the installation could take place whilst the Straight Mile was still closed.

Cllr. J. Webb was to provide a quotation for the works as soon as possible as there were a number of factors involved which needed to be resolved. This was noted by Members.

6.8 .GOV.UK EMAIL ADDRESSES

The Clerk advised the Parish Council that this matter was presently in progress by M-Piric. The Clerk was confident that she would be able to report more fully on this issue at the next meeting of the Parish Council. This was noted by Members.

Cllr. R. W. Perkins advised the meeting that he hoped that Hatherton's system would be more user friendly than other systems. This was noted by Members.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL – ROUND-UP

The Clerk advised the meeting that there was no new correspondence to report on this occasion other than the South Staffordshire Council Round-Up which was passed to Cllr. R. W. Perkins.

7.2 APPROACH BY SAREDON PARISH COUNCIL TO AMALGAMATE WITH HATHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Parish Council had received an approach from Saredon Parish Council to amalgamate the two Parish Councils. This suggestion was on the basis that with the proposed re-organisation of Local Government, Saredon Parish Council were requesting that Hatherton Parish Council joined them as both Councils were of similar size and both had casual vacancies that it had been difficult to fill.

Members felt that as Hatherton Parish Council now had a full complement of Councillors this assertion did not reflect the true situation.

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had received proxy votes from two members of the Parish Council to the effect that they did not wish to amalgamate with Saredon Parish Council.

Following full discussion the Clerk was instructed to advise Saredon Parish Council that Hatherton Parish Council had now had an opportunity to both consider and discuss this proposal and as a body of Councillors, did not feel that the residents of Hatherton and Calf Heath would be better served by the proposed amalgamation and accordingly, **resolved** not to enter into any proposal to do so. It was carried.

7.3 MEMBERSHIP OF STAFFORDSHIRE PARISH COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION

The Clerk was advised by all Councillors on Hatherton Parish Council that they had been directly approached by Staffordshire Parish Councils Association to join its Membership.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** unanimously not to join the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association.

8.0 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Councillor Chris Large gave the Parish Council a very interesting and informative insight into his aims as Cabinet Member for Finance and all Members were very impressed with his ethos in terms of sorting out a number of issues in local Government which he felt to be broken.

Cllr. Large gave the Parish Council significant reasons to feel optimistic and his report was exceptionally motivating in terms of a brighter looking future.

Cllr. Large's report is encapsulated below for Members' information.

The Council's top priority was to make sure that the County Council was run as efficiently as possible and that its finances were well managed. By using cash reserves rather than borrowing more, he felt that the County Council would be able to achieve savings on debt charges in what remain challenging financial times. This prudent and low-risk investment approach, which focuses on lending to low-risk institutions, meant the County Council would be well placed to deal with challenges arising from difficulties the current global economy presented. The County Council was to spend and invest carefully, focusing on its priorities and targeting its resources where they were most needed.

9.0 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Unfortunately, Councillor L. J. Ashley was unable to attend on this occasion, however, he had provided a brief report as follows:-

"During the General Election period very, few meetings were held at Codsall Hub. However, meetings had been held about changes to the collection of waste from domestic dwellings in 2025. Cllr. Ashley was to apprise colleagues of proposed alterations when he was in possession of more details." This was noted by Members.

10.0 MAINTENANCE MATTERS

There were no additional maintenance matters to be discussed on this occasion.

11.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no new planning applications to be considered on this occasion.

ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

The Clerk advised the Parish Council of the latest information from the Enforcement Section of South Staffordshire Council. These items were to remain confidential and accordingly, would not to be publicised in Parish Council minutes.

12.00 FINANCE

12.1 BALANCE AT BANK

The Clerk advised Members that the total funds available to the Parish Council at the present time amounted to £48,972. This amount represented a combination of funds in two separate accounts and also included earmarked funding for the Village Gateway signs, the installation of the SID Camera along with various other projects which were presently under way. This was noted.

12.2 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Annual Governance Statement and Accounts had been lodged with Forvis Mazars. The Notice of invitation to electors to Exercise their Rights had been placed on the Parish Council website as had the Annual Governance Statement and Accounts for public scrutiny. This was noted by Members.

The Clerk had circulated a copy of all documents referred to above to each member of the Parish Council for their information.

13.00 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no further items for discussion on this occasion.

14.00 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 18TH September, 2025. The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

SIGNED.....DATE.....

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

18th September, 2025

20th November, 2025

15th January, 2026

19th March, 2026

21st May, 2026 – Annual Parish Assembly and AGM.