

## Hamsey Parish Council

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*Mrs J.Toomey, Clerk to Hamsey Parish Council*  
 Beechwood Hall, Beechwood Lane, Cooksbridge, East Sussex BN7 3QG  
 Tel: 01273 890621 Email: [clerk@hamsey.net](mailto:clerk@hamsey.net)

### DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of HAMSEY PARISH COUNCIL held at BEECHWOOD HALL on Thursday 9th January 2020 - 7.15pm

**Present:** Cllr.D'Arienzo, chair  
 Cllr.Ian Ginn  
 Cllr.J.Harmer  
 Cllr.K.McBrown

**Apologies:** Cllr. M.Dodd  
 Cllr.R.Baughan, vice chair  
 LDC Cllr.Isabelle Linnington

**In attendance:** Mrs J.Toomey - Clerk/RFO to the Council. 1 member of the public

		Action
1.20.1	<b>Apologies for absence</b> – as above	
1.20.2	<b>Questions from the public</b> None	
1.20.3	<b>Declaration of interest by</b> Councillors on any agenda items and update of interests.	
1.20.4	<b>Minutes</b> of the council meeting held 7.11.19 were agreed & signed as a true record	
1.20.5	<b>Update on any matters arising from last meeting</b> (not elsewhere on the agenda) <i>Min.no: 7195.1</i> – Any update on resident parking spaces at Chatfields HPC had circulated a survey to Chatfield residents. 11 replies received to date. All replies expressed concerns about safety both on foot and in vehicles, when exiting the site. There had been several 'near misses'. The chair will collate responses and asked council to agreed £36 for a subscription to survey monkey for one month – agreed by all. Every reply supported the position taken by HPC. The parking presently causes more problems for the school. Chair is in conversation with the school regarding a more permanent solution. <i>Min.no: 111919</i> – Council had borrowed from the Bevern Trust, some matting in order to enable access for all at the Remembrance Service on November 10 <sup>th</sup> . This was offered without charge but chair proposed a donation of £50 to this worthwhile local charity. Seconded Cllr.McBrown, agreed by all.	Chair
1.20.6	<b>Financial matters</b>	
1.20.6.1	<i>Council approved the following payments (including VAT):</i> Cheque No.300384 £43.20 KPS Mowing at Malthouse Park *Cheque No.300385 Clerk. Salary/expenses for November *Cheque No.300386 £263.70 Brunel engraving. Station plaque *Cheque No.300387 £17.00 Offham Church. Poppy wreath (s.137) *Cheque No.300388 Clerk. Salary/expenses for December *Cheque No.300389 £93.60 LDC Dog Bin empty *Cheque No.300390 £70.00 Desk for HPC Office	
1.20.6.2	<b>Council noted the current financial situation</b>	
1.20.6.3	<b>Council considered</b> the precept required for 20/21 and agreed a request for £18506	Clerk
1.20.6.4	The station partnership no longer required a grant	
1.20.6.5	<b>Council considered</b> appointing a payroll service provider and agreed to appoint Simon Goacher, MCIPP , from April 1 <sup>st</sup> .	Clerk
1.20.6.6	<b>Council noted</b> the section 137 limit for 2020/21 is £8.32 per elector	
1.20.6.7	<b>Council agreed</b> the appointment of Steve Brentnall as the Internal Auditor	Clerk
1.20.7	<b>Planning matters - to receive any report from the planning committee</b> <b>LW/19/0874</b> Hewen Street Farm South Road South Common - Conversion of agricultural buildings to 5 smaller dwellings. - <i>HPC have no comment</i>  <b>Planning matters - to note any decisions by LDC or SDNP</b>	

	<b>SDNP/19/04082/LIS17</b> Bank Cottages The Street Offham: Removal of internal kitchen chimney breast, right-handed flue and associated pipework – <i>granted</i> <b>TW/19/0065/TPO</b> Chatfields Yard, Cooksbridge : T1 Hybrid Black poplar, reduce in height by approx. 10m. Reduce back house side of lateral crown by approx 6-8m to lessen weight. Blend in with remainder of crown as the side is unlikely to influence the gardens - <i>refused</i>	
1.20.8	<b>Recreation ground and Beechwood Hall</b> Revised Governing documents are awaiting approval from the Charity commission. The new managing committee will meet on January 23 <sup>rd</sup> at 1pm at Beechwood. New contracts for the service providers have been approved and clerk was asked to send these out. Council noted that there were presently some problems with the windturbine not functioning to full capacity.	Clerk
1.20.9	<b>Council noted all correspondence received since the last meeting</b> 17.12.19 ESCC had sent details of the proposed pavement from Hamsey Brickworks to Chailey but these were not very clear to understand. Clerk was asked to request clarification.	Clerk
1.20.10	<b>To receive any reports from, or meetings attended by Councillors</b> No meetings attended	
1.20.11	<b>Trees/rights of way</b> – Cllr.Harmer Cllr.Harmer will meet with ESCC, Monday Group and landowner re:FP Hamsey 9. He reported that Hamsey 15 was overgrown by 'Kits Hayes' and there was also an overgrowing hedge by Yeomans. There was a tree down on Hamsey 10 that has been dealt with.	Cllr.Harmer
1.20.12	<b>Council considered purchasing office equipment</b> for the new clerk The council had purchased a computer and printer in 2006 but this was is a tower computer and it was felt that time had come for a new laptop. The printer is still working but there may be more economic versions now available. Chair will look into this. A dedicated mobile phone number will be needed as the council number is presently the clerks home number. Cllr.McBrown suggested Furniture Now may have office chairs available – she will investigate this.	Chair Cllr.McBrown
1.20.13	<b>Highway, Parking and Traffic issues (Report attached).</b> Cllr.Harmer reported that there was a blocked or damaged culvert causing flooding near to the junction of B2116 and A275, Offham. Chair is in contact with ESCC regarding a one way system to alleviate traffic problems during the road closure due 18-20 January. Residents had been upset by damage caused to the roundabout in Chandlers Mead and by parking problems making access very difficult. There is no easy solution to this as many houses now owned several cars. Some did not have usable driveways. Cllr.McBrown will try to find out if there is garage space available to rent from LDC.	Chair Cllr.McBrown
1.20.14	<b>Rail and bus issues.</b> A report from Cllr.Baughan had been circulated (attached). Cooksbridge now has an hourly service including Saturdays and a Sunday service from May. Trains will also have 8 coaches, relieving congestion. Cllr.Ginn had made enquiries regarding rumours that charges are to be introduced for parking at the station. He was assured there are no plans for charging.	
1.20.15	<b>Council considered Police/Neighbourhood watch issues</b> None	
1.20.16	<b>To consider any environmental issues.</b> (Report from Cllr.Baughan attached.)	
1.20.17	<b>Council agreed 6.30pm May 14<sup>th</sup></b> as the date for the Annual Parish Meeting. Followed at 7pm by the AGM for the council as sole trustees of the Beechwood Hall and Rural Park charity and followed at 7.30pm by the HPC Annual meeting.	
1.20.18	<b>Council considered GDPR requirements and website accessibility.</b> The clerk is still waiting on the web provider for a quote to bring the website into line with the new accessibility requirements.	

1.20.19	<p><b>Items for noting or inclusion on a future agenda</b></p> <p>Council noted that 3 persons applied for the vacancy of clerk to the council and the new clerk will be appointed from February 1<sup>st</sup> to shadow the outgoing clerk for 2 months.</p> <p>Chair will contact a resident who expressed an interest in editing the quarterly newsletter. If they do not wish to take this on, she will re-advertise.</p> <p>Clerk was asked to advertise the vacancy for a parish councillor following the resignation of Cllr.Kinch in December.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Clerk</p>
1.20.20	<p><b>Meeting dates for 2020 –</b></p> <p>March 12<sup>th</sup>, May 14<sup>th</sup> AGM, APM and sole trustees AGM, July 9<sup>th</sup>, September 10<sup>th</sup>, November 12<sup>th</sup> All at Beechwood Hall 7.15pm</p>	

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.

JT 10/1/20

Signed.....(Chairman ) Dated.....

### 1.20.13 Highways Report January 2020

Cooksbridge Level Crossing upgrade- On Thursday 28th November 2019 Network Rail carried out the final stages of their re - scheduled commissioning works across the Lewes area. As a result Cooksbridge Station and Level Crossing were closed for an unprecedented 24 hour period. Despite repeated requests to Network Rail and East Sussex Highways to avoid a day time closure and seek alternative diversionary routes rather than the narrow back roads of Hamsey Lane, The Drove, Beechwood Lane and Wickham Lane the commissioned works went ahead as planned. This had a significant impact on our community as a whole and Hamsey Parish Council are keen to work along side Network Rail and East Sussex Highways to ensure any future works carried out will avoid the chaos, gridlocked roads and environmental damage we had in the November closure.

Please see Cllr.Baughan's Rail report and Environmental report for more in depth detail. Members from Hamsey Parish Council have requested a Strengthening Local Relations Meeting with East Sussex Highways to have this and other specific issues addressed. This is scheduled for late February.

Case. 00402407 - A275 Cooksbridge Road, Pedestrian Island 'block' needs repairing. This matter has been chased repeatedly and has now been reported again to the Street Lighting Team for urgent repair.

Case. 00351312 -Defect to the Southbound Carriageway of A275 adjacent to Beechwood Lane.

Hamsey Parish council have repeatedly requested a date for when this rapidly deterioration in the road will be fully investigated and permanently repaired.

Unfortunately just after the Christmas period a number of large potholes developed in the surface of the southbound carriageway. Raising major concerns over passing motorists having to take avoiding action and passing close to the traffic island causing potential risk of injury to themselves or pedestrians attempting to cross the road. Large chunks of road debris had also been thrown up with some force by vehicles passing by and could easily cause harm to passersby or damage to cars parked in the layby. The works were carried out promptly to refill the potholes but the road in general is deteriorating at a fast pace. We are awaiting a date to investigate the issue and permanent repairs to be carried out.

Upcoming Cooksbridge Level crossing closure 18th January- 20th January

Hamsey Parish Council have just been notified of this crossing closure and are currently liaising with East Sussex Highways and Network Rail to find out the relevant information regarding this closure and what steps to follow in securing diversionary routes for motorists to avoid any disruption.

Updates will be put on our website and where possible on our community Facebook page as soon as we have the information.

Subsidence to the edge of the left lane of Hamsey Lane, adjacent to the entrance to Hamsey Schools' playing field. This has been reported to East Sussex Highways after a local resident kindly took photos and reported it to myself. A report number has not come through yet but the urgency of this matter has been pressed.

If you see anything that needs reporting please do not hesitate to contact Hamsey Parish Council.

### **1.20.14 Rail Report – January 2020**

**Cooksbridge Train Service Enhancements** – The new winter timetable implemented from 15th December saw the restoration of the long awaited full weekday and Saturday train service from Cooksbridge station after a campaign lasting more than ten years.

The associated celebration event on Saturday 21st December was a great success with a wonderful turnout from GTR, key stakeholders and local residents, despite the inclement weather. Speeches by Phil Hutchinson, Head of Strategy at Govia Thameslink Railway and Robert Baughan, founder of Cooksbridge Station Partnership were followed by the unveiling of a commemorative plaque by Cllr. Tamsyn d'Arienzo, Chair of Hamsey Parish Council just before the 10.51 train to London arrived at the station.

At the event Phil Hutchinson of GTR delighted those present by announcing the addition of Sunday services from May 2020. This will of course complete the restoration of a full seven days per week hourly train service at Cooksbridge station, a key objective of our Neighbourhood Plan, after an interval of over 35 years! We must all now use these new train services whenever possible and promote them to local residents, and visitors to our community, to ensure that they remain for future generations to enjoy.

**Passenger Benefit Fund** – To compensate their customers for the disruption suffered during the introduction of the May 2018 timetable, GTR established a compensation fund of £15 million for enhancements to be used to 'provide tangible improvements for passengers', with £30,000 allocated for Cooksbridge as a Tier 3 station. After careful consideration of all suggestions received, the Station Partnership submitted a proposal based on costed potential options provided by GTR for the provision of enhanced cycle facilities, additional seating and an electric car charging point.

The GTR passenger benefit fund project managers are currently surveying each station to check the proposed schemes for feasibility, safety and whether the schemes are within the station allocated budget. So far they have surveyed all the stations in tranche 1 (60 stations) and will be surveying Cooksbridge amongst others early this year. They plan to have surveyed all GTR managed stations by the end of March 2020 prior to submission to the Department for Transport for final approval prior to implementation.

**Station Accessibility** – The only 'step free' access to platform 1 at Cooksbridge station is via the platform end ramp, which has an inclination that exceeds the current maximum permitted and GTR have now agreed to the installation of a handrail(s) upon completion of the Network Rail landscaping works in this area associated with the now completed level crossing upgrade works. We are currently awaiting the removal by Network Rail of a redundant equipment cabinet and post, after which GTR will be able to proceed with the installation of the handrail.

The campaign for the installation of suitable raised humps on each platform continues and we are seeking the support of Railfuture to assist us in progressing this initiative.

**Cooksbridge Level Crossing Upgrade** – Due to the postponement in March 2019 of the planned commissioning of the main re-signalling works for the Lewes area (of which the Cooksbridge level crossing upgrade is part), Network Rail carried out another final stage of works at Cooksbridge during the re-scheduled commissioning (28th November 2019 to 1st December 2019 inclusive) to transfer control of the level crossing equipment from the signalbox at Lewes to their new Regional Operating Centre at Three Bridges. To facilitate this, the existing relay equipment adjacent to Cooksbridge level crossing was de-

commissioned and the level crossing is now operated from the new electronic system installed within the relocatable equipment building (REB) installed during the autumn of 2018.

The most significant impact of these works on our community was the full 24 hour closure of Cooksbridge level crossing on Thursday 28th November to allow Network Rail's contractor to carry out the heavy changeover required within equipment housings at Cooksbridge station / level crossing area which needed to be progressed at the earliest opportunity. This was to allow the re-controlled level crossing to be set to work in shift 2 of the commissioning and principles testing to start to prove its safe operation. This strategy was based on reducing the risk of any rail closure overrunning by allowing any issues during testing to be rectified at the earliest opportunity, as well as ensuring that safe operation of the level crossing was achieved as part of the testing process.

Due to concerns around traffic again diverting via our local lanes, despite signed diversions via the A26 and A272, Hamsey Parish Council had requested Network Rail to look at alternatives to this full 24 hour closure of Cooksbridge level crossing on 28th November but for the reasons stated above it was not been practicable to determine an alternative methodology to avoid this closure. As a result, and as expected, we again experienced significant issues with vehicles using the local lanes as unofficial diversionary routes with resultant traffic chaos and environmental damage (please see the Environment Report for January 2020 for full details). Hamsey Parish Council will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders to seek a long term solution to this issue for future daytime closures of Cooksbridge level crossing.

**Promotion of Enhanced Train Service** – Cooksbridge Station Partnership is currently developing a number of initiatives to promote the new enhanced train services, for local residents and for those travelling to Cooksbridge as a leisure destination.

We are working with GTR on additional measures we can adopt to publicise the new train service at Cooksbridge station, particularly to those passing by the station frontage on the A275. With the objective of encouraging visitors to use the train service to Cooksbridge to access the South Downs National Park, we are working with the Park Authority to map and document a circular walk starting at Cooksbridge station together with the production and distribution of associated leaflets.

If any of the above requires further clarification please don't hesitate to let us know and we will do all we can to assist.

**Councillors Robert Baughan and Ian Ginn**

## **1.20.16 Environment Report – January 2020**

**Train Service Enhancements** – The restoration of a full weekday and Saturday train service at Cooksbridge station from 15<sup>th</sup> December, with Sunday trains to follow in May 2020, is a great opportunity for all of us to reduce our carbon footprint by leaving our car at home when possible and travelling by train instead.

According to Friends of the Earth, whilst all motorised transport produces Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) one of the so called "greenhouse gases" that contribute to climate change, trains are an energy-efficient carrier of people and goods and hence produce relatively less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per passenger than other modes. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger/Km are, on average, approximately half that of travel by car. Travelling by rail reduces your contribution to climate change.

**Parish Litter Picks** – A big thank you to residents Margot, Wilfred, Jim R, Pete, Jim E, Miki and Terri for turning out on the cold morning of 5<sup>th</sup> January to work off those Christmas 'mince pies' with another clean-up of the parish. Thanks also to Mary and Kevin who kindly tackled the Drove the day before. Between us all we managed to cover Cooksbridge village, the A275 (including the laybys south of Offham and the Cherry Seller layby north of the junction with Wickham Lane), the Drove, Hamsey Lane, North End, Whitfeld Lane, Ivors lane and Deadmantree Hill. There was more litter picked up on this occasion, with the laybys on the A275 south of Offham being in perhaps the worst state we've encountered to date. A big well done to Wilfred who, on his first litter pick, managed to pick up a grand total of 26 empty drink cans along Hamsey lane. Thank you Wilfred!!

Based on the success so far, we will be continuing with the Sunday dates going forward and the dates for litter picks throughout 2020 are now planned as follows: 5<sup>th</sup> April, 12<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> October. As usual, we will continue to do all we can to publicise all litter picks in the Hamsey News, on the community website (with alerts for registered users) and by posters displayed on the parish noticeboards.

Accordingly, our next litter pick is now scheduled for Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020 when we hope very much to see as many of you as possible taking part in this regular opportunity to keep our parish clean!

**Anti-Pollution Signs** – Working with Hamsey Community Primary School, we have now finalised the designs for bespoke anti-pollution signs at Cooksbridge level crossing and met with Network Rail on site to progress the installation as part of the final phase of the upgrade works. A further meeting with the Network Rail project manager is being arranged to finalise the implementation arrangements for these signs.

**Litter Heroes** – We continue to be grateful that more and more local residents are joining this scheme and adopting their local areas to complement the quarterly parish litter picks. Many areas of the parish have already been adopted by ‘Litter Heroes’ and if you, or any one you know, wish to join them and take part in this initiative to ‘adopt’ your own part of our parish please do let us know.

**Cooksbridge Level Crossing Upgrade** – Network Rail carried out the final stage of these works at Cooksbridge during the re-scheduled commissioning (28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 inclusive), transferring control of the level crossing equipment from the existing signalbox at Lewes to their new Regional Operating Centre at Three Bridges.

The most significant impact of these works on our community was the full 24 hour closure of Cooksbridge level crossing on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November which went ahead despite repeated requests from Hamsey parish Council to seek an alternative working methodology to avoid the day-time closure of the level crossing. Although the signed diversion routes were via the A26 and A272, large volumes of traffic were again diverting via the local lanes (Hamsey Lane, The Drove, Beechwood Lane and Wickham Lane), with vehicles unable to easily pass each other and again causing significant environmental damage, particularly to verges. The almost 30 hours period that the level crossing was closed was a very challenging time for many members of our community.

Accordingly, a representative of Hamsey Parish Council met on site at Cooksbridge on 30<sup>th</sup> November with the Network Rail Programme Director where we reviewed the events on, and leading up to, the closure of Cooksbridge level crossing on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Hamsey Parish Council confirmed that they will be willing to contribute to any lessons learned exercise with Network Rail to help to ensure that the issues encountered on this occasion can be avoided in future.

It is the view of Hamsey Parish Council that a solution to the issue of road traffic diverting via the local lanes during any future daytime closure of Cooksbridge level crossing will require a coordinated approach involving multiple agencies (East Sussex Highways, Network Rail and potentially Sussex Police) as a repetition of the events of 28<sup>th</sup> November must be avoided at all costs. It is our hope that any lessons learned exercise organised through Network Rail can be the catalyst for such a change in approach, thereby appropriately safeguarding our environment.

Network Rail are still to complete repairs of any damage caused to pathways, verges, fencing, etc in the vicinity of the level crossing upgrade works which will be repaired and restored to at least as good a condition as that existing before the works were undertaken.

**Vision** - Tamsyn and Robert have many really exciting initiatives now in progress and more ideas in the pipeline and we would always welcome contributions and suggestions for consideration.

We continue to share a vision of Hamsey parish as a community working together to ensure a clean and sustainable environment for present and future generations.

**Councillors Robert Baughan and Tamsyn d’Arienzo**