



Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Helsby Parish Council held in the Upper Hall at Helsby Methodist Church at 7.00pm on Monday 11th December 2023

Present:

Cllr. Mike Branigan – Chair
Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Cllr. Sarah Temple
Cllr. Rob Foreman

Cllr. Terry O'Neill

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Neil Flanagan, Police Community Support Officer (Item 4 only)

Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

CW&C Borough Councillor representing Helsby Ward, Chris Copeman

David Walker (Progressive Energy) and Cerys Percival (ENI UK Ltd) – Item 1 only

Prior to the meeting, a minute's silence was held in memory of parish councillor, Peter Duffy, who had recently passed away.

1. Public Participation - Members received a presentation from representatives of ENI UK Ltd and Progressive Energy about proposals to build a new carbon dioxide pipeline and above ground installation at Protos Energy Park. It was noted that further consultation with the parish council would take place once the proposals had progressed further.
2. Apologies were noted from Cllrs. Stothard, Marsh, Ellams and Atkinson.
3. Cllr. O'Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 13). It was **RESOLVED to grant a dispensation for precept setting to Cllr. Foreman to 1st May 2027 – HPC199/23.**
4. Policing Update. Members noted the contents of PCSO Flanagan's latest report.
5. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 13th November 2023 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – HPC200/23.**
6. Clerks' report – The following was noted:
 - CW&C had failed to produce a 'Licence to Alter' document in time for the Sherwood Court project to start on 8th January;
 - In relation to the move to Microsoft 365 Business, the data architecture and scoping work had commenced with Cloudy IT and the migration would take place on 24th January. The Owl virtual meeting system had also been received;
 - CW&C had been informed about the latest vacancy in South Ward. The vacancy notice would be issued in early January.

7. Chair's Announcements – Details of Cllr. Duffy's funeral were noted. Members agreed in principle to donate £200 to the chosen charity in memory of Peter and to waive any relevant burial fees in due course.
8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Copeman outlined that he had met with CW&C's Head of Planning in relation to a request from the applicant to remove a condition to install a rail link at the Protos site. It was noted that a new Local Plan for the borough was due in 2024 and the public consultation on the Local Transport Plan was open until 28th January. Cllr. Copeman outlined that he would be proposing a motion at CW&C's next Full Council meeting to ban all single use plastics at events on council land and property.
9. Members noted the draft minutes of the Policy and Procedures Committee meeting held on 4th December 2023. It was outlined that the wording in relation to sending letters regarding Land at Mountain View had been amended slightly and the date of the next meeting would be corrected. The following was also noted/agreed:
 - 9.1 It was **RESOLVED to adopt the revised PCA Committee section of the Standing Orders – HPC201/23;**
 - 9.2 It was **RESOLVED to adopt an amended version of the council's Publication Scheme as follows: to remove any references to the council's defunct committees, remove the signature section, amend the header section to include relevant dates and change the dates of the Business Plan – HPC202/23.** It was noted that this document would need to be amended further by the Policy and Procedures Committee once a number of other policies had been amended or created;
 - 9.3 It was **RESOLVED to adopt a new Press and Media Policy – HPC203/23;**
 - 9.4 It was **RESOLVED to amend the existing Code of Conduct as follows: to update the date on page 1 and to delete several references to the Monitoring Officer in Sections 9 and 10 in relation to the disclosure of interests – HPC204/23;**
 - 9.5 It was **RESOLVED to adopt a revised version of the council's Complaints Procedure, and to adopt a new Vexatious Complaints Policy, with an additional amendment to the review date to December 2025 – HPC205/23;**
 - 9.6 It was **RESOLVED to adopt a revised Disciplinary Procedure – HPC206/23;**
 - 9.7 It was **RESOLVED to adopt a revised Equality and Diversity Policy – HPC207/23.** The clerk outlined that she had contacted SLCC for further guidance on gender identity;
 - 9.8 It was **RESOLVED to retain the existing Health and Safety Policy with only a change to the dates on the document – HPC208/23;** and
 - 9.9 It was **RESOLVED to adopt a new Sickness Absence Policy, with three additional amendments (to allow up to half a day for medical appointments in Section 4.1, to reword references to a manager in Section 6.2 and to remove reference to the Maternity and Parental Leave Policies in Note 4) – HPC209/23.** The clerk agreed to add a Maternity and Parental Leave Policy to the 'New Policies for Consideration' section in the Table of Parish Council Policies.

10. Miscellaneous Matters

- 10.1 An update was received from the Communications Working Group following their last meeting. It was noted that a terms of reference for the group would be considered at the next meeting in January. It was outlined that displaying information on the council's digital screen had been discussed as well as the use of the noticeboards and

- a review of the council’s website. Members noted that Cllr. O’Neill would carry out a short survey of residents to determine how they would like to receive future editions of the Helsby News. It was **RESOLVED to pay £240 for the design of each edition of Helsby News during 2024 – HPC210/23**. Cllr. Nicklin and the clerk agreed to put together a rota for the councillor surgeries in 2024.
- 10.2 It was **RESOLVED to adopt e-mail addresses in the format of ‘@helsbyparishcouncil.gov.uk’ as part of the transition to a .gov.uk domain – HPC211/23**. It was agreed that the clerk’s e-mail address would be clerk@helsbyparishcouncil.gov.uk and individual councillors would have the following address format – ‘forename.surname@helsbyparishcouncil.gov.uk’.
 - 10.3 It was **RESOLVED to approve to the clerk to attend a three-part Data Protection for Councils course with Breakthrough Communications at a cost of £90 – HPC212/23**.
 - 10.4 It was noted that CW&C would charge for the rubbish collection for this year’s Ho Ho Helsby event (note: previously provided as a courtesy service).
 - 10.5 The response from Onward Homes in relation to the allocation of the affordable rented units at the Land at Cable Drive development was duly noted.
 - 10.6 CW&C’s consultation on the future of transport in the borough was noted along with the dates of various drop-in sessions and webinars. Cllr. O’Neill outlined some of the discussions held at the first Climate Change Working Group meeting in relation to cycle parking and the rental of e-bikes.
 - 10.7 It was **RESOLVED to approve a request by RSK to place another container at the rear of their property on Mountain View and to erect racking/shelving along the rear wall of the existing building for barrel storage subject to them seeking any relevant planning permission and meeting the terms of the current lease which prohibits the erection or installation of any structures within 3 metres of the air quality monitoring unit – HPC213/23**.
 - 10.8 It was noted that the new annual subscription fee for Scribe Accounts had been increased from £400.00 to £480.00.
 - 10.9 It was noted that the ‘Licence to Alter’ document from CW&C in relation to the proposed works at Sherwood Court still had not been received. Members expressed their frustration about the time taken in receiving any instructions from the borough council despite many requests. Cllr. Copeman agreed to investigate this further. Given that this project addressed a number of health and safety issues, it was **RESOLVED to continue with the Sherwood Court landscaping project in early January – HPC214/23**.
 - 10.10 Cllr. O’Neill updated members on a meeting he had attended to discuss the installation of a Police and Crime Commissioner average speed camera pilot scheme in Helsby. It was noted that a quote was being put together based on a dual camera system on Chester Road between Crossland Terrace and Helsby Cemetery.
11. Councillor surgery update. Cllr. Nicklin outlined that one resident had attended the surgery held on 9th December and had raised some interesting ideas for a hedge amnesty and a community hedge cutting project. He agreed to circulate a report.
 12. Burial grant approvals - it was **RESOLVED to grant an application for the Exclusive Rights of Burial for a term of 75 years for plot C29 received from Mrs Williams of Helsby — HPC215/23**.

13. Outside Body Reports - Cllr. Temple noted that the next Protos Community Forum would be held on 7th February and the next benefit fund meeting would be held on 12th December. It was noted that she had circulated the latest Protos Community Forum report as well as information on a joint CW&C/ChALC Town and Parish Connections event on planning. Cllr. O'Neill gave updates from recent meetings he had attended with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership. Members also noted the latest minutes from the Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee as circulated by Cllr. Ellams.

14. Planning

14.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve the responses as below in relation to the following planning applications:**

23/03431/FUL The Maples 241 Chester Road Helsby
Single storey side extension
No objections – HPC216/23.

23/03595/FUL Land Adjacent 1 Proffits Lane Helsby
Erection of 3-bedroom park home to include parking and landscaping
Objections based on previous comments to 23/01813/OUT – HPC217/23.

23/03585/FUL 87 Robin Hood Lane Helsby
Erection of two storey side extension with single storey front/side extension, single storey rear extension with rooflights and conversion of loft to include rooflights to existing rear and front roof
No objections – HPC218/23.

14.2 Planning notifications – The latest planning notification report was noted.

14.3 Member reports – no matters were raised.

15. Financial Matters

15.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £304,920.73 held in balances as at 30th November 2023 be accepted as accurate – HPC219/23.**

15.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £16,723.51 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for November be approved and duly noted – HPC220/23.** The following receipts totalling £5,478.69 were also noted:

Payments

Frodsham Tree Solutions	Hedge cutting	£490.80
Roche Audio Visual	Meeting Owl	£1,050.00
Claire Jones	Expenses	£21.00
Blachere Illumination	Festive lights	£413.72

BT	Phone and broadband	£83.06
Claire Jones	Expenses	£136.07
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£2,722.75
HPC staff	Salaries Nov 2023	£2,410.40
HMRC	Tax and NI deductions	£1,294.19
Pro Print Solutions	Photocopier charges	£12.00
Caloo	Body twist footplate	£94.80
Asbestos Roof Renewal	Replacement roof	£2,050.00
Cloudy IT	IT support fees	£2,883.12
F. Morrey and Son	Bedding plants	£249.85
Northwich Town Council	Basket swing	£1,140.00
NEST	Pension contribution	£726.67
NEST	Pension contribution	£611.12
Water Plus	Water - community centre	£35.96
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£298.00

Receipts

Blackwell's Stonecraft	Memorial stone fees	£70.00
Jacqueline Wilson FD	Burial fees	£960.00
Various	Allotment fees	£28.50
RSK Group Ltd	Rent on Eccies	£4,329.72
Natwest	Interest Nov 23	£90.47

- 15.3 It was **RESOLVED to pay an additional £324 to Mega Electrical for erection of the star on the Christmas tree – HPC221/23**. The clerk agreed to inform Ho Ho Helsby about this additional payment. The location of the tree was discussed and it was agreed to investigate an alternative, more permanent arrangement as part of the parks masterplan scoping work.

16. The outstanding actions log was noted.

17. The dates of the next Council meetings were noted as follows:

13 th December	Environment Committee
13 th December	Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee
8 th January	Finance Committee
15 th January	Full Council meeting

The meeting closed at 9.09pm

Chair's signature..... Dated.....