



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 October 2021

Present:

Cllr. Terry O'Neill – Chair

Cllr. Alan Gardner

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Mike Branigan

Cllr. Patricia Holder

Cllr. Chris Ellams

Cllr. Peter Duffy

Cllr. Margaret Marsh

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

In attendance:

Cllr. Paul Bowers, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced the sad death of Stuart Hulse, a long-standing previous councillor of the Parish Council who had been Chairman on at least 3 separate occasions. Cllr. O'Neill paid tribute to Stuart, remembering the many projects he had been involved in including Maltby Triangle, the festive lights and the Queens Diamond Jubilee parade. Councillors also remembered a previous Borough Councillor, Les Ford, who had passed away recently.

1. Public Participation. It was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC207/21**. There being no matters brought to the Council's attention, it was **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC208/21**.
2. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Standing.
3. Cllr. O'Neill declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Helsby Community Sports Club.
4. Policing Update – Apologies were noted from PCSO Lauren Davies and PC Vicky Edwards. A monthly police report from PC Edwards was noted. Councillors were unable to assist with a request in the report for a contact from Arbour Walk in relation to unauthorised pond fishing.
5. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2021 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – HPC209/21**.
6. Matters arising – In relation to Item 9.4, it was **RESOLVED that the Council would contribute £215 towards the table tennis table resurfacing project and the Clerk would submit an application to Cllr. Bowers' Members Budgets Awards Scheme for a £500 contribution – HPC210/21**.

7. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – In relation to the re-opening of the bridge on Old Chester Road, Cllr. Bowers reported that all the vegetation had now been removed and investigative work to the rock bed would be carried out shortly. Providing that no substantial problems were found, he outlined that work would be carried out in Spring 2022 to place netting on the rock face. It was reported that the work should take around one month to complete.

Cllr. Bowers outlined discussions were being held in relation to Helsby becoming the world's first hydrogen-powered village. He suggested that this would involve considerable new infrastructure, including the replacement of every boiler in the village. It was outlined that a number of areas around the country were being considered for the experiment and the final decision was expected to be made by the Secretary of State for Communities, Michael Gove, in December. It was noted that the pipeline company, Cadnet, would be carrying out the work in association with major companies such as Essar and Peel (through the Hynet North West consortium). Cllr. Bowers suggested that a press release was expected shortly.

It was noted that there was a fund under the Climate Emergency via CW&C for environmental energy saving projects. Cllr. Bowers outlined that he would ask the environmental officers at CW&C to look into a potential grant for ground source/air source heat pumps and solar panels for the new sports centre and the community centre.

8. Councillor Surgery report - Cllr. O'Neill outlined that that HPC councillor surgeries had now resumed and the first one had been held at the parish office on 2 October. It was reported that only one member of the public had attended to discuss grant funding for Harmer's Wood. It was noted that the next surgery would be held on 6 November at Helsby Community Sports Club between 10am and 11am.
9. Cllr. Duffy presented the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 27th September 2021. The following was agreed:
 - 9.1 It was **RESOLVED to vire an additional £2,000 from Code 241 (salaries) to Code 213 (parks maintenance) – HPC211/21**; and
 - 9.2 It was **RESOLVED to write to the Head of Finance at CW&C to ask for a clearer picture on S106 funding and to request why applications for payments were taking so long – HPC212/21**.
10. Cllr. Temple presented the draft minutes of the Human Resources meeting held on 28th September 2021. It was outlined that she had been elected as Chairman following the resignation of Cllr. Fincham. It was also outlined that Cllr. Marsh had joined the Committee and had been elected as Vice Chairman. The following was agreed/reported:
 - 10.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve the Clerk's latest workplan following a review at her mid-year appraisal subject to the revision of the estimated number of days for CiLCA training from 66 to 33 – HPC213/21**. Cllr. Temple requested members to note the councillor-led initiatives as set out in the workplan. It was noted that Cllr. O'Neill had agreed to act as the Clerk's day-to-day contact and that Cllr. Temple would assist Cllr O'Neill with any appraisals;
 - 10.2 Cllr. Temple outlined that a temporary change to the Clerk's current working hours would be considered under Part B;

- 10.3 On the subject of general training, Cllr. Temple outlined that she had requested a list of training courses from Breakthrough Connections, a company working on councillor training via ChALC. It was requested that any training requirements with the company should be processed through the Clerk. It was also outlined that HR Committee members had felt it would be useful to develop a new councillor induction framework and Cllr. Temple had started to draft a document. It was **RESOLVED that the HR Committee would work to develop a new councillor induction framework – HPC214/21**. It was agreed that Cllr. Temple would circulate some further information in due course.
- 10.4 It was outlined that a contractor for the cemetery and general maintenance contract would be considered under Part B.

11. Financial Matters

- 11.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £266,813.98 held in balances as at 30 September be accepted as accurate – HPC215/21**.
- 11.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £8,584.41 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for September be approved and duly noted – HPC216/21**. The following receipts totalling £1,414.21 were also noted:

Payments

Planning Portal	CCTV planning application fee	£145.00
C Jones	Expenses (mourning rosettes)	£20.50
Northwich TC	Picnic table installation	£352.80
Helsby Garden Serv	General Maintenance	£1,250.00
Winsford TC	Play area inspections	£168.00
BT	Line rental	£68.83
Water Plus	Water - community centre	£29.46
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£66.00
Ascent Arboriculture	Tree and hedge work	£1,152.00
Helsby Garden Serv	General Maintenance	£1,279.00
Chris Knott Insurance	Allotment insurance	£132.98
C Jones	Expenses (paper, book, board)	£93.17
Northwich TC	Grass cutting	£588.00
Expression Blinds	Blinds (second payment)	£258.00
PKF Littlejohn	External audit fee	£480.00
Dave Weaver	Bedding plants 2020	£210.00
Staff Salaries	September 21	£1,544.79
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions Sep 21	£495.59
NEST	Pension contribution Sep 21	£246.14
BT	Line rental	£4.15

Receipts

Blackwell's Stonecraft	Memorial Stone fees	£75.00
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Various	Allotment rents	£1264.00
Natwest	Interest Sept 2021	£0.21

- 11.3 It was **RESOLVED to approve Cllr. Temple's attendance at the following ChALC training courses: Introduction to VAT and Budgeting for Councillors at a cost of £30 per session – HPC217/21.**

12. Miscellaneous Matters

- 12.1 It was **RESOLVED give retrospective approval for the purchase of a replacement battery for the Council's defibrillator at Loxley Hall nursing home at a cost of £237 exc. VAT - HPC218/21.** The Clerk confirmed that this had now been installed in the unit.
- 12.2 It was **RESOLVED to give retrospective approval for the payment of £59.99 to the Council's webhosting service (via Cllr. Ellams) for another 12 months - HPC219/21.**
- 12.3 It was outlined that a new wire mesh fence had been erected by a local resident outside his property at the lower end of the parish field. It was noted that some initial discussions had been held with the resident who had also written to the Council setting out the rationale for the location of the fence. After a thorough investigation, it was noted that the fence was encroaching onto the Council's land. It was therefore **RESOLVED to reply to the resident to request that he removed the fence and re-located it onto his own land - HPC220/21.** As a long-term solution for this boundary line, it was also **RESOLVED that the Parish Council would arrange to fell the large conifers behind the Guide Hut and dispose of the arisings - PC221/21.** The Clerk agreed to obtain a quote for the proposed tree work.
- 12.4 Cllr. O'Neill reported that there had been a very disappointing response to the advert in Helsby News asking groups to contact the Council if they were interested in assisting with an event for the Queens Jubilee in June 2022. It was **RESOLVED for the Clerk and the Chairman to put together a list of potential groups and to write to them individually to attempt to raise any interest – HPC222/21.**
- 12.5 The Clerk outlined that Ho Ho Helsby were seeking volunteers from the Council to assist with the Christmas parade/event on 4 December. It was suggested that the Council could purchase their own high visibility vests for such occasions in order to raise the profile of the Council within the community. It was therefore **RESOLVED to purchase 20 HPC high visibility vests for Council staff and members with 'Helsby Parish Council' printed on the back - HPC223/21.**
- 12.6 It was **RESOLVED to approve the re-appointment of Blue Arrow for the Ho Ho Helsby traffic management service at a cost of £850 plus VAT – HPC224/21.** The Clerk outlined that a competitive tendering process should be carried out in 2022 for this service to ensure that the Council continued to receive good value for money.
- 12.7 Cllr. Temple outlined that CW&C had suggested repairing the damaged handrail on Rake Lane with a new galvanised iron rail. Whilst they had agreed to cover the full costs of the repair, it was outlined that CW&C were seeking permission from the Parish Council to proceed with the work. It was **RESOLVED to approve the request by CW&C to carry out the repair to the damaged handrail on Rake Lane - HPC225/21.** It was noted that the general maintenance contractor had been asked to quote for clearing any vegetation in this location prior to the work commencing.
- 12.8 It was **RESOLVED to approve a donation of £250 to the Royal British Legion for their 2021 Poppy Appeal - HPC226/21.** It was noted that a Remembrance Day service would be held at St. Paul's Church on Sunday 14th November at 11am. Any councillors

wishing to attend were requested to congregate at the top of the cenotaph from 10.45am. It was noted that Cllr. O'Neill had contacted PCSO Davies in relation to a short road closure on Chester Road during the service.

- 12.9 It was **RESOLVED to approve Cllr. Marsh's attendance at ChALC's Councillor Induction training course on 12 October at a cost of £25 – HPC227/21.**
13. The following new allotment tenancy was received – Dutton (Plot 17, Old Chester Road).
14. Protos – Cllr. Temple outlined two recent awards had been made through the Community Benefit Fund – one for the Council's own CCTV project and the other for Elton Primary School. It was outlined that £17,000 remained in the funding pot this year and the next meeting would be held in December. It was noted that the next Community Forum meeting would be held on 13th October. It was also outlined that the Clerk was progressing the lease arrangements for the Air Quality Monitoring Station at the Eccies with Peel and solicitors.
15. Helsby The Art of Here – Cllr. Ellams reported that a number of councillors had participated in a recent workshop. It was noted that a similar workshop had been completed at Horn's Mill Primary School and the same exercise would also be carried out at the Heathercliffe Residential Care Home. Some concern was expressed about the direction of the project and the value for money it offered to the community. Various ideas were suggested such as a tree carving, a 3-D pedestrian crossing and an art installation based on Helsby's history (e.g. a sandstone cable drum). It was agreed that Cllrs. Ellams and O'Neill would continue to attend steering group meetings. It was **RESOLVED to approve the contract with the artist, Mark Storer, for his role in the project (contract value £4,500) - HPC228/21.** It was noted that a formal tender process hadn't been undertaken for Mark's role as the steering group felt his specialist skills as one of the 'leading socially engaged artists in the UK (and the world)' would deliver the best results for the project within the budget available.
16. Helsby Community Association – it was noted that Cllr. Branigan had been in contact with CW&C's Property Department to see if a resolution could be reached on the billing. It was outlined that CW&C had responded to say that they believed that the costs had remained stable for several years but could not say how the electricity meters had been set up in the building. As CW&C had refused to pay for a specialist to investigate the meters any further, it was **RESOLVED for the Parish Council to appoint an electrician to define which meters read which part of the building - HPC229/21.**
17. Cycle North Cheshire – no report was received.
18. Helsby Community Sports Club – The Clerk reported that the lease agreement for the new office had now been completed.
19. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Cllr. O'Neill reported that the AGM would be held on 20th October. It was outlined that the PCC/ChALC were proposing 4 trial schemes across Cheshire and Warrington to install average speed cameras and it was suggested that Helsby would make an ideal candidate. It was **RESOLVED for the Parish Council to submit an expression of interest for the trial - HPC230/21.**

20. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – it was noted that the last Wind Farm meeting had been cancelled and no updates had been received on the Community Benefit Fund. Cllr. Ellams had previously circulated an update report on Liverpool Airport.

21. Planning

21.1 The Council's responses to the following planning applications were duly noted:

- 21/03664/FUL** Recreation Ground, Chester Road/Lower Robin Hood Lane/Parkfield Drive
Installation of one 6-metre high cabinet based tilt-over camera tower to support two fixed position turret CCTV cameras overlooking Helsby Play Area
For information only – Council's own application
- 21/03640/S73** Land At Helsby Sports and Social Club Chester Road
Erection of 118 dwellings (following Outline Application 14/04044/OUT) - Variation of condition 2 (approved drawings) on planning permission 18/04391/REM
Awaiting comments
- 20/03044/OUT** Land At 18 Crescent Drive
Appeal via Planning Inspectorate (ref: 21/00066/REF)
To submit original objection

21.2 The following planning notifications were noted:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| 21/00127/OUT | Land Adjacent To Elm Cottage Alvanley Road | Approval |
| 21/00793/FUL | 8 Bramley Walk Helsby | Approval |
| 21/01701/FUL | Orchard Croft Hill Road North Helsby | Approval |
| 21/01730/FUL | 290 Chester Road Helsby | Approval |
| 21/01807/FUL | Quarry Cottage Robin Hood Lane | Withdrawn |
| 21/01811/FUL | Saint Paul's Church Chester Road | Approval |
| 21/01990/S73 | Land At Proffits Lane Helsby | Approval |
| 21/02092/TPO | Rake Hall Bridgeside Drive Helsby | Approval |
| 21/02109/FUL | 128 Chester Road Helsby | Approval |
| 21/02554/FUL | Tesco Stores PLC Chester Road | Approval |
| 21/02010/TPO | Adjacent To Path Heatherstone/Brackenhurst
/The Beeches Vicarage Lane | Approval |

21.3 Application 20/00324/FUL Land at Cable Drive, Helsby – It was outlined that Cllrs. Duffy and Branigan had attended a meeting with the Vision group to prepare a written statement for CW&C's Planning Committee. It was noted that the Vision group wished to set out that no real meaningful consultation had taken place between the 2 parish councils, CW&C, the developers and the local community in relation to the development. Cllr. Temple suggested a number of amendments to the statement which she agreed to forward to Cllr. Duffy. She also advised that a request be made at the Planning Committee to ensure that any affordable homes be allocated to people

with a local connection in the first instance. It was agreed that Cllrs. Duffy and Branigan would meet with the Borough Councillors Bowers and Deynam as well as with representatives from Dunham Hill and Hapsford Borough Councils to agree what each would say on the proposals at CW&C's Planning Committee. Cllr. Duffy suggested that he focussed the Council's own statement on educational needs.

21.4 No members reports were received.

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

25 th October	Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee
8 th November	Full Council meeting

23. Part B – Exclusion of the Press and Public. It was **RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paras 7, 8, 9 and 12 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 – HPC231/21.**

PART B – Exclusion of the Press and Public

24. Confidential item – It was resolved not to increase the Clerk's annual working hours but to closely monitor her hours once she had started her CiLCA training

25. Confidential item – Quotes were considered for the Cemetery and General Maintenance Contract to 2024 and a contractor was chosen.

26. Confidential item – Quotes were considered for the supply and installation of a CCTV system in the play area and a parish field lighting project. Two contractors were chosen.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman's signature..... Dated.....