



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 13th March 2023

Present:

Cllr. Mike Branigan – Acting Chair	Cllr. Sarah Temple	Cllr. Terry O’Neill
Cllr. Graham Stothard	Cllr. Chris Ellams	Cllr. Margaret Marsh
Cllr. Patricia Holder	Cllr. Alan Gardner	

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk (via Zoom)
Marj Thoburn – representing Helsby News
PCSO Sean Parry up to and including Item 4 only

Due to the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair Cllr. Branigan chaired the meeting in line with Standing Order 3(c).

1. Public Participation. No matters were brought to the Council’s attention.
2. Apologies were noted from Cllrs. Duffy, Garrity and Nicklin.
3. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Helsby Community Sports Club and Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 12).
4. Policing Update – Members noted the contents of PCSO Parry’s latest report. No specific concerns were raised.
5. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 13th February 2023 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chairman – HPC42/23.**
6. Clerk’s Report – Under Item 1, it was noted that the Clerk had prepared articles on the community questionnaire and the 2023/24 precept for the next edition of Helsby News. It was also noted that Cllr. Ellams had prepared an article on the upcoming elections and the editorial team had completed a report on the recent grant show. The Clerk outlined that a new ‘Elections 2023’ page has been created on the Council’s website. Under Item 4, members noted that the Callender Way lighting belonged to Brookhouse, not CW&C. The Clerk outlined that Brookhouse had agreed to send out an engineer to look at the issue. Under Item 6, it was noted that the draft Air Quality Monitoring Station lease was with the Council’s solicitor for action and should be completed shortly. Finally, it was noted that the new defibrillator would be fitted in the phone kiosk on 15th March.
7. Chair’s Announcements – no matters were brought to the Council’s attention.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Bowers did not attend. Cllr. O’Neill provided an update on the works being carried out on Old Chester Road. It was outlined that the road had now been cleared and the new meshing inspected but it appeared that some height restricted signage was still required before the road could be re-opened. It was noted that Cllr. O’Neill and the Clerk had attended ChALC/CW&C’s Town and Parish Council Conference on 2nd March and the presentations had been circulated to members for information.
9. Cllr. O’Neill presented the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 20th February 2023. The following was noted/agreed:
 - 9.1 A report was noted in relation to removing Christmas lights on various trees around the village. It was **RESOLVED for the Council’s Christmas lighting contractor, AMR Technical, to remove all the Christmas tree lights on six trees where lights were failing or had totally failed at a cost of £1,825 – HPC43/23;**
 - 9.2 It was noted that the Committee had agreed to apply to CW&C’s Neighbourhood Pride scheme following an offer made by CW&C officers. Given time constraints, it was noted that the Committee had used their delegatory powers to apply for this funding. The Clerk confirmed that £3,925 had now been received which would be used to fund 6 new planters and to complete the remedial tree work agreed at the last Full Council meeting;
 - 9.3 It was noted that members had suggested setting up a working group to look at climate change. It was agreed that this would be considered further at the next Environment Committee meeting, looking in detail at what other town and parish councils were doing in this area; and
 - 9.4 It was noted that a village awards scheme would not be held in 2023 due to a lack of volunteer resources.

10. Miscellaneous Matters

- 10.1 It was noted that from the end of March, all printed copies of Helsby News would be delivered to the parish office for distribution. Cllr. Temple outlined that she was still working with the editorial team to finalise these arrangements. Cllrs. Marsh and Stothard volunteered to assist. It was noted that the current editor was seeking to retire from her post at Helsby News in 2024.
- 10.2 It was **RESOLVED to approve the community questionnaire summary for publication on the Council’s website – HPC44/23.** Cllr. O’Neill requested input from various committees in terms of any planned expenditure over the next 5-year period to feed into the 2023-28 Business Plan.
- 10.3 The Clerk outlined that she had attended a briefing session with CW&C regarding the 2023 Town and Parish Council Elections. It was noted that a Notice of Election would be displayed on the Council’s website and noticeboard from 16th March. Members noted that the closing date for applications was 4pm on 4th April. It was agreed that application packs should be returned to the Clerk by 24th March and she would then deliver them to CW&C for verification during the week commencing 27th March.
- 10.4 The Clerk thanked members for their input in relation to the 2023 Helsby Grant Show event which was held at Helsby Community Sports Club on 28th February. It was noted that the event had been very well supported and attended by local groups and the full £9,000 had been distributed to 8 winners. The Clerk was thanked for her work in

- producing all the literature required for the event. Cllr. Temple requested that the considerable resources required to run a similar event in the future should be factored into staff workplans.
- 10.5 It was noted that the stepper unit at the outdoor gym in Sherwood Court had been damaged and the Clerk had asked manufacturer, Caloo, to quote for its repair. It was **RESOLVED to accept Caloo's quote to repair the broken stepper and to service all the gym equipment at a cost of £445 plus VAT – HPC45/23.**
 - 10.6 Cllr. Marsh outlined that she had sought a quote for the purchase of 1500 bookmarks for the King's Coronation in May. A proposed design had been circulated for approval. It was **RESOLVED to purchase 1500 bookmarks from Insignia at a cost of £750 plus VAT – HPC46/23.**
 - 10.7 Members considered a request from Ho Ho Helsby for the Council to erect bunting around parts of the village for the King's Coronation in May. Due to limited resources at present, the Council **RESOLVED to decline the request from Ho Ho Helsby to erect bunting for the King's Coronation but offered to loan the bunting to community groups for the occasion – HPC47/23.**
 - 10.8 It was noted that CW&C Licensing had not raised any concerns about the Council using the parish office to hold future parish council meetings, although it was felt that certain practicalities such as room size may present issues. It was agreed that the matter would be raised again following the May elections.
 - 10.9 Three quotes were considered for the purchase of a lone worker alarm for the Clerk. It was **RESOLVED to take out a subscription for a lone worker alarm with fall detection from Peoplesafe at a fee of £9.87 per month (3-year contract) plus holster at £5 plus VAT– HPC48/23.**
 - 10.10 It was **RESOLVED to give retrospective approval for repairs to the phone kiosk on Chester Road by Plovers Lane at a cost of £84 (Hurst Joinery) and to the phone kiosk by Junoon at a cost of £35.44 (X2 Connect) [payments made under Standing Order 26(a) Delegation to the Clerk] – HPC49/23.**
 - 10.11 It was **RESOLVED to give retrospective approval for the Council's website domain renewal made under Standing Order 26(a) Delegation to the Clerk) at a cost of £8.39– HPC50/23.**
 - 10.12 It was **RESOLVED to approve RoSPA Play Safety's annual inspection of the play area and Sherwood Court at a cost of £75.00 + VAT per play area plus any additional items over five per play area at a cost of £3.50 + VAT per additional item – HPC51/23.**
 - 10.13 It was **RESOLVED to approve the Council's Association Membership for 2023 with Helsby Community Association at a cost of £12.00 – HPC52/23.**
 - 10.14 It was **RESOLVED to extend the Council's grass cutting contract with Countrywide for the 2023/24 season at a rate of £2,939 – HPC53/23.**
 - 10.15 Members considered a request from Frodsham Town Council in respect to exploring a joint Chamber of Commerce initiative. It was felt that the local business sector in Helsby should be asked for their views before responding. It was **RESOLVED for the Clerk to write a letter to local businesses seeking their views on a joint Chamber of Commerce initiative with Frodsham – HPC54/23.** The Clerk agreed to approach both Ho Ho Helsby and Frodsham and Helsby Rotary Club to ask if they would circulate this to any of their business contacts. It was also felt useful for the Clerk to compile a list of local businesses in Helsby in due course.
 - 10.16 Cllr. O'Neill requested the Clerk to contact Cllr. Bowers in relation to various painting jobs he had agreed to assist with in 2022 but which had not yet been completed.

11. Councillor surgery update – it was noted that surgeries had been postponed until after the election period.

12. Outside Body Reports. Cllr. O'Neill summarised the presentations given by other parish council's at ChALC/CW&C's Town and Parish Council Conference. It was also noted that he had attended an Encyclis/Biffa Energy from Waste Community Liaison meeting and had circulated a short summary. Cllr. Temple outlined that a Protos Community Benefit Fund Panel meeting had been held on 8th March and grants had been approved to two groups that had been unsuccessful at the grant show. The next Fund meeting was noted as 7th June. It was noted that Sustrans, facilitated by Cycle North Cheshire, were holding a meeting/workshop on 14th March at Helsby Community Sports Club in relation to the cycle feasibility study and that all councillors were welcome to attend.

13. Planning

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

23/00056/TPO The Old Stables Alvanley Road Helsby
Fell Maple (T1)
No objections – HPC55/23.

23/00422/S73 Land To The Front of 132 Chester Road Chester Road Helsby
Erection of one dwelling and associated garage - variation of
condition 9 (permitted development) of 22/01056/FUL
Objection based on previous comments – HPC56/23.

23/00526/FUL Land At Proffits Lane Helsby
Erection of a single storey dwelling
**Neither objects to or supports but has some comments in
relation to consulting adjacent properties, obligations
relating to road maintenance, restrictions for construction
traffic and restrictions to prevent future business use –
HPC57/23.**

13.2 Planning notifications – none were received.

13.3 Correspondence from CW&C in relation to their Draft Local Validation Checklist was noted. It was outlined that any comments on the list were invited by 22nd March.

13.4 Member reports – none were received.

14. Financial Matters

14.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £249,210.55 held in balances as at 28th February 2023 be accepted as accurate – HPC58/23.**

14.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £4,140.79 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for**

February be approved and duly noted – HPC59/23. The following receipts totalling £736.36 were also noted:

Payments

BT	Phone and broadband	£81.84
Water Plus	Water - community centre	£29.31
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£373.02
Claire Jones	Expenses	£40.93
Helsby Garden Serv.	General maintenance	£799.00
HCA	Membership fees	£12.00
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions Feb 23	£575.57
HPC Staff	Salaries Feb 23	£1,641.92
NEST	Pension contribution Feb 23	£587.20

Receipts

J C Clarke	Burial fees O'HARA	£290.00
HCA	Electricity payment	£315.04
Buckley Memorials	Memorial fees - LITTLER	£100.00
Natwest	Interest Feb 22	£31.32

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

3 rd April	Finance Committee
17 th April	Parish Council meeting

It was noted that the Health and Safety Committee scheduled on 20th February had been cancelled as it was inquorate. It was also noted that the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee scheduled on 6th March had also been cancelled (next PCA meeting to be held on 24th April).

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

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