



HELSEBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Helsby Parish Council held in the parish office at Helsby Community Sports Club at 7.00pm on Monday 11th November 2024

Present:

Cllr. Chris Ellams – Chair

Cllr. Terry O’Neill

Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Graham Stothard

Cllr. Emma Foster

Cllr. Mike Branigan (joined at 7.37pm)

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Cllr. Rob Foreman (virtual attendance, no voting rights)

CW&C Borough Councillor representing Helsby Ward, Chris Copeman

Marj Thoburn and Gary O’Neill representing Helsby News

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

1. Public Participation – members noted a written update from Nicola Brown of Helsby Methodist Church in relation to their Christmas Experience event and the Community Link Club.
2. No apologies were received.
3. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 12), Cllr. Temple declared an interest in Item 10.4 as her partner was Treasurer of the Village Produce Association and Cllr. Foster declared an interest in Item 13.4 as her partner was an employee of a contractor to Cadent.
4. Policing Update - Members noted the contents of PCSO Flanagan’s latest report. It was outlined that he was working closely with the headteacher at Horns Mill Primary School to explore solutions to the parking issues around the school. PCSO Flanagan agreed to submit a request for traffic control on the A56 during next year’s Remembrance Day Service, although it was noted that the police no longer funded road closures for community events.
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 14th October 2024 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – **HPC170/24**.
6. Clerk’s Report – the following was noted:
 - Item 1 – information about the average speed cameras had been added to the council’s website;
 - Item 6 - the new Helsby Parish Council website was due to ‘go live’ this week at www.helsbyparishcouncil.gov.uk;
 - Item 6 - a reminder was given about the Warmer Homes seminar on 19th November;
 - Item 9 – the CCLA savings account application would be sent out shortly and the new multi-pay card had been received;

- Item 11.1 – thanks were given to those that had put up this year’s poppies and soldiers for Remembrance Day;
- Item 11.6 – two banners had been received for councillor surgeries. Cllr. Nicklin agreed to raise the possibility of setting funds aside for a communications officer at the December budget meetings and Cllr. Ellams agreed to set up a council Facebook page template. Members were requested to provide any biographies for the website/noticeboards by the end of November; and
- Other – an application had been submitted to CW&C’s Highways Volunteer scheme (which included a proposal from the Helsby Footpath Society who had expressed an interest) and a reminder was given about the Ho Ho Helsby event on 7th December.

7. Chair’s Announcements – the Chair thanked those that had attended the Remembrance Day service at St. Paul’s Church on 10th November. As many council members as possible were requested to attend next year.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Copeman outlined that the test results for PCB’s around Commonsides had been released and CW&C was working with an expert from the Clean Rivers Trust to look at potential solutions. It was noted that no further progress had been made on Helsby Quarry tunnel or the re-opening of Old Chester Road. It was agreed to write to the body responsible for the Green Flag awards to express concern about the closure of the quarry tunnel. Cllr. O’Neill urged members to complete a ChALC survey about the lack of response from the borough council on local issues. It was noted that Cllr. Copeman had supplied Fearn’s Pharmacy with a recycling box for recycling used medicine packets and blister packs. It was also noted that he was keen to set up a local repair café and was looking for anyone with relevant skills that could support such a project.

9. Members noted the minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held on 21st October 2024.

10. Miscellaneous Matters

10.1 Members noted that the survey results had been received in relation to the condition of the guide hut and a meeting had been arranged with the guides on 27th November to discuss the contents of the survey and any next steps. Cllr. Copeman suggested that refurbishing the building to make it more energy efficient might be eligible for a Community Innovation Fund grant from CW&C.

10.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire’s completed exceptional grant application form for the average speed camera system was noted. It was outlined that the Clerk and Cllr. O’Neill had carried out a check of the system with the installation company and initial calibrations had been undertaken. It was **RESOLVED to approve an exceptional grant payment of £54,676.69 to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire for the average speed camera project subject to confirmation that the system was fully operational – HPC171/24.**

10.3 Members considered a quote of £2,194.67 to install reflective banding on two lighting columns for the average speed camera project. Following a lengthy debate, it was **RESOLVED not to install the banding for the average speed camera project – HPC172/24.**

10.4 It was **RESOLVED to make a payment of £1,332 to DTM Legal LLP for legal work carried out to date on a revised lease with the Helsby Village Produce Association - HPC173/24.**

- 10.5 It was **RESOLVED to approve a quote of £80 from CSS to carry out an annual service of the access control system in the parish office - HPC174/24.**
- 10.6 The Local Government Pay Claim 2024/5 for a flat rate increase of £1,290 for scale points up to SCP 43 with effect from 1 April 2024 was noted.
- 10.7 It was **RESOLVED to move the clerk’s annual appraisals from January to late November/early December in order to plan the budget for salaries and pensions each year and to amend Section 3.1 in the Appraisal Policy for Council Staff in this respect – HPC175/24.**
- 10.8 It was **RESOLVED to purchase two additional meeting chairs for the parish office at a cost of £207 – HPC176/24.**
- 10.9 Members considered taking forward events for the 80th Anniversary of VE Day on Thursday 8th May 2025, including the lighting of the beacon on Helsby Hill. It was agreed to raise any ideas at the next Environment Committee for consideration, including a potential war-time stories event at the library.
- 10.10 Members considered a request from a representative of Primary Care Cheshire CIC to carry out some bereavement support projects in Helsby, including a keep fit project on the parish field and Sherwood Court and ideas for a gardening club and memorial garden. Members expressed support for the proposals and Cllr. O’Neill agreed to continue discussions with Primary Care Cheshire.
- 10.11 It was **RESOLVED to accept a quote from Widnes Fabrication to carry out some fencing repairs around the children’s play area at a cost of £650 – HPC177/24.** Due to the potential health and safety implications of not carrying out this work quickly, it was agreed to proceed without seeking any further quotes.

11. Cllr. Foster gave an update from the latest councillor surgery as held on 2nd November. Matters raised included a request for an action log of outstanding CW&C issues in the minutes and complaints about people making u-turns on Chester Road by the shops and parking by the Methodist Church. It was confirmed that the next surgery would be held at the JTO tearooms on either 7th or 14th December from 10am (depending on councillor availability and access to tearooms on the Ho Ho Helsby day).

12. Outside Body Reports - Cllr. Temple summarised the contents of a consultation event she had attended on 4th November about the Mersey Tidal Power project. Cllr. O’Neill summarised the following meetings he had attended: ChALC’s annual meeting, a Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire meeting and a ChALC Net Zero Working Group.

13. Planning

13.1 The council’s response to the planning application below was noted as follows:

24/02856/TPO	The Vicarage Vicarage Lane Helsby Work to 2 x sycamore trees No objections (agreed under the Planning Scheme of Delegation)
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13.2 The latest planning notification report was noted.

13.3 It was noted that the Phase Two consultation on Frodsham Solar would end on 19th December. Members were directed to the website www.frodshamsolar.co.uk for

information and it was agreed that a council response would be considered at the next meeting.

- 13.4 It was **RESOLVED** to respond to Cadent’s consultation on the HyNet North West Hydrogen Pipeline Project as follows: to request that residents on Lower Rake Lane were informed about vehicle movements, to request Cadent to make good the surface of Lower Rake Lane at the end of the project, to request how they would deal with any M56 closures and to ask if there would be an associated community benefit scheme – **HPC178/24**.
- 13.5 Member reports – Cllr. Temple agreed to attend CW&C’s design code seminar on 14th November. Cllr. O’Neill suggested that no further action should be taken on a Neighbourhood Plan update given the lack of interest from any potential working group volunteers.

14. Financial Matters

- 14.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £301,779.89 held in balances as at 31st October 2024 be accepted as accurate – **HPC179/24**.
- 14.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments totalling £13,370.58 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for October be approved and duly noted – **HPC180/24**. The following receipts totalling £953.90 were also noted:

Payments

BT	Phone/broadband	£91.25
Northwich Town Council	Play inspection fees	£90.00
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£2,059.19
HPC staff	Salaries Oct 2024	£2,244.95
HMRC	Tax and NI deductions	£967.14
Claire Jones	Expenses	£146.28
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£74.00
Water Plus	Water – community centre	£39.36
Pro Print Solutions	Photocopier charges	£40.98
Countrywide GM	Grass cutting	£689.65
NEST	Clerk’s pension (Oct)	£674.60
Water Plus	Allotment water bill	£14.86
Npower	Bridge lighting	£233.18
Aubergine 262	New website set up costs	£718.80
Grenke Leasing	Photocopier lease	£108.00
Office Boffins	2 x meeting tables	£1,555.08
Carswell Creative	Helsby News design	£240.00
Cloudy IT	MS365 Premium fees	£27.52
Helsby Community Sports Club	Office utility charges	£1,071.36
Helsby VPA	Compost and twine	£117.90
Gleaves Garden Centre	Bedding plants & supplies	£697.53
Frodsham Tree Solutions	Tree work - parish field	£912.00
Complete Security Services	Door entry software fix	£168.00
Unity Trust Bank	Handling charges	£13.95
Unity Trust Bank	Multipay card set-up fee	£50.00

Royal British Legion (cheque unrepresented)	Poppy wreath and donation	£325.00
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Receipts

Co-Operative Bank	Interest Oct 24	£632.90
Various	Allotment fees	£246.00
S R Broadhouse	EROB transfer fee	£75.00

15. The outstanding actions log was noted.

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

25 th November	Policy and Procedures Committee
9 th December	Full Council meeting

Confidential Matters - Exclusion of the Press and Public

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was **RESOLVED that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of the following: To consider the provisional costings for the cemetery extension area project and to consider moving funds from other earmarked reserves to cover the project costs – HPC181/24.**

17. It was **RESOLVED to move funds from Earmarked Reserve 502 (Future Burial Provision) to cover the estimated costs of the cemetery extension area project – HPC182/24.**

The meeting closed at 8.59pm.

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