



# HELSEBY PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of Helsby Parish Council held in the parish office at Helsby Community Sports Club at 7.00pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### Present:

Cllr. Chris Ellams – Chair

Cllr. Terry O’Neill

Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Graham Stothard

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

CW&C Borough Councillor representing Helsby Ward, Chris Copeman

Marj Thoburn and Gary O’Neill representing Helsby News

Chris Johnson representing Helsby Community Sports Club (Item 1 only)

2 members of the public (Item 1 only)

1. Public Participation – One member of the public posed several questions about the average speed camera scheme. The Clerk agreed to include some further information about the project on the council’s new website. Cllr. Copeman agreed to raise questions about blocked drains, hedge cutting, weed clearance and the repainting of several give way lines with officers at CW&C. Chris Johnson of Helsby Community Sports Club spoke to express an interest in the club taking on the guide hut.
2. Apologies were noted from Cllrs. Foster, Branigan and Foreman.
3. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 13) and Cllr. Temple declared an interest in Item 11.5 as her partner was Treasurer of the Helsby Village Produce Association.
4. Policing Update - Members noted the contents of PCSO Flanagan’s latest report. Cllr. O’Neill outlined that there had been several complaints in relation to e-bikes travelling at speed through the village.
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – **HPC153/24**.
6. Clerk’s Report – The following was noted:
  - Item 10.3 – The Fields in Trust certificate had now been received for the scout hut lease and this had been sent to the legal team at the Scout Association;
  - Item 10.5 – a new ‘preview’ website was ready and had been distributed for comment. It was hoped that the new website could ‘go live’ shortly. It was agreed to use the grey logo on the website and on all future council documents and to include a banner on each website page for information about the average speed cameras. The Clerk agreed to

include all the council's policies on the 'Policy' page and to seek permission from all the organisations listed in the community directory to use their contact details;

- Item 10.8 – a Warmer Homes seminar had been booked at Helsby Community Sports Club on 19<sup>th</sup> November from 7-9pm. All were welcome.
- The Clerk thanked Cllr. Ellams for his work on the parish office IT system, and except for the purchase of two chairs, the full office upgrade had now been completed.

7. Chair's Announcements – the Chair issued a reminder about the annual quiz night at Helsby Community Centre on 1<sup>st</sup> November. It was also noted that he had made some queries about improving Helsby Station for pushchair and wheelchair users following a complaint from a local resident.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Copeman outlined that little progress had been made with the CW&C task and finish group set up to explore the Commonsides Tip/PCB issue. It was noted, however, that the Clean Rivers Trust were exploring remediation strategies for the tip. It was outlined that no further action had been taken by CW&C in relation to Rake Cottage and that Cllr. Copeman had so far been unable to contact the surveying company about Helsby Quarry. It was also noted that he had been in discussions with planning officers about the Junoon Restaurant extension and had visited the Evero biomass plant at Protos in Ince, which in future will use Carbon Capture and Storage. Cllr. O'Neill suggested that CW&C may wish to explore the provision of recycling facilities in public litter bins.

9. Cllr. O'Neill presented the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024. The following was noted/agreed:

- 9.1 It was **RESOLVED to open a new CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account and transfer an initial £25,000 from the Unity savings account into this new account – HPC154/24;**
- 9.2 It was **RESOLVED for Cllrs. O'Neill, Nicklin, Temple and Ellams to act as signatories for the new CCLA account – HPC155/24;**
- 9.3 It was **RESOLVED to transfer £40,000 from the Co-op account to the Nationwide account and the remaining balance with the Co-op (£38,109.12) to the Unity savings account – HPC156/24;**
- 9.4 It was **RESOLVED to transfer all funds from the Monmouthshire account (£80,307.61) into the Unity account and then transfer £55,000 into the new CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account once set up – HPC157/24;**
- 9.5 Following the above, it was **RESOLVED to close both the Co-op and Monmouthshire accounts – HPC158/24;**
- 9.6 It was **RESOLVED to amend the Investments Policy as follows: Section 3.5 insert 'minimum' credit rating and Section 4.3 reword from CCLA's Public Sector Deposit Fund to Unity's Instant Access Savings Account – HPC159/24;**
- 9.7 It was **RESOLVED to adopt the revised 2023-28 Business Plan (2024 version) – HPC160/24;** and
- 9.8 It was **RESOLVED to adopt an Internal Control Policy – HPC161/24.**

10. Members noted the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

## 11. Miscellaneous Matters

- 11.1 It was **RESOLVED to donate £325 to the British Legion for the 2024 Poppy Appeal (includes donations of £50 for the wreath and £75 for 25 lamppost poppies) – HPC162/24.** A working party was organised to erect the poppies and the Chair agreed to attend the remembrance service at St. Paul’s Church on 10<sup>th</sup> November.
- 11.2 The Clerk gave an update on the future of the guide hut. It was outlined that the results of the recent building survey would be discussed at the next PCA Committee, and a meeting would then be organised with the guides to discuss next steps. It was noted that several interested parties had approached the Clerk following the article in Helsby News.
- 11.3 Average speed camera project update – it was noted that some technical issues had delayed the project, but it was understood that the cameras were now fully installed and operational. The Clerk agreed to follow up the request with BT to cut back the tree on their land which was currently obscuring one of the cameras.
- 11.4 It was **RESOLVED to pay £68.38 for the Council’s webhosting service (NetNerd) for another 12 months (payment made under Standing Order 16(b) Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) - HPC163/24.**
- 11.5 It was proposed to pay £1,332 to DTM Legal LLP for legal work carried out to date on a revised lease with the Helsby Village Produce Association (the Council were inquorate for this item so this request will be included on the agenda for the next meeting).
- 11.6 Cllr. Nicklin gave an update from the Communications Working Group and outlined 5 recommendations as follows: council to consider budgeting in December 2024 for the appointment of a part-time communications officer; in the meantime, the chair of each committee to produce a short summary of each meeting for the Helsby News team; to set up an ‘information only’ HPC Facebook account; to purchase 2 parish council banners; and to include councillor biographies on the community noticeboards.
- 11.7 It was **RESOLVED to pay £892.80 plus VAT to Helsby Community Sports Club for the 2023/24 service charge for the parish office - HPC164/24.**

12. It was noted that the October councillor surgery did not take place. Cllr. Nicklin requested that the monthly rota be confirmed at each Full Council meeting along with the meeting venue. It was confirmed that the next surgery would be held at the JTO tearooms on 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10am. The Clerk agreed to set up a councillor surgery page on the new website.

13. Outside Body Reports - Cllr. Temple outlined that a Cycle North Cheshire meeting had taken place on 10<sup>th</sup> September and the minutes would be circulated in due course. It was also noted that a Protos Community Forum meeting and AGM had been held on 18<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr. O’Neill outlined that he had attended the following meetings: ChALC Board, Manchester Airport Future Airspace Stakeholder Reference Group, CW&C Highways webinar, ChALC Climate Action Group and three virtual training sessions ran by the Centre for Sustainable Energy.

14. Allotment tenancies – new tenancies were noted as follows: Fatcher/Green (OCR1L), Saunders (OCR2B), Steele (OCR3) and Spinks (QD3F).

## 15. Planning

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

**24/02610/S73** 136B Chester Road Helsby  
Erection of a 4-bedroom dwelling - variation of condition 2 (drawings) of application 22/01482/FUL  
**Neither object to nor support the application but comments on access onto Old Chester Road – HPC165/24.**

**24/02792/FUL** 201 Chester Road Helsby  
Extension to the side of restaurant (retrospective - Ref: 24/00121/EOPDEV)  
**Objections based mainly on extension design – HPC166/24.**

- 15.2 The latest planning notification report was noted.
- 15.3 It was **RESOLVED to submit the council’s comments on CW&C’s Housing Strategy 2025-2035 consultation – HPC167/24.**
- 15.4 A list of the pending enforcement cases in Helsby were noted.
- 15.5 Member reports – it was noted that there had only been one response to the Neighbourhood Plan article in Helsby News so far. The Clerk outlined that CW&C was holding a design code seminar on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Cadent’s consultation on the HyNet North West Hydrogen Pipeline was noted and it was agreed that this would be put on the November agenda for discussion.

16. Financial Matters

- 16.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £314,196.57 held in balances as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be accepted as accurate – HPC168/24.**
- 16.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £9,443.96 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for September be approved and duly noted – HPC169/24.** The following receipts totalling £3,047.08 were also noted:

<b>Payments</b>		
BT	Phone/broadband	£91.25
Northwich Town Council	Play inspection fees	£90.00
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£2,138.44
HPC staff	Salaries Sept 2024	£2,244.95
HMRC	Tax and NI deductions	£967.14
Claire Jones	Expenses	£53.59
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£257.00
Water Plus	Water – community centre	£39.36
Pro Print Solutions	Photocopier charges	£20.34
Countrywide GM	Grass cutting	£689.65
NEST	Clerk’s pension (Sept)	£674.60
Water Plus	Allotment water bill	£75.17
Cloudy IT	MS365 Premium upgrade	£153.00
Chris Ellams	Expenses (IT equipment)	£32.90
Girlguiding Weaver Division	Helsby Guide electricity recharge	£403.33
SLCC	SLCC branch conference	£35.00

Kenable Ltd	Office IT equipment	£181.08
National Office Furniture	Office furniture (cupboard)	£156.60
Office Boffins	Conference chairs x 8	£369.48
Fields in Trust	Field change request fees	£480.00
Chris Knott Insurance	Allotment insurance	£120.01
Kenable Ltd	Office IT equipment	£129.84
PNFS (footpath society)	Membership fees	£22.50
Unity Trust Bank	Handling charges	£18.43
Unity Trust Bank	Cheque handling fees	£0.30

**Receipts**

Unity Instant Access	Interest Sept 24	£689.61
Various	Allotment fees	£1,547.50
J C Clarke	Burial fees	£190.00
Helsby Community Association	Electricity recharge	£619.97

17. The outstanding actions log was noted.

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

21 <sup>st</sup> October	Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee
11 <sup>th</sup> November	Full Council meeting

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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