



# Helsby 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 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### Present:

Cllr. Chris Ellams – Chair

Cllr. Terry O’Neill

Cllr. Margaret Marsh

Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Emma Foster

Cllr. Rob Foreman

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

1. Public Participation – Concern was raised about a recent Radio 4 programme regarding PCB contamination in Helsby and members were asked how they might take forward any action with CW&C.
2. No apologies were noted.
3. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 13).
4. Policing Update. Apologies from PCSO Flanagan were noted. Members noted the contents of his latest report.
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – **HPC108/24**.
6. Clerk’s Report – The following was noted:
  - An update report on the Helsby Community Hub from Nicola Brown of Helsby Methodist Church;
  - Item 7 – the South Ward noticeboard and the basket swing were due to be erected shortly. It was felt that the quality and quantity of the grass cutting by the parish council’s contractors had improved since the last meeting; and
  - Item 10.1 – the website accessibility audit had been completed and some issues had been identified. Some initial improvements had been made to the website following the audit and through other comments from councillors. Cllr. Ellams and the Clerk would liaise further with Aubergine 262 about the audit results.
7. Chair’s Announcements – the Chair outlined that he had presented flowers and a card on behalf of the parish council to a resident of the village on her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Copeman’s apologies were noted.
9. Cllr. O’Neill presented the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The following was noted/agreed:
- 9.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve the Investments Policy subject to the amendment below and to explore short-term investment opportunities with various banks and building societies – HPC109/24**. One amendment to the draft policy was agreed – paragraph 5.3 to be amended to: *“Notwithstanding 5.2, this policy shall be reviewed in the event the Bank of England changes its base rate by more than 1%.”*
- 9.2 It was **RESOLVED to include the 2023-24 internal auditor’s recommendation in the general risk assessment at the next review date in September (under Clause 47 – Fraud by Clerk) setting out that the Clerk would copy the Chair into any e-mails sent to the payroll supplier – HPC110/24**.
- 9.3 It was **RESOLVED not to hold a grant show in February 2025 but to consider any ad-hoc requests throughout the year in line with the council’s Community Grant Policy – HPC111/24**. It was agreed to allocate some of this year’s Community Projects budget to various environmental enhancement projects in the village subject to approval by CW&C, where relevant. The Clerk agreed to contact recipients of recent grant shows to inform them that the 2025 show would not be held but that the council would still consider applications in line with the Community Grant Policy.
10. Cllr. O’Neill presented the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024. The following was noted/agreed:
- 10.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve AMR Technical to remove various tree wraps and to install new lighting gear on 2 lighting columns at a cost of £2,105 (work to be completed as part of AMR’s current contract) – HPC112/24**. It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr. Foster would meet with representatives of Ho Ho Helsby to discuss new lighting features for this year’s festive period.
- 10.2 A summary of the discussion on PCB’s with Cllr. Copeman was noted. It was agreed to wait for further information from Cllr. Copeman and CW&C before submitting any council comments.
11. Miscellaneous Matters
- 11.1 It was **RESOLVED to give retrospective approval for the Clerk to attend an online SLCC training webinar: ‘The Council as a Landlord’ at a cost of £30 plus VAT (payment made under Standing Order 16(b) Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) – HPC113/24**.
- 11.2 It was noted that the deadline for an election for the vacancy in South Ward had passed and the council was now able to co-opt for this vacancy.
- 11.3 Cllrs. Nicklin, Foster, Foreman and Ellams volunteered to explore opportunities for a potential arts project with CW&C.
12. It was noted that July’s surgery had not been held. The Clerk outlined that Tesco was unable to offer the council a permanent monthly slot for surgeries and it was suggested that JTO tearooms could be used as an alternative venue when Tesco was not available. The Clerk agreed to

circulate a rota for surgeries until December. Cllr. Nicklin agreed to contact Tesco to book the next surgery on 3<sup>rd</sup> August (Cllr. O'Neill to attend). He also agreed to continue to seek comments on the design of a pull up banner and to source some relevant images.

13. Outside Body Reports - Cllr. O'Neill summarised the latest meeting of the Northern branch of the Association of Local Councils. Cllr. Temple outlined that three applications had been approved at the latest Protos Community Benefit Fund meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June. It was noted the Cllrs. Temple and O'Neill had attended a CW&C planning policy drop-in workshop on 19<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr. Temple outlined that the next Cycle North Cheshire meeting would be held on 9<sup>th</sup> July. She agreed to circulate a link in relation to three 2-hour 'Learn to ride' courses for children in Castle Park on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July.

#### 14. Planning

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

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|---------------------|---|
| <b>24/01325/FUL</b> | 5 Greenway Close Helsby<br>Rear and side single storey extension<br><b>No comments submitted – CW&amp;C unable to extend deadline</b>   |
| <b>24/00607/FUL</b> | 54 Bates Lane Helsby<br>Demolition of existing conservatory, erection of single storey rear extension<br><b>No further comments submitted ('no objection' previously submitted)</b>   |
| <b>24/01685/106</b> | Plot 8, Protos ERF Ince Resource Recovery Park<br>S106A Application associated with the Protos ERF Unilateral Undertaking (ref. 18/01543/S73), signed on 24 April 2019, to remove Clause 5 associated to the delivery of the rail facility<br><b>Objection as removal of the rail infrastructure would mean that the site would no longer be multi-modal – HPC114/24.</b> |
| <b>24/01322/S73</b> | Ince Resource Recovery Park Marsh Lane Ince<br>Removal of condition 17 (requirement to implement the first phase rail infrastructure prior to the occupation of plots within Protos Phase 2) of 14/02277/S73<br><b>Objection on same grounds as the above application – HPC115/24.</b>  |
| <b>24/01368/S73</b> | 209 - 211 Chester Road Helsby<br>Change of use from dwelling to day spa - Removal of condition 5 (restriction to day spa) of planning permission 08-0532-COU<br><b>Does not object to or supports but comments on lack of parking provision – HPC116/24.</b>  |

- 14.2 The latest planning notification report was noted. The Clerk agreed to seek information from CW&C on any outstanding enforcement notices served in Helsby over the last few years as well as any current investigations.
- 14.3 It was **RESOLVED to approve the amended Procedure for Reviewing Planning Applications and to adopt a new Planning Scheme of Delegation – HPC117/24.**
- 14.4 A report was considered in relation to making amendments to the Helsby Neighbourhood Plan to incorporate Passivhaus standards into the design criteria for all new homes. It was **RESOLVED to carry out a consultation to amend Policy HNP H5 Design Criteria to add ‘All new homes being built in Helsby should be designed and built to Passivhaus standards’ – HPC118/24.** It was agreed that an article would be prepared for the September edition of Helsby News and members were requested to send any other consultation ideas to the Clerk via e-mail. Cllr. O’Neill agreed to put together a small working party to progress.
- 14.5 To receive any member reports – the Clerk agreed to contact CW&C in relation to the enforcement of local 20mph zones and a summary of the responses from the Lancet Homes consultation for a new housing development on Callender Way was noted.

## 15. Financial Matters

- 15.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £339,998.34 held in balances as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be accepted as accurate – HPC119/24.**
- 15.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £11,722.61 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for June be approved and duly noted – HPC120/24.** The following receipts totalling £3,498.89 were also noted:

### Payments

BT	Phone/broadband	£91.25
Northwich Town Council	Play inspection fees	£90.00
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£2,910.45
HPC staff	Salaries June 2024	£2,244.94
HMRC	Tax and NI deductions	£967.14
SLCC	Membership fees	£298.00
Aubergine 262 Ltd	Website accessibility report	£358.80
Claire Jones	Expenses	£17.55
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£257.00
Water Plus	Water – community centre	£39.36
Pro Print Solutions	Photocopier charges	£20.98
NEST	Pension contribution	£674.60
Scribe	Scribe Accounts subscription	£576.00
NMC Design	Helsby News Spring edition	£766.00
N-Power	Christmas lighting supply	£728.34
Marj Thoburn	Planter stickers	£125.40
Helsby VPA	Compost, bark and fertiliser	£488.30
Helsby Methodist Church	Room hire	£40.00
Thomas Barnes	Refund on allotment rent (OCR1R)	£28.50
Little Robins Baby and Toddler Group	Grant Show award	£1,000.00

**Receipts**

Natwest	Interest June 24	£129.65
Allotment fees	Plot 3FQD	£28.50
Allotment fees	Plot 1ROCR	£28.50
RSK Group Ltd	Rent for Eccies	£3,312.24

15.3 The Clerk outlined that both Unity accounts had now been set up. It was **RESOLVED to transfer all funds currently in the Natwest Business Reserve Account into the new Unity Instant Access Savings account and to transfer £15,000 from the Natwest current account to the Unity current account – HPC121/24**. Given the large sums involved, the Clerk agreed to transfer the money over in stages. It was noted that some funds would be left in the Natwest current account for a period of up to 12 months and then the account would be closed.

16. The outstanding actions log was noted.

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

- 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Full Council meeting

**Confidential Matters - Exclusion of the Press and Public and the Parish Clerk**

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 note further issues in relation to the guide hut on the parish field and to agree a way forward – HPC122/24**.

18. Further information was noted. It was **RESOLVED to write to the guides and other interested parties about the various legal issues in relation to the use of the hut/parish field and to offer to meet each party to discuss a potential way forward – HPC123/24**.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.

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