



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 10th February 2025

Present:

Cllr. Chris Ellams – Chair
Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Terry O’Neill
Cllr. Graham Stothard

Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Neil Flanagan, Police Community Support Officer (Items 1-4 only)

CW&C Borough Councillor representing Helsby Ward, Chris Copeman (Items 1-6 only)

One member of the public (Items 1-6 only)

1. Public Participation – A member of the public outlined that he had joined the meeting to comment on the cycling and walking aspects of planning application 24/03823/OUT (Land At Mere's Edge).
2. No apologies were received. Cllrs. Foreman and Branigan did not attend the meeting.
3. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 13).
4. Policing Update - Members noted the contents of PCSO Flanagan’s latest report. It was noted that complaints were still being made about the parking at Horn’s Mill Primary School. PCSO Flanagan and Cllr. Copeman outlined that they would be attending a meeting at the school to explore possible long-term solutions.
5. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 20th January 2025 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – HPC21/25.**
6. Clerk’s Report – the following was noted:
 - Item 6 – the average speed camera system was now in operation and the Clerk was waiting for a date with CW&C and NCRUG in relation to the active travel sign;
 - Item 8 – correspondence had been received from Helsby Community Association in relation to their concerns with the council recommending the community centre car park as a possible location for an electric vehicle charging station;
 - Item 11 – the precept request had now been submitted to CW&C;
 - Item 12.2 – CCTV repairs had been completed at Helsby Community Centre. Recommendations had been made to upgrade the cameras and possibly to erect additional cameras. A CCTV policy for this system would need to be drawn up if the community association did not have one;

- The Clerk had circulated grant monitoring forms to 2024 grant show recipients;
 - There would be a community litter pick on 13th Feb, starting at RSK offices from 1pm; and
 - The government had confirmed that Cheshire and Warrington had been accepted as part of a Devolution Priority Programme. This would be monitored to assess any impact on parish councils as further details emerged.
7. Chair's Announcements – The Chair reported that Emma Foster had resigned from the council.
8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Copeman outlined that there was a significant funding gap in CW&C's budget and substantial savings would be required. It was noted that the planning application for the extension at Junoon restaurant had been withdrawn by the applicant. It was outlined that an EV charging station would be installed at Station Avenue car park. The Clerk agreed to write to the owners of several other potential locations to get their views on hosting a charging station. Concerns were expressed about the active travel component of planning application 24/03823/OUT (Land At Mere's Edge) and the lack of segregated walking and cycling connections between the various new housing sites in this location. It was noted that Cllr. Copeman had submitted an objection to the application. Various highways issues were also noted including parking on Station Avenue, Britannia Road and Chester Road by Queens Drive and worn give way markings at the Callender Way junction (Clerk to write to CW&C Highways).
9. Members noted the minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held on 27th January 2025. The following was noted/resolved:
- 9.1 It was noted that contractors, Beechwood Industries, had been appointed for the council's Grass and Hedge Cutting contract 2025-28. It was **RESOLVED to approve the contract document for signatures – HPC22/25**; and
- 9.2 It was noted that contractor's Ground Inc. had been appointed to carry out the cemetery extension layout project. It was **RESOLVED to vire an additional £5,000 to the project from the Future Burial Provision earmarked reserve to cover various provisional items, including sandstone edging – HPC23/25**.
10. Miscellaneous Matters
- 10.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve a request to hold exercise classes at the outdoor gym at Sherwood Court between April and July 2025 and to approve a licence with Brio Leisure in this context – HPC24/25**.
- 10.2 It was **RESOLVED to renew the Council's Association Membership with Helsby Community Association at a cost of £12.00 (payment made under Financial Regulation 5.14 Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) – HPC25/25**.
- 10.3 It was **RESOLVED to renew the Council's IT support services for 2025 with Cloudy IT at a cost of £226.80 (payment made under Financial Regulation 5.14 Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) – HPC26/25**. It was also **RESOLVED to renew the council's Microsoft 365 Business Premium licence at a cost of £217.20 and 8 x**

Business Basic licences at a cost of £470.40 (payments made under Financial Regulation 5.14 Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) – HPC27/25.

- 10.4 It was **RESOLVED to renew the council’s Parish Online membership for 2025 at a cost of £100.00 (payment made under Financial Regulation 5.14 Delegation to the Responsible Financial Officer) – HPC28/25.**
- 10.5 It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr. O’Neill had met representatives from CW&C Highways to progress the Highways Volunteer Scheme. It was outlined that a provisional date of 14th March had been set for the first working party which would focus on the areas around Chester Road by Tesco and along the main shopping area.
- 10.6 It was outlined that correspondence had been received from the chair of Elton Parish Council in relation to gauging local support for a regular rail service between Ellesmere Port and Helsby via Ince and Elton. It was agreed for the Clerk to respond to confirm the council’s co-operation and to offer support in collating community feedback.

- 11. Cllrs. Nicklin and Ellams outlined that they had held a councillor surgery on 1st February. The Clerk agreed to investigate planning legislation around lighting and signage. Cllrs. O’Neill and Temple agreed to attend the next surgery at the JTO Tearooms on 1st March.

- 12. Burial grant approvals - It was **RESOLVED to grant an Exclusive Rights of Burial for a term of 75 years in Helsby Public Cemetery for plot C27 to Mrs Richardson of Cardiff – HPC29/25.**

- 13. Outside Body Reports – Cllr. Temple updated members about the latest Cycle North Cheshire meeting held on 21st January. Updates were given on the Helsby-Mouldsworth rail line, additional active travel maps and the provision of a new pedestrian crossing in Frodsham and a potential new cycle route from Helsby High School to Plovers Lane. She also outlined that Peel had yet to confirm future funding for the Protos Community Benefit Fund. Cllr. O’Neill gave updates on the Police and Crime Commissioner’s meeting on 22nd January.

14. Planning

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

25/00055/FUL	138 Chester Road Helsby Erection of detached garage, with solar panels Neither supports nor objects – specific comments to be sent to Clerk by 12 February – HPC30/25.
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24/03823/OUT	Land At Mere's Edge Mere's Edge Helsby Outline application for up to 120 dwellings (with access for approval; appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for future approval) residential development (Use Class C3) with new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle
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access, a new bridge and associated landscaping, engineering and demolition works

Objections based on lack of supporting infrastructure and flooding and the lack of a cycling and walking strategy between sites – HPC31/25.

24/03465/FUL

Land At Grid Ref 349152 375819 Mill Rise Helsby
Two storey dwelling (amended site plan and floor plans)

Objections as based on previous concerns – HPC32/25.

- 14.2 The latest planning notification report was noted.
- 14.3 Progress with the 215 affordable homes being built by Onward Homes on Cable Drive (Pavilion Park) was noted and it was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Onward Homes to advertise the shared ownership properties.
- 14.4 Member reports – no matters were raised.

15. Financial Matters

- 15.1 It was **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £258,083.24 held in balances as at 31st January 2025 be accepted as accurate – HPC33/25.**
- 15.2 It was **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £24,867.77 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for January be approved and duly noted – HPC34/25.** The following receipts totalling £1,144.02 were also noted:

Payments

BT	Phone/broadband	£91.25
Northwich Town Council	Play inspection fees	£90.00
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£903.83
HPC staff	Salaries Jan 2025	£2,322.00
HMRC	Tax and NI deductions	£1,011.87
Claire Jones	Expenses	£17.55
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£74.00
Water Plus	Water – community centre	£39.36
Pro Print Solutions	Photocopier charges	£31.76
NEST	Clerk’s pension (Jan)	£685.30
Water Plus	Allotment water bill	£15.08
Cloudy IT	MS365 Premium fees	£45.72
Multipay Card	Amazon (£24.83) Co-Op (£12.50) Fees (£3)	£40.33
Blue Arrow	Ho Ho Helsby traffic management	£600.00
Widnes Fabrication	Welding repairs to railings	£780.00
Parish Online	Subscription fees	£120.00
N-Power	Bridge lighting	£408.04
Cloudy IT	MS365 fees and support 2025/26	£1,097.28
AMR Technical	Christmas light contract	£11,248.80

Grenke	Photocopier contract fees	£108.00
DM Payroll Services	Payroll admin fees	£90.00
NMC Design & Print	Helsby News printing	£802.00
Cllr. O'Neill	Expenses	£13.50
Mega Electrical	Christmas tree	£1,654.20
Survey Solutions	Topographical survey	£1,680.00
Survey Solutions	Statutory record drawings	£780.00
Helsby Community Association	Subscription fees	£12.00
Complete Security Service (CSS)	HCC CCTV call out	£96.00
Unity Trust Bank	Handling charges	£9.90

Receipts

Hartford Parish Council	Play Inspection course fees	£488.75
HCA	Community centre reclaim	£450.21
CCLA	Bank interest	£205.06

15.3 It was **RESOLVED to transfer £55,000 from the Unity Instant Access account to the Unity current account in order to pay the invoice from the Police and Crime Commissioner for the average speed camera project – HPC35/25.** It was also noted that the Clerk had transferred £10,000 from the Unity savings to the Unity current account on 23rd January and another £5,000 on 6th February in order to pay outstanding invoices in February.

It was **RESOLVED to continue the meeting beyond a period of two hours in order to complete the remaining items on the agenda – HPC36/25.**

16. The outstanding actions log was noted.

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

17 th February	Environment Committee
10 th March	Parish 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 receive an update on the future of the guide hut and to consider next steps – HPC37/25.**

18. It was **RESOLVED to take legal advice in relation to drafting a lease with Helsby Community Sports Club – HPC38/25.** It was also **RESOLVED to liaise with the guides in relation to formally handing over the building to the council and transferring any utility accounts into the council's name by 22nd April – HPC39/25.**

The meeting closed at 9.09pm.

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