



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 20th January 2025

Present:

Cllr. Chris Ellams – Chair

Cllr. Terry O'Neill

Cllr. Rob Nicklin

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Graham Stothard

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Cllr. Rob Foreman (virtual attendance – no voting rights. Items 1-6 only)

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

One member of the public (Item 1 only)

Cerys Percival (Eni UK), James Glass (Progressive Energy) and Rob MacKenzie (WSP) - Item 1 only

1. Public Participation – A member of the public spoke to express his interest in developing a boxing club/academy in Helsby. A presentation was given in relation to the Protos (West Above Ground Installation) Spur Carbon Dioxide Pipeline Proposed Development, a small component of the much wider Hynet proposals (www.hynethub.co.uk). It was noted that a replacement planning application would be submitted in March, following amendments to the location as set out in a previous planning application (24/00777/FUL). Subject to planning permission, it was outlined that construction was expected to take place in Summer 2026. It was noted that consultation on the proposed Runcorn spur would take place in March and April. The Clerk agreed to provide links to the project and consultation documents via the council's website and Facebook.
2. No apologies were received. Cllrs. Branigan and Foster did not attend the meeting.
3. Cllr. O'Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 14).
4. Policing Update - Members noted the contents of PCSO Flanagan's latest report. Councillors and residents were encouraged to express any views on policing locally via Resident's Voice (www.cheshire.police.uk/residentsvoicechester). The Clerk agreed to display flyers in the noticeboards.
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held on 9th December 2024 were accepted as accurate and were duly signed by the Chair – **HPC01/25**.
6. Clerk's Report – the following was noted:
 - Item 6 – a meeting with CW&C about the Highways Volunteer Scheme had been delayed due to poor weather in early January. Two residents had volunteered to help following the advert in Helsby News. The recent speed camera calibration check was waiting for validation by the survey company's quality control team;

- Item 10.2 – a HPC Facebook profile had been set up and several posts had been submitted via the Helsby Facebook page. It was suggested that the name be amended from ‘Parish Council’ to ‘Helsby Parish Council’;
- Item 10.4 – funds for an active travel sign in Helsby had been ringfenced by the community rail partnership. HPC had been requested to decide on the sign location and the type of display as a first step. Members agreed that the sign could be placed on Chester Road by the station car park and an A0-sized display with a removable cover to match the one in Frodsham would be preferable;
- Item 17 – the Parks masterplan was now underway with consultants, Make Space. A first meeting had been held and topographical surveys had been carried out. Consultants would now work on an initial design and plan the consultation process;
- Item 19 - 2025/26 salary budget calculations had been confirmed as correct by the council’s payroll supply company; and
- A resident had submitted a complaint about flooding, parking and litter on Station Avenue. Clerk to raise matter with Cllr. Copeman and ask if this area could be included on the next community litter pick.

7. Chair’s Announcements – no matters were raised.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – It was outlined that Cllr. Copeman was unable to attend the meeting but had submitted a written report for information. It was noted that little progress had been made in relation to CW&C’s PCB contamination task and finish group and the re-opening of Old Chester Road at Rake Lane Cottage. It was also noted that CW&C were seeking potential sites for 800 new electric vehicle charging stations and members thought that Helsby Community Centre, Helsby Community Sports Club and Helsby Methodist Church could be suitable locations.

9. Members noted the minutes of the Environment Committee budget meeting held on 11th December 2024. It was outlined that a biodiversity policy had been adopted.

10. Members noted the minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee budget meeting held on 11th December 2024.

11. Members noted the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 13th January 2025. The following recommendations were agreed:

11.1 It was **RESOLVED to approve the proposed Environment and PCA Committee budgets for 2025/26 totalling £83,177 – HPC02/25;**

11.2 It was **RESOLVED to approve the proposed Finance Committee budget for 2025/26 totalling £88,620 – HPC03/25;**

11.3 It was **RESOLVED to approve the ‘Grants and Earmarked Reserves for Identified Projects’ table – HPC04/25;**

11.4 An incorrect figure in the receipts budget was noted (the precept amount should have been recorded as £124,250 and not £125,000). It was agreed to amend the tables in Appendix 3 of the minutes and in Supporting Paper 1 in this respect and to record the receipts budget as £163,932 and not £164,682 as outlined in the agenda. It was also agreed to add the phrase ‘for the parish field lighting’ to the text for Code 215 on page 6 of the Budget Report. It was **RESOLVED to approve a receipts budget totalling £163,932**

for 2025/26 and an expenditure budget totalling £171,797 and to issue a precept request to Cheshire West and Chester Council for £124,250 based on the above budget calculations for 2025-26 along with the 'Budget Report: Justification of the Precept Request for the Financial Year 2025/26' – **HPC05/25**;

11.5 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed amendments to the following policies: **Community Grant Policy, Credit Management Policy and Reserves Policy** – **HPC06/25**; and

11.6 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed amendments to the asset register – **HPC07/25**.

12. Miscellaneous Matters

12.1 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following amendments to the Standing Orders:

- **Page 1: Change logo and amend latest revision date;**
- **Page 10: Delete 5(j)xiii as covered under 19(h);**
- **Page 16: Reword 15(b)xv to '*Manage planning applications received by the Council in line with the Procedure for Reviewing Planning Applications and Scheme of Delegation set out in Appendix 3*';**
- **Page 18: Include wording to enable issuing invitations to tender to specific firms if felt appropriate in 18(d)iii (using footnotes from legislation);**
- **Page 19: Reword 19(c): '*The chair and the vice chair of the Council shall conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk*' and '*The reviews and appraisal shall be recorded in writing and any recommendations regarding amendments to terms and conditions shall be subject to approval by resolution of the Council*'; and**
- **Page 19: Reword 19(h) to: '*A review of the terms and conditions of service of existing employees will be carried out at the Full Council meeting each December*'. – **HPC08/25**.**

It was agreed to cover any amendments to the Committee sections of the Standing Orders at a future Policy and Procedures Committee meeting.

12.2 It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a replacement CCTV recorder at Helsby Community Centre at a cost of £650 and to approve payment of an invoice for £96.00 to cover the engineer call out fee (alternative quotes not sought as in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.11(ii) repairs to existing equipment) – **HPC09/25**. The Clerk agreed to ensure that there was a defined CCTV policy for the system or to add any procedures to the council's existing CCTV policy. It was also suggested that any data on the old recording system was destroyed appropriately.

12.3 Members noted an exceptional grant application for £3,000 from St. Paul's Church to host Wednesday Welcome lunch sessions. It was agreed to seek further information on how previous funds had been spent and what any new grant funding would specifically be used for before making a final decision.

12.4 Members noted recent vandalism damage at Sherwood Court resulting in the need for a replacement litter bin and pathway surface repairs. It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a new bin from CW&C at a cost of £310 and to request that they also carry out repairs to the adjacent pathway – **HPC10/25**.

13. Cllr. Temple outlined that she had held a councillor surgery on 14th December but there had been no formal visitors. It was noted that the surgery scheduled on 4th January had not taken

place. It was agreed that the next surgery would be held at the JTO Tearooms on 1st February and Cllrs. Ellams and Nicklin would attend.

14. Outside Body Reports - Cllr. Temple outlined that she had attended a Protos Community Forum on 13th January and that she had circulated the agenda reports and a summary of the meeting. It was noted that Cllr. O'Neill had attended a Manchester Airport future airspace project meeting also held on 13th January and a ChALC Net Zero working group on 20th January. Cllr. Ellams agreed to source some information about the renewable energy generated from the Frodsham Marshes Windfarm.

15. Planning

15.1 The council's responses to the following planning applications below were noted/agreed:

24/03465/FUL Land At Grid Ref 349152 375819 Mill Rise Helsby
Three storey dwelling
Objections based on backland development, heritage assets and trees. Also comments on car parking space, hedge on A56 and accuracy of plans - HPC11/25.

24/03539/FUL 115 Chester Road Helsby
Demolition of existing garage, erection of new two storey dwelling. Alterations to existing parking area of the existing property. Relocation of existing gateway and vehicular access for new dwelling
Neither objects nor supports but comments on backland development, overlooking, space between buildings and traffic during construction – HPC12/25.

24/03341/FUL 4 Crown Buildings Latham Avenue Helsby
Replacement windows and door to front elevation
No objections – HPC13/25.

24/03662/S73 12 Chester Road Helsby
Two storey side extension to form utility accommodation and bedroom. (Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of 24/00942/FUL)
No objections – HPC14/25.

24/03780/FUL 138 Chester Road Helsby
Two storey dwelling with vehicular site access (alterations to planning permission REF: 12/03344/FUL)
Objections based on backland housing development, drainage and lack of rear garden space – HPC15/25.

24/03550/FUL Three Stumps Old Chester Road Helsby
Basement and ground level infill extension with associated amendment to roof profile

Neither objects nor supports but request that approval includes a condition that all construction activity stays within the site and does not encroach onto Old Chester Road – HPC16/25.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue the meeting beyond a period of two hours in order to complete the remaining items on the agenda – **HPC17/25.**

- 15.2 The latest planning notification report was noted.
- 15.3 Member reports – Cllr. O’Neill outlined that ChALC had asked for feedback in relation to an MHCLC consultation on the Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms. The Clerk agreed to circulate the document for information, but it was agreed that the council did not have expertise on which to make a comment.

16. Financial Matters

- 16.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £281,901.25 held in balances as at 31st December 2024 be accepted as accurate – **HPC18/25.**
- 16.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments totalling £17,426.94 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for December be approved and duly noted – **HPC19/25.** The following receipts totalling £9,256.58 were also noted:

Payments

BT	Phone/broadband	£91.25
Northwich Town Council	Play inspection fees	£90.00
Helsby Garden Services	General maintenance	£1,481.20
HPC staff	Salaries Dec 2024	£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	£22.98
NEST	Clerk’s pension (Dec)	£685.30
Water Plus	Allotment water bill	£14.86
Above Zero LA Ltd	Cemetery extension work	£2,643.88
Kittle Photographic	ID badge	£8.70
LITE	Brackets	£180.00
LITE	Christmas lighting (spheres)	£4,017.60
Mega Electrical	Christmas tree contract	£2,650.20
Cloudy IT	MS365 Premium fees	£21.72
HAGS-SMP Ltd	Cableway repairs	£1,357.92
Carswell Creative	Helsby News design	£240.00
Multipay Card	Beesley & Fildes	£21.90
Multipay Card	Beesley & Fildes	£104.80
Multipay Card	D W Fencing	£14.00
Multipay Card	Nat. Office Furnit.	£248.40
Multipay Card	Amazon	£29.65

Multipay Card	Printworks	£25.20
Multipay Card	Fees	£3.00
Unity Trust Bank	Handling charges	£9.30
Unity Trust Bank	Cheque handling fees	£0.30

Receipts

Helsby Community Association	Electricity charge reclaim	£312.03
J C Clarke FD	Burial fees	£190.00
RSK Ltd	Rent for Eccies	£6,690.72
Jacqueline Wilson FD	Burial fees (Central 27)	£1,075.00
Unity Instant Access	Bank interest	£650.22
Monmouthshire BS	Bank interest	£338.61

17. The outstanding actions log was noted.

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

27 th January	Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee
10 th February	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 – HPC20/25.**

19. It was agreed that the Clerk would hold further discussions with Helsby Community Sports Club and the guides in relation to the future use of the building.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

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