

Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 9th January 2017 at 7pm in Helsby Hillside Primary School

Present:

Cllr. Terry O'Neill – Chairman
Cllr. John Kimpton
Cllr. Patricia Holder
Cllr. Sam Johnson
Cllr. Lances Yates

Cllr. George Randles – Vice-Chairman
Cllr. Alan Gardner
Cllr. Sylvia Crossley-Jones
Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Peter Duffy
Cllr. Chris Ellams
Cllr. Stuart Hulse
Cllr. Tim Thorne

In attendance:

Sergeant Ian Wilson and PCSO John Kopczyk – Cheshire Constabulary

Chairman's announcements – the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr. Crossley-Jones attended a meeting with neighbouring parish councils from Alvanley, Dunham Hill & Hapsford, Manley and Mouldsworth along with CWaC Localities staff to discuss the appetite for opening up the dis-used Helsby – Mouldsworth railway line as bridleway/cycleway/walkway. The actions included contacting councils with experience in that type of project and also the owners Network Rail. Everyone was aware of the extent of the clearing job needed.

1. Public Air Time – proposed by Cllr. Johnson, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC01/17**. There being no matters brought to the council's attention it was proposed by Cllr. Johnson, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC02/17**.
2. Apologies for absence – received and accepted from Cllrs. McKie and MacPherson.
3. Declarations of interest. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 17 as both were Executive members of the Helsby Community Sports Club.
4. Police Matters
 - 4.1 PCSO Kopczyk's report:
 - Community Speed Watch – the next training session was planned for 4th Feb at 2pm. Mr Angles and Mr Flaherty had been informed. More volunteers would be encouraged to attend;
 - Horns Mill Primary School – Impact Week planned for 27th Feb with members of the Constabulary to tackle the parking issues around the school and to work with the children about Road Safety;
 - Bike Marking event – the event held on 8th Jan at the High School was successful with 31 bikes being marked. The next event was arranged for 4th March 9am – 12 noon at Helsby High;
 - Anti-Social Behaviour – very quiet over festive period;
 - Arranged meeting with Mr Whitley from North Cheshire Rail Users' Group;
 - Surgeries would take place on 25th Jan at 10.30am JTO Tea Rooms and 2pm Library.
 - Theft from car in Mountain View. The owner had not locked the vehicle.

Frodsham PCSOs were providing cover for Kingsley & Norley area following an article in Norley News. Much discussion ensued and Sergeant Wilson reported the following:

- That PCSO spent 80% of his time working on matters pertaining to Helsby;
- The areas of Kingsley & Norley were very quiet with minimal demand. The time spent there was mainly going into the primary schools and giving talks. All the schools fed into Helsby High. This equated to around 5% of the PCSOs time;
- Frodsham and Helsby PCSOs had different rest days that meant cover was provided for most of the time;
- Helsby and Frodsham get a better level of service by part-funding PCSO;
- PCSO numbers had dropped recently due to upward movement. There was no intention to amalgamate into larger areas. The Constabulary was recruiting to get staffing back to previous levels. PCSO Kopczyk was a dedicated member of staff and a quick learner;
- Policing had changed considerably. The focus was intelligence led. Resources concentrated on crime patterns and not driving / walking around. Pro-active policing (gave example of Latham Avenue car break-ins when PCSO gave reassurance, advice and increased his patrols). Staff did not have the time to spend most of the day on foot;
- Crime had dropped since the new structure and crime was down massively;
- A56 targeted by interceptor vehicles and unmarked vehicles;

The Chairman summed up the council's mood by saying that the people of Helsby agreed to fund a PCSO as they were promised a dedicated PCSO that would spend the majority of their time in the village. If residents discovered the PCSO was also the PCSO for outlying villages, then the Parish Council would have difficulty justifying the £12,000 cost per year from the precept. From a recent meeting, he attended with Cllr. Duffy and the Temporary Assistant Chief Constable to discuss the future of PCSOs, one of the options was that the cost of a dedicated PCSO would be rising possibly by the full amount £36,000. Cllr. Johnson proposed (seconded by Cllr. Ellams) that Cheshire Constabulary be put on notice that we would not be renewing the contract and that no more money would be paid out on a PCSO. This was based on knowledge that surrounding villages were getting the services of a PCSO but paying far less than the areas that were part-funding. Cllr. Johnson's proposal was lost on the vote. Proposed by Cllr. Hulse, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED to ask Cheshire Association of Local Councils to organise a meeting with those councils that part-funded a PCSO where wider discussion could take place on the role of the PCSO – HPC03/17.**

5. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Hulse, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Helsby Parish Council meeting held on 12th December 2016 be accepted as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chairman – HPC04/17.**

6. Matters arising from the previous meeting.

6.1 Speeding issues Primrose Lane. Confirmation received from Highways that they had spoken to the resident and informed him that CWaC would consider 50/50 funding, with the Parish Council, for an Interactive Speed Sign (ISS) and not a camera as reported to the Parish Council by the resident. Highways had previously agreed, with the Parish Council, that it would follow-up strategy to obtain the cost of placing grasscrete on verge on Primrose Lane for the Police Mobile Camera Van. This method entailed enforcement by way of issuing tickets to speeding motorists. The Parish Council agreed to stick with the strategy.

6.2 Housing Needs Survey – the Chairman circulated the draft to all members before

confirming to Cheshire Community Action that it was suitable for circulation. The survey would be going out this week to every household in Helsby. Online form also available – duly noted.

7. Minutes of the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 14th December 2016. Cllr. O'Neill presented the minutes that included details of a rise in the 2017/18 budget for brushcutter / strimmer training day for the 2 General Assistants – duly noted.
8. Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 14th December 2016. Cllr. Hulse presented the minutes that included a rise in the 2017/18 budget for expansion of the Christmas budgets, CCTV and Road Safety although he commented that these could be subject to change – duly noted.
9. Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 14th December 2016. Cllr. Duffy presented the minutes that included a rise in training budget for 2017/18 – duly noted.
10. Minutes of the Parks, Cemetery & Allotments Committee meeting held on 14th December 2016. Cllr. Temple presented the minutes that included the extra detail explaining the overspends in the current fiscal year – duly noted.
11. Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 3rd January 2017. Cllr. Duffy presented the minutes that included the following recommendations:
 - 11.1 Specified reserves. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – that the Parks, Cemetery & Allotments Committee review, in 12 months' time, the justification of putting £2,000 per year in the reserves for future burial provision and to also ascertain intended use for the £16k currently held in specified reserves for the same reason – HPC05/17.**
 - 11.2 Committee budgets for 2017/18. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – 1. that the Road Safety budget £2,000 and the increase of £3,000 for CCTV at Sherwood Court be removed from the budget calculations as costs could (if the schemes went ahead) could be taken from the 'New Homes Bonus' reserves thus reducing the Environment Committee budget to £20,800 – HPC06/17. 2. That the Parks, Cemetery & Allotments Committee budget for 2017/18 be decreased by £8,000 (which is the sum estimated to re-surface the Junior Play Area) thus reducing the committee's 2017/18 budget to £12,600, and that payment for the project (if it went ahead in 2017/18) would be considered as soon as the matter arose – HPC07/17.**
 - 11.3 Circumference Pathway around the Parish Field. Cllr. Yates expressed disappointment that the Finance Committee was recommending the project be placed in abeyance due to budget constraints. The pathway would tie in to the other recreation facilities that the Parish Council owned nearby and could have numerous uses and bring in every age group. Cllr. O'Neill commented, that in terms of responses to the recent Budget Consultation, the pathway was the least popular. Year on year, the Parish Council was growing but should be mindful of using up its reserves. Cllr. Temple recognised that the current financial climate and competing budgets meant that the project was not feasible for 2017/18. The pathway could be funded primarily out of grants and match funding.

Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – to put in abeyance (for the foreseeable future), the project to create pathway around the field due to budget constraints – HPC08/19.**

11.4 Calculation of budget figures for 2017/18. Cllr. Temple commented that it would be wise to put notes where expenditure had been compensated by grant money and gave Sherwood Court project as an example which was very nearly cost-neutral. Cllr. Randles commented that the overspend on the current year's budget would deplete reserves and he recommended that the budgets were re-visited. This was not seconded. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – to accept the budget calculations for 2017/18 as £112,398 income and £112,398 expenditure – HPC09/17.**

11.5 Precept for Financial Year 2017/18. Much discussion ensued about paying out £13,000 from unspecified reserves for the extra funding required by the committee's. Cllr. Temple raised concern that this would drop the unspecified reserves to a low level. Ideally, the Parish Council should have 6 months running costs as a backup and, in this council's case, likely to be around £45k-£60k depending on the costs in the year. She recommended increasing the precept by £4,000 and to place that amount in reserve for essential re-surfacing in the children's park. This was not seconded and therefore it was proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – that the Parish Council to submit a precept request to Cheshire West and Chester Council for £87,260 based on budget calculations for the ensuing fiscal year 2017/18 (as now attached to the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 3rd Jan 2017 along with the justification of the precept request) and taking into account the £3,008 Council Tax Support Grant – HPC10/17.** A Band D property would pay £45.24 which is a rise of 1% on 2016/17.

11.6 Financial Statement. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – to accept the Financial Statement as at 3rd January 2017 (as now attached to the minute of the Finance Committee meeting dated 3rd Jan 2017) detailing £182,627.30 held in balances – HPC11/17.**

12. Burial Grants – no new applications received.

13. Councillor's surgery. Cllr. Kimpton read out the report from the surgery held on 7th January that he attended along with Cllrs. Randles and Temple:

Latham Avenue resident

- Enquired what action would be taken by CWaC when Gypsy / Travellers vacate the site on 19th May should they not adhere to the planning conditions – Clerk to contact CWaC;
- When would path between 3-Ways Lay-by and Horns Mill School be opened - we awaited news from United Utilities (the landowners);
- Would there be parking restrictions in the Lay-by to deter all-day/night parking – this would be a matter for Highways.

Lincoln Court resident

- Current status of Horse & Jockey site – there had been a Heritage Assessment and the conclusion was that the current building did not have enough historical value;
- Planning application for former Bike Shop – the Clerk would report facts later in the meeting;
- Robin Hood development – new street sign. Resident had spoken to site owners and was awaiting a response. Brief discussion about the reduced value of properties that were now beginning to sell;
- Tuesday Club – leftover funds (from closure) were being distributed to three charities;

- Application for 20mph and how that would be enforced – unknown at this time;
- Changes to bus routes;
- Positive feedback for the Ho Ho Helsby group and hopes that the Christmas festival would be organised for Christmas 2017.

Red Stone Hill resident

- Hedge cuttings left on road side Rake Lane – Cllr. Randles confirmed that the cuttings had been removed.

14. Cheshire West and Chester Council

14.1 Cllr. McKie was not able to attend but had written reports on Wind Farm LLC and proposed 20mph. See details below:

Frodsham Wind Farm LLC meeting held on 6th Jan

- Complaint Register – one complaint received about near-miss (no wind farm traffic involved)
- Commission Date – mid-February
- Annual Meeting – 10th March 17.

Proposed 20mph

- Cllr. McKie had attended a number of meetings. On 15th Dec, he attended a meeting with the Leader of the Council to emphasise the number of formal letters of objection and various village petitions objecting the proposed blanket 20mph for Helsby. Her response was as follows:
 - a) The introduction of a 20mph speed programmed across the Borough was part of their party manifesto.
 - b) It was considered opinion that blanket coverage using 20mph speed control allowed drivers to assume all areas were 20 mph unless otherwise designated and respond by driving appropriately (safely).
 - c) Savings generated by identifying a reduction of some 80/90% signage could not automatically be reallocated to other road improvements highlighted within the village. This logic was not accepted by Cllr. McKie as it was evident that a number of Helsby's road/traffic needs required safety considerations and could be better funded than the need for a blanket 20mph speed signage.
 - d) It was agreed that Cllr. K Shore the portfolio holder for environment should have the opportunity to consider our proposals and respond. The response could include answers as to the source of the £800k/£1mill funding stream.

14.2 Safer Together. Meeting at Helsby High School on 1st Feb 2.30-4pm. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles kindly agreed to attend.

14.3 Electoral Review of Cheshire West and Chester Council. Town & Parish Council briefing 1st Feb 7-8.30pm at Chester Town Hall. Cllrs. Holder, Hulse, Temple and the Parish Clerk agreed to attend.

14.4 B5393 Tarvin Road – Cllr. Hulse reported that School Lane Manley had been designated 20 mph – duly noted.

15. Marshes Community Benefit Fund – now being advertised via Facebook. Town / Parish Councils could apply to the fund for capital schemes (not general running costs) – noted.

16. Frodsham Wind Farm LLC – already covered in Cllr. McKie's report Item 14.1.

17. Helsby Community Sports Club – Half-Marathon 15th Jan.

18. Helsby Community Association. Cllr. O'Neill reported that the car park was full in the afternoon of 9th Jan even though the Community Centre/Library/Health Centre were empty.
19. Weaver & Sandstone Cycle Forum. Cllrs. Ellams & Duffy and Mr David Temple have arranged a meeting on Monday to discuss strategy prior to the forum meeting on Wednesday – duly noted.
20. Protos – waiting to hear from the Air Quality Monitoring meeting.
21. Ho Ho Helsby Christmas Event Group. De-brief meeting scheduled for Tuesday. Amount outstanding £759 owed to the Parish Council for invoices paid on behalf of the group, would be paid by cheque.

22. Miscellaneous Matters
 - 22.1 Donation Request. Proposed by Cllr. Hulse, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED - That the Council, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure which, in the Council's opinion is in the interest of the area and its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure to donate £250 to North West Air Ambulance towards their running costs – HPC12/17.** Cllr. Randles asked that the minutes note he objected to the donation on the grounds of limited funds.

23. Transport Matters – Cllr. Ellams reported the following:
 - Bus – changes afoot on the No. 21 service. It would run normally Mon-Sat. It would turn around at Helsby and not go through to Chester on Sunday – this was subject to confirmation;
 - Near misses caused by drones. Government looking at tougher penalties and making the devices electronically identifiable;
 - Resident reported several near misses between commercial and private aircraft. Cllr. Ellams had reported this to LJLA. The Noise Monitoring Committee, who have access to flight information, would investigate;
 - Parking Strategy – CWAC roadshow / workshop coming to Tesco Car Park 12th Jan 3-7pm.
 - Cllr. Holder proposed making a walkway (next to railway lines) from Eccies Car Park to Helsby Station. Cllr. Temple reported that this had been considered in the past but vetoed on Health & Safety grounds.

24. Cheshire Association of Local Councils
 - 24.1 NALC – confirmation of no extension of referendum principles. Government decision not to extend council tax referendum principles to any size of parish or town council in 2017/18. NALC issued a statement thanking the parish council for its support – duly noted.

25. Planning
 - 25.1 The members had no objections to the following proposal:
Hillside Primary School – Extension of Timber Framed canopy – 16/05448/FUL
 - 25.2 Land on junction of The Rock and Robin Hood Lane (Greenbelt). Request from Barton Willmore to attend another meeting with Cranford Estates to discuss their client's options. Proposed by Cllr. Hulse, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED – to agree to meet with Barton Willmore / Cranford Estates to discuss their client's options for land at The Rock / Robin Hood Lane – HPC13/17.** Members attending would not be able to assist the developer in any way other than referring to the made Helsby Neighbourhood Plan.

25.3 Brookhouse. The Clerk circulated the coloured plans for INEOS site. These had been provided for the Parish Council as an extra copy of the planning application for Reserved Matters that was on its way.

25.4 Decisions received from Planning:

16/02407/FUL 205 Chester road (change of use to restaurant) Withdrawn

16/04391/FUL 9 Bank House Lane (single storey detached garage) Approved

That in relation to the withdrawal of plans for the Bike Shop, Cllr. McKie had spoken to the Clerk informing her that the plans would be submitted in Jan/Feb 2017. The comments from neighbouring properties had been sent into Planning and were available on the website. The agent had viewed said comments and, acting on their client's behalf, had undertaken a Noise Assessment Survey which would be included in the re-application. Cllr. McKie would call it in to Planning Committee – duly noted.

26. Accounts

26.1 Bank Reconciliation. The Chairman checked the figures against the corresponding bank statement and confirmed that they were correct. Proposed by Cllr. Hulse, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED – that the Bank Reconciliation Sheet detailing £178,221.01 held in balances as at 9th January 2017 be accepted as accurate and that bank statements be initialled by the Chairman – HPC14/17.**

26.2 Payments for December 2016 to early January 2017. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Hulse and **RESOLVED – that the following payments totalling £8,105.41 be passed for payment: - HPC15/17.**

Chq No.	To whom paid	Particulars of Payment	Amount £
502			
7	Employees	December 2016 – salaries	1,868.06
-30	Neuro Muscular Centre	Print cost of Helsby News Winter 16 edition	524.00
503	HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE & NI on December salaries	483.85
1	Jeanette E Hughes	Travel expenses – Frodsham £2.40	
503		Mobile phone use 01.01.16 – 31.12.16 £60.00	
2		Refreshments for Grant Show £8.66	
503		Photocopier paper £31.17	102.23
3	Mr T J O'Neill	Travel expenses – Northwich	13.60
	E.ON	Electricity – Lantern Lights	86.07
	CWaC	Community Centre 2015/16 charges	4,595.22
503	Strong Brickwork & Constr	December office rent	300.00
4	Scottish Power	Electricity – Community Centre	106.00
503	UU	Water - same	26.38
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27. Date of the next meetings:

Parks Cemetery & Allotments Committee – Monday, 23rd January

Human Resources Committee – Monday, 30th January

Helsby Parish Council – Monday, 13th February

The meeting closed at 8.37pm

Chairman's signature.....Dated.....

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