



Helsby Parish Council

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minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held virtually at 7pm on Monday 8th June 2020
via Zoom

Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chairman	Cllr. Chris Ellams	Cllr. Michelle Massey
Cllr. Alan Gardner (from 7:24pm)	Cllr. Mags Porter	Cllr. Patricia Holder
Cllr. Terry O’Neill	Cllr. Sarah Temple	Cllr. Mike Branigan
Cllr. John Kimpton (from 7:08pm)	Cllr. George Randles	Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

In attendance:

Mrs Marj Thoburn – Helsby News
PCSO, Lauren Davies

1. Election of Chairman. Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Porter and **RESOLVED – that Cllr. Peter Duffy be elected as Chairman of Helsby Parish Council for municipal year 2020/21 – HPC28/20.** Cllr. Duffy to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as soon as possible which the Clerk would countersign.

Election of Vice-Chairman. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that Cllr. Terry O’Neill be elected as Vice-Chairman of Helsby Parish Council for municipal year 2020/21 – HPC29/20.**

Appointment of Standing Committees.

Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED that the following councillors and chairmen/vice-chairmen be appointed to serve on the following committees until the next AGM – HPC30/20:**

Note that the chairman & vice-chairman of the parish council are *ex-officio* members of all committees

- a) Environment Committee
Cllrs. O’Neill (Chairman), Ellams (Vice Chairman), Massey, Duffy and Branigan.
- b) Health & Safety Committee
Cllrs. Gardner (Chairman), Ellams (Vice Chairman), Massey, O’Neill and Duffy
- c) Parks, Cemetery & Allotments
Cllrs. Temple (Chairman), Kimpton (Vice Chairman), Gardner, Holder, O’Neill, Duffy and Randles.
- d) Human Resources
Cllrs. Porter (Chairman), O’Neill (Vice Chairman), Temple, Massey, Duffy and Branigan.
- e) Standing Orders
Cllrs. Temple, O’Neill, Branigan and Duffy.
- f) Finance
Cllrs Gardner, Temple, O’Neill, Porter, Duffy and Randles.

Chairman's Allowance.

Proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED – that the parish council, in accordance with ss.15(5) & 34(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, approve payment of £150 Chairman's allowance to Peter Duffy to meet the expenses of office – HPC31/20.**

2. Chairman's Annual Address and Financial Statement for year ending 31st March 2020. Cllrs received the Chairman's address which had also been posted on the council's website with a link via the June edition of Helsby News. A report outlining the receipts and payments account for the financial year ending 31st March 2020 (the 'financial statement') was also presented. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill and proposed by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED – that the financial statement for year ending 31st March 2020 be accepted as an accurate record – HPC32/20.** Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer to sign the statement as soon as possible after the meeting. It was suggested by Cllr Temple that the council could consider if it would be appropriate to give the address at the postponed Annual Parish Meeting if/when arranged.
3. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. Ellams, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED – that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC33/20.** Mrs Thoburn reported that everyone had agreed to continue with the village planters this year with remarkable enthusiasm despite the current COVID-19 climate. She also expressed concern about the current means of distribution of Helsby News online, meaning that it couldn't be relied on to reach all 2,500 homes in Helsby. She asked the council to assist with an ongoing review of distribution of the publication and suggested setting up a working group to consider how to move forward. Cllr Duffy agreed to liaise further with Mrs Thoburn on the matter and send out an e-mail inviting volunteers to join the proposed group.
Proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED - that the council reimburse the Village Produce Association for £33 for providing compost for the village planters – HPC34/20.**
Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC35/20.**
4. Apologies for absence – none were received. It was noted that Cllr. Gardner had notified the clerk that he would be late in joining the meeting.
5. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 16 as both were Executive Members of Helsby Community Sports Club.
6. Police Matters
 - 6.1 PCSO Davies reported as follows:
 - Anti-Social Behaviour on Helsby Hill
Police patrols had been active on foot on the hill following reports of anti-social behaviour and setting off fireworks. Also parking issues reported in the area.
 - Off Road Bikes
Following a number of incidents reported in relation to off-road bikes in the Frodsham, Helsby and Elton areas, police recently seized 3 bikes in Ince. Police have also received a number of reports of off-road bikes behind the row of shops on Chester Road (behind Thrifty and chip shop).

- Speeding on Chester Road

Trucam has been deployed at various locations on Chester Road and speeds will continue to be monitored over the coming days.

6.2 No members reports were received.

7. Cheshire West and Chester Council

7.1 Councillors noted a letter from HPC supporting CW&C's proposed bid to the Department for Transport for a demand responsive transport service trial in Frodsham, Helsby and surrounding areas.

7.2 Cllr. Bowers did not attend.

7.3 No reports were received.

8. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th April 2020 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – HPC36/20.** Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED – that all the resolutions agreed to at the meeting on the 9th April be resolved officially at this meeting – HPC37/20.** Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the catch-up meeting held on 11th May 2020 be accepted as accurate – HPC38/20.**

9. Matters arising from the previous meeting

9.1 The following member's reports were received

- Progress on the re-opening of Old Chester Road. Cllr. O'Neill reported that despite several attempts to contact CW&C Highways following the completion of the outstanding work from the homeowner, the road remained closed. Proposed by Cllr O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to write to the Chief Executive of CW&C to complain about the lack of action from their Highways Department and to state that it was unacceptable that the road had been closed for 3 years in July. Clerk to action - HPC39/20.**
- HPC's response to COVID-19. Following a coronavirus response sub-group meeting held on 14 April, the council circulated some information via the website and noticeboards and put some money aside to assist with any financial requests. No feedback has been received as yet. Cllr. Temple suggested that the council considers drawing up a statement/risk assessment regarding the impact of returning to work on its employees after COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted (see ChALC briefing from 29th May). Cllr. Porter to draft a statement and liaise with the clerk about any potential health and safety issues in the workplace.
- Purchase of Zoom software. The council has taken out a Zoom subscription on a monthly basis. The clerk outlined that the council could consider taking out an annual subscription following some offers sent through via e-mail. Clerk to bring a proposal for an annual subscription to the next meeting.
- Planning query on Towers Lane. Councillor Bowers and Rob Charnley (Acting Head of Planning, CW&C) have responded to HPC to say that inspections will be carried out on the development once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

10. Human Resources Matters

10.1 Retirement of general assistant, Mr Jones, and allocation of his duties. The chairman outlined that Mr Jones had resigned from the council at the end of May 2020. The

clerk agreed to send a letter to acknowledge his resignation and thank him for his long-service with the council. It was agreed that a working party would be set up to look at a more effective way of recording general assistant working times and duties as well as other general HR matters with employees such as holidays and sickness. Clerk and Cllr. Porter to organise. In terms of a replacement for the vacant post, proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Porter and **RESOLVED to draft a specification and advert to seek to appoint a contractor to carry out any ongoing work previously carried out by the retired general assistant (mainly in respect of Helsby Cemetery) – HPC40/20.** It was agreed to target any local businesses that may be interested in bidding for the work. In the meantime, the remaining general assistant to be requested to assist with any cemetery duties, wherever possible.

- 10.2 To accept the ad-hoc employment of Interim Parish Clerk, Jim Stockton. It was noted that Jim had been a source of invaluable support in helping the new clerk to settle into the role and it would be useful to keep him on the council's books, particularly for any financial queries in future. Proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to accept the ad-hoc employment of Interim Parish Clerk, Jim Stockton – HPC41/20.**

11. Financial Matters

- 11.1 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to accept the Balance Sheet, detailing receipts and payments and Bank Reconciliation for year ending 31st March 2020, as accurate – HPC42/20.** To be duly signed by the Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer.
- 11.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to appoint JDH Business Services Ltd to carry out the internal audit of the parish council's accounts for Financial Year ending 31st March 2020 – HPC43/20.** Their fee for 2020 is £275.40 plus VAT.
- 11.3 It was noted that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3 – External Audit 31st March 2020 would be sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP by the request date of 31st July 2020.
- 11.4 It was noted that a VAT reclaim for the previous fiscal year ending 31st March 2020 had been requested from HM Revenue & Customs for £4,605.85. The parish clerk reported that this payment had now been made.
- 11.5 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED to accept the bank reconciliations for April and May 2020 – HPC44/20.**
- 11.6 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED to approve and note the council's receipts (£122,767.21) and payments paid by either standing order, direct debit, cheque or under delegated authority (£11,122.63) for April and May as outlined below – HPC45/20.**

Payments

Date	Method	To whom paid	Particulars of payment	Amount
1.4.20	SO	Arndale Transport	Rent April 2020	£320.00
30.4.20	CHQ	C Jones - clerk	Salary April 2020	£710.72
30.4.20	CHQ	J Robotham	Salary April 2020	£364.00
30.4.20	CHQ	S Jones	Salary April 2020	£315.15
30.4.20	CHQ	J Stockton	Salary April 2020	£630.00
Date	Method	To whom paid	Particulars of payment	Amount

30.4.20	CHQ	HMRC	Tax and NI April 2020	£852.26
30.4.20	CHQ	BT	Line rental	£82.77
16.04.20	DD	Water Plus	Water - community centre	£30.48
20.4.20	BACS	Play Safety	Playground inspection	£206.40
23.4.20	DD	Siemens Financial	Lease photocopier	£207.81
15.4.20	DD	Scottish Power	Electricity - comm centre	£166.00
1.5.20	SO	Arndale Transport	Rent - May 2020	£320.00
7.5.20	CHQ	Microsoft	365 subscription	£59.99
7.5.20	CHQ	C Jones	Stamps and office supplies	£26.83
7.5.20	CHQ	ICCM	ICCM Membership	£95.00
7.5.20	CHQ	E.On	Bridge lighting	£130.65
7.5.20	CHQ	Horticon	Footpath S106 retention	£885.74
7.5.20	CHQ	DTM Legal	HCSC Grant Agreement	£600.00
7.5.20	CHQ	C Jones	Zoom - April 2020	£14.39
15.5.20	DD	WaterPlus	Water - community centre	£30.48
28.5.20	BACS	J Robotham	Expenses (petrol/sealant)	£14.12
28.5.20	BACS	Northwich TC	Park - grass cutting	£646.80
28.5.20	BACS	Old Vicarage Tree S	Tree work	£540.00
28.5.20	BACS	C Jones	Stamps	
£15.60				
28.5.20	BACS	Alvanley Agricultural	Strimmer service	£120.50
28.5.20	BACS	BT	Line rental	£82.77
28.5.20	DD	NEST	Ee/Er Pension contr.	£244.47
28.5.20	BACS	HMRC	Tax and NI May 2020	£790.16
28.5.20	BACS	J Stockton	Salary May 2020	£339.85
28.5.20	BACS	J Robotham	Salary May 2020	£364.00
28.5.20	BACS	C Jones	Salary May 2020	£1,388.61
28.5.20	BACS	S Jones	Salary May 2020	£315.15
28.5.20	DD	Scottish Power	Electricity - comm centre	£166.00
15.5.20	BACS	S Jones	Wood, petrol, weedkiller	£45.93

Receipts

Date	Method	From whom paid	Particulars of payment	Amount
3.4.20	BACS	J Hughes	Ashes burial - Shiels	£260.00
14.4.20	BACS	CW&C	Precept - 2020/21	£100,218.00
16.4.20	101004	M Statham	Ashes burial - Statham	£820.00
16.4.20	101003	V Mokring	Refund - VE Day poster	£72.60
20.4.20	BACS	Co Op Dep Acc	Interest on savings	
£189.96				
30.4.20	101005	J C Clarke	Ashes burial – Warren	
£500.00				
30.4.20	BACS	CW&C	Covid-19 grant	
£10,000.00				
30.4.20	Auto	Natwest Interest	Interest April 20	£4.14
16.4.20	BACS	D Williams	Allotment rent	
£23.50				
27.4.20	BACS	E Bougen	Allotment rent	
£10.00				

1.5.20	BACS	Blackwells	Memorial stone fees	£150.00
5.5.20	BACS	CW&C	Covid-19 Grant CC	£10,000.00
12.5.20	DPC	D T Turner	Ashes Interment	£440.00
13.5.20	BACS	Blackwells	Memorial stone fees	£75.00
29.5.20	Auto	Natwest Interest	Interest on savings	£4.01

12. Approval of grant of authorities for burials/cremations and allotment leases

It was proposed by Cllr O'Neill and seconded by Cllr Randles and **RESOLVED to approve the following: Cremated Remains Strips to Mr Stephen Warren (CRS15) and Mr N Thomas (CRS16), grants for full-sized plots to Mr Cooper (unallocated) and Mr Trevett (C4) and allotments to Denise Williams (10RQD) and Eddie Bougen (13FQD) – HPC46/20.**

13. Helsby Community Association

13.1 Member's Reports. Cllr. Holder asked if the Chair or Secretary of Helsby Community Centre were aware of the £10,000 COVID-19 grant payment paid by CW&C to the parish council. Cllr. O'Neill outlined that a proposal was going to be made at the next Finance Committee to ringfence this grant for future improvements at the centre. Various suggestions were put forward in relation to projects that could be carried out using this money. It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED that the clerk would write to the committee to inform them that the parish council was in receipt of this grant and to ask for ideas for future projects – HPC47/20.**

13.2 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED that retrospective approval was given for the centre's insurance policy renewal with Allied Westminster for 2020/21 – HPC48/20.** For information, the premium for 2020/21 is £669.81.

14. Cycle North Cheshire

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated. Cllr. Duffy outlined that, despite various challenges, the group were looking at a route connecting the science park with the school. It was also acknowledged that the National Cycle Route through Helsby remained closed at Old Chester Road.

15. Marshes Community Benefit Fund – latest awards

Cllr. Ellams welcomed this report as the first time the council had been informed about the details of the awards made to each group. He outlined that there was still a considerable amount of monies left in the Fund and it may be worth mentioning this to any clubs and societies in the area that might benefit. Cllr. Temple noted that Sutton Weaver Parish Council had received funding in this round so the fund was clearly open to town and parish councils.

16. Helsby Community Sports Club

16.1 Cllr. Randles reported that progress continues on the new build and activity had increased since the lockdown restrictions had been lifted. Completion was expected in the Autumn.

16.2 It was noted that the £100,000 grant payment for the new centre from the parish council had been paid to the club and they had sent a letter of thanks to acknowledge the payment.

17. Miscellaneous Matters

17.1 It was outlined that the council had renewed its annual insurance with BHIB on 1st June 2020. The council is tied into a 3-year undertaking with this policy until 1/6/21. The premium for 2020/21 is £1,829.16.

17.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED that retrospective approval be given to the council’s membership renewal with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management ICCM Corporate Membership for 2020/21 at a cost of £95 – HPC49/20.**

17.3 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED that a quote be accepted from Northwich Town Council for £685 (ex VAT) to supply and install a new traveller mechanism to the cableway at Helsby play area – HPC50/20.** It was agreed that further information would be sought about the repair before the work was commissioned.

18. Transport Matters

Cllr. Ellams presented a written report with updates on the cancellation of M56 Junction 11A, the proposed removal of rail services on the Helsby to Ellesmere Port line, Merseyrail’s new 777 rolling stock and the return of the Danny boat which should be back on the Weaver in August.

19. Cheshire Association of Local Councils

No report was given.

20. Planning

20.1 The council’s responses to the following planning applications were duly noted:

Application No.	Application Address	Proposed Development	Comments
20/00772/FUL	Cattle shed at Hope Farm	Single storey extension to side	None lodged
20/00959/S73	213 Chester Road	Variation of opening hours	None lodged
20/01033/FUL	Acorn Crag, 134 Chester Road	Construction of single dwelling with integral garage	Comments lodged on 14/4/20
20/01026/FUL	14 Landscape Dene	Two-storey side extension	Comments lodged on 29/4/20
20/01198/FUL	25 Old Chester Road	Erection of one dwelling	Comments lodged on 29/4/20
20/01219/FUL	Roslin, 116B Chester Rd	Erection of detached garage	No objections lodged on 7/5/20
20/01148/FUL	Land at HCSC	Vehicular and pedestrian access bridge, and associated works	Support lodged on 7/5/20
20/01187/FUL	Helsby Post Office	Sub-division of existing dwelling to create 3 apartments	Comments lodged on 14/5/20
20/00692/LBC	Helsby Railway Station	Remove and replace existing ticket vending machine	No objections lodged on 6/5/20
20/01384/FUL	45 Lower Robin Hood Lane	Single storey extension and porch	No objections lodged on 18/5/20

A note detailing the council's specific comments on the above applications was circulated before the meeting and the clerk confirmed these had been sent to CWAC as part of the council's role as statutory consultee.

20.2 The council noted the following planning decisions from the planning authority:

Date received	App Number	Decision	Address
14/4/20	19/04508/FUL	Approval	Tree Tops
15/4/20	19/01941/FUL	Refusal	6 Queens Drive
15/4/20	20/00652/FUL	Approval	203-205 Chester Road
20/4/20	19/00965/FUL	Approval	Land at Proffits Lane
20/4/20	20/00426/FUL	Approval	Brook House
21/4/20	19/03624/OUT	Approval	Land To The Front of 132 Chester Road
27/04/20	20/00815/FUL	Approval	8 Rockfield Drive
30/4/20	20/00352/FUL	Approval	Gwarth Glen
7/5/20	20/00959/S73	Approval	213 Chester Road
11/5/20	20/00681/FUL	Approval	2 Gorsefield
18/5/20	20/00481/FUL	Approval	Ingleside
27/5/20	20/01033/FUL	Approval	Acorn Crag
1/6/20	20/01219/FUL	Approval	Roslin, 116B Chester Rd

20.3 Members Reports - Cllr Temple reported that application number 20/01026/FUL Landscape Dene had come back with revised plans for a single-storey extension. No objections were lodged with CW&C on 2 June 2020. Cllr. Temple also expressed concern about the traffic lights at the top of Rake Lane related to the work associated with Rake Cottage. Clerk to contact CW&C to establish what the plans are for this in the long term.

21. Dates of next council meetings

Next full council meeting to be held via Zoom on 6th July at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.21pm

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