



Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held virtually at 7pm on Monday 9th November 2020 via Zoom

Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chairman
Cllr. Alan Gardner
Cllr. Sarah Temple
Cllr. Mags Porter
Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Cllr. John Kimpton
Cllr. George Randles
Cllr. Mike Branigan
Cllr. Patricia Holder

Cllr. Michelle Massey
Cllr. Allan Fincham
Cllr. Terry O'Neill

In attendance:

Cllr. Paul Bowers, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Paul Tudor, Chief Bridge Engineer, Cheshire West and Chester Council for Item Part B (1)

1. Part B (1) – Exclusion of the Press and Public. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paras 7, 8, 9 and 12 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 – HPC145/20.**

PART B (1)

2. Confidential item – Councillors received a report from Paul Tudor, Chief Bridge Engineer, Cheshire West and Chester Council in relation to the closure of Old Chester Road. Duly noted. There being no other matters brought to the members' attention, it was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED that Part B (1) be closed and Part A be opened – HPC146/20.**

PART A

Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Randles and the Rotary Club for their hard work in planting the 3,500 daffodil bulbs along the A56 Chester Road. He asked councillors to note some amendments that had been made to forthcoming meeting dates (see Item 21). It was noted that he had laid a wreath on behalf of the parish council at St. Paul's Church on Remembrance Sunday. The Chairman outlined that the ceremony had been carried out with respect and dignity by Rev. Green despite the challenging current circumstances.

3. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC147/20.** There being no matters brought to the members' attention, it was proposed by Cllr. Kimpton, seconded by Cllr.

Holder and **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC148/20.**

4. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Ellams.
5. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 16. Cllr. O'Neill outlined that Helsby Community Sports Club was in the process of changing its constitution to a company limited by guarantee and he had been nominated as a director. He stated that no reimbursement would be made and that he would declare an interest if ever any financial dealings were raised by the parish council. He wished it to be noted that in NALC's Code of Conduct for Parish Councils, Part 12 states that if there is a matter relating to an interest in Appendix B, he would be allowed to speak but not to vote. Cllr. O'Neill said that once the new company had been established, he would update his Notification of Members' Interests form. He urged all councillors to check their Notification of Members' Interests forms and update where relevant. Cllr. Porter also highlighted good practice in that when a chair had declared an interest in an item, he/she should not chair that particular item.
6. Police Matters
 - 6.1 It was noted that PSCO Davies had sent her apologies and had sent a written report, outlining areas where the Trucam speed camera had been deployed and highlighting several incidents involving criminal damage around Lower Robin Hood Lane on 1st November. Members also noted the report she had circulated on 15th October.
 - 6.2 Members' reports – It was noted that the noticeboard at Sherwood Court had been vandalised and the perspex glass smashed along with one of the bins at the play area. The clerk to arrange for repair/replacement.
7. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2020 be accepted as accurate and be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity – HPC149/20.**
8. Matters arising from the previous meeting – the Clerk outlined that RSK had confirmed that they were now in a position to resume rent payments and pay any outstanding debts.
9. Cheshire West and Chester Council
 - 9.1 Correspondence was noted including a budget consultation, 'Unprecedented Times' (closing date 3 December), various Community Champion reports/events, two online engagement sessions on planning and highways and a briefing on a local avian flu outbreak.
 - 9.2 In relation to the closure of Old Chester Road, it was outlined that Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles had attended a site meeting on 15th October with CW&C's Chief Bridge Engineer and Cllr. Bowers. As the issue was sensitive in nature, CW&C had requested that any information given be treated as confidential. Given the high level of public interest in this matter, it was proposed by Cllr. Massey, seconded by Cllr. Porter and **RESOLVED that a statement be prepared setting out the Parish Council's position - HPC150/20.** It was agreed that this would be shared with CW&C before publication.
 - 9.3 It was outlined that a grant submission had been made to the Arts Council for the 'Helsby the Art of Here' project and a decision on funding was expected within the

next few weeks. The Clerk set out that negotiations had been held with the Vintage Tea Rooms to host the display screen and the first initiative was expected to include images from Ho Ho Helsby.

- 9.4 Cllr. O'Neill outlined that a draft appraisal of the proposed Helsby Hill Conservation Area had been prepared by CW&C. He stated that an article was being drafted for Helsby News and the document was planned to be available to view for six weeks from 4th January 2021 on the Helsby Parish Council website.
 - 9.5 Cllr. Bowers reported he had recently attended the first Full Council meeting of CW&C since the COVID outbreak where a poverty emergency had been launched. He outlined that he had also attended a Climate Task Force meeting and a Buses Committee as well as handling case work in Helsby.
 - 9.6 Cllr. Temple set out that she had attended a CW&C COVID Community Champions meeting where some local data on recent infections had been shared and various queries/personal issues had been raised. It was outlined that a venue for a local testing site was being sought as the proposed site in Frodsham had been deemed unsuitable.
10. Cllr. Temple presented the draft minutes of the Park, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held on 21st October 2020. The following was noted/agreed:
- 10.1 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to accept a decision not to install signage at the basketball practice court – HPC151/20;**
 - 10.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to accept the quote from Northwich Town Council to replace the worn end section of the cableway at a cost of £351.16 – HPC152/20;**
 - 10.3 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to accept the cemetery risk assessment – HPC153/20;**
 - 10.4 Cemetery garage door (see Part B 2);
 - 10.5 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to accept the proposed new layout for the central area in the cemetery – HPC154/20;**
 - 10.6 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to ask the cemetery contractor to complete some additional general maintenance work – HPC155/20;**
 - 10.7 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to purchase some small weatherproof signs to be displayed for 12 months on burial plots where remedial work was required – HPC156/20;**
 - 10.8 To appoint a contractor for the disposal of the spoil heap in the cemetery (see Part B 2).
11. Park, Cemetery and Allotments Matters
- 11.1 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to allow the cemetery contractor to undertake private work in the cemetery to tidy up graves as and when requested by grave owners/relatives – HPC157/20.** It was agreed that the Clerk would check that the cemetery contractor's risk assessment covered the maintenance of grave stones.
 - 11.2 Following a short discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED not to allow a request to hold dog training classes at the play area or the parish field on Lower Robin Hood Lane – HPC158/20.**

- 11.3 Allotments – it was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED to approve the following new tenancy at the Old Chester Road site: David Nield (7L) – HPC159/20.**

12. Financial Matters

- 12.1 Bank reconciliation. It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £217,390.93 held in balances as at 31st October be accepted as accurate – HPC160/20.**
- 12.2 Receipts and Payments. Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £7,165.97 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for October be approved and duly noted – HPC161/20.** The following receipts totalling £1,400.03 were also noted:

Payments

Arndale Transport	Rent - October 2020	320.00
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	129.00
Water Plus	Water - community centre	30.48
ICCM	Training course	324.00
EoN UK	Bridge lighting	132.09
Chris Ellams	Website hosting fee	59.99
Eddie Bougen	Cemetery maintenance	363.00
Claire Jones	Expenses – daffodils/office supplies	306.87
Carswell Creative	Helsby News printing	89.00
Northwich TC	Grass cutting	588.00
SLCC	Virtual conference	30.00
Northwich TC	Cableway repairs	1,242.00
BT	Line rental	82.77
Siemens FS	Photocopier lease	147.81
HPC Staff	Salaries Oct 2020	2,293.47
HMRC	Deductions Tax and NI Oct 2020	781.35
NEST	Pension contribution Oct	246.14

Receipts

Various	Allotment fees	129.00
Co-op	Interest on savings	77.82
CW&C	S106 reclaim	1,193.00
Natwest	Interest October 2020	0.21

- 12.3 The outcome of the external audit 31st March 2020 (Annual Governance & Accountability Return) was noted. The Clerk agreed to publish the Notice of Conclusion of Audit along with the certified AGAR (Sections 1, 2 & 3) before 30th November on the website and noticeboard as required. It was outlined that only one matter was brought to the Council’s attention in that there was a long delay in the period between approving Section 1 and 2 of the AGAR and the commencement of the public rights period. The Clerk noted that this was due to coronavirus restrictions.

- 12.4 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED to approve payment of £480 for completion of the external audit by PKF Littlejohn Ltd – HPC162/20.**
13. Cycle North Cheshire – Cllr. Duffy outlined that an AGM had been scheduled during the week commencing 16th November.
14. Protos – It was agreed that the Clerk would arrange a presentation with Enviroo (a company proposing to build a plastic recycling facility at the Protos site). Cllr. Temple outlined that the next Community Benefit Fund Committee meeting would be held on 18th November and the next Community Forum meeting was scheduled for 2nd December.
15. Helsby Community Association – Cllr. Branigan said that he would find it useful to hold regular meetings with representatives of HCA. Clerk to offer the Council's Zoom facility. Cllr. Porter also offered to support Cllr. Branigan.
16. Helsby Community Sports Club – Cllr. Randles outlined that the club was still on target to be completed by 4 December although this might now be delayed slightly due to the latest COVID lockdown. The Clerk reported that the draft lease for the HPC office remained with the Council's solicitor for comment.
17. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Cllr. O'Neill reported that a Finance Committee was being held on 12th November and an online AGM was scheduled on 19th November. Clerk to circulate the papers for the AGM.
18. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – Cllr. Ellams had circulated a report in advance of the meeting which was noted.
19. Miscellaneous Matters
- 19.1 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to donate £250 to the Royal British Legion for their 2020 Poppy Appeal – HPC163/20.**
- 19.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Porter, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED to purchase an office laptop – HPC164/20.** It was also noted that an application for £500 of grant funding towards this equipment has been made to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Members Budgets Award Scheme. Cllr. Bowers agreed to investigate progress with the grant application.
- 19.3 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to increase the Clerk's minimum leave entitlement from 21 to 22 days (to be prorated based on the Clerk's current working hours) following a recent agreement by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services – HPC165/20.**
- 19.4 Cllr. Temple proposed amending the COVID workplace statement to include some wording about the office being closed to the public and the clerk working from home as much as possible once the appropriate technology was in place. It was also suggested that the statement included wording about keeping a record of any visitors to the office and requesting all visitors to wear face masks. Subject to the above amendments, it was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to accept the COVID workplace statement – HPC166/20.** It was also outlined that the outdoor gym had been closed following the latest government restrictions. Clerk to

- look at the play area risk assessment to ensure any measures in place were still satisfactory.
- 19.5 Expenditure for the cost of installation of lights on the Christmas tree (see Part B 2).
 - 19.6 It was outlined that CW&C had accepted to install a replacement wooden handrail following damage to the current metal railings on the footpath between the top of Rake Lane leading to Vicarage Lane. However, following correspondence by a local resident that this would not be in keeping with the character of the area, CW&C had sent various quotes to the Parish Council for steel replacements, with any additional costs having to come from other sources (costing up to £600). It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED that the Council responds to CW&C to say that the issue was between the borough council and the property owner who damaged the railings, that the Parish Council was not prepared to offer a contribution and that the railing should be replaced on a like for like basis – HPC167/20.**
 - 19.7 C F Fertiliser’s response in relation to a resident’s complaint about storage of ammonium nitrate was noted. Clerk to forward the correspondence to the resident who had raised the issue.

20. Planning

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

20/00324/FUL Land at Cable Drive
Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 247 dwellings
Objections sent

20/03425/FUL Land At Longster Close Helsby
Erection of one dwelling
Neither objects nor supports

20/03594/FUL Teuthill Farm Tarvin Road
Change of use of land for dog agility training, exercising and walking
Supports

- 20.2 Application 20/00324/FUL Land at Cable Drive, Helsby – Cllr. Randles reported that the Council had received an offer of a meeting from the developers, Lane End, to discuss the points raised in its objection. It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED to accept to meet with Lane End – HPC168/20.** Clerk to also invite representatives from Dunham Hill and Hapsford Parish Council.
- 20.3 It was noted that there had been an issue with CW&C’s online planning notification service and planning notifications hadn’t been received by the Clerk for some time. The clerk reported that the issue appeared to have been resolved and the following notification was noted: 20/00772/FUL Annexe at Hope Farm, Blue Bridge Lane - REFUSAL.
- 20.4 Member’s reports – None were received.

21. Dates of the next Council meetings.

25th November 2020 Standing Orders Committee

25th November 2020	Human Resources Committee (note new meeting)
9th December 2020	Budget meetings – various committees
14th December 2020	Parish Council meeting (note new date)

It was requested that the Standing Orders and Human Resources Committees be held on different dates. Clerk to action.

- 22. Part B (2) – Exclusion of the Press and Public. Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paras 7, 8, 9 and 12 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 – HPC169/20.**

PART B (2)

- 22(a). To approve the Part B minutes of the previous meeting. Approved.
- 23. Confidential item – Ho Ho Helsby new Christmas lights tenders. Duly noted.
- 24. Confidential item – Cemetery garage door tenders. Duly noted.
- 25. Confidential item – Hedge and tree work. Duly noted.
- 26. Confidential item – Cemetery spoil heap disposal. Duly noted.

The meeting closed at 21:30pm

Chairman’s signature..... Dated.....