



Helsby Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held virtually at 7pm on Monday 8th February 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chair

Cllr. Alan Gardner

Cllr. Sarah Temple

Cllr. Patricia Holder

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Cllr. Chris Ellams

Cllr. George Randles

Cllr. Mike Branigan

Cllr. Michelle Massey

Cllr. Allan Fincham

Cllr. Terry O'Neill

In attendance:

Cllr. Paul Bowers, Cheshire West and Chester Council (from 7.42pm)

Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

Paul Standing (see Item 4)

One member of the public

Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced the resignation of Cllr. Kimpton. He noted his stalwart and long-serving input to the Council. It was agreed that the Clerk would draft a letter to thank him for his service and wish him well for the future. The Clerk was requested to inform CW&C and advertise the vacancy in North Ward. It was also noted that a letter had been received from Mike Amesbury MP in relation to a query from a local resident about the outdoor gym being currently closed. It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to say that the gym was closed following national lockdown legislation announced by the Prime Minister on 4 January 2021.

1. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC18/21**. Speaker one outlined his plans to set up an online club for the local community using Zoom and asked for endorsement and support for this from the Council. There being no other matters brought to the members' attention, it was proposed by Cllr. Ellams, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC19/21**.
2. No apologies for absence were received.
3. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 17.
4. Co-optation of Parish Councillor. The Chairman invited Paul Standing to address members to support his application to become a co-opted member of the Council for a vacancy in Central Ward. His CV had been circulated with the agenda and Mr Standing was asked several questions to define his suitability for the position. It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED unanimously that Paul Standing be co-opted onto the**

Council with immediate effect – HPC20/21. Mr Standing signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was obliged to complete a Register of Interest within 28 days.

5. Police Matters

5.1 It was noted that PCSO Davies had sent her apologies but had circulated a written report prior to the meeting. The Clerk was asked to contact her in relation to vehicles travelling along Rake Lane in the wrong direction and the large numbers of used nitrous oxide cannisters around the village.

5.2 The Clerk outlined that PCSO Davies had made a successful application to the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Policing Grant. This £500 award would be paid into the Parish Council's account and would supplement the £500 donation agreed by the Council at the December 2020 meeting for a road safety campaign. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED to accept the terms and conditions of the PCC Community Policing Grant – HPC21/21.**

5.3 Members' reports – nothing was raised.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2021 be accepted as accurate and be signed by the Chair at the earliest opportunity – HPC22/21.**

7. Matters arising – Cllr. O'Neill raised concern about the continued closure of Old Chester Road and the lack of any communication from the Borough Council on progress. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to write to CW&C's Chief Executive again to display HPC's dissatisfaction with his Highways Department and to request a timescale for re-opening – HPC23/21.** It was also proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to write to CW&C's Highways Department specifically in relation to the closure of Old Chester Road by Rake Lane – HPC24/21.**

8. Minutes of the previous Extraordinary meeting. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 19th January 2021 be accepted as accurate and be signed by the Chair at the earliest opportunity – HPC25/21.**

9. Matters arising – none were raised.

10. Cheshire West and Chester Council

10.1 Correspondence from CW&C was noted on the following: Trees for Climate funding; Rural Mobility Fund; Active Travel Fund consultation and the leisure, health and wellbeing sessions being held on 9 and 15 February.

10.2 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED that the Chairman and the Clerk would draft a Council response to CW&C's Public Waste Consultation – HPC26/21.**

10.3 Update on the 'Helsby The Art of Here' public art project - Cllr Ellams reported that he was working on a second presentation for the digital screen and interviews for the appointment of a creative producer would be held shortly.

- 10.4 In relation to the Helsby Hill Conservation Area project, Cllrs. Ellams, Standing, O'Neill and Massey agreed to meet to consider setting up an advisory committee and to produce a report for the next meeting.
- 10.5 Cllr. Bowers report – it was outlined that little progress had been made in relation to the re-opening of Old Chester Road by Rake Lane following the earlier wall collapse. He reported that the Council had commissioned an engineering firm to assess the wall and they had confirmed that the road was unsafe to open. He also stated that there had been further slippage due to the bad weather. In relation to the other closure along Old Chester Road, Cllr. Bowers outlined that a meeting was being arranged with a representative of the property owners. It was agreed that he would continue to discuss both projects with CW&C's Head of Highways, along with the associated poor signage and diversionary routes. The Chairman thanked him for his generous Member's Budgets award for a laptop. Cllr. Bowers said some monies were left in the fund this year if members had any suggestions.
- 10.6 No member reports were received.
11. Cllr. Temple presented the draft minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held on 18th January 2021. The following was agreed:
- 11.1 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to continue the grounds maintenance contract with Northwich Town Council for 2021/22 – HPC27/21;**
- 11.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED go to competitive tender for the Council's grounds maintenance contract from 2022/23 and beyond – HPC28/21;**
- 11.3 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED to purchase 8 small signs for various neglected graves in the cemetery as well as a larger sign for the spoil heap 'Grave diggings only' at a cost of £120 – HPC29/21;** and
- 11.4 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Holder and **RESOLVED to continue the cemetery maintenance contract with Helsby Garden Services until 31 October 2021 – HPC30/21.**
12. Cllr. Temple presented the draft minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 25th January 2021. She outlined that she had been elected as Chair of the committee following the resignation of Cllr. Porter. She also welcomed Cllr. Fincham to the committee. The following was agreed:
- 12.1 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to approve the clerk's workplan for 2021 – HPC31/21.** It was outlined that no formal appraisal would be held with the Clerk this year but an informal exercise would be carried out shortly with the Chairs of the Full Council and the HR Committee; and
- 12.2 It was agreed that the future requirements for the general assistant's role would be discussed under Part B, given that various options were still being explored.
13. Financial Matters
- 13.1 Bank reconciliation. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £215,832.21 held in balances as at 31st January be accepted as accurate – HPC32/21.**
- 13.2 Receipts and Payments. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £11,352.79 paid by either standing**

order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for January be approved and duly noted – HPC33/21. The following receipts totalling £23,335.70 were also noted:

Payments

Arndale Transport	Rent – January 2021	£320.00
Scottish Power	Electricity – Community Centre	£129.00
Water Plus	Water – Community Centre	£30.48
Liverpool Doc Systems	Photocopier service charge	£62.65
C Jones – clerk	Stationery – labels	£10.99
Water Plus	Allotment water charge	£47.67
ICCM	Cemetery training fees	£324.00
ICCM	Cemetery training fees	£192.00
Eon	Bridge Lighting	£132.09
AMR Technical	Christmas lights installation	£7,065.30
Geosphere	Parish Online subscription	£96.00
Wirral Transport Ass.	Subscription fees	£8.00
C Jones - clerk	Office paper	£15.99
Siemens Fin Services	Photocopier lease	£147.81
HPC Staff	Salaries Jan 2021	£1,929.79
HMRC	Deductions Tax and NI Jan 2021	£594.88
NEST	Pension contribution Jan 21	£246.14

Receipts

RSK Group Ltd	Rent Apr 20 - Mar 21	£12,240.00
L Bradley	Allotment fees	£23.50
CW&C	Members Budget Grant	£500.00
Scottish Power	Refund - electricity comm centre	£672.00
Arts Council Grant	Helsby the Art of Here Grant	£9,900.00
Natwest	Interest January 2021	£0.20

14. Cycle North Cheshire – Cllr. Duffy outlined that a meeting was being held on 11th February specifically to discuss the feasibility of a bridleway/cycleway between Helsby and Mouldsworth. CNC’s current survey in relation to the cycle path between Frodsham and Helsby High School was also noted. Cllr. Randles requested that any daffodil bulbs removed as part of this project should be reinstated once the path had been completed.

15. Protos – no report was given (next meeting dates as recorded in the January minutes).

16. Helsby Community Association – The Clerk reported that a refund of £672 had been received from Scottish Power due to overpayments on the electricity account. She outlined that the direct debit payments would now be £116 a month. Cllr. Branigan agreed to explore other energy suppliers for a cost comparison.

17. Helsby Community Sports Club - Cllr. Randles outlined that the club was ready to open once lockdown restrictions had been lifted. He reported the committee was waiting for a response from CW&C in relation to changing to a company limited by guarantee. It was noted that the Chairman and Clerk had visited the club to view the new parish office.

18. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Cllr. O’Neill reported that he had circulated the results of a survey carried out by ChALC in relation to speeding. He also reported that he had attended a meeting with the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership in relation to Beeston and Middlewich railway station upgrades.
19. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – Cllr. Ellams circulated a report which was noted. He outlined that passenger flights in and out of Liverpool Airport were considerably lighter than usual but noted that Jaguar Land Rover had recently hired a Russian freight aircraft to move car parts from the airport. He outlined that the next Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee meeting would take place on 19th February. It was noted that applications for the Marshes Community Benefit Fund were open until 28th February and the next meeting of the Frodsham Wind Farm Local Liaison Group was scheduled for 26th February.
20. Miscellaneous Matters
- 20.1 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to purchase a HP ProBook 450 G7 15.6" FHD laptop with i5 at a cost of £635 plus VAT at £127 – HPC34/21.**
- 20.2 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED to approve a request by M & Y Maintenance and Construction, site managers for the development on Springfield Avenue, to set up a parking area with appropriate health and safety measures on an area of Council-owned land off Lower Robin Hood Lane – HPC35/21.** It was agreed that the Clerk would write to local residents to advise them about the use of the land until around November 2021.
- 20.3 Due to difficulties gaining access during normal working hours, it was proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED not to carry out this year’s annual service of the parish clock – HPC36/21.**
- 20.4 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED for Cllr. Fincham to attend a ChALC training course on ‘Chairmanship for Local Councils’ at a cost of £25 – HPC37/21.**
- 20.5 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED to renew the Council’s subscription with the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society at a cost of £22.50 – HPC38/21.**
- 20.6 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED in principle to enter into a 25-year term property agreement with Peel for the air quality monitoring station at the old Eccies site with a 12 month notice period to terminate on either side – HPC39/21.**
- 20.7 Members discussed the plans for an online Zoom club for the local community raised during Agenda Item 1. It was agreed that Cllr. Ellams would explore the matter further and bring a proposal to the next meeting.
- 20.8 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED to approve a retrospective payment of £98 to Northwich Town Council for the urgent removal of a damaged litter bin in the play area – HPC40/21.**

21. Planning

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

20/04662/FUL

88 Robin Hood Lane Helsby

	Two storey side and single storey side extension No objections
20/03481/FUL	20 Mountain View Helsby Single storey side extension No objections
20/03044/OUT	Land At 18 Crescent Drive Helsby Erection of one dwelling Object – same as previously
21/00084/S73	Land At Longster Close Helsby Variation of condition 2 (plans) of planning permission 20/03425/FUL Awaiting comments

21.2 The following planning notifications were received:

20/02920/FUL	10 Kings Drive Helsby	Approval
20/03046/FUL	Afton 59 Bates Lane Helsby	Approval
20/02908/FUL	33 Queens Drive Helsby	Approval
20/03481/FUL	20 Mountain View Helsby	Approval

21.3 Application 20/00324/FUL Land at Cable Drive, Helsby – It was noted that Cllr. Randles had circulated some further information about the development. It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED that the Chairman and Cllr. Bowers would make representations should the proposal go to CW&C’s Planning Committee on 2 March – HPC41/21.** It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Dunham Hill and Hapsford Parish Council to request that they make similar representations. In relation to the Vision group, it was confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for 19th February.

21.4 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Gardner and **RESOLVED for Cllr. Temple to attend 2 ChALC planning courses at a cost of £30 each: ‘The Role of Local Councils in Town Planning’ and ‘Important Planning Concepts’; and for Cllr. Fincham to attend ChALC’s ‘Introduction to Planning’ course at £30 – HPC42/21.**

21.5 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to amend the Procedure for Reviewing Planning Applications (Appendix 1 of Standing Orders) so that Clause 2b) states “A minimum of two [instead of three] ward members should review any application” – HPC43/21.** It was agreed that this change would take effect immediately, with the Appendix being formally amended at the next meeting of Standing Orders Committee.

21.6 Members’ reports – nothing was raised.

22. Dates of the next Council meetings.

10 th February 2021	Human Resources Committee (recruitment)
22 nd February 2021	Health and Safety Committee
22 nd February 2021	Environment Committee
8 th March 2021	Parish Council meeting

23. Part B – Exclusion of the Press and Public. Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham 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 – HPC44/21.**

PART B

24. Councillors approved the recruitment of a new general assistant on a 10-hour per week permanent contract and devolved any decision making on the appointment to a recruitment panel. They also agreed to offer work relating to both sets of allotments, the VPA area and any ad-hoc strimming to Helsby Garden Services as an additional element to their existing contract.

The meeting closed at 9.11pm

Chairman’s signature..... Dated.....