



# Helsby Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held virtually at 7pm on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via Zoom

### Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chair	Cllr. Chris Ellams	Cllr. Michelle Massey
Cllr. Alan Gardner	Cllr. George Randles	Cllr. Allan Fincham
Cllr. Sarah Temple	Cllr. Mike Branigan	Cllr. Terry O'Neill
Cllr. Patricia Holder (from 7.12pm)	Cllr. Paul Standing	
Claire Jones, Parish Clerk		

### In attendance:

Cllr. Paul Bowers, Cheshire West and Chester Council  
Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

### Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that CW&C had been informed of the latest councillor vacancy in North Ward and Cllr. Kimpton had received a letter accepting his resignation along with a thank you card and a small token of appreciation. He also thanked members for their positive feedback in relation to the parish clerk's appraisal. It was outlined that the clerk's core hours would be Mon-Thurs 10am to 2pm and Friday 10am to midday. The Chairman asked members if they could contact her during these hours where possible. He also asked for input from Committee chairs in relation to this year's Chairman's Annual Report before the end of March.

1. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC48/21**. There being no matters brought to the members' attention, it was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC49/21**.
2. No apologies for absence were received.
3. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs. O'Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 15. Cllr. Ellams declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 18.7.
4. Police Matters
  - 4.1 Apologies were noted from PCSO Davies. Members noted the contents of a written report which she had circulated prior to the meeting. Concerns were expressed about the use of an electric bike on Helsby playing field.
  - 4.2 Members' reports – Cllr. O'Neill outlined that ChALC had organised a Zoom meeting on 16 March to continue dialogue on speeding following the results of their recent survey.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 with the following amendment - Item 11.4 reworded to: 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 – HPC50/21.**  
They would be signed by the Chair at the earliest opportunity.
  
6. Matters arising – The Clerk confirmed that no election had been called for the recent vacancy in North Ward, so the Council could now co-opt. It was noted that a response had not been received from CW&C’s Chief Executive in relation to the Council’s latest letter on the closure of Old Chester Road.
  
7. Cheshire West and Chester Council
  - 7.1 No correspondence from CW&C was noted.
  - 7.2 Update on the ‘Helsby The Art of Here’ public art project – Cllr. Ellams reported that interviews for the appointment of a creative producer would be held shortly. The Chairman asked if any other members would like to assist with the project but no interest was expressed.
  - 7.3 In relation to the Helsby Hill Conservation Area project, Cllr. Ellams, outlined that members of the group were yet to meet although he had contacted CW&C for some further information. It was noted that little support had been expressed for the designation during the initial consultation.
  - 7.4 Cllr. Bowers report – in relation to the closure of Old Chester Road by Rake Lane following the earlier wall collapse, it was outlined that there was a pending legal situation involving a third party. With regards to the other closure along Old Chester Road, Cllr. Bowers reported that he had arranged a meeting shortly with the landowner and CW&C Highways to progress matters. It was also noted that the Honeywell application would probably be discussed by CW&C’s Planning Committee in April or May as additional information had been submitted and was currently being considered by the planning officers.
  - 7.5 No member reports were received.
  
8. Cllr. Gardner presented the draft minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 22 February. The following was agreed:
  - 8.1 A draft risk assessment in relation to the potential health and safety requirements for a new general assistant was noted. Cllr. Standing suggested including bites and stings as a risk and the need to make sure operating instructions and PPE was available. It was agreed that this would be considered further under Part B (Item 24).
  
9. Cllr. O’Neill presented the draft minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 22 February. The following was noted/agreed:
  - 9.1 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED to postpone the Best Kept Village Awards for another 12 months due to continuing COVID restrictions – HPC51/21**; and
  - 9.2 It was noted that quotations were being sought for tree surgery work at Maltby Triangle.

- 9.3 Cllr. Temple requested that the minutes be amended under Item 5 to say that Cllr. O'Neill had attended a meeting on less common metals hosted by SecREETs, rather than Enviroo.

#### 10. Financial Matters

- 10.1 Bank reconciliation. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £212,106.50 held in balances as at 28 February be accepted as accurate – HPC52/21.**

- 10.2 Receipts and Payments. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Fincham and **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £3,824.40 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for February be approved and duly noted – HPC53/21.** The following receipts totalling £98.69 were also noted:

##### Payments

Arndale Transport	Rent – February 2021	£320.00
Scottish Power	Electricity – Community Centre	£116.00
Water Plus	Water – Community Centre	£30.48
C Jones – clerk	Stationery and stamps	£9.24
PNFS	Membership fees	£22.50
Northwich TC	Reindeer repairs	£240.00
Northwich TC	Bin repairs	£117.60
Kestrel Image Makers	Cemetery signage	£120.00
HPC Staff	Salaries Feb 2021	£1,929.79
HMRC	Deductions Tax and NI Feb 2021	£594.68
NEST	Pension contribution Feb 21	£246.14
BT	Line rental	£77.97

##### Receipts

Buckley Memorials	Memorial stone fees	£75.00
Natwest	Interest February 2021	£0.19
O Boow	Allotment fee 7LOCR	£23.50

- 10.3 It was noted that that no changes had been made to the Council's financial risk assessment in 2020/21 and that it would be reviewed by the Finance Committee in the new financial year.

11. New allotment tenancies were approved for plots 7L at Old Chester Road and at 4A at Queens Drive. The Clerk was requested to ask the new tenant at Old Chester Road if they had any interest in joining the allotment association.

12. Cycle North Cheshire – Cllr. Duffy outlined that the next meeting would be held on 9 March. It was noted that a bid had been submitted to the Marshes Community Benefit Fund for cycle/walking infrastructure from Helsby to Helsby High School.

13. Protos – Cllr. Temple reported that the next Community Benefit Fund Panel would be held on 24 March. It was noted that the application form and guidelines had been updated.

Members were also informed that Helsby Community Sports Club had been a recent beneficiary of the fund for some bowling equipment.

14. Helsby Community Association – Cllr. Branigan outlined the expected programme for re-opening Helsby Community Centre following the easing of Government lockdown restrictions. It was noted that the next management meeting would be held in July. The Clerk outlined that direct debit payments to Scottish Power had been reduced to £66 per month and a quote had been received for the insurance cover for the centre.
15. Helsby Community Sports Club - Cllr. Randles outlined that the club would be opened for outdoor sports from 29 March. He reported the committee was still waiting for a response from CW&C in relation to changing to a company limited by guarantee.
16. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – The minutes of the last Executive Board meeting on 17 February were noted. Members also noted the following points raised at a Town and Parish Councils Connection event with CW&C as attended by Cllr. Temple on 3 March: substantial losses to CW&C as a result of COVID; a backlog on planning enforcement and pothole repairs and a planned review of working practices after COVID.
17. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – Minutes of the latest Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee meeting held on 19 February and the Frodsham Wind Farm Local Liaison Group meeting held on 26 February were noted. Cllr. Ellams outlined that a new company, Belltown Power Ltd, had taken over the management of the windfarm.
18. Miscellaneous Matters
  - 18.1 Cllr. Temple outlined that the Council had sought a quote to plant three trees to replace ones that had either died or been deemed unsafe during recent tree works at the parish field and play area. It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED to plant three trees at Helsby playing field/play area at a cost of £330 plus VAT – HPC54/21.**
  - 18.2 Cllr. Standing suggested setting up social media accounts to help to disseminate information from the Council. As a first stage in this process, it was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. Standing and **RESOLVED to approve a social media policy – HPC55/21.**
  - 18.3 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to approve a Freedom of Information policy – HPC56/21.**
  - 18.4 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to include the Council’s draft minutes on the HPC website – HPC57/21.**
  - 18.5 A report from Cllr. Ellams was noted in relation to parish councillor e-mail addresses. It was outlined that it was good practice and more professional to keep personal and council business e-mails separate. Cllr. Ellams stated that it also offered benefits in relation to security, data protection and Freedom of Information requests. He agreed to create an e-mail address and password for each councillor and assist individual members in setting up their accounts. A deadline of 12 months was suggested to transfer all accounts over.
  - 18.6 It was noted that a request from Helsby Online Community for an annual Zoom Pro subscription had been withdrawn.

18.7 Members noted correspondence from a resident in relation to potential noise, other disturbance and safety concerns at a local venue adjacent to Helsby Station following the Government's announcement to allow venues to serve outdoors from April. It was agreed that the Clerk would respond by referring the resident to CW&C's licensing and environmental health departments and COVID reporting link, the PCSO and to the venue itself. Cllr. Bowers also agreed to speak to the owners of the venue before re-opening.

## 19. Planning

19.1 The Council's responses to the following planning applications were duly noted:

<b>21/00049/S73</b>	Crag House 14 Crescent Drive Helsby Variation of condition 2 (materials to be used) of pp 18/00375/FUL Neither supports nor objects
<b>21/00127/OUT</b>	Land Adjacent To Elm Cottage Alvanley Road Erection of one new dwelling Object - loss of privacy
<b>20/03838/FUL</b>	7 Windsor Drive Helsby Extension to side and rear dormer window No objection
<b>21/00378/S73</b>	Teuthill Farm Tarvin Road Variation of Condition 5 of 20/03594/FUL Awaiting comments

19.2 The following planning notifications were received:

<b>20/03594/FUL</b>	Teuthill Farm Tarvin Road	Approval
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19.3 Application 20/00324/FUL Land at Cable Drive, Helsby – The Chairman stated that the application had not been raised at CW&C's Planning Committee on 2 March. Cllr. Bowers suggested it may be discussed at their meeting in May. Cllr. Randles reported that a Vision meeting had been held on 19 February and a draft report had been received and circulated from the consultants. Members were requested to provide their comments on the draft. It was agreed that the Clerk would send a copy to CW&C's Planning Department once the Chairman had sought approval from Dunham Hill and Hapsford Parish Council.

19.4 It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED for the following councillors to attend ChALC planning courses: Cllr. Standing - 'Introduction to Planning', 'The Role of Local Councils in Town Planning' and 'Important Planning Concepts'; Cllr. Fincham - 'The Role of Local Councils in Town Planning' (all £30 each); and Cllr. Branigan - 'Dealing with Individual Planning Applications' (£25) – HPC58/21.**

19.5 Helsby Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. Temple circulated a report outlining the background to the plan, reviews of the plan to date and the considerations for any potential reviews going forward. Cllr. Standing agreed to consider a future review with support from Cllr. Temple and bring a report to a future meeting.

19.6 Members' reports – Cllr. Temple agreed to draft an e-mail from the Clerk to Frodsham Town Council requesting that they share any planning applications

immediately adjacent to Helsby parish following a recent application that had been missed by HPC relating to Helsby Park Homes.

20. Dates of the next Council meetings.

6 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Finance Committee
12 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Parish Council meeting

21. 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 – HPC59/21.**

**PART B – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

22. The Part B minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

23. A Formal Protocol was approved.

24. Cllr. Temple presented the draft minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 10 February 2021. She also summarised the discussions of a subsequent Human Resources Committee held on 8 March in relation to the recruitment of a new general assistant. Given the very low level of interest in the vacancy, it was agreed to incorporate the general assistant’s duties into the current contract with Helsby Garden Services until end October 2021 and review any future potential recruitment for the role at the next HR Committee in June.

The meeting closed at 8.39pm

Chairman’s signature..... Dated.....