



# Helsby Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held in the Upper Hall at Helsby Methodist Church at 7.00pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022

### Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chair

Cllr. Terry O’Neill

Cllr. Mike Branigan

Cllr. Alan Gardner

Cllr. Patricia Holder

Cllr. Margaret Marsh

Cllr. Stephen Garrity

Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

### In attendance:

Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News

PCSO, Sean Parry (for Items 1-6 only)

1. Public Participation. It was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC175/22**. There being no matters brought to the Council’s attention, it was **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC176/22**.
2. Apologies were noted from Cllrs. Ellams and Temple.
3. Co-option of Parish Councillor. Jane Jones did not attend the meeting so her co-option was not considered.
4. Co-option of Parish Councillor. The Chairman invited Rob Nicklin to address members to support his application to become a co-opted member of the Council for a vacancy in Central Ward. It was **RESOLVED that Rob Nicklin be co-opted onto the Council with immediate effect – HPC177/22**. Cllr. Nicklin signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was obliged to complete a Register of Interest within 28 days.
5. Cllr. O’Neill declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to Helsby Community Sports Club (Item 20) and Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Item 21).
6. Policing Update – Members welcomed new PCSO, Sean Parry (e-mail contact: [sean.parry@cheshire.police.uk](mailto:sean.parry@cheshire.police.uk)). ‘Resident’s Voice’ was introduced as a way to report local crime online as an alternative to dialling 101 (link below). It was noted that a police surgery would be held in the meeting room at Helsby Community Sports Club on 15<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr. O’Neill agreed to contact PCSO Parry in relation to organising some local ward walks. (<https://www.cheshire.police.uk/police-forces/cheshire-constabulary/areas/cheshire/campaigns/chester/residents-voice/>)
7. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of Helsby Parish Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – HPC178/22**.

8. Clerk's Report – (8<sup>th</sup> August mins) Under Item 19, it was noted that a complaint had been submitted to Stagecoach in relation to the withdrawal of early morning and evening bus services beyond Frodsham, although it was understood that these had now been reinstated. (26<sup>th</sup> Sept mins) Under Item 7, it was noted that the Clerk had responded to WSP in relation to the proposed new care home on Chester Road and a response had been received. Councillors expressed their disappointment that the developers were unwilling to host any public consultation events prior to the planning application being submitted. It was noted under Item 10 that a meeting had been held to discuss this year's Christmas lights and a number of new/replacement lighting displays were being considered.
9. Chairman's Announcements – It was noted that the wreath had been delivered for Remembrance Sunday. Cllrs. Branigan, Garrity and Nicklin agreed to help with putting up the poppies and soldiers.
10. Cheshire West and Chester Council matters – Cllr. Bowers did not attend. Members expressed their dismay about the recent closure of the Quarry tunnel and the general lack of response from CW&C in dealing with issues raised by the parish council.
11. Cllr. Gardner presented the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August. The following was noted/agreed:
  - 11.1 It was **RESOLVED to replace the current Health and Safety Policy with the SLCC's Health and Safety Statement and General Policy template – HPC179/22**; and
  - 11.2 It was noted that the health and safety inspections at the two allotment sites and the cemetery had needed to be postponed. The Clerk agreed to arrange a new date.
12. Cllr. O'Neill presented the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August. The following was noted/agreed:
  - 12.1 Cllr. Garrity agreed to participate in Cheshire West and Chester Council's 'Cheshire Local List Project'. It was noted that Cllr. Ellams had agreed to attend a CW&C Heritage Strategy workshop in this respect;
  - 12.2 It was noted that a request had been made to resume work on a conservation area. It was **RESOLVED to consider this request at a later date once the Council had received responses from its community consultation exercise which included a question on the conservation area – HPC180/22**;
  - 12.3 Recent correspondence with CW&C's Carmel Clapson in relation to the Helsby the Art of Here project was noted. It was agreed to await the results of the community consultation exercise before making any further decisions about a potential new sculpture;
  - 12.4 It was **RESOLVED to purchase replacement bats and balls for the newly-refurbished table tennis table at Sherwood Court at a cost of £32.98 – HPC181/22**. The Clerk agreed to request that they be kept at Helsby Library;
  - 12.5 It was noted that having consulted further with officers at CW&C, a Section 50 licence would not be required to install this year's Christmas lights on the public highway.
13. Cllr. O'Neill presented the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September. The following was noted/agreed:

- 13.1 It was **RESOLVED** to vire **£1,500** from **Budget Code 230 (Street furniture/BT phone boxes)** to **Budget Code 265 (Health and Safety/PPE equipment)** to fund an access control system at the parish office – **HPC182/22** (see Item 14.9);
- 13.2 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following changes to the Asset Register:
- Add reference to repairs to the table tennis table;
  - Delete £284 litter bin on the parish field (vandalised) and add replacement litter bin (£204);
  - Add two new community noticeboards;
  - Amend locations of Covid signage and HPC noticeboard;
  - Remove 1 bus shelter (removed as part of housing development on Chester Road);
  - Remove all grounds maintenance equipment (items sold);
  - Add 4 new black planters and remove 4 green planters; and
  - Add CCTV system and parish field lighting – **HPC183/22**;
- 13.3 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following amendment to the Fixed Asset Policy: to exclude any assets with a purchase or resale value of less than **£250** rather than **£100** (other than items listed for inclusion in the Asset Register) – **HPC184/22**.

#### 14. Miscellaneous Matters

- 14.1 Members noted the published version of the community questionnaire as circulated via Helsby News and Survey Monkey at the end of September. The Clerk outlined that 85 survey responses had been completed on Survey Monkey so far. It was **RESOLVED** to give retrospective approval for the design and printing of the document at a cost of **£708 plus VAT (printing)** and **£80 plus VAT (design)** along with an annual subscription fee for Survey Monkey at a cost of **£384** – **HPC185/22**.
- 14.2 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Clerk’s draft workplan as discussed at her informal review held on 10<sup>th</sup> August – **HPC186/22**.
- 14.3 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of Autumn/Winter bedding plants at a cost of **£360** along with compost for the village planters – **HPC187/22**.
- 14.4 Following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, it was **RESOLVED** to give retrospective approval for the purchase of flowers at a cost of **£51** and approval for binding the Book of Condolence with Barnard and Westwood at a cost of up to **£190 plus VAT** – **HPC188/22**.
- 14.5 The contents of the tree surveys as carried out on 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September by Hilldale Grounds Maintenance were discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to request Hilldale to carry out any work identified as of high priority as soon as possible along with any felling of trees identified as being of a medium risk – **HPC189/22**. There were six votes in favour of this resolution and one vote against (Cllr. Garrity). It was agreed that all other issues raised in the surveys would be considered by the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee at their next meeting.
- 14.6 Correspondence sent to Cllr. Garrity from a local resident requesting night speed control measures to protect local wildlife was noted.
- 14.7 Given rising energy costs, it was **RESOLVED** to switch off the Christmas lights at **10pm this year, rather than 11pm** – **HPC190/22**. A lengthy discussion followed in relation to cutting this usage even further particularly during peak energy usage times but it was felt that the ‘feel good’ factor of the lights was also an important consideration.

- The Clerk agreed to liaise with AMR Technical in relation to the capability of the timing units so the matter could be considered further.
- 14.8 Three quotes were considered for this year's traffic management service for the Ho Ho Helsby event on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. It was **RESOLVED to appoint the lowest bidder, Blue Arrow Traffic Management, at a cost of £1,050 plus VAT – HPC191/22.**
  - 14.9 A report was considered in relation to the purchase of an electronic door entry system for the parish office. It was **RESOLVED to install such a system and to appoint the lowest bidder, CSS, at a cost of £ 1,470 plus VAT – HPC192/22.** It was agreed that Cllr. Nicklin and the Clerk would both learn how the system worked, including any computer software, once installed.
  - 14.10 It was noted that the unstable goal post on the parish field had been removed as it had been deemed to be dangerous. It was agreed to pass the matter to the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee to discuss any potential next steps.
  - 14.11 It was **RESOLVED to approve a payment of £68.38 to the Council's webhosting service provider, NetNerd, for another 12 months - HPC193/22.**
  - 14.12 It was **RESOLVED to approve a donation of £250 to the Royal British Legion for their 2022 Poppy Appeal (under S137 powers) - HPC194/22.**
15. The contents of the report from the councillor surgery held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September were noted. It was also noted that the councillor surgery scheduled on 1<sup>st</sup> October had been cancelled due to a lack of volunteers. Cllrs. Nicklin and Duffy agreed to attend the next surgery on 5<sup>th</sup> November.
  16. It was **RESOLVED to grant applications for the Exclusive Rights of Burial for a term of 75 years for plots C18 received from Mr Culverhouse of Frodsham and CRS17 from Mrs Findlow of Helsby in Helsby Public Cemetery, Old Chester Road – HPC195/22.**
  17. Protos – Cllr. Temple's report was noted. It was outlined that 5 applications had been approved at the last Community Benefit Fund meeting, including two in Helsby (CCTV at Helsby Community Sports Club and 'Learn to Earn' sessions at Helsby High School). It was noted that there was around £14,000 left in the fund for 2022 and the next meeting would take place on 7<sup>th</sup> December. It was also noted that a Community Forum meeting would be held on 12<sup>th</sup> October via Zoom.
  18. Helsby Community Association – Cllr. Branigan outlined that HCA had completed their transfer to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and had been issued with a new charity number. It was noted that the Clerk was working with the trustees on the possibility of transferring the electricity bills to the HCA and she was taking professional advice in terms of reclaiming the VAT on any energy bills.
  19. Cycle North Cheshire – Cllr. Temple's report was noted along with the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September. It was outlined that Sustrans had appointed an 'Active Travel Officer' for Frodsham/Helsby along with a project engineer to start the feasibility study for a cycle route through Helsby. Members noted that the next meeting would be held on 8<sup>th</sup> November at 6.45pm in the parish office.
  20. Helsby Community Sports Club – Cllr. Branigan outlined that a sports development manager had been appointed for a period of 6 months.

21. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – it was noted that Cllr. O’Neill had circulated several updates prior to the meeting. He outlined that the AGM would be held on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

22. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – Members noted the contents of a report as previously circulated by Cllr. Ellams.

23. Planning

23.1 The following planning applications were duly noted:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>22/02639/FUL</b> | 3 High View, Helsby<br>Single storey rear extension.<br>No objections   |
| <b>22/02629/FUL</b> | 276 Chester Road, Helsby<br>Single storey rear extension and loft conversion with 2no. dormers<br>Neither objects or supports - comments sent on parking  |
| <b>22/00958/FUL</b> | The Old Hall, Vicarage Lane, Helsby<br>Demolition of existing garage, erection of single storey side extension<br>Neither objects or supports - comments sent relating to previous applications   |
| <b>22/03407/TPO</b> | Clifton, Vicarage Lane, Helsby<br>Beech - Reduce through thinning, 20% and reduce limb over drive to balance. Chestnut - Crown lift to 12ft. Oak - Reduce through thin and crown lift to 8ft.<br>Neither objects or supports - comments sent on general tree preservation         |
| <b>22/03454/TPO</b> | 1 Bridgeside Drive, Helsby<br>Removal of Beech tree and shorten lower branch on Ash by 3m<br>Neither objects or supports but concerns expressed about visual impact   |
| <b>22/02967/FUL</b> | Filkins, Hill Road North, Helsby<br>Demolition of existing bay window, erection of single storey extension, erection of open canopy with glazed roof and raised deck, application of render to front of house<br>No objections but suggestions to screen the new canopy/extension |
| <b>22/00823/FUL</b> | Hillside Lodge, Hill Road North, Helsby<br>Erection of summer room/store (location change)<br>Awaiting comments   |

**22/03259/OUT**

12 Homeway, Helsby

Erection of one detached dwelling within the garden plot of 12 Homeway with associated car parking spaces for both properties

Objections in relation to backland development and parking

- 23.2 It was noted that application 21/04830/FUL (Llomond, Crescent Drive, Helsby) had gone to the Planning Inspectorate for appeal in relation to the planning conditions attached to the approval.
- 23.3 No planning notifications were received.
- 23.4 Mere's Edge Masterplan – no updates were received.
- 23.5 Member reports – it was noted that there had been a number of complaints on Facebook in relation to the piling noise and dust from the Honeywell development site. Members felt that Cllr. Bowers could be helping local residents in this respect. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Cllr. Bowers to alert him to these concerns and to ask him to attend the next meeting to discuss the matter further. It was agreed that the Clerk would also draft a letter to ChALC in relation to a number of issues the Council was having with CW&C.

#### 24. Financial Matters

- 24.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing **£288,410.92 held in balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 be accepted as accurate – HPC196/22.**  
It was **RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing **£268,138.49 held in balances as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be accepted as accurate – HPC197/22.**
- 24.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments totalling **£15,880.21 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for August be approved and duly noted – HPC198/22.** The following receipts totalling £1,715.10 were also noted:

##### **Payments**

BT	Line rental	£82.14
Water Plus	Water - community centre	£29.31
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£309.00
Claire Jones	Expenses	£61.04
Helsby Garden Serv.	General maintenance	£1,280.20
Cathy Newbery	Art of Here fees	£500.00
Royal British Legion Ind.	Queens Jubilee tree plaque	£154.99
Helsby Community Sports	Base service charges	£508.80
Complete Security Service	CCTV project	£8,256.00
Countrywide GM	Grass cutting	£480.00
Scribe Accounts	Scribe set up and subscription	£836.40
Liverpool Doc Systems	Photocopier charges	£111.41
Northwich Town Council	Noticeboard fixing	£900.00
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions Aug 22	£498.19
HPC Staff	Salaries Aug 22	£1,425.54
NEST	Pension contribution Aug 22	£447.19

### Receipts

Jacqueline Wilson FD	Burial fees - CULVERHOUSE	£960.00
HCA	Electricity/domain name reclaim	£750.11
Natwest	Interest Aug 22	£4.99

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments totalling **£27,173.60** paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for September be approved and duly noted – **HPC199/22**. The following receipts totalling £6,901.17 were also noted:

### Payments

BT	Line rental	£81.71
Water Plus	Water - community centre	£29.31
Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	£309.00
Claire Jones	Expenses	£69.45
Helsby Garden Serv.	General maintenance	£1,493.00
CW&C	Conservation area report	£2,623.20
Water Plus	QD Allotment water	£45.48
Countrywide GM	Grass cutting	£480.00
Survey Monkey	Community questionnaire	£384.00
Dave Weaver	Bedding plants	£315.00
Claire Jones	Expenses	£20.88
Water Plus	QD Allotment water	£87.08
SLCC	Branch conference	£30.00
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit	£480.00
Chris Knott Insurance	Allotment insurance	£134.98
Hilldale GM	Tree survey	£480.00
Mega Electrical	Parish field lighting	£17,769.60
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions Sep 22	£468.18
HPC Staff	Salaries - Sep 22	£1,425.54
NEST	Pension contribution Sep 22	£447.19

### Receipts

Ince Park Comm. Fund	Protos Grant for CCTV	£4,000.00
EoN	Refund on account	£44.68
Dignity Funerals	Burial fees - ROBINSON	£290.00
Various	Allotment fees	£1456.50
Arts Council	Art of Here grant - final payment	£1,100.00
Natwest	Interest Sept 22	£9.99

- 24.3 It was noted that the external audit report 31st March 2022 (Annual Governance & Accountability Return) had been returned with no issues. It was also noted that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published on the Council's website and noticeboard along with the certified AGAR (Sections 1, 2 & 3) on 14 September.
- 24.4 It was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively approve a payment of **£480** for the completion of the external audit by **PKF Littlejohn Ltd – HPC200/22**.

24.5 It was **RESOLVED** not to opt out of the SAAA external auditor appointment arrangements for the next five-year period beginning on 1 April 2022 and ending on 31 March 2027 – **HPC201/22**.

25. The dates of the next Council meetings were noted as follows:

24 <sup>th</sup> October	Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee
14 <sup>th</sup> November	Parish Council meeting

The meeting closed at 8.36pm

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