



# Helsby Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held at 7.00pm in the Parish Office at Helsby Community Sports Club on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

### Present:

Cllr. Sarah Temple (Chair)

Cllr. Peter Duffy

Cllr. Patricia Holder

### Also present:

Claire Jones Parish Clerk

One member of the public

1. Public Participation – It was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended for public participation – PCA26/22**. One member of the public spoke to encourage the council to provide wheelchair accessible play equipment. She outlined that there was only currently one public park in Cheshire West with a wheelchair swing. She offered to assist the council with any elements such as fundraising in due course, if necessary. There being no other matters brought to the Committee's attention, it was **RESOLVED that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – PCA27/22**.
2. Apologies were noted from Cllr. Gardner. Cllr. Branigan did not attend.
3. Cllr. Temple declared a pecuniary interest in Item 7.5 (review of allotment fees) as her partner was an allotment holder.
4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes. It was **RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parks, Cemetery and Allotments Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – PCA28/22**.
5. Clerk's Report. Under Item 6 (vii), it was noted that the Clerk would submit a grant claim to Protos shortly as the invoice for the CCTV system had now been received. Under Item 8.1, it was outlined that Helsby Garden Services were trying to source the correct tool to carry out bolt tightening on various pieces of play equipment and Winsford Town Council were expected to increase the height of the seat on the cableway shortly. It was outlined that the Covid signage had been removed from the play area and stored in the cemetery garage (Item 8.2). The Clerk agreed to circulate some information on a park inspection app (Item 9.3) and to circulate a quote to purchase the app at the next meeting. Under Item 9.7, it was noted that a licence to continue to hold Tai Chi and Qigong classes on the parish field had now been issued and the fee paid. Under Item 10.2, it was outlined that the work to remove the overgrown shrubs and trees in the cemetery had been completed.

6. The committee's budget for the year 2022/23 was noted as follows:

Budget Code	Description	Budget 2022/23 £	Budget spent to date £	Predicted To 31/03/23 £
201	Allotment maintenance	3500	780	3500
202	Allotment water charge	500	87	500
212	Cemetery maintenance	3500	1148	3500
212a	Cemetery repairs/renewals	400	720	400
213	Parks and general maintenance	12000	2336	12000
214	Park grass cutting	5000	1920	3500
215	Park equipment	3000	219	23788
226R	Play area improvements/upgrades	8000	0	8000
260R	Future burial provision	3633	0	3633

The following was also noted:

- i) Budget Code 212a – includes £650 to D T Turner (reclaim from the Children's Funeral Fund) and £70 refund of memorial stone fees to Buckley Memorials. The Clerk outlined some further information about the Children's Funeral Fund (see also: <https://www.gov.uk/child-funeral-costs>). The Clerk also agreed to contact ICCM to see if they offered any guidance about the fund.
- ii) Budget Code 215 – Spend to date is for ROSPA and Winsford TC inspections at play area and some CCTV signage. Invoices now received for parish field lighting project (£17,769) and CCTV system (£8,256).

## 7. Allotments

- 7.1. It was noted that some improvement had been noticed following the issue of several Stage 1 letters in June. It was expected that a plot would become vacant on Queens Drive shortly.
- 7.2. It was noted that two Stage 1 letters and one Stage 2 letter had been issued following the inspection on 21<sup>st</sup> July.
- 7.3. It was outlined that following the advert placed in Helsby News about the allotments, four people had been added to the waiting list.
- 7.4. It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council not to make any changes to the Tenancy Agreement but to make the following amendments to the Council's Allotments Policy:**
  - Letting and Management of Allotments Section 19 (2) amend typo from section 10c to 11c;**
  - Maintenance of Allotments Section 4 amend to 'Paths and walkways adjacent to the tenant's plot must be left clear to allow the Council's contractor to trim the paths. The tenant must also remove any nuisance weeds from netting or other barriers on the edge of the paths.'**
  - Maintenance of Allotments Section 9 add 'Overhanging crops must be pruned or tied back to maintain clear access along the paths' - PCA29/22.**

- 7.5. Review of allotment rents – a report as presented by the Clerk was considered and it was noted that rents had been increased last year. The Committee agreed that they were unable to make a resolution on this matter given that only 2 members were able to vote. However, it was agreed that it would be recommended to Full Council not to increase rents this year given the current cost of living crisis.
- 7.6. It was noted that members had been invited to an Allotment Open Day in Elton on 27<sup>th</sup> August. The Clerk agreed to circulate details. It was also agreed to ask Helsby Garden Services to remove some of the old notices on the gate at Queens Drive.

## 8. Children’s Play Area

- 8.1. It was noted that the CCTV system had been installed, it was now recording images and signage had been erected around the play area. It was agreed for the Clerk and several other Council members to meet with contractors, CSS, to run through the system in more detail, to make some slight adjustments to one of the camera angles and to ensure recordings were only being stored for a maximum of 30 days in line with the Council’s policy. The Clerk agreed to contact the Scouts in terms of access arrangements to the scout hut. It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve the latest revision to the CCTV policy which incorporated recent changes to legislation, made reference to designated trained councillor(s) rather than any named individuals and outlined that the flat screen monitor was on top of the locked cabinet rather than inside it – PCA30/22.**
- 8.2. Members considered a request for wheelchair accessible play equipment. Some reservation was expressed about the availability of level ground within the play area for a wheelchair swing but it was felt that Sherwood Court may offer an alternative location. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council to look further into the idea, particularly in terms of cost, likely usage, viable locations and potential community support. It was also recommended to liaise with landlord, CW&C, about any lease implications.
- 8.3. No member reports were received.

## 9. Parish Field

- 9.1. It was noted that the parish field lighting system had been installed and was now operational. It was outlined that a meeting had been held with contractors, Mega Electrical, and a few snagging issues had been raised. The Clerk agreed to set up a follow up meeting with Mega to pursue these issues before payment of the outstanding invoice. It was also agreed that an application for S106 funds would be submitted following payment of the invoice.
- 9.2. It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve a quote of £130 from Helsby Garden Services to repair and repaint the bench located at the top end of the field – PCA31/22.** It was agreed to request Helsby Garden Services to repair the bench on Chester Road adjacent to the play area at the same time.
- 9.3. The Clerk outlined that the new contract for grass cutting was underway with Countrywide Grounds Maintenance. It was noted that despite a number of small issues at the beginning of the contract, all areas were now looking tidy and well kept.

## 10. Cemetery

- 10.1. It was noted that the various items of garden machinery had now been purchased by Helsby Garden Services and John Robotham and work had commenced to clear the cemetery garage. The Clerk agreed to check that Helsby Garden Services had provided an agreement in writing about their use of the cemetery garage.
  - 10.2. Review of burial fees – a report as presented by the Clerk was considered and it was noted that rents had been increased last year. It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council not to increase burial fees and in light of the Children’s Funeral Fund, to amend waiving any fees for children under 18 rather than under 16. It was also recommended to clarify the wording in relation to the burial of non-residents and to reformat the document to specify the actual non-resident fees – PCA32/22.**
  - 10.3. It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to make the following amendments to the Cemetery Regulations:**  
**Section 2.2 – to amend the Council Office opening time from 8am to 10am;**  
**Reword title of Section 4 to ‘Right of Interment and Burial Fees’;**  
**New Section 4.3 – ‘Burial fees are reviewed annually and are available on the Council’s website or by contacting the Clerk’;**  
**To add to Section 6.1 – ‘No more than 3 lessees can be named on a grave deed’;**  
**To add to Section 7.10 – ‘Up to a maximum of 6 cremated remains may be buried in a grave plot but permission must be sought from the Clerk and the location of each casket should be specified on the Notice of Interment’;**  
**New Section 8.7 – ‘Scattering of ashes on a plot is permitted and will not incur any burial fees but the Clerk must be notified by the grave owner in advance’;**  
**Section 9.1 – insert reference to the new stonemason application form;**  
**New Section 12.5 – ‘We have a risk assessment for the cemetery which is available on the Council’s website’ – PCA33/22.**
  - 10.4. Cemetery risk assessment – it was agreed that the Clerk would arrange a date for a health and safety inspection of the cemetery with Cllr. Gardner; it was noted that Northwich Town Council were able provide a quote for a memorial safety inspection; it was agreed that the Clerk would seek advice from Helsby Garden Services in relation to some protruding tree roots; and the Clerk agreed to check the contract with Helsby Garden Services in relation to clearance of the spoil heap.
  - 10.5. No member reports were received.
11. Urgent matters – it was noted that the wrong building had been identified on the plan with the Air Quality Monitoring Station draft lease agreement, which also affected the Council’s leases with RSK and the Village Produce Association. It was outlined that legal advice was being sought and a Deed of Rectification may need to be signed in due course.

12. Date of next meeting – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Chairman’s signature ..... Date.....