

**HELINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 03 May 2023 at 7.30p.m. in the**  
**Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall**

**PRESENT: Cllrs S. Carman, J. Cooper, K. Ritchie, J. Sunderland, G. Riley.**  
**In Attendance: Cllr. J. Batty, (W&FC), M.R. Curry (Clerk) and one member of the public.**

Cllr. Carman welcomed all present to the Helsington Annual Parish Council meeting and stood down from the Chair.

**1/23 Election of Chairman:** Cllr. Sunderland (Vice-Chair) asked for any nominations for the Chairmanship of the Council. Cllr. Carman confirmed that he is prepared to stand for a further year, but if elected will stand-down in 2024. He was proposed by Cllr. Ritchie and seconded by Cllr. Riley and there being no other nominations he was unanimously elected. Cllr. Carman signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**2/23 Election of Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. Carman took the Chair and asked for any nominations for the Vice-Chair of the Council. Cllr. Sunderland was proposed by Cllr. Cooper and seconded by Cllr. Riley. There were no other nominations and Cllr. Sunderland was elected unanimously. Cllr. Sunderland signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

As part of the election process, it was noted that two vacancies for Councillors still exist. The Clerk had checked on the protocols for filling these and reported that one vacancy stemming from the previous elections could be filled by straightforward co-option. The second vacancy (a casual vacancy) can be filled by co-option after public advertisement so long as no election is called. The Clerk has put the relevant Notices in place.

**3/23 Apologies:** None – all Councillors were present.

**4/23 Declarations of Interest / Dispensation Requests:** None was declared.

**5/23 Minutes:** Following a representation from Cllr. Riley, it was Agreed to amend Minute 77/22(c) to read 'boy/girl/young people-racers' after which it was **Resolved** to Approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 05 April 2023.

**6/23 Public Participation:** No matters were raised.

**7/23 Appointment of Representatives:** Cllr. Carman suggested that the Parish Council could be more pro-active regarding some current initiatives and as a result the following Groups and representatives were confirmed:

- a. Helsington & Brigsteer Village Hall Committee: Cllr. K. Ritchie.
- b. Community Led Plan Working Group: Now subsumed into the Resilience Plan Working Group (to include Emergency Planning): All - but chaired by Cllr. S. Carman.
- c. Parish Land Working Group: This had been discontinued in 2022 but oversight would be maintained by the Clerk with support from Councillors as required.
- d. Climate Change and Greening initiatives: Cllr. Riley.
- e. Traffic and Highways: Cllr. Cooper. It was noted that the current W&FC Local Highways Officer was Helen Ryan.
- f. Community Events, initiatives and Reporting to the Community: It was **Agreed** that further consideration should be given to how the Parish Council could raise its profile within the local community.
- g. CALC: Cllr. J. Sunderland

**8/23 Policies and Procedures:** Cllrs. reviewed and confirmed the following documents which are on the website:

Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, GDPR & Data Protection, Retention of Documents Policy, Publication of Information Scheme (requires minor update), Press and Media Policy, Grants and Donations Policy and Complaints Procedure. The published Asset Register needs updating on the website and the Risk Register needs adding. Subject to these observations, Cllrs **Approved** the current suite of governance documents and it was **Agreed** that in future years all documents should be reviewed at a Working Group meeting to be convened in February.

**9/23 Future Meetings:** The dates of meetings for 2023/24 were **Agreed** as follows:

For 2023: 05 July; 06 September; 01 November.

For 2024: 07 February; 03 April.

A meeting will be required in June to sign off the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) following internal audit.

All meetings to be held in Helsington & Brigsteer Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. unless otherwise determined.

### **10/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-23 (AGAR)**

The Clerk confirmed that he had completed the various sections of the AGAR (Form 2) including a Certificate of Exemption from a Limited Assurance Review and draft Notice of Public Rights. The AGAR had been submitted to Mr Malcolm Richardson who had been appointed as Internal Auditor for the 2022-23 Return. Following receipt of the Internal Audit Report, the AGAR must be reviewed and approved by the Parish Council as follows: to confirm that the Certificate of Exemption should be submitted; to approve the Annual Governance Statement; to approve the Accounting Statements and to approve the Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights. The Certificate of Exemption must be lodged with the External Auditors by 30 June 2023. This will require a formal Parish Council Meeting in June to secure the necessary approvals and a date will be agreed and publicised as required.

### **11/23 Finance**

a. The following receipts since the last meeting were noted:

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|---|-----------|
| i) 21/04/2023: Witherslack Woodlands – sale of timber | 480.00    |
| ii) 27/04/2023: W&FC – Precept and grant              | 11,246.00 |

b. The following payments were **Authorised**:

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| i) CALC – annual subscription 2023-24                        | 159.04 |
| ii) Mark Sigrist – Tree planting, Peat Houses                | 150.00 |
| iii) M. Richardson - Internal Audit Fee (when invoiced)      | 100.00 |
| iv) James Park – Dealing with fallen tree at the bus shelter | 450.00 |
| v) Zurich Municipal Insurance – Annual premium 2023-2024     | 244.00 |

**12/23 Planning:** The following applications, responses, decisions and updates were noted:

a. **Lake District National Park Authority:** View applications, responses / decisions online at:

<http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display>

- i) **7/2023/5139:** Accessible Route at Sizergh Castle: No Objection submitted. ACON 14/04/23

b. **Westmorland and Furness Council:** View applications, responses and decisions online at:

<http://applications.southlakeland.gov.uk/planningapplications/welcome.asp>

- i) **SL/2023/0298:** 2, Prizet House, Helsington LA8 8AB: Porch/conservatory extension; rear balcony etc. **Application Invalid.**
- ii) **SL/2023/0328:** Prizet Filling Station, Northbound. Demolition of existing buildings and re-construction of site as a service station with a range of new facilities. It was **Agreed** to submit No Objection from the Parish Council but to observe that visibility when re-joining the main road should be improved.
- iii) **SL/2023/0107:** Glenbrook, Helsington LA9 5RL: Detached double garage. Delegated. ACON 12/04/23.

### **13/23 Parish Land:**

- a) **Tree Work on Parish Land:** All current work identified in the previous tree survey has now been completed. In response to an enquiry from Alan Davies, it was confirmed that this had included work at Stricklandgate Quarry. Receipts from the sale of timber were £880.00. Visual inspections will be undertaken during the year by Cllrs. Carman and Riley. It is anticipated that a new Tree Health and Safety survey will be commissioned in 2024.
- b) **Drainage on the Parish Road:** Cllr. Carman confirmed that he and the Clerk had met with the local Highways Officer acting in a delegated capacity on behalf of the Environment Agency when it had been concluded that no further work was currently required.

## 14/23 Highways

- a. **Defects Schedule:** No additions were noted; the Schedule has yet to be placed on the website. Cllr. Carman reported that as part of the conversation with the Highways Officer recorded above, the general question of drainage had been discussed with particular reference to surface water missing gullies and flowing across roads presenting a potential hazard in icy conditions. The frequency of gulley maintenance was also raised. The Highways Officer noted these observations and also advised that they should be placed on HIAMS (the on-line reporting structure). It was noted that many pot-holes had received attention recently (though not on Whetstone Lane). Cllr. Carman explained his understanding that the current work was a temporary fix pending a more permanent repair, possibly next year. Parishioners were encouraged to report highways issues on Highways with What3Words being an acceptable location indicator.
- b. **Low Lane:** In the absence of feedback from the Structures Team, it was Agreed to report this again via HIAMS.

## 15/23 Reports

- a. **Chairman and Parish Councillors:** No reports were made.
- b. **Westmorland and Furness Councillor:** Cllr. Batty reported that the Council is implementing its new structure and that she has been appointed to several Committees including the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as Chair of the Health and Adult Scrutiny Committee. She is also a Reserve Member of the Strategic Planning Committee and reported that if Parish Councils take a view against Officer recommendations in delegated cases, then the application will automatically go to Planning Committee. There is to be a first meeting of the Locality Board on 10 May at which budget allocations for local priorities will be confirmed.
- c. **Helsington & Brigsteer Village Hall:** Councillors praised the Village Hall Committee for a successful event over the Coronation weekend. It was noted that the commemorative bench was currently sited on the veranda of the Village Hall and Councillors expressed the hope that this would not deter the general public from using it. Councillors noted that wooden sleepers had been installed on the car park opposite to distance vehicles from the wooden fence on the Puddleduck Cottage boundary. It was noted that the Parish Council had not previously objected to the proposal to site concrete kerbs to achieve the same purpose. Cllr. Carman asked that his apologies for the AGM on 15 May be noted as he would be away.
- d. **Local Police Team:** No report had been received but it was noted that the Focus Newsletter for April had been published and circulated. There were no matters of direct relevance to Helsington Parish.

## 16/23 Community Initiatives

- a. **Resilience Plan:** Cllr. Carman confirmed that he was to call a meeting of the Working Group to consider any next steps that might be required.

**17/23 Correspondence:** Apart from regular communications from CALC and other bodies (circulated as appropriate) and correspondence mentioned in relation to Agenda items, no other correspondence had been received.

**18/23 Date of the Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for 05 July 2023 to be held in the Helsington & Brigsteer Village Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. However, a short formal meeting will be required in June to sign off the AGAR documents and details will be announced.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date: