

HELSEINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES of an Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 15 May 2024 at 7.30 p.m. in the Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J. Cooper, G. Riley, J. Sunderland, J. Tudor, R, Ward

In Attendance: Cllr. J. Battye (part) (Westmorland & Furness Co.), Martin Curry (Clerk)

01/24 Election of Chair: Having indicated a willingness to stand, Cllr. Sunderland was proposed by Cllr. Ward and seconded by Cllr. Cooper. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Sunderland was elected Chair of Helsington Parish Council and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

02/24 Apologies: No apologies had been submitted. All Councillors were present.

03/24 Parish Council Elections May 2024

- a) **Outcome of the Election:** For the benefit of the record, the Clerk reported that on 10 April 2024, the Returning Officer for Westmorland and Furness Council had certified that at the Election of Councillors for the Parish of Helsington, the following Councillors had been validly nominated by the latest date permissible and there being no other nominations for the 7 places available were duly elected without contest: Jane Cooper, Graham Riley, Jamie Sunderland, Jacqui Tudor and Rob Ward. Elected Councillors signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office.
- b) **The Option to Co-opt:** It was noted that two vacancies remain unfilled following the election and that following the formal election new Parish Councillors could be appointed to vacancies arising. It was **Agreed** to publicise the vacancies and invite expressions of interest from eligible candidates. Existing Councillors would promote the opportunity and make any appropriate recommendations.
- c) **Follow-up Procedures:** The Return of Expenses and Declaration of Financial and Other Interest forms were distributed, and arrangements were made for return to W&FC Offices by 30 May.

04/24 Election of Vice-Chair: Having indicated her willingness to stand, Cllr. Cooper was proposed by Cllr. Tudor and seconded by Cllr. Riley. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Cooper was elected Vice-Chair of Helsington Parish Council and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

05/24 Declarations of Acceptance of Office (Councillors): Having been distributed, signed and witnessed, these forms were retained by the Clerk for the record.

06/24 Minutes of the meeting held on the 03 April 2024: It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 03 April 2024, having been circulated, be signed by the Chair as a true record.

07/24 Declarations of Interest: Cllr. Riley declared an interest in planning application T/2024/0064.

08/24 Public Participation: As no members of the public were present, no matters were raised.

09/24 Appointment of Representatives: The following appointments were **Agreed**:

- a) Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall: Cllr. J. Tudor
- b) Helsington Resilience Planning Group: Primary Lead: Cllr. J. Sunderland, but all Cllrs. to play a part if / when appropriate
- c) Climate Change and Greening Initiatives: Cllr. G. Riley
- d) Traffic and Highways: Cllr. J. Cooper
- e) CALC: Cllr. J. Sunderland
- f) Woodlands Officer (Parish Council owned): Cllr. Riley to take the primary lead but all Cllrs. to play a part if / when appropriate. Cllr. Sunderland Agreed to ask ex-Councillor Carman if he would be willing to lead the proposed tour of Parish woodlands for Councillors and circulate dates.
- g) Footpaths Officer: Cllr. Cooper, but it was noted that Cllr. Tudor has expressed an interest in this area and requested maps of footpaths and boundaries which the Clerk will source for her.
- h) Website Working Group: This does not currently exist, but the Clerk recommended that it would be helpful for a Councillor(s) to take an overview of content to ensure relevance. Cllr. Ward agreed to take a look and report back to the next meeting.

10/24 Meeting Dates 2024-25: The Clerk confirmed that the following dates for meetings of the Parish Council had been booked in the Village Hall:

2024: 03 July, 04 September, 20 November (it was noted that this date was out of normal sequence due to a prior booking of the Hall).

2025: 05 February, 02 April (which is likely also to be the date of the Annual Parish Meeting).

It was also noted that a very brief formal meeting will be needed in June to approve the Annual Return. This date for this will be confirmed.

11/24 Planning: The following applications, responses, decisions and updates were noted:

- a) **Lake District National Park Authority:** (View applications, responses and decisions online at: <http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display>)
 - i) **T/2024/0064: Low Lane, Brigsteer, LA8 8AT:** Crown reduction of sycamores and cherry trees. Comments by 03/05/2024 – extension requested. **No Objection**
 - ii) **7/2023/5606: Plum Tree Cottage, Brigsteer LA8 8AN.** Alterations to extension and driveway. **Approved** with conditions 19/04/2024. It was noted that no condition had been imposed as to non-commercial use.
 - iii) **7/2024/5111: Sizergh Castle LA8 8AE:** Installation of automatic Fire Detection System in the Great Barn. Comments by 23/05/24. **No Objection**
- b) **Westmorland and Furness Council (W&FC):** View applications, responses and decisions online at: <http://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/search-planning-applications>)
 - i) **SL/2023/0328: Prizet Filling Station Northbound.** Major development as previously reported. It was noted that this had been **Approved** with conditions on 12/04/2024.
 - ii) **2024/0705/SCREEN: Young Spring, Helsington Mills LA9 5RL.** EA request for Env. Impact Assessment - Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme. **No Objection**

12/24 Parish Land

- a) Trees on Parish Land: As reported previously, it is intended to take a Parish tour of woodland sites owned by the Council. Work to secure quotes for a new Tree Health and Safety Survey continues.
- b) Parish On-line: The Clerk reported that work continues with an on-line schedule of property profiles.

13/24 Highways

- a) Defects Schedule: No new items were raised. There had been an incident recently regarding the spillage of oil on village roads potentially from a specific and named delivery vehicle. It was **Agreed** to monitor and report this should there be a repeat occurrence.
- b) Low Lane: It was **Agreed** to contact the local Highways Officer to try to set-up an on-site meeting.

14/24 Westmorland and Furness 20-mph Speed Limit Initiative

It was noted that the application for a 20-m.p.h. speed limit for the village had been unsuccessful due to the lack of an existing 40 or 30 m.p.h. zone. It is unlikely that the village will qualify for the higher speed zones as not having a school or shops, but it was agreed that there should nonetheless be more effective signage. It was agreed that the primary concern is the junction at the Wheatsheaf and that the current focus should be on safety initiatives for this area. It was **Agreed** to put this on HIAMS and to raise with Cllr. Battye in her role with W&FC. This matter will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

15/24 Reports

- a) **Chairman and Parish Councillors:** There were no particular reports or updates from Councillors.
- b) **Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall:** There was no report on specific issues.
- c) **Westmorland and Furness Council:** Key items from Cllr. Battye's report were:
 - i. Cllr. Battye is now a Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
 - ii. As a result of the amalgamation of the previous District Councils into the unified authority, the Council is reviewing its services and resources, particularly in the built estate, to identify what efficiency gains can be achieved as a result.
 - iii. The Council has launched a Community Power initiative to try to improve local services through closer work with local communities.
 - iv. The Locality Boards have now received a fresh tranche of funding available to Members to apply to local initiatives. Cllr. Battye asked Councillors to consider any schemes that might benefit from this resource.
 - v. Cllr. Battye noted the ongoing concerns about the need for traffic calming, particularly at the Wheatsheaf and will work with the Parish Council and Highways to see what might be achieved.
- d) **Local Police Team**
 - i. Following further communication with the local police team, The Clerk reported that he had received a telephone call from PCSO Jayne Park that day. Jayne had confirmed police awareness of anti-social behaviour at St John's Church and that she had had personal experience of this. She said that it required a targeted approach, but given the diminished level of resources available this could only be prioritised through an evidence-based and significant level of concern. She had stressed how important it was for all to report incidents of anti-social behaviour - whether at the time of the event or afterwards. The police needed a significant log of incidents and concern in order to allocate resources to dealing with the issue. Clearly, parishioners should not put themselves at risk but should report any concerns via the 101 service

if the police were to be able to step in. Cllr. Sunderland undertook to talk to Alan Davies to see how this information could be disseminated through the local community.

16/24 Finance: The Clerk reported as follows:

a) Receipts:

08/04/2024: Electricity NorthWest Ltd – Wayleave	£	2.00
26/04/2024: Westmorland and Furness Council – Annual Precept	£	11,503.62

b) Payments: The following payments for the period 01 April – 30 April 2024 totalling £432.57 were noted and **Approved:**

i. 08/04/2024: AIMS Accountants – Monthly payroll fee	£	16.40
ii. 15/04/2024: M R Curry – Salary April	£	332.77
iii. 15/04/2024: HMRC – PAYE etc April	£	83.40

The following payments required were Approved:

i. Information Commissioner Registration fee: Direct Debit 08/052/2024 - Ratified	£	35.00
ii. Zurich Municipal: Annual Insurance Premium 2024-25	£	224.00
iii. CALC: Annual Subscription 2024-25	£	173.55

c) Financial Report to 30/04/2024: The Clerk had circulated a bank reconciliation for the period 01-30 April 2024 and reported that there were no items of exception to bring to the attention of Councillors.

d) Annual Governance and Accountability Report 2023-24 (AGAR): The Clerk reported that the Parish Council will submit a Certificate of Exemption to the External Auditor (not having either gross income or expenditure over £25,000 in the year) and that the internal audit would take place on 17 May. Once completed the AGAR will require formal approval and sign off at a meeting of the Parish Council before 30 June and that the Clerk will arrange this on a date to be confirmed.

e) Governance Documents: The Clerk confirmed that he had conducted a review of all governance documents, updated them as necessary and circulated them to Councillors. He had recommended that with amendments, the documents could be approved by the Parish Council for the 2024-25 Parish Council year subject to any subsequent agreed amendments. The content in the documents listed in the Schedule to these Minutes was **Approved**.

f) Future Administration of Finance: It was noted that Steve Carman will maintain his overview of administration for the time being and that Cllr. Sunderland will become the new Primary User. Cllrs. Cooper, Tudor, and Ward will be enabled to authorise payments.

17/24 Community Initiatives

a) The Wheatsheaf Inn: Councillors noted locally expressed concerns that a board had been placed on the building by Robinsons advertising for a new tenant might indicate that the pub was closed or might be closed. It was suggested that a 'We are open' sign might help to balance this perception. Cllrs. noted that the pub was registered as an Asset of Community Value. It was felt that a constructive approach to Robinsons Brewery offering to support it in its search for a new tenant would be the most appropriate response and Cllr. Ward agreed to draft a note for consideration.

b) The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) 2024: Cllrs noted that the APM had been held successfully and had been ex-Councillor Carman's last presentation on behalf of the Parish Council. It was **Agreed** that these Minutes should formally record the thanks of the Parish Council and the local community for his service over the past 12 years and that an appropriate token of appreciation be made.

18/24 Schedule of Correspondence: Other than any items mentioned as part of the meeting, the only other items of correspondence were as follows:

- a) There had been no response to date to a representation to the National Trust about the movement of slurry through the village.
- b) Councillors were pleased to consent to the sale of home-made marmalade by Jo Kennedy from the bus shelter opposite the Wheatsheaf.

Date of the Next Meeting: The next scheduled meeting will be held on the 03 July, though a short meeting to approve the accounts will be held in June on a date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.13 p.m.

Signed.....Chairman

Date:

**SCHEDULE OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS APPROVED BY HELSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
15 MAY 2024**

At its meeting on 15 May 2024, the following documents, having been circulated and updated on the website at www.helsingtonpc.org.uk, were **Approved** for 2024-25 subject to any subsequent agreed amendment:

- The Asset Register
- Risk Register
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Retention of Documents Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Grants and Donations Policy
- Press and Media Policy
- Publication of Information Policy.

Signed.....Chairman Date:

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