

# HELINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

held on Wednesday 02 November 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in the Helington & Brigsteer Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Cllrs S. Carman (Chairman), J. Sunderland, J. Cooper, G. Riley, K. Ritchie and J. Seddon

**In Attendance:** Cllr. Janet Battye (Shadow Councillor for the Westmorland and Furness Council) M. R. Curry (Clerk).

**46/22 Apologies:** Apologies had been received from County Councillor Bland and District Councillor Holmes

**47/22 Declarations of Interest / Dispensation Requests:** None

**48/23 Minutes:** It was **Resolved** to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 07 September 2022.

**49/22 Public Participation:** None

**50/22 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. **7/2022/5529 – Low Cragg House, Low La, Brigsteer:** External & internal alterations/extension; landscaping etc. **No Objection submitted 21/09/22 subject to** concerns raised about rights of way and encroachment. **Application Approved subject to conditions 20 October 2022.** The Planning Officer's report refers to the access concerns raised by the Parish Council. Councillors noted that there is no current evidence of encroachment on to Parish Council land and that the applicant has stated that the development will not obstruct existing rights of way. Cllr. Carman confirmed that rights of access are registered with HMLR. It was agreed that by prescriptive use at least, rights will extend to vehicular access - for example for horseboxes. A question had been raised about impact on a supposed foot-way from the west towards Holme View Cottage, but Councillors agreed that this was not a Parish Council matter.
- b. **South Lakeland District Council:** View applications, responses and decisions online at: <http://applications.southlakeland.gov.uk/planningapplications/welcome.asp>. Councillors noted the following:
  - i. **SL/2022/0356 - 2, Gunpowder Site Works, Sedgewick:** Internal and external alterations. **Listed Building Consent Granted with conditions: 15/09/2022**
  - ii. **SL/2022/0775 – Land South of Prizet Filling Station:** Construction of new business building. **Refused: 21/10/2022**
- c. **Cumbria County Council – 530000-376-LICA81: Claimed Right of Way, Helington Underpass:** New length of public footpath: **Approved** by Notice 20/10/22.

### 51/22 Parish Land

- a. **Land Opposite the Village Hall:**

Rectification of address: Due to the current length of time that it is taking to process such matters at HMLR, it was agreed to take this off the Agenda until some developments are reported.
- b. **Tree Work on Parish Land:** The Clerk reported that Mark Sigrist had advised that he was currently carrying a physical injury and was going shortly for tests to check out the nature of the problem. It therefore means a delay to the start of the felling work at Peat Houses and along Moss Lane. He will advise as soon as he knows more. Councillors **Agreed** that the Parish Council should stay with him as preferred contractor, but asked for confirmation that his revised quote will remain the same. Councillors also agreed to ask him whether, in the event that he was unable to do the jobs this felling season, he will make a site visit with representatives of the Council to identify any trees, particularly along the roadsides, which are

in urgent need of attention for felling by an alternative contractor. The Clerk undertook to follow-up these observations.

- c. **Drainage on the Parish Road opposite the Wheatsheaf:** The Chairman confirmed that the Savasi's considered that the wall between the beck and their property to be theirs. Councillors nonetheless felt that further clarification as to liability in the event of damage caused by a flood event would be desirable. The Clerk confirmed that he had written to the Parish Council insurers for advice on this as well as to CALC for advice on links to a 'free consultation' with a lawyer. No responses had been received at the time of report. Cllr Seddon was researching historic documentation that could shed some clarification on the matter, but in the meantime proposed following up via the Cumbria County Council website as they have delegated responsibility for watercourses from the Environment Agency. Councillors acknowledged that there is still the link to a riparian rights lawyer provided by Cllr. Riley. The Clerk undertook to follow-up on possible ways forward and report back.
- d. **Registrations of Title:** The Clerk reminded Councillors that he was unable to make any progress with upgrades in title until contact details have been amended and formally verified with HMLR. This is required for all properties and a new Schedule is under preparation, aided by a digital mapping service called Parish On-line. This will enable the creation of a new digital map which will be the foundation of the new Schedule tying together name, location, size and tenure details. Once finished, HMLR Form COG1 will be completed for all properties to change the ownership details from a named person to corporate status. Upgrades of title will then be submitted to HMLR on Form UT1.

## 52/22 Highways

### a. Highways Matters:

- i. Update of Schedule: No updates to the Schedule were proposed.
- ii. Low Lane: Cllr. Riley confirmed that he had spoken with Bruce and Grace but due to heavy work commitments they haven't had the time to check if the plantings have been replenished and will do so in due course.
- iii. Moss Lane Bridge: It is anticipated that the work is nearing completion and that the bridge is likely to be reopened imminently, pending final checks and sign-off by Highways.

- b. **Speed Indicator Device (SID):** Councillors noted the Clerk's summary of receipts and payments on this project showing a net cost to the Parish Council of £70. It was **Agreed** that the position of the sign was appropriate and, with thanks to all who had contributed, that this matter was now successfully concluded.

## 53/22 Reports

- a. **Chairman & Parish Councillors:** No reports submitted.

- b. **Helsington & Brigsteer Village Hall:** The Chairman reported that he had actioned the agreed payment of £1,325 to the Village Hall in-full for 2022/23. He also reported that the Trustees had applied for a grant for the same sum for 2023/24 and he invited a discussion on this. He began by suggesting that it was not unreasonable for the Parish Council to seek some greater detail as to how the grant was being spent and felt that this could be evidenced through a bookings plan that demonstrated the extent of activities designed for the benefit of the wider community. Cllr. Riley agreed that the Parish Council was bound to exhibit due diligence in the use of its funds and Cllr Seddon agreed that as the most valuable asset in the Parish it was important that it maintains a relationship with the entire community. He was sure that the Trustees would welcome any constructive input from the Parish Council as to how they should consider utilising the grant. For the Village Hall, Cllr. Ritchie said that the Trustees were preparing a strategic plan that would address the question of events and usage, though it is still quite early in the planning process to be specific about what events the Hall will be used for in 2023. Cllr. Ritchie also referenced the role of the Village Hall as an Emergency Hub in the Community Emergency Plan which in itself demonstrated a commitment to wider community use. Cllr Carman acknowledged that there had been improvements recently and hoped that these would continue, including a special community event to mark the Coronation in 2023. In conclusion, Councillors **Agreed** to approve a grant of £1,325 for 2023/24 and that the Chairman would write to confirm this. His note will include acknowledgement and appreciation of recent improvements in the extent of community events and will request detail about further events in 2023, including plans to celebrate the Coronation.

- c. **Local Police Team:** No update on local issues had been received.
- d. **District Councillor:** No report as Cllr. Holmes had submitted his apologies. Through the Clerk, he had let it be known that he attended the Cumbria Coast and Flood Forum in Kendal on 20 October and he will provide a report of this event.
- e. **Councillor J. Battye** (for the Shadow Westmorland & Furness Council. NOTE: until such time as a 'formal' acronym emerges, the new Council will be identified as W&FC). Cllr. Battye's report included the following:
- Work on the structure of the new Council continues and recruitment of a Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer was underway.
  - A proposal to create a new Town Council for Barrow has been agreed for when the District Council is subsumed within W&FC.
  - Cllr Carman will complete the recent survey on community engagement sent out by W&FC.
  - Cllr. Battye is working with Cllr. Archibald on the community engagement elements of the Climate Change agenda and referenced some of the recent work done in Levens. She recommended all Councillors to look at the Climate Change Toolkit recently produced by SLDC. In response to a request from the Chairman, Cllr. Battye **Agreed** to give a presentation on this work to the Annual Parish Meeting to be held in April 2023.
- f. **County Councillor:** No report as Cllr Bland had submitted his apologies. Through the Clerk, he had expressed his optimism that the Moss Lane Bridge would re-open very soon.

#### 54/22 Finance

- a. **Receipts 07/09/22-31/10/22:** The following receipts were noted:
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|---|----------|
| i) 15/09/22: Robinson's Brewery – grant contribution towards SID:                 | £ 250.00 |
| ii) 30/09/22: Zurich Municipal: - Refund of duplicate payment for annual premium: | £ 224.00 |
- b. **Payments:** Councillors noted the following payments:
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|---|-----------|
| i) 15/09/2022: M R Curry – Salary September:        | £ 355.81  |
| ii) 06/10/22: AIMS accountants – payroll services   | £ 15.00   |
| iii) 12/10/22: J Sunderland – Books of Condolence:  | £ 118.37  |
| iv) 17/10/22: M R Curry – Salary October :          | £ 355.81  |
| v) 26/10/22: Brigsteer Village Hall – annual grant: | £1,325.00 |
- The following payment was Approved:**
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| Brigsteer Village Hall: Room Hire for PC & Resilience meetings: | £ 87.50 |
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- c. **Financial Report:** The Clerk had circulated a bank reconciliation for the period 07 September to 31 October showing a reconciled balance of £15,240.61 funds-in-hand with no unrepresented cheques to take into account. He then circulated a budget review paper to 30 September with projections to 31 March 2023. After considering the detail he concluded as follows:
- Expenditure:** Although expenditure is projected to be significantly above the budget, the bulk of this will be for tree felling work which was planned for and was agreed would come from reserves. Other increases, notably the SID and Village Bench are offset by grants received whilst other minor increases are offset by several lines of underspend.
- Income:** Income is projected to be £14,699 at the end of the year, some £4,604 above budget. Primary drivers in this are grants received (£2,550 SID); an increase in VAT income against VAT paid and a refund for a duplicate payment.
- Overall these budgets account for £4,389 of the projected increase in income.
- Conclusion:** Taking into account the expected tree felling costs and unbudgeted income referred to above, there are no matters of exception giving rise to concern. On the basis of projections it is likely that the balance of funds (reserves) at 31 March 2023 will be in the region of £7,600.
- d. **Draft Budget:** The Clerk had circulated a draft budget for 2023-24, though as a result of formatting issues not all Councillors had been able to open this document and so it was supplemented by hard copy papers. As an update on the figures, Councillors noted the recently agreed pay award on behalf of local government staff and acknowledged that this will have an impact on the Clerk's salary both in terms of back pay and the rate going forward. Given that precept papers would not be received until mid to late-December and would not be due for submission until the end of January, it was **Agreed** to give further consideration to the draft figures in the interim and agree the budget and precept by email to enable the precept

bid to be submitted. If all were in agreement, the decisions would be ratified at the February meeting, always reserving the ability to call an extra-ordinary meeting beforehand should the circumstances require. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his work on these financial documents.

**55/22 Community Initiatives**

- a. **Community Led Plan (CLP):** It was **Agreed** to remove this item from future Agendas unless or until further action was proposed.
- b. **Community Resilience and Emergency Plan:** The Chairman reported that the Resilience Plan was now virtually complete and asked if any other Councillors would now take it over to finalisation. It was **Agreed** that the Clerk would liaise with the Chairman to produce the final edition.

**56/22 Correspondence Received:** Councillors noted the Resilience Fund launched by Electricity NorthWest and it was agreed to mention this to the Trustees of the Village Hall.

**57/22 Future Meetings:** The next meeting was confirmed as to take place on Wednesday 01 February 2023. Other than matters arising from the November meeting, including formal approval of the budget and precept, no other matters were put forward for inclusion on the Agenda.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed..... Chairman

Date.....