



HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES



of the meeting of Helmdon Parish Council, held in The Reading Room, Helmdon
on Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 7:30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Harris, Hart, Holloway, Marchant, Minshall, Moody (Chair), Shepherd, Wheeler, and the clerk Charmaine Jay

Members of the public: Seven members of the public present.

287.	Apologies for absence Cllr Plunkett sent apologies. RESOLVED: To approve the absence of Cllr Plunkett
288.	Declarations of Interest Cllr Wheeler declared an interest in item 274A. Cllr Hart declared an interest in item 271, a dispensation has been granted by the clerk.
289.	Approval and signature of the minutes of 25 September 2024 RESOLVED: That the minutes of 25 September 2024 be approved and signed.
290.	Matters arising ▪ The bark at the play area was topped up by Cllrs Holloway, Minshall, Moody, and Shepherd, and vegetation was cleared back. ▪ The defibrillator's arrival is confirmed for 24 October 2024. The homeowner has requested to use their own electrician. It is recommended to consider a guardian and a bleed kit for the defibrillator.
291.	Open Forum (15min max- 3 min per person) ▪ Various footpaths in the parish require attention. Some residents are happy to help improvements if necessary. It is recommended that residents speak to Cllr Shepherd in his capacity as Parish Paths Warden for Helmdon. The Paths Working Group needs to be revitalised. ▪ Regarding item 271, residents are proceeding with a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) and have received around 60 letters of support. ▪ Concerns re flooding from the pit on Grange Lane.
292.	To review recent activity at the Helmdon Old Station Local Wildlife Site and to consider the impact in relation to public access to the site, the safety of the Grange Lane tunnel, and flooding from the site. Cllrs Holloway and Moody had a meeting with landowners of plots B, C, and D in April 2024. At the time of the meeting, Plot A and A+ had not been sold. The council's aim is to maintain access to the site and would prefer to work with the landowners.

	RESOLVED: To add the parish council's voice and weight to the Residents' DMMO application and to try to maintain dialogue and negotiation with the landowners.																												
293.	To discuss Welsh Lane (B4525) and grit store There has been no response to the letter that Helmdon Parish Council sent to Stuart Timmiss at WNC on 26 September 2024. RESOLVED: To send a chaser to Stuart Timmiss and make it clear that the parish council's actions are separate to those of any individual.																												
294.	To create the unpaid role of Acting Clerk and to appoint a member of the council to the role The HR Committee started the recruitment process for a new clerk. The closing date is 1 November 2024, and the interviews will be held on 6 November 2024. Due to Cllr Plunkett, who is part of the interview panel, being unwell, the council has requested a provisional substitute. RESOLVED: That Cllr Moody be appointed as Acting Clerk unpaid, to note the recruitment timetable, and to appoint Cllrs Hart and Minshall as provisional substitutes for the interview panel.																												
295.	Finance A) To receive the financial statement: note payments received and consider invoices to be paid. <table border="1"><thead><tr><th><u>Payee</u></th><th><u>Invoice No</u></th><th><u>Description</u></th><th><u>Amount</u></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Steve Wheeler</td><td>N/A</td><td>Allotment Pump</td><td>£38.99</td></tr><tr><td>PKF Littlejohn</td><td>3965</td><td>External Audit</td><td>£252.00</td></tr><tr><td>Parish Online</td><td>34UG036-0010</td><td>Annual Subscription</td><td>£45.00</td></tr><tr><td>H Timms</td><td>INV – 6</td><td>Pump Garden</td><td>£200</td></tr><tr><td>R & G</td><td>INV- 121182</td><td>Grass Cutting</td><td>£154.80</td></tr><tr><td>Reading Room</td><td>INV-451</td><td>Reading Room Hire</td><td>£70.00</td></tr></tbody></table> B) To note the closure letter for external auditors, PKF Littlejohn The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been received from PKF Littlejohn. RESOLVED: To note the financial statement, approve the bills for payment, and note the closure letter from the external auditor, with the Finance Committee reviewing any advisory actions.	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Invoice No</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	Steve Wheeler	N/A	Allotment Pump	£38.99	PKF Littlejohn	3965	External Audit	£252.00	Parish Online	34UG036-0010	Annual Subscription	£45.00	H Timms	INV – 6	Pump Garden	£200	R & G	INV- 121182	Grass Cutting	£154.80	Reading Room	INV-451	Reading Room Hire	£70.00
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296.	To consider an Honorary Freeperson Policy The council could consider the appointment of an Honorary Freeperson at its February meeting annually, with the award being presented at the Annual Village Meeting. RESOLVED: To appoint one or more Honorary Freepersons annually.																												

297.	To appoint a Flagmaster Geoff Bridger, who has a forces background, has offered his services to take on the Flagmaster role. John Coatsworth, who has been Acting Flagmaster will now revert to Deputy Flagmaster. The council wished to express their gratitude to John Coatsworth stepping up after the sad loss of the previous Flagmaster, Geoff Abbey. RESOLVED: To appoint Geoff Bridger as Flagmaster.
298.	To receive an update from the Station Road Working Group No report available. RESOLVED: To defer the item to the November meeting.
299.	To receive an update from the Parish Plan Working Group The working group met on 16 October 2024 to analyse the responses to the Stage 1 Survey. The group will meet next on 18 November 2024 to finalise the questions for the Stage 2 Survey. RESOLVED: To note the update.
300.	Close RESOLVED: To close the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Signed: _____

Date: _____