



HELMDON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING



Minutes of a meeting of Helmdon Parish Council held in the Helmdon Reading Room, Church Street, Helmdon on **Wednesday 26th March 2025 at 7:30 pm.**

Present: Cllrs Harris, Hart, Holloway, Minshall, Moody (Chair), Wheeler, Plunkett, and Shepherd.

Members of the public: 4 members of the public present, Unitary Cllr Eastwood.

- 353. To receive and approve apologies for absence** – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Marchant.
- 354. Declarations of Interest** – Item 362 Cllr Hart declared an interest as an owner adjacent to the Wildlife site.
- 355. Approval and signature of the minutes of February 26th, 2025** - It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved and duly signed.
- 356. Matters arising** – It was agreed at the last meeting that someone from the police should be invited to the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) to be the main speaker to discuss the recent spate of crime in the area. PCSO Colin Brooks has advised that he cannot attend so will send a report. Cllr Moody has responded advising PCSO Brooks that the Parish Council (PC) would be happy with anyone from the police force and it does not need to be PCSO Brooks therefore they will need to find someone who can attend. We await his response. Unitary Cllr Eastwood will provide a report at the APM, as will Rachel Wheeler on behalf of the Guides. The litter pick was held on 23rd March and thanks were expressed to all of those who took part and thanks to Cllr Minshall for collecting and returning the litter picking equipment.
- 357. Open Forum** (15min max, 3 min per person) –
Representations were made on:
- A parishioner thanked the PC for organising the litter pick and also noted the grass cutting looks a lot better this year.
 - Questions were asked about the Welcome Pack which will be covered under item 365.
 - Unitary Cllr Eastwood advised that councillors are out canvassing as there will be an election on 1st May. Cllr Eastwood noted that it is very sad and unfortunate to see that more accidents have taken place on the B4525 and advised that the debris from the accident should have been cleared by the police.
- 358. B4525 (Welsh Lane) – Update on the request for further areas to be proposed for a 40mph limit** – Highways have replied advising that they have already considered the additional area suggested by the PC and they do not believe it would be a suitable area for a 40mph limit therefore they will continue with the plans already approved. Highways also rejected the proposal for double white lines to prevent overtaking in the area. The councillors are very disappointed with this response and feel that West Northants Council (WNC) don't appreciate how dangerous the area is and how necessary double white lines are as the overtaking is what is causing the main risk to road users. It was

felt that to push further on this could prevent the current agreed 40mph limit from going ahead so there will be no further response to the team dealing with the speed limit reduction but **Cllr Moody will try a different team within WNC to see if they would come out to see the area in question and possibly offer some help to make it safer.**

359. Update re contact with West Northants Council (WNC) Planning Enforcement regarding the dilapidated state of Priory Barn – No response. Clerk to chase Mandy Lumb and copy in Stephanie Gibrat. If no substantive response is received within 2 weeks the clerk should escalate the matter.

360. To resolve that Helmdon Parish Council is prepared to fund WNC Highways to install timber bollards from the Jubilee Wall towards the Welsh Lane, subject to agreement on design and cost – It was RESOLVED that Helmdon PC will fund the bollards subject to agreement on design and cost which should include bollards on both sides of the wall. Clerk to inform WNC. It was suggested that as this is a safety issue it may be possible to obtain grants towards the cost such as the Police and Crime Commissioner's Road Safety Fund.

361. Finance:

a. To note the bank balances of £433.98 and £23,194.83 as at 19.03.2025 – Cllr Moody checked the statements provided by the Clerk and confirmed the balances are correct.

b. To note and approve receipts and payments:

Payments made since the last meeting using delegated powers/Direct Debits:

Date	Pyment type	Payee	Invoice No	Description	Amount
28.02.25	DD	Unity Bank	N/A	Banking fee	£6.00
10.03.25	DD	Yu Energy	02398075	Electricity	£47.50
10.03.25	DD	Yu Energy	02398077	Electricity	£16.46

Invoices to be paid:

Payee	Invoice No	Description	Amount
Staff costs	N/A	Salaries and associated costs	£865.37
Brent Harris	N/A	Repairs to benches and noticeboards	£761.00
Texprep	27333	Parish Plan Leaflets	£53.90
Parish Online	34UG036-0011	Website 5 Mar 25-5 Mar 26	£420.00

Receipts - None

It was **RESOLVED** to approve all payments and note the receipts.

Cllr Hart left the meeting at 8:05pm.

362. To receive an update from WNC Planning Enforcement on matters related to the Helmdon Old Station Local Wildlife Site (HOSLWS) – After a meeting between Cllr Moody, Cllr Marchant, and enforcement personnel from WNC a report was provided by WNC. The full report has been published on the PC website and can be found within the 'Ordinary Meeting 26 March 2025' folder <https://helmdonparishcouncil.gov.uk/meetings/ordinary-meeting-26-march-2025/>

Cllr Hart rejoined the meeting at 8:17pm

363. To receive a report and update from the Parish Plan Working Group – The Parish Plan survey has gone live. 51 responses have been received to date. The survey needs to be republished to try to encourage more responses. The closing date is 30th April. It was agreed to ask the school if they could ask some

of the children to complete it as a classroom exercise and put something out about it in the school newsletter. Hard copies will be taken to various groups to hand out to anyone who doesn't have access to a computer. **Cllr Holloway will contact the school and take the hard copies to village groups.**

Unitary Cllr Eastwood left the meeting at 8:27pm.

- 364. Report on the 3rd Annual Allotment Plot Holders' meeting and to consider recommendations** – Some plot holders had made a request to trap moles using a licensed mole trapper. This would be in breach of the tenancy agreement hence the request to the PC. After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the status quo in the tenancy agreement should be followed and there should be no trapping of moles. **Clerk to inform allotment holders.**
A request has been made for the PC to prohibit the keeping of poultry on the allotments at the moment due to the national restriction on keeping birds outside due to Avian Flu. It was **RESOLVED** to prohibit the keeping of poultry on the plots until the national restriction is revoked. **Clerk to inform allotment holders.**
There is 1 plot available which has been advertised and there has been some interest in taking on the plot.
- 365. Reading Room Welcome Pack update** – A first draft of the pack has been produced. A few more updates are required and then the pack can be put in the Reading Room for anyone to access. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Shepherd for putting this all together. Questions were asked about how new residents would know to go and find the pack in the Reading Room. The current process is for the clerk to send out a 'Welcome to your new home' card to any new residents (details of new residents are obtained from the electoral register or from councillors) which includes information about where to find the Welcome Pack.
- 366. Proposal to change the date of the May Annual Parish Council Meeting to 7th May due to the usual date not fitting in line with legal requirements in an election year** – It was **RESOLVED** to change the date to 7th May. **Clerk to make relevant arrangements.**

Cllr Wheeler has advised that he is not re-standing to be on the council from May 2025. The councillors expressed their thanks to Cllr Wheeler for his work on the PC over the years.

Meeting closed @ 8:45pm

Next meeting date – 7th May 2025

Signed..... Date.....