

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING - 12th JULY 2001

Present: Councillor W.Hepplewhite (Chairman)

Councillors E.W.Armstrong, G Gustard, M.Gustard, W.Kennedy, M.Oliver .

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors **R.Olaman, A.Westmorland**

2. POLICE REPORT:

In the absence of Sergeant Stephen Taylor, P.C.'s Scully and Hutchinson presented the monthly report. This included a vehicle theft on 11th July from premises in the village together with specialised equipment which had been left inside. The theft had taken place between the hours of 6pm and 8am the following morning, despite the presence of an Alsatian dog on the premises during this period. Damage to a Metro car in the village, which had been reported to the June meeting had resulted in the subsequent arrest of the culprit. Other than these two incidents, the month had been quiet.

3. MINUTES:

Agreed: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Thursday 7th June 2001 (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member,) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

a) Minute No.4 (b) - Public Notice boards

The clerk reported that following his meeting with an officer of Northern Training, a quotation for the manufacture and erection of a notice board of similar design and size to that within the grounds of the W.I. Hall had been received in the sum of £460 + VAT. It was felt that this figure appeared to be excessive, and it was suggested that an approach be made to a resident of the parish who was a joiner, and who might be able to carry out the work.

Agreed: That an approach be made as indicated.

b) Minute No.4 (c) - Visit to Greatham Parish Church

It was noted that this matter would be discussed in detail at Agenda Item 8

c) Minute No.5 - Casual Vacancy

It was noted that this matter would be discussed in detail at Agenda Item 6

d) Minute No.6 - Dalton-le-Dale Web Site

The Clerk reported that Mr.Gordon Richardson had agreed to the Council's conditions for participating in the web site being set up by him, and had further suggested that should the Council agree to go head with the project, the site should be advertised in its correspondence.

Agreed: That the council participate on the Web Site as follows:

- a) **That such participation be on a 3 month trial period.**
- b) **That input should be arranged only by the Clerk on official letterhead.**
- c) **That no personal details of Parish Councillors be given.**

Arising from the discussion, it was suggested that the Clerk's office technology be extended so as to give him access to the Internet, and it was

Agreed: That consideration be given to this matter at the September meeting of the Council, and that the Clerk prepare a report into the nature and costs of the necessary items of equipment.

e) Minute No.7 (c) - Traffic Calming Measures

The Clerk reported that correspondence. received from the County Council had confirmed that the cost of £1450 quoted for the installation of further provision on the Dene Road service road did in fact cover two humps at the previously agreed locations, and he requested members' approval for the necessary order to be given for the work to proceed.

Agreed: That Approval be given for the installation of two traffic calming humps to be installed at:

- a) **Between "Gloucester House" &"Hawthorn House"**
- b) **Outside "Dun Roaming"**

f) Minute No.11 (b) - Hedgerows

The Clerk confirmed arrangements for the site meeting on 17th July with Mr.Bill Kirkup of Durham County Council to consider what might be done to reinstate the hedgerows on the public footpath south of Dalton Bridge, and how this might be funded. It was emphasised at this stage, the meeting was purely a fact finding exercise, and that a report on the implications would be given to a future

meeting of the Council.

5. CASUAL VACANCY:

The Clerk reported that the resident who had indicated an interest in being co-opted to the Parish Council had been invited to the meeting to discuss the matter with members, but was not present.

Agreed: That Councillor M.Gustard make a further approach to the lady and invite her to the September meeting.

6. ST.ANDREWS CHURCH - STAINED GLASS WINDOW:

The Chairman presented a verbal report, which supplemented Appendix 1 circulated by the Clerk on the recent visit by some members to St.John the Baptist Church in Greatham, where they had seen the Millennium window which had recently been installed, and had been given a full history of the project by the Churchwarden. The visit had been most interesting and informative, and had reinforced members' views that the window as currently proposed for St.Andrew's was totally inappropriate. Councillor M.Gustard emphasised this belief by referring to the results of a questionnaire which had been placed in the Church during a recent event in order to canvass resident's views, and a copy of the results was given to each member. She advised that it was necessary to acquaint the Durham Diocese of the findings, to express the conclusion that the design as proposed was not acceptable and that a more traditional window was favoured, and to seek advice on the way forward from the current impasse. She stated that she would take the matter to a meeting of the Parochial Church Council on 25th July for confirmation, following which she suggested that the Clerk invite Canon Bill Hall of Durham Diocese to a special meeting of the Parish Council on a mutually convenient date to consider the matter further.

Agreed: That the course of action suggested by Councillor Gustard be Approved.

7. PARISH COUNCIL CLERKS' SALARIES - ANNUAL REVIEW:

Members considered as Appendix 2 a report by the Clerk on the implications of the recent review of salary scales, which became effective retrospectively from 1st April 2001. The report explained that the current salary of the clerk was based on Point 20 of the appropriate scale, i.e. £14,301 per annum, which equated to £225.47 per month for a 7 hour week. Subject to members' approval this would increase to £14,802 per annum or £233.36 per month, which would mean the sum of £2800.38 would be expended on the Clerk's salary for the 2001/2002 financial year, for which a budget of £3000 had been provided.

Agreed: That the joint recommendations of the National Association of Local Councils and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services be Approved, and that the revised salary of the Clerk be Approved at £233.36 per month.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

a) The Clerk reported receipt of correspondence. from the District of Easington acknowledging the concerns of all parish councils regarding environmental matters, especially dog fouling, litter collection and grass cutting. These concerns were being addressed, and a series of consultation meetings was being planned so that individual parishes could express their views and suggestions for improvements to the service. Details would be announced in due course. The report was noted.

b) The Clerk reported an acknowledgement by the County Council of the Parish Council's request to acquire an interest in the strip of land to the east of Dene Road, behind and including that piece of land on which the public seat was situated. Enquires were ongoing. The report was noted.

c) The Chairman reported having written a letter of appreciation to Northumbrian Water following its efforts to alleviate the flooding and sewage problems which he had recently been experiencing. Following his discussions, officers of the Company had indicated their agreement to attend a future meeting of the Council to respond to members' concerns, with particular reference to the forthcoming development of Dalton Flatts which would place an added pressure on the existing system.

Agreed: That this matter be placed on the Agenda for the September meeting for further consideration.

9. PLANNING MATTERS:

The following new applications were considered:

a) Proposed rear dining room extension & 1st floor bedroom extension at 40 Dalton Heights for Mr.& Mrs.Kerry

b) Proposed conservatory at 67 Escallond Drive for Mr.L.Willis

Agreed: That these applications be Noted without comment

The following Planning Approval was Noted:

a) Proposed boundary fence at 10 Plymouth Close for Mrs.B.Lines

10. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Agreed: That Approval be given to the payment of the following accounts:

016 J.Abbot	Salary - July 2001	£225.47
017 J.Abbot	Salary Increase (Minute 7a above)	£31.56
018 Universal Office Supplies	Files/Stationery	£52.83
019 Greatham PCC	Donation to Church Funds	£25.00

11. REPORTS:

a) Councillor Kennedy reported on her first meeting as the Council's representative on the East Durham and Houghall Community College's Parish Liaison Committee, which in fact had been the Annual General Meeting. She had found the proceedings very interesting, in particular the College's stated intention of increasing outreach involvement in the community.

12. OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS:

a) In connection with the agreed participation in the Dalton-le-Dale Web Site, Councillor Kennedy felt that some attempt should be made to inform the electorate of the Council's aims and objectives, and she suggested that (say) a five year programme should be drawn up and brought to public attention. This would be in keeping with the Government's policy of requiring local authorities, including Parish Councils to engage in a Best Value process. Taking up this point, the Chairman suggested that it might be advantageous for members to engage in a "wordstorming" session, which among other matters should include ways of achieving more effective meetings.

Agreed: That this item be included in the Agenda for the September meeting in order to allow time for the consideration of any budgetary implications for the 2002/2003 financial year.

b) In view of the lack of progress with arrangements for the proposed Summer Fair in partnership with the Women's Institute, it was

Agreed: That the Clerk write to the Secretary suggesting that in view of the short time remaining before the proposed date of 8th September, it might be preferable not to proceed with this year's fair, unless the W.I. wishes to carry on unilaterally.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

In view of the August recess, it was noted that the next meeting of the Council would be held on Thursday 6th September at 7pm.

Agreed: That in accordance with normal practice, authority be given to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk to deal with routine matters during the recess, and to call any extraordinary meeting(s) which may be necessary and appropriate.