

DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING – 1ST NOVEMBER 2001

PRESENT : Councillor W.Hepplewhite (Chairman)

Councillors G.Gustard, M.Gustard, W.Kennedy, R.Olaman, M.Oliver & A.Westmorland.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

Councillor E.W.Armstrong

2. POLICE REPORT :

In the absence of Sergeant Stephen Taylor, P.C.s Janet Hutchinson and Peter Siddle presented the monthly report. P.C.Hutchinson advised members that a number of youngsters had been causing a nuisance near the Church, and although they had not been apprehended, it was believed that they were from the Deneside area. A member stated that she had seen these youths, but had not approached them; nevertheless she would be able to identify them and would advise the Police accordingly. Councillor Marian Gustard reported the case of a local resident who had been verbally abused by two men with greyhounds whilst walking her own dog, which was not on a leash. She had given the Police a description, and one of the officers intimated that the men might be identified.

3. MINUTES :

Agreed : That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 4th October 2001 (a copy of which had been circulated previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING :

a) Minute No.4(a) – Public Notice Boards

The Clerk reported that an order had been placed for two notice boards to be sited near the entrance to Dalton Heights and Dalton Grange estates. He was currently in touch with the various public utility undertakings to establish that the proposed locations would not interfere with their installations.

b) Minute No.4(b) – Traffic Calming

Members reported the completion of the additional two speed humps on the service road. Concern had been raised that the humps were not as high as those on the main road, and because of the distance between two of them, drivers were still travelling at excessive speeds. It was Agreed that the position be monitored.

c) Minute No.4(c) – Land east of “Coniscliffe”

Councillor Marian Gustard informed the meeting that she had seen the Government Inspector on site during the course of a follow-up visit, and although he was unable to discuss the case with her, she

had stressed the need for him to have access to the underground chamber in order to see its extent.

d Minute No.4(d) – Internet Access

Councillor Westmorland reported on the completion of the installation of the facility in the Clerk's home. He pointed out that the existing monitor was of poor visual quality, and recommended the acquisition of a replacement, which he estimated would cost in the region of £90. This would keep the overall cost within the original estimate of £400.

Agreed : That Approval be given for the purchase of a new monitor as recommended.

e) Minute No.4(e) – Sewerage Concerns

The Clerk reported that Councillor Olaman had handed him a letter from the Head of Planning at the District Council together with a copy of the Drainage Statement relating to the forthcoming development at Dalton Flatts. Because of its complexity, a copy had been sent to the officer of Northumbrian Water who would be attending the special meeting of the Council on 8th November to discuss sewerage matters generally.

f) Minute No.4(f) - Trees

Councillor M.Gustard reported having been in touch with the District Council's Tree & Woodland Officer in connection with this matter, which would receive attention.

g) Minute No.5 – Stained Glass Window

Councillor M.Gustard reported that a meeting of the Parochial Church Council had taken place on 31st October, when the design brief prepared on behalf of the Parish Council had been considered. The Vicar and the PCC were fully supportive of the brief, and it was

Agreed : That Canon Hall be advised of the situation, and invited to identify a suitable artist(s) to proceed with a draft design and report on the costs involved.

h) Minute No.6 – Hedgerows

The Clerk reported having sent copies of the specification for the re-instatement of the hedgerows to three contractors on the County Council's list. Further progress was awaited.

i) Minute No.7 – Best Value Programme

The meeting considered a report by the Clerk listing the various matters of concern dealt with during the past eighteen months, how they had been dealt with, and what had been the outcome. In view of the lengthy agenda, it was

Agreed : That full consideration be given to this matter at a future Meeting.

j) Minute No.8-Community Appraisals

The Clerk reported that a meeting had been arranged for 6th November with Mr.Roger Clubley, one of the consultants involved with this exercise, and a full report would be presented at the extraordinary Council Meeting on 8th November. The report was Noted.

5. LAND OPPOSITE DALTON BRIDGE :

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report by the Clerk on his attendance at the Local Inquiry on 23rd October in connection with the application for a purchase notice relating to this land. Following discussion, it was

Agreed : a) That the report be Noted and the decision be awaited.

b) That the Clerk write to the District Council in an attempt to clarify ownership of the remaining land at this location.

6. PARISH COUNCIL AUDITS :

The meeting considered as Appendix 2 a document circulated by the National Association of Local Councils on the requirements for internal financial controls and internal audit procedures by local councils. The document contained a number of ambiguities, and the Clerk undertook to clarify the situation with the Secretary of the Durham Association and report back.

7. NALC DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN/SUBSCRIPTIONS :

The meeting considered as Appendix 3 a further document circulated by NALC which set out details of its proposals to deal with the future role of Parish and Town Councils under the forthcoming Rural White Paper, the new Ethical Framework and the emergence of Quality Status. It was pointed out that this extra responsibility would have a one-off effect on member councils' subscriptions for 2002/2003, which would rise by some 30%. Councillor Westmorland reported on his attendance at the Durham Association's Annual Meeting, at which it was unanimously agreed to oppose this increase.

Agreed : That the report be Noted, and that further details be awaited.

8. E.D.C. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME :

The Clerk submitted for information purposes, Appendix 4 setting out the report of the follow-up visit to the District Council by the Review Manager of the Improvement Programme, which was set up to monitor the changes in political and management structures throughout the country. The report was Noted.

9. PLANNING MATTERS :

The Clerk reported that there were no new planning applications for consideration. The Chairman advised the meeting that in order to avoid any imminent applications which might be in the pipeline during the inter-meeting period, he had met with a planning officer, who confirmed that no such matters were pending. The report was Noted.

10. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :

Agreed : That Approval be given for payment of the following Accounts :

035	J.Abbot	Clerk's Salary – October 2001	£233.36
036	J.Abbot	Post/Telephone/Printing – October 2001	£26.44
037	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	£30.00
038	J.Abbot	Internet Installation	£20.00
039	A.Westmorland	Internet Installation Telephone extension	£11.48

11. REPORTS :

a) The Chairman reported briefly on his attendance at the Annual Meeting of the local branch of the Council for the protection of Rural England, at which an interesting presentation was given on Castle Eden Dene.

b) The Chairman reported on his recent attendance at various Best Value consultation meetings arranged by the District Council. These meetings had highlighted a number of public services, their success monitoring factors, and their response by local stakeholders, and had been most interesting and informative.

12. OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS :

a) Councillor Olaman reported a number of sightings of grey squirrels in the Dene, and this was Noted with satisfaction.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

It was Noted that the next routine meeting of the Council would be held on Thursday 6th December at 7 pm, at which the Precept for the 2002/2003 financial year would be determined.