

*DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL*

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING - 21st MAY 2002**

**PRESENT: Councillor W.Hepplewhite (Chairman)**

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

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:**

Councillor W.Hepplewhite was Proposed and Seconded, and there being no farther nominations, it was

Agreed : That Councillor W.Hepplewhite be, and is hereby elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing year.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:**

Councillor W.Kennedy indicated that for personal reasons, she did not wish to be considered for election as Vice Chairman for a second term. Councillor M.Oliver was Proposed and Seconded, and there being no farther nominations, it was

**Agreed : That Councillor M.Oliver be, and is hereby elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing year.**

**3. CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE 2002/3 :**

**Agreed : That the Chairman's Allowance for the year 2002/2003 remain unchanged at £400.**

**4. POLICE REPORT:**

P.C.Avent reported another quiet month, the only item of activity being the apprehension of a driver in the village in the early hours of May 2nd, when it was found that a motor cycle tax disc was being displayed on the windscreen. Councillor Westmorland informed the meeting that there had been a number of break-ins at Overdene, affecting both houses and garden sheds. He expressed concern at the delay in the Police response, and P.C.Avent explained that incidents were graded on a priority basis in order to combat problems caused by a shortage of resources.

Councillor Westmorland farther reported a recent incident at Overdene when two groups of youths were in confrontation. The officer confirmed that the Police were aware of the situation, which was being monitored.

General concern was expressed that the content of the monthly Police reports did not tally with members' and residents' experience, and it was felt that officers were not fully aware that the parish covered a wider area than the village itself. The Chairman undertook to take this issue up with a senior Police officer.

Following recent suspicions of drug taking activities in a derelict building in the village, P.C.Avent offered to give a short talk on drugs at the June meeting of the Council, and this was gratefully accepted by members.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES :**

**Agreed : That the following members be appointed to represent the Council on the**

## **organisations listed:**

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| a) District of Easington North Area Forum   | Coun. Olaman                 |
| b) Easington Area Association               | Couns. Armstrong & Olaman    |
| c) C.P.R.E.                                 | Coun. Hepplewhite            |
| d) Tidy Easington District                  | Coun. Hepplewhite/Clerk      |
| e) Police Joint Consultative Committee      | Coun. Oliver                 |
| f) East Durham & Houghall College           | Coun. Kennedy                |
| g) Durham Association of Parish/Town Couns. | Chairman & Coun. Westmorland |

## **6. MINUTES:**

**Agreed : That the Minutes of the following meetings, copies of which had been sent previously to each member, be Approved and Signed as a correct record:**

- a) Council Meeting - 4th April 2002**
- b) Special Council Meeting-25th April 2002**

## **7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES :**

Council Meeting - 4th April

### **a) Minute No. 11(c) - Land South of Dalton Heights**

The Clerk reported that he had sought an explanation of an item on the District Council's Web Site which appeared to offer for sale plots of land between Dalton Heights and the Times Inn. Despite assurances, no such explanation had yet been forthcoming, and he was instructed to write to the Council for an official response to the query.

### **b) Minute No.4 (a) - Derelict Building near Cragdale Villas**

The Chairman reported having inspected this building, following a request for it to be cleared of various items believed to be drug related. He had found it to be clear, but had more recently seen a number of individuals near the area. Further investigation had revealed items of a suspicious nature, and he welcomed the offer previously made by P.C.Avent of a drugs talk at the next meeting.

### **c) Minute No.4 (b) - District of Easington Standards Committee**

The Clerk reported that neither he nor the Chairman had been able to attend the meeting on 25th April at which the two Parish Councils' representatives to serve on the Committee were selected. The request for the original nomination of the Chairman to be considered by proxy was rejected, and the decision of the

meeting was that Councillors Marina Goyns and W.Horsfield of Wheatley Hill Parish Council and Peterlee Town Council respectively be appointed to serve as representatives on the Standards Committee. The Clerk's report was Noted.

### **d) Minute No.4 (c) - Local Strategic Partnership**

The Clerk reported having been present at the meeting on 1st May at which 1 councillor was elected to sit as a representative of the Parish Councils in the Easington District, and 3 members were elected to serve on the associated Community Network Panel. Following a lengthy exhaustive ballot, the result

was as follows :

- a) Local Strategic Partnership : Councillor E.Connor (Horden PC.)
- b) Community Network Panel: Councillor Bill Horsfield (Peterlee T.C)  
Councillor Jim Stogdale (Wheatley Hill)  
Councillor M.Lenehan (Wingate P.C.)

The Clerk's report was Noted

e) Minute No.5 - Ethical Code of Conduct

The Clerk reported that in this connection, the appropriate Public Notice had been inserted in the Sunderland Echo and in the Council's notice boards.

The report was Noted.

f) Minute No. 11 (d) - Public Footpath rear of Weymouth Drive

The Clerk reported that the County Council had indicated that appropriate bollards were to be erected on this footpath to prevent a repetition of the recent incident in which a car had been driven along the path and into an adjoining garden, and these should be in place in the very near future. The report was Noted.

g) Minute No.4 (e) - Public Footpaths Nos.2 & 3

The Clerk reported having received a quotation in the sum of £1750 from Messrs.L & G.Plant Hire for the improvements and re-instatement of the two footpaths which cross the StAndrew's recreation area. The quotation was given in accordance with the specification provided by Durham County Council under

its Parish Paths Partnership initiative, and the Clerk informed members that notwithstanding the fact that only one contractor had responded to the invitation, the scheme would still qualify for grant, and accordingly, it was

**Agreed : That the quotation of £1750 submitted by L.& G. Plant Hire be Accepted and that the necessary grant procedure be implemented.**

**8. REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS :**

Members duly handed in their details of personal interests for inclusion in the Register, which was required under the provisions of Section 81 (1) of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2001. It was Noted that the Register would be sent to the Monitoring Officer of the District of Easington, being the responsible officer for its keeping and maintenance.

**9. ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2002 :**

Members considered as Appendix 1 the report by the Clerk setting out details of Income & Expenditure for the 2001/2002 financial year, together with accrued balances at 31st March 2002. Arrangements were made for the internal audit of the accounts by the two non-cheque signatory members, and it was :

**Agreed : That the Accounts for the year be Approved as submitted, subject to the appropriate internal and external audit arrangements, full details of which were still awaited.**

## **10. GARDEN COMPETITION 2002 :**

The Clerk reported that in consultation with the Parks Superintendent of Seaham Town Council, he had been able to enlist the services of Mr.Keith Henson, a member of the Parks staff, to act as judge for the forthcoming garden competition. In this connection, a copy of the publicity poster and entry form for Seaham's competition had been obtained, and following discussion, it was

**Agreed :**

- a) That the Clerk's report be Noted, and the appointment as judge of Mr.Henson be Approved.**
- b) That the competition comprise three categories :**
  - i) Best overall garden**
  - ii) Best front garden**
  - iii) Most colourful hanging basket/window box/container**
- c) That the Clerk design a suitable publicity poster for members' approval and distribution to the agreed outlets.**

## **11. CLERK'S SALARY 2002-2003 :**

The meeting considered as Appendix 2 the report by the Clerk advising members that with effect from 1st April 2002 he had progressed to the top increment of Salary Scale LC1. The effect of this would be that monthly salary would be increased to £318.80 for which the appropriate provision had been made in the financial estimates for the 2002/3 financial year.

**Agreed : That the report be Noted and that effect be given to the increase indicated with effect from 1st April 2002.**

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE:**

### **a) H.M.Queen's visit - 8th May 2002**

The Clerk reported having received and responded to an invitation from the District Council for the Chairman and his wife to attend the visit as part of the audience, for which farther details would be provided in due course. The report was Noted and Approved.

### **b) Easington Village Parish Council - A19 Signage**

The Clerk reported receipt of correspondence seeking support for Easington Village Parish Council's efforts to seek "brown on white" tourist signs on the A19 to augment those already in place on local roads, so as to better inform visitors of the attractions of the East Durham coastal area.

**Agreed :** That support be given to Easington Village Parish Council in this connection, and that the Highway Authority be urged to include a reference to StAndrew's Church and Dalden Tower on this signage.

### **c) East Durham European Partnership**

The Clerk reported that following the receipt of correspondence from the District Council, he had sought details of the criteria governing access to funding under this initiative-The subsequent response indicated that Dalton-le-Dale appeared to fall outside of any area eligible for such funding, although it was conceded that when the northern part of the parish became part of Deneside electoral ward in 2003, there may be some opportunity to secure assistance.

**Agreed :** That the report be Noted, and that pressure be maintained in order to press the claims of the parish for inclusion as an eligible area.

### **d) C.P.R.E - Planning Matters**

The Chairman drew attention to previous correspondence from the Council for the Protection of Rural

England, which contained a disquieting suggestion that in future, planning matters would be handled by regional bodies rather than District and County Councils as at present, with parish councils as statutory consultees. At the Chairman's suggestion, it was

**Agreed : That each member sign and send a standard form of letter drawn up by C.P.R.E. and that the Parish Council send a letter to Mr. John Cummings, M.P. drawing attention to this unsatisfactory turn of events.**

### **13. PLANNING MATTERS:**

The following new application were considered without comment:

- a) Proposed Sun Room extension at 85 Weymouth Drive for Mr.P.Dixon
- b) Proposed Private Garage at 22 Escallond Drive for Mr.I.Bailey

### **14. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :**

**Agreed : That Approval be given for the payment of Invoices Nos. 6-12 in the sum of £1246.28 as outlined in Appendix 3 to the Agenda.**

In approving payment of the accounts. Councillor Westmorland suggested that it was advisable to seek a way of establishing eligibility for recognising those parishioners who were celebrating special events, so that as far as possible, everyone who qualified could be included. Accordingly, it was

**Agreed : That efforts be made to identify those parishioners who were about to celebrate a Golden, Diamond or Emerald wedding anniversary, or a 90th or 100th birthday, so that appropriate recognition could be given.**

### **15. REPORTS:**

- a) Councillor M.Gustard gave a progress report on the Community Association's project to provide a new community building for the Parish. The architect had been appointed, and he was now in the course of drawing up a feasibility study and a business plan, prior to the submission of grant claims.
- b) Councillor Oliver reported on discussions which had been held with the Community Association, W.I., and Parochial Church Council as to what form a day of celebrations should take on the occasion of the Queen's Golden Jubilee on Monday 3rd June. It was felt that the day should be a fun event, not a fundraising one, and the suggestion was that an afternoon disco and party should be provided for the children of the parish from 2 pm to 4 pm, while the evening should take the form of a supper and karaoke for adults (8 pm - 11 pm). It was suggested that the children's afternoon should be free, but that the evening event should have a charge of £3 to cover the cost of the refreshments. In order to meet the cost of the disco and karaoke, it had been decided to seek some financial help from the Parish Council. Following discussion on this item, it was

**Agreed : That the Parish Council act as guarantor for this event to a maximum amount of £250**

### **16. OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS :**

- a) Councillor M.Gustard drew attention to blocked drains in Dene Road, and the Clerk was instructed to pursue this matter.
- b) The Chairman gave a report on the long-standing problem caused by hay bales being rolled into the beck. The District Council had undertaken to request the farmer to remove the bales from the field

altogether, failing which it would take the necessary action and re-charge the cost.

c) Reference was made to the accumulation of litter behind the shop on Stockton Road alongside the public footpath. This was a regular problem, and was now of such proportion as to be a health hazard. The Clerk was instructed to draw the attention of the District Council's Cleansing Department to the problem, so that the necessary remedial action could be taken.

**17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :**

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Council was scheduled for Thursday 6th June 2002 at 7 p.m.