

## ***DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL***

### **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING - 6th JUNE 2002**

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

**In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, the Vice Chairman, Councillor M.Oliver took the Chair.**

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :**

**Councillor W.Hepplewhite**

#### **2. POLICE REPORT:**

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Stephen Taylor to the meeting, following a period of other operational duties. Sergeant Taylor presented a comprehensive report on activities within the parish during the past month. These included a brief difficulty with travellers who took up residence in the southern part of the parish, but who were moved on without incident. On 4th May, a resident of Dale Terrace had suffered minor injuries whilst attempting to turn into the village from the B 1285, when his car was hit from behind by another vehicle.

Sergeant Taylor reported several instances in which youngsters were congregating around the wooden building in the donkey field, where drug related activities were suspected. The Police would monitor the situation. He explained the reason why P.C.Nigel Avent was not present to give a talk on drugs matters. This was because such talks were best given in conjunction with other agencies, and he suggested a

public meeting at which the matter could be given a full hearing, preferably with residents, parents and young people in attendance. Ongoing problems were being experienced in the vicinity of Padget's garage, and the Police were monitoring this. A number of break-ins had occurred in the vicinity of Bowes Avenue, during which tools and other equipment had been stolen, and a car had been damaged on a drive. There had also been cases of rogue workmen in the parish, who were charging inflated prices for inferior work, and who often intimidated elderly people. Sergeant Taylor explained that these persons were not committing any legal offence, and vigilance was required.

A member made reference to the initiative of the Deputy Chief Constable of Durham Police in arranging high profile foot patrols in areas not otherwise covered. He had recently seen such operations in the village, and Sergeant Taylor confirmed that a trial had taken place in the village, and the patrols would be ongoing for the next few weeks. In noting Sergeant Taylor's report, it was

**Agreed : That arrangements be made for a public meeting to be held at which a Police officer would present a talk on all aspects of the drugs problem.**

#### **3. MINUTES:**

**Agreed : That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on Thursday 2nd May 2002, copies of which had been sent previously to each member, be Approved and Signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion in Minute No.5 of the names of Councillors M.Oliver and M.Gustard as**

**the Council's representatives on the Community Association's Management Committee.**

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

a) Minute No.4 - Police Report

Councillor Westmorland refuted the inference in the second paragraph of this Minute, which stated that "two groups of youths were in confrontation", whereas in fact there was only one group in the area at the time. The explanation was Noted.

b) Minute No.7(a) - Land south of Dalton Heights

Following the claim by a resident that he had seen an item on the District Council's Web Site offering for sale, plots of land in this area, the Clerk reported that the Head of Planning had categorically stated that no such plots were for sale, and that the resident concerned may have misunderstood an extract from the Government Inspector's report following the public inquiry into the rejection by the District Council of an application for development of land south of Dalton Heights for residential purposes. The position as indicated was Noted.

c) Minute No.7(g) - Public Footpaths Nos.2 & 3

The Clerk reported that the County Council had approved the application for grant aid for surface improvements to the two footpaths across the St.Andrew's play area, and that the contractor had been authorised to commence work. Councillor Olaman confirmed that preparatory work had already started. The Clerk further advised that the rate of grant was at the rate of 100% and not 50% as first anticipated. The report was Noted with satisfaction.

d) Minute No. 10 - Garden Competition

Members Approved the poster and entry forms designed by the Clerk, and following a meeting with the judge, Mr.Keith Henson, the following aspects of the competition were

**Agreed:**

- i) That residents could enter more than one category**
- ii) That entries should be received by Friday 12th July**
- iii) That judging would take place on or around 31st July**
- iv) That appropriate advertising of the competition should commence**

e) Minute No.12(b) - A19 road signage

In connection with the Council's support on behalf of Easington Village Parish Council for additional signing on the A19 trunk road to draw visitors' attention to the attractions of the East Durham coast, together with a request for signage to publicise St.Andrew's Church and Dalden Tower, the Clerk reported on a response by the County Council setting out the criteria for such signs. These criteria were very stringent, and effectively prevented any likelihood of the request being granted. The report was Noted.

f) Minute No. 16(b) - Hay Bales in Stream

The Clerk read to the meeting, a letter sent by the District Council's Assistant Engineer to the owner

of the land from which the bales were being rolled into the stream, advising that unless they were removed from the land within 7 days, the District Council would carry out the work itself on a rechargeable basis. It was felt that the letter was too strongly worded, and the Clerk was asked to contact the farmer with a view to playing down the tone of the letter so as to safeguard the good relations which existed.

#### **5. MILLENNIUM WINDOW - ST.ANDREW'S - PROGRESS REPORT :**

The Clerk reported receipt via Cate Watkinson, of a quotation from B & R Glazing in the sum of £502.13 + VAT for the removal of the existing clear glass window, temporary glazing, and the eventual installation of the new window. Since the design had not yet been formally approved by the Diocesan Committee, it was obviously not possible to proceed with the work at this stage, and Ms Watkinson had been advised accordingly. It was understood that the Diocese would meet at the end of July to consider the design, and in the meantime, it was

**Agreed : That the quotation from B & R Glazing in the sum of £502.13 + VAT be Approved.**

#### **6. GARDEN COMPETITION - PROGRESS REPORT :**

The Clerk reported that the Chairman and he had met with Keith Henson of Seaham Parks Department to discuss arrangements for the competition, and as a result of the advice given, it was

**Agreed :**

**a) That the competition comprise three categories as follows :**

**i) Best Overall Garden**

**ii) Best Front Garden**

**iii) Most colourful hanging basket/container**

**b) That the closing date for entries be Friday 12th July and that judging take place on or around 31st July, depending on weather conditions.**

**c) That the design of the publicity poster be Approved for display in the area, and that the competition be advertised in the Sunderland Echo.**

#### **7. JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS-DEBRIEFING:**

It was generally agreed that the weekend had been a great success, and that attendance at the various events had been particularly gratifying. In thanking everyone for their efforts, the Chairman displayed a number of photographs which he had taken during the activities, and in turn, he was thanked by members for his gesture in having provided medals for the football tournament from his allowance. Special mention was made of the success of the football, and in particular of the efforts of the three boys who had devised and organised the competition by themselves. It was suggested that the possibility of having a junior team to represent the parish be investigated, and the Clerk undertook to contact the boys to seek their views.

#### **8. FLORAL PLANTERS:**

The Clerk reported that in the course of discussions with Mr.Henson and the Parks Superintendent of Seaham Town Council, mention was made of the need to replant the nine display tubs which had been

previously filled by Mencap. The Superintendent indicated that he would be prepared to refill the tubs with appropriate plants and bulbs so as to provide all year colour for the sum of £35 per unit. Discussion ensued, during which it was felt that Mencap should be allowed to submit a price for carrying out the work, and the Clerk was instructed to proceed accordingly.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE:**

a) The Clerk reported that he had been advised by the Head of Planning at Easington District Council that although a substantial landscaping scheme was being prepared as a condition of the grant of outline planning approval for the Dalton Flatts development, there was no provision for similar landscaping beyond the immediate development site, and that the Parish Council's request for a general improvement in the condition of the fencing and roadside verges alongside the B1285 could not be met. He did however suggest an approach to the developer, and the Clerk was instructed to pursue this line of enquiry.

b) The Clerk reported details of a letter sent by the Assistant Engineer of the District Council to the farmer from whose land bales of hay were being rolled into the village stream. The letter required the immediate removal of the bales from the land, failing which the work would be carried out by the District Council on a rechargeable basis. It was felt that the letter was excessively strongly worded, and the Clerk was instructed to speak to the farmer in an attempt to clear the air.

c) The Chairman reported receipt of similar letters from two parishioners who were each to accommodate 2 of a party of 61 children from Belarus during a three week visit to the area under the auspices of the organisation Chernobyl North East. The letters sought some financial assistance for the organisation towards the cost of the visit, which would amount to some £350 per child. In view of the nature of this request, it was

**Agreed : That in accordance with the provisions of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the sum of £25 per child be awarded to each of the couples, the cheques to be made payable to "Chernobyl North East"**

## **10. PLANNING MATTERS:**

The Clerk reported only one new application as follows :

a) Proposed replacement telecommunications tower at Seaham Transmitter site, Near Stotfold Farm. During discussion on this item, the Clerk reported having established that the proposed tower would be slightly larger than the existing installation, in that it would be required to accommodate additional equipment required by emergency services.

In addition to the extra height involved, members expressed concern at the possible health risks from this type of structure, and that television reception might be affected, particularly for Channel 5, and the Clerk was instructed to make representations accordingly, although not as a formal objection to the application.

The Clerk further informed members that a previous planning application by National Grid International for an electricity converter station at the former Hawthorn Colliery, together with the associated installation of 2 underground electricity cables and one fibre optic cable at the former railway line west of

Seaton and Murton, had been refused on grounds of adverse visual impact, and loss of a valuable

physical exercise amenity. The report was Noted.

### **11 INSURANCE COVER:**

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report of the Clerk summarising the extent of the Council's insurance cover for the 2002/3 financial year. The report was Noted.

### **12. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :**

**Agreed ; That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 13-22 in the sum of £851.15 as outlined in Appendix 2 to the Agenda.**

### **13. REPORTS:**

a) Councillor M.Gustard gave a report on the recent meeting of the Community Association Management Committee, at which arrangements were made for the forthcoming community survey leaflet drop in advance of the commencement of the application for funding for the new hall. The results would be collated on Thursday 27th June, and a public meeting was arranged for Tuesday 3rd July to take the project further.

### **14. OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS :**

a) In his absence from the meeting, the Chairman of the Council asked that concerns be raised regarding a number of vehicles which were being stored on land adjoining the old Church Hall, and the suspicion that a business was being conducted. It was Agreed that appropriate enquiries should be made.

b) The Chairman also asked that a brief report be given on his attendance at a recent meeting of the Tidy Ted Committee. The meeting had been told that some 5,000 tons of recycling material were presently being dealt with, and this would increase over time. Information had also been given that instances of dog fouling could now be faxed to the appropriate department, and a sample of the relevant form was provided.

c) Instances of youngsters congregating in the derelict brick building opposite Dale Terrace and around the wooden building in the donkey field, which had also been raised by the Chairman, had been dealt with in the Police report earlier in the meeting.

### **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :**

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Council would be held on Thursday 4th July