

*DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL*

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING - 7th NOVEMBER 2002**

**PRESENT: Councillor W.Hepplewhite (Chairman)  
Councillors M.Gustard, W.Kennedy, R.Olaman, M.Oliver, A.Westmorland**

**1 resident of the Parish**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :**

**Councillor E.W.Armstrong, G.Gustard**

**2. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS :**

a) The resident present drew attention to the lack of dog litter bins in the northern part of the parish, especially on the alley leading from the grass verge fronting Jubilee Avenue through Doreen and Queens Avenues. The Clerk advised on the cost of purchase and the maintenance costs, and it was

**Agreed : That Approval be given to the purchase of 2 No. bins from Glasdon, to be sited following a meeting to determine the precise locations.**

b)The resident drew attention to undergrowth on the northern end of Footpath No. 1 off the Graham Way, which was impeding walkers. The Chairman undertook to expedite this matter so as to avoid lengthy negotiations with the Highway Authority.

**3. MINUTES:**

**Agreed : That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10th October 2002 (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.**

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

**a) Minute No. 3 - Chestnut tree in Churchyard**

The Clerk advised that he had received no response from Houghall Agricultural College regarding the request for possible solutions for curtailing the supply of conkers on the tree. Councillor Olaman reported having been informed in a private capacity that nothing could be done to remedy the situation, nevertheless the Clerk undertook to continue his efforts via the College.

**b) Minute No.4 - Dutch Elm Disease**

The Clerk advised that no work had as yet been carried out, and that in view of the need to seek grant funding, this would not be done until the New Year. Councillor Westmorland felt that the explanation given that all trees, irrespective of species would be felled because of their vulnerability to exposure to winds, was dubious, and pointed out that the replacement trees would be similarly affected. The Clerk was instructed to get farther guidance from the District Council.

**c) Minute No.6(b) - Floral Tubs**

It was Noted that the re-planting of the tubs had been completed, and the general impression was

favourable.

d) Minute No.6(c) - Parish Name Signs

The Clerk reported that no information regarding costings for the replacement signs had yet been received.

(e) Minute No.6(d) - Chairman's Chain of Office

The Chairman reported that in consultation with Fattorini's he had received three quotations for suitable regalia. Concern was expressed at the quoted amounts, and it was

**Agreed : That further enquiries be made**

(f) Minute No.6 (e) - Hedgerows

The Clerk reported having received confirmation that the amount of Grant approved for the replanting of various sections of hedgerows alongside Public Footpath No.1 totalling 775 metres was £2232.80. To date only one quotation had been received from the three requested, and it was

**Agreed : That the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to expedite the work on receipt of the further quotations.**

(g) Minute No.6 (g) - Footpaths Nos.2 & 3

The Clerk advised that a further grant in the sum of £1,000 had been approved by the County Council for the re-surfacing of the footpath across the St.Andrew's recreation field to the foot of the steps to the B1285, the quotation for which was £1350. The Clerk further reported that he had authorised the contractor to expedite the work, but would ensure that this was not carried out during periods of frosty weather.

(h) Minute No.6 (j) - Land East and Rear of Coniscliffe

The Chairman reported on discussions with officers of the District Council to clarify the situation at this location, vis-a-vis various concerns which had previously been expressed.

(i) Minute No.6 (k) - Parish Lengthsman

The Clerk reported having been informed by the County Council that the District of Easington had expressed an interest in this matter, together with Hawthorn Parish Council, but that Murton Parish Council had not yet responded. Further efforts to secure Murton's involvement would be made.

(j) Minute No. 6(m) - Millennium Window

The Clerk reported having spoken to Cate Watkinson and Bill Heslop, the Secretary of the Durham Diocesan Advisory Committee seeking assurance of progress in this matter. Further changes to the window design had been suggested in order to incorporate the required Biblical references. This was now under way, and would obviate the suggestion that these references should be displayed on the perimeter walls of the window. Following final approval by all parties, it was felt that authority to apply for the necessary faculty to install the new window would be given in the New Year.

(k) Minute No. 7 - Overdene Estate - Road Widening

The Clerk reported that the County Council had acknowledge this request, to which they would respond in the near future.

## **5. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Receipt of the following items of correspondence was Noted :-

- a) District of Easington - Conservation Status - Further consideration to be given
- b) District of Easington - Appointment of Monitoring Officer
- c) Durham County Tidy Village Competition Committee - Disbandment
- d) Durham County Council - Community Information Database
- e) Seaham Town Council - Parish Councils' Balances/Reserves - Letter Received
- f) District of Easington - e-Government

## **6. PLANNING MATTERS:**

The following new application was Noted :-

- a) Proposed conservatory at 75 Weymouth Drive

## **7. 2002/2003 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY AWARD - CLERK'S SALARY :**

**Agreed : That Approval be given to the implementation of the National Salary Award for the period 1st April to 1st October 2002 as outlined in Appendix 1 to the Agenda.**

## **8. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT & FINANCIAL REPORT :**

**Agreed : a) That Approval be given for the payment of Invoices Nos. 47 - 54 in the sum of £3514.80 as outlined in Appendix 2 to the Agenda.**

**b) That the Statement of Account for the period 1st April to 31st October 2002 outlined in the Appendix be Noted.**

## **9. PRECEPT 2003/2004 - PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION :**

Consideration was given to Appendix 3 prepared by the Clerk, setting out the financial implications of current and future projects and their effect on the Precept requirements for the 2003/2004 financial year, which were to be finalised at the December meeting. The report was Noted.

## **10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 :**

The Clerk reported that conformity with this legislation was necessary by 31st December, but that due to a delay in receiving the appropriate documentation, it was not yet possible to prepare the information for members' approval. This would be done as soon as practicable. The report was Noted.

## **11. PROPOSED COMMUNITY HALL - PARKING ISSUES :**

The Chairman reported that as authorised by the Council at the October meeting, he and the Clerk, together with the Chairman of the Community Association Management Committee had visited the Land Registry in an attempt to identify the owner(s) of the land to the immediate east of the hall. It had been established that the land had not been registered, but it was suggested that either the Church Commissioners or UK Coal was the likely owner. Further enquiries were being made both with regard to this area of land as well as other possibilities.

## **12. COUNCIL MEETINGS - SUGGESTED EARLIER STARTING TIMES :**

Further consideration was given to the suggestion that in future, meetings of the Council should commence at 6 p.m. or 6.30 p.m. in order to accommodate the volume of business to be conducted. During the discussion it emerged that a number of members would have difficulty in meeting these times, and it was

**Agreed : That at this stage, no change be made to the starting times of meetings.**

## **13. REPORTS :**

a) Councillor M.Gustard reported on the recent meeting of the Community Association Management Committee, and expressed disappointment that the good progress which was being made with regard to the provision of a new community hall was being spoiled by discontent and ill feeling in the village which had led to the circulation of a petition against the hall in its present form. The Chairman presented a letter which had been hand delivered to him by a resident, together with a petition by other residents that the hall be restricted to use by people of the village rather than the parish as a whole.

Councillor Gustard asked for a re-affirmation of the policy of the Parish Council that the provision of a new hall was for the use of the community as a whole, and this was wholeheartedly supported.

Councillor Kennedy was adamant that the objectors should trust the integrity of the officers of the Management Committee, who were seeking the best possible community facility, and understand that they would have the opportunity to raise

their concerns as part of the consultation exercise which would follow the submission of the project for planning approval. Following further discussion, it was

**Agreed : That the letter and petition addressed to the Chairman be Noted and acknowledged.**

b) The Clerk reported having received a telephone call from a gentleman currently living outside the parish, but who would shortly take up residence, and who expressed an interest in the vacancy which currently existed on the Council. The Clerk outlined the qualifications necessary to gain membership of the Council, none of which were held by him at this stage, and reported having explained the situation to him. The report was Noted.

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

a) Following the continuing concerns over the nuisance which had been caused to nearby residents by youngsters collecting conkers from the chestnut tree in the Churchyard, it was

**Agreed : That a further approach be made to Houghall Agricultural College for advice on any measures which might be taken to curtail the growth of horse chestnuts on those parts of the tree which were accessible.**

b) Reference was made to further encroachment of undergrowth on to the road east of the village, which had been cleared earlier in the year. The Chairman undertook to take the matter up with the relevant department of the District Council.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :**

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Council would be held on Thursday 5th December 2002 commencing at 7 p.m.