

DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING - 2ND SEPTEMBER 2004

PRESENT : Councillor M.Oliver (Chairman)

Councillors D.Gleghorn, M.Gustard, L.Keegan, W.Hepplewhite, W.Kennedy

2 residents of the Parish area

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

Councillors R.Olaman, S.Richardson & A.Westmorland

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST :

There were no Declarations to report

3. POLICE REPORT :

Sergeant Jack Clark and P.C.Janet Hutchinson gave a brief report on a quiet period in the Parish area. The only reported incidents had been the theft of a moped in St.Cuthbert's Terrace, which had not been retrieved, and a problem in Dalton Grange caused by youths playing football on the grassed areas and using skateboards. In answer to a member's question, both officers confirmed that the Anti-Social Behaviour Order in the Deneside area would remain in force until October, and had proved to be a great success.

4. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS :

Neither resident present wished to speak, having attended merely as an observer

5. MINUTES :

Agreed : That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 1st July 2004 (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments :

- a) That in Minute No.6(d) reference to Dalton Grange be amended to read Dalton Heights.**
- b) That in Minute No.7(b) the recommendation in 2(j) of the Report of the Environment Group be extended to indicate that this photographic record be undertaken by Councillor Hepplewhite.**

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES :

It was Noted that most of the items recorded in the Minutes were of action having been taken by the Clerk, none of which had yet been fully dealt with, with the following exceptions :

a) Minute No.6(a) - Street Lighting at Walton Avenue

The Clerk reported having requested the County Council's lighting engineer to liaise with the member concerned in order to having this problem resolved. A member reported that an inspection had been carried out recently.

b) Minute No.6(c) - Playground equipment

The Clerk reported that he had been unable to identify a manufacturer able to supply a slide similar to that which had had to be removed for safety reasons, since the design had been changed. Efforts were ongoing.

7. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT GROUP- 15th JULY 2004 :

Agreed : That the report of the Group (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Noted and the recommendations therein be Approved.

Arising from the discussion on the report, the following matters were considered further :

a) Councillor Gustard advised the meeting that the grass in the Churchyard was cut by the District Council, but that all other necessary work was carried out by the Parochial Church Council.

b) Echoing the complaints of a number of residents, Councillor Gustard suggested that as the floral tub at the top of Church bank had become so badly overgrown, it should be moved from that location and stored temporarily in the Churchyard. This was Agreed.

c) It was generally agreed that thought should be given to the replacement of the tubs by "half barrell" type containers, which were more visually attractive, and the Clerk was instructed to get costings for these containers.

d) It was felt that plans for the environmental works in the village should be progressed, so as to allow appropriate planting early in 2005. In this connection, the Clerk reported having identified a contact person in the County Council's Environment Department who would advise on relatively small schemes of improvements, such as village greens and roadside verges, and it was agreed that an approach should be made for further advice.

8. PLANNING MATTERS :

The following new application was Noted without comment :

a) Proposed two storey side extension at 45 Escallond Drive for Mr.S.Ellis

The following approvals were Noted :

- a) Two storey rear extension at 41 Dalton Heights for Mrs.P.M.Howe
- b) Replacement conservatory at 61 Weymouth Drive for Dr.N.Barkataki
- c) Conservatory at 2 West View for Mr.I.J.Clark

The following refusal was Noted :

- a) Proposed house (outline) on land adjacent to "Burnside" for Mr.R.Collin

9. 2004/5 National Salary Awards for Town/Parish Council Clerks :

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report of the Clerk on the agreement reached by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services on this matter. As a result, the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks had recommended that the salary scales of all full-time and part-time clerks should be adjusted accordingly. The agreement was for a two year period, retrospective to 1st April 2004. In Dalton-le-Dale's case, calculated on a population basis, the Clerk's hourly rate had been increased to £8.82 giving a monthly salary (10 hours per week) of £382.20

With effect from 1st April 2005, this hourly rate would rise to £9.05

Agreed : That the report be Noted, and that Approval be given to the new hourly rate to be implemented from 1st April 2004.

10. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL REPORT :

a) Agreed : That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 021 to 028 in the sum of £1208.17 as listed on the meeting agenda

b) The Clerk circulated a Statement of Account for the period 1st April - 31st August 2004 which was Noted and Approved.

c) Audit of Accounts for the year 2003/4

The Clerk reported receipt from HLB AV Audit (the Council's external auditors) the Annual Return for the year 2003/4 duly approved. The Auditors had indicated that there were no matters which had come to their attention which required a report to the Council. The Annual Return would be put to the Council at the October meeting for formal approval as required by the Accounts & Audit Regulations. The report was Noted.

11. DALTON-LE-DALE IN BLOOM GARDEN COMPETITION 2004 :

The Clerk reported receipt of the results of the competition, and requested members' instructions for the presentation of awards. Accordingly, it was

Agreed : That details of the result be with-held until the presentation, to be held during the meeting of the Council on Thursday 7th October 2004.

12. DISTRICT OF EASINGTON - REVIEW OF AREA BASED STUCTURES :

The Clerk reported that the District Council was currently reviewing its approach to community liaison, and was seeking to streamline the present Area Forums, to provide a consultative forum at which major public sector organisations will be represented, including the District and County Councils, Durham Constabulary, the Primary Care Trust, Parish & Town Councils, and representatives of the community and voluntary sections.

It was envisaged that the new Forum would :

- consist of each Parish/Town Clerk together with one or two members of their councils, together with an equal number of District Council members.
- be supported by a network of District Council officers at senior management level
- meet two or three times per year to discuss strategic issues relating to the promotion of effective local working for the benefit of the residents of Easington.
- engender a spirit of partnership working between the District Council and the Town and Parish Councils which would meet both Central Government agenda for joined-up government as well as the desires of local people to engage with their elected representatives at all levels.
- include a robust agenda planning process which will focus on strategic issues and which will provide Parish and Town Councils with the opportunity to shape the work of the Forum and lead to the service improvements which the community of Easington desire.

It was stressed that the proposals were still at the planning stage, and that representations from Parish and Town Councils would be welcome, with a deadline of 1st October. The report was Noted.

13. PROPOSED RE-ORGANISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN DURHAM :

The Clerk reported that the District Council had convened a briefing meeting of all interested parties to take place in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 15th September 2004 at 2 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the recommendations of the Boundary Committee in connection with the forthcoming referendum on the creation of a North East Regional Assembly, and to seek support for the District Council's preference for three separate Unitary Authorities in the county, under which Easington would join with the City of Durham. The Clerk indicated that he would attend this meeting, on behalf of the Parish Council. The report was Noted.

14. DISTRICT OF EASINGTON - COMMUNITIES IN PARTNERSHIP :

The Clerk reported that the District of Easington had arranged a consultative event to take place in the Glebe Centre in Murton on Wednesday 6th October from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the purpose of which was to raise awareness of initiatives which have already been implemented in partnership for the benefit of the community, and to enable delegates to respond to future proposals and help shape them. The intention was to consider three main themes - "youth" "caring" and "street scene". The Clerk advised the meeting that Councillor Hepplewhite and himself would attend this event. The report was Noted.

15. DISTRICT OF EASINGTON - CHIEF EXECUTIVE :

The Clerk reported receipt of notification that Paul Wilding, Chief Executive of the District of Easington was taking early retirement with effect from the end of September, and would be succeeded by Janet Johnson, formerly the Council's Director of Regeneration. The report was Noted.

16. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL - CHARTER WITH PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS

The Clerk reported having attended two of the consultation meetings by which the County Council was setting out its proposals for the joint adoption of the Government's model charter for partnership working. No formal decision had yet been taken, and a further report would be given in due course. The report was Noted.

17. EASINGTON NHS PRIMARY CARE TRUST - ACTIVE ENGLAND PROJECT :

The Clerk reported that the Trust was in the process of submitting its Sport England Active England application, for which it was required to include letters confirming details of partnership funding. The Clerk reminded members that at its meeting on 6th February 2003 the Parish Council had given approval in principle to the payment of the sum of £50 towards the matching funding for this bid, and it was

Agreed : That Approval be given for a confirmatory letter to be sent to the NHS Trust in connection with this matter.

18. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT :

The Chairman indicated that in view of the summer recess, she had no report to present.

19. CLERK'S REPORT :

a) The Clerk reported that the Audit of the Council's Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2004 had been completed, and that the Auditors had indicated that there were no outstanding matters to which it was necessary to draw attention. The report was Noted.

b) The Clerk reported that an invitation had been issued to the Chairman and himself to attend the

Civic Service of the Chairman of the District of Easington, which was to be held in the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Seaham on Wednesday 22nd September at 7 p.m. The report was Noted.

c) The Clerk reported that he had again drawn the attention of the Highways authority to the condition of the service road in Dene Road, following recent patching work.

The report was Noted.

d) The Clerk reported having responded to concerns regarding damage to the newly planted hedgerows on Public Footpath No.1 allegedly by crop spraying activities, and to the obstruction caused to the footpath near the foot of Stoney Cut by a line of large boulders laid across the track by the farmer in an attempt to prevent access by vehicular traffic. The report was Noted.

20. OTHER REPORTS :

Members reported as follows :

a) Councillor Hepplewhite reported on his attendance at a recent T.E.D.meeting, which while being inquorate, was informed that 35 street wardens were now in post across the district, and could encourage the removal of litter by persuasion at this stage, and by enforcement powers in the future.

b) Councillor Hepplewhite informed the meeting that he had reported overgrown hedges alongside the B1285, and that remedial work had been carried out.

c) Councillor Gustard submitted photographs of the boundary sign at the southern entrance to EasingtonVillage which incorporated an attractive floral tub. The Clerk gave details of the origin of this feature, together with funding details, and it was Agreed that follow up action be considered with a view to the provision of similar facilities in Dalton-le-Dale.

d) Counillor Gustard reported that despite the previous letters to residents, further cases of the dumping of garden rubbish had occurred, and it was Agreed that another letter be sent to households in the appropriate parts of Dene Road, pointing out the various civic amenity sites which exist in the area for the dumping of rubbish.

e) The Clerk was requested to ascertain details of acquiring graffiti removal equipment to tackle the various problem areas in the parish

f) The Chairman reported on the successful site meeting with Steve Scoffin of the Great North Forest at which the feasibility of tree planting at various locations along the Graham Way was considered. A number of suggestions had been made, and Mr.Scoffin undertook to present a report on the practical implications of the proposal, together with advice on the appropriate species which might be used.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Council was scheduled to be held on Thursday 7th October 2004 at 7 p.m.