

DALTON-LE-DALE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING - 4TH NOVEMBER 2004

PRESENT : Councillor M.Oliver (Chairman)

Councillors W.Hepplewhite, L.Keegan, W.Kennedy, R.Olaman, A.

Westmorland

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

Councillors M.Gustard, D.Gleghorn & S.Richardson

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST :

There were no Declarations to record

3. POLICE REPORT :

There was no Police officer in attendance due to operational duties, but a written report had been sent prior to the meeting. This indicated that there had been a case of youths causing nuisance to residents in Weymouth Drive. The Police had attended, but the group had dispersed. It was believed that the youngsters were from the estate, and there had been no further problems. The report noted that a number of checks had been made on the tent at the rear of St.Andrew's Church. The occupants, who were homeless, were known to the Police, but were now back with relatives. The District Council had been requested to remove the tent as quickly as possible, but a member reported that it was still on the site as at the date of the meeting.

The report was Noted.

4. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS :

There were no residents in attendance

5. MINUTES :

Agreed : That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7th October (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record, subject to an amendment to Minute No.15(c)(ii) to delete the reference to Councillor Westmorland from the suggestion that consideration be given to a replacement notice board, which had in fact been made by the Clerk.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES :

a) Minute No.7(b) - Dene Road Service Road

The Clerk reported having spoken to the County Council's Area Engineer in this connection, and having been informed that the estimated cost of resurfacing this length of road would be in the region of £6,000.

It had been suggested that should the Parish Council feel able to make a contribution to this cost, it might be possible to carry out the work during the 2005/6 financial year.

Agreed : That the Clerk be authorised to carry out further negotiations with the County Council.

b) Minute No.7(c) - Dene Road - Second Driveways

The Clerk reported having spoken to the Police with regard to this matter, but it was doubtful whether any action could be taken unless any resultant parking on the service road constituted a nuisance to other road users.

c) Minute No.7(d) - Public FootpathNo.1 - Obstruction

The Clerk reported that Councillor Gustard and himself had met with the County Council's Footpaths Officer with regard to the obstruction of the footpath south of the bridge by a length of boulders placed by the farmer to prevent vehicular access.

At the meeting, it was felt that a metal barrier might be placed across the path, with a separate gate or stile provided alongside to allow pedestrian access. A subsequent discussion with the farmer revealed that he was reluctant to accede to this proposal, feeling that such a barrier would be rammed by heavy vehicles. An alternative suggestion was made by the Footpaths Officer to the effect that the boulders could be retained, but set out in two offset rows, preventing encroachment by vehicles, but allowing a comfortable passage for walkers. If necessary, it was suggested that the boulders could be secured by a series of metal plates to prevent their being moved.

This course of action was approved by the farmer.

Agreed : That the suggestion of the Footpaths Officer be Approved, and the Clerk was authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

d) Minute No.7(e) - Hedgerows - Protective "sleeves"

Councillor Hepplewhite reported that he had spoken to a contact who served as the Youth Engagement Officer for the Restitution of Justice. Part of his duties was to use young offenders to perform community service work, and it was felt that they might be asked to remove the protective plastic sleeves which had been used on the recently planted hedgerow on Public Footpath No.1, but which were now stunting further growth, and some of which had been scattered or blown across the adjoining fields. If approved, the work could be carried out in some two months' time.

Agreed : That Councillor Hepplewhite's initiative be Endorsed, and that Approval be given for this work to be carried out.

e) Minute No.8 - Audit of Accounts

The Clerk reported receipt of the information requested from the Community Association. A full report would be made to the December meeting.

f) Minute No.12 - Play Equipment

The Clerk reported that in connection with the application to the Children's Fund for financial assistance towards the cost of new equipment at the St.Andrew's recreation area, he had been asked to provide details of the people who would be "supervising" the area with a view to them undertaking the necessary CRB checks. A further letter had been sent explaining that the children using the area were accompanied by relatives, and that no formal supervision was provided. A further response was awaited.

g) Minute No.13(a) - Planning Matter - Land adjoining 1a Dale Terrace

The Clerk reported that a formal submission had been made to the Planning Inspectorate requesting that the District Council's rejection of planning permission in this matter be upheld.

g) Minute No.7(f) - Village Photographic record

Councillor Hepplewhite reported that with the assistance of residents and former residents, he was carrying out research into the history of the village. He had already taken a number of photographs, which he submitted for members' information.

7. PLANNING MATTERS :

The following new application was Noted without comment :

a) Proposed front & 1st floor side extensions at 24 Bowes Avenue for Mr.& Mrs.Tilley

An outline application for the proposed erection of 2 houses on land to the rear of "Daelton" was considered. Following discussion, it was

Agreed : That the application be formally opposed on the following grounds :

a) That the proposed development would create a dangerous egress point on to Church Bank

b) That any development at this location could involve excavation to the bankside, creating a possible land slip situation

c) That the applicant site is wooded, with the possible necessity of tree felling

d) That any permitted development at this location could well give rise to further applications

e) That land adjacent to the applicant site is not believed to have the benefit of planning

permission

f) That the applicant location does not constitute an "infill" site, and that accordingly, any development would contravene the terms of the District Council's Local Plan

g) That any development at this location could cause further problems with sewage disposal

h) That development at this location would constitute an un-acceptable intrusion into pleasant open countryside

8. SECTION 137 - FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE :

Consideration was given to an application by a resident for financial assistance towards a forthcoming trek along the Inca Trail in Peru to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society.

Agreed : That approval be given for the payment of the sum of £150

9. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :

Agreed : That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 034 to 046 (excluding No. 036) in the sum of £778.90

10. BUDGET/PRECEPT 2005/6 :

The Clerk advised members that the Council's Precept requirements for the 2005/6 financial year needed to be passed to the District Council by the end of December, and that accordingly, consideration should be given to the level of spending in the light of the Auditor's report on balances, and members' declared wish to embark on a programme of environmental improvements across the parish. A number of projects were identified, and following discussion, it was

Agreed : That the Clerk present a detailed report to the December meeting on the cost implications of the projects in order to allow full consideration of the Precept requirements.

11. REPORTS :

i) The clerk reported as follows :

a) Notification of details of the procedure for the payment of Precept for the 2005/6 financial year, namely 50% at the end of April 2005 and 50% at the end of September 2005.

b) Notification of the Annual Meeting of the Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils on Saturday 27th November.

c) Notification of the appointment by the District Council of one of its members to serve as Champion

for the Historic Environment.

ii) Members Reports :

a) Councillor Olaman reported on the poor condition of the surface of the Church Bank footpath, and the Clerk was instructed to take the appropriate action.

b) Councillor Keegan referred again to the possibility of reviewing the parking situation at the front of Jubilee Avenue, and of the provision of dropped kerbs to facilitate access to shops, transport etc. for people with mobility difficulties.

c) Councillor Keegan reported that following a burst water main outside 38/40 Escallond Drive, re-instatement work had not been adequately carried out, and water damage was being experienced. The Clerk was instructed to take the matter up with Nothumbrian Water

d) Councillor Kennedy reported that the Community Association's third submission for Lottery funding for the proposed new hall had been rejected, despite previous encouragement. A request for a meeting with the Big Lottery officers had been turned down, but further approaches were being made via other avenues. In the meantime, other options were being considered, and negotiations were ongoing.

e) Councillor Hepplewhite gave a report on behalf of Councillor Richardson, on the meeting of the Tidy Ted committee, at which enquiries had been made as to the programme of the District Council's "Blitz Teams" Dalton-le-Dale was included with the Murton and Seaham team, and the information was that the parish had received attention on 21st and 22nd October. Officers had also stressed the importance of identifying instances of fly-tipping, and had reported that Street Wardens would now be available to attend Parish Council meetings if requested.

Councillor Hepplewhite further reported that he would attend a forthcoming meeting of the Consultative Committee, at which he would request attention to be given to blocked gulleys, and yet again to the condition of the roadside fencing alongside the B1285.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 2nd December at 7 p.m.