

Dalton-le-Dale Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

held THURSDAY, 2nd April 2009.

Present: Councillors: W Kennedy (Chairman), M Oliver, M Gustard, L Keegan, S Richardson, M Hepplewhite and C Olsen.
Public: S Humes, J Humes, C Walton, K Wright, M Donkin and H Richards
Police: Seaham Police, G Stephenson.

1. **APOLOGIES** None.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** None.

3. **POLICE REPORT**

The police advised of 5 calls of vehicle problems.

Members reported that there had been several burglaries in the Dale with one young man found in the premises by the occupier. The police were aware of this and had apprehended a young male. The police would be calling round to give security advice to residents.

A report was received concerning street drinking at the park and Members reminded the police of the Stoney Cut and fields to the South of Graham Way which are regularly used by young people.

Members advised that the fencing has been stolen from the stream fissure. The Clerk will report this matter to Durham County Council.

Members expressed concerns at groups of youths (with dogs) who are around the area and that they may be after the wild life. Police advised that such sightings should be reported and they will follow these up.

Members were concerned that a White Van had parked up in the Area and the driver had changed the vehicle identity. Police were concerned that this was a suspicious activity and such matters should be reported.

Members advised that Mini-motors and Quad bikes were active in the area on a Sunday afternoon and requested the police to keep watch on this matter as the grassed areas are being damaged.

Residents advised of a road traffic accident on the Times Inn Bank at the Overdene junction. Speeding on the Times Inn Bank was a persistent problem and requested the police to undertake speed surveillance in this area. Dalton Heights roundabout was also a problem area. The police advised that this matter would be passed to other sections for their action.

Residents also expressed concerns at the deterioration of the Overdene Slip Road. The Clerk would forward this matter to the Highways section and also request speed detecting signs in the area.

The Chairman thanked the Police for their report and attendance at this meeting.

4. **REPRESENTATIONS FROM RESIDENTS**

The residents from Overdene Estate advised that the matter of land ownership and rights of use (freehold) was going to adjudication. The Chairman advised that members of the Parish Council had visited the Land Registry to further express the concerns of all in this matter. The Parish Council could not interfere with the process but ensured residents that its support in the matter was as much as could be. Residents advised that they had again tried to approach the new land owner to negotiate a joint development of the dirt track but this had failed. Residents will request a site visit with the Land Registry on this matter and are hopeful that this will take place.

Members advised resident to collate as much information as possible (old photographs and testimony's of long term residents) in building up a case of prolonged usage. Members also suggested that residents may wish to call upon the assistance of their local County Councillor and Member of Parliament to support their case.

The Chairman thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

5. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 5th February 2009 had been redrafted by the Clerk as the meeting was held over two days.

These were agreed as a true record.

6. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 5th March 2009.

These were agreed as a true record.

6a. Matters arising from that meeting.

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

- a). Members received the letter of thanks from Victim Support concerning the donation made.
- b). Members received the Newsletter from the CPRE.
- c). Members received the Newsletter from Countryside Voice.
- d). Members received the information concerning the Police Community Consultative Group to be held on the 7th May 2009 in the former District of Easington Council Chamber. Unfortunately this meeting coincided with the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council and the Clerk was requested to give the council's apologies.
- e). Members received the Newsletter from the CPRE.
- f). Members received the CDALC newsletter.
- g). Members received information from the Boundary Committee for England concerning the Electoral Review of the new County Durham Unitary Authority. Member requested the Clerk to put forward the concerns of the Parish Council that it wished to maintain its uniqueness, its drive for Quality Status and express the ability of the council to work with neighbouring local councils and the new unitary Durham County Council.
- h). Members received the information from Durham County Council concerning the consultation on Fouling of Land by Dogs (County Durham) Order 2009.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

The Clerk advised that no planning matters had been received and advised of the recent letter received from the planning department. Its content advised that local council Clerks would no longer receive written information from the planning authority as such information would now be made available via the website. The Clerk advised that it would be incumbent upon the Clerk to check this site on a weekly basis. Members were concerned at the consultation timescale that still remains at 21 days and often give no opportunity for the council to meet and consider some applications. Members agreed for this matter to be motioned at next AGM of the CDALC where such matters can be debated and if support by others a more formal organised lobby could be made against the planning timescales.

9. CPRE RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Members **resolved** to continue the Parish Council membership at a cost of £29.00

10. CDALC RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Members **resolved** to continue the Parish Council membership of the CDALC at the rate of £164.32 per annum. Members also **resolved** to continue the current allocation of 4 copies of LCR at the rate of £48.00 per annum.

11. HIGHWAYS and FOOTPATHS

- a). Streetlight No: 1309 at rear of 54 Dalton Heights. The Clerk had received information from the Street Lighting section that this matter had been attended to.
- b). The Clerk has reported a further misspelt 'Escallond' sign to DCC requesting its replacement.
- c). Bank side erosion. No further information was received from the DCC Highways on this matter.
- d). Graham Way 40mph road sign. Members advised that this sign has still not been renewed.

12. ENVIRONMENT

- a). **Cleansing of Stream.** The Chairman advised that she had met with the Engineers and Tree Officer from the former District of Easington and had undertaken a walk of the stream identifying several areas where concerns were made. Overgrown trees were identified and are to be removed; tree trunks would also be removed and old railway trunks would be placed to relieve the culvert. The grassed areas bordering the stream would not be cut as an action to deter people from getting close to the stream edge. The issue of renewing the fencing along this area is also to be pursued. It was also noted that this area is where the bank side erosion is still occurring. The bollard on the path down from Parkside would be addressed. The site visit also looked at the trees heavily laden with ivy. An application for a road closure would be made in order to allow access during removal.
- b). **Stream Fissure.** The Chairman had walked this area with officers from the former District of Easington and was advised that the remains of the fissure would be filled with blue clay.
- c). **Tender for the supply and planting of village planters.** The Clerk advised that he had only received a single quotation from the previous supplier (Horns). Members resolved to accept this quotation.
- d). **Planting of none native species along Dalton Stream.** The Clerk advised of the letter received from the District of Easington who stated they had no powers to replace the trees of force whoever had planted them to remove them.

13. LAND NEAR THE VILLAGE GREEN – ‘ADVERSE POSSESSION ‘ and THE 12 YEAR RULE

Members had visited the Land Registry and undertaken a search of the land adjacent the stream near Stoney Cut Bridge. Trees had been felled here by the District of Easington under the Miscellaneous Provisions Act though no record was found upon the land in question concerning the District of Easington's costs. Members requested the Clerk to investigate if the District of Easington had registered the costs of felling the trees on this un-owned piece of land. Members also requested the Clerk to write to Durham County Council regarding the renewal of fencing along the stream from Stoney Cut Bridge to the farm.

Members also requested the Clerk to establish a file on the village green and surrounding land and to agenda this matter for the next meeting.

14. NEWSLETTER

The Clerk provided a draft of the newsletter for distribution prior to the Annual Parishioners Meeting. Several comments/observations on this draft were made and the Clerk would redraft prior to delivery. Members agreed for the Garden Competition entry form to be included in the newsletter.

The Clerk advised that he had only received one quotation for the delivery but had also sourced a price from Amaro that was more competitive. Members resolved for the delivery to be made via Amaro.

15. AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

The Clerk provided copies of the information concerning the creation of the AAP's. The inaugural meeting was scheduled for the 11th May at Shotton Hall. Members requested the Clerk to register the attendance of the Chairman and a further member plus the Clerk.

16. MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk provided Members with details of the financial transactions for the month. Since preparing this report additional invoices were received that were for the erection of the notice board, advertising the Councillor vacancies and the verge hardening scheme. Members agreed to the payment of these invoices and moved the Clerk's financial report.

17. APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHEQUE SIGNATORY

The Clerk advised that Barclays Bank had not yet cleared the new signatories for the council.

18. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

The Clerk advised that 4 people had expressed an interest in the vacancies. Members resolved to interview the 4 candidates and agreed the interview panel to be made up of 3 councillors and the Clerk. The Clerk would write to all candidates inviting for interview, outlining the interview format to take place in May. Clerk is requested to forward copy of information to the interview panel and book the hall for the occasion.

19. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman advised that she would be attending a Special Meeting with the CDALC concerning the LGR and the existing regional committees for local councils.

20. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk advised members that he had received two quotations for the watering of the floral display. It was resolved to accept the lowest quotation. The Clerk was requested to inform both parties of the outcome.

The Clerk advised of his running of the website although some training in its management is being sought from the previous manager. The Clerk advised that it may be necessary to purchase additional software, firstly to produce pdf documents and secondly to manage the website's storage/backup to ensure the site information is not lost should the web-hosting site crash. The Clerk would present these costs to the council at the next meeting.

The Clerk advised that he had received notification of failure in the CiLCA with 3 units to be resubmitted. The Clerk will re-register and resubmit the failed units.

21. MEMBERS REPORTS

Members advised of the progress being made by the Community Association and the application for an occasional licence and further fund raising efforts.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 7th May 2009

Apologies for that meeting were given by Cllr S Richardson in advance.