

Dalton-le-Dale Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

held THURSDAY, 7th February 2008.

Present: Councillor W Kennedy (**Chairman**)
Councillors: M Oliver, M Hepplewhite, S Richardson, A Westmorland, M Gustard, L Keegan, R Olaman.
Public: Rev. Paul Harrison, Catherine Teasdale, G Cockrill (Police), M Smith (Police)

1. **APOLOGIES** None.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
One Member declared an interest in item 7a.

3. **POLICE REPORT**

Two Officers from Seaham Police attended to give an update for the past months. Firstly, apologies were given for not attending the two previous meetings.

The Police reported that their main concern was the use of off-road motorbikes around the Seaham area and the Bull field. Following a meeting which local Members and farmers attended a site visit took place at the mast area where problems exist with off-road motorbikes and 4x4 vehicles that appear to be taking a short cut through this area to get to Seaham. This meeting was also attended by the Public Rights of Way Officer from Durham County Council. The outcome of this meeting proposed that the bridge over the A19 be gated. This matter is being pursued by the Police and the Public Rights of Way Officer.

Several motorbikes have been seized and crushed and a warning notice has been given to the parents of a youth on the use of motorbikes. The District of Easington has erected a post at the wooden bridge crossing that will restrict quad-bikes in this area. Youths were spotted lamping in the woods but fled when approached by the police.

Members expressed concerns at the damaged grass at the car park near Dalton Tower. The Police were aware of this misuse in this car park.

4. **REPRESENTATIONS FROM RESIDENTS**

Rev. Paul Harrison is seeking support from the Parish Council to hold a Scarecrow Festival in Dalton-le-Dale all around the village in early June. It is hoped that different community groups will join in the fun and make their own scarecrow and site it. The idea behind this festival is to get people to drive through the area and perhaps make a donation. Posters about the event will follow in the future.

Members showed support in this activity and raised no objection and suggested that this festival could be publicised in the next parish newsletter. Members further advised that the Parish Council was not a land owner and therefore the District and County Councils should be approached regarding this festival.

5. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on the 6th December 2007 which had been circulated to Members previously were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5a. **Matters arising from that meeting.**

8a). Members advised that having checked the B1285 there is no 40mph speed limit on the bank coming down from Dalton Heights to Overdene. Members requested the Clerk to forward this matter to Durham County Council Highways.

17 para. 1. Members have also noted the fence lines along the boundary of the Graham Way (near where the trees have been cut) are uneven and are concerned that land may have been encroached upon. Members requested the Clerk to check this matter via the District of Easington.

16 para. 3 Members commented that other vehicles were parking in the village regarding this issue.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- a). District of Easington, Tree Officer – Jim Jones reply. Members agreed for the Clerk to reply to the Tree Officer enquiring if the trees can be covered by a TPO and to also enquire if the letter has been sent to residents and contact the planning department regarding rear garden gates.
- b). CE Electric UK. Members requested the Clerk to obtain 50 leaflets.
- c). District of Easington, New Year Big Clean. Members agreed that an area of concern needing a litter pick to be put forward is the B1285 Times Inn Bank. The Clerk will forward this request to the District of Easington. Members also raised concern regarding the A19 hedgerow. The Clerk will forward this matter to the appropriate highway agency. During the collection of recyclables there was paper left all over the Dale and the black boxes are not being replaced to where they are collected from. Members also requested the Clerk to forward these matters to the District of Easington Environment Services.
- d). Durham County Council – Community Engagement Advisory Group. Members moved that this item be received.
- e). Communities and Local Government – Consultation on orders and regulations relating to the conduct of local authority members in England. The Clerk advised that no issues have been highlighted by the CDALC or himself. Members raised no concerns on this matter.
- f). Durham County Council – Summary of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for County Durham 2007-2011. Members moved that the item be received and file for reference by the Clerk.
- g). CDALC, Steve Ragg email on devolved powers. In considering this matter Members expressed an interest in having Road Safety added to the list of possible devolved powers. The Clerk is requested to reply to the CDALC with this comment.
- h). CDALC, Steve Ragg email on petitions. Members expressed an interest in being able to support all petitions however small and even those that affected micro/local concerns. The Clerk is requested to relay these concerns back to CDALC.
- i). Appointment of external auditors. The Clerk advised that BDO Stoy Hayward LLP would be appointed as the external auditor to local councils for the next five years.
- j). LCR Magazines. The Clerk distributed the magazines.
- k). Durham Rural Community Council. Members received this newsletter.
- l). CDALC Durham Association Newsletters. Members received this newsletter.

7. PLANNING MATTERS

Proposal: First Floor Front Extension at 29 Dalton Heights. No objections raised by Members.

The Clerk advised of a recently received proposal concerning a rear conservatory at Shangri-la, Overdene. No objections were raised by Members.

The Clerk advised of the approvals that had been previously considered by the Council, First floor side extension and rear conservatory at 1 Brixham Close, and Front extension to garage at 14 Plymouth Close.

8. HIGHWAYS and FOOTPATHS

- a). Durham County Council - B1285 Times Inn Bank. Members considered the reply from DCC Highways and requested the Clerk to reply regarding the 40mph signage on the B1285.
- b). Overdene Estate verge hardening scheme. The Clerk advised of the costing received from the District of Easington. Members are in support of this scheme and requested the Clerk to enquire about the available joint funding from the Highways Section and their County Councillor as previous schemes had been co-funded.
- c). Handrail to footpath at Times Inn. DCC did reply that they would repair this handrail and to date Members advised that the works have not been undertaken.

9. ENVIRONMENT

- a). Progress of stream footpath. The Clerk advised that he had established contact with Ground Work East Durham to oversee the project and would bring a costed schedule to the next meeting for Members consideration.
- b). Stream fissure. The Clerk having received an email report on this issue from the District of Easington Engineers advised Members of the timeline of events and the actions taken by the District of Easington.
Members are aware that the streams disappearance is receiving attention as a variety of people and agencies were attending the site. Members were also receiving concerns from members of the public regarding this matter. Members expressed concern over public safety and requested the Clerk to contact the District of Easington to have a sturdier barrier erected and danger notices prominently displayed. The Clerk is requested to write to District of Easington, DCC, Environment Agency, County Council and local MP expressing the Councils concerns on this matter and for the Parish Council to be informed of all actions.

10. REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- a). The Learning Library. Members moved that this item be received.
- b). Dalton-le-Dale Community Association, request for pledge. Members expressed their concerns at the lack of visual progress that this project was making and questioned the need for the pledge to be paid at this point in time. Members representing the Community Association reminded Members of the progress being made and at this very moment in time they are awaiting the demolition of the building. Members also raised concerns as the pledge of £10,000 may contravene the Local Government Act, Section 137 that states Parish Councils can only provide up to £5.64 per electorate to any single community scheme in a given year. Members representing the Community Association were concerned of their cash flow in view of the ordering of goods and upfront payment to cover funding streams that only pay upon the proof of expenditure.
Members put forward the following options for consideration.
 1. The Clerk to seek financial advice on Section 137 from the CDALC and if paying the full amount can be confirmed raises a cheque to that value.
 2. The Community Association receive £5,000 this financial year and the remainder in April (next financial year)
 3. The Clerk to calculate the maximum amount payable under Section 137 in this financial year based on the electorate and if this sum is acceptable to the Community Association raises a cheque to that value.Members' agreed with option 1, and if this could not be achieved to proceed with option 3.

11. PARISH PLAN TIMETABLE

Due to the limited time available it was agreed to move this to the next meeting.

12. CiLCA

The Clerk advised that he had met with a Member of the Council to illustrate the progress he was making through the course. The Clerk advised that he was some 50% through the course and would be looking to submit his portfolio in May/June.

13. NORTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Report/feedback from the event was provided for Members information.

14. MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk advised of an additional invoice received from NEREO for the CiLCA Mentoring Course (£100.00) that was previously agreed by Members and due for Payment. Members accepted the financial report given by the Clerk.

15. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair wished to express her concerns over the stream but this matter had already been raised in the meeting.

16. CLERK'S REPORT

1. The Clerk advised that he had attended the Planning Portal event at DCC. This was an e-consultation exercise that brought the new website www.planningportal.gov.uk to his attention. This is to be the main site for finding things out in planning matters.
2. The Clerk advised that he had attended a free Risk Management training session organised by the County Durham and Cleveland Training Partnership. Attending such courses as this and the above would benefit his portfolio for the CiLCA.
3. Correspondence was received from the District of Easington regarding the Review of Polling Stations. Since the report was approved the Community Association is now under plans for rebuilding and therefore the local elections are to be held in St Andrews Church.
4. The Clerk has received a reply from the District of Easington Planning Department regarding the concerns raised by Members concerning the Poultry Farm – Siting of Static Caravan. It was agreed that this item be agreed and circulated at next meeting.
5. Request for financial assistance from East Durham Community Transport Ltd. Members agreed that this matter be agreed for next meeting.
6. A questionnaire was received from East Durham Trust but this was not applicable to the business of the Parish Council.
7. Members were presented with the latest Newsletter from the County Durham Sustainability and Environmental Partnership.
8. Members were presented with the latest Newsletter from the Coast and Countryside Rangers.
9. Members were presented with the latest Newsletter from the CPRE.
10. The Clerk advised that the next North Area Forum meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 20th February 2008 at the Glebe Centre starting at 6pm.
11. The Clerk advised of the press release received from the District of Easington Chairman regarding a Charity Night to be held in Seaham.
12. The Clerk advised of the press release received from the District of Easington Chairman regarding the Pride in Easington Awards.
13. The Clerk advised of the correspondence received from the DCC Highways section regarding the concerns raised by Members in response to Highways Section not to provide road markings in Dalton Heights Estate. Agreed that this matter be agreed and circulated for the next meeting.
14. The Clerk advised of the draft five year plan he had received from the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue.

17. MEMBERS REPORTS

Members again reported the street lighting to the rear of Dalton Heights had not been adjusted. This light was glaring into the windows on a night disturbing local residents. The Clerk will relay this complaint to the Street Lighting Section.

Members commented on the mutilation of the trees that had been cut back along the B1285.

The Member who attended the Haswell Mencap Charity Night advised that the event had raised £10,000 and was well attended.

Members advised that St Andrews Church was holding an “Easter around the World” on 4th March.

Members expressed concerns over the litter on the B1285 Times Inn Bank and requested the Clerk to report this to the District of Easington.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6th March 2008 at St Andrews Church.