

Minutes of the meeting of Dalton Piercy Parish Council

held at 7.16pm on Thursday 8th June 2023 at Dalton Piercy Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Ireland, Jackson, Noble, Patrick, Rushworth, Savage.

In Attendance: 6 residents

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Timothy, Ward Cllr Martin-Wells.
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs. Noble, Patrick and Savage in Item 14 – Dalton Piercy Village Hall Association Report.
- 3. Public Forum:**
 - A resident asked what was happening with the wall. Cllr Noble explained the Easement Agreement with Anglian Water, and that plans submitted by them for the erection of a dwelling on the site, included the removal of up to 50% of the wall to allow the front wall of the new dwelling to follow the same line as that of other dwellings on the green. The Parish Council was opposed to the demolition of the wall.
 - Another resident asked about trees on Mr Morfatt's land behind the Village Hall. Cllr Patrick explained that the VHA was required to undertake a survey of all trees abutting the site as part of the planning application for a new hall.
 - A resident raised concern that shrubs growing alongside the road at the Three Gates junction were blocking the line of sight for motorists exiting Dalton Back Lane onto the road into the village.
 - A resident informed that another resident, a qualified electrician, had suggested a 6" deep, 5-metre trench be dug from the old Christmas tree to the new one, and a cable laid to the original plug, thus saving time and money. Rob Daley, HBC, to be consulted on this.
 - A resident asked what decision had been made regarding his request for a Hexapath to be laid along the village green. The Chairman explained Councillors had not supported the proposal. She noted further, that the Hexapath laid in front of The Terrace, had been done on H&S grounds alone. The resident expressed his unhappiness with the decision. Cllr Jackson noted that where Hexapath had been installed, cars park on it.
 - A resident informed that he had been in touch with Peter Nixon at HBC regarding the 20mph signs; apparently the new flashing signs have been ordered but not yet received.
 - Residents noted that no Ward Councillors were in attendance yet again.
- 4. Minutes of meetings:** (i) The Chair noted that approval of the **Minutes of 13th April** had been deferred at the request of Cllr Jackson, who objected to the wording of the Maintenance Committee Report. A vote was therefore required. Cllr Patrick proposed, with Cllr Rushworth seconding, the acceptance of the Minutes as a true record. All voted in favour with Cllr Jackson abstaining. The Minutes were duly signed. Cllr Jackson proposed that under 'The Batts', it should be recorded that at the meeting of 8th June, Councillors accepted there were presently no issues of concern at The Batts. This was **unanimously agreed**.
(ii) Minutes of the Annual Meeting of DPPC held on Thursday 11th May 2023 – Approved unanimously.
(iii) Minutes of Ordinary meeting of DPPC held Thurs. 11th May – Cllr Savage proposed acceptance, with Cllr Patrick seconding. Minutes were **unanimously approved** as a true record.

5. Matters Arising:

(i) Highgate Meadows – Cllr Savage reported he had a petition, signed by 99% of the residents of Highgate Meadows, objecting to the proposed emergency track from Highgate Meadows to the Elwick public footpath. It was **agreed** a letter be sent by the Chairman, to Jim Ferguson, Senior Planning Officer, and copied to Ward Councillors and the MD of HBC, in support of the petition. It was further **agreed** that Cllr Jackson would draft a letter to HBC regarding concerns about pollution into local waterways from the Highgate Meadows extension, to be circulated to all Councillors for approval before being signed by the Chairman and forwarded to HBC. It was noted that Cllr Jackson could write in separately as a resident, but not as a Parish Councillor.

Actions: Chairman to write letter of support to accompany the petition; Cllr Jackson to draft letter for circulation to other Councillors.

(ii) Easement Contract – Clarification had been sought from the solicitor who had drawn up the contract, as to whether the wall is on the village green or on the Anglian Water land. A resident noted the Priory wall was mentioned in the Domesday Book. It was further noted that a neighbouring resident has written to Historic England requesting the wall be listed. Cllr Timothy had proposed we use our land barrister. Cllr Jackson asked if party wall regulations applied? It was **agreed** to investigate this in the first instance; Cllr Jackson then proposed that if this does not provide sufficient information, then the Chairman should be authorised to spend up to £1,000 on barrister advice. This was unanimously **agreed**. Cllr Jackson further proposed that a letter from our solicitor be sent to Anglian Water advising them our concern about ownership of the historic wall will be put into the public domain.

Actions: Chairman to consult barrister, but only if sufficient information cannot be obtained from other sources.

(iii) Christmas Tree removal – Cllr Patrick has received 2 quotes. Cllr Jackson noted that the younger tree is already showing signs of losing growth on one side, and insisted the tree be assessed before the older tree was removed. The 3 most recently purchased sets of lights to be removed before the tree was removed and the stump ground out. Cllr Ireland was requested to ask Rob Daley when he could move/remove the electricity box. Cllr Patrick proposed another tree be planted to take over in 10 years' time.

Actions: Maintenance Committee to remove lights; Cllr Ireland to contact Rob Daley for date.

(iv) Red Gap Projects – All 2022 projects now completed except for the installation of the plaque on the orchard stone. The 2023 bids were: the final section of the footpath to Three Gates (Chairman noted that HBC had agreed to contribute £2,000 towards the cost of this), and a Power Bank, to provide electricity for events on the village green.

6. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR): Cllr Ireland, in her capacity as Acting RFO, presented the Receipts & Payments Account 2022/23 and the Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2023. Councillors approved the Accounts. Cllr Ireland then talked through the relevant parts of the AGAR and also read out the Internal Auditor's Report, before asking fellow Councillors to respond to the questions on Governance on the AGAR. It was unanimously **agreed** that the Council could not, in all honesty, say they had been sufficiently diligent in monitoring the former Clerk's financial record-keeping, and one of the questions was therefore answered in the negative. The AGAR was signed by the Chairman. Cllr Ireland agreed to write to Mazars, the External Auditors, explaining the situation, what actions had been taken as a result of her findings after the Clerk had left, and including her report to the Council as well as the Internal

Auditor’s Report. It was **agreed** that the Exercise of Public Rights would run for 30 working days, as required, starting on 3rd July and ending on 11 August 2023.

The Chairman requested that thanks to Cllr Ireland be recorded, for the considerable amount of time and expertise she had given to sorting out the financial situation.

Actions: Cllr Ireland to submit the AGAR with accompanying explanations. Notice of Public Rights to be placed on notice board, and the AGAR, accompanying documentation and Notice of Public Rights posted on the Council’s website.

7. **Maintenance Committee Report:** Cllr Noble noted again the theft of the new Information Boards from The Batts, and suggested Councillors discuss their replacement. Another 2 blue stones had been removed from the pond surround – now up to 12 have been taken; it was **agreed** to concrete in replacement stones as soon as possible.
Blue edging stones in The Terrace – Cllr Patrick has been unable as yet to find a contractor to undertake this work. Cllr Jackson proposed that residents of The Terrace be consulted as to what they want, and a consensus reached, before the stones are replaced. Cllr Patrick supported the proposal and all **agreed**. Cllr Patrick to obtain a quote for the work agreed.
Action: Residents of The Terrace to be consulted as to what they want to do about the blue stones and the maintenance of the road,
Tree Survey – Cllr Jackson noted there are two mature Ash Trees in The Batts now near death. The Chairman to contact the arborist to arrange date for survey.
Action: Chair to contact arborist.
8. **Ward Councillors’ Report:** Cllr Martin-Wells had stated in his apologies that he had nothing to report. It was unanimously agreed he should be asked to send a deputy if he could not attend himself - there are, after all, three Ward Councillors for Rural West.
9. **Chairman’s Report:** The Chairman informed that the next Parish Liaison meeting had been postponed to 17th July; issues she planned to raise were – the need for speed bumps, Section 106 monies and the importance of contractors always contacting the Parish Council before any works were undertaken within the parish that might impact on residents/the village green.
10. **Personnel Committee Report:** Cllr Patrick reported no progress on recruitment of a new Clerk.
11. **DPVHA Report:** Cllr Patrick reported the Bat survey would be completed by the end of the month. A Lottery Application had been submitted.
12. **Financial Reports:** Cllr Ireland presented the reports which were accepted. It was noted that 2 x Allotment fees had been paid into the bank that day.

Receipts	£
Allotment fee	79.00
Allotment fee	79.00
TOTAL:	158.00
Payments	£
Zurich (annual insurance premium)	522.96
Wave Water (overdue payment)	93.10
TOTAL:	£616.06

13. Correspondence: (i) Response from Solicitor – noted; (ii) email from a lady regarding planning and ancient wall – noted; (iii) Cllr Timothy, expressing concern about apparent second dwelling on land for which an Easement had been given for only one dwelling – needs investigation.

14. Planning: H/2021/0372 – Duchy Homes – variation of conditions – OBJECT – nothing has changed to alter our original objection to this development.

15. Matters of Concern to Councillors:

MJ – addendum proposed to The Batts report in May minutes – see Matters Arising.

MI – to note that Cleveland Police are recruiting a team of Special Constables for Rural areas.

MJ – Public Rights of way not yet been cut by HBC this year and residents are complaining that some are impassible. Apparently, HBC has recently employed a contractor to do this.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm