

Piercy Parish Council
Minutes of meeting held at 7.00 pm on Thursday 14th October 2021
At Dalton Piercy Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs D. Rezai (Chair), M. Ireland, L Noble. M. Patrick, M. Jackson and S. Savage

In Attendance: Three members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr S. Rushworth, Ward Cllr B. Loynes, J. White, Clerk

2. Declaration of interests:

DR, L.N and M.P – Item 12 -Village Hall (all are trustees of DPVHA)

DR – Item 16, Planning

3. Public Forum:

- A resident raised concern about trees overhanging the road at Three Gates, reported before and requested a progress report. Cllr Noble responded that to date nothing had happened; the land was leased, and the actual owner knew nothing about the issue; it was the lessee's legal responsibility to prune the trees. **Action:** Clerk to raise concerns with HBC officers.

4. Minutes of meetings held on 9th September 2021

Cllr Patrick moved acceptance, seconded by Cllr Noble. All being in agreement it was **resolved** to accept the Minutes as a true record and the Chairman signed the minutes.

5. Tree Preservation Orders in Dalton Piercy:

Cllr Noble reported receiving an e-mail from Derek Wardle the HBC Arborist, that afternoon; he is keen to get TPOs on many of the mature trees behind College Close and Highgate Meadows as quickly as possible. He should complete his survey of the trees by the end of the week, and will then make recommendations to the Legal Department to have Preservation Orders conferred on them, some 50 or so trees will be covered. Cllr Jackson reported that he had suggested the whole of the Howls be surveyed and TPOs conferred as necessary, as this was Ancient Woodland. Sadly, a number of trees along the footpath from Dalton to Elwick had been removed in the last few months; Derek hoped to prevent the loss of any more. Cllr Savage noted that an Ash Tree on Manor Farm had been badly storm damaged, and was now in a dangerous state; he had not wished to see it removed, and Derek had agreed. TPO status is to be removed from the tree to allow it to be professionally pruned back to save it.

6. Voneus Broadband:

The Clerk reported, via Cllr Noble, that the company, rather than hold an event on the village green, had instead put information fliers through the door of every dwelling their service would reach directly with their signal. Those households not yet contacted, were not in direct line of the signal, but may still be able to get a service if a signal could be bounced from a neighbouring house.

A resident in North View had noted Open Reach working on the fibre outside their house; when the engineers were questioned, it appeared that another Dalton resident had paid individually for the high fibre cabling to their property.

7. Vote of 'No Confidence & Proposed Charter:

The Chairman gave a brief report on further actions being taken by the rural parish councils' Chairmen, as no response had been received from the Leader of the Borough Council to two formal requests for the transcript of the meeting held with him in August. Comments on the draft Charter, made by the Borough Solicitor, had also not been received, although these were promised at the August meeting. He noted that the parish councils continued to work closely together on this issue. It was noted that no Rural West Ward Councillors had attended a Parish Council meeting at Dalton or Elwick, since the vote of No Confidence had been taken. Cllr Loynes, being ill, could be excused, but there was no excuse for Cllr Stokell or Cllr Young.

Cllr Jackson proposed an emergency meeting be called with all Ward Councillors, at a date and time of their convenience, to address the issues directly, but this proposal was not supported. Cllr Jackson requested his proposal remain 'on the table' for future reference if needed.

8. Red Gap projects

Cllr Noble reported that the Clerk had been in contact with Grantscape, who were happy with the progress being made. On the current year's projects.

- (a) 4,500 Bluebell bulbs had been purchased and arrived today. Teesside Wildlife trust are coming to help prepare the woodland site for the bulb planting. A path is to be strimmed round the site as soon as Cllr Jackson has obtained a new strimmer line. The bulbs need to be planted before the first frosts.
- (b) Cllr Jackson has ordered 50 fruit trees, mostly native, for the new orchard. The Clerk has suggested that this be connected to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and perhaps the orchard named accordingly.
- (c) The Hexapath is to be installed by Meryl Gardens, commencing the 1st December.
- (d) The street lights project, 2019/20 – has been held up due to the need to apply to the HBC One Stop Shop (see Maintenance Report).
- (e) The footpath funded in 2020/21 has now been completed. The Clerk is awaiting the invoice from HBC.

Cllr Jackson requested a Volunteers event be arranged to plant the bluebells – it was agreed this be held from 10.00am on Sunday 24th October. **Action:** Clerk to alert residents about the event. Cllr Savage immediately volunteered.

Cllr Jackson noted that he had now made an application to the Woodland Trust for hedging in The Batts, to replace the stolen fencing, but he was not particularly optimistic of success. He further informed that he was able to obtain 500 Hawthorn whips, for £300, which could be planted immediately; should the Woodland Trust application be fruitful, those hedging plants could be planted to make a double thickness, mixed hedge. The Chairman supported the proposal, as did all other Councillors present and it was **resolved** to allocate £300 to the purchase of 500 Hawthorn whips for The Batts.

9. Maintenance Report:

Cllr Noble reported as follows:

- The third light to be funded by Red Gap is, it is proposed, to be placed on the corner by the defibrillator. It will not only light up the defibrillator, but also part of the parking and pavement in North View. The proposal was **unanimously supported**.
- The Christmas Tree electricity supply box has at last been installed.
- She had planted 11 flower tubs around the village green with bulbs at a cost of £50.00. Another couple of residents were willing to do the same with their flower tubs.
- HBC has finally agreed to clear the footpath on the road from Three Gates to the A19; the work has already started, with the footpath having been scraped clean today.
- HBC has also agreed to resurface part of Hart Back Lane, a section around Blue House Farm is to be done at the end of October.
- Following a challenge from the Clerk HBC has also agreed to resurface the pavement in College Close.

- The Clerk is still having conversations with Tony Hanson, HBC, about the missing waste bin at the Play Area, as well as stones missing from the bridge and trees growing out of the stonework on the bridge. There is still no timescale for the replacement of the village sign damaged a while ago in a traffic accident.
- The Clerk had received a letter from Thirteen Housing Association, informing that they were asking residents in their properties not to park on the village green.

10. Ward Councillors Report:

No attendance or Report. The Chairman reported he had received apologies from Cllr Loynes, who had fully intended to come, but had been taken ill. Cllr Noble reported the Clerk had sent a polite letter to all three Ward Councillors, giving them the dates of all DPPC meetings for the year and requesting they put these in their diaries; she had received no response.

11. Chairman's Report:

The Chairman reported as follows:

- He had spent time working with other rural parish council Chairmen on the Vote of no Confidence issue.
- He continued to deal with the legal issues around the Easement provided to the water board, which was still on-going.

12. DP Village Hall Association Report:

Councillor Patrick reported as follows:

- He had still heard nothing from HBC about the section 106 monies. Cllr Noble noted this was a legal contract with the developer and land owner, and it was not up to the Borough Council to decide where and what should be funded.
- An architect had now been commissioned to draw up plans for the new Village Hall.

13. Personnel Report:

Cllr Ireland reported that the clerk's Appraisal had been completed. As a result, the Clerk had agreed to trial working for three hours every Wednesday morning, with her priority being the timely production and circulation of the agenda, minutes of meetings and financial reports.

Councillors should note the clerk's availability at this time, and contact her, when necessary, then. Her remaining hours would be given to PC meetings, training and other business.

14. Finance

The Clerk presented the financial transactions which were **accepted**.

Cllr Noble read out the letter from Mazars, the External Auditor, which outlined what actions the Council had to take now the Audit had been successfully completed. These included, amongst other things, placing the audited accounts on the website. Acceptance being moved by Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Savage and unanimously agreed, it was **resolved** to agree to undertake all the actions required, with immediate effect. **Action:** Clerk to implement actions required by Mazars.

Financial Transactions 10th September – 14th October 2021

Receipts	£
	0.00
TOTAL:	£0.00
Payments	£
J White - Clerks salary September	217.20
L Noble – reimbursement for paint	71.29
Corden hardware Co. – gridforce path	2,051.28
J. Parker Dutch Bulbs – bluebells	1,008.00
J. White- reimbursement Box.co.uk laptop	772.39
C&C Walker – 2 x grass cuts	403.20
Mazars – Audit	360.00
Village Hall Annual Hire fee	450.00
TOTAL:	5,333.36

15. Correspondence:

- (i) Letter from concerned parties in another part of the country, circulated to all English Councils, regarding unacceptable behaviour of a public body – noted.
- (ii) HBC regarding offer of training for parish councils on new Planning Portal – the Clerk has responded agreeing DPPC would participate.
- (iii) Tree Works by Amey for Northern PowerGrid – The Clerk had requested advance notice of these and expressed Councillor concerns about the work – response gave no timescale, but did confirm that only soft growth is to be pruned.
- (iv) Note from resident requesting the tree pruning above take place in the summer, as winter works created issues for elderly residents – not supported as tree pruning must be done whilst the sap is low and when birds are not nesting.
- (iv) Three complaints from residents this week about the smell from the drain by the pond – the cause is likely to be Sambuccas again. **Action:** Clerk to write to Water Board regarding this as soon as possible, mentioning the history of the issue.

16. Planning Applications:

H/2021/0425 – 3, Manor Fields, extension – **No Objection**

H/2021/0265 - Three Gates Farm – new road access. NB: Cllr Rezai left the meeting during this Item. After a brief discussion as to the necessity for the new access road – it is a Health & Safety issue, as the current access is on the T Junction, directly opposite Hart Back Lane, and with more traffic using the access road, as there are to be three new dwellings on the site – it was agreed to make **No Objection**.

17. Matters of Concern to Councillors:

Cllr Ireland raised concern that there had been no Annual Parish Meeting as yet in 2021. This would normally have been held in April, but due to Covid restrictions, it had been postponed. However, she felt it important that residents have the opportunity to suggest what the PC might include in their plans for 2022/23, and any acceptable suggestions would need to be included in the budget. It was unanimously agreed to accept Cllr Savage's proposal that the meeting take place one hour before the normal monthly PC meeting, on Thursday 11th November. It was further agreed that wine & cheese be provided.

Action: Clerk to produce flier to go to every household, with invitations to attend to: Ward Councillors, Police, PCC, School.

The Chairman noted that the parish council Chairmen had agreed a formal meeting with our MP, Jill Mortimer, was needed as soon as this could be arranged. The PC Chairmen were working together on this.

Meeting closed at 8.39pm

Date of next meeting: Thursday 11th November 2021