

Dalton Piercy Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.03pm on Thursday 12th September 2024 held at Elwick WI Hall.

Present: Cllrs Ireland (Chair), Noble, Savage, Patrick and Middleton.

In Attendance: Sandra Valkauskaite, Clerk, 9 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs. Timothy and Rushworth

2. **Declaration of interests:** Cllr Noble - planning application H/2024/0210

3. Public Forum

- A resident said one of The Priory's flower pots was falling apart; the resident would like to replace it with one of the existing unadopted flower pots, if available. **Agreed**
- A resident expressed disappointment after HBC-filled pot holes are all uneven. **Action:** Clerk to email Peter Frost at HBC about pot holes.
- A resident expressed concern that speeding is still an issue; it was noted that HBC deals with speeding issue. **Action:** Clerk to request Officer to speak to the Highgate Meadows Developer regarding this issue.
- A resident asked if The Batts is still managed by Teesside Wildlife Trust and was informed by a Councillor that it no longer does so. The public Right of Way in The Batts is the responsibility of HBC.
- A resident expressed disappointment that the same issues keep getting discussed at DPPC meetings and no actions taken. Councillors explained that everything within DPPC power is dealt with when possible, however many of the issues discussed are outside DPPC control and can only be dealt with by HBC.
- A resident said it was nice to see more people attending meetings, but disappointed in low public engagement in the village.
- A resident insisted that DPPC provided answers to his questions over ownership of the ancient wall as requested via email. **Action:** Chair to email resident with response to this.
- A resident expressed disappointment about Agenda and Minutes not being posted on website and notice board; the Chair apologised and explained that the notice board lock was broken and is being replaced. **Action:** Clerk to keep website up to date.
- A resident asked why action had not been taken to improve the entrance to the play area as previously agreed. It was noted that a funding application could be made in November, if needed, however we first need to identify what can realistically be done, as it is quite possible that Planning permission may be required. A resident noted that a path already existed which could be utilised as an alternative route if cleared of overgrowth. **Action:** Maintenance Committee to investigate and report back.

4. **Minutes of last meeting:** Unanimously agreed as an accurate record after correcting as follows:

- DPPC have no contract with TVWT as minuted.
- One grammar mistake corrected.

5. Matters Arising:

a) HBC Enforcement Issues: The three issues of concern previously discussed have already been reported to HBC, however it now appears that Planning Enforcement require an on-line form to be completed with considerable evidence provided to support the complaint. Action: Cllrs Noble and Patrick to complete the forms.

b) Village Green Encroachment: See Chair's report.

c) Banking. NatWest keeps refusing extra signatories and coming back with different reasons as to why it cannot be done. Ongoing issue.

d) Freedom of Information request: The Clerk reported that she had still not received the information promised by HBC, which was clearly now significantly overdue and in breach of legislation. Clerk to make another request, copied to both the Managing Director and Leader of HBC.

6. Ward Councillor's Report: Report not received.

7. Chair's Report:

- Residents who had laid gravel on the village green for extended access to park outside their house, had been visited by the Chairman; they stated they had already removed most of the gravel and committed to no longer drive over the village green. It was noted that gravel still remained on part of the village green which should have been removed and that the residents had since continued to drive across village green to park outside their home. This was clearly a breach of the agreement and Village Green Policy.
- The Chair attended the Parish Liaison meeting on 24th July at the Civic Centre, it had been very constructive meeting with the new Leader of HBC. A number of strategic issues had been covered, including: road infrastructure, speeding, the impact on rural communities of the push to Net Zero and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping.
- The Leader had extended an invitation to all Parish Councils to attend any HBC Committee meeting if they wished, with a right to speak but not to vote. The Chair identified those committees she felt were most important from a rural perspective, including Neighbourhood Services, Finance & Policy and Economic Growth & Regeneration. She noted that those PC Chairman present had agreed that each PC could attend one of the Committees and represent all PCs though probably all Parish Councils would wish to attend meetings of the Planning Committee. She requested that DPPC Councillors consider whether they were willing to do this, noting that she herself would wish to attend the Finance committees.
- The annual get together of HBC, Parish Council Councillors and Officers is to take place on Thursday 10th October at 5.30pm. The meeting will be held at the Civic Centre. More details will be shared with Councillors once received.
- New lock to be fitted on notice board, work still to be completed.
- The Chair expressed concern that the website had not been updated for several months and requested, as a matter of priority, that the Clerk keep the website up-to-date in a timely manner. **Action:** Clerk to update website.

8. Personnel Committee Report: Nothing to report.

9. Maintenance Committee Report:

Cllr Noble reported that:

- Contractors had removed the fencing posts remaining from the stolen fence in The Batts and used them to repair other fencing. The old barbed-wire fencing had been removed at the same time.
- Fallen tree branch on the village green had been removed within an hour of notifying the contractor.
- Overhanging trees along The Batts Right of Way will be addressed in November.
- The Red Gap Community Funded Solar panels and tracker have arrived.
- Grantscape is to have an extra meeting in December as all funds were not allocated in July. We need to decide whether to put in any applications – possibly for a safer play area entrance or a walkway across the beck, beside the stone bridge opposite the play area. We would need quotes and to check if planning permission is required.

A resident requested that a Maintenance Committee meeting be scheduled.

10. Finance Report:

Financial Transactions 11th July – 11th September 2024

Receipts	£
TOTAL:	0
Payments	£
Meryl Gardens Tree Care	80.00
CE & Walkers Ltd (grass cutting)	508.80
Wave water bill	4.47
WI Hall Hire	110.00
Meryl Gardens Tree Care (The Batts fencing)	400.00
SLCC Subscription	105.00
EcoFlow Solar Tracker Panels	1,499.00
TOTAL:	2,707.27

Financial Report **accepted**.

The Chair reported the external audit had been completed and she had agreed to accept a Qualified opinion, as the transfer to an interest account had been wrongly stated as an expenditure.

11. DPVHA Trustees Report

Cllr Patrick informed that the demolition of the old hall had been postponed due to HBC now requiring all planning conditions to be met before demolition could proceed.

12. Speeding: It was noted that a car crash occurred in the village due to speeding. Upon arrival, the police suggested that cutting back the hedges along the road would improve drivers' visibility and potentially reduce future accidents. Chair will raise this issue at the next Parish Liaison meeting, if police are in attendance.

13. Correspondence: Circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting – two requests from the developer for a decision on what surfacing they could place on their Easement track. After some discussion it was **agreed** that we propose a mix of dolomite and road planings would be preferred. It was further **agreed** that all historic tracks across the village green, when resurfacing was required, should be resurfaced with a mix of dolomite and road planings. **NB:** Village Green Policy to be updated to reflect this decision.

14. Planning Applications – Cllr Noble left the room.

H/2024/0210 – DPPC has submitted a formal objection to protect ancient wall. Residents requested that the house be moved further away from the wall to preserve it, however, it was noted that HBC had already given planning permission to the previous owner of the land.

H/2024/0150 – Councillors had **No Objection** to the application for a first floor extension to The Grange.

15. Matters of Concern to Councillors: Cllrs expressed the importance of ensuring that the Council website is regularly updated with the latest information. **Action:** Clerk to keep website up to date.

16. Exclusion of the Press and Public: Members of the public asked to leave at 8.38pm.

17. Confidential Business: (i) Legal issues relating to an Easement.
(ii) Issue relating to encroachment on village green.

18. Next Meeting: to take place at **7.30pm** at Elwick WI Hall, Thursday 10th October 2024
NB: Later time due to prior meeting with HBC.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.