

Dalton Parish Council

**Clerk: Mrs Elizabeth-Anne Broad JP, LLB (Hons), MA, CiLCA
1 Pinewood, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 6UZ
Tel: 01695 557678 Mob: 07973 340254
e-mail: daltonpc.clerk@yahoo.com**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.00 pm on Monday 8th July 2024 at Dalton St Michael's School, Higher Lane, Dalton, WN8 7RP. Press & Public are invited to attend.

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Louise Howard (Chairman), Cllr Gill Rainford, Cllr Chris Murphy, and two members of the public.

1. To record apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Iain Pearce, Cllr Toni Newman.

2. To receive declarations of interest

None declared.

3. Public Participation: Any item raised by a member of the public will be discussed at this point.

Issue of neighbouring Round O Quarry with concerns that it was over-filled and the possible implications for Ravenhead Quarry and Dalton Quarry who are run by the same company.

The Millenium Book was compiled twenty-five years ago. Might it be considered producing an addendum at this 25 year point?

4. To ratify as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held 13th May 2024

The Minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

5. Accounts for ratification and payment and receipt of internal auditor report

Sandra Jones	200524	Internal Audit fee	£35.00
ICO	210524	Data Protection registration	£35.00
E A Broad	280524	Clerk's salary May 2024	£299.18
M Rigby	120624	Grass cutting	£50.00
E A Broad	270624	Clerk's salary June 2024	£299.18

HMRC	270624	Tax for three months	£200.60
Unity Trust	300624	Bank service charge	£18.00
M Rigby	020724	Grass cutting	£50.00

*contains VAT

Income received:

HMRC	030524	VAT Refund	£74.09
WLBC	050624	First half concurrent	£200.50
Unity Trust	300624	Bank interest	£26.78

Account Balances as at 020724

Savings account	=	£5,141.25
Current account	=	£1,598.89
Total:	=	£6,740.14

To: Chairman and Councillors
Dalton Parish Council

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2023-24

An internal audit was undertaken following examination of the accounts and minutes as presented by Mrs E Broad, Clerk to the Council and RFO.

It was found that overall the processes in place show a good standard of internal control. Sample checks of income, expenditure and bank statements were carried out and the audit trail was found to be in order. The cashbook is maintained and balanced on a regular basis and the Standing Orders and Risk Assessment Register have been reviewed during the year. In addition, the previous year's recommendation regarding the Parish Council complying with the requirements of the Transparency Code have largely been met.

However, there were a few instances, which I bring to the Council's attention:

1. **Accuracy of Parish Council meeting minutes**

It was found that there was a discrepancy with the minutes as described:

- The payment of £50 to M Rigby on 13 July 2023 has not been included on any set of minutes.

It is recommended that adequate checks are carried out to ensure that all Parish Council meeting minutes are accurate and complete. It is vital that those checks are carried out as Parish Council minutes are legal documents once signed.

2. **Clerk Salary payments**

Although documentation was provided with regard to the monthly payments in relation to the Clerk's salary, there was no proof that the salary being paid for that financial year was actually correct.

It is recommended that a formal contract should be in place for the Clerk's salary with a confirmatory letter each time there are any changes to the contract, ie following an appraisal or back payments. In addition, the letter each year should detail what the Parish Council will contribute to the Clerk's pension and the amount of any working from home expenses.

3. **Transparency Code Requirements**

It was noted that the analysis of variances during the previous financial year 2022-23 was not included on the website as part of the Transparency Code requirements. In addition, the Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4 of the AGAR) was also missing.

It is recommended that all relevant documents as listed on page 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) are included as part of each financial year's AGAR when published on the Parish Council website in order to comply with the Transparency Code regulations.

4. **Website Requirements**

Although not strictly part of the internal audit requirements, it has been noted that there is still no Accessibility Statement published on the Dalton Parish Council website. The Accessibility Statement is a legal requirement under The Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018. In addition, West Lancashire Borough Council require Parish Councils to publish an annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Statement on its website each year.

It is recommended that a process is put into place to ensure that checks are made at certain times of the year to ensure that all website publication requirements are being met. An Accessibility Statement should be published as soon as possible in order to comply with the Accessibility regulations.

Sandra Jones. CiLCA

19 May 2024

6. To select a representative on the Peter Lathom Charity Board of Trustees

The meeting resolved to propose David Howard as local representative on the Peter Lathom Charity Board of Trustees.

7. To ratify decision to donate King Charles III portrait to Parbold Women's Institute

The Clerk presented the portrait, which will be displayed at Parbold Women's Institute, during the celebration for the 95th anniversary of the Hall.

8. Update on Dalton signs maintenance

The two Beacon Lane Dalton signs still need repainting. The contractor was awaiting better weather but the prolonged rain has delayed this. Then their other grass cutting commitments took precedence, so the clerk was asked to find another contractor within the same budget.

9. To consider Ashurst Beacon Point, ownership, maintenance responsibilities

No update.

10. To record any police issues

There are continued issues of off-road motorbikes, though kissing gate installation by WLBC across the footpaths of Beacon County Park has held a little. On 16th June there was a bad accident on Higher Lane, near the Dungeon Lane and Lees Lane junction, opposite Oakwood, the road was closed and police attended.

11. To record any highway or public rights of way issues, including

- **Lees Lane issues**
- **Coronation Bridge - FP080740** – LCC confirmed that the bridge team do have this on their worksheet. However, Duke of Edinburgh teams are using this route and it is dangerous. Clerk asked to email LCC PROW again.
- **Japanese Knotweed on Dungeon Lane**
- **Himalayan Balsam on roadside verges**

All above issues have been reported to LCC and there has been little to no action taken.

Clerk to write to LCC and ask where is there plan to deal with roadside invasive weeds such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam? It was noted that there is giant hogweed along the Leeds-Liverpool canal and the river Douglas at Parbold also.

- **Surface water issues - ED 48706 Dungeon Lane Higher Lane junction**

This issue, reported to LCC Highways, continues.

12. To consider any planning issues or applications including:

- **Progress of development under Application 2022/1210/FUL - land adjacent to Old School House, Higher Lane, Dalton.**

It was noted that this appears to have a large window at the rear, possibly a patio door, not apparent on any agreed plans.

- **Update on Enforcement action to remove shipping container from the land west of Woodvale, Higher Lane.**

It was understood that the land owner has been given time to remove this.

- **Empty Public Houses: Prince William and The Beacon Inn**

2024/0224/FUL | Conversion and restoration of the former Prince William public house to form a single dwelling. Demolition of existing structures and re-use of volume to form a single detached dwelling on land for... | Prince William Inn Beacon Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7RU

Dalton Parish Council have no objection to the renovation or change of use to residential of the former Prince William Public House.

Providing all the criteria for development in the greenbelt, and the Dalton Village Design Statement have been met, then we also have no objection to the new build residential property.

The owner of this site also owns the adjacent land that Dalton Cricket Club is on. However, Dalton Cricket Club were unaware of the proposal for them to use part of the car park. They also have only three years left on their lease, and have had no indication whether the lease will be renewed.

Given the above, if planning permission is given, we would ask that a condition is attached to ensure that the remaining car park and new entrance is solely for the use of Dalton Cricket Club, and if their lease is not renewed then this section of car park and entrance is changed to grass, as is proposed for the remainder of the current car park.

Application 2024/0321/FUL – slurry store off Lees Lane

Parish Council Response:

We have serious concerns about this application, both in terms of impact not only on the health of the public, but also on the environment, and there is still a lack of detail around many aspects.

Gas - whilst we acknowledge the structure will have a roof on it, this will not stop the potentially high levels of Hydrogen Sulphide, Ammonia, Methane and Carbon Dioxide that will be emitted during storage and especially when the slurry is agitated. This is especially concerning given that the older and younger residents who live nearby are more sensitive and vulnerable to harm from these gases.

In the Environmental Health report from the previous application, it stated 'Gas monitoring and detection equipment should also be used for added protection from exposure to slurry gases'. There is no information with this application on that subject.

Water run off/flooding/water contamination - Lees Lane floods, along the section at the northern edge of this field, caused by surface water run-off from this field (there is a flood sign there year round). There are two boreholes below the slurry store, water is constantly running from a spring and a water course through this field. On the opposite side of the road there's a stream running through a wooded area, all this ultimately ends up in the River Douglas.

There is obviously a high risk of slurry pollution not only immediately around the site, but

also into the River Douglas.

Visual Impact - even with the structure being semi-sunk into the ground it will still be visible in an otherwise open raised field.

There is obviously going to be a significant visual impact of the structure and we believe it will need to have a perimeter fence around it for security/safety. The exact impact on the visual amenity of residents and the greenbelt is hard to judge, given the lack of detail/plans provided, especially as there is no plan showing a street scene. There is also mention of landscaping, but no details or plans.

Noise - with no data given, it is hard to know how many tractor/vehicle movements there will be to the site, and to therefore gauge the impact in terms of both amount of noise that nearby residents will hear and with what frequency, especially given farming is a seven day a week business. Suffice to say it will be a lot more than they currently experience.

Traffic - the existing slurry stores are near the cattle, so there are few tractor movements associated with those, and whilst this being sited where it is may reduce the movement of tractors spreading the slurry, the output from the cattle exceeds the amount of slurry being spread, hence the whole reason for having storage for it, therefore tractor movements are going to increase to the site rather than be reduced, as the slurry is going to have to be moved from the cattle to this site.

Very little has changed since the previous application, other than the addition of the Air Quality report.

There is still very little detail, no landscape plans/information, no street scene drawings. One of the reasons the previous application was refused is due to the fact there was insufficient information especially with regards to gas monitoring, and there is still very little information with this application.

We acknowledge the need for increased slurry storage capacity, 100 metres away from houses, is not the right the location for storing almost 300,000 gallons of slurry, with everything else that entails....smell, gas production, traffic, noise, impact on visual amenity, impact on people's health, pollution risk and the impact on the wider environment/water courses.

For all the reasons above, this application should be refused.

The application was listed for decision at the WLBC Planning Committee of 20th June 2024 but withdrawn by the applicant.

Application number 2024/0426/FUL:

Proposed Detached Garage

Location: Dalton Grange Higher Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7TW

Response: Dalton Parish Council has no objection to this planning application providing all the criteria for development in the greenbelt have been met, and that it meets the guidelines in the Dalton Village Design Statement.

Application Number: 2024/0454/FUL

Proposal: Extension to Barn Conversion for an Orangery
Location: Boydells Farm Hillock Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7RJ
Delegation decision granted permission.

Application Number: 2024/0477/FUL

Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory, erection of single storey rear extension and single storey front extension alongside external alterations.
Location: Viewlands Hillock Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7RJ

Response: Dalton Parish Council has no objection to this planning application providing all the criteria for development in the greenbelt have been met, and that it meets the guidelines in the Dalton Village Design Statement.

The following decision is noted:

Application Number: 2024/0203/PNP

Proposal: Application for Determination as to Whether Prior Approval is Required for Details - Construction of a new access track.
Location: Land west of Higher Lane.
Decision: Prior approval is not required.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55 pm.

Cllr Louise Howard
Chairman

9th September 2024