

Dalton Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council at 7.00 pm on Monday 4th April 2022 in Dalton St Michael's School, Higher Lane, Dalton, WN8 7RP

Present: Cllr Howard, Cllr Rainford, Cllr Murphy and two members of the public.

1. To record apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Pearce.

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. There is usually a restriction of four minutes for each issue that is brought to the attention of the Chairman.**

Issues raised:

1. Over Lockdown lots more ramblers in the area and it was noted that Dalton Quarry had extended their area by removing trees before planting trees to screen it as required by the restoration plan. Zoom meetings of the Development Committee revealed no County Councillor living south of Preston, at that time, even though they were making decisions that affect this area. Decisions included numerous conditions but there is no established monitoring to ensure applicants abide by the conditions. Therefore, we need to know exactly what conditions are being applied and we need people to tell us if these conditions are not being met.
2. Litter problems continue in the area of (lower) Beacon Lane. On the litterpick there were six filled bags, a tyre and a long section of pale blue piping retrieved from here. This is a no-mans land of unparished area but Borough Councillors James UpJohn and Yvonne Gagen have been asked for assistance. The dog bin requested however, has been put in on the wrong side of the road and doesn't address the issue of dog waste on the footway between The Woodlands and Dalton Church. Would it be possible to ask for a monthly litter-pick? Also to include writing to Up Holland Parish Council to ask that they do their bit along Mill Lane. These are the gateways to Dalton Village and we want them kept nicely. WLBC frequently describe the Beacon County Park as a jewel in West Lancashire but the entrance to it is often litter strewn also; perhaps the WLBC Rangers could litter-pick along Beacon Lane? Finally, it is understood that Borough Councillors have a 'Report My Patch' facility to get WLBC officers to deal with any issue in their area. Do the Borough Councillors for Dalton use this facility?

3. The proposal by the Anglican minister to implement car parking charges at the car park on Higher Lane, between the church and school building was raised. It is understood that this idea has been abandoned. However, could Dalton Parish Council open dialogue with the Church and ensure that they are consulted or at least informed if decisions are being taken that affect village amenities.
4. Bollards installed by LCC on Long Heys Lane have attracted attention as many other areas in the village would welcome such bollards. It was noted that Dalton Parish Council requested bollards for Dalton Church but purchased them from parish funds.

4. To ratify as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held 10th January 2022

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

5. To consider donation to the Trash For Trees Project

It was resolved to issue a LGA Section 137 grant of £400 to this new project. The project is run by the local rural police officer, and involves encouraging litter picking by swapping filled bags of roadside litter for a tree, supplied by the Woodland Trust and planted in the village. The project is local, helping to tackle climate change, encourages (particularly children) to address littering behaviour and install a pride in achievement. Cleaning up the village and planting trees helps the wellbeing of all residents.

6. To discuss the problem of speeding traffic through the village

The LCC survey of Speed Indicator Devices had been completed. The difficulties in obtaining such equipment for Dalton identified as cost and finding suitably straight locations due to LCC insistence that only temporary locations can be used (not a fixed place). The costs of initial equipment might be found from fund-raising however, the ongoing cost of moving the equipment makes it unaffordable. Other cheaper measures will be investigated including stickers for bins and perhaps, cut-out figures around the school to remind drivers to pay attention and reduce speed.

7. To record any police issues

Successful apprehension of poachers was noted. The meeting recorded thanks to our rural police force for assisting with the Community Litter-pick. The Clerk was asked to write to Chief Inspector Abbot to commend the work done, particularly by PC Paddy Stewart.

8. Accounts for ratification and payment

E A Broad	280221	Salary - Jan 2022	s.o.	£248.42
Online Design	220222	Website costs	b.t.	£29.40*
E A Broad	280221	Salary - Feb 2022	s.o.	£248.42
E A Broad	280321	Salary - March 2022	s.o.	£248.42
E A Broad	280321	Salary – adjustment tax code change	b.t.	£124.40

HMRC Cumbernauld 270321	Tax for 3 months – none due Nominal £1 to keep SO in place	s.o.	£1.00
LALC 040421	Annual Membership fee	b.t.	£78.32
Trash for Trees 040422	Donation – sec 137 to benefit parish	b.t.	£ 400.00

*contains VAT

A year end balance of £5,559.96 was noted. The accounts and Minutes Book will now be forwarded to the Internal Auditor.

9. To record any highway or public rights of way issues

The meeting understands that the proposal to charge for car parking at Dalton St Michael's Church has been rejected by the parochial parish council. This news was welcomed by Dalton Parish Council as the implications might easily have encouraged roadside parking on this dangerous corner.

10. To consider any planning issues or applications

Extension to side and rear over 3 storeys (resubmission of refused application 2021/1215/FUL)

Woodbank Higher Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7RP

Ref. No: 2022/0242/FUL

Parish Council Response: No comment on this proposal.

Application for determination as to whether Prior Approval is required for details - Erection of a building for the purposes of agricultural storage

Manor House Long Heys Lane Dalton Wigan Lancashire WN8 7RS

Ref. No: 2022/0141/PNP

Prior Approval applications do not invite parish council comment, however this application raised general questions in the meeting. The Clerk was instructed to ask WLBC Planning Officer, in general, how much land does a property have to own, in order to erect buildings for agricultural storage?

Residents concerns at possible development of the greenbelt amenity land opposite Hillock Lane was forwarded to WLBC Planning Department with the following response:-

Your concerns will be registered as a formal complaint and investigated accordingly. I did visit the site earlier today as well but there was no one working today. I inspected what has taken place so far and whilst I agree there is work on-going, I did not spot any breaches today. A very low wall has been erected off the road but this would not require planning permission in its own right.

WLBC Reference E/2022/0070/UAU

Alleged Breach: Change of use to land without planning permission

Dalton Parish Council/Minutes/040422

Location: Land South Of The Old School, Higher Lane, Dalton, Wigan.

Thank you for your recent correspondence received 31st March 2022 drawing my attention to a possible breach of planning control at the above site.

I can confirm that the matter will be investigated as soon as possible and during the investigation it may be necessary to contact you for more information.

Given the ongoing effect of the Coronavirus pandemic, we are experiencing a high volume of communications by email, post and telephone. Enforcement is a discretionary service and we have a significant backlog of complaints which remain under investigation. In accordance with the adopted Enforcement Plan, officers must prioritise investigating matters which result in the most serious planning harm. We are working hard to progress queries/complaints and will proactively contact you when our investigations have been completed and where it is appropriate and your responses are required.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

I would like to take this opportunity to point out that the Council normally has no legal powers to stop a breach of planning control immediately. We can try and persuade the person involved to stop, but in the end it may prove necessary to issue either a breach of condition notice or an enforcement notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This can only be done after the collection of evidence, and in the case of enforcement notice, followed by Committee authorisation. An appeal against an enforcement notice can also be lodged, and this can lengthen proceedings considerably. As you can see, without the co-operation of the person carrying out the breach of planning control, a remedy may take some time and can be subject to challenge on appeal.

It was resolved to reply, explaining that it is not a change of use that is feared here but development without permission. No plans have been submitted and now the wall has a clearly defined access complete with wall posts and driveway onto a very fast road with no application for this. The concern raised now may not be a clear breach of planning law but at what point is a development a development in planning terms: we have witnessed in the past £30k of restructuring of amenity land, tiering of land, rollering and flattening contours, addition of plantings and tarmacking. At what point does this constitute development requiring planning permission?

11. Update following the Community Litterpick - Saturday 25th March 2022 to coincide with the Great British Spring Clean Campaign

The most successful litter-pick was held on the 25th March 2022 with more volunteers than ever before. It was resolved to obtain more hi-viz jackets to meet future demand. Most roadside rubbish continues to be generated from fast food outlets. The meeting resolved to support the campaign for car registration to be printed on the receipts at such places and to write to McDonalds and KFC to ask if they might assist, perhaps funding to purchase more litter-picking equipment.

12. Consider approval of amendments to the WLBC Code of Conduct

Dalton Parish Council approves the update to the WLBC Code of Conduct.

13. Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press, leave the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items on the agenda.

Resolved.

14. To implement National Association of Local Councils pay award for Clerks

It was resolved to increase the hourly rate of pay from £14.05 to £14.67 in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils' Pay Scale agreement. For five hours a week (£73.35), this is £3,814.20 pa, giving a monthly nett salary of £317.85. £5 payment per month is added towards internet provision. It was also agreed that the Clerk apply for home based working allowance to reduce tax burden, (under this scheme £26 per month of salary is tax-exempt, but it does not cost the parish council anything more), if they chose to do so.

15. To consider contract for grass verge cutting

It was resolved to accept the quotation of Daniel Hankey to cut the two sections of grass verge – opposite St Michael's Church and the corner of Lees Lane/Higher Lane throughout the growing season.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8pm.

Chairman
Cllr Louise Howard

16th May 2022