

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Victory Hall on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Ann Byers (Parish Council Chairman in the Chair), Ronnie Auld (Parish Council Vice Chairman) Cllr Allison (Cumbria County Council & Carlisle City Council) & Cllr Mckerrell (Carlisle City Council). 41 parishioners including Parish Council members, the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer were also present.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies of absence.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 3rd May 2016 were approved and signed by Cllr Byers as a true record.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting. She stated that it had been another busy year with much happening in and around the Parish. To help with the ever expanding workload it was decided to employ an assistant clerk and we are very pleased to welcome Craig Mitchell to the team.

After the great amount of work put in by Trevor Allison and Pauline Dalton the long awaited library service was opened in January and is now available on a regular basis at the back of St Michael's Church. There are a range of books to borrow and these are changed regularly, alternatively books can be ordered. Pauline kindly organises the volunteer rota and we are very grateful to them all.

The Chairman then went on to thank Chris Drouet for the many hours of work he has put into compiling the Dalston Neighbourhood Plan. On its completion we hope it will help with the management of development in the Parish over the next 15 years.

This year Dalston has again had incidents of vandalism. We are in regular contact with Riverside and the police are trying to resolve the matter. The village public toilets were a target and to keep them open we are very pleased that volunteers open and close them daily, we thank them for their help. As from the 1st May 2017 Graham Kirkpatrick is the new PCSO for Dalston. He is looking to move the fortnightly Co-op desk slot into the back of the Church as this will be more private. Grahams contact telephone number and email address will be publicised in the June Parish Paper.

Our entry in Cumbria In Bloom was again very successful last year as we won four awards and trophies for our efforts. As a result of this the Royal Horticultural Society has once again invited Dalston to enter the 2017 Britain In Bloom competition. A steering group has been formed and a great deal of work is being done by the many volunteers. This is yet another reason to thank all of the volunteers for their dedication and hard work.

The Britain In Bloom competition was judged in August last year and Dalston received a Silver Gilt Award in the Large Village category at the award ceremony held in Birmingham; this was an amazing achievement.

Once again the Parish Council considered the possibility of relocating to the centre of Dalston Village into St Michael's Church extension. After a meeting with the Parochial Church Council and their architect the Parish Council voted in favour of staying at Forge Green.

The 30mph speed limit has been extended at the Southern end of the village. 6 volunteers have also had the long awaited speed gun training, this was undertaken by the police. Another request has also been fulfilled with new white lines been painted on Townhead Road. The entrance to The Grange is to have dropped kerbs, this will be completed in the near future.

The Grange development is nearly fully occupied and will be completed next year. We are delighted to have parishioners from The Grange joining into the local clubs and taking part in local events. They have a gardeners group who are going to hold an 'Open Garden' event in June for everyone to enjoy.

December 2017 is the deadline for the correct registration of common land. There are discrepancies and we are currently trying to get these amended.

After having a large number of bulbs stolen from the parish last year the police did recover a large number, these were re planted by a number of volunteers to whom we express our thanks. The Parish Council was contacted by many national newspapers and by a Yorkshire television company who wanted to make a programme in relation to the thefts. A team of three came from London and filmed areas where the bulbs were stolen, they also interviewed Jane Brazendale, Freda Carrick and Ann Byers. A radio 4 journalist has recently made a recording for the You and Yours radio programme but as yet it has not been broadcast.

The Parish Council purchased and planted 5,000 purple crocus bulbs, this was an initiative set up by the Rotary Club to promote the eradication of polio.

The precept has increased once again this year. The increase equates to 12.6p per week for the Dalston Parish. There has been an increase in the amount of work the Parish Council undertakes and there is less money available to apply for in terms of grants. Therefore as we want to keep Dalston a village we can all be proud of as well as making improvements, it was necessary to increase the precept. Finally Cllr Byers said that it had been both a challenging and interesting year and expressed as she is on a very steep learning curve all help and contributions would be greatly received.

3. QUESTIONS ON THE CHAIRMANS REPORT

There were no questions.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCILS ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2017

A comprehensive set of accounts were available for parishioners to see.

The accounts show that there is an overall surplus of £8,083 for the year.

On the General Parish Funds there was an excess of income of £5,053 chiefly because there were no items of exceptional expenditure during the year and it is likely that at least some of those which were originally anticipated and budgeted for will instead arise in this present year.

The Cemetery figures normally show a cost to the Council part of which is covered by a grant from Carlisle City Council. (The £2,102 shown in the accounts relates to the grant for the previous year)

This year however as the result of a much higher than normal number of deaths over the winter months the Burial Fees increased substantially and the result was a one off excess of income of £4,192.

On the Forge Green property one of the rented flats which became empty required refurbishment and also treatment of a long standing damp problem. As a result there is a deficit on this and further costs of around £5,000 are expected to arise in the 2017/2018 year.

For Dalston and Britain in Bloom there was a small surplus as a result of the initial corporate support which was received. This should therefore help with the ongoing costs in this coming summer.

All in all the results are, in the circumstances, considered to be satisfactory and ensure that the Council goes forward in a strong financial position in order to meet the additional costs and services for which they are likely to become responsible in future years.

5. DALSTON CHARITABLE TRUST UPDATE – Cllr KYLE

The accounts for the year to 31st March 2017 were discussed and available for parishioners to see. They show that the Charitable Trust have a building society balance of £8,808. The following organisations received awards:- St Michael's Pre-School Nursery, Raughton Head Women's Institute, Dalston Ladies Hockey, Dalston Ladies Choir, Cumdivock Area Defibrillator Project, Dalston Handbells Ringers, Dalston Festival Committee, Friends Of Dalston Station, Dalston Tennis Club, Dalston Recreation Association and Dalston Gardening Club. The total amount of grants awarded was £3,372.

It was noted that the trustees would be keen to help fund individuals who are wishing to further their education, for example working abroad. Caldew School has been informed of this opportunity.

The Dalston Charitable Trust leaflet was available for parishioners to see at the meeting, this details the Trusts objectives and ways in which donations can be made. It was explained that a bequest can be ring fenced for a particular project.

6. THE DALSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE – Cllr DROUET

Consultations were held last October and parishioner's comments were taken into consideration; all questions/queries were acknowledged. The draft plan has now been modified and submitted to the Parish Council for approval. On approval the document will be submitted to Carlisle City Council for public consultation and then for independent inspection. The inspector may produce a list of things that need to be changed, they will also check the documents legality. After the local authority have had a 6 week consultation and the plan passes inspection, a referendum will be held in Dalston Parish and the Dalston Neighbourhood Plan will become law.

7. DALSTON FESTIVAL 2017 UPDATE – ALAN DINNING

The festival is to take place between the 5th – 13th August 2017. This year the festival committee have welcomed new members. Activities include a Kingsway Carnival, Gala Day, Village Cricket Match, Quiz Night, Salvation Army Exhibition in the Methodist Church, Pantomime Jack and The Bean Stalk, Friday Festival and much, much more!!

There will also be a scarecrow, decorated garden gates and wheelbarrow competition.

8 DALSTON IN BLOOM / BRITAIN IN BLOOM – Cllr AULD

Cumbria In Bloom judging is to take place on the 5th July 2017. Britain In Bloom judging will take place on the 9th August 2017. As previously stated Dalston received a Silver Gilt award last year in Britain In Bloom's best large village category this was a huge achievement. This year Dalston will be going for Gold!

It was stated that there have been many generous donations received from both friends of Britain In Bloom (individual parishioners) and sponsors (commercial businesses within the parish), this is very much appreciated. Some of this money is to be spent on a large sandstone planter which will be placed outside the Glave Hill car park.

This year Blackdish are opening their wild flower garden to parishioners and St Michael's School are to have educational visits there, activities will include pond dipping and identification of flowers / wildlife.

Improvements are currently being made to the Doctors Surgery and the Jubilee Garden.

Cumbria County Council are to tar and chip the Square and the entrance to The Grange on Townhead Road is also to be improved. The County Council are currently working with the Parish Council in the hope that the grass crete will be renewed/extended along The Green.

9. OPEN QUESTIONS

Ian Metcalfe raised strong concerns regarding vehicles parking inappropriately on the Nine Rigg estate and surrounding areas. Many of these vehicles are parking on footways and blocking entrances to house driveways. Many of the vehicles belong to 6th formers from Caldew School. Bryan Craig stated that the police can take action on vehicle owners who are causing an obstruction.

Angela Hall stated that the residents at Barras Close would like to know what the current situation is with Barras House. Ann Byers informed her that a meeting to discuss the property had been arranged for Monday 24th April 2017 with Stella Eggleston (Neighbourhood Planner, Riverside) however this was postponed due to them receiving some further information which required consideration before carrying out a public consultation.

Angela Hall also raised grave concern in relation to an individual who lives in Barras Close, both he and his friends are very intimidating and they are carrying out numerous acts of vandalism; this is causing a great amount of stress and sleepless nights to many who live in the area. It was noted that a meeting is to be held with Tracey Edmondson (Riverside) in the near future to discuss the ongoing situation.

Florence Denwood also from Barras Close reported that a dust bin had been emptied and the outside walls and windows of her property had been smeared with the contents.

It was stressed that every incident must be reported to the police, this will enable them to build up the necessary evidence against the offenders.

Sue Nichol expressed her concerns regarding the number of developments happening within the Parish and stated that the developments are increasing the volume of traffic within the parish and contributing to the loss of green space.

Alan Dinning stated that something needed to be done in regards to the river bank erosion at Silent Quarry. This is to be discussed further at the Parish Council meeting on the 13th June 2017. Trevor Allison is to show photographic evidence of the deterioration over a period of a year.

Ian Newton re iterated the poor state of Manor House and the effect it has on the rest of the Square.

David Dickinson commented on the number of vehicles parking on yellow lines.

Thanks were given to the parishioners for attending the meeting and to the WI for providing the refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm .

The meeting was followed by refreshments provided by Dalston WI.