

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Forge Green
CA5 7QG
Tel: 01228 712766
Email: clerk@dalston.org.uk

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held at Forge Green, on Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at 7.15pm.

M Watling (Assistant Clerk)

Present

Cllr Byers Cllr Baxter Cllr Drouet Cllr Kyle

Apologies

Cllr Craig Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski

Minutes

The minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 5th March 2019 were approved and signed by Cllr Byers as a true record.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

1. Annual Review of the Financial Regulations

- NALC produced a model Financial Regulations template in July 2019 which the RFO had compared to the document the Parish Council have previously adopted. The RFO had highlighted the differences between the two documents in red and circulated these prior to the meeting. In some areas the monetary limits and requirements were not as stringent in the NALC version. It was agreed by all that the Parish Council should retain this tighter control.

After discussion it was agreed that the following amendments should be made to the Financial Regulations:

Paragraph 10.3 'obtaining three or more quotations' will be amended to 'two or more' as suppliers are reluctant to keep quoting for work they do not receive

Paragraph 1.6 'gross misconduct' to be replaced by 'disciplinary proceedings'

Paragraph 6.4 Following the addition of the Clerk to the list of authorised signatories in August 2019 this paragraph will be amended for cheque signatories and will now read 'two members of Council or one member of Council and either the RFO or Clerk'

Paragraph 6.13 The cloud was considered to satisfy the requirement of 'off site'

Paragraph 7.4 This paragraph will start 'Where the payroll is maintained in house, each...'

And after bullet point d to end the paragraph the following sentence will be inserted 'Payroll may be outsourced.'

After the above amendments the Financial Regulations 2019 will be recommended for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting.

2. Annual Review of Rents

- Forge Green Garden rents are currently £35 per annum and have been since the gardens were established. After discussion it was agreed that the rent should increase to £40 per annum.
- The rent for 2 Forge Green is currently £500 per month. This is a new tenancy with effect from August 2019. The rent has been reduced from £520 on the advice of the letting agent. It was agreed that the rent will be reviewed at the end of 12 months in August 2020. The next review would then be January 2022.
- The rent for 1 Forge Green is currently £295.13 per month. The increase in RPI to August 2019 is approximately 2% which would equate to an increase in the region of £6 per month. It was agreed that the rent should be increased with effect from 1 January 2020 and the increment would be the annual increase in RPI calculated to November 2019 as in previous years. As soon as the RPI figure is published the RFO will action.
- The current rent for the Tenancy of The Green is £100 per annum. It was agreed the rent should remain unchanged.

3. Review of Cemetery and Other Fees

- The schedule of charges for fishing permits, postcards and maps was considered. It was agreed that there would be no adjustment made to the current charges.
- The RFO had produced a schedule comparing the cemetery fees for Dalston, Wetheral and Carlisle. The last revision of Dalston fees was in January 2016. Carlisle Cemetery fees have all increased by just under 6.5%.

Wetheral have made numerous changes to their fee structure. The interment fee for a resident has increased while the fee for a non resident has decreased to make them both the same. A resident includes someone who has lived outside of the Parish for less than 20 years. The fees for exclusive right of burial have increased by differing amounts.

The fees between the three Cemeteries are now more closely aligned except for the right to erect a headstone and inscriptions which are still much higher in Dalston.

Cllr Baxter requested consideration be given to residents of the Parish who had left the Parish to reside in a care home. They may reside in a care home for many years which technically renders them non resident under our five year policy.

It was agreed that the cemetery fees would remain the same for 2020. However, consideration may be given to residents who have left the Parish to reside in a care home. In these circumstances the Clerk will consult with the Chairman regarding 'residency' status.

- There has been an exhumation in the Cemetery this year and it was queried whether a fee for exhumations should be set. It was agreed that should an exhumation be necessary in future the fee would be considered at the time.
- Cllr Byers raised the question of permitting Sunday interments. The Parish Council Cemetery Fee Schedule states that this would only be permitted in an emergency, certified by a coroner or registered medical practitioner that immediate burial was necessary. A suitable increase in fees would be charged.

4. Glave Hill Car Park

- A risk assessment is required following the purchase of the Car Park. It was agreed that the RFO would look at the risk assessment for the Kingsway Car Park as a starting point and enquire if Carlisle City Council have any risk assessments for recycling facilities which we could have sight of.
- Zurich Insurance has confirmed that they will provide cover for the car park in regards to public liability at no extra cost if an appropriate risk assessment is in place. All risks cover can be provided for fencing and walls. It was agreed that it was not necessary to obtain a quote for all risks cover at present and that the £12 million public liability cover was sufficient.

5. Grants

The RFO had attended a Funding Fair on 10th October. None of the Grant Funders present could provide any grants for the electric vehicle charging points or for the Forge Green Building.

Administration of the Dalston & Burgh Grant has changed for the 2019/20 year. There were previously three rounds of grants each year with deadlines for application. For the current year there are no set rounds or deadlines for applications. The Panel sits when there are sufficient applications submitted. It was agreed that the RFO should make an application for a grant towards the Village Information Boards.

6. To discuss the draft budget for 2020/21

Two versions of a draft budget had already been circulated. They showed different scenarios for the precept depending upon the timing of the work required to the roof at Forge Green. It was agreed that further information was required regarding how urgent the roof work was. The RFO will obtain views from both Cllr Craig & Brian Hetherington. In the meantime draft version two of the budget would be amended to move the £30,000 roof work into April 2022. It was also agreed that in view of the lack of progress with the Environment Agency the budget of £3,000 to clean the Millrace be removed and also the budget of £2,000 for Open Spaces Development. The installation of lighting to the Kingsway Car Park would be in 2020/21 as the infra structure would be required eventually for the vehicle charging points. Electric charging points would not be in 2020/21 budget. The increase in precept in the draft budget would be 4% per annum.

Further discussion would take place when the views were received regarding the urgency of the roof replacement. The budget and precept requirement would then be put to the December Parish Council meeting for submission to Carlisle City Council in early January 2020.

7. Transfer of Assets into the Charitable Trust

Discussion took place regarding the possibility of transferring assets into the Dalston Parish Charitable Trust as a safeguard should Parish Councils existence be threatened at some point in the future.

It was agreed that the general asset register did not warrant transfer from Parish Council ownership. The major asset is Forge Green which still needs some legal formalities completed with The Land Registry. Glave Hill car park has just recently been purchased with the help of a 10 year loan therefore it was agreed it was too early to consider transferring it into the Trust and The Kingsway should be considered at the same time as Glave Hill.

Cllr Drouet suggested that a full repairing lease granted from Dalston Parish Charitable Trust to Dalston Parish Council would be the way to structure the asset ownership in the future.

It was agreed at this stage no further action would be taken.

8. General Data Protection Regulations

The Clerk had circulated policies and paperwork from courses attended by herself and Cllr Byers which are to be displayed on the new Dalston Parish Council website. It was agreed that the area of GDPR is complex and another meeting should take place to go over all the documents to be published. Cllr Kyle requested that the Clerk look at other Parish Council websites and determine if all of the documents are required to be on display.

9. Burial Ground Digitised Records

The RFO is still working towards getting as much of the information onto the system as possible. The system has proved useful answering recent queries from the public regarding ancestors buried in the Cemetery. The intention is that when the records are ready for the public to view a charge would be made to access the records. It was agreed that the RFO will contact Atlantic Geomatics to find out how this works so that any preparations needed can be considered.

10. Councillor matters

Cllr Baxter expressed his dissatisfaction to the letter received from Carlisle City Council in response to the Parish Council's observations regarding Retrospective Planning Applications. It was agreed that Cllr Baxter should bring the matter to the next Parish Council meeting for comment by the full Council.

Cllr Drouet enquired if any response had been received from Carlisle City Council regarding inconsistent use of the Neighbourhood Plan. The RFO advised that no response has been received yet.

11. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

Next meeting of The Parish Council to take place on 12th November 2019 at 7.00 pm at Forge Green

Policy & Resource Meeting dates for 2020:- 25th February and 27th October at 7.15pm at Forge Green

Property & Maintenance Meeting dates for 2020:-28th April, 23rd June, and 29th September at 7.15pm at Forge Green.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm