

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, Dalston on Tuesday 1st March 2022 at 7.15pm.

M Watling (Assistant Clerk)

Present

Cllr Byers Cllr Baxter Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski Cllr Kyle Cllr Irving

1. Apologies

Cllr Drouet

2. Minutes

Resolved to authorise Cllr Byers to sign as a correct record the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 26th October 2021.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

5. Annual Review of the Standing Orders

The Standing Orders had been circulated prior to the meeting. The RFO confirmed the only change was an increase in the monetary amounts on page 19, paragraphs f & g. Cllr Baxter recommended references to the European Commission and the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) in paragraphs f & g should be removed and replaced by 'Legislation'. After this amendment the annual review of Standing Orders was passed to be ratified at the March Parish Council meeting.

6. Annual Review of Policies.

The following policy documents had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Appraisal Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Press & Media Policy
- Protocol On The Recording And Filming Of Council Meetings
- Risk Management Policy
- Retention of Documents Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy

The RFO confirmed there have been no notifications from NALC to require changes to any of these current policy documents.

A minor addition has been made to the complaints procedure to add contact details for the external auditor, The Smaller Authority Audit Appointments Ltd and The Information Commissioner.

The Risk Assessment Schedule (Appendix 1 of the Risk Assessment Policy) was discussed in detail. After considering how the Parish Council manage and control each risk Cllr Baxter recommended the following amendments:

- On page 3 to reduce the risk ratings to low risk for both The Register of Members Interests and Fidelity Guarantee.
- On page 4 the section for notice boards/benches can be removed as it is covered in the assets and maintenance sections with all other assets.
- On page 4 to reduce the risk ratings to low risk for both the health and safety risk for meeting locations and the risk of loss, damage or corruption of electronic records.

All were in favour.

It was recommended Freedom of Information Requests should be monitored.

After these amendments the annual review of policies was passed to be ratified at the March Parish Council meeting.

7. Insurance Valuation for Forge Green buildings

The letter from Zurich Insurance regarding the risk of under-insurance for buildings was discussed. As it would be difficult to obtain a professional reinstatement value for the property it was resolved to increase the insurance valuation for the property to £550,000. RFO to notify Zurich.

8. Cumberland Building Society identity and address verification

The Cumberland Building Society have requested identity and address verification information for the authorised signatories to update their records. It was agreed to continue with eight authorised signatories on the accounts. The RFO will draft the forms for signature by the authorised signatories to give permission for the Building Society to carry out the checks electronically.

9. Internal Audit

The comments raised by the Internal Auditor were discussed and the following was agreed:

- A list of the annual grants awarded by the Charitable Trust will be provided to the Parish Council. This will be certified by the Trustees. The Parish Council also receive 'Thank You' letters from many of the recipients of grant awards as proof they have been paid.
- A list of possible contractors was approved at the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 27th October 2020. This list will be updated and reviewed annually in conjunction with the annual review of Financial Regulations and Policies.

10. Solar Panel Income

The Committee recommend the May 2022 income from the Solar Panels should be transferred to The Dalston Parish Charitable Trust.

11. Update on electricity contract

A further electricity price increase is expected from Bulb from 1 April 2022 although the increment is not yet known. Utility-Aid who are in partnership with NALC and specialise in the not for profit sector advise the market is still volatile. They will provide updated prices when they become available from energy suppliers. Cllr Kyle recommended GOLow Carbon, a local business, who could be approached to obtain energy quotes. It was resolved to continue at present with Bulb and continue to monitor the situation.

12. Annual Accounts 2021/22

Discussion took place regarding reserves in the annual accounts. It was resolved:

- Fees from the sale of a grave space will continue to be transferred to the Cemetery Diminishing Asset Reserve. In the year to date seven spaces have been sold which equates to a transfer of £5,300.
- To transfer £5,000 to the Roof Replacement Reserve.

- The Tree Maintenance Reserve will be used to pay £315 for the three Roots of Remembrance trees. The contribution to tree planting at Raughton Head School will also be made from this reserve when permission for planting has been obtained from Highways.
- There will be no transfer in 2021/22 to the Covid Recovery Fund.

13. Councillor matters

Cllr Baxter recommended that the Parish Council should pay for regular eye tests for the Clerk and RFO, as they have to spend so much time working on computers.

Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski reported the gullies were blocked at Bell Bridge. The RFO will inform Highways.

14. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

The Annual Parish Meeting TBA

Next meeting of The Parish Council to take place at Primrose Hall, Gaitsgill on 8th March 2022 at 7.15pm

Policy & Resource Meeting dates for 2022:- 18th October

Property & Maintenance Meeting dates for 2022:- 19th April and 28th June 2022

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm