

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Forge Green
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Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held at Forge Green on Tuesday 26th October 2021 at 7.15pm.
M Watling (Assistant Clerk)

Present

Cllr Byers Cllr Baxter Cllr Craig Cllr Drouet Cllr Kyle Cllr Irving

Apologies

Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski – Been in close contact with a positive Covid case.

Minutes

It was resolved to authorise the Chairman to sign, as a true record, the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 23 February 2021.

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

The Financial Regulations had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The RFO confirmed no changes have been made by NALC to the July 2019 Model Financial Regulations already adopted. The Financial Regulations 2021 will be recommended for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting.

2. Annual Review of Rents

- The current rent for 1 Forge Green is £301.77 per month. No increment was added for 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Since the last rent increase in November 2019 the RPI has increased by 5.3%. Cllr Craig proposed and Cllr Kyle seconded an increase in rent to £318.00 per calendar month effective from 1st January 2022. All were in agreement.
- The current rent for 2 Forge Green is £500 per month. This was a new tenancy from 22 June 2021 therefore no increment will be applied this year.
- It was proposed the rent for Forge Green Gardens should remain unchanged at £40 per annum.
- The current Grazing Licence Fee for The Green is £100 per annum. The tenant is a good tenant who has rented The Green for a number of years. It was proposed to offer a Grazing Licence for a further year at £100.
- The current Grazing Licence for Chalkfoot ends on 31 March 2022. It was proposed to offer a Grazing Licence at £35 per annum for a further 3 years.

3. Annual Review of Cemetery Policies and Fees

- The error in the cemetery maintenance policy spelling of ‘endeavour’ to be corrected and resolved to add ‘(Existing memorials do not set a precedent for future memorials),’ at the end of the sixth paragraph of the memorial policy.
- Discussion took place in respect of the policy and protocol when a Statutory Declaration has been received. It was resolved that the receipt of a Statutory Declaration would be recorded in the Parish Council meeting minutes. The Exclusive Right of Burial Certificate number which cannot be produced will be noted on the top of the Statutory Declaration. A new Exclusive Right of Burial Certificate will not be issued.

- It was resolved to combine the cemetery interment policy and the cemetery maintenance policy into one policy document for the cemetery.
- It was resolved to add, 'Applicant to provide details of relatives and it is their responsibility to keep the Parish Council updated with any new contact details,' to item 3 of the policy for memorial seats and trees.
- The RFO had circulated a schedule comparing cemetery fees for Dalston, Wetheral and Carlisle. The fees for Dalston have remained unchanged since 2017. The fees between the three Cemeteries have become more closely aligned for burials and interments. After discussion it was proposed to increase all interment fees for persons over the age of 12 and the fee to purchase the Exclusive Rights of Burial by £50 each. In view of it still being more expensive to erect a headstone and add an additional inscription to headstones in Dalston Cemetery it was proposed to make no change to these fees.

The fee for interment on Bank Holidays will be doubled.

It was also resolved to add beneath the fees for interment: 'Dalston Parish Council do not provide funeral director services. Please use a local registered funeral director.' An additional administration fee of £100 for interments of a resident and £200 for a non-resident will be charged when there is no funeral director involved. The Cemetery fee schedule will also state that biodegradable coffins and caskets are not accepted in the Cemetery.

4. Annual Review of Other Fees

- It is proposed there will be no change to the schedule of charges for fishing permits.
- It is proposed the charge for postcards will remain at 50 pence.
- It is proposed the charge for maps will remain at £2.

5. Electricity contract

The electricity contract with Bulb Energy which began in December 2020 on a monthly rolling contract was discussed. Price rises took place in June and August and a further price rise of 60% will take place on 7 November 2021. Fuel prices are currently changing daily, smaller suppliers are going out of business and suppliers are looking for fixed contracts for 3 years. It was proposed to continue with the current contract with Bulb Energy until the market settles. The electricity contract will be reviewed again in 3 months.

6. Policy for Anti-Harassment and Bullying

The draft Policy for Anti-Harassment and Bullying prepared from the NALC model policy template was circulated prior to the meeting. The following amendments were agreed:

Page 2 the comma to be removed after 'Withholding information'

Page 3 insert 'be' in the fourth line before 'harassment'

Page 4 the 's' to be removed on the words date and time

Page 4 the word 'compliant' changed to 'complaint'.

At the next annual policy review the RFO will ensure the anti-harassment and bullying policy and the grievance policy are consistent in respect of the employee privacy notice referred to on page 5.

After the amendments the anti-harassment and bullying policy will be recommended for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting.

7. Draft Budget for 2022/23

The draft budget and notes for 2022/23 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Discussion of the figures took place and the following adjustments to the budget were agreed:

The heat and light budget will be increased to £2,000 for 2022/23.

The increase in Clerks salary costs will rise from 2% to 4%.

The budget for work on cemetery paths and levelling of grave spaces will be increased from £3,000 to £5,000 per annum.

The percentage precept requested will be increased to 4.8%.

The RFO will make the adjustments to the budget and circulate it to the Policy & Resources Committee prior to presentation to the December Parish Council meeting. The Precept request is to be submitted to Carlisle City Council by 7 January 2022.

RFO to find out if there is a dampproof guarantee in place for the damp patch in the office.

8. Councillor matters

There were no Councillor matters

9. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

Next meeting of The Parish Council to take place on 9th November 2021 at 7.15pm at Primrose Hall, Gaitsgill.

Policy & Resource Meeting dates for 2022:- TBA

Property & Maintenance Meeting dates for 2022:- TBA

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm