

## DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Forge Green  
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Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held at Forge Green, on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7.15pm.

M Watling (Assistant Clerk)

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### **Present**

Cllr Byers      Cllr Baxter      Cllr Drouet      Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski      Cllr Kyle

### **1. Apologies**

Cllr Phillips

### **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 were approved to be signed by Cllr Byers as a true record subject to one amendment. In item 3, review of cemetery and other fees, in the third paragraph it should read 'A resident includes someone who has lived outside of the Parish for less than 20 years.'

### **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.

Cllr Byers drew attention to sections 3u and 13b. Cllr Byers had spoken to CALC in connection with Councillors who have a pecuniary interest in planning matters and they have confirmed that a member can answer questions on a matter they are connected with but they must withdraw from the meeting whilst the Council discuss their response to the application consultation.

After discussion Cllr Byers agreed to contact CALC to seek clarification regarding members of the Public attending a meeting when they also have an interest in a planning matter. If it is permissible to alter the Standing Orders to ask members of the public to withdraw from the meeting whilst the Council discuss their response it will be an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting.

The RFO confirmed that there have been no changes to the NALC Model Standing Orders since the last review in March 2019.

As no further queries were raised the Annual Review of the Standing Orders was passed to be ratified at the March meeting of the Parish Council.

### **6. Annual Review of Policies.**

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

Health & Safety Policy  
Risk Management Policy  
Appraisals Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy  
Press & Media Policy  
Protocol on the Recording and Filming Of Council Meetings  
Disciplinary Policy  
Grievance Policy  
Complaints procedure  
Retention of documents policy  
Cemetery maintenance policy

The RFO had compared the current policy documents with those on the CALC website and had highlighted the changes on the documents which had been circulated.

- NALC had published new model disciplinary and grievance policies in November 2019. The NALC model did not include oral warnings in the new disciplinary policy. It was therefore agreed to remove the paragraph on page 8 of the disciplinary policy relating to oral warnings.

All the other amendments identified to the disciplinary and grievance policies were approved.

- One change is required to the complaints procedure as The Audit Commission no longer exists. It was agreed Page 3 should therefore be amended to read :

#### **Complaints about the council's financial affairs**

If a member of the public wishes to raise a complaint regarding the Council's finances it should be lodged with the External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP. If the actions of the auditor to the complaint are not satisfactory the complaint can be referred to The Smaller Authority Audit Appointments Ltd.

- The RFO advised that a new Code of Conduct is currently being written and will be rolled out by NALC at the Annual Conference at the end of June. As soon as it is available the RFO will identify the change and report to the Parish Council.

After the amendments it was agreed the Annual Review of the Policies was passed to be ratified at the March meeting of the Parish Council.

## **7. General Data Protection Regulations and Policies**

The policies and paperwork which should be on the Parish |Council website had been circulated.

Councillors still felt uncomfortable about signing the General Data Protection Awareness Checklist for Councillors. The RFO was requested to find out from CALC the consequences of not signing the document. The RFO was also asked to request all Councillors read the document when sending out the agenda for the Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Baxter drew attention to the GDPR Risk Assessment schedule. After discussion it was agreed that the RFO would ask Cllr Craig to look at the document. Councillors considered an extra column on the document was required to record the consequences of each risk happening and also how a risk of high, medium and low had been arrived at.

The Parish Council Insurance policy is on a five year agreement and taken out before GDPR. The RFO was asked to look at the Insurance Policy to ascertain if cover is adequate should there be a data protection breach.

## **8. Licence Agreement for The Green**

The licence period has now expired for The Green. The Licence had been granted for one year. Discussion took place whether a new licence should be granted for a set term such as 5 years or whether a rolling agreement could be appropriate.

It was agreed that a one year licence would be granted for 2020. The fee of £100 has already been received from the Licensee for 2020. Cllr Byers will discuss the wording of the agreement with Cllr Potter to ensure it is up to date and still appropriate. Cllr Kaye-Kreczkowski offered to ask a contact to look at the Licence Agreement as well and enquire if a set term or rolling agreement could be appropriate.

## **9. Procedure for Asset Inspections**

The annual risk assessments have now been completed by Cllr Craig and the inspection of the assets on the asset register is now due. At the last inspection Councillors were asked to take photographs of the assets to aid future recognition of the assets on the Register. The inspections had taken a long time to be carried out and there are still some assets which have not been photographed.

It was agreed that the RFO will reallocate the assets on the register to take account of the changes in Councillors since the last inspections. Each councillor will receive a list of assets to inspect. The RFO will either provide the photographs to identify the asset on the list or ask for a photograph to be taken. Councillors will be asked to comment on any defect with the asset so it can be added to the list of parish work to be undertaken. A time scale will be set for the inspections to be take place.

The RFO agreed to ask Cllr Craig to carry out a risk assessment on Silent Quarry.

## **10. Use of Cemetery Income**

The RFO had produced a schedule of income and expenditure for the Cemetery to date and projected income and expenditure for the Parish to 31 March 2020. Discussion took place regarding how to deal with the surplus.

There have been seven grave spaces and one cremated remains space sold in the year to date. Cllr Baxter observed that this is effectively a sale of an asset and that eventually more land would need to be purchased for the cemetery. He suggested that a diminishing asset fund could be created. Cllr Kyle suggested that the income from the sale of burial rights could be used for this purpose. It was agreed that an amount equal to the income from the sales of burial rights in future would be transferred into a fund to be named 'Cemetery Diminishing Asset Reserve'.

The Margaret Gore legacy income received is used for on going maintenance such as path repairs and levelling of grave spaces. The PCC have requested the RFO to send copies of all invoices paid for maintenance of the cemetery each quarter. Cllr Byers offered to speak to Revd. Phillips as it was agreed the RFO should not be spending time on this request.

## **11. Update on Internal Audit**

The RFO confirmed that the internal audit up to 31 December had been completed. A written report has not yet been received.

## **12. Councillor matters**

There were no councillor matters.

### **13. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings**

The Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7pm in the Victory Hall

Next meeting of The Parish Council to take place on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.15pm at Forge Green

Policy & Resource Meeting dates for 2020:- 27<sup>nd</sup> October at 7.15pm at Forge Green

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

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm