

## Dalton Piercy Parish Council

### Meeting Minutes

13<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**Present:** Cllrs Ireland (Chair), Middleton, Grylls, Noble, Patrick, Savage, Timothy

**In attendance:** C Porritt (Clerk); three members of the public.

**1. Apologies:** Ward Cllr Andrew Martin-Wells

**2. Declaration of Interests:** Cllrs Noble and Patrick – Item 12.

**3. Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025:** Unanimously **accepted**.

**4. Matters Arising:** None.

**5. Ward Councillor's Report:** None received.

**6. Chair's Report:**

- 1. Rural Crime Forum:** Attended on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Meeting was chaired by new Police and Crime Commissioner; she asked about the lack of rural police officers and has been promised a new dedicated officer (PC Harris) will be assigned to Dalton Piercy. Residents should soon expect to see PC's walking through the village two or three times a week, as well as an officer regularly attending Parish Meetings going forward to hear residents concerns. **Action:** Notice to be added on Parish Notice board to inform public.
- 2. Insurance Coverage for Volunteers:** A letter has been sent to our Insurance company requesting clarification on what liabilities DPPC have if they engage volunteers to do work around the village. Information needed on if DPPC need to pay for volunteer training, equipment, insurance liability cover etc as elevated costs may cancel out cost saving benefits of using volunteers. Response is still pending. Ongoing.
- 3. Annual Parish Meeting:** Chair requested that Village Hall Trustees give presentation at the meeting to inform of the good work and successful progress they have made in getting the Village Hall rebuilt. Request pending.
- 4. Meetings:** She will attend both the upcoming Parish Liaison and Finance Committee Meetings.
- 5. Neighbourhood Service Committee:** Cllr Noble attended two meetings this month. Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), are in the beginning stages of producing the new Local Plan which needs to be in place by May 2031, but delays are anticipated due to lack of resources. The Rural Plan needs to be in place in same timescale, but is already started and currently ahead of schedule. Cllr Noble suggested closer collaboration between HBC and Rural communities to produce the Local and Rural plan.
- 6. S106 Monies:** There is very little leeway on what DPPC can spend money on; spending must fit limited categories which don't all apply to Dalton Piercy e.g. exercise classes in the new Village Hall could be a possibility. To be successful, suggested plans for s106 money need to be in place, ready to submit before future planning applications are approved, otherwise money could be redirected to HBC if not spent. **Action:** Cllr Noble to ask for clarification of exact projects s106 money can be used for.

**7. Personnel Report** – Nothing to report.

**8. Village Maintenance:**

- 1. Pump. Trough and new Base:** Meryl Gardens completed the installation.
- 2. Play area access:** Work is completed and access to play area now improved. Application to Grantscape for £1,180 of funding to cover the works has been submitted.
- 3. Allotments:** Water supply to allotment has been repaired by plumber. Invoices for plumber and allotment fence repairs have not yet been received.

**9. Traffic Calming Scheme:** Cost of scheme has been reduced to £10,447 as no signage will be needed, due to the scheme already being within a 20mph limit zone. HBC confirmed that they will be responsible for installation and

ongoing maintenance costs, not DPPC. Unanimously **agreed**. **Action:** Clerk to email HBC and accept £10,447 quote; Plans to be added to Parish notice board.

- 10. Insurance Claim Progress:** Invoices submitted to insurance company and claim has been awarded £720.00. Clerk has challenged the awarded amount as the itemised breakdown does not include money spent on the pump (£478). Dispute still ongoing, but councillors are willing to accept £720 minimum if Clerk unable to increase the offer. **Action:** Clerk to keep trying to increase amount awarded.

- 11. Parking and Vehicle Access Surrounding Village Green:** No progress. **Action:** Cllr Timothy to continue to pursue.

- 12. Dalton Piercy Village Hall Trustees Report:** They now have enough money to build the new Hall, with addition of £187,000 of Lottery funding being secured. Meeting with architect and contractor planned for 14.03.25 to go over details; planning conditions still needs finalising but should be in a position to start by the end of April 2025.

- 13. Finance Report:** Transactions for 11.02.2025 – 09.03.2025

Receipts	£
Bank Interest	96.20
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>96.20</b>
Payments	£
Website Services	262.80
Water Bill	23.35
New Trough	100.00
Trough/pump/base Installation	720.00
Playground Path Work	1,180.00
Tree Care	980.00
Batts Work	480.00
Clerk Salary (Feb)	301.60
Clerk Media Allowance (Feb)	20.00
Stationery	11.00
Plants	15.97
Playground Inspection	200.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>4,294.72</b>

Also presented was Actual against Budget for February 2025, including Bank reconciliation. Reserves in Savings account are now allocated for Village Hall and Traffic Scheme, with remainder to be saved for potential election costs. Income of approximately £2,000 still anticipated from Insurance payout and Grantscape play area access funding.

Both reports were unanimously **accepted**. **Action:** Clerk to post both reports to DPPC website.

**14. Matters of Concern to Councillors:**

- Meeting Dates:** Dates for Annual Parish Meeting has been changed to Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April. May's meeting has been moved to Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May. **Action:** Clerk to schedule booking of WI Hall and update Website.
- Enforcement:** Cllr concerned planning enforcement needs checking. **Action:** Cllrs to provide information to Clerk who will follow up.
- Path to Three Gates:** Path has been 'consumed' by mud and weeds; HBC have not been undertaking maintenance, for which they are responsible. **Action:** Clerk to be sent photographs of path which will be forwarded to HBC to request maintenance.

4. **Bereavement:** Cllr Patrick recently attended funeral of resident who had lived in the village for 44 years. He was disappointed by the low turnout of villagers. **Action:** Cllr Ireland to send widow a sympathy card on behalf of DPPC.
5. **Hart Back Lane:** Cllr Grylls has been in correspondence with Peter Frost at HBC. HBC have trimmed hedges and repaired sections between Elwick Crossroads and Worset Lane so far. Ongoing.

#### 15. Public Forum:

1. **Gate to The Batts:** Concern there has been no update. **Action:** Cllr Patrick to chase.
2. **Batts Fencing:** 'Litterbug' sign has been missing since fence was replaced. **Action:** Cllr Noble to repurchase.
3. **Environmental Concerns:** Worries about village property still present. Clerk contacted Environmental officers at HBC and received confirmation it will be investigated. **Action:** Clerk will contact for an update.
4. **Litter Picking:** A resident litter picking uncovered rotten and unsightly fence posts. **Action:** Cllr Patrick to arrange for removal.
5. **Benches:** Four benches in the village are in need of maintenance. Would also like to commemorate VE Day 80 by adding a new bench or adding plaque to existing bench. Ongoing cost of maintenance is too high to purchase new bench. **Action:** Cllr Patrick to obtain quote for repair and maintenance of existing benches.
6. **Fly tipping:** Residents attended Neighbourhood Services Meeting and are developing positive relationships with HBC representatives to try and reduce fly tipping. Ongoing.
7. **Tree Preservation Orders(TPO's):** Resident supportive of five new TPO's placed on trees in resident gardens.
8. **Public Forum Placement:** One resident is still unhappy with the order of the agenda; other residents were in favour. **NB:** This decision was previously approved by the PC within whose remit this lies.
9. **Engagement:** The same resident feels councillors are unapproachable and that they take too long to respond to emails.
10. **The Orchard:** The same resident also thinks that poor quality of the DPPC contracted work has killed over thirty field mice nests, rare birds, and butterflies in the area, and are committing a legal offence. Ongoing.

#### 16. Correspondence:

1. **Tree planting:** Received request from a resident asking to plant a fruit tree in The Orchard in The Batts, in memory of their deceased pet. Agreed, with the proviso that two Parish Councillors are present to supervise the planting, and the resident supplies their own fruit tree. **Action:** Clerk to email resident to advise.
2. **Village Trees:** Tree Report received from Manor Fields resident indicating that two trees overhanging their property have Ash Die Back and are at risk of falling. This supports feedback DPPC have received from HBC's arborist, who is in agreement with the residents own contractor's assessment. DPPC will not be covered by insurance if they fall. Vote to remove both trees and replace with smaller trees was passed (6-1). **Action:** Cllr Patrick to contact Meryl Gardens tree surgeons and ask them to fell both trees as soon as possible.
3. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO):** TPO's submitted for five trees in villager's residential gardens, as they have 'substantial visual impact' on the village. Residents of affected properties unaware until orders arrived. DPPC are of the opinion that the trees would have no 'visual impact' on the village. Appealing the orders is time limited and the individual responsibility of the trees owners. **Action:** Clerk to reply to TPO's with "No Comment" on behalf of DPPC.
4. **Mayoral Charity Event:** Poster received inviting people to purchase tickets. **Action:** Cllr Noble will post on Village Notice board.
5. **Rural Watch Sign:** Sign has been damaged and needs replacing. Responsibility is with the Police, not DPPC. **Action:** Cllr Ireland to email relevant contact to have sign replaced.

#### 17. Planning Applications:

1. **H/2024/0180** – No Comment
2. **H/2024/0206** – No Comment
3. **H/2025/0027** – No Objection

#### 18. Date of Next Meeting:

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April: Annual Meeting begins at 6:30pm, followed immediately by usual monthly meeting at 7:30pm; Elwick WI Hall, TS27 3EF**