

## DALTON PIERCY PARISH COUNCIL

### Draft Minutes of meeting held at 7:00pm Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at Elwick WI Hall

**Present:** Cllrs Middleton (Chair), Grylls, Ireland, Noble, Patrick, Robson and Timothy.

**In Attendance:** Three residents, Sara Hamouda, the Clerk (M Davies) and Scott Hughes (Resilience Officer, HBC) arrived @ 19:59

1. **Apologies:** Ward Cllr Martin-Wells.
2. **Declarations of interest:** Cllr Middleton, Noble and Patrick Item 13.
3. **Minutes of Parish Council meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026:** The minutes were unanimously accepted as an accurate record-and the Chair signed the Minutes.
4. **Matters Arising:**
  - (i) Breach of planning query:** The Clerk advised she had received an email from Ward Cllr Young advising he would chase up this matter again, but to date no update has been provided.
  - (ii) Area of overgrown vegetation in Abbots Lea:** The Clerk advised a letter had been circulated to all residents in Abbots Lea, outlining the proposed works. An AI artist's impression had also been put on the DPPC website. Councillors all agreed to defer this matter to the next Parish Council Meeting, to enable residents to share any feedback or concerns with the Clerk and this is to be reported at the next meeting.
  - (iii) Ash tree located on the embankment near the allotments:** The Clerk advised she had been aware of a road closure advertised in the village for the 7<sup>th</sup> March; she had therefore contacted HBC who had requested the road closure, to establish if the Parish Council might be able to utilise the closure to carry out the works on the Ash Tree, unfortunately she was informed the road closure would not include the section of road DPPC needed closing. The Clerk advised she had since spoken to members of staff at HBC to ask if they would consider DPPC's needs in any future road closures within the village to enable work on the tree to be carried out. The Clerk will also continue to monitor the road works report on a weekly basis.
  - (iv) Allotment tenancy agreements:** Cllr Noble advised Councillors the new tenancy agreements are due in April 2026, these agreements are-similar to agreements held by HBC allotment tenants. Cllr Middleton advised DPPC need to look at a contingency fund for the allotments for works such as fencing etc. Cllr Ireland reminded Councillors it had been agreed at the December meeting that residents should not be funding water bills for the allotments and therefore the water bill for 2025/2026 is to be split between the allotment holders; due to the various sizes of the allotments Cllr Ireland proposed this is split on a 50% + 25% +25% basis. Cllr Timothy proposed an increase of 10% on last year's tenancy rate. All Councillors agreed to increase last year's rate by 10% and the water bills are to be split based on the percentages suggested. The Clerk is to draft the agreements, and circulate to all Councillors before issuing to allotment holders. Cllrs Middleton and Patrick advised they would carry out the allotment inspections.
  - (v) Memorial Tree:** Cllr Ireland advised she had visited the family of Mr Keith Johnson who served as a DPPC Councillor for many years; they had gratefully accepted the offer of a memorial tree and asked if DPPC would consider planting an Amelanchier lamarekii (Snowy Mespil) near the pond, so it could be viewed from the family home. All Parish Councillors **agreed** to both the tree species and location.
  - (vi) Mayfield House:** The Clerk advised she had been struggling to locate which HBC department to log this matter with, but she had now been advised and the matter has been logged with the Public Protection Team.
  - (vii) Village Green:** Cllr Timothy advised the Parish Council had previously sought advice on this matter and any resurfacing on Village Green must be removable and in keeping with the Village and therefore tarmac is not permitted, the Parish Council must contact the resident to advise accordingly.
5. **Ward Councillors Report:** No report received.
6. **Sara Hamouda – Potential candidate for Rural West Ward:** Sara introduced herself and gave a brief overview of her background and aspirations.
7. **Hartlepool Rural Plan Group Report:** Cllr Ireland advised the HRPG recently met, the local and rural plans are in the process of being reviewed and updated. Included in this, is an up-to-date list of priorities for each village in what they would wish any Section 106 monies, that developers are required by planning conditions to contribute to the community, be preferably spent on. It was agreed by all Parish Councillors that the Clerk is to create a flyer, to invite residents via the website, Village Life, Facebook etc to share their ideas on this

matter. The Clerk was asked by Councillors to share any feedback received at the next meeting, so any ideas submitted could be considered. Cllr Noble advised she would circulate the list to Parish Councillors of the current S106 wish list. Cllr Ireland also reminded Councillors at the next Annual Parish Meeting the DPPC would need to appoint two representatives to the HPRPG.

8. **Grantscape Red Gap Community Fund Potential Ideas:** The Clerk reminded Councillors the closing date for applications is the 20th May 2026. The Clerk advised she had received an email from a resident asking if the Parish Council might consider the installation of a swing in the children's play park, along with the benefits a swing offers. All Councillors agreed DPPC are to contact the resident and then get guidance from suitable contractors to establish if there is sufficient space, types of swings etc, the matter is to be deferred until the next Parish Council Meeting. The Clerk was also asked to create a flyer, put a note on the website, Village Life, Facebook etc, to invite residents to share any ideas they may have with the Parish Council that maybe considered at the next Parish Council meeting in April.
9. **Chairman's Report:** (i) No report from the Chairman (ii) Cllr Ireland advised she attended the recent Rural Crime Forum. It had been reiterated that any suspicious activity should be logged on COPA (Cleveland Online Policing App), so it can be monitored. (iii) Cllr Ireland advised she attended the HBC Financial Committee meeting held in mid-February. HBC have agreed a 1.98% increase in Council tax for the 2026/2027 financial year. Child SEND care is increasing dramatically and HBC are trying to bring this work in-house in attempt to reduce costs. (iv) Cllr Noble advised she attended the Neighbourhoods Committee meeting held on the 2nd of March, there was very little relating to Dalton within the meeting, which focused on the Urban Forest Plan. Cllr Noble had advised the Committee that tree planting of itself was not the problem, it is the maintenance costs for the trees once they are established and funding is not available for this. Cllr Ireland suggested that developers should be monitored as to what type of trees are planted during developments.

*Scott Hughes (HBC) arrived at 19:59*

10. **Personnel Report:** No report
11. **Village Maintenance:** (i) Cllr Middleton advised he has seen a few weeds in the flower tubs around the village and he will mention this to Meadowfield Gardens Landscaping Ltd.
12. **The Batts Maintenance:** (i) Cllr Noble advised in January a group of Councillors visited The Batts to review the double hedge. Cllr Noble referred to the 5-year management plan provided by Tees Valley Wildlife Trust which noted that if the double hedge were to remain it would create a wide dense hedgerow in the future. Cllr Patrick advised, he had received a quotation of approximately £200 per year to maintain the hedge at a height of around 3ft, this in turn would create habitat for wildlife as it thickens and matures. A majority of Councillors agreed the hedge should remain and is to be maintained at a height no greater than 3ft going forward.
13. **Dalton Piercy Village Hall Trustees Report:** (i) Cllr Patrick advised the plasterers are now in, as the first fix plumbing and electrics have been completed. The kitchen units have been chosen and will be fitted once the flooring has been laid. There are a couple of jobs outstanding but nothing that should delay the opening. HBC recently carried out a site visit and it has been confirmed the hall will be used for the elections on the 9<sup>th</sup> May. HBC have also offered to display flyers in the civic centre staff areas to advertise the hall for events etc. and the upcoming open day.
14. **Finance:** (i) The Clerk advised she had circulated to Parish Councillors a Financial Transactions Report as listed below for February 2026. This was accepted as an accurate record by all Councillors present.

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>£</b>
Nil	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>

<b>Payments</b>	<b>£</b>
WJP Software Ltd	489.60
Wave Water	17.87
Amazon – Replacement Ink cartridges for printer	41.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>549.29</b>

(ii) The Clerk advised an Actual against Budget report to date had been circulated to all Parish Councillors, this was accepted as an accurate record by all Councillors.

15. **Matters of Concern to Councillors:** (i) Cllr Patrick raised concern regarding the condition of the footpath from Three Gates to the centre of the village. This was originally funded via Grantscape and HBC had agreed to maintain it. The Clerk is to chase repairs (ii) Cllr Timothy advised residents/visitors to The Terrace are not keeping to the road, resulting in damage to the Village Green. It was agreed by all that the Clerk is to obtain some prices for large stones. (iii) Cllr Timothy advised the main road beside the pond has a camber resulting in surface water being diverted towards the pond drain. The Clerk is to contact HBC.
16. **Correspondence:** (i) Cllr Middleton advised he had received an email from a resident regarding EV Charging points. The resident has been unable to get a response from HBC. Councillors suggested to the resident they contact Kieran Bostock at HBC; another suggestion was the resident contact the Dalton Piercy Village Hall Association to ascertain if they may be interested in installing charging points. The Clerk is to also look for advice from SLCC or NALC. (ii) Cllr Grylls advised he had chased up Anglian Water regarding the trees in the Howls. Anglian Water's ground maintenance team are currently looking into carrying out a survey which will hopefully be completed in the next couple of weeks. Cllr Grylls also reminded Councillors and residents to get in touch if they would like to take part in the site visit to the treatment works.
17. **Public Forum:** (i) A resident enquired as to why Dalton Piercy precept is higher than neighbouring villages. As an example, Councillors advised Dalton Piercy's neighbouring village, Elwick had a lot more houses to share the costs of their Parish Council. Dalton Piercy also has an 11-acre nature reserve to maintain. Cllr Timothy advised historically reserves held by Dalton in the past have been depleted by legal expenses, due to DPPC requiring legal advice etc relating to the Village Green. Cllr Middleton also advised in the past the budget for the Batts, was under estimated £100 in 2023 and £1,000 in 2024 due to expectation at that time. Councillors all agreed this item was to be put on the agenda for the next meeting to consider a response. (ii) A resident advised the damaged post outside Dene Garth has still not been removed, the Clerk advised she would chase this with HBC. (iii) Scott Hughes from HBC introduced himself to Councillors and residents as the Community, Cohesion and Resilience Officer. He asked Councillors and residents to consider how he may be able to support residents and to contact him with any suggestions. He provided the Clerk with his details if any residents would like to contact him.
18. **Planning applications:** None

**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC:** The Parish Council may at any point pass a resolution that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) the public and the press shall be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item of business if publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted e.g. Employment matters, terms of commercial tenders and negotiations for contracts for legal proceedings, preparation or advice.

*Cllr Robson left the meeting at 21:10*

*Residents, Sara Hamouda and Scott Hughes left the meeting at 21:10*

16. **Confidential Matters** - Confidential matters only, recorded separately.

17. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 7pm at Elwick W.I. Hall.

Meeting concluded at 21:18