

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 28th November 2016 at 8.30pm in Nenthead Village Hall following the ward meeting to discuss action to be taken during the Success Regime Consultation period

Present: Cllrs: A. Green (Chair), D. Athey, B. Aves, P Godwin, T. Haldon, A. Martin, D. Phillips, A. Robertson, E. Stewart.

Apologies: Cllr: S. Hill, E. Grew.

Absent: none

Declarations of interest: none

The meeting was also attended by 20+ local residents.

1. Open session for local residents

Cllr Martin explained that many people were not convinced that the Success Regime understood the issues facing Alston should we lose the hospital beds. The consultants making the decision are not from the local area, and it is one thing to say on paper that the roads are challenging, and another to have to experience them. A local referendum was thought to have helped save Barrow hospital, so a public vote in favour of keeping the hospital ought to be taken seriously.

The clerk reported that the elections team from Eden District Council confirmed that it would not be possible to hold a formal parish poll as the hospital issue did not meet the eligibility criteria. It would however, be acceptable for the parish council to run their own poll, as Patterdale Parish Council had done for a local issue. If this were to go ahead a working group would be needed and volunteers to help with the tasks as Eden District Council would not be involved. The suggested date for the community vote is Thursday 15th December and a suggested wording for the ballot paper was read.

Do you agree that the options in the (NHS) Success Regime's Public Consultation document would provide an effective, caring and safe service for Alston Moor residents in the future?

The meeting was then opened for public discussion.

Younger residents pointed out that some people might not be fully aware that the question related to the future of the hospital beds, and asked that the question be simplified. A request was made for a working group to put together a form of wording that was clear and concise and could be answered by a yes/no vote. The posters stating 'Alston says NO' would make it more appropriate for those wishing to save the beds to indicate this by a No vote.

Another point made by residents was that the loss of beds could also mean loss of the minor injuries unit, which would affect all members of the community.

The parish council re-convened.

Resolved that the parish council holds a parish referendum on the future of overnight facilities including in-patient beds in Alston Cottage Hospital. Proposed by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Aves. (nem con) Cllr volunteering for the working group were Cllrs Martin, Phillips and Stewart, plus any residents present willing to put their names forward.

Signed:

Dated: