

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 6th August 2018 at 7pm in Alston Town Hall

Present: Cllrs: T. Haldon (Chair), B. Aves, P. Godwin, J. Glendinning, A. Green, C. Harrison, R. Miller, A. Hewison, H. Ho, A. Martin.

Apologies: Cllrs: E. Grew, D. Athey, D. Phillips, M. Shepherd, G. Wright.

Absent: none.

Declarations of interest: listed under specific agenda items. 7/AUG/18 and 8/AUG/18 Cllr PG declared an interest as a district councillor. 9/AUG/18 Cllr RM declared an interest as a member of Alston's Gala Committee.

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 2nd July 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

2. Progress Reports

2a/AUG/18 Bring sites

Re:2a/JUL/18 Eden District Council responded to the council's request for twice weekly bring site collections by stating that it would be difficult for their contractors to fit in additional emptying to the existing schedule. As an alternative based on the amount of material being collected in June it was suggested that at Alston: 1 can bank and 2 glass banks be removed, and replaced with one paper/card bin and 2 plastics bins. Nenthead to have 1 can bank and 1 glass bin removed to be replaced with 2 plastics bins.

EDC asked that the public continue to report concerns to the main switchboard as individual officers may not always be available. This follows a request to use the point of contact the gym have.

Nenthead cllrs reported that the glass and can banks are well used, so it would be better to remove the clothes bank, which causes the most problems with jamming. People have the option of taking unwanted clothes to Age Concern or donating to the doorstep appeals. The same suggestion was made for Alston.

It was suggested that Garrigill consider putting in a recycling bin, but it was stated that the district council are not putting in any new bring sites now that all areas have doorstep recycling collections.

Noted that the bring sites are intended for domestic users only, anything else is classed as commercial waste, which is expected to be disposed of elsewhere. Mention was made of Spar who have set up facilities for recycling their waste, and a suggestion made that it might be worth contacting AMBA to ask about the possibility of businesses sharing facilities.

There is an issue at the Alston site with paper bins put across the field gate which should be left unobstructed in case of emergency. Members were asked to look at the site to think about what improvements could be made. **Action.**

Agreed to contact the gym director who had produced a plan for the waste area besides the site. **Action JG.**

2b/AUG/18 Market Cross pigeons

Re: 2c/JUL/18 An officer from Cumbria County Council came out last month to inspect the Market Cross and advise on remedies. He is sourcing bird coil to fit all surfaces where they roost, and if this cannot be found he will use spikes. Cllr CD has emphasised the need to deal with the problem as quickly as possible.

Members were not happy with the length of time it has taken and agreed to put up netting until the County Council do something. **Action RM.**

The pigeons have bred in such numbers that they have become a nuisance, and their droppings a health hazard, with the Market Cross being a particular problem as it is popular spot for people to sit and eat lunch. The old Methodist Chapel is part of the problem as the pigeons are breeding in it. Agreed to check on progress with the enforcement order. **Action PG.**

Long term solutions need to be found, and people advised not to feed the pigeons.

2c/AUG/18 Litter bins/weed spraying requests

Re: 7/JUL/18 The clerk attended a site visit with an officer from Eden District Council to look at the sites proposed by the parish council for new litter bins. A litter bin has been provided besides the footpath leading from Church Road to the surgery. It was established incidentally that the SKS school caretaker had to dispose of dog waste left on the footpath, so hopefully people will make use of the new bin to relieve him of this task. The site on the junction leading to Nenthead Primary School was discounted as being too close to the new bin sited near the school. An existing bin has been re-sited to make it more visible to passers-by at the picnic area. Anyone with a complaint about damaged or loose bins is asked to report the location so they can be attended to.

Weed spraying around the town has been carried out, areas inspected and additional sites requested for spraying.

Members pointed out that the area besides the recycling centre at Nenthead has been neglected by Eden District Council, and the bushes at the hospital road end have become overgrown again. **Action CI.**

2d/AUG/18 Response to planning application 3/18/9001 queries

Re: 6i /JUL/18 A reply was received from the County Council planning officer about the Coal Authority criteria for the 'Development Low Risk Area' (DLRA), which is the coalfield area outside known features such as mine entrances and their safety buffers. They also stated that the proposed amount of hydrogen peroxide dosing agent specified as being held on site is covered by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 and is not classed as a dangerous substance as defined by The Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations 2015.

An e-mail was received from a resident pointing out that the applicant proposed to remove topsoil from the site, and that he had serious concerns about water abstraction. He offered to discuss these concerns during the public open session.

2e/AUG/18 Tyne Willows footpath – water problem

The clerk reported that nothing has been done about the water flowing across the footpath from the Cumberland to Tyne Willows, which is used regularly by SKS pupils and others. She asked if the council would like her to contact local contractors to discuss. *In line with council policy a named council representative should be appointed to oversee the specifications and work.*

Resolved to obtain a quotation from local builders.

2e/AUG/18 Market Cross steps/hole in pavement

No action has been taken yet over the gap in the market cross steps, which need squaring up and cementing back into place. It was agreed to send a photo to the County Council. **Action.**

A hole in the metal cover on the pavement near the Cumberland is to be reported. **Action CI**

3. Progress reports from working groups and council representatives

3a/AUG/18 Nenthead public toilets

An Eden District Council officer and the clerk inspected the public toilets in Nenthead, finding several issues which were reported to the Nenthead Community Toilets chair. Unfortunately the committee is no longer functioning, with only the chair left to look after the toilets.

Conversations have been held with the district and county councillors, who have agreed to talk to the chair, and put a proposal to her that they are co-opted onto the committee to enable it to be wound up, a mini-audit to be carried out and the toilets handed over to another Nenthead group prepared to take them on. Once this is in place someone has volunteered to help with the cleaning.

The district council grant of £500 has not been claimed since 2014 and as funds are not carried forward is now lost.

3b/AUG/18 Report from Alston Moor Care Alliance

No meetings have taken place since last month.

3c/AUG/18 Nenthead ward meeting

4 people attended the ward meeting. The chapel project tenders are in and new contractors will be chosen later in the week. Other concerns were flagged up:

Residents living in the flats across the road from the recycling centre can hear rats running around the site.

There is a hole in the steps leading from Vicarage Terrace to the Village Hall, thought to be the responsibility of Eden Housing. Potholes along this road are getting bad.

3d/AUG/18 Alston Moor Partnership AGM

Cllr PG confirmed that she was appointed as a director to Alston Moor Partnership as the parish council representative. The AGM was an open meeting, discussions include an update on the THI scheme which has a couple of years to go, and a session for people to put forward ideas for the community.

3e/AUG/18 Neighbourhood Plan team

The group continues to meet, and has spent time looking at the local plan and other planning documents. As Alston Moor is within the North Pennines AONB, an officer has been invited to speak at their next meeting on 14th August.

4 County Councillor's Report.

Apologies from Cllr Driver.

District Councillor's Report

Apologies from Cllr Sharp.

Financial scrutiny – Cllr PG met with the auditors, who carried out a full audit and found nothing contentious, and have produced full reports. They are concerned generally with the parlous state of local government finance, and although Eden is fine they have to be very careful as to how funds are used.

5. Public open session

A resident reported that responses have been received on the extended consultation for the Hags Mine treatment works planning application. Highways stated that the roads can stand up to the extra lorry movements, which will be needed to remove top soil from the site over 9 weeks. Conditions have been put on the lorry movements. The Coal Authority said originally that the top soil would be used to prevent flood ingress, and it is not known why it is to be removed now.

Another concern is over the quantity of water to be extracted which may have an adverse effect on water levels over a 3km stretch of the Nent in dry summers. With the lack of rain this summer springs have been drying up and a few farms needed access to the Nent to water livestock. Water from the sewerage treatment plant at Nenthead, and drainage from septic tanks for the caravan parks and hotels along the route enters the river, and if not sufficiently diluted could damage fish stocks and cause unpleasant smells. The resident questioned whether the Coal Authority had properly thought through the possible consequences of their proposed actions. The technology they intend to use has not been tested.

The plant has been classified as a Minewater Treatment site and not an Anaerobic Digester site, which has more stringent regulations, and there is a question as to whether this is the correct classification.

The resident was thanked for bringing these points to the councils' attention. He offered to send further information if any is received. .

6. Planning applications

6a/AUG/18 18/0598 (Tree Works CA) Fell leylandii tree due to overgrown size; to enhance garden and allow other trees/shrubs to take over; avoid any potential harm should tree fall accidentally; Alston Conservation Area. Linden House, King's Arms Lane, Alston CA9 3JF for Sheila and David Greenwood. .

Recommended for approval.

6b/AUG/18 18/0634 (Tree Works CA) Remove ash sapling (220mm) pushing against dry stone wall. Beech and sycamore: Crown lift to 10 ft from ground level. Remove saplings growing against wall: Alston Conservation Area. Church of St Augustine, Front Street, Alston CA9 3QW for Mr Mark Nash-Williams.

Recommended for approval.

6c/AUG/18 18/0634 (Tree Works CA) A) Larch: Remove (roots too close to next door's kitchen and needles going down the kitchen chimney; roots are lifting the drive); B) Cherry: Remove (serious rot, boot-leg under bark, honey fungus); C) Maple: Remove (close to house, worried about root system and branches touching house); D) Small Leylandii: Remove; E) Silver Birch: Remove (woodpecker holes); F) Beech: Remove branches over the pool; G) Cherry: Prune limbs not in good health and reshape as best possible; Garrigill Conservation Area. St John's House, Garrigill, CA9 3DS for Mr Tony Collins.

Resolved to ask for a report from the tree officer, and site plan showing the position of the trees.

Decision notices

i/AUG/18 18/0457 Full application. External alterations. Aldenstone Barn, Townhead, Alston CA9 3SL for Mr A. McIntyre. Permission granted with conditions.

7. Footway lights: to decide if the council wishes to accept the maintenance contract with Amey and to confirm if material damage is to be added to the council's insurance policy

Minutes from the Devolution meeting and a report from the clerk following conversations with local electricians were circulated earlier.

Members were asked to decide if it would be in the best interest of the community to continue with the Amey contract until 2022, which will provide 3 years experience of how well the LEDS last. Another option is to take on the maintenance now, and as the LEDS will be brand new they should be less expensive to run, although one or two serious fails could outweigh any savings.

Cllr PG declared an interest as a district councillor.

Resolved to inform Eden District Council that the parish council would like to stay with the existing contract.

Resolved that the council will not insure the lights for material damage.

8. Devolution of Alston's public toilets: to decide if the council is to take on the toilets in 2022 or earlier

A report from the chair was circulated earlier. The clerk said that she contacted the rates department, who stated that the parish council is not currently eligible for discretionary relief, but may receive mandatory relief as a charity or small business rate relief if the public toilets are the only premises the council has. As a registered charity Alston Town Hall would be able to claim mandatory and discretionary rate relief.

The situation may change in future years as the government had started to consider making an exception to the rule, but the Brexit negotiations have taken priority.

Cllr PG declared an interest as a district councillor.

Resolved that the council do not take on Alston's public toilets at present and will review the situation in 2021.

Noted that elections will take place in May 2019, and that the current and new council will have to think about increasing the precept to avoid a steep rise to cover the cost of running the toilets.

9. Proposal that horse jumping events are permitted on Tyne Willows Playing Fields during the 2019 Alston Gala

It was reported that a request was made to allow show jumping on the bottom end of the field for the 2019 Alston Gala. This year's event had been a success, and the organisers were lucky with the weather.

It was agreed that safety must come first, and that it may be necessary to make a last minute decision should there be a sudden violent downpour.

Cllr RM declared an interest as a member of the Gala Committee.

Resolved to permit show jumping at the 2019 Alston Gala.

10. Garrigill noticeboard – submission of planning application

A planning application for Conservation Area consent for a noticeboard on Garrigill Village Green has been prepared. It is proposed to use recycled plastic, and samples were circulated. Costs are about 20% higher than a wooden noticeboard, but it should last longer. The parish council has £200 set aside, and residents have pledged to make up any shortfall.

Resolved to submit the Conservation Area application for a noticeboard on Garrigill Village Green.

The noticeboard at Nenthead is not standing up to the weather conditions as well as hoped, and may need a plastic board across the back.

11. Redwing gate concerns

It was reported that the new access gate at Redwing is situated in a blind spot in a dip in the road. Questions have been raised about the need for planning permission and clearance from highways.

Agreed to send a photo to the clerk. **Action.**

Resolved to contact the planning department to enquire about the need for consent for the new access at Redwing.

12. Pesticide free public spaces on Alston Moor – follow up on enquiry about use of glyphosate products

A query has been made about the use of glyphosate for weed spraying, following reports on the radio that products such as round-up may have harmful effects. The clerk followed this up with Eden District Council who confirmed that there are currently no restrictions on the use of products containing glyphosate, but as contractors for the County Council it would have to be followed up with them. County Cllr CD has offered to discuss this with the County if there is parish council support.

Some of the larger councils have banned glyphosate use and moved on to alternatives such as hot foam.

Resolved to ask Cllr CD to ask the County Council if they can use something different because of the recently identified health issues with glyphosate products.

13 Consultations and Correspondence

13aAUG/Conservation Area appraisal – Alston and Garrigill

The Conservation Officer from Eden District Council has asked to attend the September council meeting to discuss an appraisal of the Conservation Areas in Alston and Garrigill.

13b/AUG/18 CALC Membership Subscriptions Review 2018

A letter was received from CALC stating that they are reviewing the membership fee structure to make it fairer for councils, and to differentiate between the CALC and NALC elements of the subscription. The CALC portion will be based on the electorate of each parish, which will mean that Alston Moor would have paid £303.66 (NALC £117.92, CALC £185.74) this year. The new method does not generate any more income, but spreads the contributions more fairly based on the size of the electorate. Councils are welcome to comment on the proposals. Noted.

13c/AUG/18 Good Neighbour scheme

The clerk reported that the County Council are keen for the parish council to apply for the Good Neighbour scheme funding, which could otherwise be lost if there are not enough takers.

Resolved to apply for the funding and to delegate authority to the Community Volunteers Working Group to manage the process and work with others as required.

13d/AUG/18 Notices of events/meetings

Greenprint Convergence reminder – 8th September

Alston Town Hall – meeting 9th August for all councillors

13e/AUG/18 Information received

Alston Moor Police Update

Telford Coaches 680 Alston – Carlisle route and time changes. Noted that although few in numbers some people have depended upon the bus to get them where they need to go.

Coal Authority update

Clerk & Councils Direct – July 2018

14. Administration

14a/AUG/18 CALC Training events

Cllr HH offered to attend the Planning training event

14b/AUG/18 Representative to Nenthead Footpaths Group

Resolved to nominate Cllr MS as parish council representative to the Nenthead footpath group. Proposed by Cllr BA and seconded by Cllr AM. (nem con)

14c/AUG/18 Precept requests – application form and policy for funding requests

The clerk reported that Eden District Council advised the council to set up a policy for dealing with funding requests. The council has a Community Grant scheme for requests up to £300, with larger requests dealt with at the precept meeting. This could be improved by asking applicants to complete the Community Grant form by 30th October for consideration at the next precept meeting. A draft application form and guidance notes were circulated earlier.

Resolved to adopt the application form and guidance notes for new applications for precept funding of over £300 with a deadline of 30th October.

14d/AUG/18 Approval of sickness policy and review of Social Media policy

Resolved to accept the sickness policy and to accept the review of the social media policy.

15. Items for next month's agenda/urgent business

15a/AUG/18 Old Methodist Chapel

An update on the legal progress with the old Methodist Chapel was requested as people as still breaking into the building. Anyone spotting unauthorised access was asked to contact the police.

15b/AUG/18 Alston Primary School

It was agreed to ask Cllr CD for an update on Alston Primary School at the next meeting.

15c/AUG/18 Parish Seats

The clerk was asked to thank the resident who has repaired seats along the Raise.

Agenda item for next month, replacement programme using plastic planks for damaged seats. **Action.**

15c/AUG/18 Graffiti

The Community Warden to be asked to deal with graffiti around the back of the Town Hall.

16. Finance

16a/AUG/18 Bank statements

The statements as 31st July 2018 were as follows:-

Alston Moor Parish Council tr/ac	£51,879.94
Alston Moor Parish Council bus/ac	£12,686.01
Eden Credit Union	£7,008.58

16b/AUG/18 Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were for payment:-

<i>Summary of accounts for payment: -</i>	£713.40
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting: -</i>	£2,351.35
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting: -</i>	£898.20

Resolved that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to settle all the accounts listed in appendix 1.

16c/AUG/18 financial statement

Resolved to accept the financial statement.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Signed:

Dated: