



# ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 at 7pm in Garrigill Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs: T. Haldon (Chair), M. Denoual, J. Glendinning, A. Green, E. Grew, M. Hanley, C. Harrison, H. Ho, A. Holt, A. Martin, R. Miller, Z. Robson, L. Seaton.

**Apologies:** Cllrs: G. Wright

**Absent:** none

**Declarations of interest:** none

## **1. Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 be agreed as a correct record, 4h/NOV/19 noting that Cllr Grew intended to ask for a resolution in support of the suggestion to take out alternate trees in Garrigill cemetery. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Harrison. (11+ 2 abs)

## **2. Public participation**

*A resident objected to the use of the Town Hall address on the Labour Party publicity leaflets.*

As a matter for the Town Hall Trust, it has been followed up and reported to Eden District Council, who will follow the procedure for dealing with complaints.

*A resident reported that the works and footpath besides the Cumberland are still waiting to be done, and that grey water is running across the path.*

The clerk reported that ENWL had promised to get the work done, but she will contact them again to find out why they were running behind schedule. The issue with grey water might mean they would be unwilling to sort out the water across the footpath problem. If not sewerage it could be coming from an illegal connection, mixed with spring water. A request had gone out for a contractor, but no-one has shown interest as yet.

It was agreed to report the water problem to Northumbrian water.

*A question was asked about progress with the ambulance garage.*

Cllr Grew reported that the site at the hospital where the ambulance is kept now cannot be used to build a garage as the foundations will not support it, although it would take a car port. The County Council depot is also being considered and is in their winter review for consideration. However, it is some distance from the hospital, should there be contaminated items that have to be disposed of at the hospital.

The CCG and NWAS do not have any funds to put towards the ambulance garage, so if a site can be found it will be up to the local community to find the money.

Other issues are that the crews started out as 15 strong, but are now down to 10 people, which is not enough to cover all the shifts, and there has been talk of using the ambulance elsewhere. However, if enough first responders come forward the ambulance should have a reprieve. Although the EMT level 1 training is no longer available, the community first responders will be given 4 days of training, then 1 day per month plus 4 days a year. Then if interested they can go for enhanced CFR training, which is almost equivalent to the EMT level 1.

Experience has shown that one of the major issues is that NWAS has never put anyone in charge of the project, so issues that cropped up along the way were slow to be dealt with, and specifically out of the many people who applied initially only a small number took the training.

People who come forward now for the CFR training will be trained, they are looking for at least 12 people, facebook users could help by continuing to post reminders, and the local group are trying to get the crews to come to events to let people know what it entails. The crew were at the fireshow recently, and attended the gala last summer.

Members added that the ambulance service is unique and Alston Moor is fortunate to have it, so it is important to keep the numbers up, and encourage other people to come forward.

## **3. Progress Reports**

### **3a/DEC/19 Alston Ward vacancy**

Re: 3a/NOV/19 Eden District Council have confirmed that there was no request for an election and the parish council may co-opt a new member for the Alston Ward. Two residents have expressed interest and completed the co-option form.

The clerk was asked to advertise a closing date for applicants before Christmas, so they can be invited to the January council meeting. **Action CI.**

### **3b/DEC/19 Hustings**

Hustings for the parliamentary candidates have been organised for Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

### **3c/DEC/19 Highway flooding – land adjacent Fell View, Nenthead**

Re: 6d/AUG/19 Planning application 19/0583 here has been ongoing issues with flooding arising from the new development at Whitehall, Nenthead. A response was received from planning stating that the existing land drains were cut during the building work, which has resulted in flooding across the road. The original plans sought to link the sites drainage into the existing watercourse, but this is not acceptable to the County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The applicant has now been advised to design an alternative drainage solution for the site, and in consultation with the county, district and drainage experts are intending to submit a revised scheme. A temporary solution, with limited success, has been to lay sandbags across the site, and there are ongoing discussions to try and identify what physical measures can be put in place to resolve the nuisance and hazardous conditions for road users.

There is a residents group who commented that there was considerable opposition to the initial planning application, both from themselves and other organisations, and whose comments on the potential issues with drainage were not listened to. They had provided photos of the site at the time to illustrate the issues. Noted that flooding in this area has been a long standing issue.

### **3d/DEC/19 Alston toilets lights**

Eden District Council have stated that the external lights over the toilet entrance are on individual light sensors that come on whenever it gets dark, so would not be easily reconfigured. The accessible toilet can be used by anyone with a RADAR key at all times of the day and night, so turning of the external light could cause difficulties for people with mobility issues. They could consider filling in the gap between the toilets and the town hall with railings, but would need a site visit to check.

Members reported that although most people behave well a few individuals have been throwing toilet rolls and blocking the toilets. Young people are attracted to the place by the opportunity to use free Wi-Fi.

Although there are other ways around the building it was agreed to ask Eden to put up railings. **Action CI.**

## **4. Progress reports from working groups and council representatives**

### **4a/DEC/19 Alston Moor Care Alliance & Ambulance meeting report**

There has not been a meeting of the Alston Moor Care Alliance, and the Ambulance meeting was cancelled because of problems with Skype.

The ambulance teams have been given numbers to contact Highways for Alston and Nenthead and a separate number for Garrigill for the snowplough and winter gritting.

### **4b/DEC/19 Community Plan meeting report**

Cllr Denoual reported that the steering group are still working through the long list of actions, to identify which groups could potentially take them on. They have invited AMBA to send a representative, as their plans for a regeneration scheme could link up. There are a number of actions for the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and the VC group will look at the Expressions of Interest in the New Year.

### **4c/DEC/19 Nenthead Ward meeting**

Cllr Denoual reported on the ward meeting, noting that the Old Chapel has a new management team and winter opening hours. Other concerns included:

**Highways issues** - Snowpoles on the Killhope road, but not on the Nenthead side, and faded road markings. The junction with Hillersdon Terrace and the Community Shop has no markings or signage. Complaints about speeding on Overwater.

**Nenthead toilets** . the doors are to be replaced.

**Coal Authority mine treatment works proposals** . a residents group is being formed to collate information about the proposals for Nenthead.

**Loss of nesting sites** . the river bankside works to prevent erosion has damaged the sand martins nesting sites, but it is hoped they will create new nests when they return next spring.

### **4d/DEC/19 Car Park working group**

A report on the meeting put together by a representative from High Mill was circulated, along with plans for potential car parking spaces in the building. Cllr Harrison reported that Eden District Council's research has identified that Alston has significantly less car parking space than comparable towns. Of the 80 spaces identified, 26 are on the Fairhill site, leaving just 54 spaces in the town centre areas. 83% of those who responded to a survey mentioned car parking as an issue. The group considered alternative sites, but conclude the redundant buildings at High Mill offered a significant opportunity to create a minimum of 45 additional spaces, and possibly more. The site is close to the town centre, but does not impinge on Front Street. It would involve knocking down the redundant factory building. High Mill itself is listed but the rest of the half acre site could be levelled, and the owners of the land behind are willing to discuss extending onto their land.

The site owner has confirmed that they would rather do something to help the community, instead of just building housing. The owner (present at the meeting) was thanked for considering community benefit.

**Resolved** that the parish council support further investigation into the feasibility of developing a car park on the High Mill site. Proposed by Cllr Haldon seconded by Cllr Holt. (nem con)

#### **4e/DEC/19 Volunteer Co-ordinator working group**

There have been three expressions of interest in the Volunteer Co-ordinator project, one from an organisation and the others from individuals.

#### **4f/DEC/19 Nenthead recycling centre**

Cllr Denoual reported that she had met with an officer from Eden District Council to discuss the garden area and signage, since the current sign advising of the amount collected in recycling credits dates from 2009/10. Revenue has dropped since then to around £360, so there is a question as to why it is less than before. Eden intend to carry out a deep clean, with the bins moved to clear away broken glass, and to monitor the site afterwards. New planting for the garden area could be done in February/March.

Agreed to monitor as the planting project has already slipped by one year.

#### **4g/DEC/19 Garrigill Ward Meeting**

A written report was circulated.

**Phone coverage** - Residents want a mobile phone signal, and have asked the parish council to follow up this request. It was suggested the clerk start by writing to the new MP when he/she is in post.

**Speed limits** . the meeting agreed that the village should have a 30mph speed limit and would like the parish council to ask highways to produce a plan for consultation.

**Resolved** to report the view of Garrigill residents ward meeting that they support a speed limit. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Grew. (8+ 5abs)

#### **4h/DEC/19 Defibrillators for Alston Moor**

Cllr Grew reported that she has circulated information about the type of defibrillator that can be used for children as well as adults. It was suggested that this would be best kept at the school, but a discussion with the head and NWS would be the first step.

#### **4i/DEC/19 Alston with Garrigill Educational Endowment**

Cllr Miller reported that he was unable to attend the last meeting.

#### **4j/DEC/19 Alston Front Street steering group**

Cllr Harrison reported that the trial setts have not been done as it is too cold at this time of year. They need to be set at 100mm deep on mortar and asphalt, so they will go in during the next financial year. The road will not need to be closed while the work is being carried out, but there will have to be traffic lights to allow the cement to set. A public consultation is planned on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January between 11am and 4pm

### **5 County Councillor's Report**

*Apologies from Cllr Driver.*

#### **District Councillor's Report**

*Cllr Hanley reported on the following:*

**Housing** - there is a lack of affordable housing, and although there is some funding from central government, it is just harder to build in rural areas, and difficult to meet the target of 30%, with the current rate being 11%.

There is also a shortfall of residential beds for the elderly, especially with the closure of some care homes in the area. The estimation is that an additional 284 beds will be needed by 2032. Eden District Council has very little leverage as much of the provision has gone to the private sector.

**Waste collection** . the current contract is due to finish in March 2020, so the council are looking at different options. Eden only recycles 43% of its waste, and needs to improve this. Not all areas have garden waste collections, and food waste is something which could be tackled.

**New Council plan**. the main target is to be zero carbon by 2030. They are also focusing on the One Eden project to make the council more efficient, since if nothing is done the council will be bankrupt by 2023.

**Scrutiny Co-ordinating board** . there are discussions about the new traffic lights system to identify areas for improvement, and a proposal to reduce the three scrutiny committees down to one to save about £3,000 per year.

**Housing and Communities Scrutiny Committee** . the police gave a report on Anti-social behavior, noting the drop of 20% in ASB in the last year. They are targeting drug and driving offenders. The police have a power under Section 59 to confiscate the car of a driving offender.

**Accounts and Governance Committee** – Heart of Cumbria is a housing project started by Eden in 2016, and will have 81 new houses for rental in the Carleton area of Penrith.

## **6. Planning applications**

**6a/DEC/19** 19/0712 Full application. Erection of polytunnel. Valley View, Nenthead CA9 3NA for Mr & Mrs P. Baker.

**Recommended** for approval with the request that the polytunnel have a green cover which would look better. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Miller. (12+ 1 abs)

**6b/DEC/19** 19/0759 Full application. Installation of velux roof windows, construction of first floor terrace and alter hipped roof to a picture window. Osborne House, Front Street, Alston CA9 3SG for Mrs G. Williams.

It was suggested that to be fair to other applications the parish should recommend that velux windows on properties in the town centre should only be installed on the backs of buildings, so as not to be visible from the street.

**Recommended** for approval subject to there only being velux windows on the back of the building. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Green (nem con)

**6c/DEC/19** 19/0815 Tree Works (CA) Repollard birch to previous topping points, Alston Conservation Area. Temple Croft, Townfoot, Alston CA9 3RL for Michael Collins.

**Recommended** for approval. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Holt. (nem con)

## **Decision notices**

**6i/DEC/19** 0623 Full application. Conversion of redundant barn buildings to extend residential accommodation. Coatlith Hill Farm, Alston CA9 3JZ for Mr Harrison. Permission granted with conditions.

## **7. Repairs to seat at Highlands road**

Cllr Miller reported that the seat on the Highlands road has damaged timber, although the framework is good. A resident is willing to contribute £100 towards getting the seat repaired, but would like to put a memorial plaque on it in memory of his parents. Former Cllr, D. Athey has offered to carry out the repairs. It was agreed to allocate a maximum of £200 towards the cost of materials.

**Resolved** to ask D. Athey to source the timber and materials needed for the repairs and for Cllr Miller to confirm that the council will be happy to accept the contribution towards the work, and have no objections to the memorial plaque. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Martin (12+ 1 abs) **Action Cllr RM.**

It was mentioned that another resident was interested in putting a plaque on a seat on Potters Lonning, but they will need to contact the council if they wish to discuss it.

The clerk reported that a resident had offered to draw up a list of seats around Alston Moor, and that she would check to see if any progress had been made. **Action CI.**

## **8. Alston public toilets**

Costings for the current year were provided by Eden District Council, who sent apologies as they were unable to attend the meeting. Draft costings prepared by Cllr Haldon for the parish council were

circulated. It was reported that a decision was made by the retiring council to wait until the new council were appointed before making a decision on whether to take on the Alston public toilets. If this is to happen the council needs to start to build up the precept to avoid a steep rise. The principal savings would be over business rates, either through the government passing legislation to abolish them or by transferring the toilets to the Town Hall. Savings could also be made by reduced cleaning hours, with a best guess at the current time of annual costs between £9 and £10K. A decision in principle is needed for now.

It was agreed that the toilets are well used, figures are around 12,000 uses per quarter, including use by children on outdoor activities, but should the community provide a service for visitors? Nearby businesses complained until the signage was improved that people used their facilities without using their services, and this could happen again if the toilets were closed. Some towns close the public toilets in winter, which would be a significant cost saving. Possibly the community could be consulted on their views.

**Resolved** as a general principle to continue to look at taking on Alston public toilets with a view to accepting them on in 2022. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Miller. (8+ 5 abs)

It was mentioned that Penrith Town Council has appointed a part-time solicitor, and a suggestion made that the council might be able to buy in time.

**Resolved** to contact Penrith Town Council to ask about the possibility of buying time should it be required. Proposed by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Haldon. (nem con)

## **9. Consultations and Correspondence**

### **9a/DEC/19 Proposed creation of a public footpath at Ashgill**

Cumbria County Council invited comments on the dedication of a public footpath at Ashgill. This will put the path from the bridge to the waterfall on the definitive map, and resolve a long running issue.

**Resolved** to continue to support the dedication of the public footpath at Ashgill Bridge. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Grew. (11+ 2 abs)S

### **9b/DEC/19 EDC Notice of the removal of light 2 outside The Cottage, Leadgate**

Notice from Eden District Council that the above light has failed and will be disconnected. The clerk reported that she had queried when this and other redundant columns will be removed and was advised that they are scheduled for this financial year. The parish are asked to report any columns they know of that are no longer in use so they can be added to the list.

Columns at Lowbyer and Middle Park were mentioned

### **9c/DEC/19 Nenthall War Memorial – Consultation Report**

Historic England have completed an initial assessment of the war memorial, providing links in their e-mail to view the report. They invited observations or further information.

Cllr Glendinning reported that the council would need to look for funding to repair the wall at the back of the site, which is not classed as part of the monument. The lettering on the monument has been painted and is in good condition, but the monument itself will need some work done on it.

### **9d/DEC/19 Alston Moor Historical Society complaint**

Alston Moor Historical Society wrote to ask that their letter is read out. They are concerned that they and the parish council have been slandered and accused of the criminal offence of money laundering. They would like the parish council to discuss the matter and to issue a public demand that the people concerned come forward with evidence to substantiate their accusation to submit for investigation. If unable to do this they are knowingly and repeatedly disseminating a false accusation among the residents of Alston Moor with the sole aim of bringing the parish council and Historical Society into disrepute by slander and defamation.

It was confirmed that Eden District Council's Monitoring Board have stated that there is no case to answer when a complaint was made.

**Resolved** to ask AMHS to name the person who made the complaint. Proposed by Cllr Denoual and seconded by Cllr Seaton. (nem con) **Action C1.**

### **9e/DEC/19 Notices of events/meetings**

EDC Chairman's Carol Service . 16 December 2019

Nenthead Ward meeting 27 January 2020

New Year's Eve event Nenthead village hall

### **9f/DEC/19 Information received**

Police report . December 2019

**10. Administration**

**10a/DEC/19 Appointment of representative to Alston Moor Partnership**

Cllr Wright is now the AMBA representative, so a replacement is needed. It was agreed to hold over until the new councillor is co-opted.

**10b/DEC/19 Appointment of representative to Traffic Management group**

A new representative is needed for Alston following the resignation of Cllr Athey. Agreed to hold over.

**10c/DEC/19 Attendance at CALC training session for chairs and vice-chairs**

It was reported that Cllr Ho booked and attended a training session for chairs and vice-chairs after being asked not to attend as she does not hold either position on the council. The clerk was informed by the chair and vice-chair that she should pay for the course herself.

**Resolved** that the council would pay for the course, but that in future all bookings for training sessions involving a fee must go through the clerk, or the councillor would be expected to pay for any costs. Proposed by Cllr Holt and seconded by Cllr Green. (9+ 4 abs)

**10d/DEC/19 Confidential matters following advice from the CALC training session**

It was reported that CALC issued advice that matters concerning councillors should be discussed during the public session, with mainly staffing matters reserved for the confidential part of the meeting.

**11. Items for next month's agenda/urgent business**

**A686 at Whitfield** . there is an ongoing problem with water on the road to Whitfield, with concerns that it could freeze. It was suggest that Highways could be asked to discuss this with Northumberland.

**Light at top of Whitfield** . the light on the new broadband enclosure is badly positioned and so bright that it is a danger to oncoming vehicles. The clerk was asked to report this to Highways.

**Use of Town Hall address by organisations** . to be discussed at the next Town Hall meeting. Cllr Holt asked that it be recorded that he had asked for this to be discussed during the council meeting, but was informed that as a town hall matter it was not appropriate to discuss under agenda items/urgent business.

**12. Finance**

**12a/DEC/19 Bank statements**

The statements as of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were as follows:-

Alston Moor Parish Council tr/ac	£62,931.94
Alston Moor Parish Council bus/ac	£12,714.04
Eden Credit Union	£7,008.58

**12b/DEC/19 Accounts for Payment**

The following accounts were for payment:-

<i>Summary of accounts for payment: -</i>	£432.00
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting: -</i>	£1,377.77
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting: -</i>	£2,565.92

**Resolved** that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to settle all the accounts listed in appendix 1. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Haldon. (11+ 2abs)

**12c/DEC/19 Internal Audit report**

It was agreed to hold over to the next meeting.

*The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....