



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish on Monday 6th July 2020 at 7pm held remotely.

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

Apologies: Cllrs: L. Seaton.

Absent: none

Declarations of interest: Cllr Miller 6c/JUL/20

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 1st June 2020 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Haldon (6 abs)

2. County & District reports

District Council - written reports were received from Cllrs Hanley and Sharp.

Cllr Hanley reported on the following:

EDC Review of Outside bodies - this was set up to review councillor representation on outside bodies, as many cllrs did not send back reports. It was decided not to continue with the Omega Proteins representative as the Environment Agency will monitor the situation.

Leisure Contract . the contract with Greenwich Leisure has been extended for a further 5 years.

Waste Management Contract . due for renewal this year.

Cllr Sharp reported on the following:

Community Arts Project . the deadline for applications is the 20th July for grants of £500 for groups or individual artists involved in community works.

County Council

Cllr Driver reported on the following:

Video report . to be produced soon and shared.

Local Outbreak plan . a link to the Cumbria County Council public health website will be shared with information on plans should a local outbreak of Covid 19 occur. The county are keen to make sure the plans are shaped by the communities affected and there will be opportunity to comment.

AMERG . the tasks the group engaged in are being wrapped up, reporting done and activity moving over to the recovery phase. Some of the projects around connecting the community and keeping people in touch may continue, possibly through the Good Neighbours scheme. Cllr Driver asked that it be put on record that she wanted to thank members of the parish council for their involvement and those working in the background who couldn't have achieved what they did without their input.

Health Scrutiny board meetings . have restarted. Service changes have underlined the need for more work with social care, and the need to continue close relationships. The county worked with the NHS to supply PPE and have spend £650k just on this, which has put pressure on finances. Despite two tranches of government funding, they are still short of what is needed.

Finance - Nationwide all local government are concerned about how to balance the books, as the vast reduction in tax income will impact right across the board. An immediate aim is to get major schemes ready for delivery should there be the opportunity for funding to get the economy moving again.

Alston Front Street works . work has started on the trial panels. The steering group are meeting this week to look at how it is going. There is no perfect time to carry out the work . 6-8 weeks of mild weather are needed and to wait until later would mean holding back the work until next spring. There will be good signage to explain what is happening.

It was pointed out that a parked car in front of the traffic lights is obstructing traffic. CD to follow up.

Rural Issues Working Group . discussions are ongoing on how much say parishes can have in the allocation of highways maintenance funding for work such as verge cutting.

Work at Grisedale Croft . this has just restarted.

3. Public participation

An e-mail was received from the chair of SKS governors expressing concerns about the direction the Volunteering Project was taking. Agreed to discuss under 5a Community Volunteering Project.

4. Clerk's report

4a/JUL/20 Response from Police & Crime Commissioner on request to bring police officers back to Alston Moor

Re: 13/JUN/20 A letter was received from the Police & Crime Commissioner stating that the deployment of local police officers to rural areas based on policing need started in March. It was intended to roll this out on Alston Moor [which has particular issues due to its isolated geography and attraction for motorcyclists and others, but this has been delayed due to Covid-19. Alston Moor will be included in the roll out as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so. The concerns raised at the meeting last month have been shared with the Assistant Chief Constable to enable immediate policing issues to be addressed.

Revisiting the Community Speedwatch programme was also discussed last month, where it was suggested that the Volunteering project might pick this up. A reply has been received from the Co-ordinator suggesting that this might be better looked at as part of a wider community safety parish council working group.

4b/JUL/20 AMPC Phone contract

Re: 11/JUN/20 The contract with BT has expired. BT are offering terms of £26.10 per month with one quarter free line rental for a 2 year contract. However, with the government advice to work from home where possible, the following system could be useful: the virtual voice over internet protocol (VOIP) where the current landline number is maintained, but can be switched to any device, or multiple devices.

Virtual Landline charge £7.95 per month with a suggested add on of £1 per month call whispering [??] to announce that the call is diverted from the council phone number. Outgoing calls are free to UK numbers with no fixed term contract. There is also a built in answering system that will e-mail messages to you.

Ring Central is £7.99 per month and includes 100 minutes free calls. Vodaphone from £10 per month.

Resolved to move the phone to Virtual Landline. Proposed by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Grew. (13+ 1 abs).

4c/JUL/20 Noticeboards

Re: 10/JUN/20 The noticeboard for Nenthead has been ordered, although there may be a wait as the joiner is very busy at present. He has been asked to provide a quote for the Alston board.

4d/JUL/20 Re-opening High Streets Safely (RHSS)

Eden District Council has been allocated EU funding to assist with re-opening high streets and is allocating £5000 to the larger towns. A working group has been set up with Alston Moor Business Association taking a lead to determine how the funding will be spent. EU criteria dictates that the funding must go through parish councils, so the council has been asked to manage the claim process by submitting invoices to the district council. EDC have confirmed that there will be no risk involved to either the parish or AMBA, who must have confirmation from EDC that the expenditure meets the criteria. It can only be put towards temporary measures, and cannot be used to purchase permanent items such as new seating. A service level agreement will need to be signed.

Noted.

5. Council Representatives reports

5a/JUL/20 Community Volunteering Project

Cllr Denoual read out a short report (to be forwarded) on progress with the Community Volunteering Project. She thanked the working group and was thanked in turn for chairing the meetings.

It was suggested that the Community Support working group could be stood down.

There were no further comments on the public participation request.

5b/JUL/20 Alston Moor Emergency Response Group

Questions were invited on the progress report from Cllr Grew, who reported on the following additional information.

Alston United and Fairhill Estate Charities . the charities have not received large numbers of applications for assistance, so if anyone knows of anyone in financial hardship they were asked to encourage them to apply.

Alston Minor Injuries unit . this has continued to operate through the surgery, although there are no nurses to help, the doctors are able to carry out some tasks to avoid patients having to travel to Carlisle for attention. People with minor injuries can ring the surgery for assistance.

Re-opening the High Street - many of the Alston shops have re-opened having carried out a risk assessment and set their own Code of Practice. All are participating in the 2m separation and a restriction on the number of people allowed in. Cllrs Miller, Grew and Driver surveyed the town last week to look at the possibility of a one way walking system. Alston is challenging as there are a number of pinch points. Their assessment will be taken back to the RHSS group for approval and any feedback. Any decisions will not be implemented until late July. The Crown car park, Fairhill and South Tynedale Railway have been designated as official car parks for inclusion on a map of the town with open shops, and leaflets on which shops are open. Local Links is not scheduled to re-open until August.

6. Planning applications

6a/JUL/20 20/0244 Listed Building Consent for the installation of gas supply including a meter at the rear of the property. Kirsopp House Flat, Market Place, Alston CA9 3QN for Ms Hilary Spong.

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

6b/JUL/20 20/0343 Full application. Change of use of first floor storage room to create a dwelling. 10 Front Street, Alston CA9 3SE for Revd R. Cromarty.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (nem con)

6c/JUL/20 20/0346 Full application. Erection of two light industrial sheds and eight self storage shipping containers. Nentforce Caravan Park, Station Road, Alston CA9 3JX for Ayle Colliery Co. Ltd . Mr Shepherd

Cllr Miller declared an interest as an employee.

It was confirmed that the containers were intended to be used for storage, in response to requests from people for secure storage. Earlier plans to use the site for caravans have been scrapped. The containers will be at the back of the site and not visible from the road.

Recommended for approval Proposed by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Robinson (8+ 3 abs 2-)

6d/JUL/20 20/0400 Notice of Intention Proposed private way for agriculture. Land west of High Galligill, Nenthead, CA9 3LW for Mr G. Cook.

It was agreed to hold over comments on this application, which had just been received.

7. Request to invite chair of Alston Hospital Alliance to a zoom meeting to discuss staffing at Alston Cottage Hospital

Cllr Grew reported that she is very concerned about the closure of the minor injuries unit and nurses being sent to work in Penrith, without any comment about what is happening despite requests for an update from our County Councillor. The proposal is for the joint chair of the Alston Alliance to meet with the parish council or a smaller group to give an assurance that our nurses will be returning, despite two already having left.

It was noted that the meetings held at SKS before the hospital closed were promised all sorts of things, none of which have materialised, and now very few people attend the Alliance meetings. Another point made was that the workload in Alston is around a quarter that of Penrith, so there is a need to be realistic and accept we are unlikely to get what we had before.

Cllr Grew reported that while both points were valid, she had had meetings with various people when the hospital closed, but her suggestions as to what the hospital could be used for were all dismissed, although these things are happening in other rural areas which have the backing of those in power.

Cllr Martin reported she and a former cllr met with the leader of the county council and agreed to stand down a court case on the basis of what was to be offered, all of which have now proved to be empty promises.

Resolved to invite the NHS representatives to chose between meeting a small group or attending the August council meeting. If a small group meet they will report back to the August meeting, and if the council is not satisfied will go back to ask the CCG to answer questions.

A request was made that if the meeting is to be with a small group a question is asked about why the Alston nurses had to go over to Penrith and the Penrith nurses be sent here.

Agreed that Cllrs Grew, Martin, Hanley and Denoual would take part in a smaller group meeting.

8. Woodlands & Garrigill Village Green Tree report

The tree report has been circulated, with recommendations that are mainly for trees affected by ash dieback disease.

Firs and Henderson's Woods . it was suggested that all the trees should be cut down and replanted. Concerns were raised that this would be very unpopular with residents as the woods are a popular local amenity

Resolved to seek prices for carrying out the works recommended by the tree survey in Firs and Henderson's woods and for a second price to fell and replant Firs Wood. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Holt. (11+ 1- 1 abs)

Garrigill Village Green . the only bench on the village green is around 30 years old and surrounds a tree whose growth is being restricted by it. It was suggested that as the bench is in good condition it should be repaired and moved away from the tree.

Resolved to seek prices for the recommended tree works and for a separate price for moving and repairing the bench. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Holt. (nem con)

It was suggested that as Cllr Green had concerns about the tree work, he could be present to oversee it.

9. Highlands Memorial Seat restoration

Cllr Miller reported that the cost to repair the seat at Highlands is £180, and that the family wishing to contribute towards its repair have already donated £100. They would like to put a plaque on the seat when it is completed.

Resolved to go ahead with the restoration of the seat at Highlands. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Miller (nem con)

10. Consultations & Correspondence

10a/JUL/20 NALC Model Code of Conduct Consultation

No comments were received on the consultation other than noting that the punishment for infringements was severe.

Members were asked to abide by the social media policy.

10b/JUL/20 Correspondence

Listed in appendix 4.

11. Administration

11a/JUL/20 Zoom contract

NALC has negotiated a discount on Pro Zoom accounts through the Crown Commercial Service provided 10 councils are willing to purchase a licence. They are for a period of 1 year and will cost £78.40 or £6.54 per month, which is a saving on the current cost of £11.99 + vat.

Resolved to ask CALC about joining the discounted Pro Zoom scheme, but to return to physical meetings when it is safe and legal to do so. Proposed by Cllr Holt and seconded by Cllr Wright. (13+ 1 abs)

11b/JUL/20 Ratification of risk assessment held over from March 2020

Appendix 5. (Clerk's report) The assets risk assessment has identified a number of actions that should be followed up, some of which have been delayed by the Covid-19 lockdown. The way forward might be to appoint a small working group for practical tasks such as inspecting Tyne Willows. A member suggested a re-build cost for Nenthead Fountain of between £50-£100k, but we do not yet have costs for the War Memorials to enable us to seek a quote from Zurich Municipal.

The clerk has made a start on collecting a photographic record of the seats around Alston Moor, with a view to the council deciding whether those in poor condition should be removed or restored.

Cllr Glendinning reported that he had not be able to contact Beatties over a valuation, and noted that the Nenthall memorial was more vulnerable to damage, but the Alston memorial could need more restoration in time.

It was suggested that the clerk draw up an action list for a future agenda. **Action CI.**

A few minor amendments were requested.

Resolved to put an action plan together to identify what actions are needed. Proposed by Cllr Denoual and seconded by Cllr Wright. (13+ 1 abs)

Cllrs Hanley and Robinson were thanked for their work on the risk assessment.

Cllr Robinson confirmed that he has been checking Tyne Willows regularly for fly tipping around the recycling centre, and will continue to report dumping. Noted that the gym has been closed since the start of lockdown.

11c/JUL/20 Draft Delegation Policy

The draft delegation policy provided has been updated to include the terms of reference for the Tyne Willows Management Committee as described in the lease with Alston Moor Federation (successor organisation to Cumbria County Council). It is incomplete and awaiting guidance and advice from ACT on setting up a new Town Hall committee. It is suggested that the existing working groups policy is merged with this document.

Cllr Haldon reported that he had started work on a draft scheme of delegation, which will follow model schemes and should be ready to bring to the next council meeting.

Resolved to present to the ADP working group for discussion before coming back to full council. Proposed by Cllr Holt and seconded by Cllr Robson. (7+ 5- 1 abs)

12. Accounts for payment

The following accounts were for payment:-

<i>Summary of accounts for payment: -</i>	£858.28
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting: -</i>	£1,419.92