

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 7th December 2015 at 7.15pm in Alston Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs: A. Martin (Chair), D. Athey, P. Godwin, E. Grew, T. Haldon, M. Herdman, S. Hill, R. Miller, D. Phillips, A Robertson

Apologies: Cllrs: B. Aves, R. Thomson.

Absent: G. Wright, A. Green.

Declarations of interest: listed under specific agenda items.

Cllr Martin thanked the local firemen and Cllrs Athey and Miller for helping out during storm Desmond, and was grateful that Alston got off lightly compared to the devastating floods experienced elsewhere in Cumbria.

County Councillor's Report

Apologies from Cllr Robinson.

District Councillor's Report

Apologies from Cllr Hymers who sent a written report.

Footway lighting - the column outside 17 Vicarage Terrace, Nenthead now has a wayleaves agreement and is programmed in next week for excavation and should be completed week commencing 16-12-2015. The owner of 3 Vicarage Terrace will not give a wayleave agreement for a new service cable on her property, she has also said that she wants the existing pole removed from her land.

All lights in The Firs, including no 58 are awaiting agreement from Eden Housing Association that they will take them over. They have not reached a decision yet.

Discretionary services – the district is asking if any parish council is interested in discussions about managing their services if they wish or feel able to, but it is not a mandatory situation and will not be foisted on Parishes unless interest is shown and mutual agreement is reached.

Cllr Godwin reported on the following:-

Footway lights – the consultation process is complete and the report will be going to the Executive Committee.

Community Advisory Group – Cllr Godwin is a member of this group and agreed with Cllr Hymers that there is no intention to foist discretionary services on the parishes. They have already visited Kirkby Stephen and received good feedback on what is being done within the parish. The intent is to discuss the list of services, ahead of any possible move towards a unitary authority, so that people are prepared and some services protected should Eden be divided up. They are aware that a number of services may be very difficult for parishes to take over.

Change to agenda order – Cllr Martin suggested moving the district and county reports into body of meeting, as this is now being done in council meetings to enable the parish to comment on the information received. It was agreed to try this next month.

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd November 2015 be adopted as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Haldon. (nem con)

2. Progress Reports

2a/DEC/15 Local Delivery of Services

Re: 2a/NOV/15 The Community Advisory Group (CAG) from Eden District Council would like to meet with the parish council to discuss the services in more detail and the potential for devolution. A report on the project will be going to Council in February, and they would like to meet within the next few weeks. A provisional date to meet has been set for Thursday 10th December at 2pm.

The clerk reported on a suggestion that she contact other parish councils to find out what they are planning to do, but Cllr Godwin confirmed that a comprehensive report will be circulated by Eden District Council after they have visited all the parishes.

Resolved to appoint Cllrs Martin, Phillips, Grew, Robertson, Athey as representatives to meet with the Community Advisory Group.

2b/DEC/15 Missing Garrigill litter bin

Re: 2a/NOV/15 The clerk reported that Eden District Council said they have not removed the litter bin, but if anyone has any information on it they would like to hear from them. No-one has any information about it and it does not have anything to do with Highways.

The clerk was asked to request a replacement. **Action.**

Noted that the salt bin lids are not strong enough and blow open in windy conditions. To report to Highways as replacement lids should be weighed. **Action.**

2c/DEC/15 Nenthead Election Results

Re: 2b/NOV/15 One of the people affected by the confusion over the election results at Nenthead received an explanatory e-mail from Eden District Council. However, neither of the other two people have been contacted. Cllr Phillips was thanked for following up.

2d/DEC/15 Alston Ambulance Fund

Re: 2d/NOV/15 The clerk reported that it had proved difficult to find a time to suit everyone for a meeting, and as there was no urgency she had suggested leaving it until the new year.

2e/DEC/15 Update on Alston Ambulance

Re: 4g/NOV/15 Rick Shaw, the Service Development Manager for North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust e-mailed to say that the first cohort have completed the training and have undertaken some third person placements with crews. 2 meetings have been held with the group and they are working towards an interim rota covering the weekends only until the 2nd cohort have trained. Interviews, reference checks, DBS and employment checks have been completed, and the NHS training department are finalising the course details before setting a start date. Once the training is complete they will be able to undertake full coverage with the whole group.

The vehicle, equipment and uniform are in place, but ground works, approval of plans and costs for the siting of the vehicle and storage/cleaning facilities are still being discussed. They will advise of the start date for the first cohort once it is confirmed.

2f/DEC/15 Parish Council Training

Re: 10a/NOV/15 A majority of cllrs took part in the training session, and a copy of the course notes are available for everyone, including those who did not attend. One of the aims of the training is to make council meetings more efficient. Most of the attendees thought the session was useful and informative, but Cllr Phillips objected that some recommendations were change for changes sake and circulated the notes he had made.

The following suggestions were agreed.

The reason for apologies would not be recorded in the minutes, as in the case of illness it is not always appropriate to divulge this publicly.

The clerk will bring a book to the meetings for members to write in their declarations of interests.

Correspondence and information will be made available in a folder at the meeting.

2d/DEC/15 Sandbags/flooding

Re: /NOV/15 It was reported that during the first flooding incident in November that no sand was available, although once reported Eden arranged for some to be delivered later in the day. They suggested getting a tarp and notice to explain what the sand was to be used for. The clerk to organise. **Action.**

A further issue is that it can be difficult to contact the code holders for gate, and as a result Local Links have been included in the list. .

It was agreed to revisit the Emergency plan and to convene a meeting early in the New Year. **Action.**

3. Progress reports from working groups and council representatives

3a/NOV/15 Nenthead Ward Meeting

Cllr Herdman reported that the meeting was held last Monday and discussed proposals for the Nenthead hydro with Alston Moor Partnership. The next meeting is on 25th January 2016.

3b/NOV/15 Public meeting to discuss bank closure and Alston Post Office services

A representative from the Bank Closure working group was invited to speak. He explained that the working party set up last August had looked at the proposed closure of Barclays Bank. He had contacted a number of other communities with recent closures and was particularly interested in finding out about what had happened with the impact assessments required by the government before a bank closes. It transpired that Alston was following a similar pattern to the consultations held in other areas, but at the end of the day Barclays had closed and done nothing for the communities.

3 meetings were held with Barclay's representatives, the working group's strategy had been to offer to help with the impact survey, to ensure that an ATM remains in Front Street, and that the Post Office could accommodate business banking. Also that a bank representatives comes to Alston from time to time to see customers who would otherwise have to travel to another branch.

Barclay's have agreed that the ATM can remain for 12 months, and will repair the damaged guttering above the ATM. It has closed now, but will re-open at the end of next week, and will be serviced by the same firm who service Spar. They intend to monitor it and if not used sufficiently it will be removed in 12 months, but will not release the figures on usage as this is deemed confidential. It was thought that Barclays would want to remove the ATM at the end of the 12 months to enable them to do something with an empty property, so the community should be prepared for this and lobby now to find a suitable alternative site.

The working group advised Barclays that the Post Office was under review and that they could not guarantee customers would be fully looked after, as they had not held any discussions with them. The working group have met with the local postmaster, who is willing to provide a full service, but has limited space for cash.

Barclay's offered to send someone up to Alston, but in other areas this has not lasted more than 2 sessions, so the working group will continue to push for an appointment system. Cllr Martin has spoken with Eden District Council and Local Links about taking bookings for appointments.

Other tasks have ben to lobby the Chairman of Barclays and at the appropriate time a letter was sent by Rory Stewart MP, but this did not result in Barclays changing their minds.

Cllr Hymers also followed up with Santander, helping the Post Office streamline banking for business. They met with the postmaster and the Post Office have been helpful. Santander may be prepared to put an ATM inside the Post Office. The Bank of Ireland runs the Post Office services, and as far as local people can see there is not any difference between any of the various banks in the time taken for cheques to clear.

The working group have not seen the impact assessment, and neither had any of the councils contacted.

3c/NOV/15 Social care working group

Cllr Martin reported that Cllr Thomson was organising a meeting, but as she has been ill it will be postponed until January.

4. Planning

4a/DEC/15 15/0914 Listed building. Listed building consent for the removal of flue attached to external south gable elevation and replaced with new balanced flue. Installation of gas boiler on rear of porch wall. Station House, Station Road, Alston CA9 3JB for South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society – Mr B. Craven.

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

4b/DEC/15 15/0962 Variation/Removal of S106 Removal of S106 legal agreement attached to planning approval 12/0321. Land at Sunnyside, Wardway, Nenthead CA9 3PX for Mr Pickering.

Recommended for refusal on the grounds that the applicant has not demonstrated that there is no longer a need for S106 agreements in Nenthead. The parish council would like the applicant to provide a good explanation of what has changed within the community. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Hill. (nem con)

4c/DEC/15 15/1013 Full application. Change of use of former workshops, café and museum to residential use. Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre, Nenthead CA9 3PD for Mr B. Maguire.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Robertson. (2 abs)

4d/DEC/15 Pre-planning application – proposed upgrade to telecommunications radio base station installation land of A689, Nenthead for Vodafone Ltd.

Resolved that the council are not minded to oppose a proposal to upgrade the telecommunications radio base station. Proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Miller. (2 abs)

Decision Notices

4i/DEC/15 15/0640 Full application. Proposed two log cabins for holiday purposes. Mark Close, Alston CA9 3BD for Mr & Mrs H. Wyatt. Permission granted with conditions.

4ii/DEC/15 15/0724 Full application. Proposed steel portal extension. Sheep Riggs, Alston CA9 3BD for Mr A. Richardson. Permission granted with conditions.

4iii/DEC/15 15/0830 Full application. Proposed steel portal building. The Hermitage, Alston CA9 3DB for Mr R. Glover. Permission granted with conditions.

4iv/DEC/15 15/0878 Full application. Proposed painting of front facing elevation with white paint. Hundy Cottage, Front Street, Alston CA9 3SG for Miss L. Ford. Permission granted with conditions.

5 Consultations & Correspondence for information

5a/DEC/15 Cumbria County Council consultation on refreshed Council Plan

Cllrs were asked to find time to read the Cumbria County Council consultation documents before the next meeting. **Action.**

5a/DEC/15 Letter from Community Warden

A letter was received from the Community Warden thanking the council for providing him with the job of helping to keep Alston Moor tidy over the past few months, and as a by-product helping him to stay active and help out in the community. He mentioned that he was recently stopped by a party of Norwegian visitors, who were most impressed with the standard of the town's public toilets, which he hoped could be made widely known.

Cllr Miller declared an interest as a relative.

Resolved to write and thank the Community Warden and express the hope that he is willing to stay on next year. (1 abs)

5c/DEC/15 CCC – Notices of events/meetings

Carol Service - 14th December in St Andrew's Church, Penrith

5d/DEC/15 Information received during the last month

Letter from Alston resident about lights removed at top end of Alston

CALC circular – Dec/Jan 2015

British Red Cross Volunteer Promotion

CAB - press release on advice services now available in rural communities including Alston

Eden Housing – annual report 2015

5e/DEC/15 Funding for dropped kerbs

An e-mail was received from Cumbria Highways inviting suggestions for dropped kerbs as there is a small amount of funding available. Noted that a dropped kerb had been put in at the entrance to The Firs, but members did not have any new suggestions.

6. Alston Gym – personnel changes requiring new directors and Co. Secretary

Cllr Haldon reported that he was contacted by the gym's Co. Secretary to say she is leaving in January, and that one of the directors will be standing down, so new people will be required to fill the vacancies. In addition one of the regular workers has left, and although a new person has been taken on they may have to cut a few sessions.

Cllr Haldon said he is willing to help out as co secretary until the AGM, but would not want to take on a long term commitment. He confirmed that 2 new directors have been found from the gym membership, and will report back after a meeting with the manager.

7. Nenthead Fountain

Cllr Robertson was contacted by a local resident asking about the ownership of Nenthead Fountain, which is in the custody of the parish council. Cllr Herdman has inspected it and noted that a cast part on the lower section of the back has broken and that the paintwork is in poor condition.

The clerk reported that she has made a start on looking into what funding may be available, and has made contact with the Friends of the Lake District. Eden District Council Planning confirmed that the fountain is a grade 2 listed building, but it can be restored without the need for planning permission provided no changes are made. However, the first step is going to be to find someone, preferably a heritage specialist, who understands what needs doing. Names were suggested and Cllr Godwin offered to make enquiries with the North Pennines AONB when she attends a meeting this month.

8. Request to attend a meeting to discuss Neighbourhood and Community Planning

Cllr Godwin was contacted by John Boardman, who is interested in attending a council meeting to discuss the potential for producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Alston Moor, and as refreshing the Community Plan has been discussed by Alston Moor Partnership the exercise could be combined. In which case it might be useful to also invite Hellen Aitken from ACTion with communities to the February meeting, followed by a meeting dedicated to neighbourhood and community planning.

9. Suggestion that organisations wishing to put a banner on the Market Cross consult the parish council

Cllr Miller reported that he wanted to discuss banners on the Market Cross as they can be dangerous if not put up properly. Organisers have left ropes dangling, which present a danger to the public. He thought that anyone wanting to put up a banner should notify the parish council, and be cautioned about the need for safety.

It was noted that the parish council do not own the Market Cross, but have historic rights to run a market on and around the site. Before displaying advertisements in public spaces organisations should consider whether they need public liability insurance. A proposal to ban banners was not carried.

It was suggested that the wall at Townfoot might be used as an alternative site for displaying banners.

10. Parish Council administration

10a/DEC/15 Insurance

The clerk reported that CALC have advised that it is a requirement that personal accident insurance for employees should be added to the insurance policy. The cost is £53.

Resolved to add personal accident insurance for employees to the insurance policy. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Phillips.

10b/DEC/15 Working group to review updating of policy documents and contracts before ratification by the parish council

The clerk reported that she has updated a number of the council's policy documents, and Cllr Haldon has worked on the model Standing Orders, and would like a small group to check them over before presenting to the full council. When the website is ready to go live, the Freedom of Information document and others should be posted.

Resolved that Cllrs Haldon, Phillips and Martin would review the documents.

10c/DEC/15 Report from internal auditor on half year accounts

The clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had no issues with the half year accounts.

14. Items for next month's agenda and urgent business

Although other parts of Cumbria had much worse flooding, the Mill Race remains an ongoing issue as nothing has been done to alleviate the flood risk. There is also a concern that the Local Plan has allocated a site for housing close to the stream feeding the Mill Race on land that becomes saturated, and could make the situation worse if it is developed before the infrastructure is improved. Agenda item.

15. Finance

15a/DEC/15 Bank statements

The statements as of 7th December were as follows:-

Alston Moor Parish Council tr/ac	£18,867.81
Alston Moor Parish Council bus/ac	£12,666.20
Eden Credit Union	£7,008.58

15b/DEC/15 Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were for payment:-

<i>Summary of accounts for payment :-</i>	£3,991.59
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting :-</i>	£125.00
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting:-</i>	£193.48

Resolved that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to settle all the accounts listed during the coming month (appendix I). Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Robertson.
(2 abs)

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed:

Dated: