



# ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Development, Governance & Personnel Committee held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 at 7pm in Alston Town Hall

**Present:** Cllrs: N. English, E. Grew, H. Ho, Z. Robson, R. Miller

**Apologies:** Cllr B. Davies

## **1. Appointment of Chair**

**Resolved** to appoint Cllr English as chair on a temporary basis. Proposed by Cllr Robson seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

## **2. Approval of minutes**

**Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robson. (nem con)

## **3. Actions & progress reports**

None in addition to agenda items.

Cllr English will discuss the Financial regulations with CALC and report back to the next meeting. The clerk circulated a first draft separating the Staffing and DGP Committees in the ToR.

## **4. Review of existing and new policies**

### **4a/AUG/21 Policies calendar**

The clerk suggested that due to the difficulty in keeping to the review schedule those policies that do not need an annual review could be moved onto a 3 yearly schedule.

### **4b/AUG/21 Memorial benches policy**

The draft policy was circulated before the meeting by the chair and included a number of questions. Key points included:

The application must relate to deceased members of the community.

The seats could be stone, recycled plastic, or hardwood, this being most appropriate where existing benches are replaced.

The maximum size for memorial plaques will be stipulated in the policy.

The parish council does not have insurance for street furniture other than public liability.

It was agreed that the council would not include memorial trees in the policy, as there is already a facility for this at Bridgend.

It was agreed that there would be no memorial picnic benches.

Cllr English offered to re-draft with the amendments for the policy. **Action NE.**

### **4c/AUG/21 Officers & Members protocol**

The clerk reported that Officers & Members protocol had been mentioned in the Code of Conduct investigation report from Eden District Council and as this would help in understanding the different roles a draft protocol was circulated.

Cllr Grew recommended two pieces of advice for councillors:

Councillors may tender for any work in their professional capacity, but must leave the room when their quote is being considered. Financial regulations recommend 3 quotes, although it may only be possible and acceptable to receive 2 depending upon the urgency of work required.

If a councillor volunteers to do any work they will not be paid.

It was noted that the thoughts were useful but might be more appropriately included in the Code of Conduct for members.

Cllr Grew was asked to e-mail the suggestions to the clerk. **Action EG.**

### **4d/AUG/21 Recording of meetings protocol**

It was suggested that where possible members of the public could be allocated a specific space if they wished to record the meeting, to avoid causing a distraction. This would need to work within the constraints of the room.

**Recommended** that the council accept the review Recording of Meeting protocol with no amendments. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Ho. (nem con)

#### **4e/AUG/21 Health & safety policy**

To be reviewed along with the draft staff handbook.

*Other suggestions for future consideration*

That a list of potential suppliers/contractors be compiled.

#### **5. Councillor & Officer training & Action Plan**

The clerk had put together an Action Plan based on the initial Code of Conduct report, which can be held over until the investigation is complete. She has also compiled a record of training undertaken by members, which can be updated as required.

#### **6. Community Award Scheme criteria for 2022**

It was agreed that the Community Award scheme had gone down well, but the council should be careful about extending it. It was agreed that young people should be encouraged and that it would be good to get them involved by getting them to put forward someone for the award. Community Awards for the older age group could be considered the following year.

Cllrs Grew and Robson offered to put the criteria together for the Community Award scheme. **Action EG, ZR.**

#### **7. Revisions to ToR & new title for DGP Committee**

**Recommended** the Committee be renamed Development, Governance and Policy. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Ho. (nem con)

#### **8. Date of next meeting**

November 2021 date unspecified.

#### **1. Staffing Committee ToR**

The chair explained that as the DGP Committee had lost members it would be sensible for the two Committees to have the same membership.

**Recommended** that the same people are on both the DGP and Staffing Committees. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

#### **2. Community Warden/Lengthsman progress report**

A discussion was held on what tasks were needed for the three communities and noted that litter picking could be carried out by volunteers and voluntary groups.

**Recommended** that the Community Warden's post is retired, and the council look to taking on a sub-contractor to carry out a plan of work to be devised by members from Alston, Garrigill and Nenthead. (nem con) Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Miller. (nem con)

Once ratified by full council the next step is for members from Alston, Garrigill and Nenthead to draw up a schedule of works. Cllrs Grew, Robson and Miller volunteered.

#### **3. Staff Handbook**

Cllr English reported that Neathouse have produced a 64 page Staff Handbook and that he has a zoom meeting with them on Thursday. He invited comments before the meeting.

#### **4. Staff appraisals**

Cllr English reported that Neathouse are assisting with the appraisal criteria specific to the different part-time post holders.

#### **5. Staff contracts**

Ongoing.

#### **6. Redundancy policy**

Not discussed.

*The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....