



# ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor meeting Parish Council held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October in the Masonic Hall at 7pm.

**Present:** Cllrs: R. Miller (Chair), P. Best, B. Davies, E. Grew, M. Hanley, C. Harrison, S. Hattersley H. Ho, Z. Robson.

**Apologies:** Cllr: N. English, A. Green for holidays. Cllr Best apologised for having to leave early.

**Absent:** none.

**Declarations of interest:** none.

## **1. Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Harrison. ( 8+ 1 abs)

**Resolved** that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Best. (5+ 4 abs)

## **2. Chair, County & District reports**

### **Chair's report**

No additional matters to report.

### **County Council**

*Cllr Driver reported on the following:*

**Front Street works** – the work is finished apart from the grouting, but it must cure for around 28 days depending upon the weather. The fencing will remain in place, with the addition of concrete blocks at the top and bottom to deter people from driving on the path.

Members noted that the street is looking good, and the contractors have been lucky with the weather.

**Emergency response group** – a meeting is planned to take place soon and there will be a call for new volunteers but to be sustainable the group needs trustees, a treasurer, and a new chair.

### **District Council**

*Cllr Sharp reported on the following:*

**Community kitchen** – this is on the Area Planning Group's action plan and is also looking for volunteers.

**Fit for All** – for over 50s is to return and has been partnered with the NHS, so can link in with health issues.

**Youth work funding** – government funding has been made available to launch a youth hub. The intention is to move to live contact from on-line, and a youth worker is in the process of being appointed to assist with upskilling, apprenticeships etc for the 16- 24 age group.

**New chief executive** – Ian Frost has been appointed on a fixed term contract until March 2023, although concerns about the salary have been raised, it is the going rate for the task and there is a need to have someone with experience to drive Local Government Reorganisation forward and ensure Eden District gets the service delivery it needs.

**Inspiring Eden Economic Development Prospectus** – this is an opportunity to comment on the vision, priorities, and work streams to drive economic recovery and prosperity across the district.

**Cumbrian residents' week** – Cllr Sharp to send details to the clerk.

face to face alt hen to do online cons econ dev framework. Economic rec views on vision and priority.

**Corporate strategic priorities** – includes young people, poverty, inequality, and diversity.

**Local Government Re-organisation** - council leaders have been asked to respond to a paper being drafted this month on how the area should be awarded as part of the legal process which is to be laid before parliament in January 2022.

Cllr Hanley circulated reports before the meeting.

**Eden Health & Wellbeing Forum** – the majority of new covid cases are amongst 12-18 age schoolchildren, vaccinations have reduced the number of hospital admissions and deaths.

Priorities for the forum are poverty, youth unemployment, improving mental health, loneliness, obesity, social prescribing, unhealthy eating and falls in the elderly.

The forum is also concerned about Local Government Reorganisation which could have a detrimental effect on services, as well as fewer councillors. It will be difficult to attract young people as being a councillor will be a full-time job without a living wage.

**Eden District Council meeting** – the appointment of an experienced chief executive could be money well spent, in the run up to LGR.

Eden Housing strategy aims to double the number of residential care places by 2030. The Warm Homes scheme has helped improve warmth in homes (34% of private sector properties fall into the category 1 hazard for excessive coldness.)

Penrith hospital does not have enough space for ambulatory care and are looking at using the fire station. Members were prompted to comment that Alston does have a hospital with space that is now unused, and which could provide beds for elderly care. Cllr Hanley agreed to pass on this information. **Action MH.**

### **3. Public participation**

*A resident asked if the council could return to holding some of their meetings in Nenthead, as all the meetings until the end of the year are to be held in Alston and it can be difficult for some residents to attend meetings.*

Public participation closed for the council to consider.

It was explained that meetings are generally held in Alston during the winter months due to concerns about access in bad weather, and that lockdown restricted meetings to on-line until recently.

**Resolved** to move to holding three meetings in Garrigill and Nenthead during the summer. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

**Agenda item 11 Co-option of one Alston and two Nenthead councillors was moved up the agenda.**

### **4. Progress reports**

#### **4a/OCT/21 Noticeboards**

Re: 5a/SEPT/2021 The Alston noticeboard is now installed on the Co-op wall. It sustained slight internal damage during fitting but is useable. The Nenthead board has been collected, with no charge for the repairs and the contractor stated he was unable to match the original wood stain.

#### **4b/OCT/21 Valuation of garden land, Tyne Willows**

Re: 5c/SEPT/2021 The valuation of the unsold garden plots above Tyne Willows Playing Field has now been received, both for the overall area and a sq metre value. The clerk recommended setting up a working group to enable individual plots to be measured and a value allocated. She reminded the meeting that the original request to purchase came to the October 2019 meeting from three residents, and that other resident currently renting their garden plot may or may not be interested in purchasing.

*The clerk reported that she had declared an interest in October 2019.*

**Resolved** to set up a working group to measure the plots with Cllrs Davies, Robinson, Robertson and Ho. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Best. (nem con)

#### **4c/OCT/21 Alston War Memorial misspelt name**

Re: 8/SEPT/2021 Further to the request for more detail in the quotations this information has been provided and forwarded to the War Memorials Trust Conservation officer. Advice is needed due to the different approaches from the contractors. One contractor proposes to remove a core of stone, infill with new stone and lead infill the letter. The other contractor would fill the letter with a compound to match the memorial colour, then when set hand carve the letter A and inset lead until flush with the memorial.

Agreed to hold over for now.

#### **4d/OCT/21 Request to Highways for a dropped kerb – pavement between The Firs and Church Road**

Re: 10/SEPT/2021 Highways responded to the request by stating that they will look into what can be done and report back to the Traffic Management meeting.

#### **4e/OCT/21 Request to the Woodlands Trust to take on Firs Wood**

Re:12/SEPT/2021 The Woodlands Trust responded to the request to discuss taking on Firs Wood by stating that although it is a nice bit of woodland worth preserving, it is not ancient woodland and does not adjoin any of the Trust's existing properties. Small, isolated woodlands are expensive for the Trust to look after

and as a charity their resources are limited. It would be difficult for the Trust to manage the wood so consequently it does not meet the Trust's current criteria for new acquisitions.

It was noted that the woodlands are expensive to maintain, but as the land was acquired for the people of Alston the council has a duty to ensure it remains in public ownership.

#### **4f/OCT/21 Ownership of the Old Potato Market**

Re:9/SEPT/2021 No progress has been made to date, but the long-term future of the site can be raised at the next Traffic Management meeting. Both county and district have no evidence of ownership, but adverse possession could be used to claim the site.

#### **4g/OCT/21 Memorial plaque to former councillor, Dick Phillips**

Re: 18c/SEPT/21 The clerk asked what wording was required for the memorial plaque for the seat at Hard Edge. It was suggested that the plaque should simply state the dates he had served on the parish council. (1983-2018)

#### **4h/OCT/21 Devolution of assets, actions discussed at Eden Clerk's meeting**

The clerk reported that she attended a meeting of Eden parish clerks which discussed the lack of an update from Eden District Council on the Devolution of Assets. Penrith Town Hall received an update to state that a members Task and Finish group has been established to review each asset and agree activity, which appears to differ from the resolution to develop a new policy. The group are due to meet on 5<sup>th</sup> October, where they will discuss communication with parishes and a timetable for activity. The clerks meeting agreed to await the outcome and if no communication follows request a meeting with EDC.

Another point that came out of the meeting was the desirability of preparing a Town Plan ahead of Local Government Re-organisation, which may bring in new challenges around service delivery.

Cllr Hanley is a member of this committee and will report back. **Action MH.**

### **5. Reports from representatives**

#### **5a/OCT/21 Alston Alliance**

No meetings have taken place this month.

#### **5b/OCT/21 Alston Ambulance**

No further meetings have taken place. Cllr Grew reported that the Save Alston Moor Services community group has been set up as a limited company and are just waiting for their bank account to be finalized before asking the council for the funds held for the ambulance.

#### **5c/OCT/21 Nenthead Ward**

Cllr Robson reported that those present at the Ward meeting stated their opposition to the proposed treatment works and were not happy with the decision to hold a drop-in session on 20<sup>th</sup> October rather than a public meeting. It is understood test holes have been dug without any communication.

A traffic speed survey has been carried out for Overwater.

It was reported that not all the CFRs have a life-pak. Cllr Grew reported that there should be 6, 4 defibs and packs provided by the parish council and 2 by NWAS. There could be a misunderstanding, but if more are needed it was suggested that the League of Friends might be able to assist. The issue of the ambulance not being called out for emergencies continues to be of concern.

Bunting used to welcome cyclists for the Tour of Britain has been taken down.

The roadworks carried out near the primary school are not thought to be satisfactory as water still pools with the risk of freezing in winter.

The new litter bin near the primary school has disappeared. Clerk to inform Eden District Council. **Action CI.**

It has been suggested that the noticeboard is fitted with door restrictors to reduce the risk of future damage. Noted that the declarations of interest for newly elected councillors are not yet on-line. Clerk to ask Eden about this. **Action CI.**

Councillors were advised to suggest to members of the public that they report highways matters through the on-line reporting system.

#### **5d/OCT/21 Safer Streets update**

Cllr Davies reported that he had met with Cllr Best to go through all the issues experienced over the last 6 – 9 months to produce a comprehensive report for the attention of the Police and Crime Commissioner. In the meantime, a temporary CCTV camera has been installed at Townfoot.

A question was asked about whether the community have been asked if they want CCTV. The answer was that the project is at an early stage but can be discussed with the public later on. There have been informal

comments about street lighting and the lighting of back lanes, but the project is not seeking extra lighting. Noted that the youth club would be happy to be involved in discussions.

## **6. Planning applications**

**6a/OCT/21** 21/0740 Cert. of Lawful. Certificate of Lawfulness for the replacement of roof tiles and associated works. Randal House, Front Street, Alston CA9 3HU for K. Pullen.

*Cllr Best left the meeting.*

It was noted that emergency work was carried out on the roof last year after damage to the tiles, and that the replacement tiles don't look out of place.

**Recommended** for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Davies. (nem con)

**6b/OCT/21** 21/0755 Extension of outbuildings to provide rear lobby. Former Methodist Chapel, Garrigill, Alston CA9 3EB for Mr M. Burton.

**Recommended** for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robson. (nem con)

## **7. Nenthead Community Project report & request for a response to the questions raised over responsibilities for fund raising towards restoration of Nenthead Fountain**

A report from the Nenthead Community Project was circulated before the meeting.

Cllr Robson reported that a constitution has been drawn up and agreed, and asked the parish council what their response would be to the questions asked in the report

- Will **Alston Moor Parish Council** authorise **Nenthead Community Projects** group to apply for funding on their behalf or would they oversee all administration?
- Are **Alston Moor Parish** council happy for **the Nenthead Community Projects** group to hold all monies raised until such time that there are sufficient funds to proceed with the full restoration of the Water Pump and Canopy.
- Will **Alston Moor Parish Council** guarantee that all funds raised to restore the **Water Pump and Canopy** be ring fenced for that purpose?

The clerk reported that as the Nenthead Fountain is a responsibility of the parish council if the council agreed to the offer of fundraising it would be advisable to draw up a contract so both parties are clear on what was expected of them.

Members noted that the cost of restoration is substantial and that there may be conditions attached to grant applications, which without more information would make it difficult to answer the first two questions. It was also suggested that there should be at least two representatives from the parish council involved with the group.

Cllr Robson reported that it could be difficult to access funding for repairs alone, and it might be necessary to look at the bigger picture for the community, including working with other local groups. When the fountain is restored, it needs to be insured against damage. Members suggested erecting metal fencing to limit any potential damage.

It was agreed to hold over further discussion to the next meeting and for the Nenthead Community Projects group to consider whether they could co-opt parish councillors. Cllr Robson to circulate the constitution.

**Action ZR**

## **8. Condition of Lonning walls – Old Methodist**

The chair reported that he had received complaints about the condition of the lonning walls between the Old Methodist Chapel and Church Road. It was reported that this is a long-standing issue, the walls are in private ownership and sustained damage by footpath users who pulled stones out of the wall. The parish council tried to assist in the past with finding grant funding but had not succeeded and the owners were reluctant to repair walls that they thought would be likely to be damaged again.

The clerk was asked to write to the landowners with the suggestion that they fence their land. **Action Cl.**

## **9. Alston's Christmas lights – retirement of electrician**

The parish council has provided lights for a Christmas pole below the Town Hall, lights on Alston Town Hall and on the market cross, which are checked for safety each year by an electrician who assisted with the

installation on a partially voluntary basis. The electrician advised that he was retiring this year and the council would need to find someone to replace him.

Cllrs Hanley and Robinson offered to check the lights, and Cllr Davies to pat test them. Cllr Robson will find out where everything is stored. The clerk asked to be kept informed on of any failures as it might be necessary to buy replacements. **Action MH,RR, BD, ZR**

Cllr Grew reminded those present that Garrigill should have some funding for lights this year.

#### **10. Highlands Road memorial bench and plaque**

The council received telephone calls and correspondence about the memorial plaque for the seat at Highlands, which was repaired and paid for by one of the deceased family. Two other family members objected to the wording on the plaque and have requested that it is removed. The correspondence and a photo of the plaque has been circulated. The wording on the plaque is not such as would cause offence to passers-by.

The clerk was asked to reply to state the council's view that this was a matter which should be resolved within the family. **Action CI.**

#### **11. Co-option of two Nenthead and one Alston councillor**

*Discussed following public participation.*

Cllr Robson reported that Peter Thompson had decided not to stand for co-option onto the Nenthead ward, and that she would not take part in the voting process. She questioned why only the council website had been used to advertise the vacancies. The clerk reported on unresolved difficulties accessing the Facebook page.

There was one applicant for the Alston Ward and two for the Nenthead Ward.

**Resolved** to co-opt Brian Cooper to the Alston Ward. Proposed by Cllr Harrison and seconded by Cllr Davies. (7+ 2 abs.)

**Resolved** to co-opt Ron Robinson to the Nenthead Ward. Proposed by Cllr Hattersley and seconded by Cllr Best. (7+ 2 abs.)

**Resolved** to co-opt Alastair Robertson to the Nenthead Ward. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Best. (7+ 2 abs.)

#### **12. Recommendation that the council approves the draft Memorial Benches policy**

Minor amendments to the draft Memorial Benches policy have been circulated.

**Resolved** to approve the Memorial Benches policy. Proposed by Cllr Ho and seconded by Cllr Miller. (7+ 1-)

#### **13. Consultations and Correspondence**

##### **13a/OCT/21 Inspiring Eden Economic Development Prospectus**

Eden District Council has produced an Economic Prospectus with the vision, priorities, and work streams to drive economic recovery and prosperity across the district over the coming months and years. The deadline for responding to the consultation is Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

It was agreed that members would comment as individuals.

##### **13b/OCT/21 Consultation on Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan**

The County Council have issued their Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan and are inviting comments from the public with a closing date of 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

It was observed that Alston Moor is not well provided with public transport in the plan and that Garrigill has no public transport links.

##### **13c/OCT/21 Correspondence**

(Appendix 1)

#### **14. Accounts for payment**

Summary of accounts for payment: -	£1,035.57
Summary of income received since last meeting: -	£112.82
Summary of accounts paid since last meeting: -	£1,204.95

**Resolved** that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to settle all the accounts listed in appendix 2. Proposed by Cllr Robson and seconded by Cllr Davies. (7+ 1 abs)

**15. External auditor's report**

**Resolved** to accept the auditor report. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Miller. (5+ 3 abs)

**16. Agenda items for next meeting, Traffic Management and urgent business**

**16a/OCT/21 Traffic Management agenda**

Requests for the Traffic Management meeting:

- Road verges around Blagill and North Lonning in need of repairs following the town centre diversion
- White lines from Spar to Brewery Bridge where cars cut the corner
- Welgill road to bridge has no white lines.
- New North Lonning barriers.

*The meeting closed at 9.10pm*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....