



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 6th December in the Masonic Hall at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs: N. English (Chair), P. Best, B. Cooper, B. Davies, A. Green, E. Grew, M. Hanley, C. Harrison, S. Hattersley, H. Ho, R. Miller, A. Robertson, R. Robinson.

Apologies: Cllrs: I. Lindley, Z. Robson.

Absent: none.

Declarations of interest: Cllrs Robertson & Best - 6b/NOV/21 Cllr English – 6d/NOV/21

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 1st November 2021 be approved as a correct record with the following amendments 5a/NOV/21 Action should read NE and 7d/NOV/21 Cllr Robson's declaration of interest should read non-pecuniary interest. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Harrison. (11+ 2 abs)

2. Chair, County & District reports

Chair's report

The chair reminded members that they had been asked to be careful when using social media and to make it clear whenever they were commenting as an individual.

The DGP meeting was cancelled due to storm Arwen and will be re-arranged for a later date.

County Council

Cllr Driver reported on the following:

Storm Arwen – thanks to the community for pulling together during the power cuts and looking after people. There are lessons to be learnt, especially over the difficulty of communicating when mobile and digital phones are unuseable

AMERG - will meet later this week to discuss the next area of focus; there is a need for more volunteers, demand is low in normal times, but there are a lot of crises when help is needed, and funding is still available.

Social care – is struggling nationally and locally and along with the NHS there are a high level of vacancies. As a one-off measure a £7 million support fund has been made available to social care providers to lift the wages of carers to £10 per hour.

Our rurality makes it harder to provide a service, but if anyone is aware of people struggling to get a care package could they let her know.

Area Planning Group – cancelled until January. Tracey Moran, the Community Support Officer has gone on secondment to the Policy and Development team. Amy Frith will take her place.

Radio reception – Jonathan Morrell, Chief executive from Radio Cumbria, has been in contact and wants to hear about the poor radio signal Alston Moor gets to help address the issues. Contact details have been given to the clerk.

District Council

Apologies from Cllr Sharp.

Cllr Hanley circulated reports before the meeting.

Full council – 39 properties had heat pumps installed under the green home grant scheme, which initially targeted Alston Moor. The availability of installers was identified as a problem.

An increase to members' allowance recommended in a report from the Independent Renumeration Panel was voted against due to local financial hardship.

Budget - Eden District Council's contribution to Local Government Reorganisation is £1.6 million (overall costs are £19 million) and £980k is allocated for Voreda House.

Overview & Scrutiny – a local issue is the lack of meat processing facilities in the county, with animals having to go out of the county to be slaughtered. There is a shortage of butchers, abattoir workers and the vets employed to supervise.

Task and Finish group – the questionnaire on LGR sent to parishes was criticised for the short deadlines as most parishes would not have met before it was due back.

Questions

Proposed name for East Cumbria unitary – the suggested name of Westmorland and Furness makes no mention of Eden or the fact that much of the district was originally in Cumberland. It is understood that the government have taken responsibility for naming.

Budget - £113k has been allocated to Appleby for an electric charge point because it is a tourist destination, and £37.5k for a machine to collect dog faeces in Penrith, but nothing has been allocated to Alston which is also a tourist destination. Cllr Hanley agreed to pass the comments on to the district.

3. Public participation

Held over until agenda item 7.

4. Progress reports

4a/DEC/21 Missing items

Owing to a discussion with a resident and the County Council over the alignment of the Pennine Way, the stone bench that was reported as missing has been found sited below Low Scilly Hall. The search took place in the wrong location, so it can now be added to the interactive map.

Eden District Council reported that they replaced the new litter bin besides Nenthead school playing field, after it vanished, but this one has also been stolen. They would like to know if anyone has any information on the disappearances.

No-one had anything new to add.

4b/DEC/21 Alston's Christmas lights

Re: 5e/NOV/2021 All the lights are up and working at present. Thanks go to Cllrs Hanley, Robinson and residents, John and George Glendinning who helped put them up.

Resolved to offer to pay George Glendinning [*I may have this wrong, but I thought it was John it was decided to pay*] for his time. Proposed by Cllr Hanley and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (10+ 1 abs)

5. Reports from representatives

5a/DEC/21 Alston Alliance

No meetings were held.

5b/DEC/21 Alston Ambulance

Cllrs Grew and Hanley circulated reports before the meeting.

Cllr Grew reported that she was concerned about reporting to the press and radio as she could only report on what had happened at a council meeting. (Agenda item 7/DEC/21 to address these concerns.)

Additional information to that included in the reports is that there have been problems with the contact form for anyone interested in becoming a CRF, people were advised to give their details to Dee Monk.

It was confirmed that EMT's who had dropped out for various reasons had not been contacted to see if they might be interested in returning.

It was observed that the EMTs would prefer the ambulance should stay on Alston Moor to provide an emergency response. They consider it is not sensible to have a vehicle that cannot accommodate a casualty and do not think the tent is a good idea. The EMTs have never been given a good enough reason as to why they must wait for a paramedic for all patients.

Cllr Grew reported that no final decision has been made yet. Our MP Dr Hudson has been invited to meet with SAMS and AMPC to discuss the need for an ambulance and has agreed to come in the new year.

She reminded those present that the 1st reading of a parliamentary bill requiring defibrillators for schools and leisure centres took place 2 years ago, but the 2nd reading has not happened. Dr Hudson will investigate this and ask for it to be progressed.

5c/DEC/21 Nenthead Ward

The meeting was postponed due to the weather.

5d/DEC/21 Safer Streets update

Cllr Davies reported that the draft report will be sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner and a report made to the next council meeting.

6. Planning applications

6a/DEC/21 21/0791 Variation of condition 2 (carriageways, footways etc) to alter wording of condition from pre-commencement to prior to occupation due to grading of the site, attached to approval 09/0947. Broadpot Hill, Potters Loaning, Alston CA9 3AD for Mr S. Bell.

Recommended to make a request that hardcore is put down on the site to help keep mud off the road. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Miller. (12+ 1 abs)

6b/DEC/21 21/1016 Replacement of single glazed timber windows with double glazed uPVC, Church View Cottage. The Butts. Alston CA9 3JU for Mr A. Robertson

Cllrs Robertson and Best declared a pecuniary interest and left the room.

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

6c/DEC/21 21/1019 Proposed new dwelling. Raise Park. Brampton Road, Alston CA9 3AA for Mr & Mrs S. Harrison.

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

6d/DEC/21 21/1030 Full application. Replacement of existing conservatory with two-storey extension and addition of new conservatory on North elevation of new extension. Little Ghyll Cottage. Garrigill. Alston CA9 3HB for Mr I. Grey.

Cllr English declared an interest as a friend.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Grew (11+ 2 abs).

6e/DEC/21 21/0680 Full application. Replacement of garden shed with summerhouse/shed. 1 Jollybeard Gate, Alston CA9 3TG for Mrs E. McAneney.

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

7. Proposal for consideration: Alston Moor Parish Council is in full support of the statement published by Save Alston Moor's Services, the community group which includes the whole emergency response team of EMTs and CFRs and other residents. We agree that NWAS must:

- provide an ambulance vehicle, and support a crew made up of CFRs, ECFRs and EMTs
- enable blue light working to alert other road users and make an accident scene safe, even if specialist training to allow driving that contravenes the Highway Code is not provided
- permit transportation of patients whenever safe to do so, either because specialist medication is not required, or a paramedic is available to manage such medication
- enable members of the emergency response team to progress from CFR to ECFR to EMT through training designed for our context and available to those who work
- create a proper payment system for those trained to Level 4 (EMT)
- make paramedics available on Alston Moor as far as possible, by enabling them to undertake administration days at The Bungalow at the hospital, while being on call for ambulance callouts, thus allowing for administration of specialist medication where required during the transport of a patient to the Cumberland Infirmary.

The meeting closed for public participation.

A resident stated that it was positive news to hear that the ambulance would not be taken off Alston Moor, and that NWAS has a statutory obligation to deliver a service. The community deserves a properly staffed ambulance, and the concerns about the proposal for a 4x4 vehicle is that it is certain to fail a risk assessment in adverse conditions and be withdrawn at a later stage. (The reason for this is that the vehicle must be suitable for adverse conditions and paired with someone with advanced driving training – not a lone responder managing in poor conditions.) We should not accept the offer. The argument is about obligations.

The letter from the Lead Commission (CCG) was not seen by the Cumbrian CCG, what can be said is that it is not acceptable that it is impossible for NWAS to achieve the response times performance targets.

The proposal put to the parish council is fine, all the requests may not be provided, but there is a legal obligation to provide a fit-for-purpose service, and if it is not possible with the current arrangements the service can be outsourced. There are other business models, examples being a GP practice which

employs a paramedic (although this would not be practical for Alston under the current circumstances), or service provision by the St John's ambulance.

What we have at present is a sub-standard service which needs to be challenged.

A second resident reported that the statement submitted to the council had been put together by members of SAMS with the intent that there would be an agreed position from both organisations.

The meeting re-convened.

It was observed that there are many examples of the current horrendous waiting times, just yesterday someone was told that it could be 13 hours for someone who was in severe pain. There is also the unresolved question as to why the CFR, who can only attend some call outs, are called 5-7 minutes before the ambulance. Another concern is that two people are often needed to deal with a patient, the EMTs are not allowed to work alone, and the CFRs are not allowed to drive a vehicle. There is a need to recruit new people. The EMTs receive a small payment, but the CFRs are expected to do the job for nothing.

Cllr Grew confirmed that she is still a member of SAMS but would expect to be supported when representing the parish council on the group and if asked to do a radio interview.

Resolved to adopt the proposal submitted by SAMS. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (nem con)

8. Specifications for tree works – Tyne Willows & Firs Wood

Cllr Harrison and the clerk carried out a tree inspection, assisted by the contractor appointed last year who was invited along to confirm the works held over from last year. Around 5 trees in Firs Wood should come out due to disease and proximity to paths. There is a dead ash tree besides the riverside path on Tyne Willows and other works identified as priority by the SKS tree report. The list has not been finalised as a further check needs to be undertaken first following Storm Arwen and there is a query on whether the small trees growing out of the wall besides the cemetery should be taken out before they become more of a problem.

Resolved that the small trees growing out of the wall besides the cemetery should be included in the specs. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Harrison. (12+ 1-)

9. Ratification of Appointment of representative to Alston Ambulance meetings

Cllr Hanley attended the latest Alston Ambulance meeting, as no replacement for former councillor Laura Seaton had been appointed. He is willing to continue to attend.

Resolved to appoint Cllr Hanley as a representative to Alston Ambulance meetings. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

10. Consultations & Correspondence

10a/DEC/21 Questionnaire from Eden District Council on devolution of assets

A questionnaire was received from Eden District Council Democratic Services asking for a response by 3rd December, before most parish councils would have the opportunity to meet and following a discussion between several parish clerks it was agreed that Penrith would ask CALC to respond on behalf of parish councils. The clerk has informed Eden of the resolutions made under 13/NOV/21 requesting a return of the footway lights, and for Eden or the new unitary to continue to maintain the public toilets.

It is probable that further discussion will be needed and CALC is of the view that assets and services of the district council would be initially assumed by the new authority to allow for the new council to be established on a legal footing and devolution of assets or services will then be led by either the shadow or new council.

Cllr Hanley agreed to report back on any updates from Eden's Task and Finish group and the main council. **Action MH.**

10b/DEC/21 Eden District Council Local Heritage Listing campaign

An e-mail was received from Eden District Council stating that a Local Heritage Listing campaign has been set up designed to help protect commonplace heritage assets valued by people locally but with no existing protection under planning law. Local listing does not provide any additional planning controls but the fact that a building or site is included on a local list means it is a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application. People are invited to use the new app to pinpoint those places they would like to see safeguarded: www.eden.gov.uk/local-heritage-list

10c/DEC/21 Other Correspondence (Appendix 1)

Circulated with the minutes.

11. Accounts for payment (Appendix 2)

<i>Summary of accounts for payment:</i> -	£1,569.21
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting:</i>	£1,129.26
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting:</i> -	£1,208.72

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 Green and seconded by Cllr English (12+ 1 abs)

12. Half year internal audit report

The half year internal audit report was circulated and will be posted to the website.

Resolved to accept the recommendations from the internal auditor. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (12+ 1 abs)

13. Proposal for a working group to review banking arrangements

The clerk reported that it is several months since she asked the council to review the banking arrangements as the amount held in HSBC exceeds the FSCS level. There are various options that can be considered but the decision needs to be made by the council and the most practical way forward is for a working group to look at these.

The chair reported that in his opinion the audit arrangements were adequate, and that a separate finance committee was not needed as it had never found occasion to meet.

Resolved to appoint a working group to replace the finance committee with existing members. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (11+ 1- 1abs)

14. Precept meeting preparation & requests for funding including a proposal to consider the addition of changing rooms to Tyne Willows Pavilion

The clerk has made a start on preparing a budget for next year, but still needs an indication of whether funding is required for the Town Hall and some of the other organisations that have not yet returned their forms.

Noted that all the organisations are asked to return their forms for the deadline.

Cllr Miller confirmed that the Gala are not applying for funding next year. The clerk was asked to contact Cllr Robson about an allocation towards the Nenthead Fountain. **Action C1.**

The clerk reported that with the revival of an Alston football team the lack of changing rooms has become an issue and it has been suggested that an extension to the pavilion is needed to accommodate them.

The suggestion for a temporary solution using a storage container raised off the ground and fitted out with facilities was not considered suitable. Cllr Best reported that the footballers have been considering options and the possibility of grant funding. It was noted that Eden District Council had allocated a large sum to Penrith Football Club. It was suggested that the youth teams should be involved.

A reminder was issued that any proposals must go through the parish council who would need to discuss planning requests with the QEII Fields in Trust.

Resolved to support in principle the addition of changing rooms to Tyne Willows Pavilion, subject to a firm proposal. Proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Miller. (nem con)

15. Agenda items for next meeting & urgent business for information

A reminder that the 'declaration of interests' book is back and can be used to write up declarations of interests.

There were two recent accidents on Fiddlers, and although a request for a crash barrier had been made to the Traffic Management meeting no firm details as to where it is needed have been sent. Further information is requested.

The meeting closed to the public to consider quotations for walling repairs, the youth shelter glass panels and garden valuations.

16. Tyne Willows access road wall

One quote was received for £200.

As it is currently difficult to find tradesmen to quote it was:

Resolved to accept the quote of £200 from Michael Maguire to repair the damaged section of the wall alongside Tyne Willows access road. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem com)

17. Youth Shelter glass panels

No quotes have been received following advertisement on Facebook, so it will be necessary to consider a direct approach to local builders. Noted that the parish council has agreed to look at repair costs but have not agreed to take on the ownership of the shelter.

18. Garden valuations

It was agreed to hold over until the sale of land protocol has been agreed.

The meeting closed at 9pm

Signed:

Dated: