

Alston Moor Planning Group (Zoom Meeting) 12.7.22.

Report by Michael Hanley

Present: Chair: Amy Frith (Community Development Officer, , Eden), Stephen Carruthers (Economic Development Officer, EDC), Michael Hanley, Kathy Reeds (ALATI), Sonia Kempsey, David Hymers, Mark Wojtecki, Linda Farrer (Fairhill Trust), Ian Grey, Chris Johnson.

1. Economic Development: Create a promotional campaign for Alston Moor. AMBA have talked about this but would struggle to do this due to capacity issues.
2. Create Community Kitchen(Social Inclusion): Previously suggested The Masonic Hall as a base. No further progress so far.
3. Men in Sheds (Social Inclusion): Currently thinking about moving to larger premises from behind the town hall. Current premises doesn't have sufficient room as the group has been given a large stock of tools. There is a plan to provide a rent-a-tool service. It was noted that women have been attending and Michael Hanley (MH) asked whether the name could be changed to Men and Women in Sheds. Mark Wojteki (MW) said that there was concern that if women were allowed in, that might put some men off. They could have one day just for men and the other times open to everyone. Linda Farrer: I have been there a couple of times and every time there were women in. Women have been doing up the garden and it is looking quite tidy now.
4. Emergency Plan for Alston Moor (Resilience): Raymond Miller (RM): There have been no recent AMERG meetings. AMERG still has some funds.
5. Create space for Youth (Social Inclusion): Amy Frith (AF): There has been a survey and there were 62 responses from the young people of Alston concerning a youth club and which day of the week would be best for it to be held. Most young people want a place where they can meet up with others. We have a venue, SKS, after school. I have been talking to Oaklea Trust and they might have someone (a youth worker) who would be able to come and organise it. Also Lissie Sharp had talked about funding for a portakabin, as a place for young people. Sonia Kempsey (SK): Would they be happy having it at the school? AF: Nobody raised anything about where they preferred to have it. We can ask them if they would be happy to have it at school. Probably using one of the classrooms that is not used much. Kathy Reeds (KR): What happens to the pupils who are bussed home? AF: That is a problem. David Hymers (DH): We have premises in the station, but there is no heating. RM: This is news to me about the Men in Sheds moving out of the Town Hall. SK: They will not be moving until they find somewhere else. AF: It is an idea they have had, it won't be any time soon. Chris Johnson (CJ): Ian (husband) said Men in Sheds would like to go to the Top (beside the old police station).
6. Food Growing Initiative (Social Inclusion): MH had talked about someone who had given chilli peppers to the Wholefood Shop to be given away who had made enquiries about setting up a food growing cooperative on AM. MH called in to the shop but no one could remember who this person was. MH will continue to make enquiries.
7. Motor Home Hookup Site (Economic Development): No progress.
8. Producers Market (Economic Development): Market was at Fairhill in May. Well attended and increased numbers of traders. MW: Last one was at The Gala. Feedback from traders was good. RM: There were a lot of visitors. AF: Are there a consistent number of stall holders? MW: Its all up from last year. We have more people. We are getting a few people coming from outside the area.
9. Ashgill Parking Area (Economic Development): Stephen Carruthers: We have received

expressions of interest for various projects: High Mill and the Observatory. These will go before the cabinet of EDC who will make a decision (concerning funding) by the end of July. We had expected about 35 expressions of interest but got over 100.

SK: An expression of interest does not mean the project will be funded.

DH: Projects which are ready, tend to get the first tranche of funding. An EOI doesn't give an automatic access to funding.

10. High Mill (Economic Development): SK: I had asked that a visitors centre should be added.

11. Observatory Dark Skies Project: Planning application has been submitted. If EDC funding is forthcoming, it should be complete by Christmas. DH: discussed the interest in the project from a university group.

AOB: RM: Alston Gala will be doing a drive-in movie in August.

KR: Asked about the volunteer group. ALATI has lost another trustee and will have difficulty continuing. RM: £4k was put aside a few years ago to organise a volunteer group. Nick Mason (NM) was involved but he has moved away. CJ: We could go back to NM. I asked him at the last precept meeting and he said he was still interested but nothing has happened. AF: This is a district wide problem. RM: We need an influx of young people involved in these groups.

Next Meeting: 13.9.22.