



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 5th September 2022 in Nenthead Village Hall at 7pm.

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

Apologies: Cllr: N. English

Absent: Cllr I. Lindley

Declarations of interest: none.

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 1st August 2022 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Davies. (10+ 3 abs)

2. Chair, County & District reports

Chair's report

A minute silence was held for former Cllr Caroline Ferguson.

The chair reported that 3 local events had been well supported, the Sheep Show was especially busy this year.

The seat in memory of Vince Peart at the entrance to The Firs is now in place.

There has been an improvement in the excessive use of e-mails, members were thanked for their co-operation.

County Council

Apologies from Cllr Driver.

District Council

Apologies from Cllr Sharp.

Reports from Cllr Hanley are posted to the website.

Alston Moor Project – a meeting was held to progress the project brought to the council by Cumbria Education Centre last month. A similar urban project was done in the west of the county last year, and the intent is to bid for funding to support local projects and new groups such as the Alston Community Workshop and the Men in Sheds. The intent is to submit a bid to the National Lottery with the exact amount to be determined, but the aim is to have it ready in January for it to be determined by April.

Westmorland & Furness Council – Overview and scrutiny committee. Cllr Hanley raised the issue of the isolation of Alston Moor, the ambulance situation and the need to support Bonds factory. He was asked to attend a cabinet meeting on 12th September to discuss this further.

Eden District Council – Overview and scrutiny committee who met to consider a corporate performance report looking at how well EDC does as an entity. Matters considered included the siting of the proposed 120 EV charging sites, dog faeces and the purchase of a 'poo' vacuum cleaner, funding for play areas and S106 contributions.

Questions

Information on funding for disabled toilets request by Cllr Ho. **Action MH.**

Query about the lack of monitoring of S106 contributions. This is now being followed up and systems put in place.

A query about funding for pupils to go to Durham college. Cllr Hanley offered to follow this up with Cllr Sharp. **Action MH.**

3. Public participation

Held over until agenda item 6b.

4. Progress reports

4a/SEPT/22 Tyne Willows

Re: 6fAUG/22 **Footpaths** - the clerk contacted the Cumberland Hotel and NWEL about the concrete deposited on the footpath down to Tyne Willows. The Cumberland said they would ask their builders about removing the top section. NWEL would not accept responsibility for the lower section due to the length of time that has passed, although the clerk reminded them that they had not needed to re-instate the grass on the field after their contractors' equipment left deep ruts in it so the work could be done as a gesture of goodwill. To date no action has been taken on either sections of concrete.

Re: 5a/AUG/22 **Seats** - still to fit.

Re: 9/AUG/22 **Environment Agency lease** – the clerk contacted the agents who will be in touch after discussions with the Environment Agency.

It was reported that there are several holes on the field that could be a trip hazard, and which should be filled in. Cllr Robinson offered to fill them in with sand and earth. **Action RR.**

The clerk was asked to update the hire agreement. **Action CI.**

4b/SEPT/22 Tyne Willows Garden Sales update

Two residents confirmed they would like to go ahead with the purchase of their plots and put the council in touch with their solicitor. The clerk notified Cartmell Shepherd, who are the council's solicitors and is waiting to hear back from them.

4c/SEPT/22 Community Safety Charter

Re: 10/AUG/22 The council is now signed up to the Community Safety Charter. There are training models which can be forwarded to anyone who would like this information.

5. Reports from representatives

5a/SEPT/22 NWAS Alston Moor Working Group

Cllr Grew reported on the meeting held on the 19th August where she confirmed that the parish council would not be involved with the letter sent to residents by NWAS to explain what is happening. Residents can apply directly to NWAS for a copy of the drop-in session report and a hard copy is to be sent to the clerk and Local Links.

Members observed that there are concerns about the delay to receiving replacement pads for the defibrillators. The clerk reported that replacements have been sent for the Alston defibrillator, but it has not yet been returned from Penrith ambulance station. She was told by NWAS that the replacements were originally ordered last November and have just arrived but will need to be couriered out to Garrigill and Nenthead. The member of staff usually tasked with this matters is off sick so there was no-one to attend the sheep show to promote the CFR scheme or return the Alston Defibrillator, although hopefully one of the CFRs will be able to collect it.

5b/SEPT/22 Nenthead Ward

No new updates.

5c/SEPT/22 High Mill

Cllr Robertson reported that a condition structural survey on the waterwheel building was carried out last week.

6. Planning applications

6a/SEPT/22 22/0582 Variation of condition 2 (plans compliance) for amendments including changes to the fenestration and internal alterations attached to approval 19/0604. High Mill, Northern Units, The Butts, Alston for Mr P. Olive.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Hanley (12+ 1 abs)

6b/SEPT/22 22/0588 Tree Works (CA). Fell 8 no. conifers in Conservation Area. Garage workshop opposite village hall, Bridge End, Garrigill CA9 3DS for Mr Simon Young.

The meeting closed for public participation.

A resident stated his concern for the welfare of the red squirrel population in Garrigill if the proposals were approved. He had contacted the Forestry Manager from Lowther, who pointed out that reds spend 80% of their time in the trees, as do birds to avoid sparrowhawks. He also contacted a local tree surgeon who stated that the trees could be lowered by one third without killing them.

There are 9 conifers not 8 as listed in the application and the photo of tree no 7 fails to show the squirrels drey, although the report in the application stated there were none.

The site is popular with photographers who come to photograph the squirrels and the many birds living nearby.

The meeting re-convened.

Cllr Grew reported that she has received numerous e-mails about the application, and they were still coming in during the meeting. Residents have pointed out that the couple of branches overhanging the workshop are from trees along the riverside and not the trees in the application. They also stressed that priority should be given to the wildlife, especially as the workshop is not currently in use and the applicants live outside the local area.

The clerk reported that shortly before the meeting an e-mail came it from another resident to demonstrate the link between the conifers in the application and the adjoining field.

Recommended for refusal due to the need to preserve our red squirrel population. It is recommended that advice be sought from red squirrel organisations. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Harrison. (10+ 2- 1 abs) *Cllr Hanley requested that his abstention be recorded.*

6c/SEPT/22 22/0586 Full application. Replacement dwelling. Redundant dwelling and barn North West of Harbut Law, Alston CA9 3BD for Ms Vicky Younger and Mr Mark Goodfellow.

Noted that the applicants had produced a good application which included consultation with Historic England.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Hattersley (12+ 1 abs) *Cllr Hanley requested that his abstention be recorded.*

6d/SEPT/22 22/0593 Tree Works (CA) T1 (Yew) – fell to ground level: T2 (Lilac) – reduce crown to manageable size. West View, Garrigill, CA9 3DY for Mr Michael Collins – Collins Gardening & Tree Services.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Miller (12+ 1-)

7. High Mill car park: proposal that Alston Moor Parish Council accepts the request to take on the car park at High Mill after completion

A letter was received from Ian Grey, Alston Moor Business Association chair (circulated) stating that they recently submitted an 'Expression of Interest' in creating a car park on the site of the derelict factory. AMBA is the applicant as this is not a project that can be delivered and funded by a private individual or commercial operation.

The outline proposal was approved by the Assessors and a more detailed full application was prepared for 31st August. The intent is to acquire the redundant factory and demolish it to create space for between 20-25 cars, some of which will be 'residents only', along with an area for motor cycle parking and the installation of 3-6 electric vehicle charging points. This is estimated to cost around £300,000 funded predominantly by the 'Levelling Up' funding obtained via Eden District Council. The proposal is supported by most Front Street businesses and residents on social media sites.

AMBA had pre-application advice from EDC, who are supportive, as are Historic England and EDC's Conservation Officer. The one area of concern is over traffic movements in the Butts, but there are ways to alleviate this, and it is hoped to work with Highways to develop a range of solutions.

On completion the intention is to hand the facility over to the parish council giving the council ownership of a piece of land in the town centre along with a fully operational car park. Revenue will be generated by the EV charging points and possibly the sale of resident parking permits. The EVCP can be outsourced to an external provider to minimise the council's involvement.

It is anticipated that the terms of the grant will require the car park remains in operation for a minimum of 10 years.

The parish council were asked if they would be willing to accept the asset transfer of the finished and operational car park should the grant application be accepted.

Members noted that it would be a positive move for the council to take on eventual ownership of the car park, as the issue of the lack of parking for visitors and residents has been a long-standing complaint. It will also benefit residents from the villages who need to park to go shopping in town.

Resolved to accept ownership of the completed car park project at High Mill. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Robinson (12+ 1 abs)

8. Cost of Living Crisis

Cllr Ransom reported that as chair of AMERG he was about to hold a meeting to discuss concerns about rising utility bills and winter cold spells and anticipated that there would be a need for funding and volunteers. It was observed that the County Council are opening libraries to help keep residents warm when they cannot heat their own home, but it was not known if Local Links were involved.

Cllr Miller reported on a proposal to apply for funding to heat the Town Hall main hall during the day and to provide warm drinks and simple refreshments such as soup and buns.

Garrigill and Nenthead also have the village halls designated as 'safe places', and the Masonic Hall is open for Saturday coffee mornings. There is a problem for residents who then have to go home to a cold house, but aim will be to help with warm spaces during the day.

It was agreed that AMERG should take a lead, for Cllr Ransom to investigate what funding might be available and to report back. **Action GR.**

Noted that the hospital hopes to open the day care centre and are looking for volunteers to help.

9. Christmas lights planning

The clerk reported that the council should start to think about what it wanted to do for Christmas lights this year in the three communities. A total of £1,000 has been allocated for the current year.

Cllrs Robinson and Hanley offered to check the Alston lights to identify what might be needed as replacements and the clerk was asked to contact G. Glendinning to ask if he wanted to continue as electrician. **Action RR, MH, CI.**

It was confirmed that the Nenthead Ward have handed over responsibility for the Nenthead lights to the Nenthead Community Project who recently raised £200 they intend to put towards their lights.

Garrigill plan to build up their Christmas lights and will check to see what is needed. **Action EG.**

10. Consultations & Correspondence

10a/SEPT/22 Proposed changes to the Eden Speed Limit Order

An e-mail was received from Highways stating that an informal consultation was underway which included two sites within Alston Moor. After representations have been considered and possible changes made the proposals will be presented to Eden Local Committee seeking approval to progress to formal consultation. The proposals will then be advertised followed by a second round of consultations. The advertised proposals along with responses received will then be considered by Eden Local Committee and a decision made on whether to proceed with any changes. The deadline for comments is Monday 12th September.

Garrigill proposed speed limit – Cllr Grew reported that some residents commented that they would prefer a 20mph speed limit since children play around the village green, and several have horses they ride around the village.

When the police attended a council meeting to ask for volunteers to do community speed checks, they were astonished that Garrigill had no speed limit.

Resolved to accept the proposal for a 30mph speed limit for Garrigill on the C3039 and U3227. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (11+ 1- 1 abs)

Lowbyer proposed speed limit – a proposal to extend the speed limit to the Gatehouse was not supported and the amendment put to the meeting.

Resolved to support the proposal for a 40mph extension to the A686 at Lowbyer. Proposed by Cllr Harrison and seconded by Cllr Miller. (8+ 1- 4 abs)

10b/SEPT/22 COP26 Community Fund opportunities

The COP26 community fund will support community-led sustainability projects across the Eden district. These include tackling climate change, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and reducing carbon emissions. The clerk reported that she had contacted EDC to ask if improvement works to the Dooker would qualify and it was not ruled out, however Rivers Trust funding may be more suitable. Cllr Harrison reported that funding might be available later in the year, and he would discuss it with them when they come up in October.

The clerk was asked to circulate information on the grant again. **Action CI.**

10c/SEPT/22 Correspondence (Appendix 1)

No comments received.

11. Recommendations from the DGP Committee & Alston Town Hall

11a/SEPT/22 Recommendation to approve the draft Investment Strategy, officer/councillor protocol, protocol for AMPC Facebook page (appendix to Social Media policy) and performance review policy.

Resolved to accept all four policies. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Davies. (11+ 1- 1abs)

11b/SEPT/22 Recommendation that the DGP Committee is stood down and replaced by a working group [and?] that the Scheme of Delegation for the council and its charities is updated.

Resolved to accept the above recommendation from the DGP Committee. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Robinson (12+ 1-)

11c/SEPT/22 Recommendation to set up a Unity Trust multipay card.

Resolved to accept the recommendation to set up a Unity Trust multipay card. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Robertson. (12+ 1-)

The clerk reported that before this could be done the working group would need to meet to recommend a monthly credit limit and single transaction limit.

11d/SEPT/22 Recommendation to apply for a Unity Trust deposit account (up to the FSCS limit).

Resolved to accept recommendation to apply for a Unity Trust deposit account. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Ransom. (12+ 1-)

11e/SEPT/22 Recommendation to increase the lower limit from £100 to £500 Contracts s.11 (h) of the Financial Regulations

Resolved to accept the recommendation to increase the lower limit requirement of £100 to £500 for small contracts in the Financial Regulations. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Davies. (12+ 1-)

12. Accounts for payment (Appendix 2)

Summary of accounts for payment:	£1,104.00
Summary of income received since last meeting:	£65.00
Summary of accounts paid since last meeting:	£905.88

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 Robinson (12+ 1 abs)

13. Agenda items for next meeting and urgent business to report

13a/SEPT/22 British Legion wreaths

The clerk reported that the British Legion representative needed to know if the council wanted 4 wreaths this year. Representatives to lay the wreaths in each community can be agreed next month, but it was confirmed that all 4 are required.

13b/SEPT/22 Traffic Management

The August meeting was cancelled due to the number of Highways officers on holiday and will re-convene on 23rd September. A resident has asked for a zebra crossing from Jollybeard to the Fairhill Recreation Ground. It was pointed out that Nenthead has a crossing to the play area.

13c/SEPT/22 Garrigill Cemetery branches

It was reported that EDC have not yet cleared away the branches.

13d/SEPT/22 Street cleaner holidays

It was reported that when the street cleaner is on holiday no-one comes out to attend to the bins which rapidly become overloaded, so Eden should be asked to make arrangements during the cleaner's holidays.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed:

Dated: