



# ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Masonic Hall at 7pm.

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

**Apologies:** Cllrs: N. English, C. Harrison, R. Robinson, P. Best.

**Absent:** none

**Declarations of interest:** Cllr Ho – Alston Bowling Club, Cllr Robertson – Alston Moor Historical Society, Cllrs Cooper, Hattersley & Miller – Alston Gala, Cllr Davies – Fairhill Recreation Grounds & Alston Moor Partnership.

## **1. Volunteer Co-ordinator project**

An e-mail was received from N. Mason confirming that he was unable to progress the volunteer co-ordinator project. A letter was received from a local resident requesting that the allocated funds of £4,875 be retained following discussions at an Area Planning meeting. Although the County Council at their most recent meeting indicated they can fund a review of volunteering needs for local organisations and short u-tube clips, it has been suggested that someone could be employed for follow up work.

*The meeting closed to allow a resident to speak.*

*It was explained that a problem with recruiting volunteers to help in local organisations was identified as an issue during the consultations for the Community Plan. It tends to be the same people coming forward and these people are overstretched. The intention for the volunteer co-ordinator post would be for someone committed to work on a regular basis to find volunteers. Alston Moor is in a fragile situation and with the new unitary authority about to replace the district and county councils we may not be in the best position to obtain funding, so there will be a need for consistent volunteer work. The original proposal was for a 9 month post, with a 3 month probationary period.*

*The meeting re-convened.*

Members responded to state that it had been difficult to find anyone willing to take on the work, the post had been advertised with only 3 people coming forward, and 2 dropped out before the interview. It was questioned whether further attempts would attract interest. The County Council at the last Area Planning meeting had offered funding, and a representative from CVS gave advice on recruiting volunteers.

It was observed that a more valuable use of a project officer would be to find someone who could help with sourcing funding to bring in grants from outside the community.

**Resolved** to return the earmarked funds for the volunteer co-ordinator to the general reserves, and if at a later date someone is found who can take on the job, the project could be helped of general reserves. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Ransom. (6+ 2- 2 abs)

Cllr Miller reported that 3 – 4 people had come forward at the Area Planning meeting willing to help compile a list of local organisations and their needs.

## **2. Review of contracts**

A list of contracts for 2022-2023 was circulated.

**Resolved** to accept the contract list. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

## **3. Precept 2022 to 2023**

### **Establishment**

Agreed at £20,000

### **Annual donations**

Agreed at £3 850 each for village halls, play areas and Tyne Willows pavilion.

### **Land/property management**

Agreed at £8,000

It was noted that the potholes on Tyne Willows need dealing with, but there is no point in re-tarmacking until the work on the pavilion is completed.

Woodland management is a significant cost to the council, and it will be necessary to update the tree survey for Henderson's wood, Firs Wood, and Garrigill Village Green this year.

#### **Community grants/General purpose/S137**

Agreed at £2000.

#### **Alston Mill Race**

This is an ongoing contract with K. Liverick to keep the Mill Race clear of debris to avoid problems with water backing up and potentially causing flooding to properties.

Agreed at £500.

#### **Christmas lights**

As the council has taken on the AMBA Christmas lights it will be necessary to employ a contractor to manage the putting up and taking down of the trees. Cllr Cooper reported that he had inspected the trees and lights, some of which may need replacing next year.

Agreed at £1,500

#### **Fairhill Recreation grounds car park**

This is funding towards the £520 annual lease for the car park. The remaining £200 is allocated as part of the annual donation.

Agreed at £320.

#### **Garrigill and Nenthead public toilets**

Nenthead requested £1,500 from the parish council this year to cover running costs.

Agreed at £550 for Garrigill Village Hall and £ 550 for Nenthead Public Toilets.

It was noted that Nenthead had not applied for the £500 annual contribution offered by Eden District Council which should help make up the shortfall.

#### **Nenthead Community Works**

Agreed at £1,200

#### **Alston Town Hall**

A request was received for assistance with upgrades to the fabric of the building. It was reported that the new boiler cost over £10k and the leak in the roof fixed so that it is now watertight. However, there is still a backlog of work to be done including improvements to the lighting, firestops for the doors, the windows, security systems and the sound system.

Agreed at £10,000.

#### **Alston Moor Historical Society archives**

The request is for assistance with rental costs.

Agreed at £2,000.

#### **Devolved services – footway lights**

Although Eden District Council have agreed to waive the service charge this year, there will still be electricity costs to cover.

Agreed to allocate £1,000 and to use the earmarked funds for costs over this amount.

#### **Chairman's Allowance**

Agreed at £100.

#### **Alston Gala**

Agreed at £1,000.

#### **PTA Alston Fire show**

A request was received for funding to enable the continuation of the fireworks display. Good for families

Agreed at £1,000.

#### **Alston Music Festival**

A request was made for funding towards the cost of running the music festival.

Agreed at £500.

#### **Alston Bowling Club**

A request was received for funding to be put towards a cordless hedge trimmer and blower.

Agreed at £300.

#### **Community Workshop (AMP)**

The request was for assistance with running costs for the Men's Shed and Repair Café.

Agreed at £1,000.

#### **Coronation**

This was included should the council want to fund any activities or memorabilia.

It was agreed that no allocation would be made.

### **Defibrillators**

Cllr Grew reported that she had requested funding for 3 additional defibrillators. One for Tyne Willows Pavilion, and for the two schools. The government had talked about putting defibrillators on leisure centres and schools, but the second reading of the bill did not happen. Defibrillators on the outside of school buildings are not the responsibility of the school, but it is hoped the staff would monitor them.

Members commented that it is equally important that people are confident about using defibrillators – training was halted during covid, but sessions could be run during the summer as NWAS could put on training as can the British Heart foundation.

Agreed at £1,500 for a defibrillator at Tyne Willows, and to discuss with Alston Fitness Club. Funding for a second can use the ringfenced defibrillator fund.

### **Elections**

WFC have agreed to fund the cost of parish elections unless they co-inside with government elections. No allocation was made.

**Resolved** to set the precept for 2023-2024 at £57,370 and to ask Eden District Council for £56,347 (less the CTRS of £1,023). Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Davies. (10+ 1 abs)

The council tax base figure is £723.61. A band D property will pay £77.87 per year or £6.49 monthly. This is a reduction of 2.32% from last year.

**Resolved** to take £6,000 from the reserves for public toilets and return this sum to general reserves. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Davies. (nem con)

Establishment	£20,000
Annual donations	£3,850
Property management	£8,000
General Purposes/Community Awards/S137	£2,500
Alston Mill Race	£500
Christmas lights	£1,500
Alston Recreation Grounds car park	£320
Public toilets	£1,100
Nenthead Community Works	£1,200
Alston Town Hall	£10,000
Alston Moor Historical Society	£2,000
Footway lights	£1,000
Chairman's allowance	£100
Alston Gala	£1,000
PTA – Alston Fireworks Show	£1,000
Alston Music Festival	£500
Alston Bowling Club	£300
Community Workshop	£1,000
Defibrillators	£1,500
	<b>£57,370</b>
Less CTRS	<b>-£1,023</b>
	<b><u>£56,347</u></b>

### **4. Planning applications**

3/22/9006 Section 73 application to vary conditions 1,2,3,4,24 & 25 of planning permission 3/12/90006 in order to extend the time period for mineral extraction, amend the restoration scheme and adjust fencing. Leipsic Quarry, access road to Moscow from the A686 Clarghyll, Alston CA9 3NQ

**Recommended** for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robertson. (10+ 1 abs)

**5. Urgent tree works Firs Wood and Tyne Willows**

Cllrs Davies and Harrison inspected storm damaged trees in Firs Wood and Tyne Willows with the contractor. There is a crack in a large branch overhanging the Dooker permissive path and cracks in a tree alongside the riverside permissive path on Tyne Willows. There are other trees that will need attention later but are not an immediate danger to the public. The branch from the beech tree in Firs Wood is situated on a very steep slope and will need to be extracted across the river.

A quote has been obtained for £950 from Collins Gardening and Tree Services.

Members noted that although financial regulations advise 3 quotes, when possible, it should be classed as emergency work in the interest of public safety.

Cllr Davies reported that there are two trees alongside the river in Henderson’s Wood that have split, the damage is not urgent at present, but he will carry out regular inspections to check for movement.

**Resolved** to accept the quote of £950. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Davies. (9+ 1- 1 abs)

Note for information. Cllr Miller will hold a surgery at the Warm hub on Monday morning for an hour and invited anyone who was able to come along to join him.

*The meeting closed at 8.30 pm*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....