



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 6th March 2023 in the Masonic Hall at 7pm.

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

Apologies: Cllrs: N. English, S. Hattersley.

Absent: none

Declarations of interest: none

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 6th February 2023 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Robinson (9+ 3 abs)

2. Plans for High Mill

The new owner, Bucolic Products, reported on plans to renovate High Mill which he hopes to use for his woodworking business, offer other workshops for let, and set up a heritage centre featuring the wheelhouse. He has had a lot of interest from local artists, a rug maker and potter, as well as the Men's Shed. The aim is to restore the building to its former glory, and anyone interested in looking round will be welcome to look around.

Members asked about car parking as access into the Butts must be maintained for emergency vehicles and the people who live there. There are concerns that the parking indicated on the plans might not be adequate. BP explained that there is the parking indicated on the plans and that there could be a designated loading bay. Tenants could be asked to park outside of Front Street, some might live locally so would not need to drive and visitors will have to use the public parking spaces.

The Traffic Management meeting are to be asked about providing markings to enable emergency vehicle access. **Action CI.**

It was confirmed that the owner wants to keep the wheelhouse but is interested in a lease with Alston Moor Partnership.

Members stated that Alston needs new businesses, they are aware that parking in the town centre will always be a problem, but they wished the new venture every success.

3. Chair & District reports

Chair's report

The chair reported that members continued to receive e-mails from one councillor about past events, but the council needs to look to the future and advised that if more are sent, they should not be answered.

District Council

Cllr Sharp reported on the following:

Firs Estate woodland – the woodland owned by Eden District Council at the back of the Firs has been cut back from the fence, which is to be inspected by an officer. This work should be done before the end of March.

Dereliction of property – the Enforcement Officer may issue an Enforcement notice if there is no progress with work on Steel House and has been in contact with the new owners of the old Methodist Chapel. The Bluebell and Salvin Cottage have been reported over concerns about falling tiles and windows. Tyne Café was reported, but has now been sold, the windows sealed off and fenced to make safe.

Tyne Willows Pavilion extension – Officers from the Community team are working with the Fitness Club and Football Association about the project.

Fairhill Pump Track – the Community team were shown the plans for Fairhill, where it is hoped to start work on the 30th March.

Questions - the old reading room in Garrigill is in poor condition, with no work done on it for the last 4 years. The rat catcher was called out following reports of rats but was unable to gain access to the building. It was suggested the member liaise with Cllr Sharp.

Cllr Hanley reported on the following:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – there is a budget gap in WFC of £19 million. WFC were required to consider levelling up which has resulted in an increase in council tax of £1.60 per week for band D properties, an increase of 4.99%. Eden, as the lowest spending council, will see the biggest increase in council tax. Some of the increase is due to the Police and Crime Commissioner taking on Fire and Rescue.

The government has accepted that as a rural area the authority is eligible for a sparsity grant and WFC is planning to double the council tax on second homes.

Questions

In response to an objection to the increase, which seemed unfair as Eden were the only debt-free council, it was explained that the government required WFC to level up and as part of the harmonisation the intention is to improve services across the authority.

4. Public participation

A resident explained that the application for a Community Grant will now come from the Community Workshop and not Alston Moor Partnership as the group has now registered as a charitable community group and is setting up their own bank account. Research into local community groups has identified 75 so far.

It was suggested that blank space be left in the directory for people to add emergency contact details themselves. It was also suggested putting a digital version on-line.

A second resident stated that he was pleased with the support for the plans for High Mill, although sorry that it was not possible to progress the bigger scheme.

He found it disappointing that the council are obliged to keep making the same points week after week.

5. Progress reports

5a/MAR/23 Isaac's Tea Trail – Roughside & Ashgill waterfall path

Re: 7/FEB/23 An e-mail was received from the organiser of Isaac's Tea Trail thanking the council for their interest in assisting with funding. He will contact the landowner's agent as nothing further can be done without the owner's consent.

The clerk was given a mobile contact number for the owners of the Ashgill waterfall site and has left a message asking them to contact her but has not yet received a reply. The resident who passed this information on has spoken with them and thinks they are keen to sort out the anomaly on the definitive map but are very busy people based out of the county.

The clerk reported that she spoke to the ROW officer who, although moving to the Cumberland authority, will pass on the proposals put forward to the previous owners to the officer taking over from him and if the owners contact him, it can be discussed further.

5b/MAR/23 Ownership of Nenthead Fountain

Re: 10/FEB/23 One possible avenue to resolve the issue of responsibility for Nenthead Fountain might have been to claim adverse possession through the Land Registry. However, this option is not available for structures on the public highway. Cumbria Highways were then contacted, and the council were advised that any group wishing to claim ownership would need to insure and indemnify the authority. WFC could then draw up an Indemnity Agreement with the parish council or another organisation. Highways confirmed that the Indemnity cover with Zurich should be adequate.

It was agreed that the best course of action would be to wait until the new council is in place before reaching a decision on progressing a formal agreement.

5c/MAR/23 Financial review update

Re: 4b/FEB/23 The chair, Cllr English, the clerk and an officer from Eden District Council met with a representative from TIAA who will be carrying out the review, arranged at the request of the chair, former chair and with the full support of the clerk. The proposed tasks were discussed and agreed with a remit to carry out an independent appraisal of the financial procedures to provide assurance that they have been complied with, that there is no evidence of impropriety and to identify any areas of potential improvement. The review will also look at the draft scheme of delegation.

5d/MAR/23 Hillersdon Terrace sign

Re: 5c/FEB/23 A site on the Hillersdon Terrace side of the access road to Hillersdon and Vicarage Terrace was suggested by the ward chair. As Highways were unable to confirm ownership of the wall, the sign will be erected on poles near the start of the grass verge. Eden District Council have agreed to install it.

5e/MAR/23 Sale of garden land, Townfoot

Cartmel Shepherd confirmed the sale of two garden plots to householders and have deposited the purchase price in the council's bank account. The council's costs were paid by the purchasers.

5f/MAR/23 Fallen tree across permissive path, Firs Walk

Last week, the council were contacted about a tree that had fallen across the permissive path close to the river at the Dukker. The clerk and Cllr Harrison inspected the damage; a large tree had fallen at a narrow section of the path, and if a member of the public had tried to clear it there was a risk that the tree might slip down the bank and cause injury. It was classed as an emergency and Collins Gardening Services were asked to remove it. Cllr Harrison has offered to assist if needed.

5g/MAR/23 Decision notice on Town Hall Flagpole

A decision notice for the application for a flagpole on the grass in front of the Town Hall was received today and permission granted with conditions. Building Control have confirmed that there are no building regulations to follow.

It was agreed to order the flagpole, flag and to seek quotes for a contractor to install it. **Action CI.**

6. Reports from representatives

6a/MAR/23 Warm Hubs

Cllr Miller reported that the Warm Hub continues to be popular with nearly 50 attending today. Funding should hold out until the end of April, although users would like it to carry on as it has helped people get out of the house. Continuing on will depend upon funding and finding volunteers to run it over the summer. It was suggested taking a few weeks' break and, finances permitting, starting up again for the colder weather.

6b/MAR/23 Nenthead Ward

There was nothing further to report other than the next meeting will be on 20th March.

6c/MAR/23 Alston Football Association

Cllr Best reported on a second successful season with a strong team. There has been a lot of support for the youth team from Alston Moor Federation and funding through SKS for equipment and floodlights for the all-weather pitch. They have been given access to the hall and use of all equipment. The youth council are aiming for sustainability over 5 years. They have appointed 4 youth referees and level 2 coaches. 3 youth members have been co-opted onto the committee. They are also keen to have a peer coach working with the young people.

The community has supported fund-raising with virtual race days and youth and adult discos.

7. Planning applications

7a/MAR/23 23/0052 Full application. Addition of external fire escape arrangement (gantries/ladders) to rear of dwelling. Arch House, Front Street, Alston CA9 3QW for Mr J. Condon.

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

7b/MAR/23 23/0066 Full application. Erection of outbuilding. Herdwick House, Dykeheads, Nenthead CA9 3PY for Mr Andrew Reay.

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

7c/MAR/23 23/0079 Full application. New observatory. Alston Moor Golf Club, Alston CA9 3DB for Alston Moor Golf Club.

Recommended for approval as the proposals will complement the golf club and be of interest to visitors and residents. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Robertson (nem con).

7d/MAR/23 23/0107 Full application. Variation of conditions 2 (plans compliance), 3 (construction environmental management plan) and 4 (materials) for amendments to the plans and materials and an updated CEMP, attached to approval 21/0400. Land at Garrigill Mine Site, Garrigill, Alston for Coal Authority.

Recommended for approval . Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Cooper. (10+ 2 abs)

7e/MAR/23 23/0117 Reserved by Cond. Discharge of condition 3 (Level 2 survey), attached to approval 22/0586. Redundant dwelling and barn North West of Harbut Law, Alston CA9 3BD for Mr & Mrs M. & V. Goodfellow & Younger.

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

7f/MAR/23 3/23/9001 Erection of 3 no permanent dosing cabinets and 3 no permanent water sampling cabinets, and the installation of a temporary welfare/site cabin and a temporary storage cabin (both for a period of 24 months). Nent Hags Minewater treatment site, land between Foreshield Bridge and Hudgill, Blagill, Alston CA9 3LE Easting 375056, Northing 546537.

Recommended for approval Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robinson (10+ 1- 1 abs)

7g/MAR/23 Pre-planning consultation – Site ID 22557 Proposed base station installation at CS 30702900 – land off B6277 Option 2, B6277 Forest & Frith Alston CA9 3HF, NGR E377527 N 536449

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Davies. (11+ 1 abs)

7h/MAR/23 23/0076 Full application Erection of greenhouse in orchard. High Scilly Hall, Alston CA9 3DE for Mr Edward Routledge.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Miller. (10+ 2 abs)

7i/MAR/23 23/0080 Full application. Creation of pump track. Alston Recreation Ground, Fairhill, Alston CA9 3UB for Alston Recreation Ground.

Recommended for approval subject to the provision of information on car parking and drainage requested by Highways. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Harrison (nem con)

8. Tyne Willows Pavilion

Defibrillator: Alston Fitness Club have confirmed that they are happy with the proposal to install a defibrillator on an outside wall of the Pavilion.

Cllr Grew has researched the defibrillators that are suitable for adults and children and suggested the following:

Defib Warehouse - £1,410 (exc. Vat) for a defibrillator and outdoor cabinet. Currently out of stock.

London Hearts considered last month are £1,235 + £45 for a carry case - £1,280 (inc. vat)

An electrician will be needed to install the cabinet and as access to the gym will be needed this should be discussed with the gym management. Agreed that it should be installed on the field side of the building, and once installed defibrillator training can be arranged. Noted that 6 people are interested in becoming CFRs.

Resolved to purchase the London Hearts defibrillator and cabinet if Cllr Grew confirms it is acceptable. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

Outside water supply: the Fitness Club confirmed that they had to remove the pipework in the attic for the outside tap as it had burst and damaged equipment. This is an issue for organisations using the field and Appleby Fair travellers who need access to water.

The water supply will need to be reinstated and should be included in the design for the new build. Provided super insulated pipework is used, there shouldn't be an issue with burst pipes.

The clerk was asked to notify EDC that water will need to be provided for Appleby Fair. **Action CI.**

Installation of matting & seats: Cllr Harrison is currently storing the matting intended to be installed besides the access onto the field and the two seats for besides the river.

Cllr Harrison offered to assemble the seats so it can be determined how to install them. **Action CH.**

Agreed to continue to store the matting as the pavilion extension may affect access onto the field.

9. Community grant application from the Community Workshop

An application for £240 was received from the Community Workshop, who are now independent from Alston Moor Partnership, to cover the cost of distributing a community directory for Alston Moor listing all the clubs, societies, charities and community groups. It will be an A5 booklet distributed to 1191 addresses in the CA9 postcode area by Royal Mail. Total project cost is £550.

The clerk reminded members that the precept allocation for the General Purposes budget had been spent but there were adequate reserves if the council wanted to vire funds.

Resolved to support the application from the Community Workshop for £240 with funds vired from reserves if required before the end of the financial year. Proposed by Cllr Harrison and seconded by Cllr Davies. (11+ 1 abs)

10. Dereliction of buildings - Alston

There has been progress with some of the derelict properties as reported by EDC's planning enforcement officer & Cllr Sharp.

The old Methodist Chapel building is secure, and that details of the proposed work are being sought from the new owners. Eden will then liaise with the Conservation Officer to agree on works which will retain the Heritage status of the building and intended future use.

The owners of Steel House have acknowledged the issue of the condition of the exterior of the property but as no improvement has been made a request for an update and timescale for progress has been made. An Enforcement Notice may be issued if there is no response.

There is no update as yet on progress with the Bluebell and Salvin Cottage.

The clerk was asked to thank the two local contractors who removed unsafe tiles from the Old Methodist Chapel. **Action CI.**

11. Consultations & Correspondence

11a/MAR/23 Correspondence – Appendix 1

No comments received.

11b/MAR/23 Tracks4Hacks Woodland & Biodiversity Scheme

An e-mail was received from Tracks4Hacks who are working with the British Horse Society and the Woodland Trust over creating diverse woodland that incorporates bridle routes to create a safe off-road riding environment for equestrianism throughout the UK. They asked for the council's support for the initiative they would like to progress on Alston Moor through the purchase of land which may come up for sale and increased tourism from the equine sector.

It was noted that there is a trend towards this type of activity and the clerk was asked to wish them well but explain that the council could not assist with potential transactions. **Action CI.**

12. Administration

12a/MAR/23 Approval of annual risk assessment

The risk assessment was carried out last month by Cllrs Miller, Robertson and the clerk. There are some matters which require consideration which can be raised at the next meeting.

Resolved to accept the risk assessments Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Davies (10 + 1-- 1 abs)

12b/MAR/23 Date for Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 25th April.

12c/MAR/23 Parish elections

Parish elections will take place on 4th May and the publication of the notice of election will take place on 20th March with nomination papers to be returned by 4^{pm} on 4th April. Nomination papers have been sent to the council office and those wishing to stand may collect them from the clerk to avoid a journey to Penrith. They should not be submitted before the 20th March. Guidance for candidates is available from <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent>

12d/MAR/23 End of term meal

It was agreed to ask Alston House about availability for an end of term meal towards the end of April. Noted for those who had not served under the previous council that everyone would be expected to pay for their own meal.

13. Accounts for payment (Appendix 2)

<i>Summary of accounts for payment:</i>	£5,175.52
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting:</i>	£6,460.51
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting:</i>	£961.58

A financial statement was circulated for the council to note that the establishment and property management accounts had gone over budget so funds would need to be vired from reserves. There are adequate reserves in place.

Resolved that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to pay the invoices listed

in appendix 2 provided funds are vired from the reserves. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Davies. (10+ 1 abs)

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

Agenda requests:

An update on derelict properties

Risk assessment issues including the condition of the track to Tyne Willows

Firs Wood – request from Cllr Green

The meeting closed to the public to consider quotes for a tree survey.

15. Tree survey quotes

Two quotes were received. A third contractor enquired but did not follow up.

£4,350 (no vat)

£1,500 + vat (£1,800)

Resolved to appoint Peter Dodd contracting. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Miller (nem con)

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed:

Dated: