



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the annual meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 15th May 2023 in Alston Town Hall at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs: R. Miller (Chair), P. Best, B. Davies, A. Green, E. Grew, M. Hanley, H. Ho, D. Monk, G. Ransom, A. Robertson, R. Robinson. Newly co-opted members A. Martin & E. Edgar.

Apologies: none

Absent: none

Declarations of interest: none

All members signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Election of Chair & Vice-chair

Resolved to appoint Cllr Miller as Chair. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Robertson. (10+ 1 abs)

Resolved to appoint Cllr Robinson as Vice-Chair. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Ransom (9+ 2 abs)

The chair asked that the appointments be held over until the next council meeting, except for the appointment of an interview panel to the Staffing Committee with existing members of the DGP working group and Cllr Monk who has volunteered as she has interview experience.

Resolved to appoint Cllrs Davies, Hanley, Monk and Robinson to an interview panel to appoint a replacement clerk.

Resolved to hold over all other appointments until the next council meeting.

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 3rd April 2023 be approved as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Miller. (6+ 1 – 4 abs)

2. Co-option of Alston & Nenthead Ward Councillors

Alix Martin, Alice Bondi and Elaine Edgar applied to be co-opted to the Alston Ward. AB sent apologies due to illness and confirmed that she wished to be considered. Linda Farrar confirmed that she had withdrawn her application.

Resolved to appoint Alix Martin to the Alston Ward. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (9+ 2 abs)

Resolved to appoint Alice Bondi to the Alston Ward. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Hanley. (10+ 2 abs)

Resolved to appoint Elaine Edgar to the Alston Ward. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Grew. (9+ 2 abs)

There is still a vacancy for the Nenthead Ward.

Co-opted members A. Martin and E. Edgar signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took their seats.

3. Chair & District reports

Chair's report

There was no chair's report this month.

WFC

Apologies from Cllr M. Robinson

Cllr Hanley reported on the following:

WFC Induction Day – the meeting was to introduce the various council departments.

Locality Board – there are to be 4 meetings per year. There is to be a new 'stronger communities' grant with £10k in the pot for councillors to distribute, when they have determined how it is to be allocated.

Cllr Hanley was appointed as representative to the Alston Moor Partnership, Alston with Garrigill Educational Foundation and Carlisle and Eden Healthwatch Community Health Forum. Cllr Robinson is the representative to Croglin Educational Land Trust and the North Pennines AONB.

New Energy Efficiency Funding – information has just been received about a new £12.4m fund for energy efficiency upgrades for up to 600 homes in Cumbria. This was achieved through a bid led by Eden District Council working with Cumbria County Council. Further details will be released later.

The reports are posted to the parish council website.

Agenda item 20 Quarterly Financial check was moved up the agenda as Cllr Hanley had to leave for another meeting.

4. Public participation

None.

5. Progress reports

5a/MAY/23 Defibrillator for Tyne Willows Pavilion

Re: 4a/APR/23 Cllr Grew recommended purchasing a defibrillator from Defib World at a cost of £865+ vat with a cabinet costing £450 + vat.

A concern was raised about the lack of information on the cabinet on the website as it will need to cope with sub-zero conditions during winter. The proposed defibrillator can be used for children as well as adults, which is important as the defibrillators provided for Alston Moor by NWS are not child friendly.

Resolved to purchase a defibrillator, cabinet and essential replacement parts after Cllrs Grew and Monk have reached agreement on the model. (11+ 1 abs)

5b/MAY/23 Mill Race Contract/Tyne Willows potholes

Re: 11a & 11b/APR/23

Mill Race – Cllr Hanley and the clerk carried out a site visit to inspect the Mill Race at Tyne Willows and with the help of two Northumbria Water workers were able to confirm that at the time the water was flowing well. They also spoke with Mr Liverick's grandson who assisted him with the contract and is willing to continue. It was suggested in the annual risk assessment that a new contract is set up for one year initially.

Resolved to appoint K. Liverick (jnr) as contractor for the Mill Race on condition he has his own insurance or, if not, through the company. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (11+ 1 abs)

Tyne Willow potholes – the clerk was asked to order the gravel to fill in the potholes, which was delivered to the Playing Field by Charlton's and the potholes filled in by volunteers. Cllr Robinson was thanked for his involvement in the task.

5c/MAY/23 Appleby Fair update

Re: 4b/APR/23 An e-mail was received from WFC stating that as the site is not a legal site, but a tolerated stopping place, the council does not have a statutory duty to provide a water supply. The issue can be raised at the MASCG group, but it cannot be confirmed that a water supply will be provided. KL?

A further e-mail was received from Cumbria Police who will work alongside WFC. Police patrols start on 25th May and will run until 13th June. There will be a dedicated 101 line to report any incidents requiring a police presence. MASCG will trial an on-line form where reports can be made, with details shared when it is finalised.

5d/MAY/23 Proposed ROW meeting to discuss Ashgill Waterfall ROW issues & Isaac's Tea Trail

Re: 8/APR/23 A member of the public has provided contact details for the Priorsdale Estate indicating that they would be willing to discuss improvements to the Ashgill waterfall area. The clerk was in contact with ROW officers who are willing to meet on site and have suggested either the 7th or 14th June. The date needs to be confirmed with Priorsdale and a representative appointed by the council. The resident, who is knowledgeable about the area, has also offered to attend.

Resolved to appoint Cllr Robertson to meet with the Priorsdale Estate and the ROW Officer.

A ROW officer has been in contact with Roger Morris from Isaac's Tea Trail to advise him of some footpath improvements that are to be made and will continue to discuss other issues along the trail.

5e/MAY/23 Nenthead Litter bin

Re: 5b/APR/23 The request for a litter bin has been submitted and an officer is available week commencing 29th May to meet someone on site (mid-morning) to identify the location.

Resolved to appoint Cllr Ransom to meet with a WFC officer to discuss the location of the litter bin.

5f/MAY/23 Housing proposals for the old Alston Primary School

An e-mail was received from the architect working for the owner of Alston Primary School stating that they have decided the best contribution the property can make to the community is to convert it to residential use, taking away some of the more unsympathetic recent additions. They are also proposing some new houses on the site to create a range of housing for families, couples etc. The architect is willing to discuss the scheme in person.

It was noted that there is a lack of affordable housing for younger people, but the town is well supplied with larger family homes.

The clerk was asked to request a site visit between the architect and council members. **Action Cl.**

6. Reports from representatives

6a/MAY/23 NWAS working group

Cllr Grew reported that no meetings were held this month. There is however an article in the newsletter and on-line about the new vehicle. It has some issues as the EMTs still have to use the phone, the vehicle could take 8 minutes to warm up in winter, and they are still waiting for the orange light to be fitted, as without one it may be dangerous to attend roadside callouts. A plus is that the EMT can work alone or with a CFR. Over the past two weeks only one call out was received so there has been little opportunity to test out the new system, which is to be monitored with call time logged against ambulance response times, and patients or their helpers will be asked for their views.

The BBC ran a news article about the pilot mentioning NWAS and SAMS, but not the NWAS working group. It was described as a big favour from NWAS, but it has taken 4 years to get to this point. Cllr Ransom reported that he was interviewed by Border TV. Cllr Martin said that SAMS have now run out of legal aid so are not pursuing NWAS's ambulance provision any further.

6b/MAY/23 AMERG

Cllr Ransom reported on a successful funding bid of £14.5k to provide generators for the village halls for conversion work on the electrics and purchase of generators to the centres can be used as a safe hub in emergencies. Cllr Ransom and Tim Haldon, AMERG treasurer were thanked for putting the application together.

6c/MAY/23 Nenthead Ward

Cllr Ransom reported that the meeting will be held next Monday.

6d/MAY/23 Warm Hub

Cllr Miller reported that the last of the season's warm hub meetings was held last Tuesday. All the grant funding has been spent but donations will enable the event to start up again next winter, hopefully supplemented with grant funding. The season ended with a buffet, live music, bingo and a quiz. Many people donated scones and cakes and especial thanks to Cllrs Monk, Ransom and Hanley and all the residents who assisted in making it a success.

6e/MAY23 Garrigill Ward

Cllr Grew reported that a Sustrans sign on private land at Hartside was removed by the new owner, so it is hoped highways might be interested in re-siting it. A request has been sent to highways officers and it will be on the agenda for the Traffic Management meeting. Possibly Sustrans should be asked about similar signs for Alston and Nenthead.

7. Planning applications

7a/MAY/23 23/0094 Listed building. Listed building consent for the replacement of single glazed soft wood sash windows with double glazed hardwood sash windows and replacement of existing hardwood panel and glazed door to front extension. Lowbyer Manor Farm, Alston CA9 3JX

Decision received prior to meeting.

7b/MAY/23 23/0267 Full application. Addition of sun deck above existing garage, part retrospective. Brooklyn, Brampton Road, Alston CA9 3AA for Andrew Mounter.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Miller . (7+ 5 abs)

7c/MAY/23 23/0284 Tree Works (CA) T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 - reduce canopy by 15% and reduce internal branches overhanging neighbour's border. Beechwood, Park Lane, Alston CA9 3AB for Mrs P. Jackson.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Green. (11+ 1 abs).

7d/MAY/23 23/302 Tree Works (CA) Fell T1 in conservation area. St John's House, Garrigill CA9 3DS for Mr T. Collins.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Green. (9+ 3 abs).

7/MAY/23 23/9002 Erection of single-storey side extension to the dosing building to provide site operative welfare facilities. Nent Hagsgs Minewater Treatment Site. Land between Foreshield Bridge & Hudgill, Blagill, Alston CA9 3LE for Mr J. Bagnall.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (7+ 2- 3 abs).

8. Water & Abandoned Minerals Mines (WAMM) project

Cllr Ransom reported that the Coal Authority plans are moving forward with the Nenthead site. There will be a consultation event at The Hive on Saturday. As the council are aware, Nenthead residents are opposed to the proposed works, and the Nenthead representatives agreed to put a meeting together with the Priorsdale Estate and Nenthead Mines. However, Nenthead Mines sent an e-mail stating they did not want to meet with the representatives. The clerk was asked to circulate the e-mail. **Action CI.**

Resolved that the clerk writes to Nenthead Mines to remind them of their business plan and Community Asset Transfer which states they will consult the community over their plans for the site. Proposed by Cllr Ransom and seconded by Cllr Miller. (nem con)

9. Request from WFC ROW officer to improve the Pennine Way access at Brewery Bridge

An e-mail was received from a ROW officer to explain that they would like to create a wider gap in the stile besides Brewery Bridge on the Pennine Way. This is to make it easier for users to negotiate and was identified in a Pennine Way improvement survey. The council as landowners need to give permission for the improvement works.

Resolved to give permission for WFC ROW team to go ahead with the improvements to the stile on the Pennine Way besides Brewery Bridge. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

10. Disabled parking in Garrigill

Cllr Best reported that the lack of disabled parking in the village was brought up at a Garrigill Village Hall meeting and is to be added to the agenda for discussion at the next Traffic Management meeting. It is understood that the George and Dragon will have 1 disabled space round the back of the building which highways state can be used by anyone, but this will not be ideal. There is a suggestion that a disabled parking space could be made outside the village hall if the seat were removed. Another option is the parking bay next to the village green, which is included in the land leased by the parish council from the Catholic Trust. Long-standing residents were aware that Highways marked out the spaces in the past, but they need re-doing and the tarmac replaced.

11. Memorial plaque for Garrigill

Cllr Ho reported that she would like to erect a 'Lest we Forget' plaque on the memorial bench around one of the trees on the village green when the seat is replaced. She was reminded that it would have to be of a size listed in the Memorial Benches policy, and that the original memorial plaques would be re-instated.

Resolved in principle to accept a plaque on the village green seat no larger than the original plaques. Proposed by Cllr Ho and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (nem com)

12. Future of Highlights – Autumn Season

The clerk reported that there is a group of volunteers who are involved with putting on Highlights Shows in the Town Hall, with any funds that are raised passed to the Town Hall. As clerk she had acted as promoter on behalf of the Town Hall and maintained a spreadsheet of costings. However, as she will be retiring, the promoter's role needs to be handed over, and, although the expectation is that her replacement will take on the duty, the volunteers want to know if they can go ahead and book a show for the Autumn season.

Resolved that a Highlights show can be booked for the Autumn season. Proposed by Cllr Grew and seconded by Cllr Davies. (nem con)

13. Consultations & Correspondence

13a/MAY/23 Correspondence – Appendix 1

No comments received.

13b/MAY/23 Resident's question about applying for the Miners Arms to be listed as a Community Asset

An e-mail was received from a resident enquiring what had happened to the list of signatories interested in retaining the Miner's Arms as a community asset. There is a form for a community group to complete, but the clerk noticed that there were not enough signatures for the group to submit the application. Additional signatures have been found, and information on setting up and running a community asset forwarded. The parish council has not made a decision to apply on the group's behalf but would not be able to purchase the property.

Cllr Ransom reported that the resident was asked to call a meeting of residents interested in moving things forward, and to decide if the community wants to apply to make the Miner's Arms a community asset. It was noted that the application is still in the planning system.

14. Matters Arising from the Annual Parish Meeting

There were a couple of matters arising from the Annual Parish Meeting:

Use of old primary school for car parking during the Fairhill Festival – the clerk contacted the architect and put him in touch with the organisers. It was suggested that a Land Registry search be undertaken to identify the owner, but this may not be necessary as the architect thought the parking could be arranged.

Cumbria Community Foundation Alston Moor Fund – a question was asked about whether anyone knew about the fund, which is specifically for Alston Moor projects. The clerk contacted CCF who confirmed that they receive applications and forwarded information about how to apply which was forwarded to members.

15. Confirmation of General Powers of Competence eligibility

The clerk reported that as 11 councillors were elected, and the council fulfils the other eligibility criteria the council could resolve to confirm their eligibility for the General Power of Competence.

Resolved that Alston Moor Parish Council is eligible for the General Power of Competence. Proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Martin. (nem com) *Cllr Davies missing from vote.*

16. Appointment of insurance company

Cllrs English (while still in office) and Cllr Ransom reviewed the quotes received from Zurich and BHIB and were satisfied that BHIB would provide a satisfactory service. A third quote had been sought by the clerk, but the company did not respond.

BHIB quote £2,625.19 annual or £2,565.18 for 3-year long term agreement.

With subsidence £3,001.80 or £2,885.90 for a 3-year long term agreement

Zurich quote £4,419.31 annual, £4,202.53 for a 3 year long term agreement or £3,985.76 for a 5 year agreement

Resolved to accept the 3-year quote from BHIB excluding the subsidence clause. Proposed by Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Robertson. (12+ 1-)

Note: subsequently CCTV cover was added to the quote from BIBH for £2,858.72 to take effect from 1st June 2023.

17. Accounts for payment (Appendix 2)

<i>Summary of accounts for payment:</i>	£26,835.29
<i>Summary of income received since last meeting:</i>	£58,096.92
<i>Summary of accounts paid since last meeting:</i>	£1,450.58

Resolved that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to pay the invoices listed in appendix 2. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Ransom. (11+ 1 abs)

18. Acceptance of Internal Auditors Report

Resolved to accept the report from the internal Auditor. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Miller. (9+3 abs)

19. Financial Review from TIAA and action plan

The draft Financial Review has been circulated to councillors, but it has been made clear that it is for internal use only and should not be circulated or discussed outside of the council. The clerk asked permission to publish the conclusion but has not heard back yet. To summarise there are no significant areas of non-compliance and the accounts, reporting systems, allocation of reserves are in order. The Financial Regulations will need updating and the Scheme of Delegation needs to be progressed. The review sets out a management action plan which is to be returned to TIAA after the council has included their comments and a timetable for action.

Resolved that Cllrs Monk and Robinson will review the action plan with the clerk. Proposed by Cllr Monk and seconded by Cllr Robinson. (nem con)

20. Q4 banking check

Cllr Hanley confirmed that there were no issues to report over the final quarter of the 2022-23 finance check. ok.

21. Acceptance of year end financial statements

Resolved to accept the year end financial statements. Proposed by Cllr Robinson and seconded by Cllr Robertson.(9+ 3 abs)

22. Appointment of signatories to HSBC and Unity Trust Banks

Cllrs Miller, Davies, Green and Hanley are the current signatories.

Resolved to add Cllrs Robinson and Ransom to the list of signatories to HSBC and Unity Trust Banks Proposed by Cllr Robinson and second by Cllr Ransom.

23. Agenda items for next meeting, Traffic Management meeting and urgent business to report

23a/MAY/23 Traffic Management meeting

It was agreed that Cllr Miller would attend the Traffic Management meeting to represent the Alston Ward until appointments are made.

Agenda items - the Sustrans sign, disabled parking in Garrigill and the delay in resolving the SKS flashing lights.

23b/MAY/23 Tree Survey

The clerk reported that the tree survey was received over the weekend and can be included on next month's agenda but there are some matters over Henderson's Wood to discuss with the contractor. She is meeting with him on Wednesday and asked that Cllr Davies attend. Agreed.

The meeting closed to the public to consider staffing matters.

The main issue discussed was the issue of a few people using social media to attack council employees and members of the council. It is not good for Alston Moor residents and visitors to have to put up with this form of abuse and if it continues the council may consider taking legal advice on getting it stopped.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Signed:

Dated: