

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council held on Monday 6th March 2017 at 7pm in the Samuel King's School

Present: Cllrs: A. Green (Chair), D. Athey, B. Aves, J. Glendinning, P Godwin, E. Grew, T. Haldon, C. Harrison, S. Hill, A. Martin, R. Miller, D. Phillips, E. Stewart.

Apologies: none

Absent: G. Wright

Declarations of interest: listed under specific agenda items. As a district councillor, Cllr Godwin declared a regular interest in planning matters. Cllr Miller in 5, 6a and 6b and Cllr Stewart in 5 and 6b.

1. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the parish council held on Monday 6th February 2017 be adopted as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Aves and seconded by Cllr Athey. (nem con).

Resolved that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Monday 13th February 2017 be adopted as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Aves and seconded by Cllr Athey. (nem con).

1a Proposed mine treatment work to clean up the river Nent

A representative from the Nentsberry Community Group reminded the meeting that the Coal Authority and Environment Agency will be holding two consultation events next week.

She had attended the CA lecture on progress at Force Crag at the Newcastle Institute of Mining where mention was made of ongoing problems, and reported on the notes she took. Odour from hydrogen sulphide is being emitted over the whole water surface area and not just at the inlet/outlet points. The instruments available to the CA and EA are not sufficiently sensitive to be able to measure smells that can be detected by the human nose.

A cyanobacteria bloom has grown due to high levels of carbon in the vertical flow ponds, with one pond now closed due to the algal mat. To date the CA have not released a sample for independent analysis, so the impact on health and safety cannot be measured. The concern is that spores could be released in dry warm conditions.

With these issues at Force Crag there are questions about the proposals for the Nent valley. The geology and ecology are different, but no trials are planned to identify what algal blooms may occur. The CA and EA are self-regulating and there is no independent regulatory body to monitor their work or plans.

The Nentsberry Community Group has collected data and information, which they feel explains the CA and EA agenda for the Nent Valley. They stated that sediment at the Port of Tyne is processed at Rotterdam, and even a small reduction in the percentage of zinc will re-align their target for quality standards, allowing future sediment to be dredged and deposited at sea. Currently 127 tonnes of zinc enter the Tyne estuary each year, with approximately 63 tons from the Nent catchment area and 7% from Hags, which is 2.07% of the total annual zinc load at the Port of Tyne. In total there are 23 pollutants in the Port of Tyne sediment, with the main contributor being polymer ship paint; zinc is way down the list.

Local concerns about the proposed schemes are over the control of odour, the potential for algae blooms that inhibit the vertical flow pond process, and unsightly surface growth. The size of the proposed passive scheme for the percentage of zinc removal, and a suggestion from the CA to install pumps to add hydrogen peroxide to reduce the odour would mean the scheme is no longer passive. The CA also proposed to install agitators to prevent the development of algal bloom. There would also be the destruction of calmarian grassland at Blagill, an ecosystem facilitated by the metals to be extracted. The site would be dosed with the required metals for just three years post scheme. Another possibility is the use of high intensity white light to attract emerging male midges away from people and dwellings.

Members were asked to attend the consultation events and to seek answers to the issues raised above.

2. Progress Reports

2a/MAR/17 Code of Conduct training

Re 1a/FEB/17 The clerk reported that she spoke to CALC about a workshop on the Code of Conduct to help decide if the parish wants to include rules about the registration and disclosure of interests that are

not disclosable pecuniary interests. They need to prepare as it is not a standard workshop, but would like to know when the council are thinking of holding it. Agreed that it should take place over the next few months.

2b/MAR/17 Update on actions arising from Traffic Management meeting

Re: 2c/FEB/17 A meeting is to be held on 24th March to discuss the Front Street closure to repair the cobbles, and the issues that may arise from this. Highways have issued a road closure notice for 8 weeks starting on 2nd May. Suggested items for the agenda included consultation with local businesses, management of deliveries and parking, and signage that does not indicate from 20 miles away that the town is closed for business.

The clerk also wrote to Peter McCall, the Police and Crime Commissioner, at the request of the Traffic Management Group to ask for a greater police presence in Alston following a number of crimes. Following this she spoke to PS Parkin about requesting a police officer to work alongside PCSO Raine.

An e-mail has now been received to say that whilst officers are no longer deployed from Alston there are a number of officers dedicated to Alston and the surrounding area. There were 20 crimes across Alston Moor over the past 6 months, which led to a dedicated operation to tackle criminality for a period of 5 weeks at the end of 2016, where dedicated staff were tasked with patrolling Alston and the Fellside throughout the night. Speeding incidents should be directed to the CRASH group (Casualty Reduction and Safer Highways) to allow a proper assessment to be made of the problem with the use of traffic data units (TDUs).

The Inspector advised the Chief Constable's Office that in the last two years 2 TDU 's were installed in Alston Moor and whilst one revealed there was not a problem in that particular area, the other showed a problem existed, and that stretch of road has now been adopted by the safety camera partnership.

The police presence in and around Alston is targeted carefully, and the police value close co-operation and information from the local community to collectively address these issues. Emerging problems should be reported to nip them in the bud.

2c/MAR/17 Urgent requests – ATM Alston Co-op and Tom Collier's road

Re: 9d/FEB/17 A letter was given to the Co-op manager after the last council meeting. It was reported that the proposed site may not be big enough to house the ATM, but nothing further has been heard

Tom Collier's road was reported as being in poor condition and Highways have explained that the road is on the flood recovery programme, but is well down the list. They will carry out pothole repairs on the same works instruction as High House Lonning (U3114)

3. Progress reports from working groups and council representatives

3a/MAR/17 Long term vision for Alston Moor

Agenda item 9.

3b/MAR/17 Representatives meeting with Fitness Club

A meeting is still to be arranged as the representatives were not available for the Fitness Club meeting.

3c/MAR/17 Healthcare for the Future - decision meeting

Cllr Martin reported that seats have been allocated for the meeting in Carlisle on 8th March, when the NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group will meet to decide the future of the community hospitals and other proposals from the Success Regime. She agreed to report back.

Alston was well represented on the NHS demo in London.

4 County Councillor's Report

Apologies from Cllr Robinson.

District Councillor's Report

Cllr Godwin reported that the meeting on Thursday will have on the agenda a letter from central government asking planning authorities to approve a 20% price increase for planning applications. Members observed that this would be a disincentive for minor planning matters, and make it harder to encourage people to self-build.

5. Consideration of the plans for the future of education on Alston Moor and response to Samuel King's School

Cllrs Miller and Stewart declared an interest as school governors.

Cllr Haldon reported that several councillors had taken the guided tour of the primary and secondary schools. The proposals will allocated more space than they currently have, and noted the comments made at earlier council meetings on the importance of keeping primary and secondary education on Alston Moor.

Resolved to close the meeting for public participation.

A spokesperson stated that many people have strong opinions on the proposals, and are concerned that should secondary education not be viable some years down the line, primary education might also be under threat. She pointed out that primary schools in Northumberland have been decimated over the past few years, with pupils having to travel up to 12 miles. There are also concerns over the access, as Church Road is a cul-de-sac, so there could be a health and safety issue with cars arriving to drop off pre-school and primary age children.

The meeting re-convened.

It was noted that the political climate is different in Cumbria, with the County Council more supportive of primary school education, so it would be hoped they will continue to find provision for primary education should secondary education be threatened.

The access issues were noted, and a suggestion made that there was potential to make the bottom half of the hospital field into a car park. Members of the public were advised that they have all had the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Resolved to support the continuation of primary and secondary education on Alston Moor. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Grew. (2 abs)

6. Planning

6a/MAR/17 17/0044 Full application. Change of use from residential property to office and storage. 1 Force Cottages, Station Road, Alston CA9 3JX for Ayle Colliery Co. Ltd – Mr & Mrs J.K. Shepherd.

Cllr Miller declared an interest as an employee.

Recommended for approval. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Aves. (2 abs).

6b/MAR/17 3/17/9003 Consultation on a planning application by the County Council. Construction of new staff car park, formation of disabled parking bays and a drop off point at the front of the school, minor external alterations to add external doors in two locations, addition of a MUGA pitch with fencing and floodlights to replace the existing all weather surface. Addition of new adventure playground for primary school pupils. Samuel King's School, Church Road, Alston CA9 3QU.

Concerns about floodlights disturbing residents were mentioned, but it is understood that they have to be turned off at a reasonable time. The drop-off point on Church Road is not ideal as the road is already congested, and parents dropping off primary and pre-school children will add to the problem.

Recommended for refusal only because of concerns over drop off and pick up points, congestion and concerns over safety for children. Proposed by Cllr Glendinning and seconded by Cllr Athey. (6 + 1 - 5 abs).

Decision Notices

None received.

7 Eden District Local Plan & the request to reduce Alston Moor's housing allocation from 4% to 3% of the district's total allocation

The clerk reported that Eden District Council were expecting a decision from the parish council following the extraordinary meeting held last month.

Members observed that the suggested reduction of 1% might be a more manageable figure to achieve, and adequate for now. Additional sites could be allocated through a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important that the Local Plan is approved, as the delays will be holding back development. Alston Moor is to be treated as a separate case to the rest of Eden District, and under the new Plan building on the footprint of a former dwelling in the open countryside will be allowed.

Resolved to accept a reduction of 4% to 3% of the overall housing allocation for the district for Alston Moor. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Aves. (2 abs)

8 CCC Tree Survey – Tyne Willows

A copy of the section of the tree survey commissioned by SKS relating to Tyne Willows Playing Fields was circulated earlier. SKS have suggested that if any work needs doing it could be done at the same time. Only one tree falls into the priority 1 category, a spruce near the gauging station with a limb that needs to be removed.

The clerk was asked to check if SKS planned to carry out any work. **Action Cl.**

9 Proposal to accept the report on Alston Moor Parish Council's aspirations and aims to 2050 and to forward to Eden District Council

The report was circulated earlier. Cllr Haldon reported that the working group had met to put together a draft report on the parish council's aspirations and aims to 2050. It cannot be a definitive document, 30 years is a long time and many changes may lie ahead.

Resolved to accept the report on AMPC's aspirations and aims to 2050 with the addition of more off-street car parking for residents and visitors. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Grew. (nem con)

Resolved to close the meeting and to re-convene in 5 minutes to allow Walter Walker the prospective Conservative candidate for Alston Moor and East Fellside to introduce himself.

10 Proposal to accept the draft letter to submit to Eden District Council on behalf of the four larger town and parish councils

Cllr Phillips reported that he wanted to discuss the draft letter from the 4 larger parishes, as the letter assumed that a unitary authority would happen and that local services would be lost. In due course we may be asked again to have our councils re-organised on a unitary basis, but there is no guarantee that all services will be sold off.

Resolved to suggest an amendment to the letter along the lines of 'it is only a matter of time before the proposal to form a unitary authority comes around again'.

11 Application for funding from Walkers are Welcome

An application to the Community Grant fund was submitted by the Walkers are Welcome group with a request for 3 years' membership fees of £120.

Resolved to make a one-off payment of £60 to Walkers are Welcome to assist with the current years membership fees and a contribution towards fees paid on behalf of the group by the Chair. Proposed by Cllr Godwin and seconded by Cllr Stewart. (9+ 3- 1 abs)

12 Consultations and Correspondence

12a /MAR/17 Meetings & events

Healthcare for the Future consultation decision making meeting - 8th March 2017

Proposed mine water treatment schemes meetings – 13th March in Nenthead, 14th March Nent Hall Hotel

Additional information on site evaluation criteria, odour control and the potential for midge and mosquito infestations are available on the Coal Authority website. Two further reports on the environmental and economic benefits of cleaning up mine waste and the River Nent water quality catchment characterisation studies will be available by 10th March

CALC Course on Common Land and Village Greens – date to be confirmed

12bMAR/17 Information received

NHS Healthcare for the Future independent analysis report

NHS press release – new boundaries for Clinical Commissioning Groups in North Lancashire and Cumbria. Alston Moor will be part of the North Cumbria CCG

Alston Moor Police newsletter

CALC circular

Clerks & Councils Directs

ACT – Community resilience & emergency planning

13 Working parties to lead discussions with EDC on the devolution of services

Resolved to appoint Cllrs Martin, Grew, Glendinning, Phillips and Stewart to the working group.

14 Report on annual Risk Assessment and actions required

The clerk reported that the working group had met to update the risk assessment for the parish council, (circulated earlier). Actions requiring attention include:

Water on footpath besides the Cumberland - Cllr Green reported that he had done some work on the path, but as it was reported to be still running will take another look. **Action AG.**

Tyne Willows car park – Cllr Athey reported that he will organise some more repairs if time permits.

Woodland management – a further tree survey needs to be arranged, and the working group identified a need for signage for the Firs and Henderson’s woods asking people to keep to the footpaths/permissive paths and a sign on both sides of the bridge stating ‘dangerous if in flood’. To remind people that it was Dr Brown who initiated the permissive path, the words Dr’s Walk should be included. **Action CI**

The clerk was asked to contact the tree survey contractor to see if he would be interested in carrying out a follow up survey later in the year, and to meet with councillors during or after the survey. **Action CI**

Council property – there is no insurance for the Nenthead fountain or war memorials and the council needs to confirm it is aware of this. Noted.

Nenthead noticeboard – needs to be repaired or replaced.

Clerk’s contract – to be updated.

Resolved to accept the risk assessment. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Miller (nem con)

15 Co-option of Alston Ward Councillor

Two people put their names forward, with Holly Ho appointed to the Alston Ward.

16. Items for next month’s agenda and urgent business

16a/MAR/17 Gossrigate – Blagill bridleway at Corbygates

It was reported that a rider’s horse was upset while on the bridleway near Banks Farm, two men came to help, but one was kicked by the resident horse. There was also an issue with the field gate which should be openable for a mounted horse-rider. Clerk to report to ROW team. **Action CI.**

16b/MAR/17 Dog Fouling – Nenthead Wardway

A problem with dog fouling along the Wardway at Nenthead was reported. Members were advised that it can be reported to Eden’s Community Warden, but they will need information to go on and will only take action if the fouling is on public land. It was suggested that photos are taken of the offending dogs. Agreed to ask our Community Warden to put up extra posters in Nenthead. **Action CI.**

17. Finance

11a/MAR/17 Bank statements

The statements as of 28th February 2017 were as follows:-

Alston Moor Parish Council tr/ac	£20,194.29
Alston Moor Parish Council bus/ac	£12,676.55
Eden Credit Union	£7,008.58

11b/MAR/17 Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were for payment:-

Summary of accounts for payment: -	£245.00
Summary of income received since last meeting: -	£0.00
Summary of accounts paid since last meeting: -	£804.17

Resolved that sufficient funds are held in balances for the clerk to be authorised to settle all the accounts listed in appendix 1. Proposed by Cllr Haldon and seconded by Cllr Aves. (nem con)

The meeting closed at 9 pm

Signed:

Dated: