



# ALSTON MOOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 held in Alston Town Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs: R. Miller (chair), B. Cooper, E. Grew, S. Hattersley, H. Ho, WFC M. Hanley, A. Robertson, WFC M. Robinson & 5 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllrs B. Davies, P. Best, G. Ransom, R. Robinson.  
Mark Nash-Williams, L. Farrar.

## 1. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 were approved as a correct record.  
Proposed by BC and seconded by RM.

## 2. **Matters Arising out of the Minutes of the last AGM**

None.

## 3. **Report from Alston Moor Parish Council**

Copies of the annual report were circulated and are published on the council's website. The chair reported that his predecessor was a hard act to follow and thanked him for all he did in his year as chair. He also thanked Cllr EG for her careful research over planning applications.

The year saw the Queen's platinum jubilee with trees planted in each ward and medals presented by the chair to all pupils attending the Alston Moor schools. This was followed by the sad death of the Queen and some communication issues over accommodation for refugees that were satisfactorily resolved. The financial review report the parish requested Eden District Council to commission is not ready yet, but a phone call to the chair has confirmed that nothing is financially wrong and there are just a few minor improvement to the council's governance that can be made. The report should be available early next week. In all it was a testing year for the council. The chair looks forward to working with those colleagues who are remaining and for those leaving offered his best wishes, also thanks to the clerk who is retiring this year after 37 years in post.

The clerk reported that her post is to be advertised shortly and asked to let anyone know who might be interested.

## 4. **Reports from Westmorland & Furness Council**

Cllrs Hanley & Robinson reported that WFC held their first real meeting last week, having spent the last year as a shadow authority. Elections to the positions of chair, vice-chair, leaders and to the various committees took place. Eden area has Judith Derbyshire as Housing leader and Virginia Taylor for Communities and Planning. Planning will continue to be dealt with in the separate localities with 8 members on planning including MH and MR. Both will take part in a training session on Friday. MR as an independent has a seat on one of the scrutiny committees for children and young people. Over the past year she was involved in the 'Investing in Eden' project which provided bursaries to 16-18-year-olds including transport to Durham for Alston Moor children. The scheme was a pilot that it is hoped can be replicated. The 'Investing in Eden' project took expressions of interest last year and will be assisting the Golf Club observatory amongst other projected earmarked for development. 1.2 m must be spent on the footprint of the old district.

### **Questions**

*Can the Investing in Eden fund assist the gym with their project to extend Tyne Willows Pavilion?*

Not unless an expression of interest had been submitted. However, there are two WFC officers in post who could help with progressing the project if the gym and football club contact MH and MR for assistance.

*Can pupils access the transport bursaries for the place they want to attend?*

Yes, it should be about where the child wants to learn with the aim of meeting their aspirations.

*There are issues with people trying to pay WFC bills with a debit card or cheque at the Post Office, causing serious difficulties especially over care bills, but also with paying parking fees as it was also impossible to pay on-line.*

MR will follow up if sent details of the issue.

*A question was asked about what the district councillors had done for Alston.*

MH replied that he had served on committees including the scrutiny and planning committees, his fellow councillor was on the cabinet and in charge of leisure, both were on various working groups including devolution of assets.

MR replied that the role of councillors is to represent the wider community and individual communities, but it would be impossible to function on every committee. They have a massive area to cover and must deal with the issues of sparsity, rurality and lack of services. For example, there are no buses on the other side of the fell so bus passes are useless. They must fight tooth and nail to hold onto whatever services we have and make sure people outside of Alston Moor know we exist and hear what we have to say.

## **5 Reports from Local Organisations & Charities**

### **5a Alston Recreation Grounds**

Work on the bike track should have started on 2<sup>nd</sup> April but due to the time taken for planning consent to come through the contractors started on another job so the start date is now 16<sup>th</sup> May. They are looking to complete within 4 weeks, but it will interfere with plans for a festival on 29<sup>th</sup> May. Lots of activities are planned with games, races, market stalls, rides – all will be free for children and adults. The car park must be shut for the duration of the works on the bike track, which is necessary but not ideal for the festival or regular users of the car park. A request to use the car park at the old primary school had been made to the owner's architect, but no response had been received.

**Resolved** to check with the Land Registry for contact details. Proposed by EG and seconded by MH.

### **5b United Charities**

BC reported that the United Charity is for individuals living on Alston Moor who find themselves in financial difficulties. They offer small grants, typically £50 - £250, with past grants assisting with heating bills, health needs, funerals and other essential things. Grants this year amounted to over £4,500. Most applications this year have been for help with energy bills and rent, and the trustees refer people to other charities and the foodbank. Applications can be made through the church or the church website.

### **5c Alston Moor Foodbank**

MH reported that Hazel Hanley has taken over as chair, and that there has been a big increase in deliveries over the past year.

### **5d NWAS Working Group**

EG reported that the aim is to keep the ambulance for as long as possible, but there are now only 5 EMTs so it cannot be used as often as people would like. We have been given an emergency vehicle which should be arriving soon and the EMTs are to be trained this week before it goes live. It will mean that if one EMT is on duty they will be able to use the emergency vehicle and meet with a CFR at the scene or house. There is still the option of going out in the ambulance, but only if two EMTs sign on for work. Disadvantages are that patients cannot be put in the back of the vehicle; it will only have an orange light and as it does not look like an ambulance there are safety concerns about roadside accidents. It is here for a 6 month trial period and patients or their carers will be asked to fill in a questionnaire which will be used for the 6 month review.

Working group meetings with NWAS continue, EG met with the Integrated Care Board (ICB), NWAS and the MP where it was agreed jointly that Alston Moor is a special case. The aim is to set up something nationally, but if specific training along the lines of how the EMTs used to be trained could be piloted on Alston Moor it could be implemented elsewhere.

Local representatives asked NWAS to look at the Scottish model which has different ways of working for city, rural or island communities and although this was initially rejected, they have now agreed to look at it.

SH reported that EMTs book on for 12 hour shifts through NWAS, but there are discussions about moving to fewer hours.

The focus now is on preventative and serious illness and that several paramedics have left the service to work at GP surgeries. It has been suggested that CHOC could take on a paramedic, which would be ideal as they could go out in the ambulance accompanied by one EMT and transport patients to hospital. *(This suggestion has not been taken up yet).*

#### **5e Tyne Willows Pavilion**

Paul Best was unable to attend but e-mailed to say that the intention is to submit a planning application to extend the pavilion and once this is approved make a start on fundraising.

RM confirmed that a meeting was held in March, so hopefully they have been able to make a start. The Football Club is going from strength to strength; they won 8-1 at their last match.

#### **5f The Community Workshop**

The Community Workshop is going well with plans to open a session in the *[what?]* morning to include women. The Repair Café is going from strength to strength. Members helped with the pantomime.

#### **5g Warm Hubs**

RM reported that funding was obtained from various organisations included Cumbria Community Foundation and the Frieda Scott Trust, enabling the Warm Hub to run from November to the end of the May. The people using it don't want it to finish, and it is hoped it can continue next year if funding can be found. It is all free to users, volunteers have baked cakes and helped with serving refreshments. SKS pupils, through the Oaklea Trust, provided soup and scones for several weeks.

An Easter party was held with an Easter bonnet competition, a buffet and music. Regular activities include games, bingo and dominos and music. It has enabled people to get out of the house and is open to anyone including several visitors who dropped by and has been the most well-used in Cumbria. Several organisations attended sessions including the police, fire service, EDC to explain about the Warm Homes scheme, Age Concern who donated packs of useful equipment, and there was CPR training on offer.

*A question was asked about the timescale for funding and other uses.*

RM confirmed that the funds must be spent or returned to CCF; there is no time limit on the Frieda Scott donation. Costs are for prizes, transport, refreshments from local businesses, the Christmas and Easter party, a contribution to the musicians and room hire and heating. The funds must be used for the Warm Hub; a separate attempt is being made to make use of the Community minibus for trips.

MR said that the WFC Locality Board should have funds available when it is set up.

MH reported that the day hospital has been restarted between 10-3 on Tuesdays for men and Wednesdays for ladies. Pre-pandemic taxis could be used, but they are now relying on volunteer drivers. The organisers asked if anyone is willing to help during sessions or help with transport. Although fully-funded in the past, they now need to fundraise to keep the service going.

#### **5h Fairhill Estate Charity**

The Fairhill Estate Charity is open to residents from Alston Moor who find themselves in financial difficulties. Assistance can be given with costs such as funeral expenses, fuel bills, playgroup or under-11 school trip fees, telephone monitoring fees, one-off transport costs to cover exceptional circumstances, or other financial problems not covered here. It can also assist with educational requirements for people over 25.

This year most grants have been allocated to people finding difficulty in paying their fuel bills. £2,194 was given out in donations this year. Applications can be made through the parish council and on the council website.

#### **5i CCF Alston Moor Community Fund**

MR asked if anyone knew about the Alston Moor Community Fund managed by CCF.

The clerk was asked to contact CCF to find out if it is being used.

**5j Wednesday Coffee mornings**

HH reported that the Wednesday coffee morning organisers are planning to hold a celebration for the coronation.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

DRAFT