



## ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

To: Members of the Council, you are hereby summonsed to attend

### Alston Moor Annual Parish Council Meeting

#### Councillors Present:

Alice Bondi, Elaine Edgar, Elaine Grew, Raymond Miller, Dee Monk, Graeme Ransom, Holly Ho, Alan Green, Brian Davies, Alix Martin, Paul Best.

**In Attendance:** Carrie Pillow, Mary Robinson(DC)

**Public Present:** 2

#### **APCM/2425/57. Public Participation (Timed item 15 minutes)**

This is at the Chair's discretion and no decisions can be made on items brought to the attention of Alston Moor Parish Council under this item.

**APCM/2425/58. To receive apologies & consider approval of the reasons** given for absence

Ron Robinson, Michael Hanley, Alastair Robertson

**APCM/2425/59. To receive declarations of interest** in items on the agenda.

None

**APCM/2425/60. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on**

1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

**APCM/2425/61. Exclusion of Press & Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)**

To decide whether there are any agenda items which require consideration for the exclusion of the press and public.

Clerk position

**APCM/2425/62. To note councillor vacancy & review any co-option candidates**

1. To consider co-option candidate

No candidates

### **APCM/2425/63. Chair's Report**

To receive for information a verbal report from the Chair

Correspondence from quarry, reassurance re reinstatement

Closed session & behaviour and abuse of public to clerk when asked to move away from door.

### **APCM/2425/64. Council To Receive Reports (If Any):-**

*Written reports received will be placed in the appendix of the minutes, verbal reports will not be minuted.*

Westmorland & Furness District Councillors' Report

WAFC 11/7 appendix 1

ELB 17/7 appendix 2

District Councillor Mary Robinson discussed the on-going issues of trees in the cemetery

**APCM/2425/65.** To receive reports from **Committees, working groups & consider** any actions required

#### **i. Group Representatives**

The Alston & fellside Place Action Group next meeting 19/9/2024

**APCM/2425/66.** To **Consider** Matters arising, and actions required

1. Ongoing - Position of Clerk / RFO – Moved to closed Session
2. Ongoing – Nenthead Fountain - Ongoing
3. W&F - a list of historical "assets" – Gathering of evidence –

**Resolved** To create a

Facebook group to enable the community to contribute to creating a list

4. Christmas Lights / Christmas Trees –  
To go on next meeting  
to agree donation for pat testing  
to agree charge to business for fitting of trees.

5. Benches for removal.

Ongoing Removal.

Survey Public of where they suggest placing of up to 3 new benches

6. Local Plan

Working group – DM, AM, EG, AB

**APCM/2425/67.** To **Discuss Planning Applications & Consider Response** as a **statutory consultee.**

No Planning Applications

**APCM/2425/68. FINANCE REPORTS:**

1. Current Balance of the Community Account as at 5/8/202

£ 148476.62

2. To consider payments for Approval

**Resolved** to Approve

Status	Order No	Order Tender	Order Date	Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Supplier	Description	VAT	Total
Outstanding	115	ONLINE	02.08.2024	25.07.2024	779	LCC	Locum	£365.60	£2,193.60
Outstanding	111	DIRDEBIT	29.07.2024	26.07.2024	50478	Urbaser Ltd	bins	£1.21	£7.25
Outstanding	109	ONLINE	15.07.2024	05.07.2024	242536	Rural Services Network	Membership	£10.00	£60.00
Outstanding	108	ONLINE	15.07.2024	12.07.2024	2475	Alston Town Hall	Office Rent	£0.00	£657.75
Outstanding	107	ONLINE	15.07.2024			HMRC	hmrc council only	£0.00	£430.20

3. To approve any payments required between meetings.

None Known

4. Agar Page 2 – resign

**Resolved** to Sign

5. Applications for funding – WAMM project £300

**Resolved** to approve

**APCM/2425/69. To note the status of assets & consider any action required.**

Tyne Willows Playing Field – no issues

Firs Woodland Walk – No issues

Pavilion – Cllr discussed the proposed gym extension, & other community requirements.

To review lease and way forward. To review in working group 19/8/2024 7pm

To bring info back to council meeting. (Moved to end of meeting)

Village Seats – Benches list to review which are to be repaired, or replaced

War Memorials – No Issues

Bus Shelters – No Issues

Notice Boards – No Issues

Defibrillators – Cabinet in Town Hall ongoing.

Footway lighting - No Issues

**APCM/2425/70.** To **note** the status of **Open spaces / Trees & consider** any **action** required.

Council to review trees that the parish council own and note what need work.

**APCM/2425/71.** To **Note Correspondence** Received

None

**APCM/2425/72.** To consider items for the **Next Meeting Agenda**

Christmas Trees, charges, donation

Benches for works.

Tyne willows path.

Bank signatories

**APCM/2425/73.** To consider any Councillor or Officer **Training**.

None

Westmorland and Furness Council 11.7.24

Report by Michael Hanley.

#### 1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (9.5.24)

A Burns (AB, L): Queried what Cllr A Jarvis had said about money going to Barrow and money going to Grange Lido. This was amended in the minutes.

#### 2. Public Participation

J Davies: WAFC has been in operation for more than one year. One of its statutory duties is to be financially transparent. This is the second year and it is still not complying. Accounts have not been published. Councillors are wanting more money for themselves but are not accountable with regard to their financial obligation.

A Jarvis (AJ, Finance Portfolio Holder, LD): I previously responded to another query of yours on financial transparency. We hope to be able to deliver the information in the next week. Disaggregation of the financial team from Cumberland Council is due in the next 12 months. We will have more control then.

#### 3. Announcements

M Severn (MS, Chair, LD): Thanked all the council staff who were involved with election. There is to be an Adult Social Care Listening Event in Barrow.

J Brook (JB, Leader, LD): A huge amount of work occurs behind the scenes during an election. Thank you to all the council staff involved. I also extend a warm welcome to our new MPs. They are all working to the same goal. I have written to them. I also want to thank all the businesses who took part in our annual business survey. This will inform our future economic strategy. This confirms our desire to work with our businesses. Enterprise Cumbria was launched last week, promoting business in Cumbria.

P Thornton (PT, Highways Portfolio, LD): Discussed half joint bridges. They were very popular in the 60s and 70s. They were built on motorways (eg the M6 at the Lune Gorge). We have five of these bridges. In the last 20 years there has been two high profile collapses, one in Canada and the other in Italy. The failure is usually sudden, you don't get the usual warning cracks. We have brought in weight limits on two of these bridges. Recently we were advised to close another two (in the Kendal area). They were closed a few weeks ago and this has caused problems for motorists. We are proceeding to examine the options.

V Taylor (VT, LD): The Dock Museum in Barrow was highly commended and won an award from Cumbria Tourism. We will be launching a leisure strategy consultation. Discussed the upcoming local plan. It is important that local people and parish councils feed into this. I would like to commend the councillors across the chamber (the Labour Group) for the speed that the new government will accelerate changes to the planning rules.

S Sanderson (SS, LD): Discussed summer schools holiday programme. This provides a wide range of activities and young people attending receive a warm nourishing meal.

#### 4. Minutes of Cabinet Meeting

This took place in Alston on the 4th of June,

M. Hanley (MH, L): Both local WAF councillors Mary Robinson and MH were unable to attend. Both were notified of the meeting three weeks prior. Could there be more notice the next time as

it is important that local WAF councillors be able to attend when the cabinet visits smaller venues.

JD: Alston Moor PC have asked us back so we plan to return next year, so you will get more notice. Alston Moor was the first location outside the usual ones of Barrow, Kendal and Penrith.

P Dew (PD, C): Referred to criticism by the chair of the Lakes Parish Council, Andrew Biggs. This mainly focused on the state of the roads: potholes, collapsed roads etc. He commended PT for always giving his full attention to his role in Highways and he is fully committed to what he does.

J Battye (JB, LD): I want to make sure placements of children are suitable ( part of the document described the establishment of a regional adoption agency. It is hoped that the speed of the process will be improved).

PT: We have 146 parishes. We do our best to get around all of them. Our roads are the distance to the North Pole plus 10 miles. I think our teams do a great job. We spend £20 million: all the bridges, gullies, street lights and roads we have to maintain.

B Shirley (BS, C): Asked about council-owned assets. He is concerned about the delay in getting things done.

AJ: I will look into this.

H Carrick (HC, C): Asked about the mothballing of the county offices (County Hall, Kendal). If the costs are so high why are we continuing to use this building until September.

PT: Its not saying it's unsafe to continue to occupy this building until September. Very few businesses are operating in the same building as they were in 1936. We want to be a three centre council rather than a one centre council. We have the Town Hall in Kendal. The Carlisle office is a bit of a red herring. In the long term there will only be three centres.

C Atkinson (CA, C): Asked about Voreda House and when will the costs be published. The council tax payers have shown their anger as the cost of this has risen from four to eight million pounds.

AJ: Voreda House has just opened. We should be proud. Costs were higher than expected. I will give you a written report.

A Burns (AB, L): Asked about schools not meeting health and safety standards. How many are there and what happens when the school becomes a trust. What responsibilities have we?

AJ: That is a complex question. I will ask the officers to give you a written response.

D Taylor (DT, I): Asked about Borderlands Grant money for Dalton and the replacement of bollards and shopfront enhancement. Will there be funding for this?

PT: I am not sure whether the Borderlands Funds will be relevant to this. I could do a walk-around (of Dalton) with you.

## 5. Questions from Members

H Chaffey (HC, LD): Asked about the future of local transport with the new government.

N Hughes (NH, Transport Portfolio, LD): £129 million was promised by the outgoing government over 8 years. There is capital funding for improvement of roads. No money was awarded before the election. Rishi Sunak knew that not a penny would be awarded. We have to see whether the new government will award this. Many organisations have their eyes on the local transport fund. We have to wait for an announcement from the new Secretary of State.

BS: Read an email from a local resident concerning the rubbish on her street. She refused to pay her council tax because of this. We have waited for over four weeks for our recycling bins to be collected.

JB: This is a serious matter. It is always unfortunate when things like this happen. I will follow it up. As for paying your council tax, it is a legal duty. If services fall below what is expected, that is not a

reason to not pay your council tax.

DT: Asked about the cemetery in Dalton. It is on a steep hill and the lower gate is always locked. It was shut because of an accident due to a pothole. We need the paths re-tarmacking.

NH: I don't know the detail. All cemeteries should be in good condition. I will get an officer to reply.

## 6 Members Allowance

Paul Jones (PJ, Chair of Independent Review Panel): Discussed special responsibilities and extended roles of some members. There is a big time commitment and a lot of hard work involved. There should be no financial disadvantage. As a result we recommend an uplift in the basic allowance from £13,000 to £13,500. I think this is fair and reasonable.

(Total members allowance cost 2024-25: £1.125 million. Compared to other councils, WAFC is among the lowest. Basic allowance in Cumberland is £14,500, in North Yorkshire: £17,000. Chairs of various committees receive less in WAFC: Planning Committee: WAFC: £6500, Northumberland: £12,150, Cumberland: £8700.)

BS: Thank you. What are the next steps?

KJ: We will review this whenever it needs to be done.

JB: We need to be able to attract a diverse range of councillors. We may have to revisit this as new committees are formed.

HC: If we approve we will have to concentrate on improving council services. There is an increasing perception that councillors are being rewarded for poor performance.

Vote: All in favour except two abstentions.

## 7. Council Size Submission

Linda Jones (LJ, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer): Discussed the process. Currently there are 65 councillors. Average 2845 electors per councillor. The report recommends the council size stays at 65.

AJ: The workload per member is high. We have a wide area and many parish and town councils. Some rural areas have asked for more members. We have discussed whether to have 2 or 3 member wards.

PD: I don't find that size matters. I think that multiple member wards causes problems especially when they are from different parties. There is a problem with confusing residents when you are having meetings (due to your different political perspectives).

M Brereton (MB, C): Discussed allowing officers to decide on 1,2 and 3 member wards.

AJ: The officers will not redraw the map until the electoral commission has given the go-ahead.

J Murray (JM, LD): For the record I would like to say how much fun it has been to share the ward with Councillor Dew.

Vote: Unanimous in favour.

## 8. Update on Cumbria Pensions Fund

D Rathbone (DR, LD): This is a local government pension fund. It impacts on our balance sheet. There are 65,000 members. It impacts on all of our actions. It is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme. There is a guaranteed minimum income. It provides for 120 different employers: parish and town councils, schools, academies, contractors and subcontractors. £7.3 million is paid out every month to 19,000 pensioners. 84% of these live in Cumbria. The average

is £4600 per year. The assets of the fund are £3.4 billion. The annual return is 7.3% (benchmark: 6.8%).

Investment is made with environment, economy and society in mind. It was agreed to invest in climate opportunities products.

#### 9. Urgent Item

Approval of Absence of a member (Cllr Andy Connell (AC, Appleby and Brough, LD) ) It is requested that Cllr Andy Connell be allowed to extend his absence beyond six months. The absence is due to ill health and he is expected to be back at work in September.

MS: Cllr Connell is a dedicated councillor. We would like to see him back in his place.

G Simpkins (GS, LD): Cllr Connell still remains very active with council work.

AB: We would like to wish him all the best.

T Callister (TC, L): Can the council send him a get-well card?

MS: Yes.

MB: We urgently need him back as when we quit county hall we will not have anyone to sing us out.

Next meeting: 26.9.24.



Eden Locality Board 17.7.24

Report by Michael Hanley.

1. John Murray (JM, LD) elected chair, Lorna Baker (LB, LD) elected vice-chair.

2. Home to School Transport

Caroline Watson (CW, Senior Manager Home to School Transport): We have 456 SEND pupils (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) who we transport to school. We have a statutory obligation to provide transport. The financial burden is becoming increasingly difficult, especially for individual transport. This occurs sometimes due to the behaviour of the child (eg. some autistic children). From September there will be an increase in offers of parental grants. This will be cost-effective. There will be grants for breakfast clubs and for driving lessons for parents (to enable them to drive their children to school). There will also be encouragement for the child to walk to school under supervision. There will also be work done to help young SEND people to become more independent. Some situations where the child is being brought by taxi, negotiation is being done with parents to establish a budget to help them drive the child to school.

M Eyles (ME, LD): Are any other councils taking a similar approach ?

CW: Yes. All authorities are struggling with the rising demand.

P Dew (PD, C): Praised the service. This authority has a very thorough approach.

N Hughes (NH, LD): Can we allow members of the public to be involved in home-to-school transport?

CW: We try to use public transport where appropriate and encourage young people to travel independently. We have worked with Active Cumbria.

P Bell (PB, LD): Asked about feedback from parents.

V Taylor (VT, LD): Asked about the bursary scheme.

CW: £300k was allocated for Eden and a separate grant for Alston (to fund transport of post GCSE young people to schools which provide education for A levels, SKS secondary school in Alston provides education only to GCSE level).

VT: Are some of our students limited because of where they live?

CW: Discussed this. From next year we will be administering the bursary scheme for non-SEND children.

VT: I have a dream, an electric vehicle which is plugged in at night and used for school transport the next day.

MH: Asked about the grants. He also thanked the department for the years that they transported his autistic son from Alston to Ullswater Community College. Also asked about the grants to help parents to learn to drive and whether other grants were means tested.

CW: There is no means test. In other areas funding has gone to parents to learn to drive and pass the driving test. This has not happened here yet but we would not dismiss it.

NH: Is the fund available up to 25 year olds?

CW: No, up to 19.

3. Safe and Strong Communities.

N Wright (NW, Senior Manager of Safe and Strong Communities ): Discussed the report.

Appleby Horse Fair: MASCG (multi agency strategic coordination group) helped to make the fair safe and enjoyable.

Eden Resettlement Group: involved with Homes for Ukraine which helps secure housing for Ukrainian families to move from their hosts. An Afghan family has recently settled in Penrith and

the children are attending a local school.

Place Action Groups (PAGs) continue to develop. Eden and Lyvennet Vale PAG had their first session on 1st May. Other PAGs have also met. There have been delays in Alston and Fellside PAG but this is planned to start in September with the first meeting in Ainstable..

Eden Food Network Group met on 13 May to discuss food poverty and work towards local food security. An out-of-hours food parcel service is being developed.

Appleby Library has a highly successful craft group meeting twice weekly. It is hoped to have baby weighing scales in all libraries and extend baby vitamins to be available from libraries in Penrith, Alston, Appleby and Kirkby Stephen.

Community Grants: there will be three deadlines: 19.8.24, 11.11.24 and 17.2.25 with the Community Grant Panel meeting about four weeks later.

Alston Live recently submitted an application but this did not meet the timings. The project was still awarded £2000 based on officer advice.

At the last Eden Locality Board meeting. £50k was allocated from the Household Support Fund. Those funded included: Penrith Foodbank (£5k), Alston Foodbank (£3k), Upper Eden Foodbank (£4k), Carer Support (£5k), Riverside Housing (£5k), Cumbria Family Support (£5k), Barnardo's 0-19 Service (£5k),

NW: We are happy with the progress of the PAGs. We have had the input of Sue Castle-Clark.

NH: Commented on the amount of counterfeit products being sold at Appleby Fair. We welcome the Ukrainian refugees fleeing terror but the outgoing government changed the rules.

JM: What we saw on the ground was impressive, that worked very well (at Appleby Fair).

Asked for volunteers for the Community Grants Panel. JM, LB, PB and MH volunteered.

Next meeting: 6.10.24

JM: Commented that this would be PD's last ELB meeting.

PD: I will be decamping to Stockport, to revive my ministry. I will move lock, stock and barrel, quite why because God called me? I don't know why I ended up in local politics, it's not what I intended to do.

JM: I would like to add my thanks for all the work you have done with children. I know we didn't always see eye to eye.