



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the **MONTHLY MEETING** of Alston Moor Parish Council held on **Monday 1st September** at 19:00hrs in Alston Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Ho (arrived 19.05hrs).

Clerk/RFO: Claire Thomson

Also in attendance:

Members of the Public: 2

2526/80	To receive apologies & consider approval of the reasons given for absence Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Martin, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Robinson No apologies or reasons from Cllr. Green.
2526/81	To record all votes on every agenda item by name to make it clear what you vote whether it's for, against or abstain. It will be recorded in the minutes by your name next to what you voted for, this is in our Standing Orders, Section 3 Paragraph 5
2526/82	Minutes of the Last Meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 4 th August 2025 were considered. <i>Motion: To authorise the chairman to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th August 2025. Proposer: Cllr. Monk, Seconder: Cllr. Robertson, Vote: Favour - Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Edgar. Against - None Abstention – None.</i> Resolved: to accept the minutes of the previous meeting Cllr. Ho arrives 19.05hrs, Clerk gives her a hard copy of the agenda.
2526/83	Declarations of interest & requests for Dispensation 1. To receive declarations of interest for agenda items – None 2. To receive dispensation –All Cllrs. have dispensation from May 2025 to April 2027, for any business relating to Alston Town Hall. Resolved: Recorded in minutes 2526/12.3 that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2).
2526/84	Public Participation (Timed item 15 minutes) 1. Ian Grey gave a brief update on the progress of Nenthead Community's proposed request to refuse the development of treatment ponds and a pumping station on the Nenthead Mines site. Sadly, he reported that a very small email reply had been received confirming their documents had been received by the Trustees of Nenthead Mines Conservation Society. The Clerk confirmed that the same style of email had been received in relation to the letter sent by Alston Moor Parish Council.
2526/85	To note councillor vacancies & review any co-option candidates One vacancy at Nenthead - no candidates received



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2526/86	Chair's Report The Chair had nothing to report.
2526/87	Westmorland & Furness Councillors Report – Cllr. Hanley reported that August was a very quiet month for meetings and there was not much to report. Bus Services – See 2526/88. Police Report - The monthly report from Cumbria Police was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. Nenthead ward meeting update – Cllr. Robertson advised that the next meeting is at the end of September, however the Nenthead 200 celebrations were well attended and proved to be a success, and the Nenthead community should be proud. It was requested that some steps in Nenthead by the waste heap, need some attention. These are the responsibility of Westmorland & Furness Highways Team. Nenthead Ward have been asked to write to the Parish Clerk so they can pass this on to the Highways Team at Westmorland & Furness Council to request the repair of the steps by the waste heap in Nenthead.
2526/88	889 Bus Service – Cllr. Hanley has contacted the officer responsible for this termination of service, who advised that they were unaware of the termination of the 889 bus service until very recently. Alston Moor Parish Council were also only informed by email on 21st August by Westmorland & Furness Council. Westmorland & Furness Council did state that they were unable to get the new Hexham service up & running in time for the old long standing service ending. The new service, once agreed, would only run until April 2026, as Westmorland & Furness are waiting for confirmation from the Department of Transport on the Councils "Bus Service Improvement Plan" funding beyond 2026. Once received all current contracts will be evaluated. The new service may involve a change of route or change of day. It was stated, in the correspondence received by the Clerk, that an increase in usage is needed to ensure the service is maintained in the future. Tenders will have to be sought & received for the 889 service, and the Cabinet must OK the funding. Issues that contributed to the 889 service being terminated were the high subsidy per person (£9.50) & Northumberland Council having a maximum of £7 per head. The high subsidy is due to the small number of people using the service. The average number using this service was less than 10. Another point was raised, that in the email received from Westmorland & Furness to the Clerk, it stated that the Monday & Wednesday 680 bus service to Carlisle contract is also due to end in November 2025 but there are hopes of having a replacement contract in place until April 2026. It was noted that the problems Alston Moor face, with non-existent transport infrastructure and poor public transport that is reliable, will be raised with the Labour Leader from Barrow, who will be asked to bring it to the scrutiny committee. Alston Moor Parish Council wish it to be strongly emphasised that this must be considered due to Alston Moor's isolated community & location.
2526/89	To consider matters arising and actions required 2526/89 1. Benches for removal/repair/replace/sites for new benches – This is ongoing, benches in Nenthead & Garrigill are having repairs carried out by the Parish Handyman. Cllr. Robinson advised that purchase of a bench for part of the Pennine Way, near Tower Hill, looked promising as it was likely that



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	permission will be given from the landowner. The bench at Nenthead Play Park needs repaired and it was suggested that they apply to Alston Moor Parish Council for a community grant for the repairs. 2526/89 2. Signs on Tyne Willows – It was discussed that along with the no overnight stays, no camp fires should be added to the signs due to the damage caused by camp fires over the summer period. Cllr. Davies is not present at the meeting but will be contacted regarding this. 2526/89 3. Memorial Bench on Tyne Willows – Following last month, the application form has been completed, and the family have confirmed they are happy to pay for the work and will help to keep the area tidy. 2526/89 4. Mount Hooley Mast – The Clerk has had a response from Cellnext as the email was passed to them from Arqiva. It was confirming they had acknowledged the email sent and were looking into the matter and would be in touch. 2526/89 5. Local Plan – Westmorland & Furness Council have been asking local councils for suggestions of possible sites for new housing. A map from 2015 showing possible sites and unsuitable sites, the most recent suggestions Alston Moor Parish Council have, was suggested to be sent to them. 2526/89 6. Meet the Neighbours – This proposal was asked to be raised by Cllr. Martin to hold a meeting for new and old residents, to include volunteer groups with which Sarah Stamford (the AMP's Community Development Co-Ordinator) has been working with. Unfortunately, Cllr. Martin could not attend tonight's meeting, so this will be raised at the next meeting. 2526/89 7. Policies, Assertion 10 & IT Policy – Cllr. Monk has updated several policies (Communications Policy, Co-Option Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy, Social Media Policy, Safeguarding Policy & Sexual Harassment Policy) and has asked councillors to read over the revised versions and send any comment to her directly. The new advice for the AGAR (Annual Governance & Accountability Returns) submission for 2025 has been released, and there must be a number of GDP regulations in place along with other matters before the submission date. A great amount of background work has been done by Cllr. Martin & the Clerk to ensure that the website meets all the criteria, along with the iPads and .gov.uk email addresses for all councillors, so Alston Moor Parish Council is compliant with everything required. 2526/66 8. Waltons Memorial – Cllr. Robertson raised a question of whether it would be acceptable to add the Waltons Memorial, situated on the grassed area at Townfoot Alston, to Alston Moor Parish Council's assets. Cllr. Miller advised that this area, along with the memorial, belonged to Westmorland & Furness Council and it was agreed that it should be left in the hands of Westmorland & Furness Council. Cllr. Ho raised concerns that the upkeep and any repairs to the memorial would be costly. If there are any problems/issues with the Walton Memorial, the contact at Westmorland & Furness Council is Alan Harty, Head of Assets, who needs to be informed.
2526/90	Committees, working groups & consider any actions required 2526/90.1 Committee – Development, Governance & Personnel (DGP) – which includes staffing – to be discussed in the closed session. 2526/90.2 Group Representatives



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	Alston Moor Partnership – A meeting had been held with the Royal Countryside Fund, who are the funders for the Community Development Co-ordinator. It was reported they are very happy with the work that has been done so far and future work is planned. Alston Moor Traffic Management Group – a date for the next meeting is to be confirmed but will be before the end of September. NWAS Alston Moor Working Group – Cllr. Monk reported that they had had no further updates & Cllr. Grew updated the council that again, after providing 2 dates for Rhonda & Jean to attend council meetings, they declined but however Cllr. Grew has asked if they can attend November's meeting. So, we again await a response. Alston & Fellside Place Action Group – next meeting 4th September. Tyne Willows Management – dates have been given, weather permitting, for the resurfacing of Tyne Willows Car Park. This is scheduled for 10th September. The Clerk is to issue notices advising that no vehicle access is allowed until the works are completed, however foot access is allowed. Clerk has informed the Gym and the Recycling Centre by email regarding this. Notices will also be placed on the website & parish Facebook page. AMERG – No update. Hospital Group – No update Alston Community Transport – No update.
2526/91	Planning Applications & Decisions 2526/91.1 Applications received – 2025/0288/FPA – Headmasters House, Front Street, Alston CA9 3SQ change of use of vacant land to create additional garden & installation of fencing, railings, gates & hot tub. Part retrospective. Councillors noted that the work already done were not in keeping with the area & some inappropriate materials had been used. <i>Motion: to object to the application</i> <i>Proposed: Cllr. Grew Seconded: Cllr. Bondi Vote – Favour: Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Robertson, Against: None Abstain: Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Best</i> Resolved: Unable to comment as too many abstentions are recorded. Cllr. Hanley voted in favour but then was reminded that he must abstain as he attends the planning committee as a Westmorland & Furness councillor. 2526/91.2 Decisions – None
2526/92	Finance Reports & Accounts The finance reports & accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. 2526/92 1. Current Balance of the Community Account as at 31/08/2025 £110715.45 2526/92 2. Consider payments for approval –ProCut & Parish Handy Person <i>Proposed Cllr. Miller Seconded Cllr. Robertson Vote – Favour Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Edgar. Against – Cllr. Ho Abstain – None.</i> Resolved: Clerk to pay 2 invoices. Flag invoice is on the approval list but only as the payment hasn't been taken from the bank at the time of the meeting as it went through "stripe" which can take several business days to clear. 2526/92 3. Approve any payments required between meetings – The Clerk advised that they were unaware of any invoices due.



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	The Clerk discussed the request to move monies in the reserve's balances. This is to be voted on at the next meeting.	
2526/93	Note the status of assets & consider any action required Tyne Willows Playing Field – grass cutting continues. After the recent “camp fire” incidents, it was decided to ask the Fire show PTA to either raise the bonfire off the ground or remove the turf before and replace it after the fire display. This will help preserve the condition of the grass. Cllr. Miller would like to move the two picnic tables that are near the Gym area over to where the large boulders are to try and preserve the ground that in the past has been worn down. The council agreed this was a sensible solution. Firs Woodland Walk - nothing to report. Pavilion – nothing to report. Seats & Benches – Handyperson is working their way round the benches, assessing and carrying out repairs as required, ongoing project. Bus shelters - ongoing, repainting is nearly completed on the bus shelter at Nentsberry. Weather permitting, work will continue to paint all the bus shelters on Alston Moor. Notice Boards – Nothing to report. Defibrillators – Cllr. Monk advised that there are new stickers which will help show when the defibrillator is used that it goes back to its correct “home”, as some in the past have not been returned. Nenthead Fountain – The Clerk advised that all documentation is with Westmorland & Furness. Footway Lighting – The Clerk advised that no further correspondence has been received regarding Westmorland & Furness taking over the ownership of the footway lighting. The Clerk is to contact Scott at Westmorland & Furness for an update. Christmas Trees & Lights – Plans for PAT testing the trees and lights is to be organised as soon as possible, along with sorting out the issues with the brackets. Clerk to email Tim Haldon to organise this. Cllr. Miller is to contact Brian Cooper as he has knowledge of the correct connections for the lights for the trees. Cllr. Robertson offered his services to help with sorting out the trees. Flags & Flag Poles – The flag has been ordered with delivery early September. Discussions on flying the flag all the time or just on celebrations/special occasions, it was pointed out that although it is not compulsory, any building relating to local councils is encouraged to fly the flag all time. <i>Motion: to always fly the flag. Proposed: Cllr. Miller Seconded: Cllr. Grew Vote – Favour: Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Monk. Against: None Abstain: Cllr. Robertson.</i> Resolved: to always fly the flag. Waltons Memorial – see 2526/89 8.	
2526/94	Note status of Open Spaces/ Trees & consider any action – Nothing to report	
2526/95	Correspondence – Received 1. Pop Up Flower Stall – an email has been received asking permission from the Parish Council to sell flowers occasionally on the Market Cross. The Clerk advised them that the Market Cross belonged to Westmorland & Furness and therefore they would need to contact them.	



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	2. Blueberry's – an email has been received from a potential buyer asking if the Parish Council had any issues if they made an offer on the building, as they would like to reinstate the café & B&B, as a business. Suggestions were to contact other businesses in Alston with similar ventures. 3. Internal Auditor – an email has been received asking if the Clerk can provide a testimonial to be included on their new website. The council agreed this would be acceptable for the Clerk to do this. 4. Fibrus/Poles & Cables – Yet again correspondences have been received regarding the situation. The Clerk advised that Fibrus do not need planning permission to carry out the works, so unfortunately there is nothing that can be done. The cobbles in the Potato Market are to be reinstated properly. It needs to be documented that Alston Moor Parish Council have no authority about such works being carried out, the authority to contact is Westmorland & Furness Council.	
2526/96	Items for the Next Meeting of the Parish Council • Policies • Reserves • Traffic Management – signs, parking, cleaning.	
2526/97	To consider any councillor or officer training	
2526/98	Date and Time of Next Meeting The next PARISH COUNCIL meeting to be held on Monday 6th October 2025 at 7.00pm. Meeting to be held Garrigill Village Hall. Cllr. Best advises he won't be able to attend this meeting.	
2526/99	Exclusion of public & press (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960) Resolve to close the meeting at 20.40hrs	
2526/100	Close Parish Council Meeting Meeting closed 20.50hrs	
2526/101	Open Fairhill Charity Meeting	
2526/102	Close Fairhill Charity Meeting	

Cllr. Miller closed the meeting at 20.58 hrs

Please note: all Parish Council meetings are open to members of the Public.

Chair Signature: _____

Date: _____

Clerk Signature: _____

Date: _____

DRAFT