



## ALSTON MOOR BUSINESS ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date/Venue:** Thursday 3 December 2020, 6.30pm, online via Zoom

**Present:** Ian Grey (Chair), Gina Perryman, Lesley Mearns, Janis Goodfellow, Guy Harmer, Elaine Edgar, Andy Holt

**Apologies:** Gary Wright

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### Minutes of committee meeting held on 12 November 2020

Agreed, with no matters arising. **Action for Gina** to update and publish on the website. All action points discharged, or carried forward as detailed below.

### Finance and Membership

Since the last meeting expenditure has gone out for a Xmas tree bracket (£48) and there will be some lights to pay for. **Action for Gina** to send invoices for 2020 Zoom fees to Janis for reimbursement before year-end on 31 December. There's been a further increase in membership, taking the total to 97. The membership form is available on the [website](#). Ian has sent customised letters out to 5 potential members who had indicated they wanted to join, with stamped addressed envelopes.

### Marketing Group sub-committee

Gina provided an update on activities since the last committee meeting:

- Caravan/Holiday Parks project – Ongoing contact work on this by the Alston TIC staff.
- Shop Local - Alison Clark has been working on the survey referred to last time, a draft ready to test has been received today. This is the starting point for the whole Shop Local strand of marketing activity. As Gina will be standing down at the AGM, it would make sense for someone else on the committee to pick this new piece of work up with Alison and take it forward. Elaine kindly offered; **action for Gina** to advise Alison, and make sure Elaine is sighted on everything.
- Reopening High Streets Safely (RHSS) - Gina is leading on this for AMBA, and it was agreed that she'd see this through to delivery, seeing as the work has already started. The online guide [www.alstonmoorhealth.org/guide](http://www.alstonmoorhealth.org/guide) has press releases prepared, but they have remained on hold for now in light of the current Covid-19 situation. Work has resumed on the leaflet now, which Alix Martin is doing as it's a follow-on from the online guide and shop window posters. Gina and Alix have had an initial discussion, and Eden DC (who authorise all RHSS-funded work) are on board. The aim is to have leaflets ready to distribute, along with the press releases, once it's appropriate to do so. Leaflets will also be sent out to the caravan/holiday parks (see above) and others such as Bowlees Visitor Centre, High Force and Killhope, for whom Gina has contacts through the AONB Tourism Working Group.
- Gina attended the AONB Tourism Working Group on 1 December. There has been a 'North Pennines Circular' long distance walking trail in planning since 2017, and it's now in the AONB's delivery plan for the current period. They're looking to form a working group to make this happen, and Gina has volunteered to be part of that, on behalf of Alston Moor Walkers Are Welcome.

### Accommodation Forum

Guy reported that the group has wound up for the winter season, but will resume in 2021. Guy attended the Cumbria Tourism Covid Tier Restrictions webinar, and will pass on anything of interest to the forum members.



### **Front Street Steering Group**

Before the Steering Group meeting on 2 December, Gina met with the other Alston stakeholders on that group (Sonia Kempsey, Dave Liquorice and Claire Driver). The plan is to form an Alston group of member businesses to proactively and creatively manage the road closure next year, with support from the Steering Group. Sonia (Alston Moor Partnership) and Dave (Save Alston Front Street) will also be part of that Alston group. Gina has invited our members to be part of this, and several have come forward. Elaine mentioned her contacts at Grampus Heritage who may be able to offer some interesting input; Elaine will feed that into the new Alston Group. The next step is to hold a Zoom meeting, which the Cumbria CC Project Manager has agreed to attend, as has Claire Driver. The Steering Group will be putting some comms out in the new year, but everything is still on track for a post-Easter start on the work.

### **Community Plan**

Gina and Ian attended the last Community Plan meeting on 18 November. All activities have now been assigned a lead body, so the next step will be for each of those bodies, AMBA included, to take stock of those, prioritise and liaise with the Community Plan Steering Group on progress going forward.

### **Traffic Management Committee**

Gary represents AMBA on this, but it hasn't met since our last meeting. At the Alston Area Planning Group (see below) some funding was mentioned that we may be able to tap into for the brown signs mentioned at the last meeting. **Action for Gina** to explore that further.

### **Alston Moor Emergency Response Group (AMERG)**

Ian represents AMBA on AMERG, which has reactivated its helpline, but only 3 calls have been received so far. In the current lockdown AMERG is coordinating prescription/medicine deliveries. A Xmas card is being printed with some community information on and will be distributed to all households.

### **Alston Area Planning Group**

Gina and Ian represented AMBA at the meeting on 1 December. This is a new group, currently coordinated by Cumbria CC. The Terms of Reference are 'A forum of key partners to discuss, coordinate and plan for the delivery of projects that will improve the sustainability and vitality of Alston Moor'. **Action for Gina** to forward the fuller ToR to the committee.

### **United Utilities sub-committee**

All of the remaining funds have been committed. Ian would like to have a face to face/Zoom meeting with UU in the new year, to present what we've used the money for, and to ask for more. **Action for Ian** to write up what we've done with the money and to circulate that to the committee before approaching UU. **Action for all** to think of things that we might like to fund as a starting point for any negotiations. If UU are receptive then we can go out to the wider community to ask for input.

### **South Tynedale Railway**

Ian continues to remain in contact with one of the trustees over developments. STR have advised that in principle the trustees will be happy to keep the car park open on days they're not operating next year, which will help when Front Street is closed. The terms of that offer are being discussed between STR and our County Councillor Claire Driver.

### **Webinar**

Ian had circulated a detailed outline for a webinar event. We agreed it looked good, and the next step is to gauge interest in this from the members. **Action for Ian** to share with members.



### **Window Wanderland**

We agreed that it's not for AMBA to lead on, but we will support it in whatever way we can. It's on the Parish Council agenda for 7 December, so we'll see what's decided there.

<https://www.windowwanderland.com/>

### **Potential MP visit**

Action point carried forward to keep in touch to arrange Neil Hudson visit. We agreed that late-Spring would be a good time, when STR has hopefully reopened, and when the Front Street works have started. **Action for Janis.**

### **Succession planning for Gina's roles/activities**

Secretary – Lesley kindly offered to take this role on. **Action for Gina** to liaise with Lesley to start the transition.

Gina recommends that the committee considers splitting the marketing responsibilities up. A lead for local marketing and a lead for visitor marketing would make those strands more manageable. Elaine and Alison are taking forward the first stage of the marketing to locals, as outlined above.

Other roles/activities to be discussed at the next meeting.

### **AOB**

AGM – If it looks like it would be possible, Ian would prefer to defer the AGM to April/May if it means that we can meet face to face rather than on Zoom. We'll review that next time to see how the Covid situation is looking.

After the success of the pre-lockdown late night opening in Alston, Janis has spoken with a few businesses and there will be another on Friday 11 December, with live music from the Bazley family on the Market Cross. Janis will do some Facebook publicity and Gina will include in an all member email.

Gina asked if AMBA would be able to fund Alston Moor's accreditation fee for Walkers Are Welcome status in 2021, plus the website hosting for [www.walkalstonmoor.com](http://www.walkalstonmoor.com), as they did for 2020. The total cost will be about £75. The committee unanimously agreed to this.

### **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 21 January, 6.30pm via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.