



## Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington**

**Present: Councillors M. Woolley (Chairman), K. Wood, R. Brennan, J. Stillwell, T. Kearney, D. Harbour, B. Norton, N. Clark, R. Lancaster, N. Carver, R. Strudwick**  
**Parish Clerk Karen Dare**  
**County Councillor Frank Wilkinson**  
**Neighbourhood Wardens Peter Newell & Jayne Jeffrey**  
**PCSO Hannah Venus**  
**0 members of the public**

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### **288/11 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

District Councillor Roger Arthur (holiday)

### **289/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman declared a personal, prejudicial interest in Correspondence for Action item 6. The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

### **290/11 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Brennan and seconded by Councillor Norton, and agreed.

### **291/11 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

#### **Problems with Drugs**

We are continuing to tackle the issues with drugs in Ashington working closely with partner agencies to deal with this. Police are continually given intelligence that we have gathered whilst out on our foot patrols and whilst engaging with people face to face. This month two warnings have been given to youths by us. This information is then passed to our Anti-Social Behaviour team. Letters will be sent to parents and a suggestion that the youths concerned will have to attend a substance misuse session. Some of the Youths that are on the Voluntary Behavioural contract have really made an effort, they are beginning to see the effects that taking drugs has on them, they are actually interacting with us more and we are able to educate them and hopefully divert

them from their old ways. A date in September has now been set for the substance misuse team to attend Ashington Youth Club to deliver drug awareness workshop. We continue to target some of the known hot spots in the village hoping to deter the use of drugs in Ashington.

### **Friday Night Club**

Unfortunately due to the availability of youth workers we have had to change the day to Thursdays. However despite the change of day it has been very successful and the youth workers have managed to interact with some of the more challenging youths. The attendance has been good and the youths have enjoyed using the youth club facilities. Saxon Weald is funding this youth worker provision for six weeks. If we can prove it has been successful they may consider more funding so as we can continue with the Thursday night club. Overall this is an inexpensive diversionary activity that has been well received by the young people of Ashington. With the winter months soon approaching I suspect this will increase more so in popularity providing a safe clean and warm social environment. In addition to the youth club facilities basic refreshments have been provided free of charge over the six week period. Feedback from the youths has been very good; they are all saying they are enjoying the sessions.

Due to the different age groups we have been looking at ways to accommodate all needs.

From September if possible we would like to run a session for age groups 10-14 and then followed on by age group 15- 20. We feel it is not good to mix the age groups.

In addition to the Thursday night we are still opening the community centre ball court for a free play session. The court was quiet for the first week or two but now has picked up especially now that the word has gotten out amongst the youngsters. The youths were really excited that they could use this facility and enjoyed it very much. Whilst the session is on we are present and supervise at all times but so far everyone has been respectful of the facility. We would very much like to continue using this facility for approx two hours per week but sadly we have a limited budget and are therefore restricted on how much we can use it. We would like to see if the community centre committee could perhaps let us use this at a discounted rate or perhaps dare I say it for free. The interaction we have whilst the youths are using this ball court is very valuable, we are able to educate and correct their ways. There has been a considerable change in their behaviour over the past few weeks. The swearing and general bad behaviour has not been as bad. There is a greater level of respect between the wardens and several different groups of young people in Ashington giving us clear in roads to talk about perhaps deeper issues and problems they might be having. Overall in reflection the ball court sessions are a positive step that allows engagement through fun.

### **Skate Park**

We have been a more visible presence in this area, educating and correcting the bad behaviour. We are still getting a number of complaints about behaviour in the park but

these have reduced in number. We are trying to stimulate greater respect for the park and as part of that the youths that use it most have been assisting in litter picks of this area. We are trying to make them have ownership of this area and are close to setting up a small “skate park” group to promote this across the age ranges. Most of the users we have been working closely with have been attending the extra youth provisions. They have asked several times if the skate park can be updated with new equipment and they are quite prepared to help and raise funding. We said we would put to the parish council the suggestions that have been made by the youths to update area. We appreciate that previous ventures have been made in this area but would ask the parish council to hear us out as perhaps this time the young people involved are different from the previous.

### **Dog foul Signage**

Signage has been replaced in some areas and we are working around the village to do others. Dog foul is once again becoming an issue and we have been doing regular dog foul patrols, just being seen and interacting with the dog walkers. Dog foul bags are available from us and we will be doing spot patrols where we will happily hand the bags out to dog walkers. If seen not to be picking up their dogs foul we will issue a on the spot fixed penalty of £50.00. Dog fouling is such an emotive issue and is one that we feel very strongly about. But there are only two of us we need to appeal to the parish as a whole to help identify those responsible. Any information received is treated with the highest degree of discretion and always confidentially.

### **Carnival**

Due to unforeseen emergency situation late Friday night as incident liaison officers for Horsham District Council both of us were called out to attend. We were tasked with the set up and running of a rest centre for persons that had to be evacuated from their homes overnight. We had to attend as we are both trained to assist in this type of emergency situation. We were called out at 22:30 Friday 19<sup>th</sup> and worked solidly through the night until 09:00 hours Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August. As a result of having already worked all night we were told by our management not to work the carnival, but we both felt that we couldn't let Ashington down and made a joint decision to attend. We managed to work from 11.00 – 23.00 hrs. During the course of the day we managed to escort the carnival procession, we then went on to show a high visibility presence around the recreation field. In the evening we went on to confiscate alcohol from groups of underage youths working in partnership with Sussex Police we prevented at least a few underage drinkers. Throughout the day we met many members of the community and some from further afield overall it was a lovely day and we were pleased that we attended the event.

### **Elderly and vulnerable visits**

Throughout the month we have made visits to the elderly and vulnerable residents on our register, we have also managed to add several more names to our list. When making visits we have assisted and reassured that we are available to help them if

required. We have sign posted two to relevant partner agencies for assistance with disability aids and also for financial help.

Following our visits it has come to our attention that they would like to do outings more perhaps just a visit to the supermarket or to a local garden centre. We will look at our schedule and try to accommodate their wishes. It would be a good idea as we then could have more regular contact with some of them. Transport can be arranged. We are hoping to organise something perhaps once a month even if it is just to blow the cobwebs away.

In an initial response to this a day trip to Bognor seafront with lunch included was provided on the 30<sup>th</sup> August for 14 elderly and vulnerable residents of Ashington. This was a day that was thoroughly looked forward to and enjoyed by all.

### **Anti Social Driving**

In July we both were witnesses to a display of wreck less and simply dangerous driving in the village. This has recently resulted in us giving a statement to police to assist in the prosecution of this driver. At the very least this driver faces 3 points on his licence a fine and a stern talking to from Sussex Police

### **ASB Known offender**

Following a very busy month in assisting and reassuring the victims targeted by this known offender we successfully managed to catch the said offender in the act. We managed to interact and delay this person until police arrived to arrest him. As a result of this he has now been put on remand and is awaiting prosecution for a string of known offences. We have carried out many house visits and have sign posted the affected parties to relevant agencies. We will continue to carry out reassurance visits. To enable us to help catch this offender our shifts were changed to work until 3am.

### **Rota Changes**

We have changed our working hours to accommodate when we feel the village needs cover. Cover some nights until 24:00 hrs is now being done. We have been monitoring the number of complains and this is when we are getting the most from residents due to ASB, loud music, dangerous driving, asb from youths etc. By working these hours some of the cover early morning has been lost but we have adjusted our working pattern to cover this where possible. We are dealing with any phone calls that come in as soon as is available. However sometimes residents need to be reminded that we are not a 24 hour operation and that we are not always going to be available to answer the phone. If in doubt they need to call police.

### **Phone Calls / Phone Messages**

We have had several instances where there has been some concern that we are not responding to messages or phone calls. We want to reassure everyone that if we are on duty we will respond to messages as soon as is practicable. However it must be stated we are not a response service and this response cannot be guaranteed within an immediate or short time frame, as we too have days off. Residents also need to

remember we cannot always answer the phone when a call comes in due to being on another call or carrying out another duty. If a message is left with relevant contact information we will get back to them as soon as possible.

### **Junior Wardens**

We are still working on a structured itinerary for next terms sessions. Risk assessments are being put in place and we still need to attend meeting with Saxon Weald to design their new uniform, a £200 grant has been given by Saxon weald for their uniform. We also want to put together some sort of presentation to be given in school to recruit junior wardens for the new term. We too want to make what the junior wardens do much more accessible to their parents / guardians and members of the public as a whole.

### **Action Plan for Wardens**

Since Jayne has started in Ashington both of us came to the conclusion that we needed to take a step back from what has been done before and to look at refreshing the warden scheme. We wanted to address the current concerns in the village more and wanted to breathe some life back into the wardens. Above all we wanted to meet more of what the village wants and needs rather than concentrating on past duties and issues that perhaps were out of date. The simplest way to do this has been to pretty much start again stripping the scheme back to its core and as such with help from our manager Neil Worth we have established a new action plan to move forward with. The complexities of which are currently being worked out with the Parish Council.

### **Defibrillator**

We now have a defibrillator on our warden car. This has kindly been leant to us by Ashington first responders. In exchange for us carrying the Defib machine we have agreed to “once paper work has come through” work closely with the responders if / when needed.

PCSO Hannah Venus made the following report:

1. The Festival had been a great success and only a couple of police issues had arisen on the day.
2. The individual who had been causing problems for some residents was now in police custody (for at least one month) awaiting sentencing.
3. She had visited Church Lane/Foster Lane on Sunday morning and parking was much better than on previous weekends. She would continue to monitor the area. She is able to deal with vehicles obstructing footpaths (such that pedestrians/wheelchairs have to walk in the road) and can order these to be towed away. Residents are encouraged to report such issues to the Police (non-emergency number 101 or [www.operationcrackdown.org](http://www.operationcrackdown.org)). A Newsletter article to this effect could be useful.

**KD D**

The Chairman thanked the Wardens & PCSO for their reports.

The Chairman asked if Councillors had any questions/comments for the Wardens/PCSO:

1. One Councillor had received positive feedback from a member of the public regarding the Wardens. They had shown good physical presence at the Festival.
2. Councillors were very pleased with the work of the Wardens – projects are moving forwards and progress is being made.
3. Councillors agreed that thanks should be sent to Sussex Police for their support at the Festival. **KD D**
4. The Chairman proposed that the Wardens be thanked for working Festival Day following their all night attendance at an Emergency the night before. Agreed by all. **KD D**
5. Cllr Stillwell asked if anything could be done about vehicles parking on pavements in the village causing an obstruction to pedestrians and wheelchair/mobility scooter users. The PCSO advised that residents report offenders to the Police using the new non-emergency number (101). PCSO's have the power to have vehicles towed away if they are causing an obstruction. Several areas around the village were a problem (Turnpike Way, Hillcrest Drive). It was agreed that a Newsletter article could be appropriate. **KD D**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments.

Wardens Action Plan for 2011/12 – discussion of draft document circulated at the last meeting. Comments would be passed to the Steering group for discussion at their next meeting (6<sup>th</sup> September). The Parish Council was very impressed with the document – it is ambitious and stretching (possibly too stretching). A couple of minor issues:

1. Newsletters are Quarterly not monthly
2. The document specifies that the Wardens should spend 80% of their time on patrol. It is difficult to see how this fits with all of the other activities they perform. The figure should be looked at.

The document would now be amended, adopted and reviewed regularly.

Litter picking – to be removed from the Wardens duties and a new solution found. The most onerous of the litter duties is emptying the play area bins (dirty, smelly and nowhere to put the rubbish). HDC would charge £1.89 Per bin x 5 bins = £491.40pa (£285 to the end of this financial year) to empty on a weekly basis as part of their normal litter bin emptying duties around the village. This would have to come from the Contingency budget as no budget was set for litter picking in 2011/12 and a budget would need to be set for 2012/13. Agreed by all. **KD D**

The Clerk will liaise with the Wardens & previous Litter Warden to find out which roads & areas of the village are the worst for litter, she will assess how much time it would take per week to clear these areas, frequency, which days are worse than others etc and will bring this information to the next Council meeting.

Cllr Wood reported that the slip roads get quite bad as people throw litter from their cars as they enter the village. It was agreed that a Newsletter article was required.

**KD D**

The Wardens have indicated that they would still be involved in litter clearance in the village – responding to reports of littering, education of youngsters etc. It was simply the routine litter patrols that they lacked the time to undertake.

It is suggested that in the first instance the Council appeal (via the noticeboards/village email) for volunteers and if this is not successful then a new Litter Warden would need to be recruited (on a contractual basis). This work could be offered to 14+ year olds and may help them take care of their village and spread the word to their friends. **KD C/F**

### **292/11 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNEMENT**

None present.

### **293/11 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor Frank Wilkinson reported that:

1. He had been advised by the Clerk of another accident at the A24 Hole Street junction. WSCC Highways has undergone some internal re-organisation and the new Area Co-ordinator would be asked to look at this junction to see if improvements can be made.
2. He had been informed by WSCC Highways that all of the speed bumps in London Road had been repaired recently. The Clerk would check this. **KD D**
3. Chanctonbury CLC County Councillors have agreed to add the Ashington/Wiston Parish Councils request for a 30mph speed limit on Hole Street/Water Lane assessed by WSCC Highways, prioritised and put onto the TRO list.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Wilkinson for his report.

### **ACTIONS OUTSTANDING:**

**D** = Minuted but deleted from next agenda.

**C/F** = Minuted and carried forward to 'Actions Outstanding' on the next agenda.

**To list** = moved to the list at the end of the minutes until some progress is made

### **294/11 Item 85 Community Action Plan**

Clerk to email Steering Group to arrange a meeting to elect a new Chairman. **KD C/F**

### **295/11 Item 216 Queens Diamond Jubilee (2-5 June 2012)**

The first meeting took place on 24<sup>th</sup> August and Councillors have been provided with a copy of the minutes. Councillors were asked to approve £25 expenditure for a questionnaire about the event to be distributed to all households in the village. Agreed by all. Clerk to draft a questionnaire & circulate, position collection boxes strategically around the village, organise electronic & telephone feedback and analyse results.

**KD C/F**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **296/11 For action:**

1. Invitation to SALC AGM 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011. No volunteers.
2. Letter from resident about parking in Church Lane (an accident had occurred because of poor parking on Festival Day). The Clerk has already spoken to the PCSO and she would put advisory notices on vehicles. The Clerk informed the Vicar and asked that he speak to the congregation. The Clerk has also informed ACCT.
3. WSCC – are proposing that Ashington be in a ‘cluster’ with Storrington/Sullington, Washington & Thakeham. They will be contacting us shortly to discuss the ‘next steps’. Councillors were reluctant for this item to generate yet more meetings as Councillors give their time on a voluntary basis.
4. Invitation to Community Resilience Workshop (Emergency Planning) at HDC on 16<sup>th</sup> November 4-7pm. Clerk to ask the Wardens to attend. **KD D**
5. Invitation to attend the West Sussex Mediation Service AGM at 6pm on 21<sup>st</sup> September. No volunteers

The Chairman left the room & the Vice Chairman took over.

6. WSCC re: proposed bridleway link (from the Church to Park Lane). WSCC are suggesting that the Parish Council make contact with all of the landowners to see if they would be amenable to the suggested upgrade of the public footpath to a bridleway. They suggest that this is more likely to elicit a positive response than if they contact landowners directly. It was agreed that the Clerk write to landowners and gather responses. **KD C/F**

The Chairman returned and resumed the Chair.

7. RHS – invitation for the Parish Council to get involved with the Britain in Bloom campaign. Clerk to circulate. **KD D**

### **297/11 For information: None**

### **298/11 General:**

1. The Clerk magazine

### **299/11 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

None present.

### **300/11 PLANNING.**

The Planning Committee met on 24<sup>th</sup> August and Councillors have been provided with a copy of the minutes. Agreed by all.

### **301/11 Correspondence**

The owner of Nail & Tan has provided some further draft development plans for the Council to consider. Previously the Council have expressed concerns that submitted plans are ‘overdevelopment’ of the site. The owner is keen to get the Council’s view on

his new scaled-down plans prior to formal submission to HDC. It was agreed that 'without prejudice' the Council had no issues with the amended plans. **KD D**

### **302/11 New Enforcement Allegations/Information**

None

### **303/11 Amendments**

None

### **304/11 Applications**

None

## **Horsham District Council**

### **305/11 Approvals**

None

### **306/11 Refusals**

None

### **307/11 Withdrawals**

None

### **308/11 Appeals made/ decisions**

None

The next Planning Committee meetings are scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 7.00pm.

## **FINANCE**

### **309/11 Correspondence**

Quote for play area repairs – Councillors have been provided with a copy of a quote for £1860 to make the necessary repairs in play areas (following the RoSPA report) and including maintenance to village seats & noticeboards. The Council had set the following budgets for 2011/12:

Play area repairs £1000

Noticeboard/seat maintenance £500

(Unspent budgets for 2010/11 – Noticeboards/seats £800, Play area repairs £1410)

The Clerk has been unable to find any other quotes as the work is a long list of small tasks which could take months to complete (depending on the weather).

It was agreed that the contractor be asked to undertake the work subject to the following:

1. The roofing material for the Warminghurst Close play area be confirmed as good quality marine ply.

2. The Posthorses play area post tops be removed from the works. Cllr Kearney would enquire of the local sawmill the price to make these up (there are 36 post tops in total, 13 need immediate replacement, 12 need replacing shortly and it may be more economical to have 36 new tops made at the sawmill).

**TK/KD          C/F**

**310/11 Income**

None

**311/11 Expenditure**

**Cheque no.**

Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£475.00	
	Hanging basket watering (£65 x 4)	£260	1223
Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Algae remover	£9.49	
	Total	£26.49	1224
WSSC	Salary and on costs (August)	£820.05	1225
Plusnet	Broadband	£17.99	DD
Ashington School	Meeting cost	£20	1226
ACCT	Parish Office quarterly rent	£189	1227
Playground Services Ltd	safety surface repair kit	£100.80	1228
	(as agreed at last meeting)		

It was resolved that the schedule of payments shown above be approved for payment. Agreed by all.

**312/11 MEETINGS**

The Chairman met with HDC's Consultant (employed to assess the suitability of existing gypsy/traveller sites and make recommendations for future gypsy/traveller sites in the District) on 22<sup>nd</sup> August. The Chairman gave the following report: the consultant had listened to the Council's concerns but could not give any indication of their findings until their report had been submitted to HDC. It was expected that HDC Officers would study the report, possibly make amendments before submitting to Cabinet at the end of September. It was unclear whether there would be public consultation on the document before adoption by HDC.

**KD    D**

**313/11 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

Councillors reported:

1. Overgrowing vegetation very close to the overhead electricity cable running to Swan Cottage (at the back of Aladdins Cave). Clerk to report. **KD D**
2. The drainage ditch at the southern end of the nature trail needs vegetation cleared. Clerk to ask Mark Adsett. **KD D**
3. Possible Jubilee Woodland – on land to the south of Penn Gardens (owned by HDC). Clerk to contact HDC. **KD C/F**
4. There is Himalayan Balsam in the stream at the back of Church Close. Clerk to arrange with Mark Adsett to have it removed. **KD D**
5. This year's Festival was the best ever. Clerk to write to the Festival Committee to congratulate them. **KD D**
6. Pothole in Rectory Lane. Clerk has already reported to WSCC Highways.
7. Residents of Rectory Lane complained about bonfire smoke on Bank Holiday Monday. Mark Adsett is thought to have been burning vegetation. Clerk to speak to Mark. **KD D**
8. The 'keep left' bollard light outside the Co-op doesn't work. Clerk to report to Highways. **KD D**
9. There is mud along Rectory Lane (from Meiros Farm development site). Clerk to write to BDW Customer Liaison to ask them to clean it up. **KD D**

### **314/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The meeting finished at 9.20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

**315/11** Items awaiting action:

Item No	Description	Last Action & Date
1	Mill Lane flooding	EA to organise meeting with WSCC/HDC/PC July 2011
32b	Spur road of The Sands & Viney Close – streetlights & laybys	No progress August 2011
218	East Side nature trail handrail	Re-assess in December 2011 when budget setting
	No information has been received from WSCC Pension Fund about the likely cost of Ill Health retirement.	

### 316/11 WSCC Highways Issues

Fault	Date reported	Reference no	Comments
Trees on north side of recreation ground need cutting back	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	Email to Highway Rangers	County Councillor to ask WSCC to cut as ownership unclear
tree on London Road opposite the Methodist Church is dead	3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2007	WSEK-75QDJG	Has been felled, April 08. Awaiting replacement
Sign beside A24 at Mill Lane junction discouraging crossing at that point	WSCC are designing a sign and will pass to the PC for approval	July 08	
large white concrete blocks on the highway verge opposite the entrance to Holmbush House, Old London Road	Reported to Highways Sept 08  Reported again Dec 08		
Reduce speed limit on Hole Street to 40mph	WSCC to add to TRO priority list	WSCC will undertake a review of the speed limit on Hole Street prior to it being placed on Chanctonbury CLC Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) List. The review will investigate the current traffic speeds and compare the location against West Sussex County Council Speed Limit Policy (2010).	March 2011