



# Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington**

**Present: Councillors M. Woolley (Chairman), K. Wood, R. Brennan, J. Stillwell, R. Strudwick, T. Kearney, N. Clark & N. Carver**  
**Parish Clerk Karen Dare**  
**District Councillor Roger Arthur**  
**County Councillor Frank Wilkinson**  
**Neighbourhood Warden Peter Newell**  
**Four members of the public**

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## **106/11 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr B. Norton (holiday), Cllr D. Harbour (personal) & Cllr R. Lancaster (business)

## **107/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

## **108/11 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Strudwick and seconded by Councillor Kearney, and agreed.

## **109/11 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

### **Anti Social Behaviour**

Reports of ASB have been low again this month. However due to the nice weather there have been a few reports of groups being out and about drinking. Also we did receive a report of loud music being played from a car parked in the recreation ground car park. Young people still tend to be gathering outside the CO-OP of an evening (because it is dry, warm and out of the wind) and as a result we have increased our presence in the area as much as possible. The Wardens are still investigating the possibility of a Youth Shelter somewhere in the village. None of the shops have ever complained about the youths.

### **Crime Related**

Ashington like many areas has been the victim of opportunistic theft this month. Over two separate nights residents of Cricketers Close and Billingshurst Road were victims. Cricketers Close had a vehicle and a garage broken into where only a few items were taken from the vehicle and thankfully the garage was empty. Billingshurst Road had a car and a couple of garages / out houses broken into. The thieves are clever in the sense they know how to overcome car locks and alarms and are very quiet, however on the flip side they are not so clever in what they are taking as they are not taking the most valuable items from any location. In response to these break-ins we sent a message out via the Ashington Newsletter and also knocked on residents doors in and around the targeted areas.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of March we had cause to call the Police to Ashington in regard to a potential drugs deal in progress. Three known residents were seen acting suspiciously in the recreation ground car park. All details were passed to the Police however upon their arrival the individuals had already left the car park.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> March we received reports of cars speeding and driving dangerously near Billingshurst Road. We arrived to witness 3 cars involved in driving recklessly around the roundabout and were able to get the details of each car and pass them onto the police. All have been given a s59 anti-social vehicle usage warning by the Police.

### **Junior Wardens.**

During the Month of March we have been working to try and put together a Junior Warden Manual to enable parents of Junior Wardens to see exactly what to expect. We have identified three key areas, Environment, Community and Safety. We are working on expanding this to give us a source from which to plan our activities.

### **Litter**

Thanks to recent sunny weather the litter in the village has been pretty bad. The skate park, Turnpike Way and London Road have looked pretty bad on a day to day basis so on top of our normal litter picking we have tried to hit the hotspots more regularly (as has been possible). Equally we have noticed the play parks have been victim to more litter than normal.

### **Other incidents etc**

Thanks to successful trial session that was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March we have been able to establish a new dance group that will meet on a Tuesday evening in the school hall. This is a street dance group aimed at older teenagers with the primary idea of giving them more to do in Ashington and getting them away from sitting outside the CO-OP being bored. For the trial session we had around 12-15 teenagers, including some boys, and as there was sufficient interest we will be starting a 6 week course of sessions on Tuesdays at the school to establish this new group. If the 6 sessions prove successful too this group will continue on a weekly basis.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March we reported a dangerous driver on the A24 to the police. They were driving towing a trailer with another car on it. The driver was all over the carriageway with no regard for which lane they were in.

During March we have noticed a number of vehicles driving in excess of the speed limits both in London Road and Billingshurst Road. It is our intention to work with the Police to try and reduce this speed by using the Speed Indicator Device and showing an increased presence in both locations.

The Chairman thanked the Wardens for their report.

Cllr Clark reported that the next meeting with the Wardens & HDC is on 12<sup>th</sup> April at 12pm in the Wardens office.

### **110/11 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNEMENT**

The Clerk had received the quote for the additions to the skatepark that young people had asked for at the July 2010 Parish Council meeting. The Cost would be £12,000 for new ramps, modification to existing ramps in order to accommodate the new equipment. Councillors discussed the issue and concluded that the quote was too expensive and the village had a good skatepark for the size of population. The Wardens & Cllr Clark would speak to the young people who raised the request.

### **111/11 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

District Councillor Roger Arthur reported:

1. HDC had agreed a 0% rise in Council Tax
2. The Penn Retreat planning application (DC/10/1288) would be discussed at the 17<sup>th</sup> May Committee meeting as there had been lots of questions raised and time was needed to prepare answers. The Lamorna planning application from the same applicant (DC/10/1287) would be discussed at the 19<sup>th</sup> April HDC Committee meeting.

County Councillor Frank Wilkinson reported:

1. A24 road closures were planned for both carriageways in early May. WSCC Officers had been asked to review their plans and dates as the closures would mean severe disruption locally. WSCC would also need to publicise more widely.
2. A meeting would take place in early May with officers from WSCC Education dept. to discuss s106 Education funds for Ashington. Clerk to circulate the date.

**KD C/F**

### **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

### **112/11 Item 1 Mill Lane flooding**

Still waiting for WSCC to build up the height of the culvert wall and to install a vented/grilled manhole cover on the grass verge. County Councillor Wilkinson confirmed that the works would definitely be undertaken within 3 months.

The Environment Agency report:

1. The first occurrence of flooding that staff within our incident management team recall occurring at this location was in 1993. The permit (to Tarmac) was issued in 1986 which means that we had no prior knowledge of flooding events at this location to take into account when issuing the permit.

2. If we identify that these flows from Tarmac are having an impact we will look to contact Tarmac to determine what action to take.

3. The permit is not scheduled for review.

4. The following response is from our Development Control Team - When Ashington Bypass was constructed flood risk would have been taken into consideration by the scheme designers, particularly in respect to the design of the culvert. However, at the time of design and construction it was considered appropriate to design structures to pass the predicted 1 in 50 year flood flow, unfortunately allowances for climate change were not being taken into consideration at this time.

For your information if the road was designed to today's standards then either a clear span bridge or oversized culvert capable of passing the 1 in 100 year flood flow, including an allowance for climate change, would need to be incorporated within the design.

Our predecessors would have issued a formal Land Drainage consent for the construction of the culvert. However, the issue of the culvert's current hydraulic capacity is outside of the Agency's remit and therefore I would suggest that you contact West Sussex County Council, as the relevant Highways body, to discuss your concerns.

We are also aware that there are some surface water attenuation systems upstream (an attenuation pond and a cellular system). It may be worthwhile to contact Horsham DC building control to make sure that these are working correctly.

5. To offer help in this matter I feel it would be beneficial for communication between relevant organisations including West Sussex Highways and Horsham District Council to begin and a site meeting to be organised with yourself and those residents affected.

The Clerk has asked the EA for a meeting, to which WSCC and HDC will be invited. The Clerk has also asked the EA about the surface water attenuation systems that they refer to in their letter as we are not aware of these systems.

The Clerk has asked WSCC how long the sand quarry at Rock Common is expected to be in operation. It has planning permission until 2020 but may not extract sand for this long. It is likely that sand will continue to be extracted for a maximum of 5 years and it is possible that extraction may stop within 2 years.

**KD C/F**

**113/11 Item 2 Ashington Community Minibus**

Cllr Clark & the Clerk are gathering information.

**KD C/F**

### **114/11 Item 85 Community Action Plan**

The Chairman & Clerk had provided a summary of projects that have been allocated to the Parish Council. Councillors agreed that the Clerk & Chairman's comments were acceptable and that the Clerk should add projects to Parish Council agendas where appropriate with the aim of moving the projects forward. **KD C/F**

### **115/11 Item 196 Annual Report**

The Clerk & Chairman have drafted an Annual report and circulated to Councillors for comment. Councillors are asked to approve.

Delivery is £94 + VAT for solo delivery to houses within the village plus @£40 for postage to outlying houses

Printing is £156 + VAT

Both prices are approx. the same as last year. Budget set was £200 which is a little low because last year the delivery cost was allocated to Parish Plan costs as both documents were included in one delivery. Budget to be increased to £300 for next year and additional delivery cost to be taken from contingency budget. Agreed by all.

**KD D**

### **116/11 Item 213 Parish Council Land**

The ditch behind no. 17 Covert Mead needs clearing (dead trees, blocked ditch etc). Waiting for a quote for the work before speaking to affected residents.

Volunteers were sought for the annual inspection – Cllrs Woolley, Brennan, Wood & Carver volunteered. Clerk to arrange a date. **KD C/F**

### **117/11 Item 217 ACCT Arbitration**

Some time ago the Parish Council was asked by ACCT to act as Independent Arbiter in the event of a complaint against ACCT not being able to be resolved by ACCT. ACCT had prepared a draft procedure and the Clerk had circulated to Councillors – Councillors agreed that the procedure was acceptable. **KD D**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **118/11 For action:**

1. SALC – Annual members survey needs completing. It was agreed that the Clerk should complete the Survey. **KD D**

### **119/11 For information:**

1. WSCC will be undertaking a review of speeds along Hole Street prior to it being placed on the TRO list. WSCC were currently reviewing all TRO's.
2. WSCC – inspection of PROW will take place in the next few weeks
3. Letter from resident advising that WSCC has installed horse warning signs on Hole Street
4. WSCC – update on library service review

5. WSCC – West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026. The only issue affecting Ashington is the proposed safety improvements project on the A24 Ashington to Southwater – will be done ‘when funding is available’
6. HALC Agenda for 16<sup>th</sup> March – circulated to Cllrs Clark & Stillwell prior to the meeting, neither could attend.
7. HDC – info on Localism Bill & effect on Standards

**120/11 General:**

1. HDC – litter picking on the A24 has taken place
2. Letter from resident congratulating the PC on the Newsletters
3. Sussex Police – merger of North Downs & West Downs into one division
4. Sussex Heritage Trust awards 2011
5. Clerks & Councils Direct magazine
6. AiRS Newsletter
7. The Clerk magazine
8. Local Council Review magazine

**121/11 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

1. A member of the public reported that the layby outside the shopping centre was being occupied by parked vehicles, sometimes all day. This included BT vans. The Clerk had previously asked HDC Parking Enforcement to visit the village but was unsure whether they had been. Clerk to ask again (copy to Roger Arthur).

**KD D**

2. A member of the public reported that there had been an incident of criminal damage to property in Penn Gardens, the culprit had been caught and the Police were dealing with the matter.
3. Members of the public reported that waste containing household & potentially hazardous items had been deposited on land adjacent to Penn Retreat. There was a potential environmental pollution risk, rats had been attracted to the waste, a smell was evident, the waste was very hot and up to 2 feet thick in places, Rabbit lorries had started arriving on site @6.45am and had disturbed residents, ditches on site had been removed, a hedgerow had been removed and new access from the highway created without planning permission, the highway & verges had been damaged by the lorries. A resident estimated that approximately 1000T of waste had been dumped on the site. The owner of the site had told the Council that he was creating a track onto the land to allow EDF access to the electricity poles on site. The Clerk reported that she had already alerted HDC Enforcement Officers, they had contacted the Environment Agency and WSCC and all were looking into this matter. HDC had issued a STOP notice for all works on the land. Clerk to pass details to Frank Wilkinson & Roger Arthur.

**KD D**

4. A member of the public suggested that affordable homes should be built at Penn Retreat rather than a gypsy/traveller site.

### **122/11 PLANNING.**

The Planning Committee did not meet in March as there were no applications to discuss.

### **123/11 Proposed Gypsy/traveller site at Penn Retreat – DC/10/1288 Proposed stationing of 6 traveller/gypsy pitches plus outbuildings and storage area. Formation of new access and hardstanding.**

The Council's planning consultant had prepared a response to the application. This was circulated to Councillors, approved and sent formally to HDC. Councillors were very pleased with this letter.

Cllrs Woolley & Norton had met with HDC Planning Officers and had discussed issues raised at the various Parish Council meetings. Some issues were planning matters, others could be dealt with by planning conditions and other issues were not planning matters (eg Police issues).

Cllr Stillwell reported that a number of residents had telephoned the Planning Officer as they were afraid to write to HDC for fear of intimidation. Cllr Arthur suggested that residents could email members of HDC's planning committee 2-3 days before the planning committee meeting as it was unlikely that these emails would be published in the public domain. The Clerk would send out a link to the HDC planning committee email address.

**KD C/F**

The Chairman proposed:

#### **CONSIDERATION OF STANDING ORDER 68**

"To be moved that in view of the item to be discussed being of a confidential nature that the public and accredited press be excluded from the meeting and that they be instructed to withdraw". Agreed by all.

All members of the public and District/County Councillors left the meeting and all elected not to return.

It was agreed that the Clerk speak to the Council's Planning Consultant for advice.

The Chairman re-opened the meeting.

For the record - the Parish Council are supporting the exploration of other options for the Penn Retreat site.

**KD C/F**

### **124/11 Correspondence**

None

### **125/11 New Enforcement Allegations/Information**

EN/11/0110 Furniture removal and storage company operating from containers - East Wolves Farm, London Road. No breaches had been found by HDC.

Oakwood House, Billingshurst Road – HDC has invited an application for the garage

recently built to the front. A garage was permitted under AS/56/01 but it was constructed outside the time limit and was not built according to plan in any case.

### **126/11 Amendments**

None

### **127/11 Applications**

DC/11/0527 Surgery to 1 x Oak tree – 17 Covert Mead. The Parish Council defer to the advice of HDC's Tree Officer.

DC/11/0605 Proposed redevelopment of the site replacing the existing commercial unit with a purpose built health and beauty spa – Nail and Tan, London Road.

The Parish Council made a number of comments:

1. Re-development of this site in principle would be good
2. The submitted design was not in keeping with surrounding buildings or the street scene, the size of the proposed building is overdevelopment of the site.

The Parish Council objects to the plans as submitted and would like to see alternative plans put forward.

## **Horsham District Council**

### **128/11 Approvals**

DC/11/0105 & 0106 Proposed roof window & garden shed - Mitchbourne House, Malthouse Lane

### **129/11 Refusals**

DC/11/0185 Two storey side extension, garage, new front porch and master bedroom with en suite to 1st floor – 21 Penn Gardens (reason - overbearing impact upon the neighbouring dwelling to the west)

### **130/11 Withdrawals**

None

### **131/11 Appeals made/ decisions**

None

The next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 7.00pm in the Parish Office.

## **FINANCE**

### **132/11 Contract Reviews:**

Clerk - That the Council reviews the salary and hours worked of Karen Dare Parish Clerk currently SCP29 (£12.810 per hour or £7993.44 per annum, 12 hours per week). SCP30 would result in £267.70 additional expenditure (£13.239 per hour or £8261.14

per annum). The Clerk is happy to remain on 12 hours per week. Agreed by all.

**KD D**

### **133/11 Correspondence**

No information has been received from WSCC Pension Fund about the likely cost of Ill Health retirement.

**KD C/F**

Consider a request from Horsham Museum to contribute to the purchase of a medieval silver gilt ring found in Ashington. The ring has an image of a Saint on it. The ring is valued at £300 – Horsham Museum does not have the funds to buy the ring outright and are asking if the Parish Council would be willing to go 50% (£150) on the ring. It will then put it on display in the village hall as part of a temporary exhibition. The History Group have indicated to the Clerk that they would be willing to contribute some funds to the purchase. Not agreed – the Council did not consider it appropriate to spend Council funds on this item which has no specific link to Ashington and could set a precedent for purchasing other historical items that could come to light in the future. A local resident had indicated he may be able to offer financial assistance. Clerk to inform Horsham Museum.

**KD D**

Consider a quote for dredging the Church Close pond - £5301.81 exc VAT. The pond desperately needs dredging as current water levels are only a few inches and the reeds are taking over the pond (reeds grow in shallow water). The pond is not currently acting as a balancing pond as it has insufficient capacity to manage surface water. The quote is from the company who did a good job dredging the Posthorses pond in 2009 and proved to be highly competitive in price. The works would take place Spring/Summer this year, silt would be spread on adjacent grassed areas, negating the need to pay for it to be taken away and allowing any creatures to find their way back into the pond. The cost would need to be taken from Developers lump sums held by the Council. The Clerk explained that the Council was holding funds for exactly this purpose and that it should not consider applying for a grant for the works as this would be unethical. The Council has a duty to maintain the pond and the works are not optional. Agreed by a majority.

**KD C/F**

Consider a request from Horsham CAB for a donation towards running their outreach service in Storrington. Not agreed.

Friends of Lodge Hill Newsletter March 2011 and a request to renew the Council's subscription (£45). Councillors agreed to renew the subscription using s137 expenditure powers and that the level of expenditure is commensurate with the benefit. Agreed by all.

Review of SALC/NALC Subscriptions – the cost of subscriptions has increased by 10% this year. Councillors previously asked the Clerk to monitor how much the Council used the services offered: the Clerk is a regular user of the SALC website (advice, legal

updates, training info, QPC information) and the Clerk has sought the advice of SALC once during the past year. It was agreed that with the new Localism Bill on the Government's agenda it was more important than ever to make use of the services offered by SALC.

### 134/11 Income

Kite & Thomas Ltd – rent & roundabout sponsorship £2027.50

VAT Reclaimed £2640.92

HDC Environmental Cleansing grant £757.10

### 135/11 Expenditure

		<b>Cheque no.</b>	
Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£446.25	1174
Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Travel costs to various meetings	£22.88	
	Print cartridges	£82.56	
	Stationery	£51.35	
	Wicking material for hanging baskets	£13.95	
	Postage	£0.97	
	Total	£188.71	1175
WSSC	Salary and on costs (February)	£738.51	1176
Plusnet	Broadband	£17.99	DD
Ashington School	Meeting cost	£20	1177
Ashington Festival	Grant (as agreed at last meeting)	£500	1178
Malcolm Woolley	Travel costs	£9.60	1179
NALC/SALC (10% increase from 10/11)	Subscriptions	£662.57	1180
HALC	Subscriptions	£15	1181
BT	Phone bill	£53.96	DD
HDC	Dog bin emptying	£104.00	1182
Parker Dann	Planning consultants	£981.23	1183

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

A Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm for the Finance Committee to approve the annual accounts. The Clerk would like to request that the meeting is moved to 13<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm as she is not available on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Agreed by all.

### **136/11 MEETINGS**

The Clerk had attended the West Sussex Rural Forum and had circulated comments by email.

### **137/11 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Carver reported that a mattress and two tyres had been dumped in various locations along Park Lane. Clerk to report to HDC. **KD D**

Cllr Clark had been asked by WSCC Youth Service to organise a meeting between the Parish Council, Youth Club and WSCC to discuss the provision of Youth Services in the village. Cllr Clark reported that WSCC were cutting funding for Youth Workers to zero from September. Cllr Clark to circulate dates. **NCI C/F**

Cllr Kearney volunteered to clear the remaining salt bags from Rectory Close.

Cllr Brennan reported that in his opinion the new speed limit on Billingshurst Road had made little difference to traffic speeds. WSCC would be conducting a survey 12 months after the speed limit had been reduced to see what impact it had.

Cllr Brennan asked why a new on-test average speed camera had been installed on the A24 southbound carriageway at Southwater – a location with few reported accidents rather than at a location where there had been a number of accidents. Clerk to ask County Councillor Wilkinson. **KD D**

The Clerk reported that she had received a very short petition from a resident asking for a handrail to be installed at the steep section of the east side nature trail (to the south of the footbridge). The Clerk would investigate costs and present at a future meeting. **KD C/F**

### **138/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The Annual Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 7.45pm at Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The meeting finished at 9.35pm

Signed.....

Date.....

**139/11** Items awaiting action:

Item No	Description	Last Action & Date
32b	Spur road of The Sands & Viney Close – streetlights & laybys	WSCC & HDC dealing with. Persimmon are not co-operating and HDC/WSCC continue to pursue the matter (Nov 09)
	Village seats/noticeboards need repainting	Clerk to organise 2011
216	Decorative signs for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee	Cllr Wood will provide some examples of signs with a Coach and Horses design once the Museum re-opens in April 2011

### 140/11 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	Clerk to write to WSCC  Written to WSCC  WSCC will undertake a review of the speed limit on Hole Street prior to it being placed on the Chanctonbury CLC Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) List. The review will investigate the current traffic speeds and compare the	August 2009  Sept 09  March 2011

		location against West Sussex County Council Speed Limit Policy (2010).	
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