



Ashington Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7.45pm Ashington School, Foster Lane

Present:

Councillors: S. Ball (Vice Chair), N. Carter, T. Kearney, P. Kerrey, G. MacPherson, J. Morris, T. Moss, N. Spiers (Chair), B. Wallace, M. Woolley

Also present:

Horsham District Councillors: Philip Circus

Members of the Public: 6

Minutes taken by Cllr Ball

The Chairman reminded members of the public the requirement that they limit their participation to the Public Adjournment section of the meeting. If Members of the Public have questions for Police/Wardens & District/County Councillors, then the Clerk will pass these on if these individuals have left the meeting.

Members of the Public are reminded that Standing Orders allow for 5 minutes maximum participation.

065/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved from:

Clerk: Lee English

Councillors: Alan Manton

County Councillor: Paul Marshall

Neighbourhood Wardens: Christina Arnold and Bryony Sparks

066/24 Declaration of Interests and notification of change of interest

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011).

067/24 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting 8th February 2024

To approve and sign the minutes of the PC meeting dated 8th February 2024.

Proposed by Cllr Kearney seconded by Cllr Kerrey and agreed by all.

068/24 Co-option to fill Parish Councillor vacancy

No by-election had been requested and therefore the vacancy could be filled by co-option. This had been advertised in the noticeboards and on the PC and village Facebook pages and 1 candidate had applied (Penny Howie) within the deadline (one received after); the application form had been circulated to councillors. Penny Howie was invited to introduce herself and gave a short speech to

support her application. Cllrs voted, and unanimously approved the application and Penny was invited to join the council.

069/24 Neighbourhood Wardens Report (Appendix 1) and report from Steering Group

Nothing raised from report. Steering group to meet Wardens on Tuesday 19th March.

070/24 Reports from District & County Councillors

District Councillor Circus

- 1. Dog bins** – there is a consultation with parishes to see if they require more dog bins. Cllr Spiers enquired if there would be an additional cost?
- 2. HDC Planning Committee** – ongoing discussions regarding the reform of the planning committee system. It could be advantageous if done properly. However, there seems to be support for a reduction in the numbers that sit on the committees, and for ward councillors not to be involved, or to be able to vote on applications in their ward, or alternatively to only be involved at a later stage so as not to be “influential” with other councillors. Cllr Circus was concerned that there was a deliberate attempt by the planning officers to emasculate the planning committees as the officers don’t like their judgements to be contested.

Questions – Cllr Spiers raised the issue of the WSCC planning application WSCC/013/24 land raising at Hooklands Farm, London Road, for Cllr Circus to be aware of.

A member of the public also raised concerns about the application and the loss of woodland, and why noise was suddenly an issue so many years after the bypass had been built?

A member of the public asked why a noise reducing fence couldn’t be installed instead of a bund?

The Chair thanked Cllr Circus and he left the meeting.

071/24 Public Adjournment – Members of the public can ask questions

- 1. Margaret Alford** noted that the Ashington of today should be visually recorded for posterity for the future, and whether the parish council would be willing to advertise in the newsletter for someone to take this on? **Clerk**
Cllr Kerrey proposed an annual photo competition to support this idea.
Cllr Moss proposed the idea of a village archive.

072/24 The Parish Yard update

The working party proposed a mutually agreeable figure of £130 per month (50p per car/per week day) for the staff of Ashington Day Nursery & Pre-school to park on the site. A draft licence agreement from Cllrs Kerrey and Wallace had been sent to Cllrs and was read out by the Chair. Clerk has previously provided costs from the WSALC recommended solicitor for a licence to be drawn up.

It was noted by Cllr MacPherson the lack of mention of Public Liability Insurance (PLI) in the draft agreement, and that the Nursery would require this. It was acknowledged that there would be no monetary gain to the council for approx. 1 year, but that this would benefit the village by reducing parking on the London Road. Risk was discussed if formal legal advice was not taken. There is the danger of unintended costs (ie unauthorised 3rd party occupation of land) and that use of a formally drawn up licence would be a prudent approach to a public asset.

Cllrs discussed the matter as to whether a legal agreement was required or whether both parties having PLI was sufficient. It was requested that Cllr Kerrey speak to the Nursery regarding the requirement for PLI and the matter would be looked at again. It was agreed that some legal advice was required. Clerk to investigate. **PY Working Party and Clerk**

A review of the previously drawn up building plans is still being investigated and to look at having a review with the Planning Department at HDC regarding water neutrality. One thought for the site is a “hub” with a café, parish council office and Warden’s office.

073/24 Speedwatch update

Poor weather in February continued to hamper efforts for another month with only 2 sessions being completed. 42 vehicles out of 389 were recorded (11%). A small improvement, but perhaps more likely to be due to the sessions being earlier in the day (due to daylight restrictions) when traffic volumes are lower.

Regarding installation of posts, progress is slow due to difficulty of volunteers. The offer of help from Cllrs may speed things along. Awaiting date for installation.

074/24 Green initiatives update

They have had a meeting with Sussex Wildlife Trust which was very useful and there is a lot of expertise that can be tapped in to. They are going to run a regional initiative on ponds, and they were interested in the village ponds.

Additional updates –

- The school have been supplied with a bird nesting box and some kits (supplied with thanks from the Chanctonbury Church Repair Café).
- The school children have produced “Help a Hedgehog” posters, which Cllr Morris has asked whether they can be placed in the noticeboards and on FB. All approved. **Clerk**

075/24 Highways update

Proposed pedestrian crossing, London Road – The clerk is meeting Paul Marshall and Adam Bazley in April for a general Highways update, and this will be discussed at the meeting as to the process to undertake for a crossing to be installed. Cllrs to try and locate any photos of the original crossing.

076/24 Annual Review of ACCT/PC agreement

It was updated that a meeting had been held and there were still a few issues under discussion that the ACCT would review. It was discussed about the possibility of using the upstairs office at Ashington Community Centre for the clerk, on the proviso that lighting etc could be improved. Another idea was whether the previously used Willard Gym building could be used for the Chanctonbury Storehouse and the parish office could then be located in that room, which is adjoining the Wardens – it was not clear whether the Willard Gym building was still available. **CFWD**

077/23 Emergency Plan

The plan has been reviewed and updated with current Cllr details. Cllr Macpherson raised the issue that since the plan was written, the resilience framework has changed and become more professional, and the likelihood is that the only role a parish council would have is to assist Horsham District Council for the provision of a rest centre. Further research required. **GM & Clerk - CFWD**

078/24 Correspondence received for action

1. **Parish/Neighbourhood Council planning training** - Wednesday 20th March 5.30pm - 7.30pm via Teams. Topics – Changes to NPPF 2023 / HDC Local Plan review update / water neutrality “mythbusting”. No volunteers. Clerk will attend. **Clerk**

079/24 Correspondence received for Councillor information

1. **Sussex Police security briefings** information (passed to Cllrs)
2. **MP Andrew Griffith letter** including support for Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan concerns (passed to Cllrs). Cllr Macpherson has contacted the MP obo the council and asked

that they use Ashington as a “case study” as to the effectiveness (or otherwise) of a neighbourhood plan.

3. **HM The King official portrait** free to councils. Clerk has applied for one. ACCT are interested in having one also. **Clerk**
4. **ACCT meeting minutes** for January 2024 (passed to Cllrs). Cllr Spiers noted that contrary to mention in the minutes, he had not had a discussion regarding any grant for the AYC.
5. **HALC minutes** for February 2024. A survey was sent requesting a brief overview of the council’s experience with Local and Neighbourhood Plans, which the clerk has completed.
6. **Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategies** – Parish & Town Council briefing. Cllr Morris will complete the questionnaire provided. **JM**

080/24 Correspondence received for public interest – none

081/24 Meetings attended by Councillors

Cllr Moss – 21st February – **HALC AGM**. They have a new Chairman due to the recent sad loss of the previous Chair. Theme was every parish was quite robustly against the Horsham District Local Plan.
Cllr Moss – 26th February – **Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategies** briefing to parish councils.
Cllrs Carter and Wallace – 4th March – **ACCT** working party agreement review.
Cllrs Moss and Morris – 7th March – **Sussex Wildlife Trust** regarding green agenda.
Cllrs MacPherson and Spiers – 8th March – working party meeting with **Bellway and Savills**.

082/24 Matters raised by Councillors

Cllr Wallace – The **Ashington First Responder** has asked whether we would pay for replacement pads, batteries etc? It has been noted that some of the units are aging and that they may require servicing soon, and again can that money be used? The response was that we hold monies for the First Responder and that is what it is for, ie maintenance and replacement of consumables. **Clerk**

Cllr Howie – **Bridleway next to Methodist Church (Nursery) building**, the path is often muddy, particularly where it crosses Cricketers Close. Is there anything that can be done? Cllr Spiers noted it is a WSCC PRoW and discussions have been had previously regarding putting 4 grab bags of MOT type 1 aggregate down. A previous amount that was laid has been washed away/disappeared. It was also noted that previous works by the PRoW volunteers had rather decimated the hedging and greenery along the first section of the path next to the Nursery building. **Clerk**

Cllr Carter – **Hillcrest Drive sign** has been taken down due to works by the householder. Keep an eye that this is put back when the wall is rebuilt. **Clerk**

Cllr Moss – **Green Hedges**; is there a timetable for when the repair works are to be carried out to the footpath, road surface etc? **Clerk**

083/24 Chairman’s Announcements – none

PLANNING

084/24 Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings 22nd February and 7th March 2024

To approve and sign the minutes of the planning meeting dated 22nd February 2024 – CWFD as minutes not finalised yet. **Clerk**
7th March cancelled as no new applications.

085/24 Planning Correspondence

1. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023** – Summary of key changes and implications received (passed to Cllrs)

086/24 HDC Local Plan Review Update

The council's response to the Regulation 19 draft has been submitted to HDC.

087/24 Neighbourhood Plan – Chanctonbury Nurseries ASH10

Elivia Homes have asked us if we would like to be involved in the street naming for the development, and also to propose a marketing name for the site. Probably 4 streets on the development.

There are some names that have been submitted previously for developments and they can start the list, and it is proposed to throw this out to the residents also to provide some ideas. **Clerk**

088/24 Neighbourhood Plan – Land West of Ashington School ASH11

Update from working party following meeting with Michael Birch (Bellway) and Rob Steele (Savills) on 8th March. It was felt that they are beginning to listen to the responses / comments / suggestions from the council. Overview of the meeting –

- They believe 2 pitches can now be accommodated side by side.
- They are proposing a new drawing regarding the size / configuration of the Sports Pavilion.
- They are proposing 38 spaces in total for the Sports Pavilion and allotments.
- They are having to rethink the location of the attenuation basin further to input from WSCC Surface Water Authorities consultation objection, regarding surface water runoff figures proposed by the developer as being inaccurate. It is proposed to relocate it to scrub land in the northern section of the site.
- Regarding the Church Lane / Foster Lane junction; they will remap it as per the instruction from WSCC Highways department. Feedback was given from the council that their transport assessment was rather lacking in data / inaccurate in places / incomplete in the final report.
- Regarding school expansion, this is dictated largely by the WSCC consultation response which states that the school is at capacity, but WSCC is only looking to safeguard land for future expansion and a CIL contribution, which means WSCC have no intention to expand the school as a result of this specific development.
- They are looking to talk to Elivia Homes with regards to having a pedestrian access link from the north of the site, past the balancing pond behind the school, which would join the existing footpath access that Elivia Homes will be upgrading.

089/24 Planning Applications –

DC/24/0156 Erection of a single storey side extension and installation of porch and sliding doors to rear elevation. Stoneleigh, Mill Lane, RH20 3BX.

The application was discussed, and it was noted that the parish council own the land immediately adjacent to the property, and that the applicant had contacted them in December 2020 to raise their concerns regarding a drainage ditch bordering their property on the council owned land. They noted *“that the area of our property next to this land is subsiding / slipping into this drainage ditch”* with the movement of fence posts and hairline cracks appearing on internal plaster on the side of the property adjacent to the council land and section of ditch. Therefore, the council are concerned that the applicant now wishes to build even closer to the previously mentioned boundary.

For this reason, the parish council **object** to the planning application.

DC/24/0243 Removal of existing conservatory and erection of a two storey rear extension. 23 Rectory Close, RH20 3LP.

No objection.

DC/24/0257 Application to confirm that condition 2 of previously approved application DC/19/2196 (Erection of two x 3 bedroom semi-detached dwellings) has been complied with and that the actions and intent of the applicant with regards to prior to commencement conditions 3,4 and 5 ensures the

permission remains extant (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing).

Westlands Farm Billingshurst Road Ashington West Sussex RH20 3BB

The Cllrs discussed the application are were unable to offer any comment on the application, in particular as to whether condition 2 has been complied with, and therefore would defer the matter to the planning enforcement department as applicable.

WSSC/013/24 Land raising and regrading of agricultural land to alleviate noise, air and light pollution from the A24. Hooklands Farmhouse, London Road, Ashington, West Sussex, RH20 3AT

The application falls under Shipley parish although the main access of London Road is in Ashington parish. The following was highlighted from the application documents –

- A “waste management type” inert material land raising
- Estimated 110,230 cubic metres to be imported
- Up to 7m higher than original ground
- 15,300 two-way HGV trips / 7,650 loads
- 30 – 40 daily HGV two-way movements at the site
- Construction anticipated to take up to 2 years
- Monday-Friday 7:30am to 6pm / Saturday 7.30am to 1pm (start times seem to vary)
- Construction of new dedicated haulage access road, extending the existing London Road

Discussion was had regarding the application and the following issues were noted –

- Inappropriate access route to the site
- Danger to traffic exiting the BP service station, particularly with HGVs having priority
- The London Road has degraded in recent years and is not suitable for HGV movements
- Sustained disturbance to the residents of the village
- Excessive impact on residents on and near London Road access point
- Impact of HGV movements through the village
- Concern that contractors would be likely to use village amenities – insufficient parking
- Concern that the bunds would be ineffective due to the physical break between them both
- Unclear how the bunds would alleviate air and light pollution problems
- No report from WSSC Highways regarding the application and the impact on local routes

The Cllrs agreed to **strongly object** to the application on the grounds of the negative impact on the village and the residents.

If WSSC are minded to approve, it is suggested that access should be via the resident’s drive from the A24, rather than the London Road and any lorries turning should do so at the Washington roundabout and not use the village.

090/24 New Enforcement Allegations – none

091/24 Horsham District Council Decisions

Approvals –

DC/23/2191 Erection of single side storey side extension. Stone Barn, London Road, RH20 3JR

DC/23/2222 Construction of a two bay shed. Petrol Filling Station, Showroom 2 And Service Centre, London Road, RH20 3AT

DC/24/0007 Erection of front porch and associated material changes. 8 Rectory Close, RH20 3LP

Prior Notifications –

DC/24/0043 Prior Approval for the erection of a single-storey rear larger home extension, which would project 3.00m from the rear elevation, comprising a maximum height of 3.30m and an eaves height of 2.50m. 55 The Sands, RH20 3LQ. Prior approval not required.

Refusals – none
Withdrawals – none
Appeals – none

FINANCE

092/24 Correspondence received

1. The internal audit has been booked with Mulberry & Co for 10th May. Approx. 2 hours @£65 per hour / 45p mile as per 3 year fixed price agreement approved September 2023 (266/23).

093/24 Income

£73.29 Bank interest

094/24 Expenditure (Appendix 3)

Cllrs to approve the schedule of invoices for payment totalling **£4,549.70**

095/24 Date of next meetings

Planning Committee: **7:30pm on Thursday 28th March 2024, Ashington School**

Parish Council: **7:45pm on Thursday 11th April 2024, Ashington School**

Members of the public were then asked to leave the meeting as Councillors needed to discuss confidential matters: none

Meeting closed at 9:35 pm

Signed: Dated:

Appendix 1 – Warden Report - February 2024

Patrol hours TOTAL:	67	ASB incidents reported to us TOTAL:	3
Foot (high visibility)	29	Noise	0
Vehicle	38	Neighbours	1
Notices/warnings TOTAL:	4	Driving/vehicles	2
Verbal warning	4	Bicycles	0
Parking alert	0	Alcohol	0
Yellow card warning (ASB)	0		
Community Protection Warning/Notice	0		
Fixed Penalty Notice	0	Clear up/disposal reports TOTAL:	2
Reports into Police TOTAL:	3	Fly tipping / flyposting	2
Phone (including 101 and 999)	1	Graffiti	0
Online	0	Dog fouling	0
Intelligence report	0	Litter	0
Verbal	2	Drug litter	0
E-CINS cases (multi-agency reporting)	0	Hazards	0
Media Reports TOTAL:	4		
Press release/Community magazines	0		
Social media posts	2	Community events attended	3
Admin hours	36	School contact	1
Vulnerable people welfare checks	16	Youth engagement	26
Signposting	5	Reports to DVLA	1
Safeguarding referral	0	Reports to Operation Crackdown	0

ASB

An office chair was confiscated from the young people in the skate park for their safety, as they were proceeding to push each other down from the big ramp.

We have had reports of people knocking on doors late at night. We are in contact with the residents affected and are patrolling those areas at night.

Parking/vehicles

A vehicle was stolen from Lindfield Lane, it was found stripped of parts along the Billingshurst Road. The police were informed and are investigating.

We received a complaint about parking on London Road near the chemist, we have spoken with the Parish council and West Sussex highways to ascertain if any thing can be done. As there are multiple places along this road that we are receiving parking complaints about.

Fly tipping/littering/graffiti

There were 2 reports of fly tipping/littering on the roundabouts at the north or the village, a large amount of glass bottles.

Community engagement/events/meetings

We have attended a meeting this month with our local PCSO regarding on going work that we are collaboratively working on together.

We have attended youth group this month to engage with the young people and the staff regarding joint future projects.

Patrols (foot/visible and car)

We have been on foot and vehicle patrols covering the whole of the parish, we specifically included areas that have been brought to our attention for various reasons. We are focusing a lot of our late patrols on providing a hi visibility presence.

Older, vulnerable people and youth

We supported a vulnerable member of the community who spoke with us around concerns about their mental wellbeing and safety, we spent time talking, reassuring and signposting them to relevant support.

This month we attended Cuppa and Chat at the Red Lion which had several new faces attend, it was great to see so many people there socialising.

We ran our second support group at the Church for parents and carers of Autistic and SEN children, it has been great to have a space where parents can openly talk about some of challenges they face, where they can advise and support each other.

We are currently working on two neighbour disputes; these are ongoing and will continue to be ongoing until we reach a resolution with all involved.

Dog related issues

We are in the final stages of organising the dog behaviour session which we hope to hold on the recreation ground in June.

Cycling

Nothing to Report

Parish specific/other

We discussed the recent floods at the north end of the village with the volunteer fire service that attended and pumped the water away making the north of the village accessible again.

Social media/press

Appendix 2 – Correspondence received for public interest – none

Appendix 3 – Expenditure

Lee English	Home Office (Feb 2024)	£26.00
Lee English	Giff Gaff (mobile phone topup)	£6.00
Mark Adsett	Landscape gardening (Feb 2024)	£715.00
Eon	Electricity - Parish Yard (Direct debit)	£40.00
WSSC	Salaries and oncosts (Feb 2024)	£2,742.25
HDC	Litter and dog bin emptying	£450.45
Ben Aldrich	Tree work	£570.00
Total		£4,549.70

All to be paid by Bank Transfer