



# Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 7:45p.m.  
in Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

**Present:** Councillors: N. Spiers (Chairman), Cllrs: G MacPherson, T Moss, K Wood, T. Watson, L. di Castiglione, J. Stillwell, T Kearney

**Also present:**

Acting Clerk – Karen Dare  
District Cllr J. Blackall  
7 Members of the Public

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The Chairman reminded members of the public the requirement that they limit their participation to the Public Adjournment sections 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.

**024/19 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received and approved from: Councillors S. Ball (Vice-Chairman), M Woolley, R Strudwick, District Councillors P Circus & D Jenkins and County Cllr P Marshall.

The Chairman explained that Clerk Emma Johnston had left the Council's employment on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 for personal reasons. Staffing matters would be discussed, in confidence, at the end of the meeting.

**025/19 Declaration of Interests and notification of change of interest**

None. The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011).

**026/19 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

The minutes of the meeting dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr di Castiglione, seconded by Cllr MacPherson and agreed by all.

**027/19 Neighbourhood Wardens Report (Appendix 1)**

Cllr Stillwell gave an update:

In addition to the report in Appendix 1 she thanked HDC for providing Warden cover, at its expense, while the Ashington Wardens were on sickness absence.

The Chair invited questions:

Cllr Moss asked that the Council's best wishes are sent to both Wardens and clarified that Maternity Leave could be up to one year.

It was discussed and agreed that Cllr Stillwell would speak to HDC as there are several other elderly residents that would benefit from occasional Warden visits. Only the Ashington Wardens hold a list of elderly/vulnerable residents so HDC would need to make sure that cover-Wardens are aware of this list.

Cllr Watson asked if Ashington has a 'befriending service' for the elderly. The Church manage this service and any volunteers should contact the Church Office.

#### **028/19 Youth Worker Report (Appendix 2)**

The Chairman gave an overview of the report and explained that the Youth Club need more volunteers to help run the club and its facilities and need help with organising fundraising activities.

The Chair invited questions: none

#### **029/19 Report from District and County Councillors**

District Councillor J. Blackall reported:

1. HDC are aware of Warden issues in Ashington and are supporting as best as possible. The recruitment of a Warden Supervisor will provide additional resource in times of need.
2. He commended the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on the quality of their recent Public Exhibition.

County Councillor P. Marshall reported: not present.

**Questions were invited from Councillors – none**

#### **030/19 Public Adjournment**

1. Thanked the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for their recent Public Exhibition
2. Thanked the Parish Council, especially Cllr Woolley, for their hard work reaching an agreement with ACCT on the future of some village assets.
3. Reported that the Community Centre has been awarded a Hallmark level 1 award from Action in Rural Sussex which indicates that the hall is well run.
4. A member of the public introduced herself as Laura Schroter, the applicant for DC/18/2354 and she had attended the meeting to explain more about her application and Eventing business. In summary: She explained that her aim is to compete at the 2024 Olympics and that she trains some of her own horses but also her sponsors horses. She has been identified and supported as a promising young event rider. Her plans are for 12 stables only, running a small competition yard in a quiet rural location, close to her Vets (Sussex Equestrian Centre) and her home. Traffic movements would be minimal and a worst-case scenario had been presented with her planning application. She confirmed that she would not need any overnight accommodation on site as her yard would have full cctv, alarms and audio security and she lives just a short distance away in Brooks Green. She confirmed that her horsebox is a 12T, 10m size with a capacity for 4 horses and she already uses it to transport horses to and from the site to Brooks Green where her current yard is. The Chairman thanked Laura for her attendance and explanation.

#### **031/19 Young Persons Adjournment – none**

#### **032/19 Action List Update (CFWD = carry forward to next meeting, D = delete)**

- a) **ACCT working together** Update from ACCT Trustees is that the Agreement has been signed without any amendments. The Acting Clerk has arranged for skatepark equipment to be added to the Council's insurance policy with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, the additional insurance premium is expected shortly. Once the new lease agreement on the One Acre play area is agreed then the Council should look to remove/replace the two pieces of equipment that are rotting at the base.

**CFWD**

b) **IT/Website**

The Council's new website was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and the clerk@ and np@ email addresses moved across to the new servers. Cllr Woolley now has a PC email address and is testing out how this will work instead of using his personal email address for Council business.

It is proposed to put the new RFO laptop 'on hold' until staffing issues are resolved. Agreed by all.

The PC backup drive has been located and Cllr Kearney has checked that it is working. D

- c) **Hanging baskets** Councillors to decide whether to install hanging baskets again in 2019 with associated costs of lamppost testing, baskets and watering. The costs have been included in the budget for 2019/20. Agreed by all, colour choice is purple/yellow. Cllr Wood suggested a Councillor accompany the lamppost testing to check what it involves. D

- d) **Weedkilling** The Council has budgeted £500 for weedkilling costs this year. The contractor has not undertaken the work for a few years (reason unknown). The contractor would normally spray 3 x pa the edges of the nature trail and other pieces of Council land. It is proposed that the Acting Clerk re-establish contact and discuss works with a proposal to place the contract if it is under the £500 budget. Agreed by all. D

- e) **Church Close pond/trees** The Acting Clerk met with Mark Adsett on 25<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the PC's 2017 pond survey comments regarding the health of the pond and works needed to the trees to maintain good pond health. Mark Adsett has provided a quote of £1150-1300 for the necessary tree works. Agreed by all. D

**033/19 Correspondence received for Action**

- a) WSCC Review of Soft Sand extraction Policy and sites – Bunton Manor Farm, Chantry Lane extension, Ham Farm (all on the A283 near Ashington) have been put forward as potential sites. Deadline for responses 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Councillors to read the document and respond as they see fit.

**034/19 Correspondence received for Information**

- a. Invitation to the 2018/19 season of our Discover Gatwick programme
- b. HDC re-naming of addresses in Ashington: Rosha House to Baytree house (Billingshurst Road); Homes to the rear of Cooings are South and North Perch (London Road)
- c. Horsham District Older Peoples Forum 2019 public meeting dates
- d. JAG (Joint Action Group) meeting of Sussex Police, HDC, WSCC and other relevant agencies – procedure for reporting issues.

**035/19 Meetings attended by Councillors**

The Chairman attended a Youth Steering Group meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

**036/19 Matters raised by Councillors**

1. Cllr Moss asked if the Village Litter Pick could take place earlier than normal this year so that litter was not hidden by vegetation growth. The Chairman suggested mid to late March and asked for volunteers to help him organise this. It was clarified that HDC operate an 'adopt a road' scheme whereby residents sign up to keep their own road tidy. Acting Clerk to get details from HDC.
2. Cllr Watson reported some overgrowing vegetation in Fairfield Road/Fairfield Mews. The Acting Clerk reminded Councillors that anyone can report this kind of issue via the LoveWSussex App on their phones.

037/19 Chairman's Announcements - none

## PLANNING

### 038/19 Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019

Minutes of the planning meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 had been distributed to Councillors. Agreed by all.

### 039/19 Planning Correspondence

- a. HDC – SHELA update January 2019 (passed to Neighbourhood Plan consultant). One new site at East Wolves Farm had been submitted to HDC but because of its location it was not deemed developable within 20 years and was marked 'red' by HDC.

### 040/19 Neighbourhood Planning Update

The Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition of Preferred Site Allocations was held on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019. The deadline for submission of comments is 8<sup>th</sup> February. These will be analysed and passed to the Planning Consultant for comment before the draft Neighbourhood Plan is completed in April/May 2019 and the various stages of formal consultation begun.

The Neighbourhood Plan Clerk reported that 267 people had signed the attendance sheets and feedback was generally positive but reflects residents concerns about highways, landscaping, environment and other matters that would all be addressed at the planning application stage of the project. The Plan reflects residents wishes namely to create a community heart and to maintain Ashington as a village.

### 041/19 New Enforcement Allegations - none

### 042/19 Planning Applications

DC/19/0217 Amendment to decking in rear garden – 5 Mill Lane

The Parish Council maintains its objection of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The Parish Council accepts that measures to reduce the impact on the adjoining property have been suggested namely moving the steps, reducing the depth of the decking and installation of trellis to the side fences but these do not completely solve the issue. Concerns were also raised with it being a potential fire hazard, the potential for vermin to live in the large void areas with the property being nearby to a stream, and the potential noise created on the decking due again to the voids/storage incorporated in this design.

DC/18/2354 Mixed use of land for agricultural and private professional equestrian activities, replacement barn, stable building, sand school, horse walker, muck storage area and associated hard surfaced area and re-topping of existing access track - Land South of Oxcopse Farm, Hooklands Lane. The Council had discussed this application at its meetings of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 and had objected on the grounds of 'Highways & Access' and 'Overdevelopment' particularly relating to the unclear commercial aspect of the site and the potential for significant increases in traffic on a small, country lane. Further supplementary planning information has been provided by the applicant regarding the commercial aspect of the proposed development (email circulated to Councillors).

The Council welcomed that fact that the applicant had attended the meeting and taken the time to discuss their proposals. Councillors were reassured that, subject to the suggested conditions that had been sent to HDC, their objections had been overcome. On this basis of the following conditions the Council raised no objections:

1. The site shall only be used for private professional equine purposes and shall not be used for a riding school, commercial DIY/part livery yard, or hunt yard.
2. The equestrian development hereby permitted shall only be carried on by Laura Schroter.
3. No further stables shall be erected within the area shown on the block plan (Drawing Number 2018/17/04 Rev.A) hereby permitted.

4. All traffic movements by horse transporters (including trailers and boxes) shall enter and exit the site to the south along Hooklands Lane and shall at no time exit or enter the site from the north along Hooklands Lane.

DC/19/0252 Surgery to 6 x Oak trees – 10 Covert Mead

The Council has no objections.

#### **043/19 Horsham District Council Decisions**

##### **Approvals**

DC/18/2409 Surgery to 1 x Oak - 6 Broadbridge Cottages London Road Ashington Pulborough West Sussex RH20 3JR

##### **Refusals**

None

##### **Withdrawals**

None

##### **Appeals**

None

## **FINANCE**

#### **044/19 Correspondence**

- a. Quarterly Budget Report & bank reconciliation - the RFO reports the following areas of budgetary overspend: Training (budget £500, expenditure £640); Subscriptions (budget £1000, expenditure £1009.92). Cllr di Castiglione approved the quarterly bank reconciliation.
- b. Approval of Acting Clerk's overtime for January – 75 hours (5 weeks). Agreed.
- c. Online banking – Councillors were asked to approve in principle the move to online banking. The Acting Clerk will make enquiries about how it will work and what needs to be done to set it up eg Acting Clerk plus one Councillor to create payments, two from three Councillors to approve payments. It was proposed that preparations are made but actual introduction is delayed until after the Elections in May. Agreed.
- d. Appointment of Internal Auditor – it was proposed that Peter J. Consultants are re-appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for 18/19 accounts. Agreed.
- e. Consider a quote from M. Adsett to remove dead wood from the 8 oak trees at Posthorses play area (as agreed at the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018, minute 240/18) total £360. This would come from Open Spaces maintenance funds. Agreed.

#### **045/19 Income**

NS&I Annual Bank interest £1229.31

#### **046/19 Expenditure (Appendix 3)**

It was resolved that the schedule of invoices for payment totalling £5,828.58 for February 2019 be approved. Agreed by all.

#### **047/19 Date of Next meetings**

The next Planning Committee meeting is at **7:30pm on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019** in Committee Room 2, Ashington Community Centre.

The next Parish Council will be held at **8:00pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019** at Ashington School, Foster Lane and is preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.45pm at Ashington School, Foster Lane.

Members of the public were then asked to leave the meeting as Councillors needed to discuss confidential matters:

#### 048/19 Staffing Issues

The Chairman provided a very brief update on the departure of the Clerk.

Going forward it was proposed to offer the Council's current RFO/NHPlan Clerk the following:

1. The Clerk, NHPlan & RFO roles to merge back into one
2. Contractual hours of 20 pw - the NHPlan/RFO is currently 5 hrs pw, clerk 18 hrs pw
3. Approval for up to 3 hrs pw overtime with a review in April
4. Clerk will monitor hours closely and let the PC know if any adjustments, up or down, need to be made especially as the Neighbourhood Plan progresses towards completion.
5. Clerks home/office expenses of £20 per month (at present it's £5 for RFO and £17 for the Clerk)
6. To take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and new contract to be issued.

Agreed by all.

**Meeting closed at 8.55pm**

**Signed:** ..... **Dated:** .....

*Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its Committees will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present.*

#### Appendix 1 – Warden Report

This update has been collated by Sharon Cadman, Community Safety Officer at HDC.

<b>General situation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jayne is still on sick leave and recently had an Occupational Health appointment. HDC is awaiting the results of that meeting and will then share with the Parish Council.</li><li>• Bryony is on sick leave due to a pregnancy related issue. HDC does not expect her to return to work until the end of her Maternity Leave.</li></ul>
<b>Warden cover</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HDC has agreed to pay for wardens from other schemes to provide cover in Ashington on their rest days or after their own shifts end.</li><li>• Barry Faust from Billingshurst has been working a few shifts per week in Ashington since mid-December and additional cover from three other wardens has been in place since 14<sup>th</sup> January.</li></ul>

- A calendar showing this cover has been sent to the Steering Group reps for info. It amounts to between 22 and 29.5 hours per week until the end of February.
- Once HDC knows when Jayne may return to work, the cover may need to be extended.
- This cover is being paid for by HDC and will not be recharged to the Parish Council.
- A key safe (bought by HDC) has been put up outside the office and will house the office keys so all wardens providing cover can access the office.

### **Emails and phone calls to Bryony**

- HDC has asked Bryony to put an Out of Office message on her email account asking people to forward their emails to [communitysafety@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@horsham.gov.uk) (accessed by Sharon Cadman).
- Bryony has also been asked to put a voicemail message on her mobile asking people to call Sharon Cadman on 01403 215173.
- This will ensure all important emails and voicemails are picked up and dealt with by HDC.
- Barry Faust is regularly checking the post and giving letters to Sharon Cadman and leaflets/posters for the noticeboards to Sam.

### **Reports/updates from wardens providing cover**

- All are undertaking regular foot and vehicle patrols of the whole parish to provide a visible presence and deal with issues.
- Reported a local farm to WSFRS due to concerns from a neighbouring property that his weekly bonfire is a potential hazard due to it being located under power lines (on inspection this did seem to be the case and it's been reported to the council).
- Herded a sheep out of the road, failed to locate farmer but sheep safely back home.
- Spoke to 1 resident about how to report via Operation Crackdown.
- Spoke to 10 people and 6 drivers about parking down the road next to the BP garage. 5 cars moved on immediately, 1 moved by warden's return.
- Reported 3 cars to Op crackdown for no tax / MOT / being abandoned.

- Regularly checking on an elderly vulnerable woman who lives alone.
- Checked known burglary hot spots (cactus farm and other areas that have been known to be subject to theft).
- Regular engagement with the young people playing in the courts and congregating in the Community Centre car park.

## **Appendix 2 – Youth Worker Report**

### **January Activities**

- We ran the following activities throughout January:
  - Break some World Records night - youth attempted to break some world records like ‘eating m&ms with a chopstick while blindfolded’ and ‘eating jam donuts without licking your lips’! They really enjoyed the challenges but sadly we didn’t break any records!
  - Card and board games with hot chocolate - this didn’t go as well because the young people didn’t bring their favourite game as I asked! So we just had a hot chocolate night and tried to play the games we had here already with them.
  - Scalextric - WOW! This was amazing, and the young people loved playing it. What a blessing from a donor at the church to pay £450 for us to have this evening.
  - Challenge night - Don’t break the egg - the older youth had fun building something that would allow us to drop an egg from a great height and cushion the fall. This encouraged teamwork and problem-solving.

### **Youth Club Evenings**

- Attendance has been lower than previously, this could be due to freezing cold weather and the start of a new term with new school clubs etc. That being said, we have had a newcomer and someone return who hadn’t been for a while.
- Tonight (4th Feb) is the Parent’s Information Evening. I hope to give an overview of the club, who we are, why we do what we do and how they can help us run it. A successful evening will be one whereby we recruit a volunteer or two and have someone offer to come in and share their skills for a night (e.g. a chef or a policeman etc).
- Coming up, we are hosting T-shirt decorating and Nutella nights! There will be a £3 charge for the T-shirts to cover costs.
- I have had a good conversation with Steph who works at Sussex Clubs for Young People - we are looking to start running the Bronze UK Youth Achievement Award as soon as possible with the Thursday night group. This will cost £25 per person (we are looking into funding) and look great on their CV. Each young person needs to think of a project and complete it with my support over a half term. The SCYP will moderate, offer support and hand out awards at an awards night. If successful, I would like to offer it to the Monday night gang too.

### **Pastoral**

- We had one incident of name-calling which was dealt with by me talking with the parents involved. Both youth left upset but both have returned since and have now become friends. It was helpful to have Tom with me that evening who helped diffuse the situation.

### **Other**

- I am in communication with Jamie about holding a kitty so that I can use it to organise evenings that have a cost. This is taking a long time to sort but hopefully can free me up going forward to be more proactive with organising one-off events like the scalextric.
- I am also waiting on the committee to sign off on a website - I think this will serve as a great information point for parents and for other bodies such as when we apply for funding.
- I have been unable to source any other funding for other essential repairs that need to be carried out at the club. I am hoping that the AYC Committee will take the lead because there are

many things that need doing to bring the club up to scratch.

#### Numbers

- Average year 6-7 numbers on a Monday night are 28.
- Average year 8-9 numbers on a Thursday night 6.
- Average year 10+ numbers on Mon and Thurs nights are 0!

Nick Taylor - Senior Youth Worker - nick@ashingtonyouth.co.uk - 07966 985921

#### Appendix 3 – Expenditure

Mrs Karen Dare	Home Office (NH Plan)	£5.00	2055
	Home Office (Clerk Dec & Jan)	£27.00	2055
	Postage (Precept form to HDC)	£1.77	2055
	Postage (NH Plan leaflets)	£62.64	2055
	Travel (delivery of NHPlan leaflets to distributor)	£9.60	2055
	Travel (collect posters from printers)	£8.80	2055
Mark Adsett	Landscape Gardening - January 2019	£533.75	2056
Ashington PCC	Invoice YW-201901 (January 2019)	£1,083.33	2057
Kenads Printers	Neighbourhood Plan leaflets	£185.60	2058
Letterbox Logistics	Neighbourhood Plan leaflet delivery	£251.91	2059
WSCC	Invoice: 800? Salaries and Costs (January 2019)	£1,491.34	2060
EcomSolutions	INV-3328 Website final payment	£414.00	2061
EcomSolutions	Website/Email hosting from 1st Feb 2019	£79.20	2062
HR Services Partnership	HR Services	£1,254.64	2063
Jordans Solicitors	HR Services	£420.00	2064
	<b>February 2019 Total expenditure</b>	<b>£5,828.58</b>	

#### Appendix 4

Funds held by the Parish Council on behalf of others (as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018):

Ashington Rangers £724.01

Ashington Residents Association £615.85