



## Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington**

**Present:** Councillors M. Woolley, K. Wood, R. Brennan, J. Gichovi-Elias (formerly Stillwell), T. Kearney, N. Carver, B. Norton, D. Harbour  
Parish Clerk Karen Dare  
District Councillor Roger Arthur  
County Councillor Frank Wilkinson  
Neighbourhood Wardens Peter Newell & Jayne Jeffrey.  
Invited Guests from Southwater Youth Club  
5 members of the public

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### **287/12 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

R. Lancaster (business), N. Clark & R. Strudwick (both personal)

### **288/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

### **289/12 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Clerk explained that the Wardens report for September had been provided to Councillors in paper format at the meeting and she had only summarised the report verbally at the meeting. She had not read out the whole report but Councillors had a copy to read for themselves.

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Gichovi-Elias and seconded by Councillor Carver, and agreed.

### **290/12 INVITED GUESTS - Representatives from Southwater Youth Club**

Provided a summary of the Southwater Youth Project SYP (attached to these minutes). In summary: joint project between the Parish Council and local churches, started in 2006, employs one experienced full time youth worker, Southwater has @4000 under 18s in the Parish, approx 200pw visit the youth centre, the youth worker visits local middle & senior schools and presents to more young people, no intention to convert young people to Christianity just providing a service to the Parish, churches are biggest employer & trainer of youth workers in the country, Parish Council provide the buildings,

Methodist Church provide payroll & personnel functions, sessions are run on almost every day of the week, make use of volunteers (usually from the church community) to assist with sessions.

Southwater would be happy to assist Ashington in setting up their own youth service. Youth Worker (Angie Choat) is an accredited trainer and can supervise inexperienced/student youth workers.

#### Costs:

Experienced youth worker - £40k pa

Full time youth worker - £30-35k pa

Newly qualified youth worker - £20-25k

Student placement - £ 16-17k pa

A student would need supervision from Angie, would be available 8 out of 10 days, would need to get experience across the district rather than only Ashington, would be available for 3 years.

#### Questions:

1. A member of the public reported that he had good experience of using student youth workers on a youth project in Torquay.

2. Why not use the Wardens as they are a parish resource?

The Wardens are currently 'plugging the gap' in youth provision by helping out with Wednesday youth club and opening the club on a Friday night for older youths but they could get called out to attend an incident and would have to close the club at short notice, not ideal. They are not qualified as youth workers and have a wide role within the village, not just youth issues.

3. There is no longer a Methodist Church presence in Ashington, church was sold to private buyer. Is there any chance of getting hold of a grant?

4. Southwater is much larger than Ashington but Ashington has a high precept because of the Wardens. This leaves limited funds for other projects.

Southwater identified Youth as being a priority in its Community Action Plan therefore they had support from residents. Ashington would need residents support for large sums of expenditure.

5. HDC has put resource (Claire Ebelewicz) into working with Parishes to come up with a solution to the withdrawal of youth services by WSCC. HDC has no statutory duty to provide youth services but are trying to facilitate a solution to a common problem.

#### Agreed actions:

- a. Rev Kath (Southwater) to investigate possible funds from the Methodist Church
- b. Peter Newell to contact other churches (at local and regional level) to see if funds/volunteers/partners could be available. Also investigate other possible funding sources.
- c. Peter Newell to identify exactly what the village needs in the way of youth services.

Information to be presented at the December PC meeting.

## **291/12 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

### **Anti Social Behaviour**

With the colder nights setting in we have noticed that the youths out and about are seeking shelter where possible. They have been congregating both outside the co-op and outside the community centre. They have chosen these areas as they can find both shelter and light. We have been keen to move the youths on from these areas when we have seen them there but at the same time have sympathised with them that there is really nowhere else that they can go to get out of the weather.

### **Friday Night Youth Club**

In light of the above we have worked with the youth club and Co-Op to enable us to open up on a Friday night. The Co-Op have kindly helped support the club by providing provisions / refreshments for the first couple of weeks. We have had several successful sessions where a good number (15-20) of the older youths within the village have been using the facility. They come in and play pool, watch tv or listen to music. The atmosphere has been respectful and calm so far. The youths are also keen to support the youth club and respect the fact that they have been given a chance. This has also proven as an excellent informal situation where we can highlight and identify problems / issues at a personal level. Already after only a couple of sessions we have been able to identify two substantial issues and deal with them appropriately. We are currently going through the process of registering the youths as a club so that they can create their own identity and also help support the youth club.

### **Youth Shelter**

Following on from the Friday night youth club sessions one of the key topics that keeps being brought up is the idea of somewhere for the young people to go, meet friends and stay warm and safe. The idea of a youth shelter has been talked about and the older youths are very keen to see if there is any way that one can be provided for them. They are happy to support the idea / project in any way they can offering to help fund raise too. A large group of them have signed a letter and have asked that we present the letter on their behalf.

Councillors agreed that it was important to learn from past mistakes when a youth shelter in the village had to be removed because of various problems. It was agreed that Peter Newell visit Washington & Sullington to look at their successful shelters, consult with the youth about what type of shelter they want and where. The Clerk could then seek quotes and the Parish Council could discuss the matter with ACCT (it was anticipated that the shelter would be at the skatepark). Clerk to respond to the letter.

**PN/KD      C/F**

### **Anti Social Driving**

Since our last report there has been some success regarding anti-social driving at the Billingshurst Road roundabouts. Sussex Police have stopped and seized a vehicle belonging to an individual from Lancing. This hopefully will put out a strong message to anyone else who continues to drive irresponsibly in this area. At the same time we are working with our young drivers in the village to ensure that they know the consequences

and dangers of driving dangerously and anti-socially. Councillors were interested to know what happens to a seized vehicle – Peter Newell to find out. **PN D**

### **Dog Fouling**

We have continued to get reports and complaints about the dog fouling in the village particularly in and around the recreation ground. In light of this we are currently exploring the idea of making the recreation ground a “no dogs” area through a dog control order. We are exploring this idea through the community centre with support of the parish steering group. We are also pleased to announce the winner of our dog foul poster competition and hope you will all see her posters around the village soon once they have been made up. It was questioned whether a ban on dogs on the Recreation Ground would result in the annual Dog Show being cancelled. Peter Newell to investigate. Clerk to write a Newsletter article. **PN/KD D**

### **Dangerous Dogs**

Whilst outside the front of the Co-op Peter was bitten by a dog that had been tied up on a lead. The owner / person responsible was found and the Police contacted. This issue was dealt with and thankfully no-one else was hurt. It has at the same time highlighted the issue of dogs being tied up right outside the front doors. We are now working with the co-op to ask dog owners to not tie their dogs up right in front of the shop. Hopefully this will help reduce any chance of this happening again.

### **Halloween / Fireworks / Bonfire Night**

We have made sure that our elderly and vulnerable residents have been given “no trick or treat” posters to place in their front window to help reduce the risk of unwanted callers. We have also left a supply of the same posters in the co-op free for anyone to collect. This poster has also been printed in the county times for anyone to use. In partnership with the Police, Anti-social behaviour team and other agencies we took part in a joint operation to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour over this period. This involved working together to target hot spot areas and provide an extra reassuring presence.

### **Dark Nights / Clocks Changing / Thefts from Vehicles**

With the clocks going back an hour and the nights getting darker we are starting our campaign to remind residents to ensure their properties are left safe and secure. It is also an ideal chance and time to check your smoke alarms and outside lights to make sure all are functioning properly. We have had a number of opportunist thefts from vehicles over the last month even during the daytime so please ensure that you leave your vehicle safe and please do not leave anything of value on display. Builders vans have also been targeted so if you have anyone working around your house or property please extend the word to them too.

### **Luckista Caravan Park**

This month we have been working closely with a number of residents from the park. It has come to our attention that there is a lot of negative feeling amongst residents and the landlord there. So as well as helping to deal with individual’s needs and problems we have been increasing our patrols to show a reassuring presence.

### **Emergency Planning Training / Neighbourhood Management Awards**

We have recently attended a 1 day emergency planning training session at Brighton and Hove and also were awarded our Neighbourhood Management qualification. This qualification stems from training previously undertaken and the completion of an individual assignment.

### **Elderly and vulnerable visits**

With our party on the 17<sup>th</sup> not far away we have been working hard with the final arrangements. Invites have gone out and raffle prizes from many organisations and companies have been collected. We would still like to extend an invite to anyone in Ashington over the age of 50 to join us from 3 till 6 on the 17<sup>th</sup> in case our invites didn't get to you. Please just give us a call to confirm you can attend.

We have now got dates for our first Lunch club which will be on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> of February and our first bingo night on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. We would like to voice our thanks to the Parish council for the first 3 months rent to cover both these events.

This month we have had a really successful meeting with Age UK. We are now working together to try and increase the services available to our residents. We are trying to cater for the needs and desires of our elderly and vulnerable residents. Some examples are in the form of Arm Chair Exercises, Chiropodist and trying to get a GP to visit and hold a surgery Ashington on a weekly basis.

In addition to our Christmas party we are trying to organise a Christmas outing and meal with our elderly and vulnerable residents. This is something that they really enjoyed doing last year and we wanted to continue it for this year too.

### **Criminal Damage**

We have had two instances now where windows at the front of two businesses have been damaged. It appears that someone is shooting an air gun or bb gun at the windows and on both occasions has made a small chip in almost the centre of the window. We have encouraged both businesses to report this matter to the Police as not only is the damage an offence but it too is an offence to have a firearm in a public place.

### **Youth Club / Provision**

To help support the running of the youth club we have changed our shifts on a Wednesday to cover a late. This has resulted in us working more late shifts at present but we find it invaluable to keep the Youth club up and running. We are still keen to support the idea of establishing a youth worker in Ashington and have been working in conjunction with this. Tonight we have Southwater Youth Project here to give an option on how the Parish could proceed.

### **Reporting Incidents to the Police**

The Police can be contacted in a number of ways from the **999** call in an emergency to **101** in a non emergency situation. There too are other ways to get in touch via their

website and even text message. They can be emailed via [contact.centre@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:contact.centre@sussex.pnn.police.uk) where you can report non emergency problems. If you are a victim of criminal damage for instance this can be emailed through with as much detail and information as possible. You can even send the police a text message on **65999** to alert them of a drunk driver or similar issues.

Without your support in contacting the Police to report instances of crime we can't build up a picture of what is going on in the village and in addition we can't get the support from the Police that we too need.

The Chairman thanked the Wardens for their report.

Questions for the Wardens from Councillors & Members of the public:

1. A representative from ACCT asked if the Parish Council could investigate whether it is possible to install a poo bag dispenser on the Recreation Ground to encourage the minority of dog owners who do not pick up their waste to do so. It was agreed that the Clerk investigate possibilities and pass information to ACCT.  
**KD D**
2. Cllr Carver reported that a hanging basket had been stolen from his property. He had not reported this to the Police.
3. A member of the public complained about speeding along London Road. The Wardens agreed to recruit volunteers to a Community Speedwatch group. They would also contact the Police as the approved 'SID' position on London Road needed to be re-assessed (as do all of the SID locations in the County). The Clerk could ask WSCC to conduct a formal speed survey if speeding was found to be an issue.  
**Wardens D**
4. Has the late night opening at the Co-op caused any problems? The Wardens reported that it had little impact, there were very few customers between 9 and 11pm, there had been no increase in sales nor had there been any problems of anti-social behaviour or alcohol related issues. The manager was using the extra quiet hours to re-stock the shelves.
5. Why can't the village have a GP surgery? The NHS guidelines are that a local surgery is necessary if the population exceeds 5000. Ashington is currently only 3000 people. The complainant understood that many more houses were to be built in Ashington in the Meiros Farm area and therefore the Parish Council should build a Doctors Surgery. The Chairman confirmed that no new houses were planned or approved for the village, the Parish Council has no responsibility to construct a Doctors Surgery - this would be the responsibility of a Developer in the event that the village was to expand beyond 5000, however there are no plans for such a large-scale increase in population. The Storrington Area Help Scheme is available to assist residents (young and old) attend medical appointments. The Wardens and Age UK would approach the local doctors to see if they would run a regular local surgery in the Pharmacy.

## **292/12 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNMENT**

None present.

## **293/12 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

District Councillor Roger Arthur reported:

1. He was asking planning officers what the current status of plans at Penn Retreat were. No response yet.

The Chairman thanked District Councillor Roger Arthur for his report.

County Councillor Frank Wilkinson reported:

1. WSCC were working on addressing various flooding issues across the County.
2. The Clerk was now using the Love WSussex App to report various highway issues.
3. Wiston Parish Council were pushing WSCC to ban school buses from using Water Lane/Hole Street unless they needed access.
4. Geoff Lovall is the new Director of Highways at WSCC. The Highways consultant from Surrey was remaining at WSCC for more time in order to help resolve some of the highways departmental issues.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Wilkinson for his report.

Questions:

1. A resident complained about the cambers being the 'wrong way' at Water Lane/Hole Street and that lots of lorries are using the route illegally and the Police do not stop offenders. There was some discussion about the road surfacing and the routing of a water pipeline that was done many years ago but there is little that can be done currently. Clerk to speak to the PCSO about lorries using the route.

**KD D**

### **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

### **294/12 Community Action Plan**

Updated list on the PC website.

**KD C/F**

### **295/12 Housing Needs Survey**

Waiting to hear the outcome of a meeting between AiRS and HDC.

**C/F**

### **296/12 Emergency Plan**

Councillors are asked to review the Parish Emergency Plan. The Clerk reports that no amendments are necessary. Agreed by all.

### **297/12 Speed bumps in London Road**

County Councillor Wilkinson has received a complaint from a resident about the noise generated by the speed bumps in London Road. Other residents have complained over past years. The Clerk has previously discussed this matter with WSCC and was informed that they no longer construct speed bumps using granite setts because of the

noise that they create (body rattle, tyre noise) and they require very frequent maintenance (re-pointing etc). It was agreed that the Clerk contact WSCC and ask about 'best practice' and current designs of speed bumps and review the situation. It may be possible to ask WSCC to use s106 transport funds to put alternatives in place if deemed necessary. Frank Wilkinson to arrange a visit with highways officers. **KD C/F**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

**298/12 For action:** None

**299/12 For information:**

1. AiRS – the new Local Government Finance Act will require Local Councils to hold a referendum on 'excessive' Council Tax increases if they are above a minimum threshold trigger. Although we have no idea what the trigger level is yet. More details in due course.

**300/12 General:**

1. Parish Matters Newsletter
2. AiRS AGM agenda 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012

## **301/12 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

Members of the public reported:

1. A London Road resident complained about the speed bumps – horrendous noise from tyres and body rattle, vibrations that are affecting the house (cracks in the walls). All made worse when lorries/large vehicles travel over the bumps. Reducing the speed limit along the road would not be the solution as no-one would adhere to it, no-one would enforce it and a TRO would take years to implement. It would be difficult to stop lorries coming through the village. Pinch points were discussed but it was felt that there is not enough space for these as there are so many residents driveways along the road. Parked cars are a good way of slowing traffic down.  
The Clerk (a resident of London Road) made a personal statement and supported everything that the resident had raised.  
The residents agreed with the Council's proposed course of action (minute 297/12).
2. A resident reported that the speed bumps affect the emergency services and that travelling in the back of an ambulance over the bumps is not a nice experience.
3. There is a pothole outside 46 The Sands. Clerk to report to Highways.  
**KD D**
4. The new Compass bus timetable lists the no. 73 service as being on Mondays only but it actually runs Mondays & Fridays. Clerk to check with Compass.  
**KD D**

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments.

## **302/12 PLANNING.**

The Planning Committee met on 17<sup>th</sup> October and Councillors have been provided with a copy of the Minutes. Agreed by all.

## **303/12 Correspondence**

1. HDC – Planning Framework Preferred Strategy is delayed from October to sometime in the new year.
2. Owner of 1 Hillcrest Close – copy of letter to Doug Wright, Planning Officer, HDC responding to the Parish Council's objection to his plans for a new house on land at 1 Hillcrest Close. Clerk to write to HDC. **KD D**

### **304/12 New Enforcement Allegations/Information**

None

### **305/12 Amendments**

None

### **306/12 Applications**

None

## **Horsham District Council**

### **307/12 Approvals**

DC/12/1564 Surgery to 1 x Horse Chestnut and Leylandii trees - Land East Side of The Willows London Road

DC/12/1057 Surgery to 1 x Oak (T1) and 1 x Ash (T2) trees - 10 Warminghurst Close

### **308/12 Refusals**

DC/12/1527 Change of use of building to 1 No. 2- bed dwelling with associated car parking - Post Horses, London Road

Reasons – Category 2 settlement and no evidence of need, loss of a retail unit.

### **309/12 Withdrawals**

None

### **310/12 Appeals made/ decisions**

None

The next Planning Committee meetings are scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at 7.00pm.

## **FINANCE**

### **311/12 Correspondence**

1. The monthly Lunch & Bingo clubs have asked if the Parish Council can act as their 'banker' until they become fully established. The Parish Council has been banker for the First Responders for many years and this has worked very well and creates very little additional work for the Clerk. Agreed.
2. ACCT – rent on Parish office. ACCT increased the rent by 3% without informing the Clerk. Upon checking the lease agreement it appears that no rent increases are permitted. The Clerk rejected the invoice and an amended invoice has been issued.

3. Mark Adsett – The Council previously agreed that the elm trees in The Sands path should be removed this winter as a one-off job and that Mark Adsett should cut them down every time they reappear (ie include this in his annual contract). The one-off cost to remove 25 dead elm trees is £275. Councillors to approve. Open Spaces funds to be used. Agreed. **KD D**
4. Mark Adsett would like to purchase more wire and posts to create another area for cut vegetation. Approx cost £100. Open spaces funds to be used. Agreed.
5. Skatepark - The halfpipe is structurally sound but the underside of the riding surfaces is rotting badly, the external cladding is sopping wet in places and is rotting away and the internal shuttering is soggy and rotten. The contractor advised that the Council don't spend the money that was allocated for ventilation work as, in his opinion, it is not economically viable to do this work. The ramp is safe to use and will last this winter and possibly next but after that it is 'end of life'. The 'ventilation' money is better saved this year and put towards the cost of a new ramp in the near future. In light of this the Clerk asked the contractor to complete the repairs of the broken backboards only and not undertake the ventilation work. Therefore the amended invoice is £3900 not the £4250 that had previously been agreed. The Clerk has asked the contractor for a quote for a new halfpipe and will seek other quotes and suggests that we put in an s106 application to replace the ramp in 2013/14. Agreed.
6. The Clerk has signed up for a training course on 'The General Power of Competence' at a cost of £12. This is a new 'power' coming from the Localism Bill and will allow a Council with a trained Clerk (CiLCA and General Power of Competence), greater than two thirds of members elected (rather than co-opted) to undertake innovative activity to drive efficiency and therefore will result in them – potentially – undertaking activity that presents some risk to the tax payer. This would include taking over services that other Authorities have a statutory duty to provide. Whilst the Council may not be considering such action at present, for a £12 training cost (plus minor cost to submit a small piece of work for assessment) the Clerk would be ready for the future. Agreed.

The Clerk reports that the quarterly bank reconciliation has been checked and signed by the Chairman.

Quarterly budget report – the Clerk reports that there is one new area of budgetary overspend at present :

1. Members travelling expenses – budget set £70, actual expenditure £113.90  
This can be met from either the contingency budget or the Clerks travel expenses budget. There are other budgets that are under-spent at present.

### **312/12 Income**

Kite & Thomas – rent & roundabout sponsorship £2027.50

### **313/12 Expenditure**

		<b>Cheque no.</b>
Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£483.33      1347

Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Stationery	£23.76	
	Total	£40.76	1348
WSSC	Salary and on costs (October)	£844.93	1349
Plusnet	Broadband	£17.99	DD
Mrs K. Dare	Responder equipment	£286.02	1350
(The Clerk paid by credit card after the invoice was 'lost in the post' and payment became overdue)			
Radii Ramps	skatepark repairs	£3000	1351
SOS Systems	photocopier	£52.22	1352
ACCT	rent	£378.00	1353
Radii Ramps	skatepark repairs	£900	1354

The Clerk explained that the majority of the skatepark repairs were complete but the painting with wood preservative would have to wait as the wood was too wet to paint. Therefore she had written 2 cheques for the work and would hold the smaller amount until the final work was complete. Agreed.

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

The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm in the Parish Office to discuss preliminary budget proposals.

### **314/12 MEETINGS**

Cllr Clark & the Clerk had attended the Wardens Steering Group meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October.

### **315/12 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

1. Cllr Wood asked Councillors to check Ash trees in the village for signs of disease. 'Ash dieback' had been highlighted in the media as potentially a massive problem and it would be impossible to tell if a tree is diseased after the autumn leaf fall.
2. The Oak tree at the end of Church Lane is not looking too healthy. Clerk to ask WSSC to check it. **KD D**
3. Councillors asked that public participation be restricted to the public adjournment section of the meeting as there had been much participation at this meeting that had disrupted Councillors discussions.

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012** at **Ashington School, Foster Lane.**  
To be followed by Xmas drinks in the Red Lion.

The meeting finished at 9.35pm

Signed.....

Date.....