



## Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2013 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington**

**Present: Councillors M. Woolley, K. Wood, R. Brennan, T. Kearney, B. Norton, D. Harbour, R. Lancaster, N. Clark & R. Strudwick**  
**Parish Clerk Karen Dare**  
**Neighbourhood Wardens Peter Newell & Jayne Jeffrey.**  
**5 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.

### **001/13 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs N. Carver & J. Gichovi-Elias (holiday). District Councillor Roger Arthur (business) & County Councillor Frank Wilkinson (illness)

### **002/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

Part 1, Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012/1464 do not provide for any general or specific dispensations the Council will grant to ALL members (upon written request) a dispensation to speak and vote at any relevant meeting on the following:

- a. The approval of the budget
- b. The approval of any borrowing under the LGA 2003
- c. The making of the Precept
- d. The making of the calculations under ss 49A, 49B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992
- e. The approval of an allowance, payment or indemnity to Members.

Basically, Councillors are not able to approve the budget or precept of the Council unless they have applied for, and been granted, a dispensation to do so. The Clerk has provided all Councillors with a form that they must sign if they wish to participate in budget/precept discussions.

In addition, the Council must agree who will grant such dispensations on behalf of the Council. It could be the Clerk, a Committee or the full Council.

The Council has resolved that dispensations shall be considered by the full Parish Council. Agreed by all.

Dispensations to discuss the Council budget/precept are awarded to Cllrs Wood, Clark, Harbour, Strudwick, Lancaster, Brennan, Woolley, Kearney, Norton.  
Cllrs Carver & Gichovi-Elias would be considered at their next Council meeting.

### **003/13 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Brennan and seconded by Councillor Lancaster, and agreed.

### **004/13 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

Wardens report (See Appendix 1). The Chairman thanked the Wardens for their report.

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

1. Notices had appeared on Billingshurst Road & London Road about a rumoured gypsy site at Luckista Caravan Park – these had been removed by the Wardens as they were illegal fly-posting.

### **005/13 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNMENT**

None present.

### **006/13 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor Frank Wilkinson had sent the following report:

1. Further remedial works have been made to the culvert at Mill Lane – bricking up the gate and raising the height of the wall.

Questions to be passed to WSCC by the Clerk:

1. There is still a large amount of loose chippings along Church Lane
2. Water flowing across the slip road outside Monza garage, salt bags should be put out in order to prevent accidents on icy surfaces. **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

### **007/13 Community Action Plan**

Updated list on the PC website.

**KD C/F**

### **008/13 Housing Needs Survey**

The Clerk & Chairman have put together a summary document (currently being checked by AiRS). This will be circulated to Councillors asap and a meeting with Andrew Smith at HDC will be arranged for January. The summary will be made publically available as soon as it has been approved by AIRS.

**C/F**

## **009/13 Speed bumps in London Road**

Update at next meeting.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **010/13 For action:**

1. Some residents of Church Close/Church Lane have requested that trees fronting 1 Church Close be trimmed as they are restricting light to gardens. Councillors inspected the trees some months ago and did not consider the work to be necessary, however, residents have indicated that they would be willing to pay Mark Adsett to trim the trees. Councillors to consider the extent of any work. Cllr Wood recommended that the 2 field maples adjacent to the fence be crown lifted by no more than 2 ft and that possibly one branch from the Himalayan Birch could be removed as it was crossing another branch. The other 2 trees should be untouched. It was agreed that the Clerk speak to Mark Adsett. **KD D**
2. Letters from Ashington resident – the Clerk has already responded.

### **011/13 For information:**

1. WSCC Report on June 2012 flood – focuses mainly on the areas worst affected (not Ashington)
2. Southern Water – Future Strategy. Does not list and future infrastructure projects (this will be available early 2013)
3. WSCC – recent PROW maintenance works

### **012/13 General:**

1. Local Council Review magazine
2. Water Resources update

## **013/13 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

Members of the public reported:

1. Any progress on the planning application for houses at Penn Retreat? The Clerk reported that the applicant had been advised that a Stage 1 Highways Safety Audit was required before this application could be determined.
2. Meiros Farm development - There is a lot of building debris that has spilled out of the site (over the newly erected wooden fences) to the southern/western edge of the site. It is making the public footpath adjacent to the fences difficult to walk along and there is a green mesh fence along the edge of the site adjacent to Rectory Lane. This is in quite a poor condition. Clerk to report to Developers. **KD D**
3. A member of ACCT Committee expressed concern about the Parish Council's enquiry about the possibility of siting a new Youth Shelter at the skatepark. He explained that there is a youth shelter on the 'one acre' field that is not used, previous youth shelter created problems, a new youth shelter may not fit into the area. He suggested that Parish Council funds could better be spent opening the Youth Club more often or creating a porch area in front of the Youth Club. The Chairman explained that the Wardens/Youth would put a detailed proposal forward to the Parish Council and ACCT in due course but, before investing a lot of time into this they wanted to check that ACCT would be amenable to

suggestions and not reject the idea outright. It was agreed that a proposal be written and presented in the future. **KD D**

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments.

### **014/13 PLANNING.**

The Planning Committee met on 19<sup>th</sup> December and Councillors have been provided with a copy of the Minutes. Agreed by all.

### **015/13 Correspondence**

1. S106 agreement for the 'New House', Post Horses - £2876 in 'community facilities funds', £135 Fire Services contribution, £1880 'transport contribution'

### **016/13 New Enforcement Allegations/Information**

None

### **017/13 Amendments**

None

### **018/13 Applications**

DC/12/2351 Installation of a solar array of 250kW in 0.5ha of land - Broadbridge Farm, Ashington

Councillors noted a number of mistakes/discrepancies in the application: number of panels to be installed differs through the report, report states site can't be seen from A23 when it presumably should be the A24, report states that new access is not from a public road but the Parish Council understands that it is a public highway up to the proposed site entrance.

Notwithstanding these errors the Parish Council has no objection to the application however has a number of concerns that HDC should consider:

1. The installation is on the highest part of the field and will likely be visible from the SDNP and countryside/A24 views. The proposed screening needs to be effective.
2. Is this a commercial or a domestic installation? There appear to be no cables linking the arrays to the applicant's farm or house. The only connection appears to be at the sewage works into the National Grid.
3. Loss of farmland in a rural community. The proposed development site is quite small but this application should not lead to further industrialisation of farmland.
4. The application does not show any buildings on site for equipment such as meters/switches etc. Are there to be any buildings associated with the arrays?

DC/12/2356 Material Alterations to approval DC/11/1314 for construction of a two storey, part pitched roof, building with veterinary surgery and two bedroom apartment over - Former FlowerPots, London Road, Ashington

The Chairman opened up a Public Adjournment as a member of the public wished to speak about the application:

He identified himself as the owner of the adjacent property (Brookside). His main concern about the application centred around the scale & massing of the proposed building and how it would block light to his kitchen window. He also commented that the new application was characterless compared to the previously approved application. The Chairman thanked him for his comments and closed the public adjournment.

Councillors had no objections to the application however, given the prominence of the site at the southern entrance to the village Councillors were very disappointed that the new roof/frontage design was not as appealing as DC/11/1314. The new roofline is less attractive and no longer matches the houses opposite. It was considered that the new design was a backwards step in terms of appearance.

### **Horsham District Council**

#### **019/13 Approvals**

DC/12/1729 Replace 10 fence panels and two gates to improve setting for property by replacing old and varied fencing with one style and replace open style gate for added security for the rear of the property - The Willows London Road

DC/12/2026 Application for the permanent extension of hours following the temporary permission granted for one year under DC/12/0310 (Extend factory working hours from 0600 hours to 2300 hours Monday to Saturday) - New Highfield Works Spring Gardens

DC/12/2040 Retrospective application for new timber gates within 1 metre of boundary - Prospect Cottage Rectory Lane

DC/12/1951 Fell 1 x Ash Tree – Hedgerows, Church Lane.

#### **020/13 Refusals**

None

#### **021/13 Withdrawals**

DC/11/1827 Variation to condition 5 (AS/12/94) to permit the installation of one pole mounted 250W Halogen light and 2 No. 250W sodium lights fixed to the barn, to be changed to "No additional lighting other than one pole mounted 250W Halogen light and 2 No. 250W so - Triggles House Hole Street

#### **022/13 Appeals made/ decisions**

None

The next Planning Committee meetings are scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 7.00pm.

### **FINANCE**

#### **023/13 Budget & Precept 13/14**

It is the Parish Council's wish to have a 0% increase in Precept this year, making 3 years in a row. However, due to a reduction in the amount that the Government refunds

Council Tax Benefits to HDC (90% this year instead of 100% in previous years) it has been necessary for HDC to pass some of the funding shortfall to each Parish. In 2013/14 the Tax Base for each Parish has been adjusted to take into account the reduction in numbers of properties paying full Council Tax ie receiving no benefit. But Parishes will receive a grant from HDC equivalent to 90% of the Council Tax benefit for the Parish (in addition to the Precept).

To achieve a 0% rise:

Precept/Tax Base (2013/14) = £82.83 pa (Council Tax for a Band D household in 2012/13)

Precept = £82.83 x Tax Base

Precept = £82.83 x 1073.9

Precept = £88,951.14 (round up to £88,952)

This is a little short of the budget that the Council requires, however, the additional grant from HDC will be £5007

Total payable to the Parish Council = £88,952 + £5007 = £93,959

This total figure would meet the Parish Council's financial obligations. Agreed by all. **D**

#### **024/13 Review of Kite & Thomas Rent**

The Clerk has met with the owner and agreed a £200pa increase in the rent. In addition, the paperwork needs updating. Cllr Norton to advise the Clerk. **KD C/F**

#### **025/13 Parish Office**

Waiting to hear from ACCT

#### **026/13 Correspondence**

1. Consider a request for a donation towards Storrington Area Help Scheme to help cover the cost of running the Scheme. Not agreed.
2. Consider quotes for essential repairs to a piece of play equipment at the Posthorses play area £580 (David Newland). Agreed by all.
3. CLG – there is NO capping of Parish Council Precepts in 2013/14, although it may be introduced in future years.

#### **027/13 Income**

Payment from Administrators of Singer & Friedlander £3274.25. This takes the amount recovered to 76%. To be transferred to NS&I account at the next meeting.

Donation to Lunch/Bingo clubs £426.63

#### **028/13 Expenditure**

		<b>Cheque no.</b>	
Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£483.33	1364
Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Travel	£12.20	
	Play area minor repair	£6.49	

	Total	£35.69	1365
WSSC	Salary and on costs (December)	£844.93	1366
Plusnet	Broadband	£17.99	DD
LanGuard Ltd	weedkilling	£384.00	1367
BT	phone	£62.38	DD
PWL	Public Works Loan	£3110.12	BACS

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

### 029/13 MEETINGS

None

### 030/13 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

1. Footpath behind Meiros Farm development – see Minute 013/13
2. Cllr Harbour had copies of the free bus to Asda timetable. Clerk to put on noticeboards. **KD D**
3. Cllr Harbour reported that the ditch to the rear of Turnpike Way needs clearing. The Clerk advised that this is a private matter between homeowners and the Parish Council had no power to get involved.
4. Could Ashington be made a 'cold calling zone' – the Clerk advised that the Wardens had looked into this but it would prevent anyone from cold calling, even genuine companies that residents may wish to use eg Kleeneze, Betterware
5. Why were 'no gypsy site' signs put up in the village? It was reported that a local gypsy family had purchased 11 acres of land behind Luckista Caravan Park. The Council were not aware of any planning applications for the site.
6. Water is still flowing over the slip road outside Bridge Garage. Clerk to ask WSSC to put out salt bags again this year to prevent accidents due to ice. The Clerk had already reported the water problem to WSSC several times.

**KD D**

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013** at **Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The meeting finished at 9.05pm

Signed.....

Date.....

## APPENDIX 1: REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

### **Youth**

There has been a little bit of a mix up recently due to annual leave and work commitments with regards to our Friday night youth project. However with the New Year here we are all set to sit down with the youth that use the club and get better support from them. We aim to make the club better for them with their input as well as get them involved in the future with fund raising etc. It is also a perfect opportunity to discuss things like youth provision and the youth shelter.

### **Young Drivers**

There are a number of young drivers either just passed or soon to pass their driving test. We are already making them aware of the risks and dangers involved with driving both irresponsibly and anti-socially. We are also still working with west Sussex county council to see if there are any appropriate driving courses that we can sign post the youths to.

### **Cold Callers**

We continue to have problems with cold callers in the village. We recently came across a large group out one evening and were keen to stop them and ascertain their identity. We continue to stop / check anyone out and about calling on households and are reporting their movements directly to Police in case there are any concerns.

### **Dog Fouling**

We continue to receive complaints regarding dog fouling and we are trying our best to catch out the culprits but unfortunately as is usually the case when we are present everyone is picking up. We are open to any suggestions on how people feel we can further prevent dog fouling problems. We hope the new installations of dog poo bag dispensers around the rec will be a step in the right direction. We appreciate that it is only a few culprits that are spoiling it for the rest of the village and appeal to everyone out and about to report anyone not picking up after their dogs with as good a description of the dog owner and dog as possible.

### **Luckista**

We continue to work with the residents of Luckista Caravan Park and are well aware of recent issues there. We at the same time are working closely with Horsham district council and their enforcement team.

### **Fly Posting**

We have been keen to keep the amount of fly posting in the village to a minimum but over the festive period it has hit a high level. We are trying our best to educate people responsible by phoning the organisations or individuals concerned. However if it continues we will soon be left with no alternative than to issue the offenders with a fixed penalty fine.

### **Litter**

As with fly posting there has been a significant increase in rubbish in a few areas around the village and we will be hitting some of the hot spots over the next few days. As well as getting Horsham to remove any larger items. Should you notice any particularly bad areas please do not hesitate to give us a call to ensure we don't miss any.

### **Elderly / Vulnerable Visits**

We have continued with our usual checks ensuring that they are all set for the festive period. We have been keen to ensure we know the movements of the residents should they be going away for Christmas and have made sure that should they be left alone that appropriate arrangements have been put in place to ensure their welfare. We too have been ensuring that they keep their homes secure and reminding them about not answering the door after dark to any unwanted callers.

### **Burglary / Home security.**

We have had a burglary in the village which has occurred over the last few nights. Thankfully due to the secure nature of the house the residents only suffered some damaged windows, door and fence. Perhaps the offenders were disturbed but it certainly helped that the front door was well secured and all windows locked. It is a good reminder that thieves, burglars and opportunists are about and that doors and windows should be properly secured and if going away timers should be used with lights to give the idea that someone is home.

### **Urinating Male**

There have been a number of reports of a young male approaching youngsters in the village and proceeding to urinate. This matter has been taken seriously and reported to the Police. The Police are aware of the individual concerned and will be taking things further once they have collected all reports / information.

### **Thank you / Merry Christmas / Happy New Year**

We would like to end our report this month by saying December has been a relatively dare we say it quiet month and we would also like to say a big thank you for your continued support it is much appreciated. We have had some recent technical difficulties with our computer in the office which is why our report has only just reached you. Hopefully by next month's report we will be back to normal. Finally just wanted to wish you all a belated merry Christmas and a happy new year!