



## Ashington Parish Council

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**Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington**

**Present:** Councillors K. Wood, R. Brennan, B. Norton, N. Clark, R. Strudwick, J. Stillwell, R. Lancaster, N. Carver, D. Harbour.

**Parish Clerk** Karen Dare

**Neighbourhood Wardens** Peter Newell & Jayne Jeffrey

**Neil Worth (HDC Community Safety)**

**County Councillor** Frank Wilkinson

**2 members of the public**

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### **109/12 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr T. Kearney (holiday), M. Woolley (business) & District Councillor Roger Arthur (business).

### **110/12 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Woolley was nominated by Cllr. Carver and Seconded by Cllr. Norton. There being no other nominations Cllr. Woolley was unanimously elected as Chairman and the Clerk would ensure that he signed the declaration of acceptance of office asap.

### **111/12 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Clark was nominated by Cllr. Brennan and Seconded by Cllr. Stillwell. There being no other nominations Cllr. Clark was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr Clark then took the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

### **112/12 ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEES**

The following Councillors were elected to serve on following Committees.

**Finance** - Cllr Norton, Cllr Carver, Cllr Brennan, Cllr Clark, Cllr Woolley

**Planning Committee** –Cllr Norton, Cllr Carver, Cllr Wood, Cllr Kearney, Cllr Woolley, Cllr Stillwell, Cllr Harbour

It was agreed that, at present, no new Committees were needed.

### **113/12 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The following representatives were agreed:

Ashington Community Centre – Cllrs Clark & Stillwell share the position of Observer.  
Horsham District Association of Local Councils - Cllr. Clark.  
Ashington Youth Club – Cllr. Clark (observer)  
BTCV (Tree Warden scheme) – Cllr. Wood  
Ashington Residents Association Committee – Cllr. Norton  
Neighbourhood Wardens Steering Group – Cllrs Clark & Stillwell.

#### **114/12 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2012-2013**

The Clerk had circulated a proposed list of dates. Agreed by all.

#### **115/12 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Clerk confirmed that there were no amendments to the Code that had been previously adopted by the Council. There will be a new Code of Conduct issued soon but in the meantime the present Code still stands. Councillors confirmed their adoption of the Code of Conduct.

#### **116/12 ANNUAL REVIEW & APPROVAL OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Clerk confirmed that there were no amendments to Standing Orders that had been previously adopted by the Council.

#### **117/12 REVIEW OF REGISTER OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

The Clerk had provided all Councillors with new Register of Members Interests documents and all Councillors were asked to complete and return the forms to the Clerk asap.

#### **118/12 ANNUAL REVIEW OF COUNCILS RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT**

The Clerk had circulated the financial risk assessment document and has prepared a new 'litter warden' risk assessment and circulated for comments. Agreed by all.

#### **119/12 REVIEW OF COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES AND CHAIRMANS ALLOWANCE**

The Clerk explained that the Council does have a Scheme of Members Allowances and that the current claimable allowance for Councillors is £430. All Councillors present informed the Clerk that they did not wish to claim the allowance for the forthcoming year but wished to retain the right to claim out of pocket expenses. Cllrs not present to inform the Clerk if they wish to claim the allowance.

Normal Monthly Parish Council business:

#### **120/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

#### **121/12 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Cllr Strudwick proposed one minor amendment to the Minutes of the meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012 - Minor Matters point 5 should read Cllr Strudwick not Cllr Lancaster. The amended Minutes were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Brennan and seconded by Councillor Norton, and agreed.

## **122/12 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

### **Problems with Drugs / Alcohol**

This month we have seen a distinct change for the better in the behaviour of some of our worst offenders in this area. Seemingly this is something to do with a new found hobby and passion for the skate park and roller bladeing. We have seen quite a dramatic change in behaviour and outlook in some of the young persons who were the worst for substance misuse. It appears that in their own way they have found a reason to at least cut down if not stop some of their drugs / alcohol intake. This is extremely positive and we can already see the affects. As a group they look healthier and are making a positive effort to do things for themselves by getting out of the village etc. Let's hope this continues into the future.

### **Residents Association**

We organised a drugs and alcohol awareness session for the residents association which seemed to go down well. Kirsty (from the anti social behaviour team) Jo (Young persons alcohol worker) Darren (Horsham Police) provided an interactive session. They gave insight into the different types of substances out there, their effects, the penalties for taking them and more over the support that is out there for anyone associated.

### **Criminal Damage**

This month has been a good month as we haven't had any complaints of criminal damage. The only damage that appears to have occurred has been at the skate park on one of the ramps. However after talking with the users of the area and observing them it appears that this is as a result of the heavier use and the fact that some of the surfaces could do with "refreshing". The young persons using the area did in fact come up with a couple of helpful solutions that might stop future damage too.

### **Home / Property Security**

This month Ashington has been the victim of a few "odd job" men calling on residents and in some areas even leaving cards. We have had on at least one occasion complaints the individuals have been a little persistent in their attempts to make repairs to walls, roofing, gardens etc. These individuals are trying to take advantage of some of the elderly and vulnerable residents of the village and we wanted to make everyone aware. They seem to be using a small green van to get about in. This has been reported to the Police and their advice is if at any time you feel threatened, pressured or uncomfortable to simply tell them no and to call the Police right away.

Also we would again like to take this opportunity to remind people to make sure that their homes, garages and sheds are left secure. We have had a recent spate of break-ins in the Ashington and Washington areas so would like everyone to be safe and secure and not a victim.

If anyone is in need of advice about home security or would like to purchase items from a range of home security products at cost prices please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

### **Litter**

We seem to have made a break through with the CO-OP regarding Litter. Horsham District Council has asked them to be more responsible for their area and have asked them to carry out a little pick outside the shop. We are keen to help ensure that this is carried out and after speaking to a few shop staff were under the impression that they fully intended to do it but that they were doubtful the co-op would buy them a litter picker to do the job. It just so happens that we have a spare litter picker and have kindly donated it to the co-op so they can carry out their litter picking duties. We shall wait and see if this helps make a difference to litter in the area.

### **Elderly and vulnerable visits**

We have finally settled on the New Forest area as our Elderly and Vulnerable trip this year. This will be taking place on the 24<sup>th</sup> May and we already have a good number of people coming.

We are continuing to carry out our weekly visits and are carrying out checks to fire alarms and community link alarms that many of them have. With finances at a squeeze during the current financial climate we are very conscious that the elderly and vulnerable might be struggling especially. We have been helping to deal with issues of high bills, money worries and anything that might be causing a worry. Through HDC and other agencies we have access to a lot of helpful information and support for this very thing. If you or anyone you might know has concerns and worries about finances don't hesitate to get in touch.

### **Village Minibus**

The Village bus is working well. Tuesdays is the new day and over the last few weeks we have had a full load (of passengers and shopping on the way back). We have finally created a better schedule created after much discussion with those who use the bus. The bus will run 4 weeks of every month. First week going to WORTHING, Second week to HORSHAM, Third week to WORTHING, Fourth week to HOLMBUSH.

### **Youth Provision**

We have been approached by two different groups who use the skate park asking if we can take them to other parks, roller disco and especially scaterham a specially designed outdoor skate park in Caterham. We are in the process of getting groups created so that they can make use of the village minibus and hope to make a trip or two out of the village with these groups soon.

We have been working closely with the young person's alcohol worker who has offered if and when needed targeted sessions with any young persons in Ashington. We continue to monitor those young persons who drink and will involve the alcohol worker if and when needed. In addition to this we should be getting the snack wagon back in Ashington again very soon too!

### **CO – OP**

We continue to work closely with the co-op and are working to deal with several issues in this area. We continue to provide a high visibility presence in the area to deter any anti social behaviour / gathering. A side benefit of our presence in the area is a deterrent to anyone trying purchase age related products for those underage.

We are still very much aware of the Co-op intending to open late. We are continuing to monitor them along with licensing teams in case this extension causes undue problems. It is our intention to work closely with the co-op as much as possible but rest assured if they fail to comply with rules and regulations this will be reported.

The Co-op is currently without a full time manager. There is someone acting as manager but hopefully soon we will have an idea of who will be taking over. It is our intention once this manager is in post to have a meeting with them to discuss ongoing concerns and the worries about what the future could hold.

As most will be aware the Co-op recently suffered an early morning break-in. This resulted in a window being smashed and batteries being stolen. Thankfully a local resident alerted the Police and the two offenders were arrested shortly afterwards. It would appear that they had intended to get more than batteries but either through bad planning and or execution failed.

### **Bullying**

We continue to work closely with a number of residents with regards to the issues of bullying. Yet again we have had a number of incidents of bullying reported to us this month. We are spending time with the victims and their friends / family trying to get to the heart of the issues at hand. We have been working closely with the Police and other agencies that might be able to help like schools etc. We continue to offer support to those involved and are trying to ensure these issues are dealt with as effectively as possible.

### **Parking**

This month we have had a number of complaints regarding vehicles parked in residential areas that are causing somewhat of an eye sore. Having discussed this issue at the recent residents association meeting unfortunately there is very little that anyone "officially" can do. Ashington is lucky to be a village without too many parking restrictions and as such there is often no reason to stop someone parking somewhere. The Police have little powers too. Only if a vehicle is causing an "obstruction" might they be able to help. Horsham Parking services can only enforce parking restrictions such as yellow lines etc. So the only solution we can offer is to talk to those who own the vehicles concerned and perhaps express how it causes you a problem / discomfort. We are of course happy to help in anyway we can but, like you, in the instance we can only appeal to someone's better nature.

However I would like to take this moment to appeal to everyone to be considerate to other road users and pedestrians when parking their vehicles. Parking your car on a pavement may not block the road but perhaps give a thought to an individual in a wheel

chair or a mother with a push chair who then has to go out into the road to get past. In addition give a thought to other residents when parking near their home.

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

We are still encountering incidents where residents are not reporting things to the Police and instead are only reporting them to us. Some are reluctant to bother as they seem to have had a bad experience previously or in few isolated cases they can't be bothered and see it as our responsibility as wardens. We would again like to remind everyone that we aren't actually on duty 24/7 but the Police are. In addition the Police will record every incident called in to them. This will aid us and you in building up a picture of what has been happening over time.

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 [contactcentre@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:contactcentre@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. Cllr Carver reported damage to the fence at Warminghurst Close play area. The Clerk confirmed that she had already arranged for the minor repairs to be done.
2. A member of the public reported youngsters sheltering in the porch at the Community Centre and causing a disturbance to hall users (shouting, banging on the doors etc). The Wardens confirmed that they would speak to anyone found in the area.
3. What happens to Wardens mobile phones when they are on holiday? It was confirmed that the phone is given to the other Warden so that messages can be monitored.

### **123/12 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNEMENT**

None present.

### **124/12 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor Frank Wilkinson reported:

1. WSCC has agreed to install a 'low bridge/bridge height' sign at the Red Lion mini roundabout (southbound side) after a recent incident when an HGV used the slip road to do a U turn, causing significant hazard to others on the slip road at the time.

2. There had been no flooding incidents at the Mill Lane road culvert despite the very heavy rain of late.
3. HGV's using Hole Street (in breach of the 6'6" width restriction). The Police had been made aware of the issue. Members of the public could report offenders via Operation Crackdown.
4. Proposed re-development of Castle Kitchens – it is very difficult for WSCC Highways to raise an objection to the new application as the new development would only generate a small amount of additional traffic (compared to that previously approved by HDC). However, routing of vehicles needs to be considered as this could have a significant impact on Ashington. He was doing all he could to explain the potential impacts on Ashington to Highways Officers and HDC.
5. The Clerk & Highways Officers are dealing with the Ashington 'highways priorities' list.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Wilkinson for his report.

Questions: None

**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

**125/12 Community Action Plan**

Updated list on the PC website.

**KD C/F**

**126/12 Housing Needs Survey**

The Clerk confirmed that the Survey is due to be distributed mid-May. It was reported that the West Sussex County Times of 3<sup>rd</sup> May had an article about the Survey in it.

**C/F**

**127/12 Annual Report**

In May each year the Council would normally publish an Annual Report and have it delivered to all households in the village. The cost was £360. The Report was a requirement of the Quality Council scheme, which the Council is no longer a member of. It was proposed that the Council make an electronic version of the report, advertise it widely and make paper copies available locally and to anyone upon request. Agreed by all.

**KD D**

**128/12 Annual Inspection of Council Land**

Two or three Councillors to volunteer to accompany the Clerk around the village. Cllrs Carver, Brennan, Norton, Harbour, Clark, Lancaster & Woolley volunteered. Clerk to arrange a date.

**KD C/F**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**129/12 For action:**

1. Invitation for the Chairman to attend the HDC Annual Reception on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 7pm. No volunteers.
2. HDC – Community Governance Review - The review is an opportunity for anyone interested to consider creating, merging, grouping, altering or abolishing parishes, the naming of parishes and style of new parishes and the electoral arrangements for parishes. This could be the overall number of councillors, parish warding and number of councillors for those wards. Deadline for comments – 28<sup>th</sup> May. Cllrs were concerned that a reduction in the number of Councillors could leave the Council without a quorum if some Cllrs were absent due to holidays, business etc. Clerk to respond to HDC. **KD D**
3. WSCC – proposed West Sussex Health & Wellbeing Co-operative, inaugural meeting 31 May at 2pm. No volunteers.
4. HDC Health & Wellbeing outreach work – advisors can visit to talk to members of the public about their wellbeing. Circulate to Residents Association. **KD D**
5. HDC – CLC working with HDC & Parish Councils. Meeting Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 7.30pm, Steyning Centre. Clerk to check her availability. **KD D**
6. Invitation to AGM of Purple Bus – 19<sup>th</sup> June at 6pm. The Wardens are attending.
7. Invitation to WSCC ‘Local Youth Provision’ meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 2pm. Clerk to send details to Cllr Stillwell. **KD D**

**130/12 For information:**

1. Minutes of HALC meeting
2. HDC – press release on the future of BBH Leisure Centre
3. Closure of Rectory Lane between Meiros Way & Penn Gardens starts Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May for 5 days. To allow cabling work for the Meiros Farm development.

**131/12 General:**

None

**132/12 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

A member of the public reported that a large amount of rubbish and two caravans had been dumped at Penn Retreat site. The Clerk was asked to report this to HDC.

**KD D**

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments.

**133/12 PLANNING.**

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

**134/12 Correspondence**

None

**135/12 New Enforcement Allegations/Information**

EN/12/0162 Unauthorised works to TPO Trees 1016 – Welbourne, Well House Road

EN/12/0180 Extension added on to detached Garage and residential use – Feathers,

London Road

### **136/12 Amendments**

None

### **137/12 Applications**

DC/10/1288 Proposed stationing of 6 traveller/gypsy pitches plus outbuildings and storage area. Formation of new access and hardstanding.

Update – nothing new to report.

DC/12/0827 Surgery to 1 x Oak tree on land to rear of 34 Rectory Close – Oakwood Copse, Ivy Lane – deferred as paperwork had not been received.

DC/12/0733 Two storey side extension - 32 Fairfield Road.

The Council had no objections but noted: the plans propose to remove the tile hanging and replace with rendering which would be out of keeping with other houses in the area; the proposed extension is very close to the boundary fence and footpath; there is a drainage pipe that runs along the boundary of the property and the homeowner needs to be made aware of this; the proposed extension is in front of the building line.

### **Horsham District Council**

#### **138/12 Approvals**

DC/12/0256 Ground floor rear extension to form an orangery with associated internal works - 11 Church Close

DC/12/0346 Single storey rear extension and extension of garage and re-surfacing of driveway and hardstanding - 31 Hillcrest Drive

DC/12/0310 Extend factory working hours from 0600 hours to 2300 hours Monday to Saturday - New Highfield Works Spring Gardens

DC/12/0668 Surgery to one Quercus Robur on land adjacent to 39 Rectory Close – Oakwood Copse, Ivy Lane.

#### **139/12 Refusals**

None

#### **140/12 Withdrawals**

DC/12/0596 Extending to the side of existing dwelling to form a new 3 bedroom dwelling – 1 Hillcrest Close

#### **141/12 Appeals made/ decisions**

None

The next Planning Committee meetings are scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 7.00pm.

## FINANCE

### 142/12 Contract Reviews:

Clerk - That the Council reviews the salary and hours worked of Karen Dare Parish Clerk currently SCP30 (£13.239 per hour or £8261.14 per annum, 12 hours per week). The Clerk is happy to remain on 12 hours per week.

Defer to next meeting to allow the Clerk to investigate this years' pay settlement. **C/F**

Landscape Gardener – the current cost is £5700pa. It was proposed to increase this to £5800pa as a small number of tasks have been added to the contract. Agreed by all.

### 143/12 Correspondence

HDC – Parish Council commitment to the Warden Scheme. The Parish Council has committed to this scheme until March 2013, HDC are seeking a further 3 year commitment from the Parish. Councillors noted that retention of the Wardens was no. 1 priority on the Community Action Plan 2010. The Steering Group arrangement is working well and the current Wardens make a positive difference to the village. Clerk to write to HDC confirming the Parish Council's commitment from March 2013 to March 2016. Agreed by all.

**KD D**

### 144/12 Income

HDC Precept £46,396.90

HDC Environmental Cleansing Grant Q4 2011/12 £282.60

Donation to Ashington First Responders £819.05

Cllr Norton reported that he had received correspondence from the Administrators of Singer & Friedlander bank – they are paying a further 10p in the £ to creditors and have applied for an extension to their contract for a further 3 years to allow for completion of their work. This would take the total amount recovered to 73%. It was agreed that when the funds are received the Clerk transfer them to the Council's NS&I account.

**KD D**

### 145/12 Expenditure

		<b>Cheque no.</b>	
Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£475.00	1290
Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Postage	£9.84	
	Total	£26.84	1291
WSSC	Salary and on costs (April)	£820.05	1292
Plusnet	Broadband	£17.99	DD
Ashington School	Meeting cost	£20	1293
Mrs B. Hill	Clerk – April	£50	1294

Ashington Festival	grant (as agreed at last meeting)	£500	1295
Ashington Parish Council	transfer to NS&I	£5457.08	1296
(In Oct 2011 we received £5457.08 from S&F. Would normally transfer these funds to NS&I account)			
SOS Systems	photocopier	£52.22	1297
HALC	subscription	£15	1298
BT	phone bill	£55.80	DD
HDC	Neighbourhood Wardens (Sept 11 to March 12)	£33,787	1299
Helping Hand Company	litter picking equipment	£69.60	1300
M. Woolley	meeting at HDC	£15	1301
ACCT	Parish Office rent	£189	1302

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

The Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm.

### **146/12 MEETINGS**

Cllr Brennan met with WSCC Highways Officer to discuss speed limit signage on Billingshurst Road. WSCC has confirmed that all of the correct signage is in place.

Cllr Brennan attended the first meeting of the new Scrutiny & Overview Working Group - Supporting Local Businesses on Wednesday 18th April. The next meeting is Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 10am and Cllr Brennan will attend.

Cllr Stillwell & the Clerk attended a Wardens Steering Group meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April. Minutes will be circulated separately.

Cllr Harbour had attended a seminar on energy – advice on conserving energy, how to identify and help people who may be struggling to pay their energy bills etc.

Cllr Carver had attended a Western Sussex Hospitals Trust meeting at which their 2012/13 priorities were discussed. He gave the Clerk a copy of the agenda for information.

**147/12 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

1. Cllr Wood asked about the proposed closure of Rectory Lane for cabling works Correspondence For Information no. 3). Cllr Carver was advised to contact WSCC in a personal capacity about this as it could potentially affect his business.
2. Water was still running across (following heavy rain) the southern slip road outside Bridge Garage. The Clerk explained that there is a spring in the area and this was causing the flow of water.
3. Cllr Carver reported potholes along Rectory Lane (alongside Meiros Farm development). Clerk to report to WSCC Highways. **KD D**
4. Cllrs asked if anyone had heard about any future plans for Hoots House – nothing was known.
5. Cllrs asked if a decision had been taken by HDC on the petrol station planning application – no decision yet.

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The meeting finished at 9.05pm

Signed.....

Date.....

**148/12** Items awaiting action:

Item No	Description	Last Action & Date
1	Mill Lane flooding	EA to organise meeting with WSCC/HDC/PC July 2011
32b	Spur road of The Sands & Viney Close – streetlights & laybys	No progress August 2011
218	East Side nature trail handrail	Re-assess in December 2011 when budget setting
	No information has been received from WSCC Pension Fund about the likely cost of Ill Health retirement.	