



Ashington Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2013 at 7.45 p.m. in Ashington School, Foster Lane, Ashington

Present: Councillors M. Woolley, N. Clark, R. Brennan, J. Gichovi-Elias, B. Norton, R. Strudwick, D. Harbour, K. Wood & N. Carver
Parish Clerk Karen Dare
District Councillor Roger Arthur
County Councillor Philip Circus
4 members of the public

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

296/13 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

T. Kearney (personal), R. Lancaster (business) & Neighbourhood Warden Jayne Jeffrey

297/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Chairman reminded Councillors that previous declarations still stand.

298/13 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd October 2013 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Brennan and seconded by Councillor Harbour, and agreed.

299/13 REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS & PCSO

PCSO report (see Appendix 2).

Questions: None

Wardens report (See Appendix 1).

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

1. Our Warden has been very busy since she has been back at work, catching up on a lot of issues that occurred while she was away.
2. People are still not picking up dog mess, particularly at the rear of the Church
3. Police response times to incidents in the village are very slow as they have to travel from Crawley/Haywards Heath and they are under-resourced.

The Chairman thanked Councillors & Members of the Public for their comments.

Long term plans: The Clerk, Cllrs Clark & Gichovi-Elias met with HDC about recruiting a part-time Warden. HDC will not recruit if the Warden is to be expected to work on their own, mainly evenings, dealing with ASB/patrolling etc as they consider this to be an unsafe working practice. Lone working under these conditions is not permitted by HDC. The Steering Group met on 5th November and the Warden suggested recruitment of a part-time Warden for 2 x 8 hour shifts per week (to include evening/night work) to work with her and concentrate on patrolling/crime/ASB/home visits etc which can only be done by a pair of Wardens. It was agreed that Councillors would consider this issue at the next meeting. **C/F**

The Clerk, Chairman & Cllr Clark also met with the new Rector to discuss the joint project to employ a full-time Youth Worker and detailed project proposals will be available shortly for the Council to consider. It is likely that the Youth Worker would start somewhere between Spring and Autumn 2014 and the Council would try to retain the existing Youth Worker until this time. The current Youth Worker has provided a report of her work to the Youth Club (copy should also be given to the Parish Council) – she is opening the Club one night per week and has 22 younger and 8 older individuals regularly attending. She does need more adult volunteers to help run the club. **KD C/F**

300/13 YOUNG PERSONS ADJOURNMENT

None present.

301/13 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

The Chairman welcomed the new County Councillor Philip Circus.

District Councillor Roger Arthur reported:

1. He had no information yet on HDC's Council Tax requirements for 2014-15, information would be made available to Parishes in early December. The Clerk reported that she had received information from HDC that HDC's grant to the Parish Council (@£5000 in 2013-14) could be reduced by as much as 20% next year and she would have to factor this into her budgets.

Cllr Carver asked how the recent announcement about the closure of the Novartis site in Horsham would affect the District. Cllr Arthur responded that it would have a major impact – loss of 500 direct jobs plus many more peripheral jobs, loss of business rates being paid to HDC, loss of business space in the Local Plan and perhaps replaced by housing.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Arthur for his report.

County Councillor Philip Circus reported:

1. In his role as Chairman of HDC he had invited the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) to address the Council. District Councillors were concerned that in reality crime figures were not actually going down (in spite of the evidence), it was becoming more difficult to report crimes or residents think there is no point in

reporting crimes as nothing will be done about them. Residents seem to be discouraged to report certain offences. In reality the number of policemen may have increased by 200 recently but it was decreased by 500 some years ago, therefore numbers are still greatly reduced. If any residents have Police issues they can report them to District Councillors and they will be put to the PCC at the next HDC/Police meeting.

2. He is getting to grips with WSCC issues, in particular there is a Highways Priority list that needs to be addressed asap (see Minute 302/13).
3. He has arranged to meet the Chairman & Clerk on 21 November.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Circus for his report.

Questions:

1. A member of the public asked County Councillor Circus when the A24 would be resurfaced with 'noise-reducing' tarmac. WSCC had promised that this would be installed many years ago but had continually delayed the project. County Councillor Circus is aware that this is a high priority, coming top of the Community Action Plan 2010 issues.
2. What is WSCC doing about the number and severity of accidents on the A24? County Councillor Circus is supporting WSCC's bid to improve the A27 as a strategic route. He explained that he was aware that the A24 south of Dorking had seen a speed reduction from 60 to 50mph and this had reduced the number of accidents and that a review of the A24 accidents would be undertaken. Cllr Carver responded that there had been a fully worked up Route Safety Scheme that involved closing the dangerous A24 junctions, installing flyovers/slip roads but this had been dropped by WSCC because of cost. Speed reduction is a short term fix but will result in congestion and reduced capacity on the road. Lower speeds reduce accidents and the severity of accidents but there are consequences.
3. There is a strip of land at the northern edge of the Recreation Ground that WSCC, HDC, Saxon Weald, ACCT and the Parish Council all deny owning. The land has streetlights on, highway drain under, grass is mown by WSCC and for all intents & purposes is considered highway verge, yet WSCC will not accept responsibility for the trees on the land. There is some concern that the trees are becoming dangerous and are blocking out the streetlights. All parties are reluctant to accept responsibility for fear of potential costs eg repairs to drains due to tree roots, ongoing maintenance of trees etc. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask a tree expert to assess the condition of the trees. **KD C/F**

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

302/13 Highways Priorities

Parish Councillors have suggested the following priorities:

1. Noise – resurface A24 with noise reducing tarmac. This is the number one priority for residents identified in the Community Action Plan 2010. Noise levels in some parts of the village are approaching the World Health Organisation's 'community nuisance' level.
2. Safety Engineering – Church Lane, Rectory Lane & The Sands excessive ramping on speed humps and poor drainage. These bumps are damaging cars.
3. Speed management – A24 slip road/Hole Street Accident Improvement Programme. WSCC has undertaken some improvements in recent years. Not sure what else can be done considering the short slip roads and road layout.
4. School safety – Ashington 'school safety zone'. There are no known accidents to have occurred outside the school.
5. Safety Engineering – Meiros Way/Rectory Lane junction review junction priorities. Several near misses reported as vehicles turn across Meiros Way towards Warminghurst. The priority of the road was changed when Meiros Way was constructed.
6. Parking management – Church Lane/Foster Lane review issues and improve if poss. A local solution is more likely to succeed than a project requiring TRO.
7. Pedestrian improvements – Ashington to Spring Gardens new or improved footpath/cyclepath. There is an existing footpath which is well used by walkers, runners & cyclists but it is frequently overgrown and narrowing year on year. It just needs cutting back. Move footpath away from edge of A24?
8. London Road speed bump improvements – investigate whether granite setts can be replaced with smooth tarmac to reduce noise/vibration for nearby residents
9. Rectory Lane/Park Lane improvements – improve the passing places, improve drainage, repair road haunchings, stabilise bank sides.
10. Pedestrian improvement – Hole Street and London Road new or improved footpath. We must assume that a resident has requested a footpath be created from the houses in Hole Street to join with the London Road footpath to allow these residents easier access into the village.
11. PROW – new bridleway from Ashington village to bridleway. Same as the project below. The idea was to link Bridleway 2612 into Ashington village somehow, but upgrading of FP2611 didn't get supported some years ago.
12. PROW – improvements to bridleway route to Storrington (same project as 11)
13. Speed Management – A24 south of Ashington. Parish Council has no specific information about this but the A24 has a bad accident record in the vicinity of Ashington.
14. Environmental improvements – Spring Gardens. Don't know what this project is.

It was agreed that the Clerk pass this information to WSCC, with some comment that the Parish Council did not instigate some of these projects and doesn't have many details about them. It was suggested that a meeting with WSCC may be appropriate to discuss the issues.

KD D

303/13 Winter & Emergency Plan review

The Clerk has provided Councillors with a summary of the likely costs for winter gritting/ploughing services from Sussex Manures. Councillors agreed the arrangements,

set a maximum budget of £2000 for the winter period and are happy for the Clerk to agree on a daily basis with Sussex Manures whether gritting should take place. The Clerk has reviewed the Emergency Plan and, apart from the new Winter arrangements, no amendments are proposed. Agreed by all.

304/13 Parish Council trees

Insurers are recommending that all trees are inspected annually by a qualified arboriculturalist as well as more frequently by our gardener and Councillors. It was proposed that the Clerk seek the advice of HDC and gather quotes. Agreed by all.

C/F

CORRESPONDENCE

305/13 For action:

1. Does any Councillor know who the landowner is of the footpath between 9 Blakiston Close and Chanctonbury Lodge? Councillors think that it belongs to Chanctonbury Lodge but they are denying it. No action.

306/13 For information:

1. Communities and Local Government – Our Place! Programme

307/13 General:

1. ERHA Annual Report
2. WSCC – Working Age Adults Service
3. Clerks & Councils Direct magazine

308/13 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT

Members of the public reported:

1. Why has the PC not agreed to gritters clearing Rectory Lane as far as Penn Gardens? The Parish Council simply does not have the funds to pay for the whole village to be cleared. The Council agreed to clear the bus route and the main roads to school. This is the first year that the Parish Council has organised any gritting of the village and most houses are within a few hundred metres of a cleared route. The Council will review after the winter and re-consider next year.
2. ACCT had had some problems with youths hanging around the building this summer and it is pleasing to have one Warden back on duty. They ask that the Parish Council employ a second full time Warden and increase residents Council Tax to fund this. The resident understood that the Church would pay most of the cost of the Youth Worker. The Chairman clarified that the Church is not completely funding a Youth Worker, the Parish Council would be making a significant contribution, although exact figures are not yet known. When we had 2 Wardens they worked the same shifts therefore coverage of the village wasn't extensive. The Wardens never work late at night and they cannot deal with serious issues. The Police should always be called if problems occur. Cllr Clark stressed the importance of having a Youth Worker in Ashington – they are more effective at dealing with the causes of youth problems than Wardens. Wardens do not engage with youth, they simply have the power to move them on and take enforcement action. Youth Workers can encourage/develop certain types of

behaviour eg not taking drugs which has the knock-on effect of stopping dealers coming into Ashington as there are no buyers.

3. The phone number on the side of the minibus needs changing. The Clerk is aware of this but the Minibus Association has yet to supply the new stickers, despite her asking several times.
4. Katy Bourne, Police & Crime Commissioner, will attend the Residents Association meeting in February.
5. Why are the outside lights at the Community Centre on all night? Answered by a member of ACCT - the lights form part of the Fire/Emergency Exit system and they have sensors on so that they are only on at night. To change this would involve re-wiring the system at considerable cost. All of the bulbs are low energy. The lights are also needed for cctv camera visibility.
6. Trees overhanging the public footpath near the rectory. Clerk to investigate & deal with. **KD D**
7. Why is there still no petrol station in Ashington? Planning permission has been granted but a Developer has not yet started. There is nothing the Parish Council can do about this.
8. Blocked drains on the A24 slip road adjacent to Monza Garage. Clerk to report to WSCC. **KD D**

The Chairman thanked residents for their comments and closed the public adjournment.

309/13 PLANNING.

The Planning Committee met on 16th October and Councillors have been provided with a copy of the minutes. Agreed by all.

310/13 Correspondence

Neighbourhood Plan – It was agreed that Ashington Parish Council begin production of a Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that the whole of Ashington Parish be designated as the Plan area. The Clerk will complete HDC's Neighbourhood Plan 'proposed area for designation' form and submit, with a map to HDC. HDC will then consult with the public (via newspaper adverts, their website etc) and invite comments over a 6 week period. If there are no significant objections then the Plan area will be formally designated and the Council can begin preparation of the Plan. The Council is then able to apply to HDC for the first phase of grant funding to cover some of the cost of preparing the Plan. During the preparation of the Plan potential new development sites would need to be identified. Councillors were asked to let the Clerk know of any land they think may be available/suitable.

WSCC – consultation on proposed amendments to Waste Local Plan following Planning Inspector's scrutiny. It was agreed that the Clerk respond.

311/13 New Enforcement Allegations/Information

None

312/13 Amendments

None

313/13 Applications

DC/13/1996 To install 1 x new pole under an existing line and to remove 1 x existing pole and divert overhead line to new pole (Land adjacent to Blue Bird Cottage, London Road, Ashington) Overhead lines

The Council has no objections.

DC/13/2030 Removal of internal wall within kitchen and the installation of a new kitchen window on the ground floor easterly elevation (Listed Building Consent) – The Mill House

The Council has no objections.

DC/13/2063 Part garage conversion to provide playroom and office above with 2 x windows to front elevation to match existing style and small dormer above - Tollgate Cottage London Road

The Council has no objections.

Horsham District Council

314/13 Approvals

DC/13/1611 Removal of existing single external door to kitchen and replacement with double glazed doors (Listed Building Consent) – Mill House Hotel

DC/13/1608 Erection of an oak framed double garage – The Flat, Mill House Hotel

DC/13/1669 Single storey extension to east elevation (Listed Building Consent) – The Willows, London Road

315/13 Refusals

DC/13/1736 Retrospective application for timber based porch and summer room- 26 Fairfield Road

Reason - The development by virtue of its design, scale, siting and materials is considered an unsympathetic addition, which has an adverse impact on the character of the dwelling house and wider area

316/13 Withdrawals None

317/13 Appeals made/ decisions None

The next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 20th November at **7.30pm** in Ashington Sports Pavilion.

FINANCE

318/13 Correspondence

The Clerk reports that the quarterly bank reconciliation has been signed by Cllr Norton

The Clerk reports that there are two areas of budgetary overspend in Q2:

1. Hall hire – budget set was £240, actual expenditure to date £423.36 due to invoice from 2012/13 not being received until the current financial year
2. Chairman’s Allowance – budget set was £0, actual expenditure to date £41.66 due to long service awards.

319/13 Income

First Responders donation £628.10

Kite & Thomas – rent & roundabout sponsorship £2077.50

320/13 Expenditure

		Cheque no.	
Mark Adsett	Gardeners contract payment	£491.66	1444
Mrs K. Dare	Clerks expenses (home & telephone)	£17	
	Stationery	£81.32	
	Total	£98.32	1445
WSSC	Salary and on costs (October)	£879.11	1446
	Payroll costs	£42.12	1447
ACCT	Lunch club hall hire	£59.20	1448
	Bingo club hall hire	£37.00	1449
	Planning committee 18/9/13	£7.40	1450
T. Kearney	Perspex for playground sign	£9.86	1451
D. Newland	Playground repairs	£150.00	1452
M. Woolley	reimbursement for gift purchased for others	£84.96	1453
P. Webb	lunch club purchases	£58.79	1454
HDC	food hygiene course (lunch club)	£60	1455
LanGuard Ltd	annual weedkilling	£396.00	1456
S. Fenn	responder expenses	£46.16	1457
Horsham Matters	youth worker	£1017.00	1458

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

321/13 MEETINGS

Cllrs Clark & Gichovi-Elias had attended Wardens meetings
Cllr Clark had attended a Youth Club meeting as PC representative and Cllr Gichovi-Elias had attended an ACCT meeting as PC representative.
The Chairman & Clerk met with the new Rector and with Liz Burt (Horsham Matters) to discuss long term plans for a Youth Worker.
Cllr Carver had attended a Western Sussex Hospitals Trust meeting and reported that Worthing Hospital was in the top Band with the lowest number of deaths as a result of operations. The Hospitals were introducing progressive treatment for prostate cancer and figures were improving all the time for MRSA & C. difficile infections.

322/13 MINOR MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

1. Cllr Carver thanked the Council for his long service award.
2. Cllr Gichovi-Elias reported a pothole outside 11 Hillcrest Drive. Clerk to report to WSCC. **KD D**
3. Cllr Brennan asked for an update on the VAS sign for Billingshurst Road – the Clerk reported that it is still scheduled for 2013/14
4. What has happened about SID sites in Ashington. The Clerk would chase up with the Police. **KD D**
5. There had been 2 accidents on the A24 to the immediate north of Ashington, cause unknown. WSCC are undertaking a safety review of the A24 south of Horsham.
6. Cllr Strudwick had cause to call the Police on 101 recently as he had seen an elderly gentleman sweeping the road late at night in the dark. He had waited 15 minutes for someone to answer his call only to be told that the Police would not do anything about this. He was disappointed that the Police were not prepared to help an elderly gentleman. This issue should be brought to the attention of the PCC.

The next meeting will be held at **7.45pm on Thursday 5th December 2013** at **Ashington School, Foster Lane.**

The meeting finished at 9.40pm

Signed.....

Date.....

323/13 APPENDIX 1: REPORT FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

Criminal Damage

There has been a lot of criminal damage around the community centre. Damage to drain pipes, brackets, sheds at rear of property, strong smell of urine and evidence of sexual activity at rear of hall, vast amounts of alcohol related litter. Following an incident which occurred Thursday morning I checked CCTV cameras and it seems that large groups of older youths are gathering there after 23:30 hrs. They are staying there until the early hours of the morning. This area around the community centre whilst I have been away has become the local meeting point for all youths in the village. I have spoken to the younger and older youths and explained that they can no longer congregate in this area. It is very difficult for the youth as they have nowhere else in the village to go that provides cover from the weather. This is why we desperately need a youth shelter so I can direct them to this area.

Due to intelligence I have gathered and passed to the police an offender has been identified and is now being dealt with regarding the criminal damage.

YOUTH SHELTER

I think a good idea would be for the youth to have a youth shelter in the village where I can direct them too when they are in areas that they should not be. I know that whilst I have been away there has been some discussion regarding this matter.

DOG FOUL

Still big problems in Ashington with dog walkers not picking up their dog foul. I will be doing regular dog foul patrols and if I see an offender not picking up their dog foul I will issue them with a fixed penalty on the spot fine of £50:00.

I would like to remind residents to remain vigilant and report offenders to me. They need to get description of person and dog, the time and area they were seen.

I am in the process of replacing old and damaged dog foul signage in the village with new.

FLY POSTING

I have removed several items of fly posting material from street furniture in Ashington. I have made phone calls to those concerned reminding them it is an offence to put up any material and that they will face a £75:00 fine.

FLY TIPPING

I have reported two cases of fly tip to Horsham District Council cleansing department. It was removed the following day. If anyone spots illegal fly tipping please let me know. I would like to remind you to get details, time, date description of vehicle, registration of vehicle.

I will be patrolling the hot spot areas in the village known for fly tipping.

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLES

Suspicious vehicles have been reported to me and I have passed intelligence onto the police.

I have had to deal with several suspicious persons in the village over the last two weeks. I have taken details and descriptions and will pass to police.

ELDERLY/VULNERABLE

I have been visiting the elderly/vulnerable and have been doing winter checks on them all. Winter kits have been handed out. Checks with fire alarms have also been undertaken. I have been telling them to stock up with provisions in case of a bad winter so they are prepared.

I have had meeting with the community link alarm manager to update me with a list of all residents in Ashington who have an alarm. I will be making a home visit to all checking that they are ok. I have also been updated on what other services they can provide to our elderly/vulnerable group.

I have also had dealings with young homeless person in Ashington. I have signposted them to the relevant housing department for help and advice on their situation.

WARDEN CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Christmas party will take place at the Ashington community centre on the 14th December 2013, 3-6 pm.

Invites are ready to go out to residents in Ashington 50 and over. I have written to all local businesses to see if they can provide a raffle prize for this event.

ASHINGTON LUNCH CLUB

This monthly event is very popular with the elderly/vulnerable in the village.

Thanks to an AGE UK grant we will be able to pay rent for the premises where it is held for the next coming year.

In the New Year we are looking to extend the hours of lunch club to provide a Chatter club in the afternoon where people can stay following their lunch for a chat and afternoon tea. Hours that are proposed will be from 2-4. This will also be funded with the grant that was received from AGE UK. It is hoped the chatter club will be somewhere for the elderly/vulnerable to meet during the winter months. If successful I will try and hold the chatter club on a fortnightly basis.

BINGO CLUB

This event is proving popular with the local residents. The club needs a few more members. I will place posters around the village and outskirts advertising this event.

Due to a grant I have managed to secure rent for this event for the following year.

I would just like to end this report by saying a big thank you to everyone for their get well wishes and support over the last few months following my accident. I am now hopefully fully on the mend and glad to be back working in Ashington.

Please feel free to pop into my office anytime for a chat.

Thank you once again

Jayne

324/13 APPENDIX 2 – PCSO Report October-November

On 09/10/13- Copper cable was stolen from a site in Hole Street, approx £200 worth. A torch light was seen on at approx 1:00am. If you saw or heard anything please call 101 quoting ref 0252 of 09/10/13

Between 17:00 on 15/10/13 and overnight into 16/10/13 at approx 1:00am; there was an attempt break in to an electricity sub station, on London Road. Fortunately nothing was stolen. If you saw or heard anything then please call in on 101 quoting ref 0229 of 16/10/13.

During the late evening hours of 30/10/13 and early hours of 31/10/13 there was damage to the community centre. The offender has been found and this is being resolved with a community resolution.

There were a few reports this month of suspicious vehicles seen in Ashington. One was seen driving up and down The Sands. If you see any suspicious vehicles then please call it in on 101 at the time it is occurring in order to get a response. Also if you can obtain any vehicle details such as the registration number, colour and make of vehicle that would be very beneficial.

PCSO Bryony Sparks