



Ashington Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 1st March 2018 at 7.45 p.m. in the School Hall at Ashington First School, Foster Lane, Ashington.

Present: Councillors: N. Spiers (Chairman), J. Stillwell (Vice-Chairman), T. Currell, G. MacPherson, R. Strudwick, M. Woolley, K. Wood.

Also present: Clerk - Celia Price, Youth Worker – Paddy Donovan, County Councillor – P Marshall, District Councillors – J Blackall, P. Circus, 7 Members of the Public

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillors: S. Ball, L. di Castiglione and T Kearney and District Councillor D Jenkins

Report from the Chairman of Ashington Parish Council on the Year 2017/18

The Chairman gave an overview of his report – appendix 1

Report from District and County Councillors

County Council

County Councillor Marshall reported that all WSCC schools continue to struggle with low funding having one of the lowest budgets across the whole country. WSCC are seeking fairer funding for our schools and are being very proactive in this.

In addition, the County budget for the 2018/19 has been signed off. It is a robust and balanced budget with a 0.6% rise generating an additional £3.6m. This is enabling the county to continue with investments and will be spending £135m across various projects including highways and education whilst continuing to support libraries, citizen advice bureaus and many other free services.

The 4.95% precept rise includes 2% for adult care services and will enable the county £2.5m for one off projects including £600k for the homeless and £500k more for highways.

District Council

District Councillor Circus reported that the rolling out of the new waste collection services is going well with fewer complaints than anticipated.

Horsham District Council are raising their precept by 3.4% and will also be making £1m savings per year by introducing the new fortnightly waste collection service.

Councillor Circus congratulated the Parish Council as being a proactive and forward-thinking council. The warden scheme is a pilot for the area and many other parishes are taking on the scheme following Ashington's success.

District Councillor Blackall added that HDC had voted to accept the budget last week. The budget has an emphasis on investment. £4m has been spent on rebuilding Hop Oast and new rear loading vehicles. He also asked for an update on the parking problems in the village and asked if any parking enforcement officers had been deployed.

The chairman responded advising that HDC have not employed any new staff yet and this is not likely to happen until later in 2018 (even though this was promised as part of the new parking scheme). Cllr Blackall will investigate and report back.

Public Adjournment

Questions were invited from members of the public and the following was raised

- Is there any news on the re-opening of the bus stops in the A24?

Cllr Circus responded, advising the bus companies say there is not enough demand and the cost of putting in lay-bys is too great.

- The new rear loading bin lorries need more personnel, how can this be saving money?

Cllr Circus responded. The old fleet were elderly and require more maintenance, the cost of parts and repairs are more expensive as most councils use rear loaders. The rear loaders are cheaper to buy and maintain and they only require 1 HGV qualified driver whereas the side loaders need 2, the predicted savings are £1.4m. In addition, the new vehicles are also quieter and safer.

- The clerk was thanked on behalf of the residents for her work over the last two and a half years.

The chairman thanked all present and closed the meeting at 8:20pm

Signed Dated