

SHEBBEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held at 7-30 pm on Tuesday March 10th 2009 in the Church Room. Shebbear.

Present: Chairman: R Johns. Cllrs: H Davis. G Slade. L Quance. E Haste. P Lomax.
R Clark. N Jeffers. District Cllr A Saywell. Clerk: David Walker.
8 Members of the Public.

Before the commencement of official business Chairman welcomed the Rev David Wheeler from the Shebbear Methodist Circuit and Heather Stevenson from Holsworthy Community Property Trust who outlined their joint proposals for a Social Housing development at New Inn, Shebbear on the west side of the bungalow "Suomi". The Rev Wheeler explained that the Methodist Circuit had been bequeathed 2 fields and a wood 3 years ago which were adjacent to the bungalow "Suomi", which is also owned by the Methodists. The proposal is to use an area of this land to provide low cost housing for local needs with an initial suggestion of 6 low cost units or 5 units and one retirement bungalow to be offered to the Methodist Ministers Housing Association. Heather was keen to emphasise that the number of units was only a suggestion and the proposals were only to sound out local opinion at this stage. More detailed plans would depend on public needs and reactions. Councillors pointed out that all these type of schemes tended to fail over the issue of what is "affordable" or "low cost". Other drawbacks identified were, poor access along a narrow lane, the requirement for an expensive sewerage system, being way outside the village development area, and what constitutes a "local person", which is another controversial topic. Councillors also drew attention to the fact that the land and wood in question had been acquired originally as a protection for the rural landscape and a relative of the deceased benefactor had been horrified to hear of the proposal which seemed to go against the wishes of his family. In conclusion Rev Wheeler thanked councillors for their observations, which gave food for thought, and which will be carried forward to the Public Consultation which will be held on April 23rd at Lake.

Agenda. 2009. Commenced at 8-05 pm.

21. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr R Gliddon. (Working.) PCSO M.Baker. (Off Duty.)

22. Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda/ Any variations to Members Registration of Interests.

Cllr Quance declared an interest in St Michaels churchyard improvements (Minute 27d), also Village Hall and P/F Committee (Minute 25b).

Cllr Clark informed the meeting that he has been elected to serve on the DAPC County Committee and requests that his Register of Interests be updated to include this.

23. Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday February 10th 2009, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed.

24. Any matters arising from the Minutes.

None raised.

25. Agenda items for Discussion and Resolution.

(a) Social Housing proposal at New Inn. Councillors felt that there was little more to add to what had been discussed already before official business commenced, and that it would be appropriate to await the public response at the consultation next month.

(b) Village Hall & Playing Field Committee. Clerk read a letter from the Committee Secretary which, in response to the parish councils request for an idea of the level of support the Village Hall was looking for, suggested that £10,000 would be an appropriate figure. In reply to questions as to the anticipated cost of the project, Cllr Quance said that it would be at least £30,000 and that around £7,000 had already been raised with ongoing efforts being made to identify other sources of funding. It was agreed that the matter should be held over until the next meeting as, despite the hall being an essential amenity within the parish and deserving of support, the parish council had a duty to the taxpayer to be satisfied as to the viability of the project and the satisfactory state of the Hall and Playing Field finances by way of a business plan and a set of up to date accounts before approving a large donation. It was pointed out that this precaution is no different to that used when dealing with Local Grant allocations every year.

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(c) P3. Annual footpath survey. Cllr Jeffers reported that he had completed the annual survey and had noted that where FP 9 from Lake divided to go to Manna Park and South Furze a 3 way finger post would be beneficial. Cllr Quance declared an interest as the landowner on the route of FP 9, and said that it would be appreciated if a small gate could be installed in addition to the 14 foot field gate where the path divides, as some people using the path leave the big gate open allowing livestock into the wrong field. The stile at School Corner 9(b) had subsided and Lovacott Bridge will soon be in need of attention. Cllr Lomax suggested that a "kissing gate" might be a suitable replacement for the stile at School Corner. This was thought to be a good idea and of benefit to the less agile walkers as well as those with dogs. Lovacott Bridge is not too bad but will need attention soon and a decision will have to be made as to whether a new bridge or a repair will be required using funds that we have in reserve. Cllr Jeffers will take these matters up with P3 at DCC.

(d) TDC Settlement Assessment. Clerk drew councillors attention to the questionnaire recently received, as the filling in of the details required a certain amount of historical knowledge which long standing councillors might wish to contribute to. Clerk was asked to fill out the survey and consult with councillors where appropriate.

26. District Councillors Report.

Cllr Saywell said there was not much to mention this month. The Torridge share of the council tax had not been raised this year. It was noted that the Police county wide were taking more from the Devon budget than Torridge were, and this was causing some concern particularly as we were not receiving much Police coverage locally. The grant towards the village hall had been delivered. There was no further news to report regarding the situation at SMC (Endford) and the complaints received were still being followed up. Chairman thanked Andrew for his attendance.

27. Planning.

(a) New Applications. 1/0099/2009/AGR. Agricultural Storage building at Splatt. Shebbear. For Mr A.Boycott. Councillors noted that the application was received on Feb 17th and was granted on Feb 24th, making any comments from the parish council superfluous.

1/0145/2009/FUL. Heard at Chairmans discretion to meet time limit deadline. This application is a resubmission of 1/0936/2008/FUL for an extension at Grafton Portway for Mr S.Tucker which was refused by planning officers on technicalities which have since been resolved. Councillors agreed that as No Objections had been raised previously at parish level, No Objections should be recommended for the resubmission. Cllr Jeffers asked that a Section 106 agreement be placed on this application towards parish recreational facilities.

(b) Applications Granted. 1/0099/2009/AGR. As (a) above.

(c) There were no relevant adjacent applications.

(d) St Michaels churchyard pathways improvements. Clerk had made enquiries on behalf of the Church Council as to what planning submissions would be necessary in connection with the intended church paths improvements. Councillors attention was drawn to the fact that the PCC asked that their planning application be made in the parish councils name, in order to qualify for a reduced fee. Clerk had enquired with TDC planners about this. It is apparently a regular practice and has not caused any problems to date. The matter is now in the hands of the PCC.

28. Finance.

(a) Parish Council Insurance. All were in agreement that further quotations be sought.

(b) Proposed by Cllr Haste and seconded by Cllr Lomax that Items (1) to (4) inclusive be paid.

Bank Balances received by Councillors. Cllr Davis suggested that the P3 Balance held within the overall Reserves, should in future be stated separately. All in agreement. Therefore this months Reserve a/c is £15,477.72 and the P3 balance is £1718.36.

29. Correspondence.

- (a) Shebbear Area Youth Project. Penny Warren writes to inform the parish council that changes are imminent in the running of the Project. From September there will no longer be a full time youth worker as, sadly, Lizz Prangle will be moving on. The Committee will still be supporting local youth and asks that the parish council continues to support local youth projects particularly Shebbear Young Farmers Club which is now up and running again.
- (b) TDC Dog Control Orders. In advance of an initiative to implement the Clean Streets and Neighbourhoods Act, the Local Authority have issued advice as to the legislation involved, details of which are on the parish council notice board.
- (c) Items (c) and (d) for councillors information.

30. Items for next Meetings Agenda on Tuesday April 14th 2009, after the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, and any other business at the Chairmans discretion.

- (1) S.M.C at Endford. This matter will be debated at next months meeting if the complaints being followed up have not been resolved by then.
- (2) A suggestion has been put forward that an annual award be made for an achievement by a parishioner during the course of a year.
- (3) Financial contribution to Village Hall improvements.

There being no other Business the Meeting ended at 9-13 pm.