

SHEBBEAR PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of Council Meeting held on Tuesday September 11th 2012
in the Church Room. Shebbear.**

Present:

Chairman: Cllr R Clark.

Cllrs: M A Wells. J Dungate. E Haste. P Lomax.

TDC Leader and C/Cllr Barry Parsons.

3 members of the public. Clerk. David Walker.

Agenda. 2012. Commenced at 7- 36 pm.

92. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr H Davis (Holiday). Cllr T Carr (Holiday). Cllr R Gliddon (Away). Cllr J Curtis (Working).
Cllr J Stupple (Family commitment).

93. Public Participation Period.

No requests received.

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

Cllr Haste Declared an Interest in item 99(a) Planning, solar panel array at Southcombe Farm, as he rents land at the application site.

7-40pm. Chairman invited C/Cllr and TDC Leader Barry Parsons to address the Meeting as Barry had another engagement to attend. Councillors heard that a number of changes were in the process of being made to tackle problems that had been identified in the District Council administration, in particular the Planning Dept where a new management team is being formed headed by David Green. A new Local Plan is being developed, due for completion at the end of this year.

Joining the team is Kate Little from East Devon DC, who did a lot of work with the Cranbrook new town development. Barry hastened to add that no new towns are in the pipeline for Torridge.

Other departments are also being assessed, in particular Waste and Recycling, Finance, Human Resources and the Legal Systems. The priorities being, matters at ground level, and overcoming the current difficulties in making contact. Efficiencies and economies are being made in conjunction with other authorities and further liaisons are being explored.

7-53pm. Chairman thanked Barry for his attendance and report and welcomed John Scott, the Rural Housing Enabler from the Community Council of Devon, to the Meeting. After introducing himself John explained that the Community Council of Devon was contracted by TDC to carry out a number of housing surveys a year to establish the need for affordable housing, Shebbear having been selected for survey on this occasion. Before carrying out a survey CCD will always consult with the relevant parish council and if we are told that a survey is not required then that is the end of the matter, because the survey process does involve the assistance of the parish council. Shebbear has not had a survey done by CCD before.

Chairman pointed out that two or three surveys had been done by TDC in the past with mixed results and a generally low response rate which resulted in very few respondents saying they were in need of affordable housing. The word, affordable, is misleading. It has to be made clear from the outset what an affordable house actually means.

When Ackland Close was developed a lot of work was done to ensure that there was an acceptable number of affordable houses in the mix, and, due to Devon CC buying six more from the developer, who was in need of some money at the time, we ended up with thirteen social housing units which were hard to find tenants for, resulting in tenants being moved in from elsewhere in the County, some of whom, because of the rural location of Shebbear and the lack of local employment, have personal needs and problems which cannot be met locally but necessitate awkward and costly travel for many miles to the nearest towns and facilities. Having outlined the sequence of events involved in carrying out the survey, and leaving literature for Cllrs information, John said that he would return at a later date to receive the parish councils' reaction.

Chairman thanked John for his visit and presentation

8-26pm. Official agenda business resumed.

95. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday August 14th 2012.

All in agreement that the Draft Minutes, which had been previously circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

96. Clerks Report. Any matters arising from the Minutes.

Chairman reported, in connection with the dormant Twinning Funds referred to in the Minutes, that he was still chasing up the remaining funds which had been invested in shares. The fact that the person administering the funds had moved to France was slowing matters up but completion was hoped for shortly.

Clerk reported, firstly, that regarding Mr Harrups' complaint, he had replied to the ICO on August 15th in answer to their letter which was discussed at the August Meeting (Item 90(1)). Having received no reply after 3 weeks, and mindful of the fact that the ICO had mislaid an earlier letter, Clerk had spoken to the Case Officer who confirmed that they had received the Aug 15th letter and hoped to deal with it in the next week or so.

Secondly, Cllr Lomax and Clerk had carried out the annual inspection of the parish council fixed assets in the last few days. All items were present and in good condition apart from the bus shelter which continues to deteriorate and needs regular monitoring, and a number of seats which are showing their age, the recommendation being that provision should be made in the forthcoming budget for replacement, a more detailed assessment to be done nearer the time.

97. Agenda items for Discussion and Resolution.

(1) New Parish Plan. Arrangements for inaugural meeting of Steering Group. Cllr Lomax, who had kindly taken on the task of making the early arrangements, reported that he had established contact with all the volunteers. The earliest date that was suited to most had been settled for Tuesday October 16th at 7-30pm in The Church Room, when the election of a Chairperson and other preliminaries could be agreed.

(2) Complaints relating to Dogs. Cllr Lomax reported that he had received a number of complaints relating to dogs, probably because he is the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. The first complaint was of a dog running loose, messing on farm land and chasing cattle. The second was of dogs barking continually, to the annoyance of neighbours. Thirdly, of dogs being exercised in public places and being allowed to mess on verges and in gateways, the results being either left behind, or in some cases bagged up and hung in the hedge, despite there being dog bins available around the village, and the much publicised request for owners to take it home.

Peter had compiled a report as a result of these complaints, which highlighted the local procedures in place for dealing with offences relating to dogs, together with advice and suggestions for owners. He suggested that the report, which had been circulated to Cllrs, be approved for inclusion in Reflecting Shebbear.

Nigel Brock, from the public gallery, spoke with Chairmans permission, and asked that the public be reminded that farmers and landowners have the legal right, as a last resort, to shoot dogs that are worrying livestock on their land.

Agreed, that Peters report should be included in an article in Reflecting Shebbear which was already planned as a result of correspondence received by the Editor.

(3) Snow Warden Scheme. (Winter 2012 - 2013). Cllr Haste confirmed he has to give up Snow Warden duties due to pressure of work. Cllrs agreed that a replacement for Ted should be sought, to join Graeme Quance and Robert McCurrach. Due to the mild weather last winter salt stocks are believed to be sufficient for the coming year. The importance, and difficulty, of keeping the salt dry was commented on, as Ted and Clerk found that the towable gritter frequently clogged up if the salt was only slightly moist.

98. District Councillors Report.

D/Cllr Lewis not in attendance.

