

SHEBBEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Tuesday March 8th 2011 in the Church Room. Shebbear.

Present:

Chairman: Cllr R Johns.

Cllrs: G Slade. H Davis. R Clark. J Curtis. J Dungate. P Lomax. E Haste. J Stupple. R Gliddon.
C/Cllr B Parsons.

No members of the public. Clerk. David Walker.

Before the Agenda was commenced Nigel Barnard, Managing Director of Tarka Housing, gave Cllrs details of the background, objectives and operations of Tarka Housing and its associates, West Country Housing Group. Tarka Housing was founded in 2007 after taking over the former Torridge Housing properties when Government criteria for updating housing placed too onerous a burden on Local Authorities. Tarka Housing has charity status and all income is ploughed back into the business and no taxpayers money is involved. Any monies resulting from Right to Buy sales go to TDC as does a share of VAT returns. Tarka Housing has 25 properties in Shebbear mainly in Barn Close, Valley View and North View. Allocation is a sensitive issue with priority given to tenants needs and thereafter in date order. At present 98% of allocations are made to Torridge people and 2% to people from elsewhere in Devon. More recently properties are publicised on the Devon Home Choice network. Tarka Housing take the issue of troublesome tenants and anti-social behaviour seriously and because of the lengthy and costly process of taking cases to Court, which is kept as a last resort, have measures in place to try and avoid situations developing. They work closely with the Police, offer tenants a 24 hour reporting service for any problems, and run play programmes for young people. Mr Barnard was aware that 32 cases of ASB were already being dealt with but pointed out that Devon & Cornwall Housing Ass'n have 21 properties in Shebbear, in Ackland Close and Balleroy Close and no doubt some of the issues could be traced back there. After taking Cllrs questions Mr Barnard was thanked by Chairman for an informative presentation and left the meeting.

Agenda. 2011. Commenced at 8-35 pm.

21. Apologies for Absence.

D/Cllr A Saywell. (At another meeting). PCSO Baker. (Off duty).

In making her apologies PCSO Baker asked that Cllrs be informed that there had been 9 calls received from Shebbear in the last month. 1 call related to a road traffic collision, 1 concerned public safety, 1 nuisance call, 1 administration and 4 complaints of anti-social behaviour, one other unspecified. With regard to the anti-social behaviour incident a group of young persons, some of whom were from elsewhere, have been dealt with under the first stage of the ASB procedure.

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

Chairman R Johns declared a prejudicial interest in item 27 (a)(1) as he is a member of the partnership making the application and left the meeting while the matter was discussed.

Cllr R Gliddon declared a prejudicial interest in item 27(a)(2) as he is related to the applicant and left the meeting while the application was discussed.

23. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on February 8th 2011.

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

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

(1) Clerk reported that he had been in touch with Midas Homes asking that the signs around the area could be removed now that the sale of properties in Ackland Close was almost completed. No answer had been received.

25. Agenda items for Discussion and Resolution.

(1) Snow Wardens and gritters. C/Cllr Barry Parsons reported on the progress of his project to ensure that parishes were better prepared to cope with disruption caused by heavy snowfalls. Tests have been carried out on grit spreaders that can be towed by a 4x4 vehicle and DCC have approved their introduction.

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Barry intends to purchase up to 6 of these spreaders using his Locality Allowance, and as there are 28 parishes these machines will have to be shared, and the intention is for participating parishes to appoint a Snow Warden who will be responsible for coordinating their use. Decisions will also have to be made as to, where the gritters will be stored, salt supplies, vehicles that will be available for towing, which parish gets first use and which roads take priority. All very tricky decisions for the Snow Warden, who will receive training. Barry has also authorised the purchase of 16 additional grit bins which will be located throughout his Ward, at a cost of £4,800, with 2 intended for Shebbear.

Barry said that an additional problem is of people taking salt from the roadside bins for their own private use, which could be classed as theft, but is certainly an anti social act., causing shortages at crucial times. Chairman pointed out that a lot of the busier routes within the parish were already cleared by local farmers fairly promptly to enable access for milk tankers and livestock feed transport. As long as the salt/grit bins in strategic locations were kept topped up, it is a pity there weren't more public spirited residents who were willing to turn out with a shovel, as some are already doing, with great success, and should be commended. Cllr Clark suggested that, as 3 of the 6 local centres listed in the District Plan, namely Halwill Junction, Shebbear and Bradworthy, were in C/Cllr Parsons' ward, and were supposed to provide resources and facilities for surrounding areas, it would be sensible if they were to have 2 spreaders each with which to provide support and assistance to the 28 parishes involved.

Cllr Davis said that he had reported, via My Devon, that a pothole on the main road that had recently been repaired, had very soon after subsided again, and that in addition to not receiving a satisfactory response, was concerned that there was no monitoring of contracted out work resulting in contractors getting away with shoddy workmanship. Barry said that this highlighted something that was being actively tackled and had been a problem between DCC and SWH for some time for contractual reasons. Cllrs pointed out that there would not be so many potholes if more attention was paid to roadside drainage, which was given priority years ago. Barry assured Cllrs that he had taken on board all the suggestions raised and would include them in his activities at County level. Chairman called for a decision to be made on the subject of Snow Wardens and gritters, but as there were still many details to be settled it was agreed that everybody should work together to finalise a suitable plan. C/Cllr Parsons was thanked for his attendance.

(2) Local Elections May 5th 2011. Cllrs were of the opinion that the nomination papers were rather daunting for anyone considering putting themselves forward. Cllr Slade informed the meeting that he would not be standing again, for personal reasons. Chairman said how sorry the Council would be to lose someone with lifetime local knowledge and hopefully any vacancies would attract candidates from groups that are currently under represented.

26. District Councillors Report.

In the absence of D/Cllr Saywell, C/Cllr Parsons took the opportunity to report in general terms about County matters relating to the forthcoming elections, finance and planning and took questions from Cllrs.

27. Planning.

(a) New Applications.

(1) 1/0040/2011/OUT. Agricultural workers dwelling. Backway Farm. Shebbear.

(Chairman R Johns left the room while this application was discussed, leaving Vice Chairman R Clark to take the Chair temporarily.)

No Objections to the application were raised. Chairman R Johns returned to the meeting.

(2) 1/0054/2011/FUL. Demolition of agricultural building and erection of annexe. Southcombe Farm. Shebbear. For Mr B Ward.

(Cllr R Gliddon left the room while the application was discussed.)

No Objections to the application were raised. Cllr Gliddon returned to the meeting.

(b) Applications Granted.

1/0056/2011/AGR. Agricultural store at Wootten Farm. Shebbear. Received by Cllrs.

(c) There were no relevant, adjacent applications.

28. Finance.

(1) Grasscutting. Cllrs were in agreement that Adrian Caudwell had carried out the grasscutting to everybody's satisfaction last year and he should be invited to continue for the new season at the rate of £40 per cut which included The Square and New Inn. Any visits to clear and tidy Back Lane would be charged at £6 per visit and charged to the P3 budget.

Concerns were raised about the state of the hard surface in Back Lane which may become a hazard.

Clerk will try and establish the legal title to the lane and footpath before quotes were sought for repair.

Bank Balances to February 28th, received by Cllrs. Current a/c - £1581.34 Reserve a/c £12,518.74

29. Correspondence.

(1) Mr & Mrs Pearce. The Linhay. Ruxhill and Mr & Mrs Pearce. Ruxhill Farm (Received since agenda issued). Both correspondents concerned that the recent road works at Berry Park Barn Corner and any possible erosion of the hedge bank in future by traffic would pose a threat to their water supplies which connect to the water main which runs past the site. Cllrs agreed that Clerk will contact SW Water to ascertain if an appraisal can be carried out to establish if the connections are vulnerable.

Circulation Folder Received by Cllrs.

30. Items for the Council Meeting Agenda on Tuesday April 12th 2011 which will follow on from the Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 7 pm, and any other business at the Chairmans discretion.

No matters raised.

There being no other Business the Meeting ended at 10-03pm.