

SHEBBEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Tuesday September 13th 2011 in the Church Room. Shebbear.

Present:

Chairman: Cllr R Clark.

Cllrs: H Davis. P Lomax. M Wells. J Stupple. T Carr. J Curtis. E Haste. J Dungate. R Gliddon.

9 members of the public. Clerk. David Walker.

7-30pm. Before the formal agenda began, Chairman welcomed James Jarroudi, the Health & Recreation Officer, from TDC, who outlined the progress of the Active Villages Initiative relating to Shebbear parish. The Initiative is grant funded by Sport for England, through Devon County Council. The feedback received from Shebbear from the earlier survey was very good and resulted in a £3,500 grant being made available to this parish. Examples given as to what the grant may be used for include, bringing in specialist coaching staff, the creation of new clubs, and the purchase of new equipment. The survey revealed support for the existing clubs and activities as well as Walking, Table Tennis, Cycling, Archery, Snooker, and facilities for young people. All the arrangements will be done by James, it is up to the parish to decide preferences.

Agenda. 2011. Commenced at 7-50 pm.

85. Apologies for Absence.

D/Cllr J Lewis. (Child care issues). PCSO Melissa Baker.

86. Public Participation Period.

- (1) Wendy Lawrenson - Wind turbines. 5 turbines are in prospect in the vicinity of Shebbear. They are not carbon free. Materials for their manufacture come from as far away as China. Up to a thousand tons of concrete are used for each turbine base. They need conventional back up in calm weather. They are only 17-28% efficient. The feedback tariff exceeds the productivity gains. The main beneficiaries are the banks, the developers and the site owners, very little for local communities. We don't know yet what the implications will be to the suggestion of Community turbines, but the situation will need to be monitored. Noise is a factor, windows will have to be closed. The flicker effect is substantial and property values are affected. Say "No".
- (2) John McNab - Wind Turbines. I am a retired engineer and I moved to Shebbear for peace and quiet. I have worked hard to bring my bungalow to a good standard, this will be affected by the nearby turbine. A number of countries have been operating turbines for some years and are finding them unsatisfactory. Germany for instance has 22 thousand of them and has closed 8 nuclear power stations. They now discover that the turbines are only 16% efficient and now want to buy nuclear electricity from France to make up the shortfall. France has none to spare. In 25 years time all the turbine sites must be restored to their original condition. No dwelling should be closer than 1 mile from a turbine. The Government do not have a grasp of the facts, I speak from professional experience in these matters.
- (3) Penny Riches Mills - Wind Turbines. I Chair the Torridge branch of the C.P.R.E, and I invite Shebbear Parish Councillors to join us. I want to highlight what is going on in NW Devon. There are 94 proposals in total, 50 in Torridge itself. CPRE is not against renewable energy, but is very much against the spoiling of the countryside. Applications are shoddy and do not convey accurate information. This was evidenced at the Buckland Filleigh meeting yesterday concerning the Battledown turbine which is far too big. It is a purely commercial project with no benefit to the community. It is in the wrong place.

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

Cllr Davis asked that his Register of Interests be amended to include the fact that he is now Treasurer of the N Devon Cancer Care Centre Trust.

Cllr Stupple declared a personal interest in item 90(1) Allotments, as he, and a family member, are involved With the Allotment Association.

88. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday July 12th 2011.

All in agreement that the Draft Minutes, which had been previously circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record. An earlier error listing Cllr Davis as being present, when he was on holiday, having been corrected.

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

Tithe Map There was no further news at present regarding the condition and repair assessment being carried out by DCRO. The NDRO archivist has indicated that there would be no legal obstacle to Shebbear Parish Council including the map on our list of assets. Cllrs agreed that this be done, with the value recorded as nominal. Clerk will amend the list.

Grit Bins Clerk had reminded DCC that the bin agreed for Ackland Close had still not been sited, despite the DCC official list indicating that it had.

90. Agenda items for Discussion and Resolution.

(1) Allotments - Progress and start up costs. Mrs Shelley Fleming, representing the Shebbear Allotment Association, at Chairmans invitation, reported that there was currently a slow down in progress, mainly as a result of consultations with TDC planners over the need for permission to erect deer fencing around the site. When the go ahead is received, the local Methodist Circuit can pass it to higher authority for final approval. Chairman reminded Mrs Fleming that the parish council will be considering applications soon for the 2012 local grants.

(2) Proposed wind turbines.

Following the suggestion at the August parish council meeting that a public meeting would be an appropriate way to give parishioners access to as much fact as is available at present, Chairman had spent some time recently establishing from senior planners details of the current situation. Included among the large number of turbines, of various sizes, which are likely to be applied for throughout Torridge once the initial screening process has been cleared, are 5, possibly 6, proposals either in, or very close by, Shebbear parish.

The screening process starts by establishing whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required, which is basically related to the size of the proposed turbine. Secondly, is the land suitable? TDC intends to colour code the district according to the suitability, or otherwise, of the land areas for turbine operation. As the project is not completed we don't yet know which zone Shebbear will included in. Next, are there any other turbines in the vicinity? If there are, it may be self limiting whether more would be approved. The noise issue is then considered, and finally, ecological concerns, whether the natural environment would be affected.

In receiving this information, Chairman considered it to be very technical in content, and felt that if a planning officer was to attend a public meeting and deliver the facts in that fashion, it would not be easy for those in attendance to understand.

On the subject of Shared Ownership, TDC appears interested in exploring this option. The Alscott proposal is apparently to be similar to a scheme already operating in Totnes on a 60/40 arrangement, the company paying the larger share of the setting up costs, hoping that the local district or parish council would take up the remainder, with the revenue from the sale of power to the grid being proportionately shared. Should TDC take this idea forward, there will be difficulties identifying a suitable location, and a parish willing to accept a turbine. In Shebbear itself we also have the potential for possibly 5 turbines being located very close to our boundary and having to live with all the drawbacks, and with no influence over, or benefit from, their installation or operation, which would be the entitlement of the parish in which the sites will be located. Even if a proposal was in our parish, TDC planning officers only have to take our views into consideration, we do not have a veto over planning applications, and in the past, experience has shown that in many cases TDC have done the opposite to what we have recommended.

The only aspects upon which our recommendations can be considered are, amenity and the noise factor. Other aspects such as commercial viability, or the impact on property values, are not planning issues and submissions relating to these will be disregarded by decision makers.

Cllrs agreed that, to hold a parish meeting, open to the public, with knowledgeable speakers from differing sides of the debate and the opportunity for Shebbear parishioners to register their opinion, based on knowing what facts were likely to be considered by planners, was the correct way to proceed, provided it is clear to the public that there can be no guarantees of a favourable response and that the parish councils' decision is made to allow everybody, whatever their opinion, a fair representation.

Clerk to try and book the village hall for a Tuesday at 7-30 pm in October.

91. District Councillors Report.

No report this month. D/Cllr Lewis, in making his apology, asked that Cllrs be informed that he is supporting the allotment project and is asking the planners for clarification on progress. He has also been in touch with both environmental protection officers dealing with the ongoing pollution issue at West Country Concrete (Endford). All deadlines have now been reached in relation to the permit application and it is vitally important that any instances of cement dust pollution are reported immediately to Carol Sestakovs. Cllrs asked Clerk to ensure this information was passed to the complainants.

92. Planning.

(a) New Applications.

1/0714/2011/FUL. Change of use of stables, to workshop, for the repair and renovation of sporting guns. Highworthy. Shebbear. For Mr P Selwood. No Objections.

(b) Applications Granted.

None

(c) Applications Withdrawn.

None

(d) Relevant adjacent applications.

1/0721/2011/FUL. Single 71m wind turbine. North of Sunderleigh, Buckland Brewer. For Mr G Heywood. No Objections. Site is sufficiently far away to not affect Shebbear parish.

93. Finance.

(a) To approve items for payment.

Proposed Cllr Davis, seconded Cllr Wells, with all in favour, that Clerk be reimbursed for computer repairs. £30.00

(b) Annual Return 2011.

Clerk reported that the Return had been received back from the Audit Commission, signed off as correct and complying with all legal requirements. Now available for inspection by application.

(c) Bank Mandate. The signature variation process is still ongoing, due to hopeless inefficiency on the part of bank administrators, who don't appear to have an understanding of their own procedures. As a result Clerk is reluctant to ask for any more cheques to be drawn until the mandate variation is finalised and seen to be correct.

Bank Balances to August 30th, received by Cllrs. Current a/c - £2,629.12 Reserve a/c £12,521.89
(Reserve includes P3 balance of £1610.36).

94. Correspondence.

(1) Holsworthy Area advisory group. October meeting details received by Cllrs.

Cllrs Circulation. Received by members, plus recently arrived information relating to DALC Conference, AGM, and Sept/Oct newsletter.

95. Items for the next Council Meeting Agenda to be held on Tuesday October 11th 2011, and any other matters at the Chairmans discretion.

There being no other Business the Meeting ended at 9-38 pm.