

MINUTES
SHAUGH PRIOR PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting

Held on

Wednesday, 6 February 2008

at

Lee Moor Hall Committee Room

Present: Cllrs. Mr. Vincent, Ms Winter, Mr. Small, Mr. Norman, Mrs. Smerdon (Chairman), Mrs. Burkill and Mr. Stone
County Councillor John Hart (part-time)
District Councillor Nicky Barnes (part-time)
Police Constable Yarnold (part-time)
Mr. Stan Finemore
Several members of the public (part-time)

OPEN FORUM

The Brake - See under "Planning".

POLICE BUSINESS

PC Yarnold said that there had been 20 lorries using the SatNav equipment which had become lost in the area in recent weeks and had caused considerable traffic problems and damage to banks and hedgerows which could not cope with HGV traffic. This was also being caused by foreign drivers not understanding English or being able to read the road signs. He had requested appropriate signs to prevent this problem. PC Yarnold agreed with Mr. Williams from Bardon Aggregates who said that the HGVs using the wrong road network did not belong to that firm.

It was reported by a member of the public that large lorries were crossing Shaugh Bridge which had a weight restriction on it which they obviously exceeded. PC Yarnold asked for any such instances to be reported to the police non-urgent crime telephone number.

PC Yarnold reported that 207 offences had been reported during 2007 in his area, 30 of which had turned out to be non-crimes. There had been two incidents of theft and one of an alcohol related crime so far in 2008.

With the escalating price of metal, this was now a prime target for thieves.

PC Yarnold asked for members of the public to be on the look out for a speeding cars with another following as this could be a stolen vehicle which was about to be burnt out.

DNPA BUSINESS

The Clerk reminded members of the dangers of building without Planning Permission. At the last DNPA meeting enforcement action was to be made against a land owner who had erected several “guest accommodation” buildings, including a swimming pool, on his property which could be very costly to that land owner.

01/08 Apologies

Cllrs. McIver and Rayers, District Councillor Hitchins

02/08 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be a true record of proceedings.

03/08 Matters Arising

Permissive Path from Shaugh Bridge to Bickleigh Bridge - Nothing further.

Bench on Bowling Green at Shaugh – The Chairman would be purchasing a replacement bench.

Wotter – Tor Homes had advised that it would not be financially sustainable to move the bank to provide more parking spaces.

Lee Moor Cemetery – Nothing further.

Hemerdon Mine – Mr. Hale from Wolf Mining had agreed to attend the Cluster meeting later in the month.

Gordon May – The bench would now be presented to Mr. May at the Parish Plan day on 9 February in Lee Moor together with a small celebration. The County and District Councillors had been invited to attend.

Parish Maintenance - Unfortunately, during the remedial work to the bus shelter at Wotter the Contractor had found that there was more damage to the construction than originally thought. Cllr. Norman had inspected the shelter and agreed. The Contractor had put in a further quotation for the extra work which had been accepted and work was in progress. The Clerk had contacted the insurance company to advise them of the situation. Cllr. Norman advised that the roofing work was not yet complete. Councillors authorised the Clerk to pay the bill from the Contractor when Cllr. Norman had confirmed that works were complete.

Wotter Kick About Area – Nothing further to report.

Affordable Housing –Nothing further.

Post Office in Wotter - Nothing further.

Speed Limits & Signs – Nothing further.

Highway Problems –The Clerk would report that the direction sign had been turned around at Beatland Corner but it was not known whether this was caused by an act of vandalism or the recent strong winds.

Composting - Cllr. Rayers and the Chairman would go and look at the scheme being run in Chagford.

Parish Plan – Various invoices had been passed to the Clerk for payment. Councillors agreed that a float of £50 should be held by the Committee and Cllr. Vincent accepted a cheque which he would cash and pass this amount on to the Secretary. The Clerk was concerned that one person was in charge of these payments and kept her up to date with invoices for the payments she was making through the Parish Council account.

Footpath – Wotter “By-pass” – Nothing further.

Clerk's Appraisal and Contract – Due to the Chairman’s recent operation and bereavement this had not yet taken place.

04/08 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Hart advised that DCC will be agreeing a 3.9% increase in their budget. They were currently sorting out their priorities. There was concern that Devon’s road network was getting into a worse state and overall funding had been reduced. In addition, because of the high cost of oil, surfacing materials had considerably increased in price. The County were concentrating on the emptying of gullies.

The Boundary Committee would be reporting back on their suggestions on how and if the make up of Local Authorities in Devon should be altered.

The Chairman pointed out that it was close to lambing time and asked Cllr. Hart to chase up the installation of the speed limit signs from Beatland Corner to Cadover Bridge.

05/08 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

District Councillor Barnes reported that a Council Tax increase of 4.49% (£5.52 on a Band D Property) had been agreed.

West Devon Borough Council and SHDC had agreed to extend the Contract for their shared Chief Executive for a further two years, the two Councils being at the forefront of the shared services agenda which was saving both Councils a considerable amount of money.

There had been some problems with refuse collection and the order of the rounds was being looked at to try to claw back some of the overspend on this service.

The proposal to install public conveniences at Shaugh Bridge had been resurrected and suggested details were being looked at by stakeholders other than SHDC and DNPA. The Chairman felt this installation was essential and with the number of visitors to the site, the current situation should be investigated by the Environmental Health Department.

06/08 CORRESPONDENCE

SLCC Conferences – Councillors agreed that the Clerk could attend both the regional conference in Plymouth and the National conference in the autumn. The Clerk felt that she would probably not attend the regional conference but would certainly attend the National one.

Conduct of Local Authority Members – Cllr. Burkill had glanced through this document and felt, unless you were a lawyer, it was very difficult to get to grips with. The Clerk said she would read it.

South West Lifelong Learning Network – As the role and functions of Parish Councils were likely to change considerably as a result of the Government's White Paper, this organisation was to put out a questionnaire to all Councillors and Clerks. The Clerk would forward this to all Councillors on receipt.

Imerys' Public Meeting – Notes of the meeting held on 27 December had been circulated to Councillors.

Cluster Meeting – The Clerk had circulated copies of the meeting held on 25 September.

Survey of Rural Retailers – The Clerk had responded that this Parish did not have any retailer facilities.

Victim Support Devon – The Clerk would advise that a presentation had already been made in this Parish.

Police Procedures for "Special Events" – the Clerk held details if these were required.

Register of Electors – The Clerk now held the latest full register.

NALC Conference – As the conference in May was to be held in Eastbourne it was felt too expensive for a Parish Councillor to attend. Councillors did not feel they had an appropriate case study to add to the agenda.

CAB Presentation to Parish Council – The Clerk was asked to organise this.

The Clerk held the following if Councillors wished to read them:-

SHDC Minutes of Meetings
SHDC Executive Forward Plan

The Clerk
SHDC – Minutes of Development Control and Conservation User Group Mtg
Devon Rural Transport Partnership Newsletter
Devontalk
Clerks and Councils Direct
South Hams Magazine
Devon's Outstanding Landscapes
Volunteering
Voluntary Vine
Viewpoint
Dartmoor National Park Management Plan
Junk Mail
The Playing Field

07/08 REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Website and Computer – The clerk reported that unfortunately there was a teething problem with the printing of labels as the new software programme and printer did not appear to be compatible. Mr. Isaacs was looking into this. The Clerk would ask Mr. Isaacs to remove out of date material and include the names and e-mail addresses of Councillors Stone and Vincent and the e-mail address of the Chairman. The Clerk confirmed that the invoices received from Mr. Isaacs were small compared to the amount of work involved.

Play Areas – Cllr. Burkill was annoyed that the Clerk had not come to the meeting with the cost of the grass cutting and fence repair. The Clerk felt that the figure for grass cutting had already been answered by Mr. Palmer. The fencing had been repaired by English China Clays/Imerys at no cost to the Council.

08/08 PLANNING

a. Decisions by District Council/DNP:

Brixton Barton, Shaugh Prior – Refurbishment of existing flat roof garage – Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent – Granted subject to natural roof slates, approval of joinery and approval of natural random stonework.

b. Applications considered by Parish Council:

The Brake Wotter

Cllr. Burkill was concerned that she had attended the meeting unprepared for the number of members of the public attending to express their concerns on the application and thought that the Clerk would have advised members. The Clerk pointed out that she had only received letters of objection from two households and was unaware of the extent of the opposition.

Several members of the public attended the meeting to express their concerns at the proposed development of 14 houses, mainly because of the unneighbourliness of their size. Cllr. Barnes explained that although the number of 14 came below the minimum of 15 where an

element of affordable housing had to be included, the Outline Permission for development which had been obtained some years ago, had a Condition whereby an element of Affordable housing had to be included.

Mr. Finemore had inspected the trees and scrub on the land of the proposed development. He felt there was very poor tree cover and most of the land was scrub but three oak trees would have to come down if the development went ahead. A member of the public was concerned at the loss of the scrub and trees as they deadened the noise of the traffic on the road below. Cllr. Barnes said that some trees were covered by a TPO and that SHDC were concerned at the impact of the development on the trees above the development. Mr. Finemore asked for details of which trees were covered by a TPO and Cllr. Small asked for this information to also be passed to the Clerk for the Parish records. Cllr. Barnes explained that SHDC rarely allows development which would damage trees with a TPO.

Mr. Toms was concerned that despite sending objection letters, the views of the public had been ignored by the Parish Council. The Chairman explained that when visiting site Councillors had not thought there were grounds for objection in planning terms and the Clerk had replied during the time constraints imposed on the Parish Council. Unfortunately most objection letters had been received after this. Mrs. Toms felt that there was not enough water and sewerage capacity for any more than 5 houses. Cllr. Burkill was also concerned about the perceived drainage problems but Cllr. Norman said that a test had previously been carried out and there was not a problem. Cllr. Barnes explained that SHDC was concerned at the density of the development and there were still an unacceptable number of unanswered questions about the development and that the application would come to the Planning Committee for determination where a member of the public could speak for three minutes on behalf of the community.

The Clerk explained the government definition of Affordable Housing. Cllr. Small said despite the fact that the Housing Register at SHDC did not show a need for affordable housing in the Parish, the Parish did need some form of housing for young people in the area. He asked for all those interested to attend the Parish Plan day the following Saturday to express their views.

Cllr. Barnes confirmed that SHDC would investigate the possibility of building on exception sites.

The Chairman passed other letters of objection to the Clerk who would forward letters of acknowledgement.

c. General

Shooting Range at Newnham Park – This was a retrospective application and the activity had been carried out for several years with no complaint.

DCC Consultation on New Procedures for the Validation of Planning Applications – Parish Councillors had no comments to make.

09/08 FINANCE

Provision of Bin – Councillors agreed to the payment of £20 for a recycling resource box which would be of benefit to the whole parish.

Audit Commission – A letter had been received by the Clerk advising that it was proposed to appoint Mr. Alun Williams as auditor for Shaugh Prior Parish Council for the next five year period. The Clerk was asked to ascertain the reason for the apparent change in the way the Parish Accounts are audited.

It was agreed that the following cheques would be paid:-

Petty Cash for Parish Plan (to Cllr. Vincent)	£ 50.00
Jimbo for Parish Plan (to Cllr. Smerdon)	£120.00)
Bouquet for retired Councillors wife (to Cllr. Smerdon)	£ 9.99)
Lee Moor Hall Hire & presentation to retired Cllr.	£ 80.00
Little Big Events (Parish Plan)	£350.00

10/08 ITEMS TO WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

The Chairman explained that there as an issue of rights of way over a path between nos 6 and 7 Dartmoor Cottages. However, Councillors agreed that they could not spend Council Tax payers' money on obtaining Land Registry details to solve problems between individuals as this could set an expensive precedent.

11/08 DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 5 March 2008 at Lee Moor Hall Committee Room commencing at 7.15 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Signed:.....

Date: