

MINUTES
SHAUGH PRIOR PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting Held on

Wednesday, 7 March 2007

at

Wotter Methodist Hall

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Smerdon (Chairman), Cllrs Howells, Norman and Small and Cllr. Mrs. Burkill
District Councillor Hitchins
Constable Dick Yarnold (Part-time)
Mr. S. Finemore (Part-time)
Approximately 40 members of the public (Part-time)

OPEN FORUM

Members of the public had been invited to attend the meeting to voice their concerns on community issues regarding the situation at Lee Moor pit. Although Imerys had declined to attend the meeting, they had agreed to respond to any comments forwarded to them by the Parish Council.

Cllr. Small pointed out that none of the Local Authority members had received any communication on what Imerys intended to do with the pits, the special concern being that they would be flooded or used for land fill. The Clerk had spoken to the MP about the possibility of land fill and he had assured her that he would fight vigorously against such a suggestion on environmental grounds. Cllr. Hitchins felt that the DNPA would also be strongly opposed to such a scheme as this would also cause drainage problems. It was up to DCC to find suitable land fill sites.

Several of those present had rented ground from the china clay company over a period of years for a very small rent. The Agent for the company was now offering these pieces of land for sale to the residents at very high rates and in addition, should planning permission be gained, 50% of the uplift had to be repaid to the company. Residents queried whether this was legal, especially as they did not consider that many of these plots had been registered at the Land Registry.

It was pointed out that the mining works were only 35 years into their 50 year permission and that Imerys only held the mineral rights to the land.

The Chairman explained that even "green belt" land was owned by someone, as was Common Land.

No-one knew of the connection between the Saltram Estate and Saltram Terrace in Lee Moor.

Concern was expressed about security of the pits as they could be used for such activities as off roading.

Those attending queried the involvement of third parties. The possibility of WBB looking after the pits was being discussed.

Cllr. Hitchins was aware of a suggestion that the pit at Lee Moor could be a source of sustainable aggregate supply for the Langage and Sherford developments because of the low road mileage implication.

An employee at the company said that Ashley Shopland, who was based at Imerys in St. Austell, was willing to come and discuss issues with the Parish Council. He thought that Imerys themselves had not decided on the way forward and that their Agent was asset stripping. Parishioners asked for Imerys to give the community some idea what their intentions were.

They thought sitting tenants had a right to purchase from the Company at less than market value.

The general feeling of the meeting was that the pits should be landscaped and the tunnels capped off to prevent drainage problems.

Rev. Carlton agreed that the access path and the gates to the cemetery at Lee Moor needed attention. He explained that the grazing land around the churchyard at Lee Moor was CofE land and the land currently being used for burials was Methodist land and the maintenance of the access was the responsibility of the four Trustees. Anglican church land belonged to the church commissioners until it was consecrated, when it became the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council. In the past ECC had looked after the gates and path. None of the land has been consecrated.

Residents at Dartmoor Cottages were concerned at where cars would be parked if the current parking plots were taken back by Imerys. The DNPA Ranger for the area pointed out that this was on the edge of the Park boundary and we would have to make appropriate arrangements when a final decision had been made by the Company.

The Clerk would write to Imerys requesting clarification on the points raised above and a of plots for sale.

On other matters, the Chairman suggested that Mrs. Toms let her have any notices she wished put on notice boards and she hoped they would not then be taken down.

Parishioners were advised that the Methodist Church Council would decide whether the Chapel rooms would be sold before or after Outline Planning Permission for residential was obtained.

They were assured that the doctors' surgery was owned freehold and would not therefore be included in the sale.

The Chairman advised residents of Saltram Terrace Lee Moor that they should work towards getting the road passed their homes adopted, especially if houses were to be built on the end of the terrace. The Clerk would consult the County Councillor on procedure.

Cllr. Hitchins asked parishioners to contact him if they had any District Council issues.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their attendance and Councillors agreed that their work in leafleting each house had been successful in achieving a good attendance.

POLICE BUSINESS

Con. Yarnold advised that there had been seven reportable crimes in the last month, three of which had arisen from the same incident. The police were currently targeting the problem of theft from motor cars.

He had received no further reports of HGVs of ending up down unsuitable lanes, nor had he seen any.

Con. Yarnold assured the meeting that the wolf which had escaped from a nearby animal park had posed no risk to the public, had now been recaptured and the fence surrounding its enclosure further secured.

He thought the helicopter seen flying backwards and forwards across the Parish was being used for filming purposes.

DNPA BUSINESS

Although Cllr. French was unable to attend the meeting because of a previous commitment, he had forwarded a written report to the Clerk who read this out.

Following the recommendations in the updated Code of Conduct a list of members' known interests was prepared for each Authority and Planning meeting.

Both applications this month for domestic wind turbines had been turned down by the Committee on Conservation Area and aesthetic grounds. However, Members had been sympathetic to the aims of the applicants.

At the Authority meeting the Dartmoor Preservation Association had addressed Members, expressing the hope that ways could be found if not to terminate Military presence for it to be reduced. A DNPA Member working party would be set up to further explore the matter.

Increasing vegetation on the moor was chiefly blamed on the reduction in livestock levels.

12/07 Apologies

Cllr. John Hart, Cllr. Nicky Barnes, Cllr. M. French and Cllr. Jennie Winter

13/07 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

14/07 Matters Arising

Permissive Path from Shaugh Bridge to Bickleigh Bridge -. Cllr. Hitchins confirmed that Bickleigh Parish Council was also pressing for the reinstatement of this footpath. However, it was down to DCC to sort out the complications caused by the now different ownerships. The Clerk was asked to obtain a copy of the definitive map of footpaths in the Parish.,

SHDC Chairman's Visit - Cllr. Brian Carson had conveyed his thanks for the welcome he had been given at the last Parish Council meeting. He had enjoyed the opportunity to attend and had listened with interest to the issues raised.

Village Development Boundary - The Clerk had received a copy of the boundaries of Lee Moor and Wotter from SHDC but unfortunately DNPA did not hold such information for Shaugh. Cllr. Hitchins confirmed that any proposal to develop the recreation field in Lee Moor would be strongly resisted in planning terms, especially as it would result in the potential loss of leisure facilities, which could potentially be used by residents from a wide area.

Gordon May - Cllr. Small would ascertain exactly when Mr. May first joined the Council and the plaque for his memorial seat would be inscribed accordingly. Mr. May had not expressed a wish for the seat to be placed in any particular location.

Dartmoor Trust - Leats Project – Nothing further.

Parish Maintenance - Mr. Palmer had not yet sent in a quotation for the works required.

Wotter Kick About Area – Cllrs. felt some topsoil would be required. The Clerk would inform Imerys accordingly.

Post Office in Wotter - Negotiations had commenced to relocate this with a local business.

Speed Limits & Signs – Cllr. Hitchins had written in support of the proposed 30 and 40mph limits on the grounds of road safety and animal welfare. He hoped that the police had resources to enforce the speed limits. The Clerk would reply to the letter from the DCC solicitors in strong support of the proposals.

Highway Problems - The Clerk would contact Plymouth City Council in more strident tones about the poor condition of the road through Loughtor Mill, pointing out that they were being negligent in their duty to maintain the road in a safe and usable condition and copy the letter to Cllr. Hitchins. Cllr. Norman pointed out that signs at Beatland Cross had been knocked down and needed attention. Cllr. Norman also pointed out that a drain had blocked causing a considerable amount of water to run down the Shaugh road passed his farm entrance. The Chairman would ask the lengthsman to look at this. Cllr. Norman understood that resurfacing work was due to commence during week beginning 12 March. The Road from Hele Lane to Brag Lane Shaugh would be closed from 19 to 23 March and that at the Bowling Green Road Shaugh from 5 to 9 March. Alternative routes had been posted on notice boards.

Photographs of Shaugh Prior Primary School - Photographs forwarded to Mr. Balkwill had been uploaded on to the internet. The Clerk was asked to organise a link to the Parish Council website. Cllr. Small recommended Mr. Balkwill's book.

Best kept Village Competition - The Chairman had looked into the implications of entering this. One of the criteria was that a Parish Plan must be undertaken. She pointed out that this did seem to be at the root of requirements for funding etc. This should be carried out by the community with the support of the Parish Council. Cllr. Small pointed out that when it was proposed some months ago that a Plan should be undertaken, no-one was interested in participating, possibly because they felt that most of the results of the Parish Appraisal had not been implemented. The Clerk was asked to put a notice on the Website, in the Parish Magazine and on notice boards, pointing out that we had to carry this out if we wished to Parish to move forward in the new political climate.

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

Christmas Trees and Lights - The Clerk was asked to request a quotation from Lee Moor Hall Committee for the installation of an outside power point which could be used to light the Christmas Trees in future years, with a view to making a grant towards the cost.

Bus Services - The Clerk had received no response to her three e-mails.

Lee Moor Pit - See above.

Motocross Track - Cllr. Hitchins advised that any future reoccurrence of motor cycling activities would automatically invoke formal proceedings.

Affordable Housing in Lee Moor Village - Imerys's Agent had agreed that the mix of housing may not be economical. Not surprisingly he had been unable to find any developer who would simply construct the affordable units only but he hoped that the one would come forward. He would keep the Clerk advised of any developments. Those present expressed concern that the residents of the new development would have to travel over a private road which each individual current house had to pay to maintain. The Chairman advised the owners to press for adoption of this road as soon as possible.

15/07 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

In Cllr. Hart's absence on holiday there was no report.

16/07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr. Hitchins reported that an extensive programme of road patching had just been undertaken in Bickleigh and he understood that this was likely to be extended to Shaugh and Sparkwell.

Cllr. Hitchins had recently attended one day of the public examination of the two proposals for Sherford, focusing on deliverability and build rates. He had been concerned to hear that:- the Highways Agency did not contemplate any increase in traffic onto the A38 as it was anticipated that the park and ride would nullify any increase and keep pressure off the Marsh Mills roundabout; the estimated cost of the Deep Lane junction and park and ride had risen to £53m but as yet there was no substantiated funding; the preferred developer had stated that the social/affordable housing provision was well under the 50% agreed because their figures did not stack up and the subsidy had not been confirmed; start dates were still slipping and the development was unlikely to be completed by 2016. The alternative proposal was considered to be weak and poorly researched. However, Cllr. Hitchins pointed out that if the balance of power changed after the elections in May there could be a different view from SHDC.

Cllr. Hitchins also reported that the Chief Executive of SHDC had announced her resignation after seven years at Follaton House and would be leaving in June. Dr. Nick Atkinson, Chief Executive of the DNPA would be retiring in September 2007.

Tone Leisure had commenced their investment programme at the Ivybridge and Kingsbridge leisure centres. Progress to date had been impressive, pricing had been rationalised and membership had been increasing. The company was intending to rename the centre at Ivybridge to the Ivybridge Leisure Centre and also to extend an outreach programme.

17/07 CORRESPONDENCE

Audit Commission - The Parish Council had been advised that Mr. Alun Williams, an officer of the Audit Commission, had been appointed as auditor to them for the financial year 206/07. New fees would remain in operation for a five-year period.

Footpath Nos. 47 and 31 - Mr. Finemore had looked into the proposal to divert footpath 47 and extinguish footpath 31 and he recommended that the Parish Council have no objection. However, he felt more signage was needed. The Clerk was asked to write and thank Mr. Finemore for undertaking this. A copy of the proposals had been copied to Councillors.

Public Space Strategy Workshops - These were being held on 8th and 15th March at 7.30 p.m. at Ivybridge Town Hall. Cllrs. would advise the Clerk if they wished to attend.

Disabled Access - A course organised by the Community Council of Devon was to be run in Shaugh Prior on 8 November between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Royal Garden Party - 19 July 2007 - The names of the Chairman and Clerk would be put forward for the ballot.

Developing a Senior Council - Councillors did not support this idea as they felt it would just add another layer of local government bureaucracy.

Amendments to Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members - The Clerk would copy the consultation paper to Councillors for discussion at the next meeting.

Transferring Public Services in Devon The DAPC had reminded Parish Councils that central government expects all local councils to deliver improvements in services and come forward with new ways of working. Councillors pointed out that the bus service did not take into account the needs of the Parish in that there was no direct service to the nearest town (Ivybridge) where most of the children in the parish attended school and despite having attended a meeting when requested had not responded to any of the questions raised by parishioners.

Can Rural Councillors Make a Difference? - The new Commission for Rural Communities was seeking views. Councillors felt there were too many unaccountable quangos. They expected their views to be heard as they were the closest local government authority to the grass roots communities. Councillors accepted that clusters of Councils lobbying on one common issue was more effective. To obtain the views of the whole community the most successful way of gathering people together was to mail each individual household.

New Brown Wheeled Bin Liners - SHDC had introduced corn-starch wheeled bin liners that are 100% compostable for sale. These were available from Follaton House in rolls of 5 for £3.75 including postage.

Election - May 2007 - The Clerk would ascertain whether nomination forms were available from SHDC or whether they would be sent out. Councillors were advised that poll cards would cost the Parish the value of a second class stamp plus 5p per elector. However, this would only be charged if there was no election at District level. Councillors agreed that poll cards should be ordered as they were also a reminder to people to go and vote.

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

- DNPA Community News
- DNPA Agenda & Minutes
- SHDC Minutes of Meetings
- SHDC Executive Forward Plan
- South Hams Magazine
- Local Council Review
- Devon In Touch
- DCC Budget proposals
- Clerks & Councils Direct

Voluntary Vine
Village Green
DAPC Newsletter
Junk Mail
NALC Journal
The Clerk

18/07 REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Website and Computer – The Clerk had ascertained over the telephone that HM Customs & Revenue had no problem with the Parish Council placing advertisements on the website and charging for this service, however, as the Parish Council was not VAT registered (they only received a dispensation to recover VAT on inputs) they could not charge VAT on this service. The Clerk would ask for this clarification in writing.

School Governors - The Head Mistress of the School had asked for this item to be removed from the Agenda as there was no longer a Parish Council representative on the Board. The Clerk had looked into this earlier and had been informed that the only change was that the Board did not have to include a Parish Council but it could do so if it so wished. She would obtain clarification in writing.

Play Areas - Nothing to report.

19/07 PLANNING

a. Decisions by District Council/DNP:

None.

b. Applications considered by Parish Council:

The Bungalow Wotter - Alteration and Extension to dwelling - no objection.

1 Broad Oaks Cottages Lee Moor - Demolition of glass porch and construction of timber conservatory - no objection.

The Pavilion Lee Moor Bowling Club - Extension to building - no objection.

c. General

Sue Burkill had read the paper and felt that there was not enough information given and no maps. Cllr. Hitchins said that this comment had also been made by several members. Councillors were in receipt of the SH Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy. No-one was available to attend the workshop.

20/07 FINANCE

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

Mainly Stationery	£ 15.07
Clerk Salary (3 Months)	
Clerk - Annual Expenses	£ 525.00
Internal Auditor	£ 144.00
Postage	£ 33.56
Wotter Methodist Church	
(Electricity for Christmas Trees)	£ 20.00
Shaugh Church "	£ 20.00
Wotter Hall Hire	£ 21.00

Budget - The Clerk handed out copies of the budget for the forthcoming financial year to Councillors, which took into account the amounts brought forward from this financial year.

Accounts 2005/06 - The only comments from the internal auditor had been that there was no mention of the additional play equipment and new photocopier on the insurance policy. The Clerk felt this was not correct and would check the policy accordingly. The Clerk and Chairman signed the Annual Return. The Clerk explained that the payment to the internal auditor was considerably up on the previous year as his fee was based on the turnover of the Parish Council which that year had included the purchase of large items such as a new photocopier and play equipment.
Post Meeting Note: The photocopier was included in the insurance Schedule and the play equipment was insured by SHDC.

21/07 ITEMS TO WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

None.

22/07 DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 4 April 2007 in Shaugh Recreation Hall at 7.15pm.

It was agreed that this meeting would be preceded by the Annual Assembly. All present were reminded to forward their Reports to the Clerk at least one week before the meeting so that these could be printed and circulated.

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Signed:.....
 Chairman

Date: