

RATTERY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting Held Tuesday 23rd November 2010 at Rattery Village Hall
Meeting Commenced at 8.00pm.

Present - Cllr P Smerdon (Chairman), Cllr Mrs B Palk (Vice-Chair), Cllr J Hampton, Cllr A Coker, Cllr B Evans, Cllr M Daymond (from item 3a), Cllr S Levy, C Cllr T Pennington.

Attended by – 1 member of the Public, Cllr J Baverstock – SHDC Chairman.

Apologies for absence – D Cllr C Jones

1) Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 12th October 2010.

The minutes of the above meeting has been distributed to Cllrs and read, they were proposed by Cllr B Evans and seconded by Cllr J Hampton with all in agreement and duly signed by the Chairman – Cllr P Smerdon.

2) Police Report / Neighbourhood Watch – e-mail report received – 11 incidents last month – 8 relating to the A38, one criminal damage to dwelling and a report of a car sliding around Marley Head Roundabout. With metal value rising thefts are increasing – please remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

3) **Parishioners Question Time** - (15 minutes) –

a) Cllr J Baverstock - SHDC Chairman - formerly in the police force as a traffic cop for 30 years-retired 20 years ago and run business in the South Hams, became a Stokenham Parish Councillor and then went on to become a District Councillor. Realise the value of the work done within Parish Councils and will visit all 60 Parish Councils within his years service. The relationship between South Hams DC and PC will change - the big society and localism bill will become apparent from main government in the future but as yet they have not stipulated who will make the decisions but it is thought it will be a mix of Parish and District Councils. Planning is an important area - Parish Councils influence should become more relevant as Parish Councillors know what is going on in the Parish. Many thanks personally and many thanks from the District Council for what you do as a Parish Council it is much appreciated.

b) Travellers Site - enforcement at Marley Head - Main Government have now relieved the District Councils of their obligations to find sites. Enforcement at Marley Head is now underway by DNPA.

4) **District and County Councillors Reports.**

a) C Cllr T Pennington – reported as follows:- The Government Revenue Support Grant to DCC will be reduced by 28% over the next four years due to the National Financial crisis. Therefore Devon will need to find annual savings of at least 7% per annum. If DCC is prepared to freeze Council Tax then the Government will increase the grant by £8million which would equate to a two and a half per cent increase. Total DCC gross expenditure is £1,890million per annum of which Council Tax funds £323million or 27%, Fees and Charges £147million or 2% and the remaining 61% from various Government Grants. Therefore it can be clearly seen that the bulk of DCC expenditure is from Central Government. Drastic falls in interest rates have also greatly reduced income from DCC investments. Therefore capital spending on schools, libraries and highway improvements are likely to be reduced over the next four years. The DCC final budget for 2011-2012 will be determined in Feb when the final Government Grant will be known. Between November and January the DCC Committees will examine areas where savings can be made. It will be a difficult exercise.

b) D Cllr C Jones - e-mailed report as follows:- 1. Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – 20 October As expected, this heralded major cuts in public spending – for example a reduction in g'ment core grant to local authorities of 28% over the next 4 years, but with the biggest cuts coming next year (8.4%) and in 2011/12 (6.5%).

The exact settlement for each local authority will not be known until December, but the outlook is bleak, even taking into account savings achieved through shared services and other efficiencies. There will also be a 63% cut in the g'ment's capital budget for affordable housing. There will inevitably be some painful cuts in services, and increases in charges. However, the g'ment is encouraging authorities to freeze Council Tax next year, and is offering a grant incentive for doing this ! 2. Council Executive – 11 November - The main decisions were a) to not approve a recommendation (which I strongly supported) from the Environment Policy Development Group to fund a feasibility study into SHDC utilising its land and buildings to generate renewable energy – but instead to set up a ‘task and finish’ group’ to look into this idea.

b) to approve a draft method for prioritising future investment in affordable housing in the District – since funds will be severely rationed in future from the Government via the Homes and Communities Agency 3. Scrutiny Committee – 21 October - On the agenda for this meeting -which I attended, expecting to speak - was a detailed paper on affordable housing provision and funding, in question and answer format – the questions having been submitted by me.

I was therefore shocked and appalled that as soon as this item was introduced, one of the members of Scrutiny chose to criticise me for raising these issues and then proceeded to ‘move next business’ in order to thwart any discussion of this agenda item. Most regrettably, the other four Conservative councillors on Scrutiny supported his motion, and despite the efforts of the Chair and Vice Chair to keep this item afloat, they lost the vote and were forced to move to next business.

I regard what happened as a shameful denial of democracy, and a wholly unacceptable political stunt. It was not only a gross discourtesy to me, to Council officers who had prepared responses to my questions, and to the Executive Member for Housing who had come prepared to answer further questions (and indeed to the Chair of Holne Parish Council who had come to listen to the discussion) but a very poor advertisement for a Council which purports to have the provision of affordable housing as its number one priority and to uphold the principles of democracy, accountability and open government.

If a Scrutiny Committee, whose very purpose is to scrutinise the policies and practices of the Council, is not prepared to do just that, then what is the point of it ??

5) Planning Applications & Decisions.

Applications received from Dartmoor National Park - None.

Decisions received from Dartmoor National Park – None.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM South Hams District Council

- a) Application no 39/2166/10/F – Mr M Ryan – Culver Farm, Culver Park Nurseries – Single storey extension to single storey dwelling, new driveway, new garage. Report from Chairman – Cllr P Smerdon confirmed he had spoken to the planning officer who confirmed that they had various items to discuss with the applicant regards this application and they have now granted permission.

Decisions Received from South Hams District Council

- a) Planning Permission Granted – Application no 39/2166/10/F – Mr M Ryan – Culver Farm, Culver Park Nurseries – Single storey extension to single storey dwelling, new driveway and new garage.
- b) Planning Permission Granted – Application no 39/1716/10/F – Mr & Mrs Keen – site opposite Springfield, Rattery – Dwelling house and garage.

Planning Matters

- a) Copy of Notes and report from SHDC regards Application for Greenaway Recycling Ltd at Channer Wood Plantation, Marley Head TQ10 9LW. This Application is going to DCC Committee tomorrow - a much more detailed planning application has been submitted and SHDC have recommended approval. South Brent PC have also now withdrawn any objections. C Cllr T Pennington will attend meeting tomorrow to talk in support of the application.

6) Matters Arising –

- a) Broadband Speeds – Cllr Baverstock confirmed - SHDC doing a survey regards speeds but more technology coming every week - now a broadband satellite to reach out to all remote areas.
- b) Emergency Planning - Snow Warden wanted - Chairman – Cllr P Smerdon to ask Neil Coaker if he could do it and be appointed in case of bad weather.

7) Correspondence.

- a) DNPA – Parish Planning Survey 2010 – Vice-Chair – Cllr Mrs B Palk to complete.
- b) Totnes & Dartmouth Ring & Ride – Request for Donation - £25 proposed by Cllr B Evans and seconded by Cllr J Hampton with all in agreement.
- c) SHDC – Village Housing Initiative – details into the envelope for Cllrs perusal.
- d) South Hams CAB – Request for Donation - £25.00 proposed by Vice-Chair – Cllr Mrs B Palk and seconded by Cllr M Daymond with all in agreement.
- e) DCC – Devon Minerals Debate Consultation – details and forms have been distributed to all Cllrs.
- f) DNPA Forum Meeting – 26th November 2010 – Vice-Chair – Cllr Mrs B Palk to attend.

Matters not requiring discussion placed in the folder for circulation.**8) Main Agenda.**

- a) P3 Report - no report given. Cllr S Levy reported - survey required for next years grant - finance forms to be completed.
- b) Reports from members of the Parish Council.
 - 1) Vice-Chair – Cllr Mrs B Palk - attended DNPA meeting on the 16th Nov 2010 - review on spending - DNPA are funded by DEFRA and looking at 25 to 30% reduction over 4 years. Cuts are being looked at, voluntary redundancies and retirements will take place, other ideas are being looked at regards savings in spending.
- c) Highway Maintenance.
 - 1) Potholes on Brownston Lane.
 - 2) Rattery Sawmills flooding has been drained and the new drainage system is now working.
- d) Play Area.
 - 1) Seesaw renewal – Cllr Baverstock confirmed that he would look into any other play areas which are upgrading equipment.

9) Cheques for Signature.

Bank Account November 2010 = £6,453.75
 P3 2010 = £249.86
 Playing Field = £151.87
 Parish Plan = £150.00

Proposed by Cllr J Hampton and seconded by Cllr B Evans with all in agreement.

10) Any Items to go onto the next Parish Council meeting Agenda.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.25pm NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - TUESDAY 4th January 2011 - 8.00pm at RATTERY VILLAGE HALL.
ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC WHO HAS SPECIAL NEEDS AND REQUIRES A COPY OF THESE MINUTES SENT TO THEM – PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK – 01364 644109 – They can also be found on the Parish Web-site www.ratteryvillage.co.uk .