

SHEBBEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Church Room, Shebbear Tuesday 14th July 2026, at 7.30pm. Minutes.

Present, Cllr Quance (Chair) Cllr Goode (Vice Chair), Cllr Whatley, Cllr Watts Cllr Joan Curtis, Cllr Chamberlain, District Cllr Wheatley, Selina Woollacott (Clerk) One member of the public.

Part 1.

Chairperson's opening remarks. Cllr Quance welcomed everyone to the July meeting on a very warm evening.

037. Apologies for Absence. Cllr Jax Curtis, Cllr Hockin, Cllr Saywell, Cllr Walker.

038. Declarations of any Councillors Interests in Items on the Agenda.

(a) Disclosable pecuniary interests (Prejudicial). None.

(b) Registerable Interests. None.

(c) Any variations to Members Registration of Interests. None.

(d) Requests for Dispensations. None.

039. To Agree any items to be dealt with in Part 2, closed session, of the meeting. None.

040. Public Participation Period of 15 minutes. Please registered in advance with the Clerk. None.

041. Agenda items for Discussion and Resolution.

Any matters raised during the Public Participation period. None.

042. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9th June 2026 having been previously circulated, to be approved and signed. Cllr Joan Curtis proposed the Minutes are an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Goode seconded the proposal. All Councillors agreed. Cllr Quance signed the Minutes.

043. Any matters arising from the Minutes. None.

044. County Councillor's Report. No Report. Cllr Quance has spoken to other Parish and Town Councils and all but one said they never see our County Councillor at meetings. The one Council said she had been to a few meetings. Most of the Parish Councils are planning to talk over the issue at their next meeting. Our Highways officer said a lot of what we raise with her should be raised by the County Councillor as well.

045. District Councillor's Report. Report given by Cllr Wheatley.

Torridge District Council - Councillors attended a Member Briefing Meeting with XLinks recently on 22nd June 2026 where we first became aware of XLinks proposed Torrington AI Data Centre/Campus and storage for nearby Torrington. We received an update letter from XLinks regarding the AI Data Centre/Campus. XLinks have stated that the consultation has been extended however no new dates for the drop-in days yet. A petition has gained 24,500+ signatures already. The PIDS (Public Information days) has been put back to allow more time. It is envisaged that XLinks are to submit their Planning Applications in the New Year for the data centre and battery BESS storage. The potential sheer size is huge, 850 Acres, and it could mean that it would be the tenth largest Data Centre and Battery Storage Project in the World and the largest in Europe with 1.8GW with 2700 containers of Bess batteries.

Battery Storage - 47 football pitches in size

Data Centre - 235 football pitches in size

There are many more questions to be answered along with details regarding the Data Centre and Storage. The potential sheer size and other many other factors are of concern including excessive water usage, noise, light, security, electric consumption, and fire risks. Productive prime farmland and an ecological paradise lost.

Cllr Cottle-Hunkin has been on the local news and meeting with people as she is fully against this. It is likely the planning will be submitted in January 2027.

FULL COUNCIL. At our recent full council meeting we received a presentation from Nick Brewer -Future Hospital Associate Programme Officer regarding the estate development at the Barnstaple Hospital site.

Phase 1 - Munro and Chichester House to be demolished and replaced with 120 modern en-suite accommodation costing £22.7 million.

Phase 2- Demolition and renewing of the rest of the accommodation block to enable development of a new staff car

park.

Phase 3- Reorganisation and rationalisation of the main hospital site.

It was confirmed that the Bideford Hospital had received £6 million from NHS England for a CDC (Community Diagnostics Centre)

And Community Regeneration Partnership Funding to deliver a health and well-being Hub and with details of proposed provision.

Two New Deputy Leaders Appointments. Councillor Hudson and Councillor Tinsley were appointed and voted for by Council as Deputy Leaders

External Overview Scrutiny Committee Report- Railway Futures Ltd was presented to Council to take the final steps and after much discussion and debate it was rejected by one vote! 15 against and 14 for with the chair casting the decisive vote after some members said it indicated a negative tone and concern the message it would send.

1 - TDC should concentrate efforts to improve connectivity by looking at cheaper and more immediate measures such as a fast coach service linking Bedford and Tiverton Parkway railway station and/or London as proposed with the Bideford Regeneration Plan

2- TDC should develop a comprehensive more Active Travel network providing greater opportunities for cyclists and walkers to access the centre of Bideford from the various new developments around the Town and surrounding communities such as Northam and Westward Ho.

3 - TDC should prioritise looking to improve public transport links between Bideford and other Towns, villages, and rural communities within the District.

4- Although rails travel is greener than car travel to Exeter improving facilities locally would be better for the environment and local economy.

LICENSING COMMITTEE. We are pleased to announce a License was approved for the historic Black Horse Inn in Torrington in the main square. The premises have been closed sometime and the applicants met TDC officers and the Police with a positive outcome. The pub must undergo some work before opening, and will support local suppliers, create employment and a safe venue along with working with the local community.

046. Cake Shed Review. The owner of the Cake Shed spoke about how well the Cake Shed is doing, and the positive feedback she has received. Cllr Quance had concerns over theft, the owner explained that she was once short but the customer did pay and it was a genuine card transaction that did not process. Cllr Chamberlain had reservation over the Shed but he has seen how well used it is. Cllr Watts did not think there was a need but there is as the Shed is well visited. The owner would like to continue with the current agreement. The Parish Council has had no complaints or issues. The Parish Council agreed that the agreement will continue and be reviewed in March 2027.

047. Clerks Report. Grade 2 Listed house. Barn Close Weeds. Footpath Signs, Bank Accounts, Tree Inspection, Declaration of Interest Form, Fibre Broadband.

Grade 2 Listed house. Update from TDC, second letter sent to owner asking what his plans are for the property. Builders have been contacted to quote to board up the house.

Barn Close Weeds. Council workers with a road sweep have been in the Village digging out weeds and one of the areas they did was Barn Close. There is a concern the weeds will soon grow back, lets hope the dry weather slows the growth.

Footpath Signs. Has the sign been replaced at the end of Church Farm or Ruxhill ? If not, I will chase this now. No the signs have not been replaced.

Bank Accounts. I have started the forms and I am now collecting together the current signatories' details for the new account.

Tree Inspection, The Oak tree needs to have it 3-year inspection soon. I have emailed 2 companies with no reply. I will ring them, I am asking for an idea of cost then I will book one.

Declaration of Interest Form. All Councillors need to complete a new declaration of Interest form.

Fibre Broadband. Clerk read out the following letter she was sent, The UK Government is offering vouchers to properties to install a full fibre service, we are designing 50 hamlet scale projects and working with Parish Councils to lay approximately 200Km of fibre through remote rural areas.

Attached are some draft plans showing a fibre route and the properties we would hope to include in a community fibre project. We have a short timescale and I wanted to talk to the most relevant person in the Parish who could coordinate this project with us to make the most of these Government vouchers and get a fibre service installed in your community. If residents have already committed to a satellite or slow BT service, we can use the grants to complete a fibre installation with a no use no fee service. This allows residents to future proof their property with fibre and help the community by adding their voucher value to the community project.

Any properties just outside of the scope of this project will be supported in the following way - if less than 200m to the draft route outlined we will install free of charge - if more than 200m we will charge £15 per metre for installing the fibre to the property on top of the Government voucher.

The area on the attached plan is Pitt Hill out to Berry. This is a small part of the Parish. Councillors feel it does not benefit enough of the Parish for the Clerk to be managing it and asked the Clerk to pass the information on to a member of public in the area and if they don't want to take on the project put the information on to Facebook.

048. Chair Report. Shebbear Sign. A few weeks ago, Cllr Joan Curtis noticed that the Shebbear sign on the Battledown to the Square Road had been turned around. Cllr Joan Curtis contacted me and I turned it back around to the correct way. The poles of the sign do go a long way into the ground but as the ground has dried out so much the sign was able to be lifted out and turned around. We will keep an eye on this.

Thank You to Cllr Chamberlin, Cllr Goode and Cllr Hockin for removing the old benches and installing the new benches in a number of locations around the Parish. We did order one more ground archer as we were not happy with how secure 2 of the benches were. They are both now secure and the cost of the ground archer is listed later in the agenda. The old benches have been safely disposed of. Cllr Chamberlain voiced his thanks to the Chair for the work he did with installing the new benches and organising the team.

049. Planning.

(a) New and amended Applications. None.

(b) Application decisions. None.

(c) Planning Appeal. None.

050. Finance.

(a) Bank Account balances and update.

The deposit account which is the reserve account on the 30th June 2026 had a balance of £15,481.23

June Interest £11.53

Current account on the 30th June 2026 had a balance of £8,719.36

Payments in £50 June Tiner Legacy

Written cheques not presented,

£100 Grant Citizens Advice.

£150 Grant St Micheal

£350 Grant Lake Chapel

Cheques on this evening agenda total £401.40

The Account holds

£463 P3 money,

£537 2025/26 Tiner Legacy funds.

£150 2026/2027 Tiner Legacy funds.

Leaving a useable balance of £6,567.96

(b) Q1 Accounts. Clerk sent the Q1 Accounts to all Councillors prior to the meeting and paper copies were available at the meeting. Q1 is up to 30th June 2026. Income was £8,330.76 Mainly 1st half of the Parish Precept. Expenditure was £5,171.98 mainly grants which currently totals to £2,625 Insurance for the year £851.95. Landing light area maintenance £340. Cllr Quance asked about the Nest pensions amounts as one month it is a large amount the next month is 2p. This is due to the Clerk being paid Bi- monthly and the pension submissions being monthly. The large amount and the 2p added together is the amount on the Bi-Monthly pay slip. Clerk puts a copy of the pay slip and the two months Nest submission printouts in the Accounts folder for checking at the end of the year by the Accountant. No changes needed to the budget at this time. No other questions.

(c) Narked Ltd Parish Council website and email annual fee £225

(d) DALC AI Training Course £42

(e) Lee Duckworth Defibrillator pads £74.40

(f) Clerk for bench ground archers £60

Cllr Watts proposed the payment of items 50c –50f, Cllr Joan Curtis seconded this proposal. All Councillors agreed. The cheques were signed at the end of the meeting.

(g) Invoices received not listed above. None.

051. Asset Checking Report. Clerk and Cllr Quance completed the Asset checking on the 16th June. The Clerk has asked the local contractor to wash the benches in the Square and the bus shelter. This historically was done annually however last year there was no need as all Assets were clean. Also asked that the Shebbear sign in the Square and the Bounder sign on the Church room wall is washed and wood stained. Cllr Watts raised the fact people are still sticking

posters to the bus shelter and not using the board. Cllr Watts will pass the posters to the Clerk who will inform the people that the posters need to be on the board.

The new bench on the New Inn to Hayes Cross Road has been installed the other way around from the old bench. As the bench lost its view many years ago as the hedge has grown.

The dog waste bins at Church Farm the post is a little wobbly but of no concern. Now all the old benches have been replaced there are no concerns with any of the assets and the time of checking.

052. Dipper Mill update. Update from Highways. The boreholes were completed earlier this week as planned and testing is now commencing on soil samples retrieved from site. This was completed on the 16th and 17th June 2026. We have an initial understanding of rock depths and have asked our geotechnical consultants to advise on the potential for sheet piling in this location. If sheet piling is possible, we will then aim to develop design drawings to enable us to progress to site. If sheet piling is not possible, we may need to explore alternative design options. Once we have a better understanding on the proposed design route, I will email again to update you.

053. Meeting with the Highways Officer. Speeding. Cllr Quance and the Clerk met with the Highways Officer on the 16th June.

Battledown to Sedgwell cross is on the list to be patched soon.

Battledown to The Square had a deadline of the 10th July 2026 for patching work. A lot of the work has now been completed on this stretch of road.

New Inn Cross is on the list to be patched soon.

Pottery Road is flagged for Services Patching and pothole filling. It is on the system. No time scale.

Thornbury Road. Not all the potholes have been marked up; Highways Officer and us went to look at this road.

White Lines in the Square we were asked, has there been any accidents? no not yet. She will try and push it more.

Agreed that it does not help that Cllr Dan Thomas goes on the News saying 4 million more for Highways and local Parishes are not seeing work being completed.

Contractors only complete what is on their list. As they only have materials sometimes for what is on their list.

We asked about Speeding, she said there is not a speeding issue in Shebbear, there is also no funds for changing speed limits and DCC are finding the 20mph is not working. Speedwatch group is the way to go.

She has been cleaning signs by the College when in the Parish. The 30mph signs.

She has 2 of the 3 Hayes Cross finger signs as she saw them and picked them up, she hopes to have the 3rd one made and put them all back on.

New Inn is missing one of its fingers as well.

Cllr Quance voiced his concerns that it will get to a point that emergency services will not drive some of the roads in the Parish.

Barn Close Weeds. Not Highways responsibility, she will see what options there are and if she can get anything done. Went for a drive around in the Highways van.

Thornbury Road. She had already done most of the roads the day before. Went on the road to Backway as she needed landowner information with regards to drains.

Dipper Mill Road - gullies. She will be contacting landowners.

She marked up an area in the Square. Which has been filled.

When down the road past Ambren House. Lots of issues on that road and she was going to drive it again.

Since the meeting with the Highways Officer a number of areas on the road to Stibb Cross have been marked.

Cllr Whatley they have been working on the Pottery Road but have missed a 50m wide area and have dumped tarmac in a pull in place when it should have been used to fill in a number of potholes on the road. Clerk to feedback to Highways Officer. Cllr Watts asked when feeding back to the Highways Officer please inform her that when the patching work in the Square was completed 2 parked cars were splattered with tarmac. Cllr Quance said that the bus shelter needs to be checked for tarmac splatter. (After the meeting it the bus shelter was checked and is ok no tarmac on it)

054. Road Warden Scheme. A member of the public has shown an interest in becoming a Road Warden for the parish. Councillors discussed the scheme. It was agreed that the Clerk needs to find out where the training is held. That the Parish Council wants 3 people trained in the Parish. Once Clerk has more information on the training to inform the Councillors and look for 2 more people who are interested to be Road Wardens.

055. Correspondence. The following were emailed to all Councillors since the last meeting.

a) DALC updates 26,27,28,29,30

b) Road Closure. Monday 10th August 2026 - Friday 14th August 2026 (Both Dates Inclusive)

Between The Hours of 09:00-17:00 No person shall cause or permit any Vehicle to proceed on the sections of

affected roads. Roads Affected - Road from Highworthy Cross to Battledown Cross, Shebbear
This Temporary Restriction is considered necessary to enable - Installation of new underground cables and replacing LV poles

The above was read out.

056. Agenda items for the next Parish Council Meeting which will be held on Tuesday 11th August 2026 in the Church Room, Shebbear at 7.30pm. Shelia's Folly payment. Policies.

Any other matters, for discussion only, at the Chairperson's discretion.

Cllr Chamberlain raised the fact that a number of local landowners are not happy with the way their hedges have been cut by the DCC contractor. The hedges have been butchered in places. The top of the hedge has been cut in a number of places when it should only be the sides of the hedge at this time of year. Clerk to send this feedback to Highways.

Cllr Whatley. The dog waste bin at Sheila's Folly has fallen off the stake. It ideally needs a metal post to be fixed to. Clerk to inform TDC.

Cllr Goode is currently unable to cut Church Farm footpath with his tractor, Cllr Chamberlain offered to do it for him.

Cllr Goode asked if the Parish Council have heard from Planning Enforcement after members of the public flagged the work happening at Lavender Cottage. No, the Parish Council have not heard yet. It can take up to 56 days to hear from Planning Enforcement.

Cllr Goode is going to repaint the Keep Clear markings near the Church entrance. The Parish Council were informed a few years ago that the area is not part of the Highway.

Part 2. All members of the Press and Public will be asked to leave the meeting. No Part 2.

Meeting Closed 8.24pm

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Selina Woollacott

Furze House, Shebbear, Beaworthy, EX21 5RL

01409 281280. clerk@shebbearparishcouncil.gov.uk