

## CLERKS REPORT – September 2013

### Agenda Items

**5 b) Post Office deliveries** - Royal Mail's Customer Service Advisor at Plymouth has responded: 'Thank you for your letter regarding our Modernisation Programme. I am sorry to hear that you feel past changes have not resulted in a more efficient service for you. Royal Mail accepts that it is learning some valuable lessons as it continues with the modernisation programme. But it is doing everything possible to ensure a high level of customer service with minimal disruption to its customers. All operational changes are subject to an ongoing review. The way we all communicate with each other and with businesses has changed dramatically in recent years. This has affected the volumes of mail sent by Royal Mail and we need to modernise our delivery network and ways of working to reflect these realities and operate more efficiently in a challenging market. This means we need a delivery network which meets these changing needs and so we are able to maintain the range and reach of the services we provide whilst keeping our prices as low as possible. The changes we are making vary in different areas. We are reorganising local delivery routes to ensure they are as efficient as possible, delivering to your area in the most logical way and accommodating new developments. The way we deliver will depend on the type of routes needed in your local area; we will ensure our equipment is fit for the changing mail we deliver. Current equipment consists of bicycles, motorised trolleys and shared vans. All delivery methods will be tested in an effort to find the most efficient for your route. Postmen and women may share vans to complete two delivery routes, making it more efficient and high capacity trolleys will be used to assist with the larger items and carrying more mail at one time. We will also be opening our enquiry offices for longer in the day, with later opening on a Wednesday evening. We will be delivering for longer during the day, including Saturdays and many of our customers will continue to receive their mail by lunchtime. However the time you receive your mail will depend on where you are located on the new delivery routes. Whilst our new transformation agreement extends the times by which we aim to deliver letters to 15:00 for most residential areas and up to 16:00 for more rural areas, we anticipate making the vast majority of deliveries by 14:30 and most by 14:00, as per current services. I trust the above information fully explains the changes we are making with Royal Mail, resolving your enquiry and concludes this matter for you. Thank you again for contacting us and if you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us using the details at the top of this letter.'

**8 b) Request from Mere & District Railway Modellers for help in exploring possibility of a suitable plot of land upon which to build a Club House** – Mr. Snook writes: 'As it would appear that the rectification of the Band Hut is becoming a murky picture, I have been asked by my membership to explore the possibility that the Parish Council could find us a suitable plot of land upon which to build a Club House. Two areas that have suggested are :-

- (a) to reinstate the building that was on the Recreation Ground Car Park ( 50' x 25').
- (b) in the area adjoining the Andy Young Pavilion.

Please note that we are still interested in the Band Hut project but we require guidance from you the Parish Council. Finally I request that the matter of a parcel of land for our club be discussed at you next Parish Council meeting in September.'

**8c) Request from Mere Bowls Club to install shed to use as changing rooms** – Mr. Butchers (Club Secretary) writes: 'Further to our telecon, can you please raise the following request at the next Parish Council meeting?

Mere Bowls Club would like to purchase and erect a 12' x 12' shed within the fenced off area containing the water tank for the green irrigation system. The shed would have high level windows, two doors and be divided internally to give two equal male and female changing areas. It is planned that the seating be made to give additional storage below for bowls bags, shoes, etc so as to free up the area in front of the pavilion during games (this is currently a mess of bags, shoes, jackets, etc)

The size of the shed will be such that it will fit within the current area, no additional area is needed. The size/shape of the shed may vary from the current idea of 12' x 12' if say 14' x 10' fits the space better. Site drawings can be supplied if required. It is planned to apply for grants from a number of areas, these areas may contact the Parish Council for additional information.'

**8d) Request from Mere Bowls Club to abstract water from river to fill their irrigation system** – Mr. Butchers (Club Secretary) writes: 'Further to our telephone conversation of this morning, Mere Bowls Club would like to fill its' green irrigation system from the Shreen Water that runs behind the green; to that end I have today contacted Wessex Water who stated that they have no interest in water abstraction and directed me to the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency are only interested in an individual or party taking water from a river or water course if the abstraction is planned to be more than twenty cubic metres per day, Mere BC only plan to abstract a

maximum of three and a half cubic metres per day three times a week for a maximum period of twenty weeks - this is assuming that no rain would fall in Mere for the full twenty week period.

As per your advice I will be contacting Mere Fish Farm in the next couple of days to discuss our plans with them. The benefits of this system are that the Bowls Club would no longer obtain water via the school and/or the swimming pool so we would no longer pay sewage charges for every cubic metre of water used, when all of our water goes back into the ground anyway.

Mere BC would however like to remain connected as we currently are as we have an outside tap that we use to fill a watering can for small jobs. A plan of our project is available if required. Thank you for your advice during our telephone conversation this morning.'

**8e) Request from Mere Bowls Club to run a mobile bar for the benefit of their members and guests only – Mr.**

Butchers (Club Secretary) writes: 'Mere Bowls Club are currently thinking about running a mobile bar for the benefit of members and their guests only; the bar would not store any alcohol or money within the confines of the green, pavilion, storage containers, garage or any outbuildings/sheds that we subsequently erect, all alcoholic stock and cash would be removed to a members home after every period of operation, the only stock left on site would be a small amount of soft drinks which would be locked in our store cupboard in the pavilion. The idea is to only sell beer, lager, cider and wine, there are no plans to offer liquor for sale now or in the future.

Could you please raise at the next meeting of the Parish Council the above plan and ascertain if the Council have any objections firstly to the idea in general and secondly to the Club applying for a licence via the relevant authorities? It is hoped that with a better social atmosphere in the Club we will be able to attract additional members.'

**9a) Proposed changes to Dorset Bus Service 59/158 Wincanton-Mere-Gillingham-Shaftesbury – please see attachments.**

**9d) Proposal for a 20mph speed limit to be implemented in Mere Town Centre – Cllr. D. Hope writes:** 'In the context of the Department for Transport's guidance on 'Setting Local Speed Limits', and Wiltshire Council's draft policy based on it, I would like to propose that a 20 m.p.h. limit is implemented in Mere town centre - say from Castle Street (junction of Bramley Hill), through The Square to Salisbury Street/Hazzards Hill, and including Barton Lane, Church Street, Angel Lane, Barnes Place, Boar Street and part of Manor Road.

A 20 m.p.h. limit might be preferred to a 20 m.p.h. zone, in order to avoid installing physical calming measures that would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and also justified as speeds in the town are already low. A 20 m.p.h. limit would only require signing at the start and finish with repeater signs painted on the carriageway. Wiltshire estimate that the cost for a village is £8000 - £10000.

20 m.p.h. limits without physical calming measures are said to be appropriate where vehicle speeds are already low, 24 m.p.h. or less. This appears to be the case in Mere where road alignments, on-street parking, the complex of road junctions at The Square, and the presence of shops indicates that care needs to be taken. Roads through Mere do not have a strategic function: the movement of vehicles is not the primary function as opposed to shopping, socialising etc.

Whilst further speed reduction is likely to be minimal, the presence of a signed 20 m.p.h. limit is likely to bring about a change in driver attitude and introduce positive community benefits, including for vulnerable people such as cyclists and the disabled.

Since speeds in Mere town centre are already low, there is likely to be good compliance. However, Wiltshire Council's report on the matter states that targeted enforcement of a 20 m.p.h. limit by the Neighbourhood Policing Team is likely to be undertaken.'

A proposed decision by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Streetscene and Broadband has been published, outlining the Wiltshire Policy on 20mph speed limits and zones. A copy of Wiltshire Council's Policy on 20 MPH speed limits and zones is available here : <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s62679/HSB-007-13%20-%20Appendix%201%20Wiltshire%20Policy%20on%2020%20mph%20speed%20limits%20and%20zones.pdf>

**9 e) A303/A20/A358 Statement on feasibility study and MPs request for Parish Council views -**

**A303/A30/A358 Statement**

From Somerset County Council, Devon County Council, Wiltshire Council, Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Highways Agency. 27 July 2013.

On 27 June 2013, the Government announced the biggest ever upgrade of the strategic national roads network, tripling annual investment on major roads enhancements from today's level to over £3bn by 2020/21. This means investing £10.7bn in roads enhancements between 15/16 and 20/21 to deliver a world-class strategic national road network, tackle congestion, and support jobs and growth.

As part of this, the Government announced that it will tackle some of the most notorious and long-standing road hot spots in the country; including the A303/A30/A358 corridor to the South West. The first step will be to undertake a small set of feasibility studies targeted at key locations and problems. The positive local approach and close

cooperation between local authorities and enterprise partnerships to develop a business case for improving the route contributed to the A303 being included as one of the feasibility studies.

The A303/A30/A358 corridor feasibility study will consider various options for improvement including the various sections of road that could be widened or form bypasses, and the type of junction layouts that would offer the best value for money. At this stage the Government has not committed funds for construction but will make a funding decision following completion of the feasibility study when it finalises a detailed programme of road construction for delivery from 2015 onwards.

The Highways Agency and Department for Transport will continue to work closely with the Local Authorities and enterprise partnerships to take the proposals forward.

Contact details:

Mark Anderson, Somerset County Council

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Our MP, Andrew Murrison writes: 'I'd appreciate Mere PC's view on the possibility of the A303 being improved since the settlement is one of the largest sitting directly alongside the road. I think most would approve of any safety improvements and many would like widening to reduce traffic jams at Stonehenge and Blackdown Hills but I'm less certain of the town's enthusiasm for the likely increase in volume of traffic which currently uses the M4/5 and wonder if a bid for mitigation might be needed given the close proximity of some of the new homes in particular. Thoughts please.'

**9f) Highway, Traffic & Transport Priorities** – draft plan attached

**10 b) To approve Budget/Expenditure report at 30.6.13** - Budget/Expenditure Report at 30.6.13 attached

## **Information Items**

### **The following planning applications have been determined:**

Application: 13/00443/FUL

Location: St Matthews House, Wet Lane, Mere. BA12 6BA

Proposal: Internal and external alteration to include new floor level to provide bedrooms and bathroom space, installation of dormer windows and fire escape, installation of a wood burner

Decision: Approve with Conditions

Decision Date: 12.7.13

Application: 13/00444/LBC

Location: St Matthews House, Wet Lane, Mere BA12 6BA

Proposal: Internal and external alteration to include new floor level to provide bedrooms and bathroom space, installation of dormer windows and fire escape, installation of a wood burner

Decision: Approve with Conditions

Decision Date: 12.7.13

Application: 13/01149/FUL

Location: Burton Grange Barn, Burton, Mere. BA12 6BR

Proposal: single storey extension to west elevation

Decision: Approve with Conditions

Decision Date: 07/08/2013