

# Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

**Present:** Councillors B. Norris (Chairman), J. Jordan (Vice-Chairman), N. Beale, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, Mrs. K. Symonds, R. Sims, Mrs. L. Traves

**Also:** PCSO Peter Tcherniawsky, Marily Johnson, D. Morris, Mrs. M. White, Mrs. C. Payne, D. Stone & R. Stone

## Public Session

*The Chairman will convene the Town Council meeting after the public session (please note that members of the public are no longer permitted to speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman).*

Marilyn Johnson from Angel Corner Tea Rooms said that she had come along to raise an objection to the planning application for a café at the industrial estate. She pointed out that there would be a new café adjacent to the industrial estate when the new Hill Brush Factory is moved and she expressed concern that cafes outside the town would deflect trade from the town centre.

Cllr. Mrs. Symonds wanted to relay some information and said that as a resident of the Duchy of Cornwall development at White Road, she and other residents in the development had received a letter from the Duchy pointing out that many residents were breaching covenants attached to their properties relating to the parking of large vehicles & caravans, changing the colour of front doors and putting up garden sheds. Mrs. Symonds said that she had spoken to the Duchy of Cornwall about the practicalities of enforcing these covenants. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds offered to negotiate with the Duchy on behalf of residents if they had concerns as a result of having received these letters.

Cllr. Mrs. Symonds also pointed out that she and Cllr. Jordan had been on a geology walk and that Paulette McManus would be producing a leaflet which tells you about the geological site of Special Scientific Interest at Dead Maids Quarry

The Clerk read out a letter from Mrs. Rachel Hyde regarding the unreliability of the S W Coaches bus service between Wincanton-Gillingham-Shaftesbury and asking the Town Council to bring its power and influence to bear on South West Coaches to revise/review the 158 service.

**Apologies for absence** received from Cllr. M. Cassidy, Cllr. P. Coward & Cllr. Mrs. Hurd

## **38. To receive declarations of interest from members and to consider requests for new DPI dispensations.**

*Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Mere Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.*

Cllr. Mrs. Traves declared a personal interest in Planning Application Ref: 15/04535/FUL

Cllr. C. Hazzard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 45a) Payments

Cllr. G. Jeans declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 45a) Payments

Cllr. B. Norris declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 45a) Payments

**39. Minutes** – With an amendment to Minute 29b), it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015 be approved and adopted as a correct record of proceedings on proproposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 1.6.15

## **40. Matters Arising**

**\*a) Co-option of Councillor to fill Casual Vacancy (see Minute No. 29c)** – The Clerk confirmed that one submission of interest had been received from Mr. Bob Parsons (as distributed in the Clerks Report). The

Chairman asked Councillors if they had any other nominations but none were received. Cllr. Mitchell proposed that Mr. Bob Parsons be co-opted as a Town Councillor to fill the casual vacancy. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Beale and carried with a unanimous vote.

**b) Adoption of road at Downside Close (see Minute 29d)** – the Clerk confirmed that, despite several reminder emails to Wiltshire Council officers, she had received no responses. However, the Chairman did say that witnesses had reported seeing men on site measuring the road so this may mean that some progress is being made.

**c) Report on Clock Tower refurbishment work (see Minute 29b)** – Cllr. Hill confirmed that the very top section of the clock tower had been carried out and the renovation work was coming on well. He explained that much of the work was being done off-site in a workshop. Burfitt and Garrett had estimated the projected costs to finish the work would be approximately £3600 + an additional cost for decoration. It was agreed that Burfitt & Garrett should be authorised to complete the work and to include decorations before removing the scaffolding.

**d) Mere First School Building, Dark Lane – breach in conditions of sale – Information contained in Title Register (see Minute 30a)** - The Clerk reported that she had obtained the Title Register and could find no mention within the information supplied of any covenants that the present occupiers would be in breach of. Cllr. Jeans said that he had spent a great deal of time on this prior to the sale of the building. He was aware that there were 38 conditions attached to the planning permission and a number of covenants but asked the question of who was going to enforce these. It was agreed to ask for a copy of the planning decision notice for the planning application granting permission for Wessex Woodburners to use the building for storage. The Town Council could then assess whether or not the conditions have been met.

**e) Traffic Management in Mere Town Centre – representative to attend CATG meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> July at Dinton Village Hall at 2.00 p.m. (see Minute 18a)** – The Chairman said that he would be attending the meeting to represent the Town Council and would put forward the case for the traffic management proposals. Cllr. Sims said that he would also be attending the meeting.

**\*f) Litter picking community events – insurance and supply of equipment (Public Session 1.6.15)** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, members asked the Clerk to relay this on to Mrs. Beall who enquired about this during the public session of the last meeting.

#### **41. Reports & Consultations**

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report** – PC Peter Tcherniawsky said that the monthly newsletter had been published and was dominated by accidents occurring on the A303 again. The latest accident had resulted in related traffic problems at Zeals and West Knoyle caused by drivers diverting from the traffic jams on the A303. There had been attempted break-ins to sheds at Gasper and West Knoyle and there was an anti-social behaviour issue at Hillside Close which would be put forward for discussion as a possible priority at the next Neighbourhood Task Group Meeting which would, hopefully, be held next week.

**b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report** – Cllr. Jeans reported that superfast broadband now in Mere. Wiltshire Council had a lot of problems with the green bin collections since the payment option has been introduced. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds said that the stickers provided by Wiltshire Council to put on the green bins do not adhere to the plastic.

#### **42. Planning**

**a) Applications:** (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council's website <http://planning.wiltshire.gov.uk/Northgate/PlanningExplorer/ApplicationSearch.aspx> – and type in the relevant application number)

Application Ref:	15/04591/PNCOU
Application for:	Prior Notification under Class Q
Proposal:	Change of use of agricultural building and land within its curtilage to 1 new dwelling

(190m2 floor space building and 190m2 curtilage)

Site address: Dutch Barn at Church Farm, Wet Lane, Mere. BA12 6BA

The Clerk informed members that the planning authority (Wiltshire Council) had determined, in this case, that prior approval will be required as to the design of the building, and that this prior approval is refused.

Application Ref: 15/06290/TCA

Application for: Work to Trees in a Conservation Area

Proposal: Fell one silver birch

At: Lenridge, Water Street, Mere. BA12 6DY

RESOLVED that the above application should be recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. R. Hill, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

Application Ref: 15/04843/FUL

Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Construction of a storage building and associated groundworks for equestrian equipment, fodder and seasonal lambing shelter.

At: The Old Dairy, Charnage, Mere. BA12 6AR

In passing on information only, Cllr. Jeans told members that, in the open countryside, as soon as a property is approved for equestrian use, it becomes a brownfield site rather than an agricultural site.

Members felt that this application, however, was clearly proposed as being for equestrian AND agricultural purposes and that as the storage building was on a working farm it was RESOLVED to recommend approval of the application on proposal made by Cllr. Mitchell, seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a majority vote in favour. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Application Ref: 15/04331/FUL

Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Change of use to café (A3) for part of industrial unit

At: Unit 1, Block K, Quarry Field Industrial Estate, Mere, BA12 6LA

The Chairman confirmed that the site was within the industrial estate to the west of Quarry Fields and Quarry Cottages and not the east side. There was a general discussion over concerns as to whether or not a café on the industrial estate would take business away from the town centre but the Chairman said that he didn't think that competition was a reason on which to base a planning decision. He did say, however, that there was no mention as to how the café business would be advertised and was concerned that there would be 'A' frame boards and advertising signs situated along the roadside. Cllr. Hazzard raised concerns about the issue of employment and whether or not the change of use to a café would result in a loss of employment opportunity as a café may not offer the same number of potential jobs and pointed out that it is not a retail park but an industrial estate. Cllr. Jordan raised concerns about the available room for vehicle movements and parking and said that vehicular access may be an issue and Cllr. Mrs. Symonds said that she thought a café in this location would attract vans and lorries and that there could be a potential vehicle movement/parking issue. Members also raised the issue of residential housing nearby and the likely environmental issues of noise and smells coming from the proposed café. RESOLVED, on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 6 for and 4 abstentions, that the Town Council objects to the above application as it will result in the loss of an industrial unit with employment opportunities. The café may also have a detrimental effect on nearby businesses on the industrial estate as there will be increased traffic movements going in and out of the yard and pedestrian movements. The café will also generate associated noises and smells which may have an environmental impact. There is no mention of the opening hours of the café. The

abovementioned issues may also have an adverse amenity and environmental effect on nearby residential properties at Quarry Cottages and Norwood House. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Application Ref: 15/04535/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Single storey extension to north elevation  
At: 13 Southbrook Gardens, Mere. BA12 6BE

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a majority vote. Cllr. Mrs. Traves, having declared a personal interest in this application, refrained from discussion or voting. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

### **43. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport**

#### **a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults**

- Drain on Castle Street, outside car park and opposite Butt of Sherry has sunk. GJ reported it 6 times and would like it reported again. Also to ask them to look at all drains on that side of the road in Castle Street.
- Pothole at Boar Street still there.
- Light in Castle Hill Lane still not working (LT reported it previously).

Cllr. Jeans said that surely something needs to be done about the state of the roads through Mere and wondered if a letter from the Town Council might add weight to his constant urges and pleas. It was agreed that a letter should be put together.

It was also pointed out that property owners were allowing their hedges and trees to overhang roads and pavements and cause obstructions. Cllr. Hazzard, J. Jordan and Mrs. Traves agreed to walk around the town and report back on such obstructions.

**Passenger Transport** – with reference to Mrs. Hyde’s letter (read out in public session) it was agreed that the Town Council should make enquiries and seek advice on how to take action.

### **44. Buildings, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Sports Grounds, Allotments & Cemeteries**

**a) Re-pointing of wall at Walnut Play Area** – The Clerk reported that she had become aware that the wall at the rear of the Walnut Road Play Area had another crack in it and Cllr. Hill confirmed that he had been out to assess the wall and in his opinion, it did not appear to be unsafe but that the crack would let the rain in if it was not repointed. Members agreed that the Clerk should appoint a builder to get the crack repaired/repointed.

**b) Yew arches in Cemetery** – The Clerk explained that one of the yew trees of the yew arch in the cemetery had gone completely brown and others nearby were looking less healthy. The Clerk was concerned about this and wondered whether the Council should pay to have the tree inspected by an arboriculturalist. The Council agreed that Cllr. Richard Hughes should be asked to look at the Yew Trees in the first instance.

Cllr. John Jordan in The Chair

**c) Locking grounds at night** - The Chairman said that he had asked for Cllr. Jordan to Chair the meeting at this point because he personally wanted to make a proposal. He went on to say that, at present both the recreation ground and duchy manor sports grounds are left open through the night which leaves both grounds potentially vulnerable to unauthorised access. He therefore wanted to make the following proposal:

1. The vehicular access gates to both the Recreation Ground and the Duchy Manor Sports Grounds be locked at night between the hours of 9.30 p.m. and 7.00 a.m. The gates to be locked with fixed combination locks and chains.
2. All authorised groups and emergency services will be given the code combination.

3. A notice will be placed on the gates informing the public that the gates will be locked from 9.30 p.m. to 7 a.m., seven days a week. One month's notice will be provided.
4. For a fixed period of time an emergency contact telephone number will be posted inside the gates.
5. Member of the public currently parking in the recreation ground will be given the combination code for access and given a user code of conduct. (It will be their responsibility to ensure that the gates remain locked between 9.30 p.m. to 7.00 a.m. when unattended).

He confirmed that Mere School had been consulted on proposals to lock the Duchy Manor gates and that Mr. Barry Hansford had agreed to lock and unlock both gates. There was a long discussion over whether or not the Parish Council should be allowing residents from White Road to park in the Recreation Ground car park and the potential implications this could have. However, Cllr. Jeans said that he would be happy to second the proposal as long as it was reviewed in 6 months time and as long as the gates were locked completely with no access by residents once per year and that this must be recorded in the Minutes. Also on the understanding that if the Council's consent to residents parking should be abused then these privileges would subsequently be lost. With these additions, the proposal was carried with a vote of 8 for and 1 against (Cllr. R. Hill).

#### 45. Finance, Policy & Resources

##### Cllr. John Jordan in The Chair

**a) Payments – RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. R. Hill and carried with a unanimous vote of those present in the room. Cllr. Hill said that whilst he knew it had to be paid he thought that the costs for trailer training and test fees were overpriced. Cllr. Hazzard, Cllr. Jeans & Cllr. Norris, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the room whilst this matter was discussed/voted.

Mole Valley Farmers Ltd	Roundup, Oils	69.47
Cash reimbursement	HM Land Register – Register & Title Plan View	6.00
Mainstream Digital	Telephone call charges 5.5.15 – 28.5.15	3.28 – Paid by DD 15.6.15
BLN Sweepers Ltd	Reimbursement for trailer training and test fees for James Suter	790.00
Wiltshire Council	Commercial waste collection 1.6.15 – 31.3.16	792.49
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil for June	312.70
Burfitt & Garrett	Refurbishment work to Clock Tower	9659.46
Jeans	To find fault and repair light fitting & replace burnt out light fitting in public toilets	129.92
Cash	Travel expenses – James Suter – trailer training & test	74.40
The Consortium	Public Toilets – toilet rolls	64.76
	Public Toilets – toilet descaler	17.39
A R Diesels Ltd	Service & repairs to Mitsubishi L200	437.70
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	Delegate fee for Regional Conference 2015-South	82.80

	(Clerk's training)	
T. J. Young	Husqvarna ride-on repairs	105.60
North Street Nurseries Ltd	Summer planting of tubs and flower beds	1074.00
Jeans	To replace and rewire lighting in top of Clock Tower	419.56
	Hoover bags, padlock & disposable gloves	20.64
3 County Locksmiths	New lock & keys for youth club building	128.40
Mrs. A. Vella	Holiday cover – cleaning public toilets	70.65
Tincknell Fuels Ltd	Gas oil	171.36
Scats	Grease & engine oil	25.74
Eon energy	Electricity supply to public toilets	53.17 – Paid by DD 25.6.15
Imprest Account – cheques 3070 - 3078	PAYE, Wages, Petty Cash & Pension	8579.54

#### **Cllr. Brett Norris in The Chair**

**\*b) Allotments –Duchy of Cornwall rent review** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, it was RESOLVED to accept the increase in the allotment land rental from £536.76 to £570 per year effective from 29.9.15.

**\*c) To approve and adopt LGPS Employer Discretions Policy** – RESOLVED that the Staffing Panel & Appeals Committee be delegated authority to deal with this matter.

#### **46. General Items**

**a) Presentation of flags** – The Clerk reported that a Mr. William R. Sherriff (ex Royal Engineer) has paid for and donated a Union Flag and a St. George's flag to the Town Council. Originally Mr. Sherriff had thought that the flag was flying on Castle hill as a ceremonial flag by the Rifles for Dorset and he was concerned as to its wind-worn state. However, he was subsequently referred to the Town Clerk who wrote to him explaining that Castle Hill itself is not a military war memorial and that the Town Council took the decision, some years ago, to fly the flag all year round. Mr. Sherriff was still happy to donate two flags to us and presented them to the Clerk last week for presentation to the Council at this meeting. The Chairman and councillors asked the Clerk to write to Mr. Sherriff to express their gratitude and thanks for this very kind and generous gift to the town. Cllr. Jeans said that he would remove the wind-worn flag as soon as possible and replace it with the new Union Flag.

**b) Honours Board for past Clerks** (see Minutes of Annual Budget Meeting 3.12.14) – Cllr. George Jeans kindly agreed to provide a separate board for past Clerks to the Parish Council and agreed that the board & wording should be researched and arranged/organised and any invoices made direct to him. RESOLVED to thank Cllr. Jeans for this very generous offer and proceed as discussed.

**c) Report on Mere & District Linkscheme AGM** – The Chairman reported that he had attended the Mere & District Linkscheme AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> June which was well attended. The Linkscheme and Literary Festival are run by volunteers providing a vital service for people in our rural community. The Literary Festival, which is a success in its own right, puts on various events in the community and was able to donate £2,500 towards the operational costs of the Linkscheme last year. 70% of the Linkscheme users are from Mere. The Linkscheme drivers collectively racked up 30,000 miles in the year. Sadly, the Community First grant of £1600 will be cut. There is a need for more volunteers to help in various roles within the organisation.

#### **47. Forthcoming meetings**

- a) Community Area Transport Group Meeting**, 2.00 p.m. on 20<sup>th</sup> July, Dinton Village Hall – The Chairman and Vice-Chairman confirmed that they would be attending this meeting.
- b) South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting**, 6.30 p.m. on 29<sup>th</sup> July at Wilton Community Centre
- c) Invitation to attend training course on **Market Town Benchmarking at Corn Exchange Devizes from 10 a.m.** – 1.0p p.m. on 7<sup>th</sup> July (All Wiltshire towns invited)
- d) Seeds4Success AGM – Youth Centre – 8<sup>th</sup> July at 7.00 p.m.** – The Chairman felt that a member of the Town Council ought to attend this meeting.

\*Further information on these items in Clerks Report

Note: Members are reminded that the Town Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.