

Mere Parish Council

*Parish Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood*

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 5th November 2007 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors R. Coward (Chairman), Mrs. M. White (Vice-Chairman), M. Hall, C. Hazzard, R. Hill (from 8.09 p.m.), R. Hughes, G. Jeans (from 7.50 p.m.), E. Mitchell, D. Sealy, R. Sims, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves.

Also County Cllr. Mrs. B. Wayman.

Public Session

Mr. Stanton wanted to publicly thank Cllr. Jeans for his help in enabling a solution to the problems that had caused great difficulties between himself and his neighbour. Mr. Stanton said he was extremely grateful to Cllr. Jeans for his help.

S. Squires said that he had been asked by Rev. Welch about the possibility of lowering the speed limit through Mere and also about residents parking in Church Street. It was agreed that these two items would be placed on a future agenda.

Mrs. Traves said that sadly, Mr. Nurden would be closing his butchers shop next week but she wanted to publicly thank him for 20 years of service to the community and wish him well in his retirement.

Mr. Richard Hughes said that he had been informed of a number of incidents where animals had escaped onto the allotments at Southbrook. He believed that the animals were goats belonging to a Mr. Young who was a Duchy tenant farmer. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Duchy of Cornwall.

Mrs. White wanted to thank Mrs. Howell and the organizing committee for the Literary Festival last month. Mrs. White reported that the various events were extremely well attended and that the Parish Council entered a team in the Literary Quiz and did extraordinarily well – team members were Lesley Traves, Mary White, Louis Stanton and Merl Benson. The Chairman said he went along to the Sunday event to present prizes for the poetry competition and he had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. M. Peirce, P. Coward, R. Porter

74. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. R. Hughes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 82a)

75. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 1st October be approved subject to the following amendment:

Page 2 – S/2007/1784 ..... Cllr. Mitchell, having declared a personal & prejudicial interest in the above application, left the room whilst it was under discussion. *Cllrs. R. Coward, having declared a personal interest in the above application, did not join in the discussion or vote on this issue. Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a personal interest in the above application, joined in the discussion but did not vote on this issue.* Cllr. Hazzard informed members.....

The proposal to above the Minutes with this amendment was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present.

## 76. Planning

a) *Applications*: (All applications can be viewed on SDC's website [www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning) – application search – and type in the relevant number)

S/2007/1972 – FULL APPLICATION – EXTENSION TO FORM BEDROOM & BATHROOM & ERECTION OF DOUBLE GARAGE & SUMMERHOUSE (RE-POSITIONING EXISTING SHED)

TALBOT COTTAGE, HAZZARDS HILL, MERE

(Please note that due to time constraints and the inability to coordinate a parish council meeting within the consultation deadline, we have informed SDC that we are unable to comment on the above planning application).

S/2007/2033 – FULL APPLICATION – ERECT NEW DWELLING

MULBERRYS, NORTH STREET, MERE.

Cllr. Mitchell proposed that the above application should be recommended for approval subject to the same conditions raised by the Parish Council when it considered a previous application for the same site some months ago. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sealy and carried with a vote of 8 for and 1 abstention.

S/2007/2035 – FULL APPLICATION – CONSTRUCTION OF CONSERVATORY

20 OAK LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Squires proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote.

S/2007/2047 – FULL APPLICATION – RETROSPECTIVE 2 STOREY EXTENSION/LOFT CONVERSION

STADDLE STONES, PETTRIDGE LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Sims proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a vote of 8 for and 2 abstentions.

S/2007/2048 – FULL APPLICATION – ERECT REAR CONSERVATORY

34 SOUTHBROOK, MERE.

Cllr. Hughes proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a vote of 9 for and 1 abstention.

S/2007/2068 – FULL APPLICATION – SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS

2 EDGEBRIDGE, MERE.

Cllr. Sealy proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a vote of 8 for and 1 abstention.

S/2007/2109 – FULL APPLICATION – REVISED SCHEME FOR DWELLING, ERECT GARAGE AND INSTALL DORMER WINDOWS

SITE ADJACENT TREVORDALE, SHAFTESBURY ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a vote of 5 for, 3 against and 2 abstentions.

S/2007/2115 – FULL APPLICATION – ALTERATIONS TO LINK PROPERTIES AND FORM NEW ACCESS TO EXISTING FIRST FLOOR FLAT  
QUEEN VICTORIA HALL, THE SQUARE, MERE.

Cllr. Hazzard stated that he could not decide how to judge this planning application because, in theory, the town would be losing another shop although the premises would still retain its commercial premises status and it would enable the Co-Op to enlarge their existing shop floor space. Cllr. Mrs. White said that she did not agree with one of the present shop windows being replaced by a doorway as this would jeopardize the future viability of the commercial premises as it would be difficult to re-open it as a shop with only one window. Cllr. Jeans said that this was a difficult application to consider and he said that the Co-Op had not done themselves any favours but arranging for a petition and he pointed out that a petition will only carry the same weight as one letter despite the number of signatures it receives and he had also received a number of objections from residents who felt that they were being coerced into signing the petition. Cllr. Squires explained that, whether the application were to be passed or not, Mr. Charlton would still be closing because his rent had been increased considerably and the level of trade could not sustain the increased rent. Cllr. Hughes proposed that the application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a majority vote of 7 with 3 abstentions.

*\*b) Decide on policy for dealing with objections that are raised on Salisbury's website but not sent direct to Parish Council – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would only consider letters of objection or support for planning applications when there are sent direct to the Parish Council, electronically or otherwise.*

*c) Update on S/2007/1818 – TPO Application – Walnut Tree, Clements Lane – The Clerk informed members that the application had now been approved but that the tree officer had stipulated that the tree could not be cut back by any more than 15%*

77. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground

*a) Lease/rental for Mere Youth Development Centre – the Clerk read out extracts from Gilyard Scarth's valuation report and confirmed that a copy of this report had been sent to the County Council. In response, the County Council had indicated that most of the recommendations would be acceptable although they could not agree that WCC pay all the landlord's costs for administering the building as this is not normal in a commercial lease, particularly when the tenant is paying for all repairs and insurance on a stand-alone building. Given the length of time since the last agreement was drawn up, however, the County Council was prepared to recommend acceptance of a rental of £500 per year. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Recreation Ground Charity should ask for a nominal rent and that, in return the County Council should be encouraged to allow for the assignment or subletting to other youth groups in Mere (i.e. brownies & scouts) at minimal hiring rates. The Clerk agreed to ask for the County Council's thoughts on this before asking the Charity Commission for their views.*

*b) To approve figures and details for Annual Return 2007 - deferred*

*c) Dog/litter bins & signs – Cllr. Sealy informed members that he had been assured that the bin would be made and installed within the next two weeks.*

78. Matters Arising

a) *Report from County Councillor* – Cllr. Mrs. Wayman had nothing specific to report.

b) *Report from District Councillor to include report on Western Area Committee Meetings* – Cllr. Jeans reported that he had tried to ask SDC to include, in their planning notices and notifications, that representations should be duplicated and sent to local Parish Councils. However, he did not think that he would achieve any success in this matter. Cllr. Jeans also pointed out that the District Council's Minutes on Planning Applications were not always accurate and this is something he was taking further at district level.

c) *Report from Transport Representative* – Cllr. Sims reported that the new 'Connect 2' service was launched on Monday, 22nd October outside the Co-Op and that the feedback from users and drivers had been positive.

d) *Report from Community Safety Representative* – Cllr. Sims reported on a meeting held on 27th October where CSO Michael Tryhorn brought along the last known list of neighbourhood watch co-ordinators. Cllr. Sims had agreed to help update the list. The Esso garage at Willoughby Hedge is to be refurbished and it is hoped to have a better 'no right turn' sign placed where the B3089 meets the A303. Cllr. Sims also attended the AGM of Wiltshire Association of Local Councils on 31st October which was followed by a presentation by Martin Abbott (Ex. Chief Superintendent), Project Manager of Neighbourhood Policing Implementation Team. Mr. Abbott explained that 135 CSOs were currently in operation in Wiltshire and that the target was 205 but these figures would be reviewed annually. The Chairman reported that he had spoken to the safety camera officer and asked him to put warning signs on the road when he is parked on the by-pass bridge.

e) *Boundary issues adjacent to Jubilee Gardens* – Cllr. Jeans asked for this item to be deferred.

f) *Report on Wiltshire County Council's 'Meet & Greet' evening held on 22nd October* – The Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. White & the Clerk had attended the meeting but felt that there was not a great deal of new information to report and that it had been difficult to extract any convincing or authoritative answers to the questions that were being put forward by the Parish & Town Councils.

g) *School Travelplan* – the Chairman agreed to adjourn the meeting in order to allow Mr. Simon Ford to address the Council. Mr. Simon Ford (school governor) reported that following a useful meeting with Cllrs. R. Coward, Hazzard and Jeans, there were three particular areas of concern with regard to road safety: Hazzards Hill, Lynch Close & Mill Lane/Edgebridge. Mr. Ford said that 71 children cross the road at Hazzards Hill and it was suggested that a Lollypop Lady might help alleviate concerns. Mr. Ford also said that he was aware that the rules were changing on 20 mph limits and he felt that this could be looked into along with 'SLOW' markings on the road. With regards to The Lynch, Mr. Ford pointed out that there is an unofficial path going through SDC land and if this could be officially designated and resurfaced it would help address pedestrian safety concerns in this area. Finally, Edgebridge presents the biggest challenge because it is not wide enough to extend a pavement and Mr. Ford wondered if the idea of coloured tarmac would increase driver awareness. The meeting was re-convened. County Cllr. Mrs. Wayman said that she would be happy to support the School Travelplan initiative and would be happy to do any lobbying etc. After discussion on the various suggestions to improve pedestrian safety it was agreed that the Parish Council should not yet support any specific proposals but should support Simon Ford (acting on behalf of the school) in approaching the Highways Authority to ask for options and proposals that may help to address the road safety concerns identified at the three locations – Hazzards Hill, The Lynch and Edgebridge. These proposals should then be brought back to the Parish Council for further consideration. Proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Jeans and carried with a unanimous vote.

*h) BTCV Conservation Project on Long Hill* – the Chairman informed members that the Parish Council was in the process of completing application forms for a Tree Felling Licence (Forestry Commission) and Works to Trees in Conservation Area (SDC) in order to carry out the Conservation Project.

#### 79. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

*\*a) Road surface at Limpers Hill/Southbrook* – e-mail response from Highways Authority – members noted the response, as detailed in the Clerks Report. Cllr. Hughes said he was pleased that some of the major works had been carried out although there was little improvement on the road leading to Limpers Hill from Southbrook.

*b) Jobs for Parish Steward* – the Clerk informed members of the jobs completed by the Parish Steward in October. Members asked if the following tasks could be carried out in the future:

- § Clear back branches around Chamber of Trade sign on B3098 between Mere & Stourton.
- § Clear obstructions from Burton Path
- § Clear obstructions on footpath 24 at Badgers Bend, Mill Lane

*c) Licence for Parish Councils to Plant & Maintain on Highway Land* – the Clerk read out the details on the procedures for 'nil cost' licensing of the maintenance of the adopted public highway. The Clerk could not recall whether or not the Parish Council & County Council had entered into such a licence agreement to carry out work on Waterside and it was agreed that this should be clarified.

#### 80. Open Spaces/ Sports Grounds, Play Areas and outdoor recreation facilities

*a) Play Area at Clements Lane* – quotations for safety surfacing & SWAG Grant – the Clerk confirmed that she had e-mailed various companies to ask for quotations for safety surfacing under the climbing equipment in the play area so that the bark chippings could be removed. She had received only two quotations. The Parish Council authorized Cllr. Hazzard to submit the SWAG Grant application asking for a grant to enable the safety surfacing to be carried out.

*b) Hiring Policy for Andy Young Pavilion* – it was agreed that the Parish Council should allow the letting of the Andy Young Pavilion on the basis that the event would not require a Temporary Event Notice. This would exclude any events that wanted music and/or sale of alcohol and/or large numbers of people. The Clerk was asked to raise Hire Charges on the next agenda.

#### 81. Allotments

*a) Permission to erect shed on plot 7 – Wellhead allotments* – Cllr. Sealy proposed that permission should be granted to erect a wooden shiplap shed, measuring 2.5m X 1.2m on allotment 7 at Wellhead. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

*b) Suggestion to increase car parking area at Wellhead allotments* – Cllr. Jeans said that he was aware that parking congestion in Wellhead/North Road was causing problems and he was aware that there could be potential in increasing the existing car park area at Wellhead allotments as there was a vacant allotment to the left of the car park. Cllr. Jeans was not suggesting that the car park should be enlarged at any cost to the Parish Council but that it would be paid for by the surrounding residents. It was agreed to write to the Duchy of Cornwall to ask for their thoughts on this before investigating the matter further.

*c) Problems associated with Field Horsetail at Wellhead allotments* – the Clerk informed members that she had received a visit from concerned allotment holders about the fact that this invasive

weed was now present in allotments and was hard to keep under control. Members felt that there was nothing to do other than encourage allotment holders to dig it and remove it.

## 82. Finance

a) *Payments:* Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the following accounts be approved for payment. Proposal seconded by Cllr. E. Mitchell and carried with a unanimous vote of those present. (Cllr. Hughes, having declared a personal & prejudicial interest, was not present in the room for this vote).

Bristol Wessex Billing Services Ltd	Recreation Ground – Water supply (Standing charges only)	27.38
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Grounds expenses – Repairs to Victa mower	34.55
T. Thornley	Website – Macromedia Contribute software	108.48
Richard Hughes	New Cemetery – supply & plant yew trees	456.00
Richard Hughes	Castle Hill – Weed, bramble & coppice control	485.00
CPRE	Admin – Annual Subscription	27.00
Mere School	Electricity for Community Changing Area 3/9/07 – 9/10/07	24.62
Mere School	Gas for Community Changing Area 3.9.07 – 9.10.07	59.01
Mere School	Electricity for swimming pool 6.9.07 – 9.10.07	45.91
Mere School	Water & Sewerage for AYP & bowling green 3.9.07 – 9.10.07	115.70
Mere School	Water & Sewerage for swimming pool 3.9.07 – 9.10.07	46.28
Mere School	Water & Sewerage for community changing area 3.9.07 – 9.10.07	17.15
*Mere School	Gas for Community Changing Area 31.3.07 – 30.4.07	35.22
**Ecosolve Ltd	Drainage treatment for bowling green	3159.05
A. R. Diesels	Repairs to tractor & Landrover	345.40
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	93.30
Imprest account (cheques 2450 - 2458)	Wages, PAYE, Petty Cash	2755.41
Playsafety Ltd	RoSPA Play Area Safety Inspection (2 sites)	148.05

\*The Clerk explained that she did not understand why this invoice had been received and would investigate and discuss with the Chairman before releasing the cheque.

\*\* To be reclaimed from Policy R2 funds

b) *Assessment of Internal Auditor - deferred*

c) *Letter from SDC's Acting Chief Executive regarding provision of public toilets* – The Clerk read out the letter which stated that owing to the change of political control, the new administration has indicated that it is indeed to continue to fund the provision of public toilets rather than withdraw the service. The letter also asked if, in view of the Local Government Reorganisation, the Parish Council's affected would wish to consider taking over ownership of the public toilet prior to the setting up of the new unitary council (likely to be April 2009). Members were pleased that SDC were to continue funding the provision of the public toilet service in Mere and did not wish to consider taking over ownership of the public toilets at the present time. It was, however, pointed out that Gillingham Town Council managed their town's public toilet facilities.

d) *To set date, member make-up and venue for Budget Meeting* – it was agreed that the budget meeting would be held on Tuesday, 4th December at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Council Office. The

following councillors agreed to make up the budget committee: Cllrs. Mrs. White (Chairman), P. Coward, R. Coward, G. Jeans, M. Hall, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes & Mrs. L. Traves.

e) *Letter from Lloyds TSB regarding charges for Treasurers Account* – the Clerk informed members that she had received a letter from Lloyds TSB stating that they would need to operate the accounts as business accounts and incur transaction charges as from 10th December. The Clerk had, meanwhile, discovered that the Co-operative Bank was able to offer the Parish Council a free banking facility which could be operated through the local post office. It was agreed to write to Lloyds TSB informing them that the Parish Council, as a non-profit organization, found it inappropriate and unacceptable to incur transaction charges and have its accounts operated as a business and would therefore need to seek alternative banking arrangements unless they were able to offer a solution that would enable us to continue our banking relationship with them.

### 83. Health & Safety

a) *Health & Safety & Fire Risk Assessments* - deferred

b) *RoSPA Play Area Safety Inspection Report* – The Clerk reported that there were two items of equipment that were identified as requiring urgent attention: the Slide Tower in Castle Hill Play Area and the Multiplay item in the Recreation Ground. With regard to the Slide Tower, the Clerk reported that there was a rotten plank at the slide entry and she confirmed that this had now been replaced. With regard to the Multiplay item, the report stated that the item was at the end of its useful working life as there was significant wood rot apparent in beams and support structures. Cllr. Squires proposed that the Multiplay item should be taken down and removed from site and that a notice of explanation should be publicly displayed. With regard to other 'less urgent & low risk' issues raised in the Inspection Report, it was agreed that the Clerk should ask local builder, Mr. McCann, to carry out repairs and remedial works as identified.

### 84. General Items

a) *Mere Film Shows* – Cllr. Mrs. White reported that the profit from the films shown over the 2006/07 season is £875.36. The Film Club wanted to distribute an amount of £725, keeping a balance of £150.36 in hand to start the new season. The Film Club wanted to distribute donations to eight local organizations and the Parish Council gave their unanimous approval to this suggestion. Cllr. Mrs. White reported that the films had been booked to be shown in the Grove Buildings whilst the Lecture Hall was shut but that the seating capacity was only 80 instead of 100 and the Club would also have to apply for a Temporary Entertainment Notice. Mrs. White therefore anticipated that there would be a drop in funds. The Chairman thanked Mrs. White for this report and thanked her and her helpers for their hard work in providing this much-appreciated facility for the community.

b) *Xmas Tree, Xmas Lights & other Xmas events* – the Parish Council had kindly been offered a Xmas Tree by Mr. & Mrs. Brown of Water Street but Cllr. Hughes felt that this was not quite big enough yet. He had, however, been to see a tree offered by Cllr. Hill which was of suitable size. It was agreed that the tree would be erected on Friday, 30th November and that there would be coloured lights on the tree with white lights on the clock tower. Cllr. Hazzard confirmed that Father Xmas would be visiting the Clock Tower before Xmas but the date had not yet been set.

c) *Wiltshire & Swindon Community Transport Conference 2007* – members noted the information and Cllr. Sims expressed an interest.

*d) Wiltshire Children & Young People's Trust Board: Consultation on Wiltshire's Children & Young People's Plan 2008-2011* – members noted the information regarding the consultation.

*e) Parish & Town Councils – Act on CO2 – Ways to tackle climate change (guidance from defra)* – members noted the information.

85. Clerks Report – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Clerks Report be approved and adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a unanimous vote.

The Chairman reminded members that the Remembrance Day Parade would take place this Sunday, meeting at 10.45 a.m. in The Square.

\*Further information on these items in Clerks Report