

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 2nd June 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors R. Coward (Chairman), E. Mitchell (Vice-Chairman), C. Hazzard, G. Jeans, Mrs. R. Porter, R. Sims, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves & Mrs. M. White.

Also: P. Button, Mr. & Mrs. D. Fricker, Mrs. D. Riddick, Mrs. J. Coward, Mr. & Mrs. Cox, Mrs. A. Howell, Mr. & Mrs. J. Hyde and Mrs. L. Brodier.

Meeting convened at 7.35 p.m. with Public Session

Mr. Peter Button wanted the Council to be aware of the situation at Old Hollow where the vegetation growing along the verges makes it almost impossible to cycle around there. He said that the state of the verges and paths have never been so bad. Mrs. Riddick said that she had telephoned CLARENCE on numerous occasions but had never received any feedback.

Mrs. Rachel Hyde said that she appreciated having an allotment but that she had looked at her tenancy agreement and would like the Parish Council to clarify the situation regarding the fact that some allotments were not being properly cultivated.

Mrs. Adrienne Howell asked the Parish Council to seriously consider asking for some of the assets to be returned to us as part of the local government re-organisation programme. Mrs. Howell said that the rents charged by Salisbury District Council were beyond the means of many of the organizations and she was hopeful that the assets could be returned to Mere so that they could be used by these groups at prices they could afford. She clarified that she was referring, in particular, to the old band hut and the Mere Boules & Croquet club site.

Mrs. Adrienne Howell also wanted to discuss river cleaning and said that the river along Waterside needed to be cleared and that the present practice of leaving the weed to rot is not appreciated. Mrs. Howell said that in previous years the weed was always taken away to be used as compost on the allotments and wondered if there was a better way of managing the river cleaning situation. She was quite sure that the people of Mere would be happy to pay more on their rates to have the river cleaned.

Mrs. Adrienne Howell also stated her objection to the fact that the paths onto a number of the allotments had been blocked off from the Wellhead footpath and she felt that this was causing an obstruction.

Mr. John Hyde said that as an allotment holder at Wellhead, he would welcome the waste from the river and he felt that the allotment holders would be happy to earmark a site where it could be deposited. He also said that with reference to Mere's entrance in the Best Kept Village Competition, the allotments are a real mess. The allotments at Jack Paul Close are neat and tidy but there are a number that are not cultivated at Wellhead/North Road. The council should charge and there should be no free years because people come on, take a free year and do nothing and people should not be allowed to leave their allotments uncultivated. Mrs. Fricker pointed out how nice the floral tubs looked in and around Mere but asked if someone could look at the problem area at the end bridge towards The Green.

Mrs. Lindsay Brodier said that as a resident who lives adjacent to the allotments at Wellhead, she thought they looked fantastic and it was nice to see them being used. She did ask, however, if the Parish Council could ask WCC to tarmac the footpath along North Row.

Mrs. Traves said that it had been pointed out to her that there were cigarette ends on the pavement outside the Butt of Sherry on Saturday and Sunday mornings and wondered if they could be asked to provide a receptacle for cigarette ends. Mr. Sam Squires agreed to deal with this issue.

Mrs. White said that the first home match of the Mere Cricket Club was using its new all-weather wicket was played yesterday afternoon and she said that Mere won the match and everyone had a brilliant time.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. M. Hall, R. Hill and County Cllr. Mrs. B. Wayman, P. C. Richard Salter and PCSO Michael Tryhorn. Also Mrs. Barbara Hewitt.

153. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Mrs. Traves declared a personal interest in planning application S/2008/903

Cllr. Jeans declared a personal interest in Minute 156 (g) & a personal interest in Minute 159 (a)

Cllr. R. Coward declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute 159 (a)

154. Minutes –Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of Annual Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 12th May 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 12.5.08.

155. Planning

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

S/2008/857 – FULL APPLICATION – CONSTRUCTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF CONSERVATORY
FUCHSIA COTTAGE, DARK LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Mrs. Traves confirmed that she had informed the Mere Surgery of this planning application. Cllr. Squires proposed that the application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 7 for and 1 abstention (Cllr. Jeans).

S/2008/903 – FULL APPLICATION – DEMOLISH EXISTING LEAN-TO AND CONSTRUCT SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION
HOLLY COTTAGE, NORTH ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Sims proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a vote of 5 for and 2 abstentions (Cllrs. C. Hazzard & G. Jeans). Cllr. Mrs. Traves, having declared a personal interest, refrained from discussion or voting.

S/2008/905 – FULL APPLICATION – (RETROSPECTIVE) SATELLITE DISH TO THE COACH HOUSE
THE COACH HOUSE, CASTLE STREET, MERE.

Cllr. Sims proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 6 for and 2 abstentions (Cllrs. Mrs. White & Mrs. Porter).

S/2008/967 – FULL APPLICATION – GLAZED PORCH AND VERANDA
WILLOWDOWN HOUSE, WET LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 7 for and 1 abstention (Cllr. Jeans).

S/2008/974 – FULL APPLICATION – ALTERATIONS TO ROOF OF LEAN-TO, ADDITION TO EAST ELEVATION
WATERSIDE VILLA, WATERSIDE, MERE.

Cllr. Mitchell proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a vote of 7 for and 1 abstention (Cllr. Jeans).

***b) Sustainable Rural Communities: Review of Rural Issues in Wiltshire** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, Cllr. Jeans said that when this matter was discussed at SDC level, he had succeeded in reaching agreement that an addendum would be added to this report to stress the importance of allocating sufficient car parking spaces in rural areas.

156. Matters Arising

a) Report from County Councillor – not present.

b) Report from District Councillor to include report on Western Area Committee Meetings – Cllr. Jeans confirmed that the Committee discussed issues relating to the Release of Discretionary Funds for Secondary

Refuse Compactors, a Planning Enforcement Draft Statement of Service Provision and the issue of advertising signs on the A303 was raised again.

c) Report from Transport representative – Cllr. Sims reported that all the Connect 2 vehicles were now running on bio-fuel.

d) Report from Community Safety Representative – Cllr. Sims stated that there was a full report on police news in this month's edition of Mere Matters.

e) Sports Centre & Swimming Pool at Gillingham & support for Three Rivers Partnership – The Clerk reminded members that the Three Rivers Partnership had asked for support from Mere Parish Council and had asked the Parish Council to consider financial support for their project. However, the Clerk informed members that Mere residents already pay, within their District Council Tax (not parish precept) a sum of money that is used to provide leisure facilities at Salisbury (Five Rivers Leisure Centre), Durrington (Swimming Pool) & Tisbury (Sports Centre). The Chairman closed the Parish Council meeting in order to ask for the views of those members of the public present:

Mr. Hyde said that he would take legal action if this Council were to impose extra taxes to support North Dorset District Council. Mrs. Adrienne Howell felt that there should be no financial support unless Mere residents could get some of their tax rescinded. Mr. Button pointed out that Mere residents would also have to pay to get to Gillingham in order to use the facilities. It was generally felt that the project should be support but that Mere was not in a position to offer financial support.

Meeting reconvened

Cllr. Mrs. White felt that the Three Rivers Partnership needed to make sure that they attracted people from this area and market the new leisure centre in such a way that it attracts customers and revenue. The Parish Council resolved to write to the Three Rivers Partnership explaining that it would be inappropriate to ask the residents of Mere to provide financial support for two districts and that whilst it would be more appropriate for them to pay towards the provision of the most local facilities, the Parish Council could not see how this could be achieved with the current authority functions, duties and boundaries. In every other way, however, the Parish Council would like to offer its full support for the Gillingham Leisure Centre project.

f) Formal Consultation on Proposed Electoral Divisions for New Unitary Wiltshire Council – the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had received a letter from WCC informing us that they had submitted their proposals in accordance with our wishes. In other words, they had included West Knoyle in the Mere ward and East Knoyle in the Tisbury ward. However, Cllr. Mrs. White informed members, they had actually taken Maiden Bradley out of the Mere ward and included it in the Warminster ward which was against Maiden Bradley's wishes and not even included within the Options submitted for consultation.

***g) Transfer of community assets from Unitary Authority to Parish Council** – Cllr. Jeans declared a personal interest in the above item. Cllr. Hazzard felt that the Council should consider asking for the transfer of the band hut and the croquet and boules site. Cllr. Mitchell pointed out that if the Parish Council took on the car parks, we would be able to determine whether or not car parking charges were imposed. It was agreed to write a letter showing an interest in the transfer of all assets and to ask Mr. Richard Munro to come to Mere and discuss matters.

h) Report on meeting held with chamber of Trade + letter from Mere & District Chamber of Trade (a representative from the Chamber of Trade has agreed to attend the meeting) – deferred.

157. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

a) Jobs for Parish Steward (next visit 18.6.08) – The Clerk reported that, during his last visit in April, the Parish Steward had repaired potholes in Barton Lane, cleared grips & gullies through Mere, trimmed back overhanging vegetation on paths off Angel Lane, trimmed back grass on path off Mill Lane and trimmed back hedge at Wet Lane/Shafesbury Road junction. He had reported the drain at Boar Street/Pettridge Lane, and the potholes from Limpers Hill to Shafesbury Road. He had not carried out any grass cutting along Burton Path, however, because this was SDC's responsibility. The following jobs were suggested for the Parish Steward's next visit:

Overgrown verges at Old Hollow

Emergency exit route from Castle Street (B3092) and Long Hill on Kingsmere Estate – (weeds and rubbish in verges and ditch.

Sinking road in Mill Lane

Unevenness of cobbled area outside Balcony Cottages.

b) River Cleaning – the Clerk reminded members that the Environment Agency would need to provide advice on best practices for river cleaning. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that, in view of the strong feeling, the Parish Council should pay for our groundsman to clean the river after consultation with the Environment Agency and that the weed should be removed to the allotments at Wellhead. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a vote of 6 for and 2 abstentions (S. Squires & E. Mitchell).

158. Allotments

a) To grant permission to erect sheds (one at Southbrook & one at Wellhead) – permission was granted to erect a shed at Southbrook (Mr. Horne, Plot 134) and to erect a shed at Wellhead (Mr. & Mrs Dickin, Plot 12B) – the Council requested that the sheds should be in line with others and should not obstruct the footpaths/walkways.

b) Report on site meeting held at Wellhead allotments on 21st May – The Chairman reported that he, Cllr. Mrs. White, Cllr. Squires and the Clerk had visited the allotments at Wellhead and it was clear that some of them were not being cultivated properly while others were being extremely well tended. The Councillors noted that there seemed to be a lot of debris around and on the allotments and that there were two unauthorized skips on allotment land. The Chairman wondered if there might be some merit in hiring a skip to try and encourage the general area to be cleaned up. The Chairman read out a letter from Mr. Boorn, an allotment holder at Wellhead, which suggested that some of the allotment holders were of the opinion that the parish council was not managing the allotments effectively as a number of plots were left untended, possible subletting issues, lack of water supply and lack of regular audits and assessments, involvement for young people. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the allotment holders who are not properly cultivating their allotments should be sent a strongly worded letter and should be offered a further month's grace in order to make changes. He also proposed that some of the plots should be divided in half and that the Parish Council should obtain a price for installing a water supply. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried. Members also felt that the 12 months free of charge policy (which only applies on allotments which are taken over in a poor state of cultivation) is an incentive and pointed out that the school has a garden of its own and a gardening club. It was further agreed that the footpath situation should be established and clarified. The Clerk expressed concern at the time resources required by staff in monitoring and managing the allotments versus the income received from allotment rents which barely cover the Parish Council's lease payments to the Duchy.

159. Finance & Resources

a) Payments: Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the following accounts be approved for payment. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a majority vote. (The Chairman, Cllr. R. Coward & Cllr. Jeans, having declared an interest, refrained from voting or discussion).

R. Coward	Chairman's Expenses 07/08	210.00
Mere & District Linkscheme	S. 137 expenditure (donation)	300.00
Mere Matters	S. 137 expenditure (donation)	600.00
Mere Brownies	S. 137 expenditure (donation in lieu of flag raising)	
Mere School	3% of bill to service fire alarms	3.09
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Gang Mowers	42.30
Farnfield & Nicholls	Additional search fees in relation to transfer of Clements Lane Play Area	6.00
I. V. & S. M. Thomas	Hedge trimming	258.50
Kingsbury Hedging	Cremation Interment	20.00
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Back pack sprayer	59.95

Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	178.86
R. V. Maidment Skip Hire	Skip Hire for artificial cricket wicket	????
A. Suter	Grounds maintenance from 22.5.08 – 27.5.08	279.50
Duncan Fearnley Cricket	Coaching equipment (to be covered by donation)	828.00
Imprest account	PAYE, Petty Cash etc.	????
Salisbury District Council	Bin Bags	18.00
Paul Millard Plant Hire Ltd	Removal of concrete pads in sports grounds	540.50
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Stihl Backpack Strimmer	103.29

b) To approve Budget/Expenditure Report at 31.3.08 and verify bank balances - deferred

c) To report on allotment rent audit held on 26th March – the Clerk reported on the allotment rent audit and confirmed that she was hopeful that the rentals received would meet the lease payments. However, she informed members that an invoice from the Duchy of Cornwall for allotment lease rental had still not been received. Members asked the Clerk to write a letter to the Duchy.

160. General Items

a) Invitation to attend Parish & Town Liaison Meeting on Tuesday, 8th July at 6.30 p.m. (City Hall, Salisbury) – it was agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk would attend the meeting.

b) Mere Film Shows – Cllr. Mrs. White reported that during the previous two years, the Film Shows had made a profit and there was money available at the end of the year (about £700) to distribute amongst local groups and organizations. However, due to various problems encountered by the Film Shows this year, their profit is depleted (only £400 of which £100 has been pledged to the Cricket Club to help with their application for funding for equipment) and she was asking the Parish Council for approval to carry forward the money to next year. There was unanimous approval to this suggestion.

c) Report on Conference ‘Developing Community Area Partnerships in South Wiltshire’ attended on 13th May - the Clerk reported that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and herself had attended the meeting and that a full and comprehensive report on the meeting had been sent to her which she would make available to anyone interested.

d) Report on Sports Development meeting held on 28th May – Cllr. Hazzard, Chairman of Sports Development reported that all the sports groups were represented at the meeting, apart from football. There were no significant problems to report.

e) Wessex Water – Consultation on draft Water Resources Management Plan - noted

161. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground – nothing discussed

162. Clerks Report - The Clerks report was confirmed and adopted.

*Further information on these items contained in Clerks Report.