

Parish Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 3rd March 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Cllrs. R. Coward (Chairman), Mrs. M. White (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward, M. Hall, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, E. Mitchell, M. Peirce, R. Sims, S. Squires & Mrs. L. Traves.
Also present: Mary Harbert, John Gammy, Mr. & Mrs. Cox, M. Whatley, L. Stanton

Presentation from Three Rivers Partnership on proposed new sports facilities for Gillingham.

Mr. Stewart & David Webb, explained that the whole of the existing Sports Centre in Gillingham would be closing at the end of this month & indeed, the swimming pool had already closed. The Three Rivers Partnership is trying to replace the current facilities for everyone living in the surrounding area, make the swimming pool bigger & suitable for competition purposes, extend the sports hall to a 4 badminton court size and add a community hall with seating for 250 – 300 people. A recent feasibility study showed overwhelming support for the project and the Three Rivers Partnership commissioned an up-to-date funding review which suggested that there was a potential £1 million or £1.5 million funding that could be successfully bid for. NDDC has already earmarked £4m for the project. The Partnership then went to Philip Proctor Associates (architects) to ask what could be built for that money & they came back with encouraging news & the ultimate key to success is ensuring a sound business plan. There is a degree of risk but the message from leisure professionals is that a new facility can be run by the local community for a great deal less than by a local authority. However, swimming pools do not make a profit & there will be revenue shortfall. In the business plan, the Three Rivers Partnership is assuming that the consumer base for the new facilities will encompass everyone within a 5mile/15 minute-drive radius of Gillingham town – a population of near 30,000 living in Gillingham, Mere, Shaftesbury & all the surrounding parishes. This catchment area has nearly 12,000 Band D equivalent households and sharing a public subsidy fairly between them, each band D household in this area would pay £14.48 per annum (£1.20 per month) for the new proposed facilities. Gillingham Town and several of the neighbouring villages had already precepted towards the development of the project and Gillingham Town Council has made a considerable capital contribution. However, the Three Rivers Partnership is appealing to all councils in the catchment area to join in & would like Mere Parish Council to consider how this works within the community of Mere. There will be an exhibition on 28th, 29th & 30th March in the old Leisure Centre, showing drawings & plans of the new facility.

Public Session

John Gammy from Vogue Cottage spoke regarding Planning Application S/2008/312 and said that he had no objection to the planning application on condition that it did not affect his access or narrow the entrance.

Mr. Gammy also said that every Saturday night at around 9.30 p.m., there is a coach that stops in The Square to take people to Club Ice in Westbury. When it stops, people often leave the minibus in order to go to the toilet and instead of going down to the car park, they decide to use doorways and shop entrances for this purpose. It was agreed to find out if the public toilets are open at this time of night and, if so, to ask Club Ice to use the Salisbury Street Car Park as their collection point. Also to ask the community beat officer to pay a visit to ensure that this doesn't happen.

Mrs. Traves reported that after about 150 yards past the Walnut Tree Inn, towards Shaftesbury, there was a dark area that would benefit from street lighting.

Mrs. White reported that there has been recent concern on coming out of Mill Lane into Pettridge Lane at Edgebridge. She was aware that one of the residents of Mill Lane had spoken to the police but wondered if it might help if the existing road sign on the junction was replaced and also the existing 'SLOW' road markings were renewed.

Mr. Sims reported that there was a drain into the pavement opposite the Chapel in Boar Street that was causing a safety hazard for pedestrians.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. G. Jeans, R. Hughes, Mrs. R. Porter & D. Sealy. Also PCSO Michael Tryhorn who was not on duty.

120. Declarations of Interest – None received

121. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 4th February 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a majority of those present on 4.2.08

122. 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/2008/209 – TREES IN CONS. AREA – CROWN LIFT OFF SHED ROOF & PRUNE LIGHTLY OFF 2 CABLES

CASTLE HILL BARN, CASTLE HILL LANE, MERE.

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

S/2008/265 – FULL APPLICATION – SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION
EDGEBRIDGE HOUSE, MILL LANE, MERE.

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

S/2008/286 – TREES IN CONS. AREA – CROWN REDUCE BEECH BY UP TO 40%
LAWRENCES, OLD HOLLOW, MERE.

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

S/2008/303 – FULL APPLICATION – PROPOSED SIDE EXTENSION TO PROVIDE GARAGE AND OFFICE

RHEOLA, PETTRIDGE LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Hill proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a majority vote in favour. (Cllr. Mrs. White abstained from voting).

S/2008/312 – FULL APPLICATION – CONVERSION AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING GARAGE TO CREATE TWO BED DWELLING

THE OLD BAKERY, NORTH STREET, MERE.

There was discussion regarding the on-street parking in North Street and the need to ensure that there was sufficient off-street parking provision for this application. There was also a discussion on the fact that the Parish Council's policy, when considering applications for new garages, is to attach a condition tying the garage to the house so that it cannot be converted into a dwelling and therefore, this application would be setting a precedent for the Parish Council. Cllr. Sims proposed that the application is recommended for refusal on the grounds

of traffic & parking congestion and due to the fact that this would set a precedent. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell – there were four votes for the proposal, 4 votes against and 2 abstentions. The Chairman used his vote to support Cllr. Sim's proposal to recommend refusal of the application for the following reasons:

- 1) This existing site currently provides off-street parking for four cars. The access statement states that this is in excess of the requirement of the current owners. However, North Street is a narrow street and at times, particularly at night and at weekends, it is congested with parked cars on both sides of the road. The Parish Council fears that the conversion of this garage will exacerbate the on-street parking problem by, a) taking away existing off-street parking provision and, b) creating a need for more on-street parking in the long term.
- 2) The Parish Council fears that approval of this planning application would create an undesirable precedent for the conversion to separate dwellings of garages and other ancillary buildings.

S/2008/313 – FULL APPLICATION – SINGLE STOREY REAR CONSERVATORY
5 CLEMENTS LANE, MERE.

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

***b) For LDF Working Group to approve Report of meeting held on Monday, 18th February – report attached** – members of the working group approved the report.

c) For Council to approve recommendations made by LDF Working Group at meeting held on Monday, 18th February – Cllr. Sims proposed that the Council should approve these recommendations. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a unanimous vote.

123. Matters Arising

a) Report from County Councillor – none given

b) Report from District Councillor to include report on Western Area Committee Meetings – none given

c) Report from Transport representative – Cllr. Sims reported that the next meeting of the Shaftesbury & Gillingham Transport Forum is to be held on 14th April in Gillingham Town Hall. Cllr. Sims reported on the passenger figures for the Connect 2 from April '07 – December '07 and said that the best figures were in June, July & September registering over 1,000 passengers per month but this was while the bus was registered as the Wigglybus. Since the Connect 2 changeover, the best month has been November with 943 passengers. The service is becoming increasingly popular, particularly the Clarks Village & Yeovil shopping days. The average subsidy over the 9 months is £4.78.

d) Report from Community Safety Representative – Cllr. Sims reported that he had received a response from Richard Salter the Community Beat Manager as to why he could not attend the Community Safety Partnership AGM which was due to staffing problems resulting in the fact that he is covering all local neighbourhood policing matters in Mere & Tisbury alone. P. C. Salter is suffering at the hands of staffing problems. Cllr. Sims reported on a meeting he had attended in Salisbury entitled 'Improving Community Public Safety' and a meeting he had attended in Trowbridge entitled 'CCTV National Strategy Conference'. Cllr. Sims had learnt that a Code of Practice for the use of CCTV's in public places had been approved in January 2008 and all cameras in public places must have signage.

e) Boundary issues adjacent to Jubilee Gardens – Cllrs. Mrs. White & G. Jeans measured the boundary in February and a copy of the measurements was lodged with the Parish Clerk. Cllr.s Mrs. White reported that they had acknowledged the fact there was a pillar on the north

eastern boundary marking the line of the old wall running between Jubilee Gardens and Whitford House although the hedge had been planted inside the wall and the wall now demolished. The Parish Council was happy that the measurements tallied with the Parish Council's understanding of the extent of their ownership of Jubilee Gardens/Castle Hill Approach.

f) 2008 Best Kept Village Fiftieth Anniversary Competition & Calor Village of the Year Competition 2008/09 – Cllr. Hazzard reported that Cllr. Mrs. Porter was arranging a meeting to co-ordinate the submission of an entry for Mere.

g) White Road Cabin – legal fees in relation to transfer – the Clerk informed members that Cornhill Estate's solicitors had quoted a figure of £250 + VAT (+ Land Registry fees) and the Parish Council's solicitors had quoted a figure of £500 + VAT to transfer the Title of the Cabin. The Parish Council suggested that, before committing itself to spending money on these legal fees, it would be prudent to have some idea of our legal responsibilities and access rights to the building and the Clerk was asked to write again to Cornhill Estates seeking clarification on the rights of access, restrictions of use etc.

124. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

a) Jobs for Parish Steward – it was agreed that the Parish Steward should be asked to look again at issues around The Lynch/Pettridge Lane.

b) Traffic Management Scheme for Castle Street (Condition 14 of planning application for former Castle Hill Garage) - deferred

c) Traffic speeds on entrances to Mere – the Clerk confirmed that she had written to the Road Safety Camera Partnership in February but a response was still pending.

125. Finance

a) Payments – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote:

David R. Jones	Annual maintenance service on clock (clock tower)	152.75
Westree	Tree inspection/assessment	423.00
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Chainsaw chain + reel of strimmer line	40.58
Tincknell Fuels	Gas Oil	150.68
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	185.69
Imprest Account (cheque Nos. 2381 – 2391)	Payroll & petty cash	2876.53
J. T. Evans	Gas supply for Andy Young Pavilion	95.90
Mr. & Mrs. A. Charlton	Last account for sundries at V & A Charlton	53.71
Nick Lear	Cleaning Andy Young Pavilion	180.00

b) Fencing at Duchy Manor Grounds – Cllr. Hazzard asked for the Parish Council's approval to spend £200 on an area of 30m at the eastern boundary of the grounds that currently has no fence. Cllr. Hazzard felt that a fence would be a health and safety benefit because the next field contained a pond and a stockproof fence would provide a barrier between the sports field and the next field. Cllr. P. Coward proposed that the fence should be provided by the Parish Council. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a vote of 8 in favour.

126. Insurance & Health & Safety

***a) Insurance Review – to adopt recommendations made by working group meeting on 13.2.08 – report attached** – Cllr. Hall proposed that the recommendations be adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

***b) To adopt or comment on the following:**

i) **Draft Risk Management Policy** – Cllr. P. Coward proposed that the policy should be adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

ii) **Draft Risk Management Strategy (incomplete)** – Cllr. C. Hazzard proposed that the document should be adopted and congratulated the Clerk on producing it. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a unanimous vote.

- **Review of systems of internal control** – the Council adopted the recommendations and items within the report submitted by the Clerk.
- **Review effectiveness of system of internal audit** – the Council adopted the recommendations and items within the report submitted by the Clerk.

127. General Items

a) Tourism Promotion – Cllr. Clive Hazzard says that he was concerned about the closing shops and economic problems that Mere seemed to be facing at the moment and he wanted to arrange a get together with the Chamber of Trade and SDC's Tourism Office to discuss how we might encourage people to come into Mere. Cllr. Hill felt that the parking problems in Castle Street did little to encourage anyone to come into Mere. It was agreed that Cllr. Hazzard should investigate this matter further and that it should be raised again on the next agenda.

a) To set date, venue and agenda for Annual Parish Meeting – it was agreed that the meeting should be held in the Grove Buildings on Wednesday 23rd April or 7th May. It was further agreed to invite Three Rivers Partnership to do a similar presentation about Leisure Facilities and also to discuss Tourism, Local Development Framework and Best Kept Village Competition.

b) Suggestion to invite Chamber of Trade to future Parish Council meeting – Cllr. Mrs. White said she was concerned that a lot of natural progression had disappeared and shops were closing in the town and there seemed to be a general loss of visitors. Cllr. Mrs. White wondered what the Chamber of Trade felt about this and what their policy was in promoting businesses in Mere. There were 2 members of the Chamber of Trade present at the meeting (John Gammy & Mary Harbert) and the Chairman suspended the meeting in order for them to speak where they said that they did not have many members and were trying hard to get themselves noticed but it was very hard to get support from local businesses. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Chamber of Trade should be invited to a future meeting.

c) Invitation to a Reception & Briefing by the Army Presentation Team – Cllr. Mrs. White said that she may be interested in attending.

d) Electoral Boundary Review – the Clerk informed members that an electoral boundary review was taking place to establish electoral divisions for the new Wiltshire unitary council and will come into effect for the elections in May 2009. WCC hopes to consult formally with district, parish & town councils in mid March.

e) One Council for Wiltshire – Invitation to 'Parish Meet & Greet' evening – it was agreed that the Chairman and the Clerk would attend the meeting at Sarum College, Salisbury on Tuesday, 22nd April.

128. Clerks Report – The Clerks Report was confirmed and adopted.

*Further information on these items in Clerks Report

