

Mere Parish Council

Parish Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 14th January 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors R. Coward (Chairman), Mrs. M. White (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward, M. Hall, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, M. Peirce, Mrs. R. Porter, D. Sealy, S. Squires & Mrs. L. Traves.

Also County Cllr. Mrs. B. Wayman
R. Potter & M. Whatley

Public Session

Mrs. White said that she had been asked to mention the broken seat and flower tub on the island outside Balcony Cottages and the ever-increasing number and size of potholes in Mill Lane. Mrs. White also thanked Cllr. Jeans for his help in sorting out difficulties faced with the licensing officer over the film shows.

Mr. Hughes added that the highway conditions from Southbrook to Limpers Hill & near St. Matthews Church had deteriorated significantly.

Mr. P. Coward wondered if something could be done to improve the system for emptying the recycling skips in the car park. He pointed out that the paper skip was often completely full. Cllr. Jeans said that he would ask if the skips could be emptied more often.

Apologies for absence received from Councillors C. Hazzard, R. Hill & R. Sims

97. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Hall declared a personal interest in Minute No. 99 (Planning Application S/2007/2576)

Cllr. Jeans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 103 a)

98. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 3rd December 2007 be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a unanimous vote of those councillors present on 3.12.07. Cllr. P. Coward proposed that the Budget Committee approve Minutes of Budget Meeting held on Tuesday, 4th December 2007, proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those councillors present on 4.12.07.

99. 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/2007/2507 – CHANGE OF USE – RETROSPECTIVE CHANGE OF USE FROM ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION TO USE AS A SEPARATE DWELLING

THE COACH HOUSE, CASTLE STREET, MERE.

Cllr. Peirce proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sealy. Proposal was not carried with a vote of 4 in favour and 5 against. It was therefore agreed that the application should be recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

a) The development proposed on this site without adequate provision for parking facilities would be likely to encourage parking on the highway with consequent risk of additional hazards to all users of the road.

b) The development proposed on this site would have a detrimental effect on the amenities currently enjoyed by surrounding properties and residents.

S/2007/2525 – TREES IN CONS. AREA – 1 x LAUREL FELL
1 X WILLOW REDUCE BY 30%
THE COTTAGE, OLD HOLLOW, MERE.

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

S/2007/2542 – CHANGE OF USE OF RETAIL PREMISES TO RESIDENTIAL
10 CHURCH STREET, MERE.

The Clerk explained that the previous application for change of use of this premises had been recommended for refusal by the Parish Council and had also been refused by SDC. However, a new planning application had been submitted with an amended statement declaring that the property had now been marketed as a retail premises with living accommodation, as an investment opportunity with living accommodation and as a separate retail outlet for rental on a leasehold basis.

Cllr. P. Coward felt that part of the problem with the sale of this property was the tied property at the rear and he said that he was aware that there had been interest in the shop but the people interested could not afford the property as a whole. Cllr. Mitchell proposed that the Parish Council should object to the planning application for the same reasons as before. He felt that it was not a good time to market properties over the Xmas period and that it may be possible to acquire rental or purchase interest in the coming months. Cllr. Sealy pointed out that it was unlikely for a butcher to be interested in acquiring the premises and that any other retail use would require complete renovation and it would cost a lot of money to strip out all the butchers fittings. Cllr. Hall wondered what lengths the Parish Council expected someone to go to in order to prove that their business was no longer viable. Cllr. Peirce felt that the premises was not in The Square and was therefore not in a prime location. Cllr. Jeans pointed out that the Parish Plan, which was a community document adopted by the Parish Council, stated that the community voted to resist the closure of shops and said that in 3 years we have seen 11 businesses close which was not good for a sustainable community. Cllr. Mitchell's proposal was seconded by Cllr. Squires but not carried with a vote of 2 for, 7 against and 2 abstentions.

S/2007/2576 – TREES IN CONS. AREA – CROWN RAISE 1 x HORSE CHESTNUT & FELL 1 x ORNAMENTAL CHERRY TREE
WATERSIDE VILLAGE, WATERSIDE, MERE.

Cllr. S. Squires proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with a unanimous vote. (Cllr. Hall, having declared an interest, refrained from voting or discussion).

S/2007/2571 – FULL APPLICATION – CONSERVATORY TO SOUTH ELEVATION

WOODSTOCK HOUSE, SHAFTESBURY ROAD, MERE.

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

S/2007/2581 – FULL APPLICATION – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING ASBESTOS BUNGALOW AND CONCRETE GARAGE AND ERECTION OF TIMBER FRAME BARN STYLE HOUSE AND GARAGE
THE PAX, LIMPERS HILL, MERE.

Cllr. Squires proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a majority vote in favour. (Cllrs. R. Hughes & G. Jeans abstained from voting).

S/2008/24 – FULL APPLICATION – ERECT DWELLING & CREATE NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS

BUTTS PADDOCK, SOUTHBROOK, MERE.

Cllr. Sealy proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with a vote of 6 for, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

b) Parish Council input into Local Development Framework –

With reference to the information given and discussion held during the December meeting, Cllr. Jeans stressed the significance of the Local Development Framework. The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to Mr. Milton (SDC Officer) regarding this issue and he had

confirmed that it would be helpful to the District Council if they had some idea of what Mere Parish Council thought they would like Mere to be like in 10 years time. For example, would the Parish Council like to see housing developments within a certain housing policy boundary and existing town-centre employment sites moved to a new employment area outside the town centre? Would the Parish Council like to see the housing policy boundary realigned? As a result of consultation documents already received, officers at SDC will now be producing Options papers and Mr. Milton stated that it was inevitable that there will be housing allocations, employment allocations and boundary changes for Mere. He felt that it might be preferable and beneficial for the Parish Council to make some suggestions now rather than wait for an officer from Salisbury to make the suggestions which the Parish Council would then need to react to.

Cllr. Jeans felt that one area which might be important to clarify is whether or not the Parish Council wants to include windfall sites within its housing allocation. It was agreed that this matter would need some deliberation and that a working group of interested councillors should meet at the Parish Council offices to discuss the issues in more detail who can then present a full report to the Parish Council for consideration.

Those councillors interested were M. Hall, Mrs. White, P. Coward, G. Jeans, R. Coward and Mrs. Porter.

c) Policies for Local Development Framework to support economy for sustainable settlement – Cllr. Jeans pointed out that the District Council views Mere as a ‘sustainable settlement’ and wondered whether the Parish Council should have some input in policies for the LDF to support the economy for Mere as a sustainable settlement. It was agreed that the working party (as formed in Minute 99b – above) should look into this also.

d) Query raised in public session of last meeting regarding action taken on issues raised in Community Area Plan 2004-2009 – the Clerk pointed out that with reference to the queries raised by Mrs. Pringle during December’s Public Session – she had downloaded a progress report on the Western Area Community Plans and written

to Mrs. Pringle giving her details of how to obtain this information – members noted this information.

e) Parish & Town Councillors Training Seminar – there were no councillors able to attend the all-day planning seminar in Salisbury.

100. Matters Arising

a) Report from County Councillor – Mrs. Wayman reported that a young lady from Mere had received a Wiltshire Young People's Award and that the Highways Authority had given permission for their Mere Depot to be used as a base for the Motorcycle Access Project giving young people a chance of affordable transport by loaning them a motorbike. Mrs. Wayman also said that following attempts to arrange a meeting to discuss the weight limit proposals for the B3092 and B3098 it had been revealed that there was a delay with the Highways Agency's junction study and the meeting had therefore been postponed.

b) Report from District Councillor to include report on Western Area Committee Meetings – Cllr. Jeans reported that, despite the representations made by Cllr. Mrs. White on behalf of the Parish Council to keep the advertising sign on the A303 for future use by Mere businesses, the Western Area Committee resolved (by a majority of only one vote) to serve a discontinuance notice requiring that use of the site for advertisement notice should cease.

c) Report from Transport representative - deferred

d) Report from Community Safety Representative - deferred

**e) Reduction in speed limit through Mere – analysis of speed data collected* – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, Cllr. P. Coward stated that he still maintained that a roundabout outside Bramley House would provide the best measure to slow traffic speeds coming into Mere. The Clerk explained that she had also obtained details of the company that had provided the Speed Indicator Device for Gillingham Town council. Cllr. Peirce said that he felt a Speed Indicator Device would help to reduce traffic speeds along Castle Street and the Clerk was asked to enquire from the Highways Authority about the criteria for providing and siting such a device.

f) Boundary issues adjacent to Jubilee Gardens – deferred.

101. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

a) Jobs for Parish Steward – it was agreed to ask the Parish Steward to cut back overgrowth in Dark Lane.

b) Suggestion for pedestrian crossing in Pettridge Lane – the request, which had come from Mr. David Chalke, was read out. Members felt that extra pedestrian safety measures had been taken for Pettridge Lane some years ago with the provision to include a footpath along its length and make safer crossing places where the road narrows and that a formal pedestrian crossing would not be feasible.

c) Suggestion for a bus shelter in The Square – The Clerk read out a letter from Mrs. Stansfield, requesting a bus shelter in The Square, outside Balcony Cottages. Cllr. Mrs. Porter was concerned that there was not enough space to provide a bus shelter. It was agreed to investigate the matter further, to see if there was suitable space, costings and criteria from the Highways Authority.

d) Concerns raised in public session of last meeting regarding speed of passing traffic and safety of pedestrians trying to cross highway in The Square – there was a discussion on the number of large lorries passing through Mere and whether they were doing so unnecessarily.

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

a) Trees in Cons. Area consent to fell approx. 150 trees and clear Long Hill of secondary Woodland – The Clerk confirmed that SDC had raised no objection to the notice.

b) Felling Licence application for Long Hill – the Clerk also confirmed that the Woodland Officer for the Forestry Commission had confirmed that he was generally happy with the council's proposals to fell the trees on Long Hill but asked that a small number of trees on the north side, in particular one beech tree and maybe one or two of the better/larger ash be retained.

103. Finance

a) Payments: Cllr. Mrs White proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs Traves and carried with a majority vote. (Cllr. Jeans, having declared an interest, left the room whilst the matter was being discussed).

A. R. Diesels	Capital Purchase – New vehicle	4112.50
	Less part-exchange for Landrover	Already pd.
Post Office Ltd	Vehicle tax for Diahatsu	180.00
		Already pd.
A. McCann	MUGA – installation of noticeboards	160.58
G. McCann	MUGA – installation of noticeboards	105.00
Bow Fire Protection	Service fire extinguishers	48.00
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Chainsaw chain	18.33
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service gang mowers	387.75
P. F. Parsons Ltd	Replace guttering and downpipe at chapel	393.95
P. F. Parsons Ltd	Replace broken paving slabs around bowling green	90.77**
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	90.22
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service Husqvarna Chainsaw & Stihl Chainsaw	94.00
Mazars	External audit work undertaken on behalf of the Audit Commission for the year ended 31.3.07	646.25
Southern Electric	Electricity supply to clock tower	16.11
Jeans	RCD adaptors for football floodlights	17.98
Cash	(Scats – links to repair play equipment)	7.96
Imprest account (cheques 2362 - 2371)	Payroll, petty cash etc.	4212.29

D. Phillips (Insurance Brokers) Ltd	Insurance premium for Diahatsu	367.73
Playtop	Play Area Surface Repair Kit	302.56
Cllr. R. Sims	Reimbursement of travel expenses	57.00
Henry Cooch & Son Ltd	Proforma for mobile floodlighting unit	8248.50***

** To be reimbursed by Mere Bowling Club

*** To be reimbursed from Policy R2 Developer's funds

b) Assessment of Internal Auditor - deferred

c) Is there any interest in asking SDC to transfer assets to Parish Council (car parks, old bowling green)? – Cllr. Jeans explained that, in view of the impending unitary authority situation, there was a possibility that SDC might be willing to transfer assets to the Parish Council instead of transferring them to WCC. It was agreed that, rather than making a decision on what assets the Parish Council may or may not want, we should write in the first instance to SDC to register an interest and ask if we could be kept informed.

****d) Audit of Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2007*** – External auditor's certificate and opinion – members noted the information in the Clerks Report and thanked the Clerk for preparing all the papers and documents.

e) To adopt recommendations made by Budget Committee as per Minutes of Budget Meeting held on Tuesday, 4th December 2007 – Cllr. Mrs White proposed that the recommendations be adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a unanimous vote.

f) To approve Precept on Salisbury District Council of £71,577 for 2008/09 financial year – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Precept be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

104. Health & Safety

a) Health & Safety & Fire Risk Assessments – deferred.

105. Community Safety

a) Public Meeting – Tuesday, 5th February 2008 – Improving Community Safety – it was suggested that Cllr. Roy Sims may be interested in attending the meeting.

106. General Items

a) Training day for New Councillors (Saturday, 15th March 2008 at Civic Hall, Trowbridge) – members noted the information and it was agreed that they should contact the Clerk if interested in attending.

b) Correspondence with owner of The Old Ship Hotel – the Clerk read copies of correspondence with the owner regarding the possible re-opening of the hotel.

c) Salisbury District Council Parish & Town Council Liaison Meeting – it was agreed that the Chairman, District Councillor and Clerk would attend the meeting.

107. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground

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

b) Closing of gates in Recreation Ground at night – Cllr. Jeans pointed out that there had been complaints about cars driving into the Recreation Ground late at night and other disturbances and he said that the shutting of the gates was very much left in the hands of the volunteer key holders. The question as to whether or not the Trustees should pay someone to open and shut the gates was discussed but no decision was made on this.

108. Clerks Report – Cllr. P. Coward proposed that the Clerks Report be confirmed and adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves.

*Further information on these items in Clerks Report