

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 2nd November 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors: E. Mitchell (Chairman), M. Hall (Vice-Chairman), C. Hazzard, R. Hill, D. Sealy, R. Sims, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves & Mrs. M. White.

Also: Mrs. A. Howell, R. Potter & M. Whatley.

Public Session

Mrs. A. Howell wanted to raise a number of points regarding the planning application for Old Hollow Rise and said that this was a very contentious planning application when first mooted and one of the criteria was that on the western boundary there should be a thorn hedge and indigenous trees planted. On the present new application she could see no mention of hedge and trees, but it did mention a fence. Mrs. Howell asked the Parish Council to request observance to the original planning condition in respect of this boundary so that it presents a pleasing aspect when viewed from the conservation area. Mrs. Howell also said that the height of the houses was of some concern in the original application and plots 25 and 26 are now shown as 2.5 storey with windows in the roof. Mrs. Howell suggested that these houses should be reduced in height so as to present a more pleasing aspect when viewed from the Conservation Area and AONB. Mrs. Howell also expressed concern about the huge pile of sub-soil on this building site at the present time and said that she was bringing this to the attention of the planning authority.

Mrs. Howell raised the fact that the water levels along Waterside were extremely low and asked the Parish Council to write to Wessex Water about this matter. She also asked the Parish Council to seriously consider taking on the duty of river cleaning along Waterside and said that this was a tourist area which was publicized on the parish website.

Mrs. Howell asked the Parish Council if it could plant some hedging to screen the composting area in the far bottom left-hand corner of the cemetery.

Mrs. Mary White mentioned the lack of water in the river through Ashfield Water and Burton Pond.

Mr. Squires said that the two tubs on the clock tower island are regularly being vandalized and that Mr. Hansford spends time most days re-planting the tubs. He said that the vandals were not young children but 15 – 16 year olds who regularly display anti-social behavior in and around The Square. It was agreed to mention this to PCSO Jake Noble.

Mr. Sims raised concerns about recycling and said that although 3 wagons come around to collect the rubbish and recycling separately, it is apparently then all thrown into one wagon and is therefore not recycled at all. Mr. Sims was advised to take the matter up with Wiltshire Cllr. Jeans.

The Clerk read out a letter from Stephen Burroughs, Deputy Chairman of the Stour & Vale Hydro Group which thanked the Parish Council for their helpful letter in support of the SEEDS funding application for micro hydro at the Group's three pilot demonstration sites which include Lordsmead Mill. Mr. Burroughs reported that the 1st Stage Application was well received at the Local Action Group (LAG) meeting in September with an average score of 4.35 out of 5.0. The 'LAG' made many positive and encouraging comments indicating that the proposal is also of high enough quality to proceed to the Executive stage for the Main Application in December.

Apologies for absence received from Councillors: P. Coward, R. Coward, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, Mrs. R. Porter. Also PC Richard Salter & PCSO Jake Noble.

334. Declarations of Interest – None received

335. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 5th October 2009 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 5.10.09.

336. Planning

a) Applications: (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council's website <http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning/development-control/planning-applications.htm> – and type in the relevant number)

S/2009/1480/TCA – TREES CONS. AREA – 1 x ASH TREE, 1 x CHESTNUT AND 1 x YEW TREE – RAISE CROWN TO 15FT, 4 x BIRCH, 1 X BLUE SPRUCE AND 2 X POPLAR – FELL, 5 X LIMES TO RAISE CROWN TO ALLOW ACCESS
THE CHANTRY HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, MERE.

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

S/2009/1522/FULL – FULL PLANNING – SUBSTITUTION OF HOUSE TYPES ON PLOTS 1, 2, 16-26 AND THE ADDITION OF PLOT 27 ON PREVIOUS APPROVAL S/2006/1599 FOR 26 DWELLINGS AT DOWNSIDE CLOSE, MERE.
OLD HOLLOW RISE, DOWNSIDE CLOSE, MERE.

Cllr. Hall felt that the addition of plot No. 27 was secondary but that proper screening of the site was more important and that the developers should be made to observe the original conditions in relation to landscaping. Cllr Hall proposed that the application be recommended for approval with conditions and that the following submission should be made:

The Parish Council has no objection to most of the alterations and modifications to previous approval S/2006/1599, being applied for within this application. However, there is one modification that the Parish Council is stringently against and that relates to the boundary treatment. The previous approval included a 2 metre wide mixed thorn hedge with indigenous specimen trees on the western boundary of the site. However, in the new application, the hedge is replaced with 'Demountable Fences with drainage easement'. As this is such a prominent site, visible from a vast number of viewpoints in the north-western edge of Mere and forming the backdrop of a Conservation Area, the Parish Council feels strongly that a fence would be wholly inappropriate and that the original 'approved' hedges and trees should be planted as a form of landscaping and screening.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a vote of 5 for, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

S/2009/1521/S73 – VARIATION CONDDITION – VARIATION OF CONDITION 13 TO PLANNING PERMISSION S/2008/1494 (FOR NEW DWELLING) IN ORDER TO DISPOSE FOUL DRAINAGE TO A PACKAGE TREATMENT PLANT RATHER THAN THE MAINS SEWER LAND ADJACENT CASTLE HILL LANE, CASTLE HILL LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Mrs. Traves reminded members that the Parish Council had informed the Planning Authority of problems with the drainage system in the initial planning application stage. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should object to the above proposal and that the following submission should be made:

The Parish Council objects to the variation of condition 13 to the original planning permission S/2009/1494 on the basis that a connection to the mains sewer is an available option. You will note that within the Parish Council's consultation response to the original planning application S/2008/1494, we added a note of concern that 'the proposal states that foul drainage from the site will run to the main sewer but we have been informed that there is no mains drainage in Castle Hill Lane.' The applicant was aware of the situation and the Parish Council does not want to set a precedent so that others may follow suit.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a vote of 5 for and 2 abstentions

337. Matters Arising

a) Wiltshire Councillors Report, to include report on South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting held 16.9.09 – as Cllr. Jeans was absent, there was not report given.

b) Report from Community Safety Representative – Cllr. Sims reported that there would be a Neighbourhood Watch meeting in Small lecture Hall on 16th November starting at 7.00 p.m. and that anyone who would like to could come along.

c) Report from Transport Representative – Cllr. Sims reported that Network Rail were creating passing places for trains on the route from Exeter to Waterloo and when this is completed, there will be hourly services in each direction.

338. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

a) Parish Steward – The Clerk reported that, during his last visit the Parish Steward had cleaned/cleared “Mere” sign and bollards on B3095, repaired potholes on footpath near Wellhead, cut hedge in front of roundabout sign by the Walnut, cut back hedge around fingerpost and footpath entrance at Woodlands Road and checked/cleared various grips and gullies through Mere.

The following jobs were identified for his next visit:

- Mill Lane – grass in middle of road needs cutting.
- Clean street name signs and clear of obstructions – throughout the town.

***b) Notice that Wiltshire Council has made an Order to temporarily introduce a 7.5 tonne MGW weight restriction on various roads in the locality** – members noted the information, as detailed in the Clerks Report.

339. Allotments

a) Renewal of lease and registration with Land Registry – The Clerk confirmed that the Council’s lease with the Duchy for the allotment land and Castle Hill Play Area had now been completed. However, the Duchy’s solicitors had asked the Parish Council to Register the Lease with the Land Registry. The Clerk said that she understood this to be new legislation and had made some enquiries with the Land Registry who had said that it would be possible, although time consuming, to Register the Lease ourselves. Members asked the Clerk to check with the Duchy of Cornwall on this requirement.

340. Cemetery

a) Responses to suggestion to create allotment area adjacent to new cemetery – The Clerk confirmed that there had been nine responses to the notice in Mere Matters, four had been in support of the suggestion, four had objected and another thought it would be a better idea to plant it as a community orchard. Members felt that as there was not an overwhelming level of support and as the site was fairly sensitive and the Parish Council needed to be considerate, the suggestion should not be pursued further.

341. Finance & Resources

a) Payments: To approve payments as listed in payment schedule – Cllr. Hall proposed that the following items be approved for payment. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a majority vote.

Mere Tennis Club	Reimbursement for tennis coaching fees – Summer 2008	240.00
Mere Town Youth Football Club	Reimbursement for coaching fees - October 2008	640.00
Mere Town Youth Football Club	Reimbursement for coaching fees – February 2009	370.00
Mere Town Youth Football Club	Reimbursement for coaching fees – June 2009	875.00
Mere Youth Development Centre	Reimbursement for coaching fees – July 2009	510.00
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna ride-on mower	14.66
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna ride-on mower	29.90
Campaign to Protect Rural England	Membership subscription	29.00
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Capital purchase – new hedgecutter	450.00
Tincknell Fuels	Gas oil	182.96
Gedney Bulb Company Ltd	Daffodil bulbs for new cemetery	122.48
Jeans	Bulb for sensor light on AYP	5.99
Scats	Safety boots, First Aid Kits & Tree Ties	64.70
Cash	Reimbursement for Advert in BVM to sell felled timber	10.07
Cash	Reimbursement for Zone Alarm Internet Security annual	38.20

	renewal	
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	146.35
Impress Account – cheque Nos. 2620 - 2624	Wages, Petty Cash, PAYE & Pension	3496.83

b) Invitation from BT to adopt local red telephone kiosk(s) – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, the Clerk explained that BT would remove the telephony and then the ownership of the kiosk structure is transferred and can be used for whatever purpose may be of benefit to the local community. Members felt that the telephone kiosks would become a liability and a drain on financial resources and it was resolved that the Parish Council should decline the invitation to adopt them. However, it was agreed that we should inform BT that the Parish Council may be interested in adopting the telephone kiosk in The Square, should that become available in the future. Proposal made by Cllr. Hall, seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a unanimous vote.

342. General Items

a) Rivers Meet Leisure Centre – Cllr. Mrs. White reported that she had attended the ceremony to lay a commemorative stone to mark the progress of the building works for the new leisure centre at Gillingham. Cllr. Mrs. White reported that Mr. Havill, the Chairman of Gillingham Community & Leisure Trust Ltd, asked again if Mere would be subscribing £13 per band D house with a commitment for a 4-year payment. Cllr. Mrs. White said that she had explained the Parish Council’s previous feelings on this matter but had agreed to report back to the Parish Council to ask if councillors felt any different about the issue. The Chairman said that he had recently spoken to Mr. Colin Dann, former Mayor of Gillingham, and explained the Parish Council’s point of view and he had understood the situation. Members had no different views on the matter and felt that their financial commitments and responsibilities to the sports provision in Mere were of primary importance.

b) Xmas – lights, tree, judging, ceremonies etc. – Cllr. Hughes said that he would arrange for the provision of a Xmas tree and it was agreed that councillors would make the necessary arrangements to arrange for the erection of the tree and lights. Members asked the Clerk to contact Melinda Emby to ask if she would like to organise the switching on ceremony again. Cllr. Mrs. Traves agreed to carry out the xmas light judging again this year, but pointed out that this would be the last time.

c) Remembrance Sunday Parade – members were reminded that the parade and service was taking place this Sunday at 10.30 a.m.

343. Clerks Report – Members adopted the Clerks Report and asked for the following future agenda items:

Speed of traffic along Manor Road – Cllr. C. Hazzard

Speed guns available for Parish Councils and community groups – Cllr. M. Hall.

344. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity

a) Rating valuation for Tennis Courts – the Clerk stated that the valuation Office Agency had produced a summary of the rating valuation for the tennis courts, valuing it at £820. As the Charity had previously received 100% discretionary rate relief on the property, the Parish Council had telephoned Wiltshire Council to ask for confirmation as to whether this would still apply. The gentlemen confirmed that, as far as he was aware, there was a letter being sent out to say that the rate relief policy remained unchanged.