

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 6th April 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

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

Public Session – Mr. Stephen Burroughs, Lordsmead Mill informed the Parish Council that the Environment Agency had given permission for a small hydro-turbine to be installed at both Lordsmead Mill and Hinckes Mill to act as a pilot study. A grant had been received from Sainsburys and from the AONB and the Stour & Vale Hydro Group would be applying for a Sowing Seeds Grant also. The other source of funding would be the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Mr. Burroughs pointed out that he was busy collecting local stone to carry out works on the Mill and the river bank but it was apparent that if there were enough people who were interested in getting funding to repair stonework, a Heritage Lottery Funding application may be more successful for a group submission as part of a townscape heritage initiative or similar plan. Mr. Burroughs therefore asked that any other people who had a future interest in repairing their stonework should contact him.

Mr. Sam Squires said that he was led to believe that Southern Co-operatives had purchased the NISA store in Mere simply to stop any other grocery chain from purchasing it and to achieve a local monopoly and that the ex-Nisa shop premises would remain closed, used for storage purposes or for office purposes and that, in effect, the Co-Op had taken away, from the residents of Mere, their right to be able to have a choice of grocery shops in the town. Mr. Squires said that they had closed a shop in Tisbury under similar circumstances. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Southern Co-operatives to explain the rumours and ask them to explain their future plans for the Nisa store and clarify the situation.

Apologies for absence received from Councillors M. Hall and M. Pierce.

253. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. P. Coward declared a personal interest in planning application S/2009/358

254. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 2nd March 2009 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present.

255. 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/2009/317/TPO – REDUCE ASH TREE BY 33%
6 HILLSIDE CLOSE, MERE.

Cllr. Sims proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a majority vote of 9.

S/2009/358/LBW – LISTED BLDG (WKS) SELECTIVE MORTAR REPAIRS AND STONE REPLACEMENT TO NORTH, SOUTH, EAST ELEVATION AND ONE NEW WINDOW ABOVE DOOR ON EAST ELEVATION
1 THE LODGE, CASTLE STREET, MERE.

Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above application be recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

‘The Parish Council feels that this is an important building within this new development and that the conservation of this building should be carried out with the stone replacement method using local ‘Mere’ stone rather than the proposed method of lime mortar repairs.’

Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a vote of 7 for. Cllr. P. Coward, having declared a personal interest, refrained from voting or discussion. Cllr. Mitchell abstained from voting.

S/2009/415/TCA – TREES CONS. AREA – VARIOUS TREE WORKS
LAND ADJACENT TO TREGANHAWK, 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.

b) Appeal Decision – Ref: APP/T3915/A/08/2090719 – FORD OAK FARM, LIMPERS HILL, MERE.

The Inspector has allowed the appeal – Members noted this information.

The Clerk informed members that a planning application to build four new houses at Southbrook had just been received and asked members when they would like to meet to consider this application. It was agreed that members would convene a Parish Council meeting on Wednesday, 15th April at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion and that they would meet on site beforehand.

256. Matters Arising

a) County Councillors Report – County Cllr. Mrs. Wayman reported that she had received the Community Area Highway Information booklet and that it stated that minor improvements schemes were proposed for the B3092 Crab Lane at Mere, Dropped kerbs along Castle Street at Mere and a footbridge would be installed along Fp 41.

b) Report from Community Safety Representative – Cllr. Sims reported that a meeting was held on 30th March. Car crime still persists, particularly at local beauty spots such as Alfreds Tower where people are still leaving their belongings on view in their cars. Cllr. Sims was pleased to report that three new members had joined the neighbourhood watch group.

c) Report from Transport Representative – Cllr. Sims reported that despite a recent number of withdrawals and mergers of Connect 2 buses the Mere one remained unchanged. Shaftesbury & Gillingham Transport Forum met today and discussed issues such as a bus provision from Salisbury to Weymouth for the Olympics and also the fact that bus pass holders may now have to pay for Park & Ride buses in Salisbury.

d) Report on meeting held with Wiltshire County Council officers & Community First to discuss representation on South West Wiltshire Area Board and Community Area Partnerships – meeting held Tuesday, 31st March 2009 – The Parish Council Chairman chaired the meeting and handed over the presentations, questions and answers to Steve Milton. On the whole the meeting was well attended although there were some residents who were unhappy that they were not given an opportunity to raise questions and others who were generally unhappy with unitary authority proposals. However, there were a number of people who left their names at the end of the meeting and who showed an interest in forming a Community Area Partnership and this would, no doubt, be followed up in due course.

e) Handbook for Wiltshire's Area Boards – Cllr. Mrs. White felt that the handbook was full of targets, performance indicators and a lot of annual meetings. She was also surprised to read that the quorate Area Board meeting may consist of only two members and that area board meetings could be held quarterly, monthly or as frequently as we see fit. It seems that all organizations would have a voice on the Area Board Meetings and that a cabinet member will be invited to sit on the board and these members will be rotated around the various Area Boards. It also suggests that we may not be allowed not to form a Community Area Partnership because we may not get any funding.

257. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

a) Parish Steward –job list for next visit:–

Mill Lane – fill potholes in first part of lane.

Footpath from end of Mill Lane through to Ashfield Water – strim footpath.

Church Street – large pothole outside St. Annes

Boar Street – broken manhole cover.

b) Recent concerns relating to footpaths in the Mill Lane/Edgebridge to Burton/Limpers Hill area – Cllr. Mrs. White reported that she had been contacted by several residents within the last week or so regarding the footpaths

at the back of the Clements Lane development and at the back of Southbrook allotments out onto Mill Lane. The new tenant farmer wants to stock-proof the fields but many walkers feel that he has blocked off footpaths. However, having checked the Rights of Way Map it would appear quite legitimate in that the farmer is not proposing to obstruct any footpaths or rights of way. Also, the owner of Burton Grange has fenced a footpath on either side and this had made the path very narrow and very muddy and overgrown in the winter. Cllr. Mrs. White confirmed that she had spoken to the Rights of Way Officer about this issue.

c) Various Traffic Regulations – South West of Wiltshire – the Clerk informed members that she had received copies of the plan, public notice and the County Council’s Statement of Reasons for wishing to make the Traffic Regulation orders which would prohibit HGVs from driving through Corsley Heath, Chapmanslade and Maiden Bradley but would redirect them around the A350 and A303 at Willoughby Hedge. It was agreed that the Clerk should construct a letter along the following lines: *‘Whilst the Parish Council has every sympathy with the residents of Corsley Heath, Chapmanslade and Maiden Bradley and we agree that the current high levels of freight traffic travelling through these villages are inappropriate and unacceptable, we cannot support any of the proposed Orders that will cause HGVs to use the B3089 westbound from its junction with the A350 and the A303 at Willoughby Hedge. Whilst we understand that the current practice of HGV’s turning right from the A350 on to the A303 westbound at the A350/A303 junction has caused accidents and is a safety concern, we feel that these proposals will be moving one black spot to another black spot.*

The B3089/A303 westbound junction is an extremely hazardous traffic area for the following reasons:

- *Large numbers of vehicles coming out of Willoughby Hedge Service Station are unaware that they are entering two-way traffic on the B3089*
- *During busy peak periods the B3089 opposite the Willoughby Hedge Service Station is often congested with indiscriminately parked cars. These parked cars compete with the traffic queuing up and waiting to join the A303 west-bound.*
- *The queues can become quite considerable because the A303 traffic is busy and fast-moving and there is no slip road and so careful judgement is needed to consider whether one can pull out into the road and build up enough speed before the next vehicle comes along. This is difficult enough for a car but is far more difficult for a HGV which takes longer to build up speed.*

Your Briefing Paper confirms that the Highways Agency’s preferred option is to construct a second slip road to the south of the A303 and close the A303/B3089 junction to right turning traffic in order to improve the accident record at these two junctions. However, this preferred option would be subject to a series of evaluations and the Highways Agency is unable to confirm if or when its preferred option will come to fruition. You then say that, bearing in mind the lack of certainty with the Highways Agency’s preferred scheme, that you have decided to pursue the weight limits outlined above as an interim measure. The Parish Council would prefer it if you would campaign with the Highways Agency to provide this slip road and, more specifically, to urge central government to provide funding to allow the A303 to be dualled between Wyle and Mere.

Furthermore, the Parish Council is extremely concerned that HGV’s redirected onto the A303 westbound who want access to Gillingham may come off the A303 at the first exit into Mere, thereby driving through Mere town centre. There should be adequate signage on the A303 directing such traffic to stay on the A303 and take the next exit, just past Mere, for access to Gillingham.

Lastly, your Briefing Paper makes mention of your agreement with Cabinet, to provide a Bespoke Consultation Process. Mere Parish Council does not feel that it has been involved in or included in any kind of bespoke consultation process. Indeed, we had to ask for our first local meeting and were told that a second one would be held after the Highways Agency had completed their Safety Study but a second meeting did not take place.’

258. Allotments

a) Report on Wellhead allotment site visit – the Chairman reported that a site meeting had been held at Wellhead Allotments on 1st April and that a number of the allotment holders were asking for a water supply to be installed. This was not a unanimous request amongst allotment holders as some of them were not requiring a water supply and did not want to pay for a water supply. It was agreed, however, that quotations for a water supply, meter and standpipe tap would be obtained as soon as possible. Members agreed that the quotations should be obtained before any further decisions could be made.

259. Buildings & Facilities

a) *Repairs & maintenance relating to Multi Use Games Area* – The Chairman reported that it had been necessary to carry out yet more repairs on the fencing and gates of the Multi Use Games Area.

260. Finance & Resources

a) *Payments:* Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a majority vote.

Financial year 08/09		
Wessex Water	Trough OS 212 (New Cemetery) 7.9.08 – 1.3.09	21.04 already pd.
Wessex Water	Trough OS 142 Standpipe (Jack Paul Close Allotments)	11.22 already pd.
A. Suter	18.2.09 – 3.3.09	682.00 already pd
A. Suter	4.3.09 – 17.3.09	764.50 already pd.
A. Suter	18.3.09 – 31.3.09	759.00 already pd.
Wiltshire Association of Local Councils	Clerks Training – Accounting Solutions Seminar attended 17.3.09	23.00
Mere School	Changing Rooms – Gas from 16.1.09 – 10.3.09	114.28
Mere School	Changing Rooms – Water & Sewerage from 16.1.09 – 10.3.09	16.30
Mere School	Changing Rooms – Electricity from 16.1.09 – 10.3.09	51.07
Mere School	Andy Young Pavilion – Water & Sewerage from 16.1.09 – 10.3.09	30.39
Mere School	Swimming Pool – Water & Sewerage from 16.1.09 – 10.3.09	6.08
Broxap Ltd	4 new litter/dog waste bins	1521.22
Kevin Jenkins	Security for office door	233.90
Cash	Mobile phone top-up fee	£10.00
Grove Buildings Account	Hire of hall for Annual Parish Meeting	15.00 already pd.
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	160.51
A. R. Diesels	Service & repairs to New Holland Tractor	567.71
Sydenhams	Coarse Sharp Sand	10.58
Imprest Account (Cheque Nos. 2569 - 2578)	(wages, PAYE, pension, petty cash)	5287.02
Southern Electric	Supply to Clock Tower	17.23
Bourton Fencing	Wooden stakes for Recreation Ground	12.07
New financial year – 09/10		
Wessex Water	Cemetery supply 1.4.09 – 31.3.10	73.19
Wiltshire Council	Non-domestic rates for cemetery	375.87
Wiltshire Council	Non-domestic rates for Duchy Manor grounds	1721.75
Wiltshire County Council	Lease of land & changing rooms at Duchy Manor grounds	200.00
Wiltshire County Council	Lease of office	500.00

b) To report on ‘Accounting Solutions Seminar’ attended by the Clerk on Tuesday, 17th March at Devizes - deferred

c) To report on Risk Assessment/Insurance review working group meeting held on Thursday, 19th March and to adopt recommendations made therein – the insurance review report had been distributed amongst members. The Clerk was asked to make enquiries about the hand bier (how many times a year it was used, do we charge for it to be used), it was also agreed to make enquiries with the Walnut Tree Inn to see whether they might be interested in having ownership of the wall around the car park, since it has their lights in it. These issues to be reported back to next meeting.

261. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground

a) To approve the following payments: - Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a unanimous vote.

Wessex Water	Recreation Ground Supply	£ 26.38 already pd.
Wessex Water	Old Cricket Pavilion supply	£ 8.01

b) New Play Equipment – Cllr. Hazzard reported that some quotations had now been received for installing a new piece of play equipment in the Recreation Ground and that, although the lowest quotation was still £1500 over budget, it had been agreed that these costs could be reduced if the Parish Council undertook to remove the existing rubber safety surfacing. Cllr. Hazzard therefore proposed that the Parish Council, as Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity, should proceed with this scheme using R2 funds, allowing for the fact that Cllrs. Sealy & Mitchell will remove existing safety surfacing and if there is a shortfall of £1000 or less, the Parish Council will make up the difference. Proposal carried with a vote of 8 for

c) Request from Mrs. Brodier to apply for grant funding to provide lighting and improve car park at Mere Recreation Ground for users of Youth Development Centre – It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Mrs. Brodier to come and explain her proposals to the Parish Council.

Exclusion of the Press & Public

It was resolved that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by S100 of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public for the remaining items of the agenda and the minutes for the remainder of this meeting would not be available to the press and public since it would represent a disclosure of personal information involving staff.