

Parish Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 6th July 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Small Lecture Hall, Salisbury Street, Mere.

Present: Councillors R. Coward (Vice-Chairman), M. Hall, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, D. Sealy, R. Sims, Mrs. L. Traves & Mrs. M. White.

Also P. C. Richard Salter, Mr. P. Button, Mr. G. Cook, Mrs. R. Hyde, Mr. L. Stanton & Mr. M. Whatley

Cllr. R. Coward in The Chair

Public Session – Mr. Peter Button spoke in reference to the agenda item relating to the water supply for Wellhead allotments and said that he objected most strongly to the way the vote was taken. He pointed out that some of the allotment holders were away on holiday and that it was incorrect and undemocratic to presume a yes vote from those that did not respond. The Chairman explained that the decision on this was taken with the best of intentions in order to encourage everyone to respond. However, Mr. Button's points were taken on board although it was revealed that the responses received by the Parish Council were such that the outcome would have been no different if those that did not respond had counted as yes votes or abstainers.

Mr. Cook & Mr. Bowley, residents of Lovage Way, said that since the houses at White Road Gardens had been built, there had been an ongoing dispute between the Duchy of Cornwall, Bloor Homes and Wiltshire Council and that there had been no progress made in sorting out the adoption of the roads and footpaths within the development. Mr. Cook was concerned that residents could find themselves liable for the highways and said that the residents were asking for the support of the Parish Council in urging the parties within this dispute to address the situation with some urgency.

P. C. Richard Salter asked if any members of the council or public wished to ask questions.

Mrs. Rachel Hyde asked whether there had been any progress in investigations relating to the walk-in robbery in Salisbury Street which took place on 17th June. P. C. Salter explained that the enquiry was ongoing but he was aware that there were false rumours circulating about this robbery and clarified that it was not true that the victim had been knocked down in the street. Mr. Jeans asked if the level of vandalism had risen recently and P. C. Salter said that there was some justification for this as there was a spate of low level crime and minor damage. However, the police were spending more time in the town centre.

Mr. Richard Hughes asked about the condition of the footpath from Burton Lane to Mill Lane and said that people were now taking alternative routes because of the obstructions. It was pointed out that the responsibility for clearing the obstructions remained with the landowner.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. P. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, E. Mitchell

302. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Mrs. Traves declared a personal interest in Planning Application S/2009/922

Cllr. G. Jeans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 309 a)

303. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 1st June be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sealy and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 1.6.09. Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 22nd June 2009 be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a majority vote of those present on 22.6.09.

304. Planning

Cllr. Jeans pointed out that Wiltshire Council has a new set of rules and for the time being he is unable to vote as a Parish Councillor on any planning application or on any matter that may go to the Area Board.

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/2009/889/FULL – FULL PLANNING – ERECT NEW TWO STOREY DWELLING AND FORM VEHICULAR ACCESS
FAITH COTTAGE, NORTH ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the above application should be recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

The Parish Council feels that this infill development would contravene Policy D2 of the Local Plan for the following reasons:

- Faith Cottage and The Croft and two of the oldest houses in the area and the proposal to infill between the two houses with a new dwelling will not respect or enhance the character of appearance in the respect that it will not fit in with the scale of the area and the building plot width.
- The construction of this house will cause a loss of amenity for properties opposite and adjacent. The Properties opposite, (Nos. 30 & 32 North Road) will suffer a loss of privacy as the bedroom windows will be directly facing each other. The Croft will suffer a loss of natural light in the garden and will suffer an element of overshadowing. Faith Cottage will suffer a loss of natural light and will be left with a tiny garden with views only of a brick wall.
- Although, a single off-road parking space has been provided we note that the access to this off-road parking space will take up an existing on-road parking space in North Road. Also, as the design statement points out 'visitor parking will be available on street where parking is unrestricted'. North Road becomes extremely congested with on-street parking which restricts easy access for service vehicles. Furthermore, with on-street parking either side of this property and no turning space for the off-street parking, this will entail drivers reversing out of or on to this parking space which will cause a safety hazard both for drivers and pedestrians as there are no pavements along the road. Contrary to the access statement, the road does become very busy and children walk along the road to get to the school bus.
- The plans show a pedestrian gate leading from the proposed new garden into the allotment site. There is no existing pedestrian gate in this location or any existing gate from the property onto the allotment site and as the allotment site is land owned by the Duchy of Cornwall but in the control of the Parish Council, we feel it is inappropriate to have a private pedestrian gate leading onto the allotment site.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 3 for and 3 against. The Chairman, using his casting vote, voted in favour of the proposal.

S/2009/910/TCA – TREES CONS. AREA – CROWN THIN ONE CHERRY TREE BY 20% & REMOVE DEAD WOOD, FELL ONE CYPRESS TREE & CARRY OUT WORKS TO ONE LABURNUM TREE INCLUDING THE REMOVAL OF CROSSED BRANCHES & DEAD WOOD & THE THINNING OF THE CROWN BY 30%
FIR BANK, WATER STREET, MERE.

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

S/2009/922/FULL – FULL PLANNING – SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION
4 SOUTHBROOK GARDENS, MERE.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a majority vote of 5 for.

S/2009/458/FULL – AMENDED PLANS – FULL PLANNING – CLOSE OFF EXISTING ACCESS, FORMATION OF NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS AND ERECTION OF FOUR DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED GARAGE, CARPORTS, PARKING AND TURNING AREA
NEWMEAD, SOUTHBROOK, MERE.

The Clerk informed members that the amended plans had been received this morning and notification had therefore not been given on the agenda. However, members all agreed that they should consider the amended plans at this meeting. The Clerk explained that the amendments related to the roof heights and that the roof height on the detached dwelling had been reduced by 47cm and the roof heights of the terraced dwellings had been reduced by 15cm. Members agreed that the reduction of the roof heights would be beneficial to the surrounding properties but also agreed that their previous conditions should be reiterated.

305. Matters Arising

- a) *Wiltshire Councillors Report*** – Cllr. Jeans reported that he had attended various training events and he had been nominated to sit on the Southern Planning Committee and also on the Audit Committee. Jane Scott has been re-elected as leader of the Council. There are five Wiltshire Councillors for the South West Wiltshire Area Board (one each from Wilton & Lower Wylye Valley, Tisbury, Fovant & Chalke Valley, Mere + Nadder & East Knoyle). The Area Board had been allocated a sum of £50k per community area for grants etc, but because we are three months into the financial year, this amount has been reduced by 25%.
- b) *Report from Community Safety Representative*** – Cllr. Sims reported that he had been driven around Mere in a police car to identify the weak areas in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme which were: Mill Lane, Manor Road and White Road Gardens. He reported, however, that there had been three new members in the last three months.
- c) *Report from Transport Representative*** – Cllr. Sims had nothing new to report.
- d) *Area Board Meeting – 14th July, 6.30 p.m.*** – it was confirmed that the first South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting would be held in the Lecture Hall in Mere. The Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. White agreed to attend the meeting.
- e) *Memorial trees*** – Cllr. R. Hughes reported that there was room for no more than 2 new trees at Jubilee Gardens. However, he felt that it was better to wait until the autumn before planting any trees and he would suggest species nearer the time. Cllr. Jeans reminded the Clerk that the Brownies had planted two oak trees at the end of the Duchy Manor sports fields in order to mark the Millennium.

306. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

- a) *Parish Steward –job list for next visit*** – The following jobs were identified:
The Lynch & Clay Knapp - hedge, brambles and nettles coming out into road.
- b) *Request for disabled parking space to be allocated in town centre*** – Cllr. Jeans said that he had been approached by several people who said that there was a need for a disabled parking space in the centre of town. Cllr. Hughes felt that, although in principle a dedicated disabled parking space was a good idea, in practice it may be open to abuse as someone could park there all day and if it was time limited it would not be possible to police the waiting time allowed. Cllr. Hall was concerned that a request to Wiltshire Council may result in a whole

new parking scheme that could impose parking charges but he proposed that the Council inform the Highways Authority that Mere was in favour if having a dedicated disabled parking and to ask them to consult with us on a suitable location. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a majority vote. Cllrs. D. Sealy and G. Jeans abstained from voting.

c) *Signage* - deferred

d) ***Report on InterRoute's A303 Willoughby Hedge Information Meeting held on Thursday, 25th June*** – Cllr. Mrs. Mary White gave a report of the meeting which explained the proposed maintenance works for the A303 at Willoughby Hedge, Chaddenwick Hill and Mere during January, February and March next year. Details of the diversion routes were given for the overnight closure and also for the five-week full closure. The Wiltshire Police confirmed that there would be no extra traffic police on duty but there would be a direct line number should we face problems with drivers using Mere/West Knoyle/Kingston Deverill as a diversion route. Cllr. Mrs. White was assured that new signs would direct traffic for Gillingham to turn off at the exits to the west of Mere so that it does not come through the town centre and also that they would look into providing a new Mere sign indicating eating places, toilets, tourist attractions etc. The Clerk asked members if they were happy for her to ask the Highways Authority to pollard trees alongside the A303, particularly at Manor Road and Downside Close, whilst the maintenance works were being carried out and members confirmed that this was a good idea.

e) ***Adoption of roads/pavements & other facilities in White Road Gardens Development*** – Cllr. Jeans said that he was surprised to learn that the adoptions had not taken place and he had every sympathy with the residents. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to the parties involved to try and expedite the matter so that this situation does not continue.

f) ***Keep Clear signs in Church Street*** - the Clerk read out the response from Peter Kyte of Mouchel regarding the replacement of the Keep Clear markings at Church Street. Mr. Kyte said that “following the resurfacing of Church Street, the lining has been replaced like for like throughout the extents of the works. Prior to the replacement of the lining Wiltshire Council representatives were consulted and it was agreed that the markings would be replaced in the same manner due to the poor access which the residents of this property had sustained prior to the marking being installed. Why this one property has a Keep Clear marking and not others was due to the campaigning of the residents at this property although I am unsure who initially implemented the installation on Wiltshire’s behalf.”

g) ***Agency Services/Street Cleaning*** – The Clerk explained that this had been raised on the agenda following complaints from residents and councillors about the Wiltshire Council ‘green machine’ that comes to Mere to sweep the pavements and kerbs once a week. Cllr. Squires reported that it was necessary to sweep along after the green machine because it left lines of debris, grit and rubbish behind it. The Clerk therefore suggested that the Parish Council should write to Wiltshire Council to see if they would be willing to consider an agency agreement for this service: i.e. discontinue the green machine coming to Mere but to divert the costs/funds to Mere Parish Council and thereby the Parish Council would assume full responsibility for street cleaning. Members agreed that the Parish Council should approach Wiltshire Council in this manner.

307. Allotments

a) ***Water Supply for Wellhead Allotments*** – Cllr. Mrs White said that she had noted Mr. Button’s concerns and she shared them. However, the results of the poll are quite clear and such that the issue is immaterial in this particular instance. The responses received in favour of installing a water supply were 12 and those against installing a water supply were 6 and there were two allotment holders that had not responded. It was agreed, that as the Parish

Council had previously voted to accept the majority view, that the water supply should be installed.

b) Request to erect shed on allotment 5(a) at Wellhead – it was agreed that Mr. Tuck be granted permission to erect a 6' X 3' shed on his allotment with a small lean-to green house (plastic, not glass) in the location shown in Mr. Tuck's application.

308. Sports Development

a) Official opening ceremony for cricket facilities – The Chairman reported that the opening ceremony had gone very well, publicity photographs had been taken and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. He thanked all those councillors who attended and mentioned a special thank you to Mark Cassidy for providing the refreshments.

b) To set date for Sports Development Meeting – it was agreed that the Clerk should liaise with Cllr. Hazzard (Chairman of Sports Development) to set a date for this meeting.

309. Finance & Resources

a) Payments: Cllr. Hughes proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a majority vote in favour. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room whilst this matter was discussed and did not vote.

Sydenhams	Cement	27.53
Jeans	Repairs to light on Castle Hill	113.11
Wyntok Ltd	Health & Safety for Local Councils	116.00
Cash	Mobile phone top-up fee	10.00
City Irrigation Ltd	Irrigation equipment for cricket	120.25***
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna ride-on	29.90
Scats Countrystores PLC	Protective Clothing & Sundries	24.41
Proludic Ltd	Play Equipment for Recreation Ground	16854.40
Southern Electric	Electricity supply to Clock Tower	17.23
S. J. Aplin Playgrounds Ltd	Removal of concrete in Rec. Ground	454.25
NALC	Subscription to Local Council Review	13.50
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	162.21
Imprest Account (cheques 2599 - 2604)	Payroll, PAYE, petty cash, pension	2658.56
Mere Lecture Hall Trust	Meeting room hire	15.00

**Mere Cricket Club will be paying us a donation of £104.57 towards this purchase.

b) Floral Enhancement Sponsorship – deferred.

c) Grant application to continue with management plan on Long Hill/Castle Hill – Cllr. R. Coward explained that, with the help of Simon Ford, he would like to apply for a grant to enable the Parish Council to fence off Long Hill to enable larger cattle to graze the hill properly and manage the hill in a more sustainable way. Also, he wanted to apply for funds to erect a beacon on the top of Castle Hill and signage on the A303 for a historical site.

Another proposal was to fence Castle Hill in order to graze it with sheep. Cllr. Coward explained that there were various National Trust properties that were closed to dogs for two months of the year in order to allow sheep grazing although there was a second option where the higher side of the perimeter footpath could be fenced in order to allow continued use for dogs on leads. It was agreed to defer a decision on the options for fencing Castle Hill but to apply for the necessary funding now. Cllr. Hughes suggested that funds should be included to remove trees before the fence is put in place.

d) Training Workshop – Local Councils & VAT – the Clerk asked the Council if they would grant permission for her to attend this free training workshop in Bristol, being run by H. M. Revenue & Customs, and members agreed that she should attend and that the Parish Council should pay the travelling expenses.

e) Renewal of office lease – the Clerk explained that she had written to Wiltshire Council's Head of School Buildings & Places, Mr. Nigel Hunt, who had replied to say that the matter would be dealt with by his colleague, John Price.

310. General Items

a) Mere Film Shows – Approval of Accounts & Distribution of funds – Cllr. Mrs. White explained that the profit to be distributed this year came from the films shown over the last two years which amounted to £1086.07. Mere Film Shows wanted to keep an amount to offset costs and any possible losses for next year and so they were suggesting an amount of £900 for distribution, therefore keeping a balance of £186.07 and it should be noted that with the films shown during Carnival Week and as part of Mere Literary Festival, a combined sum of £130 was donated to those events. Thirteen applications for the allocation of funds were considered and amounts varying from £100 to £35 were allocated to the following twelve:

- Mere Guides
- Mere Scouts
- Mere Swimming Pool
- Mere & Tisbury Young Parent Development Group
- Mere Literary Festival Community Poetry Events
- The Rosemary Goddard Centre
- Fives Court
- Mere Snooker Club
- Mere Gardening Club
- Mere Matters
- Mere Drama Society
- Mere Carnival

The amount and objective of the thirteenth application was considered, by the Film Shows Committee, to be inappropriate for this kind of funding. Cllr. Mrs. White said that there would be no film in September and, because of the popularity of the films, it was now necessary to book them 18 months in advance. Members approved the distribution of the funds and the accounts and thanked Cllr. Mrs. White and all those who helped in organising the Mere Film Shows.

b) Access to Parish Council office and Health & Safety implications – deferred

c) Placements for Community Payback Workers – The Clerk reported that she had received a letter from the National Probation Service explaining that they were looking for suitable placements where a low risk offender could work the hours of their order under direct supervision of beneficiaries within the work placement. The Clerk wondered whether there might be an opportunity for a Community Payback Worker to work within the community on

river clearance, on condition that the necessary insurance, training and supervision could be given. It was agreed that the Clerk should liaise with the National Probation Service on this matter.

d) A training course for Parish Councillors – How to engage more effectively with young people in your parish – Thursday, 16.7.09, 6 – 9 p.m. at Community First, Devizes – members noted this information but there were none that were able to attend.

e) Devonshire & Dorset Parade – Members were reminded that the parade would take place on Sunday, 12th July 2009

f) Solar powered light in cemetery –Members noted that the light in the cemetery had been completed thanks to the work and funding from George Jeans and Philip Coward.

g) Mere Buildings & People & A Mere Meander (Historical Trail) – deferred

h) Area Board Roadshow – Members were reminded that the Roadshow would take place tomorrow - 7th July, Mere Library 11.00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- **i) Report on Community Area Partnership meeting held on 25th June 2009** – The Clerk and Vice-Chairman reported that a meeting had been held which had really only been attended by Mere residents. At the end of the meeting Mrs. Diane Pringle was nominated as spokesperson and it was agreed that she and two others (the Clerk and Lynette Elliott) should examine terms of reference and what a Partnership might do in Mere and how to get more people involved.

311. Clerks Report – None. Members noted that the Clerk had distributed notes on Training Seminar (Accounting Issues for Local Councils) dated 17th March 2009