

*Parish Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood*

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 7th September 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

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

Also Mr. R. Potter, M. Whatley, M. Doddington, Mr. & Mrs. Cook, L. Stanton, B. Wagg & PCSO Jacob Noble.

**Public Session** – Caroline Cook spoke in support of the request for funding for the Historical Society’s self-guided walk. She confirmed that a run of 200 copies had already produced and given out.

Mr. M. Doddington asked if anything could be done about the need for a pavement in The Lynch and also to stop HGV’s from using it as a short cut. Cllr. R. Coward explained that he had looked at this problem a few years ago in connection with the school’s Travelplan policy but he felt that it might be worth approaching the new authority about this again.

Mrs. Traves reported that various hedges in Castle Hill Lane needed cutting back as they were causing obstructions. Also the shrubs outside Trevordale had grown to over 1m high and were causing a visibility obstruction and she seemed to recall that there was a planning condition relating to these shrubs. Lastly, there were weeds growing along the pavements along Castle Street.

Cllr. Hazzard remarked that the floral enhancements outside The George were wonderful this year and he asked if the Parish Council would write and thank them for enhancing the town centre in this way.

Cllr. Hazzard said that the Parish Council needed to take some action to make the path at the top of the new cemetery more wheelchair accessible.

Cllr. R. Sims reported that no action had been taken about the broken manhole cover beside Marketplace House.

The Clerk reported that Mr. Burroughs of Lordsmead Mill had asked the Parish Council for a letter of support for the ‘Sowing SEEDS’ funding application put forward by the Stour & Vale Hydro Group. The Parish Council were happy for the Clerk to send a letter of support.

The Clerk informed members that there is an Expo about the RiversMeet Centre (new Leisure Centre) to be held in Phoenix House (opposite Nat West Bank) in Gillingham from 5th – 13th September, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. each day, where they will show plans, photographs and give progress reports on the project. Parish Councillors and residents from Mere were invited.

PCSO Jake Noble attended the meeting to answer questions and queries relating to the police and policing in Mere.

**Apologies for absence** received from Cllr. Mrs. M. White

**312. Declarations of Interest** – Cllr. Jeans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 319 a)

**313. Minutes** – Cllr. Hall proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 6th July 2009 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 6.7.09.

**314. To elect Vice-Chairman** of Mere Parish Council for remainder of 2009/10 year – The Chairman explained that Cllr. R. Coward had agreed to stand as Vice-Chairman as an interim measure and for a short period only. Cllr. R. Coward now felt that it was time to stand down as Vice-Chairman and the Chairman thanked him for all his hard work and support. Cllr. R. Coward nominated Cllr. M. Hall as Vice-Chairman. Cllr. Mrs. Traves seconded this proposal and there being no other nominations, Cllr. Hall was duly elected as Vice-Chairman with a unanimous vote of approval.

### **315. Planning**

#### ***a) Applications:***

S/2009/1086/FULL – FULL PLANNING – AMENDMENT TO DWELLING (PLOT 2) APPROVED UNDER CONSENT S/2007/1944 TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL LOFT ACCOMMODATION BROCKHURST, WHITE ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a vote of 10 for and 2 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans abstained from comment or voting).

S/2009/1163/CLE – APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL USE (EXISTING) TO ESTABLISH WHETHER USE OF LAND AS RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGE IS LAWFUL LAND AT MAPPERTON HILL FARM, GILLINGHAM ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with a vote of 9 for and 4 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans abstained from comment or voting).

S/2009/1203/FULL – FULL PLANNING – FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS BEEHCROFT, CASTLE HILL LANE, MERE.

Cllr. Hill proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a vote of 10 for and 2 abstentions (Cllr. Jeans abstained from comment or voting).

S/2009/1256/FULL – FULL PLANNING – REVISED DESIGN TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DWELLING, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL CHIMNEY AND ADDITIONAL WINDOW PLOT ADJACENT MULBERRYS, OFF NORTH STREET, MERE.

Members were reminded that when the original application for this dwelling was put forward, there were neighbour concerns relating to overlooking and the placement of windows. It was also felt that the application information was incorrect because the additional window was not on the ground floor as stated and there was no first floor plan. The Clerk was asked to make further enquiries with the planning officers.

***\*b) Invitation to Parish, Town & City Councillors Training Seminar*** – there were no councillors available to attend the training seminar.

***\*c) South Wiltshire Core Strategy*** – the Proposed submission document dated July 2009 is available for viewing

at:<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planning/planningpolicy/localdevelopmentframework/southwiltshirecorestrategy/southwiltshirecorestrategysubmissiondraft.htm> –

it was noted that the overall housing allocation for the Mere area had been reduced to 290 (270 for Mere itself) and Cllr. Jeans explained that of this 270, a reduction would be made for the existing development allocations that were not started before 2006. Members were informed that a public exhibition would be held in the Lecture Hall in Mere between 12.30 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. It was further explained that only representations on whether or not the Core Strategy document was ‘sound’ or ‘legally compliant’ could be made. Members

unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should reiterate issues about rural parking policies within the Core Strategy.

**d) *Public Participation on the Core Strategy and development Management Policies Development Plan Document for North Dorset*** – The Clerk had received information from North Dorset District Council on how the public could participate in their Core Strategy Process. Members noted this information.

### **316. Matters Arising**

**a) *Wiltshire Councillors Report*** – Cllr. Jeans reported that he had attended, as a substitute councillor, a meeting of the Environment Select Committee where they discussed the future harmonization of car parking across the county. Cllr. Jeans felt that this could entail the imposition of car parking charges in Mere. He said that the matter would be discussed again at the next Environment Select Committee Meeting to be held on Friday, 11th September. Cllr. R. Coward asked for the Parish Council to support Cllr. Jeans in his efforts to keep parking free in Mere and the Clerk was asked to send a strong objection statement to the Chairman of the Environment Select Committee.

**b) *Report from Community Safety Representative*** – Cllr. Sims said that there had been no meeting during the last two months and he was not aware of any planned for the near future.

**c) *Report from Transport Representative*** – Cllr. Sims reported that there would be a meeting of the Shaftesbury & Gillingham Transport Forum next week in Gillingham.

**d) *Report on Area Board Meeting – 14th July*** – Cllr. Jeans reported that this was the first South West Wiltshire Area Board meeting and was well attended. This particular meeting was more an information event, with the committee members informing attendees about the structure and purpose of the Area Boards and the attendees informing the Area Board members of their concerns and issues. Cllr. Jeans informed the Parish Council that the next meeting, to be held on 16th September, would concentrate on the Core Strategy. Cllr. Jeans also informed members that grant applications for the community fund were being invited.

**e) *Memorial tree for Jubilee Gardens + tree guard + plaque*** – deferred.

**\*f) *Response from Area Highway Engineer regarding S38 Adoption Agreement at White Road Gardens*** – Members noted the information in the Clerks Report . The Chairman suspended the meeting in order to allow Mr. Cook to speak and he confirmed that he had spoken to Bloors who say that agreement has been reached between the Council and the Duchy for using a resin bonded gravel called Natratex. Mr. Cook has had a letter from Bloors confirming that this has been agreed. The meeting was reconvened and the Parish Council agreed that they would apply further pressure if and when needed to ensure that highway adoption took place.

**\*g) *Proposed Pedestrian Improvements, Castle Street, roundabout for Gillingham Corner junction and footway improvements – responses from Wiltshire Council*** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, members confirmed that the suggestion of a roundabout at the junction of Castle Street and the B3095 (Gillingham Corner Junction) should be submitted to the South West Wiltshire Area Board to gauge support.

### **317. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport**

**a) *Parish Steward*** –The Clerk reported that the Parish Steward had carried out clearance work to various footpaths, cleaned graffiti from signs, filled potholes along Shaftesbury road and cut grass along Burton Path. Members identified the following jobs for his next visit:  
Cut vegetation obstructing roundabout sign by the Walnut Tree Inn.

Clean road name signs.

Cut hedges causing obstructions along Castle Hill Lane

Clear weeds from pavements along Castle Street

*\*b) Disabled parking space for Mere town centre – response from Wiltshire Council’s Senior Traffic Technician* – members noted the information in the Clerks Report and Cllr. Jeans said that he would be pursuing this matter further.

*c) B3092 Crab Lane, Zeals – Minor improvement scheme and temporary road closure* – members noted that the works and road closure would last for approximately 2 weeks, starting from Monday, 21st September.

### **318. Allotments**

*a) Policy for skips on allotments and Parish Council land* – the Clerk explained that this had been brought about following the Wellhead allotment inspection and councillors noticing that there was still a skip on the allotment land. Cllr. R. Coward felt that residents along Wellhead should ask the Parish Council’s permission to place a skip on the land and that the Parish Council should charge a weekly license fee. Cllr. Sims felt that a time restriction should be placed on the skips. The Chairman felt that a weekly license fee should deter residents from keeping their skips there for long periods of time. Cllr. Peirce agreed that, as an act of politeness, people should ask for permission to place a skip on the allotment site and he proposed that the Parish Council should reserve its right to charge a fee of £5 per week after the first week and after permission has been granted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

*b) Permission for fences and structures on allotment Plot No. 10 at Wellhead* – The Clerk read out a letter from Anna Usvaldas, the allotment holder, giving reasons for the erection of lean-to attached to the shed, fences and dog kennels + the other equipment such as pallets, cable wheels, baths etc. and stating that she had disabilities which necessitated rest at unpredictable times and the need for level spaciousness and sure footedness at all times. Cllr. S. Squires felt that this allotment looked like Steptoe’s Yard and that the Parish Council should not set a precedent by allowing this. Cllr. R. Coward said that he believed that there was a chap that usually worked on the allotment, although the lady who wrote the letter, who says she is disabled, is the allotment holder. Cllr. Mrs. Traves felt that the conditions within the allotment tenancy agreement had been breached. Cllr. P. Coward felt that it would have been better if the allotment holder had asked before erecting fences, patios, dog kennels etc. Cllr. Hall felt that all these things were a question of degree but that this allotment plot was pushing the degrees of acceptability and that the allotment was not being maintained within the spirit of our rules. Cllr. C. Hazzard felt that it would be good if a site meeting could be held with the allotment holder to discuss these issues rather than letters going backwards and forwards. ‘We do not want to be seen as picking on a disabled person’, he said. Cllr. R. Coward said that he had no objection to the add on ‘lean to’ adjacent to the shed but there was so much equipment on this plot which was unnecessary to manage the allotment and even more stuff covered up with a tarpaulin. Cllr. Sealy felt that if the Parish Council was not careful it would start getting letters from the residents of Wellhead and North Row. Cllr. Hall felt that the other allotment holders should be considered and the rules should be observed and that therefore the Parish council should not permit the fences and structures but would allow the lean-to (not the dog kennel). It was agreed that the Parish Council should take photographs of the allotment and that the matter should be raised again at the next meeting.

*c) Request for shed at Southbrook* – members agreed to the request for a shed on allotment plot 116B.

### **319. Finance & Resources**

*a) Payments:* Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room whilst this item was discussed. Cllr. Hall proposed that the payments, as listed in the

schedule, should be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a unanimous vote.

Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna Ride-on mower	41.40 already pd.
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Wreath for Wessex Parade	20.00 already pd.
Wiltshire Council	Bin Bags	18.00 already pd.
Tincknell Fuels Ltd	Fuel & Oil	182.96 already pd
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Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	213.75 already pd
Wiltshire Council	Occupational Health charges for period ending 30.6.09	320.00
Orchard Street Furniture	Traditional Seat with aluminium plaque	539.70
I.V. & S. M. Thomas	Hedge trimming	211.60
Jeans	Bulbs	29.96
Cash	Reimbursement of mobile phone top-up & wasp nest killer	22.99
Scats Countrystores	Grass seed & dog signs	118.42
Rochford Garden Machinery	Strimmer line & safety glasses	37.30
E. G. Coles & Son	50 hr service for new tractor	303.34
Rutter & Rutter	Renewal of insurance for Kubota ground tractor	493.62
Rivendell	Wheeled transport cradle for greensmower (cricket)	177.75*
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna ride-on mower	71.30
Duchy of Cornwall	Rent in arrears (29.9.08 – 28.9.09) – Castle Hill	14.38
South West Regional Board	Affiliate/Associate Membership Fee	287.50
Jeans	Bulbs for Xmas 2009	174.15
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	140.54
T. Thornley	Domain name renewal (2 years) + P.C. Maintenance	40.22
<b><u>S.137 Payments</u></b>		
Mere Brownies	Flag Raising	75.00
Mere Youth Development Centre	Leisure Credits Summer Scheme	300.00
Mere & District Linkscheme	Donation	300.00
Mere Matteers	Donation	600.00

***b) To approve and adopt:***

***Revised Grievance Procedure (Draft attached)***

***Disciplinary Procedure (Draft attached)***

***Dignity at Work/Bullying & Harassment Policy (Draft attached)***

On proposition made by Cllr. P. Coward it was agreed that under both the Grievance Procedure and Disciplinary the right to be accompanied at grievance and disciplinary meetings should be extended to include representation or accompaniment by spouses, partners, carers, or friends.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the Council should acknowledge the work that Clerk has undertaken in order to produce these policies and proposed that the Council should approve them, with the agreed amendment above. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

**c) *Employment Law for Local Councils*** – The Clerk explained that via the Society of Local Council Clerks, she had received information about a new web-based subscription service on Employment Law for Local Councils. The price was £145 for first year's subscription and £95 thereafter. The Clerk felt that this might be useful but was not sure that there was a need for both this and the subscription with South West Employers. It was agreed to defer this item for consideration at the budget meeting and, in the meantime, the Clerk would ask for further information from colleagues.

**\*d) *Mere Historical Society – Mere–Buildings & People + A Mere Meander and request for funding to provide a further 100 copies of the self-guided walk*** - With reference to the information in the Clerks Report, Cllr. Hazzard spoke in support of this request. Members were in unanimous agreement that this was a worthy project for funding and agreed to send a letter of support along with a cheque for £50 to provide a self-guided historical walk.

**e) *To approve Budget/Expenditure Report at 30.6.09 and verify bank balances*** – Cllr. Sealy confirmed that the balances as recorded in the Budget/Expenditure Report were in accordance with the bank statements ending 30.6.09. Members noted that there was a deficit of £4121.21 as shown in the budget/expenditure report.

**f) *Andy Young Pavilion – replacement door*** – The Chairman pointed out that the inside pane of the quadruple glazed door had cracked and he had asked Roman Glass for an assessment and quotation to repair. Roman Glass had advised that there was no immediate danger and were providing a quotation. It was agreed to ask the builders, P. F. Parsons, if there is a guarantee on the doors and then, if not, to make an insurance claim. It was agreed, that the glass should be replaced.

**g) *Floral Enhancement Sponsorship*** – the Clerk confirmed that there were 4 tubs that remained unsponsored and the large display on the clock tower island. Individual members agreed to sponsor the remaining 4 tubs and it was agreed to ask Southern Co-Operatives if they would like to sponsor the large display.

### **320. General Items**

**a) *Graffiti wall? - Cllr. Jeans*** – Cllr. Jeans asked if members would like to consider the suggestion of the far side of the kicking wall in the Recreation Ground being used as a graffiti wall. He confirmed that this would be overseen by Jaki Farrell of the youth club and would be carried out during youth club time under complete supervision. Members had mixed opinions on this suggestion which was made into a formal proposal by Cllr. Jeans and seconded by Cllr. Peirce but not carried with a vote of 3 for, 4 abstentions and 6 against, regretfully.

**b) *Swine Flu – Wiltshire*** – letter from NHS Wiltshire & Wiltshire Council asking for help in identifying a co-ordinator who could arrange a network of Flu Friends for people within the parish – noted.

**c) *Invitation to meeting for Market Towns of Wiltshire to be held on Friday, 9th October at 11am in County Hall, Trowbridge*** – Cllr. Sims said he would see if he could attend.

**d) *Twinning proposal*** – The Clerk read out an e-mail from a councillor in the village of Méré, in the Yvelines department in France, 28 miles south-west of Paris. The e-mail was asking if the Parish Council would be interested in twinning. Members felt that it was not within the Parish Council's remit to discuss whether or not Mere should be twinned as any such project would not be an appropriate use of ratepayers funds. However, the Clerk suggested that a notice be placed in Mere Matters to see if there were any residents who

would wish to give this matter further consideration or may wish to form a twinning association. This was agreed.

**321. Clerks Report** – Cllr. Squires proposed that the Clerks Report be adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.