

*Clerk - Mrs. L. C. Wood*

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 12th January 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

**Present:** Councillors R. Coward (Chairman), E. Mitchell (Vice-Chairman), M. Hall, C. Hazzard, G. Jeans, D. Sealy, R. Sims, S. Squires and Mrs. L. Traves.  
Also: County Cllr. Mrs. B. Wayman, Mrs. F. Jukes, R. Potter, M. Whatley and B. Hill.

Meeting convened at 7.32 p.m. with **Public Session**

Mr. M. Whatley reported that he had hit the bottom of his car whilst driving past Doggrell's yard at Limpers Hill. He said that the road surface was extremely uneven and very dangerous. County Cllr. Mrs. Bridget Wayman explained that there is a very limited budget to spend on roads and therefore it is only spent on priority safety areas.

Mr. Brian Hill said that he had two Land Registry documents: one for his house which was registered in 1995 and the other for the Dilly House which was registered in 1999. He said that the Land Registry Document of 1999 states that the application was to register a Building Plot, Jubilee Gardens. Mr. Hill therefore claimed that the Dilly House was registered on Jubilee Gardens. Mr. Hill also said that the Land Registry Document for the Dilly House said that the land had the benefit of the rights granted by a Deed of Grant dated 14 November 2003 made between. The Chairman and Clerk explained that the Deed of Grant referred to a Grant of Easement that was issued to the developers in order for them to excavate drainage across Jubilee Gardens. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had also contacted the Land Registry and had been satisfied that the Land Registry documents for the Dilly House did not encroach upon Castle Hill Approach/Jubilee Gardens. The Chairman explained to Mr. Hill that the Parish Council had tried to help him time and time again but that, contrary to Mr. Hill's opinion, the Parish Council had not acted illegally and did not have the power to help Mr. Hill with his legal action or civil dispute. Mr. Hill was not happy with the Chairman's response and left the meeting.

It was felt, as Mr. Hill was constantly calling on individual parish councillors and the parish clerk, that the Parish Council may need to seek legal advice on how to control the situation.

**Apologies for absence** received from Councillors P. Coward, M. Peirce and Mrs. M. White and also PC Richard Salter and PCSO Mike Tryhorn.

**221. Declarations of Interest**

The Clerk declared a personal interest in Minute No. 9a)

**222. Minutes** – Cllr. Squires proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 1st December 2008 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a majority vote of 8 for.

**223. Planning**

- a) Notice of Appeal – FORD OAK FARM, LIMPERS HILL, MERE  
ERECT AGRICULTURAL STORAGE BARN & ASSOCIATED HARD SURFACED YARD  
S/2008/1075  
Mr. & Mrs. William Grant.

The Clerk informed members that an appeal had been made to the secretary of State in respect of the above site and that the appeal is to be decided on the basis of an exchange of written statements by the parties and a site visit by an Inspector appointed by the Planning

Inspectorate. It was agreed that the Parish Council would submit its previous comments to the Planning Inspectorate.

## **224. Matters Arising**

**a) Advertising Signs** – Cllr. Hazzard reported that since the December meeting, both the ‘A’ frame advertising board and the brown tourism sign for the Walnut Tree Inn had been taken away from the centre of town. Cllr. Hazzard said that the Walnut Tree Inn employed over 20 people and the ‘A’ frame sign placed on the island in the centre of town was not, in his opinion, situated where it would cause a hazard or obstruction to pedestrians or highway users. It was agreed that County Cllr. Bridget Wayman would take up the matter with the Highways Officer, Mr. David Button, to see if ‘A’ frame signs for the Walnut Tree, Angel Corner café and Fish & Chip shop would be permissible. Cllr. Jeans explained that Business Link provide certain services free on-line to small businesses and they are currently advising businesses in Mere to contact SDC for permission for ‘A’ frame advertising boards. Cllr. Jeans said that this is clearly inaccurate advice but yet another example of how confusing the policies are.

**b) Speed counter survey results for White Road between 13th & 20th November 2008** – the Clerk read out information from an email sent by Community Beat Manager, PC Richard Salter which said that ‘the Metro County survey taken between 13th and 20th November shows an average speed of 30.5 MPH, the 85th percentile was 36.2 MPH. This is not sufficiently high to warrant enforcement by camera unit but I will arrange to deploy the interactive speed signs for a couple of weeks in the near future.’ Members were surprised that the average speeds were so low but welcomed the news that the interactive speed signs would be set up again. Cllr. Jeans reported that he receives regular complaints about traffic speeds along White Road.

**c) Concerns relating to future distribution of Policy R2 funds** – The Clerk confirmed that following the Parish & Town Liaison Meeting convened by Salisbury District Council, she had written, on 16th December, to Mrs. Jane Scott as Chair of the Implementation Executive, stating that the Parish Council would resist any plans to amend the distribution of Policy R2 Developers Funds. The Clerk had received an acknowledgement but no response to this letter. However, the Parish Council had received a copy-letter from Jane Scott to Salisbury District Council stating that R2 policy funding which has already been secured by SDC is effectively ‘ring fenced’ and will have to be spent in accordance with the terms of the agreements made between SDC and the developers which made the contributions. However, ‘forward looking’ work was currently being carried out in connection with the establishment of the Area Boards. This letter did not seem to give any specific details about the distribution of Policy R2 funds collected after 1.4.09. County Cllr. Bridget Wayman agreed to speak to Jane Scott about this matter.

**d) A303T – Willoughby Hedge to Mere** – The Clerk read out a letter from the Highways Agency which confirmed that the proposed 12 week closure of the A303 would not now take place but that the maintenance work is essential and the Highways Agency, along with its contractor, is currently undertaking a full review of the scheme in response to the concerns raised. This review will include the construction programme, the extent and type of works and the need to reduce the impact and inconvenience of this scheme to road users and the general public. The Highways Agency said that they would write again to inform us of the revised proposals once the review is complete. Members acknowledged the need to make improvements to the A303, highlighted by a further fatal accident at Charnage last week.

**e) County Councillors Report** – Mrs. Wayman explained that she had nothing further to report.

**f) District Councillors Report to include report on Western Area Committee meeting held 11.12.08** – Cllr. Jeans reported that the planning application for The Boardroom was considered at this Western Area Committee meeting and that it had been resolved to refuse the planning application for various reasons. Cllr. Jeans pointed out that a large proportion of the District Councillors abstained from voting on this application and a second voting process was called for.

**g) Report from Community Safety Representative** – Cllrs. Sims reported that there had been no recent meetings.

**h) Report from Transport Representative** – Cllr. Sims reported that a meeting was planned for 19th January 2009. He did say, however, that Connect 2 has an average of 800 passengers per month which falls below their targets.

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

**a) Parish Steward –job list for next visit** – It was pointed out that there was a large amount of litter on the road going out of Mere towards Stourhead, after the bypass bridge. It was also reported that there was a street light out in Dark Lane.

**b) Parish Improvement Grants Scheme** – The Clerk reported that the Wiltshire & Swindon Countryside Access forum and WCC are starting a new grant scheme for parishes and groups of parishes within Wiltshire who wish to implement non-statutory improvements to countryside access and rights of way within their parish. It is expected that bids will be for such things as providing permissive routes to avoid busy roads and improving existing rights of way that would not be eligible under existing arrangements. The bids will be judged on a points basis with points being awarded for a range of aspects in the bids including, but not restricted to, benefits to the community, the amount of contribution in funds or labour from the parish, the longevity of the improvements, and innovation. Each year there will be 5 grants of up to £1000 each, and one of up to £5000. The Clerk had full details of the grant scheme and instructions on how to apply for the grants. It was agreed that Burton Path and The Meads would be suitable paths that may be eligible for grant funding of some sort and that, if time permitted, it may be appropriate to publish a request in Mere Matters, asking parishioners for ideas.

## **226. Buildings**

a) Clock Tower repairs – Cllr. R. Hill - deferred

## **227. Finance & Resources**

**a) Payments:** Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the payments, as listed in payment schedule, be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a unanimous vote.

Convenience Services Ltd	Portable toilet for croquet club	£579.86	(already pd)
Farnfield & Nicholls	Fee paid on a/c in connection with transfer of The Cabin	£350.00	(already pd.)
Solicitors			
A. Suter	26.11.08 – 9.12.08	561.00	(already pd)
Cash	Petty Cash 1.12.08 – 18.12.08	55.80	(already pd)
A. Suter	10.12.08 – 16.12.08	330.00	(already pd)
Post Office Ltd	Road Tax for Diahatsu	185.00	(already pd)
Duchy of Cornwall	Allotment rental 29.9.06 – 28.9.08	£3838.16	
AR Diesels	MOT & repairs to Diahatsu Fourtrak	168.48	

Scats	Sundries	8.00
Cash	Reimbursement for mobile phone top-up	10.00
Southern Electric	Supply to Clock Tower	17.10
David Harness	Tree works to Long Hill & Duchy Manor	1025.00
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	39.00
Imprest Account – (cheque Nos. 2543 - 2550)	wages, petty cash, pension & PAYE	2697.50
Salisbury District Council	Bin Bags	18.00
A. Suter	17.12.08 – 8.1.09	627.00
Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity	Donation	1,100.00

**b) Report on Internal Audit assessment** – The Clerk read out the Internal Auditor’s report which said ‘I have carried out an interim internal audit of the Mere Parish Council Financial Statements for the year ending 30 April 2009 in accordance with the instructions included with your letter of appointment dated 3 June 2008. In my opinion the Council has maintained proper accounting records and the financial statements have been properly prepared. It is noted that the Council accepted the recommendations made in my last audit report of 2 July 2008, though some of the work of a minor nature remains to be done on updating the Asset Register. One item on which I am required to report is whether the Council’s insurance arrangements are appropriate and adequate. I understand that a review of the Council’s insurance and health and safety arrangements is included on the agenda for the January meeting of the Council, together with a review of the Council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The aim should be to complete these reviews before the financial year end. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the assistance I have received from the Clerk, Lindsey Wood. She certainly made this task easier by having, as always, everything ready to hand and in such good order.’ Members noted these comments. The Clerk confirmed that the work relating to the asset register had now been completed (this was a requirement to include tools in the workshop valued over £25).

**c) Risk Management** - It was agreed that Cllrs. R. Coward, M. Hall, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell & Mrs. Traves would form a working group to meet and consider the following, probably in February:

- Review Standing Orders & Financial regulations.
- Review Risk Management Strategy
- Review Insurance cover

## 228. General Items

**a) Consultation paper on proposed boundaries for the new Wiltshire Area Boards** – the Clerk confirmed receipt of the consultation paper.

**b) Parish & Town Councillors Training Seminar – Friday, 30th Jan (10.00 to 13.00), City Hall, Salisbury** – Councillors R. Coward, E. Mitchell & R. Sims said that they would try and attend the seminar.

**\*c) Wheelie bins – e-mail from Mrs. D. Pringle** - with reference to the information in the Clerks Report and Mrs. Pringle’s subsequent correspondence enclosing a letter written in the Salisbury Journal by District Cllr. Andrew Roberts (Cabinet member for finance and member

of the waste management board) which stated that SDC had ‘introduced a flexible policy, which allowed many homes to retain collection by bags and will make smaller bins available to those who need them. Residents who were having problems with their bins could apply to the council for collection by bag and their property will be reassessed if necessary.’

Members agreed that a notice should be published in Mere Matters about SDC’s flexible policy and advising people to apply to SDC.

**d) Consultation Document - Wiltshire Council – Interim Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy** (see [www.salisbury.gov.uk/housing/housing-assistance.htm](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/housing/housing-assistance.htm) for further information)

**e) Consultation Document – ‘Communities in Control: Real people, real power.’** Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity. Issued by Department of Communities and Local Government.

**f) Invitation to attend follow-up meeting of Market Towns of Wiltshire to be held on Wednesday, 21st January 2009 at County Hall, Trowbridge** – It was agreed that the Chairman or Cllr. Jeans would try to attend this meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council was being consulted on all three of the new policies. She also pointed out that District Cllr. Mrs. Spencer had suggested that Parish Councils should be notified about licensing applications in their parishes. Currently site notices are erected, and adverts put in the Blackmore Vale Magazine, but it is not a requirement of the 2003 Licensing Act that Parish councils are consulted. Cllr. Hall proposed that the Parish Council should ask to be notified of any applications within the parish relating to the three following policies.

**g) Consultation on draft Statement of Sex Establishment Policy & Regulations for the new Wiltshire Council area.**

**h) Consultation on draft Statement of Gambling Policy for the new Wiltshire Council area.**

**i) Consultation on draft Statement of Licensing Policy for the new Wiltshire Council area.**

Information on the above three agenda items is available on [www.salisbury.gov.uk](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk)

## **229. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground**

In their capacity of Trustees of the Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity, Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the following payment should be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a unanimous vote.

Payment - David Harness – Tree works in Recreation Ground

£ 1050.00

## ***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.