

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday, 22nd June 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

Present: Councillors: E. Mitchell (Chairman), R. Coward (Vice-Chairman), R. Hughes, Mrs. R. Porter, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves & Mrs. M. White.

Meeting convened at 7.30 p.m. with **Public Session**

Mr. R. Hughes said that he had been asked this week, by someone who lives in Zeals, to find out why the road at Zeals Rise has been resurfaced and yet they do not have the funds to resurface the road at Limpers Hill. In their opinion the surface of the road in Zeals was not in poor condition and certainly not by comparison with the surface of the road at Limpers Hill.

**Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. G. Jeans, M. Hall and C. Hazzard.**

**295. Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr. E. Mitchell declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application S/2009/770

**296. Planning**

**a) Applications:** (All applications can be viewed on SDC's website [www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning) – application search – and type in the relevant number)

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

Members viewed the amended plans and whilst they noted that some of the Parish Council's previous issues had been addressed, Cllr. Mrs. White felt that the surface water issues and highway issues had still not been addressed. Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the application should be recommended for approval with the following conditions:

Conditions:

- The Parish Council has long been perturbed about the general condition of the highway from Southbrook to Limpers Hill and has been asking for surface improvements to be made for many years. The Parish Council is concerned that construction vehicles, necessary to create this development, may cause further damage to the road which will become a hazard for other road users and residents of the area. Members therefore feel that the developers should be asked to make a financial contribution towards resurfacing treatment for this road.
- 1. The Parish Council has concerns relating to the fact that ground water levels are close to the surface and flooding occurs in this area after heavy rain. Members are anxious that this development may cause additional surface water flooding. Also, the Highways Authority has always informed us that one of the reasons for the poor quality of road surface in this area is due to surface water and inadequate roadside drainage. The Parish Council therefore feels that the developers should be asked to improve roadside drainage within the proximity of this development.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with a vote of 4 for, 1 abstention and 1 against.

### **Cllr. R. Coward in The Chair**

S/2009/770/FULL – FULL PLANNING – ERECT BUILDING FOR STORAGE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT

LAND OPPOSITE HOMESTEAD FARM, SHAFTESBURY ROAD, MERE.

Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Parish Council should object to the above planning application for the following reasons:

**Access** – the Parish Council considers that the current access onto this strip of land is wholly inappropriate as there is limited visibility on a road where traffic is generally traveling at speeds over 40 mph. Members feel that access by a tractor or any vehicle to collect agricultural equipment along this stretch of the Shaftesbury Road is extremely dangerous. The Design and Access Statement states that no increase in traffic will be generated by the proposal as the use will simply be to provide covered secure storage of existing agricultural equipment. However, the application has stated in the planning form that ‘the storage is needed as a base to keep my equipment under cover and secure when it is not in use on different farms. The machinery is used by both myself and my wife as we both do work on different farms varying from 2 acre smallholdings to 2,650 acre estates. The equipment is currently in rented storage facilities at 2 different locations but is deteriorating as it is not kept under cover. This will improve productivity....’

If equipment is currently being kept in 2 different locations and machinery is being used both by the applicant and his wife, and it is proposed to keep it all in this one location then it must be assumed that there will be an increase in traffic generated by the proposal.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 5 for. Cllr. Mitchell, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

### **Cllr. E. Mitchell in The Chair**

S/2009/812/FULL – FULL PLANNING – CONSTRUCT MENAGE

FORDS OAK FARM, LIMPERS HILL, MERE.

Cllr. Hughes proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a vote of 5 for and 1 abstention.

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

### ***a) Proposed pedestrian improvements for Castle Street, Mere – letter from Wiltshire Council***

NB. These proposals include drop kerb crossing points at the bottom of Castle Street (between Lloyds Bank and George Hotel car park) and a build out with bollards (pinch point) at the top of Castle Street (half way between turning for Townsend Close and Castle Hill Service Station development site).

Members were presented with Wiltshire Council’s initial consultation letter along with the drawing and synopsis of consultants study. Members were unanimous in their views that a pinch point was inappropriate for Castle Street and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should respond to say that it is not in favour of the pedestrian improvements proposed mainly because of the build-out with bollards at the western end of Castle Street. Also, an informal crossing point was provided some years ago, between the Clock Tower Island and the northern side of The Square (outside the Charity Shop) and this was considered by the Highways Authority to provide a safer crossing point for pedestrians to reach the bank etc. Recent works completed outside the new development site (old Castle Hill Garage Site) have improved pedestrian safety by providing a dropped kerb crossing point and the bollards erected alongside the very narrow pavement outside ‘Tithings’ have also helped to improve pedestrian safety. Furthermore, the recent addition of staggered parking

restrictions in Castle Street has provided passing places for traffic whilst still allowing on-street parking. It was agreed that the Parish Council should reiterate its objection to any form of road humps, chicanes and road narrowing (as it did in its letter of 23.1.07) that proved to be restrictive for buses and commercial traffic necessary for the economic welfare of the town. However, the Parish Council does recognize the need to slow the speed of traffic when entering or exiting Mere further west along Castle Street and considers that a roundabout at the Gillingham Corner junction would be the most effective solution. Looking ahead, this would also help to manage the increased traffic flows anticipated with the development of the new industrial area just west of the Gillingham Corner junction on the B3095, which has now received planning permission. Lastly, it would improve pedestrian safety if the surface of the pavement were to be improved. The surface of the pavement between the George Hotel car park and the Barton Lane junction is extremely uneven and in very poor condition.

**b) Letter from InterRoute regarding invitation to Information Meeting** – Cllr. Mrs. White agreed to attend the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council.

## **298. Finance & Resources**

**\*a) To consider Internal Auditor's end of year financial report and adopt/approve recommendations therein (attached)** – members noted the information in the Clerks Report and the Council agreed to a 'de minimis' figure of £100 as a value below which it will not account for its assets as a fixed asset for its financial statements and agreed that the Asset Register should be revised by 30th September 2009. Members also agreed to the recommendation on the insurance basis in relation to the Asset Register and agreed that all necessary employment policies be agreed and implemented by 31st July. The Council acknowledged the amount of work and time given by Mr. Wilson in carrying out these internal audit controls and a vote of thanks was proposed.

**\*b) To approve accounts and supporting papers for the year ending 31st March 2009 (as attached)** – The Clerk pointed out that, after examining the accounts with the internal auditor, it had been deemed inappropriate to charge the Recreation Ground Charity for the sick pay that was paid to the Groundsman as this was a Parish Council liability and not a charity one and that an amendment to the Charity summary had been made accordingly. Members agreed with this point. The accounts and supporting papers, having been prepared by the Clerk and distributed to members, were unanimously approved on proposition made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White.

**c) To complete and sign Annual Return and Statement of Assurances for the year ending 31.3.09 for submission to external auditors** - the Chairman read through the Annual Return and Statement of Assurance. Members agreed that they should answer 'yes' to all statements in the Statement of Assurance. The Annual Return and Statement of Assurance were signed by the Chairman in the presence of the Council.

**d) To note public rights to view accounts** – The Clerk reminded members that the Annual Return and other documents such as accounts books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them are to be made available for inspection by any person interested at a convenient place fixed by the Parish Council on reasonable notice and that the Parish Council must display a notice containing this information. Parishioners also have a right to question the auditor about the accounts and to make objections to the auditor. The Clerk confirmed that a proforma notice, containing all this information will be displayed on the Parish Council's noticeboard outside the Lecture Hall.

**e) Lease for Parish Council Office** – the Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council's office lease expires in March 2010. The Clerk had had preliminary discussions with Mr. John Price of Wiltshire Council who had said that if the Council was happy to grant a new lease, it was likely that the Parish Council would need to take a more commercial approach to

the rent as the rates bill alone is likely to be about £1000 and they may require the Parish Council to at least cover the costs of the office. The Parish Council instructed the Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council to ask whether:

1) Wiltshire Council is agreeable to a new lease being granted and, if so, 2) whether there are likely to be any significant changes to the terms of a new lease.

Cllr. Mrs. Porter also brought up the fact that access into and out of the Parish Councils office, through the front foyer which is a communal area, had been obstructed by the use of child safety gates and that there were occasions when there were crawling children and children's toys on the floor. Cllr. Mrs. Porter said that she was concerned for the safety of the Parish Council and also for that of visitors to the Parish Council office. It was agreed that this matter would be raised at the next meeting.

**f) Donation of seat and tree in memory of Ken & Phyllis Deverill** – the Clerk pointed out that the daughters of Ken & Phyllis Deverill were donating funds for the provision of a memorial seat which was to be situated at the Play Area in White Road Gardens. They also wanted, however, to donate a tree and plaque to be planted in Jubilee Gardens and the Clerk asked for the Council's advice as to which species etc. Cllr. Hughes said that he would investigate and make enquiries. Also Cllr. R. Coward said that Mrs. Peggy Jukes wanted to plant a tree in memory of her granddaughter and so Cllr. Hughes agreed to advise on this at the same time.

**g) Payments** – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the following payments be approved.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote:

Scats Countrystores plc	Sundries	32.03
Mere Peace Memorial	Adjustment to donation made	1319.96
Recreation Ground Charity		
Mere Plumbing & Heating	Plumbing work for swimming pool & cricket pitch	407.92
Mere School	Swimming Pool – Electric used from 10.3.09 – 1.6.09	26.54
Mere School	Changing Rooms – Electric used from 10.3.09 to 1.6.09	54.44
Mere school	Changing Rooms – Gas used from 10.3.09 – 1.6.09	90.72
Mere School	Changing Rooms – water & sewerage from 10.3.09 – 1.6.09	19.69
Mere School	Swimming Pool – water & sewerage from 10.3.09 – 1.6.09	25.95
Mere School	Pavilion & Bowling Green – water & sewerage from 10.3.09 – 1.6.09	19.46
Record RSS Ltd	Repairs & Maintenance to play equipment in Recreation Ground	978.65
Cash	Petty Cash reimbursement	107.47

## 299. Allotments

**a) Application to erect shed on allotment at Wellhead** – the Parish Council were happy to grant permission for a small garden shed (6ft X 4ft) to be erected on plot 14 a), in the location shown on the plan submitted by Mr. Spencer. The Clerk was asked to suggest that space should be left between the shed and the car park boundary hedge in order that the hedge can be maintained.

### **300. General Items**

*a) Invitation to Community Partnership Area meeting* – 25.6.09 – the Clerk and Vice-Chairman agreed to attend the meeting to be held in Mere.

*b) Nominate a Parish Representative on the Area Board* – it was agreed that the Chairman should be nominated as the Parish Representative.

### **301. Mere Peace Memorial Recreation Ground Charity**

*a) Payment:* As Trustee of the Charity, Cllr. Coward proposed that the following payment be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. White and carried with a unanimous vote.

Mere Parish Council

Adjustment to expenses for 2008/09

£1300.00

*b) Play Area – Removal of Concrete* – the Clerk explained that the contractors had just started preparations for installing the new play equipment today and it had already been agreed by the Parish Council (as trustees to the Recreation Ground Charity) that it would be necessary to remove excess concrete from the old base at a later date. However, the contractors had a mini digger on site and had a skip on site and had informed the Clerk that they would be prepared to carry out this work for £395 (to be paid direct to contractors). On proposition made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Squires, members considered that this quotation should be accepted since it would cost more than that for the Parish Council to get a digger on site, hire a skip and meet necessary H & S requirements (fencing etc).

#### Future agenda items requested:

Castle Hill/Long Hill

Agency Services/Street Cleaning

Mere Film Shows – Approval of Accounts & Distribution of funds.

Meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.