

# Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

**Present:** Councillors: E. Mitchell (Chairman), P. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, G. Jeans, R. Sims, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves & Mrs. M. White.  
Also Mr. M. Whatley

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

Mr. George Jeans said that he would be declaring an interest in Wiltshire Council's Parking Strategy Consultation and so he would like this opportunity to speak as a member of the public and to say that he fully supported the parish in its efforts to try and keep the car parks free from parking charges.

A letter from Lt. Col. Bruce Leece was read out in which he said that the present government had made it clear that decisions affecting local issues should be made locally and in the light of these changes, the introduction of car parking charges by Wiltshire Council, needed to be re-examined and if necessary, thrown out. 'Mere's special needs to have free car parks has been fully justified and documented over the years.'

**Apologies for absence** received from PC Richard Salter & PCSO Jake Noble, also Parish Councillors M. Hall, R. Hughes & D. Sealy

**433. Declarations of Interest** received from:

Cllr. C. Hazzard declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application S/2010/973 (applicant)

Cllr. G. Jeans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 435 (a) and a personal interest in planning application S/2010/973.

## 434. Planning

a) Applications: (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council's website

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planninganddevelopment/planningapplicationssearchonline/planningsearch.htm> – and type in the relevant application number)

**Application Number:** S/2010/973  
**Location:** LAND ADJ. TOWNSEND NURSERY, MERE.  
**Proposal:** CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FOR THE STATIONING OF SIX STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS USED FOR HOLIDAY LETTING (RENEWAL OF TEMPORARY PERMISSION)

**RESOLVED** that the above application is recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. R. Hill, seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a vote of 5 for. (Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room whilst this matter was considered. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal interest, refrained from voting or discussion).

**Application Number:** S/2010/1070  
**Location:** SANDS COTTAGE, MANOR ROAD, MERE.  
**Proposal:** FULL PLANNING – PROPOSED TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO NORTH WEST ELEVATION, SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO SOUTH WEST ELEVATION. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS, ERECTION OF DETACHED TWO STOREY GARAGE AND WORKSHOP WITH FIRST FLOOR GYM/GAMES ROOM.

**RESOLVED** that the above application is recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a vote of 7 for. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting. Cllr. Jeans agreed to investigate whether or not a licence would be required from Wiltshire Council for the

highway verge land that had been acquired for use as a visibility splay in this planning application.

**Application Number:** S/2010/1073  
**Location:** ROSEMARY HOUSE, THE FIELDS, MERE.  
**Proposal:** ERECT REAR PORCH

**RESOLVED** that the above application is recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. P. Coward, seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a vote of 8 for.

**Application Number:** S/2010/1101  
**Location:** LAND BETWEEN WEST BOURTON AND WHISTLEY FARM B3081 (GILLINGHAM TO WINCANTON) SILTON/GILLINGHAM  
**Proposal:** ERECT 4 NO 120M HIGH WIND TURBINE GENERATORS, CONSTRUCTION PADS, SUBSTATION, TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND, INFORMATION BOARD AND MODIFY VEHICULAR ACCESS

Cllr. P. Coward felt that this was not a very good location to site the wind turbines from a wind generation point of view. Cllr. Hazzard pointed out that last month, the Parish Council refused to comment on an application in Zeals and reminded members that the Parish Council had a general policy not to become involved in planning applications outside the parish unless they have a direct impact upon Mere. Cllr. Mrs. White said that the Parish Council had submitted a comment on the previous application for six wind turbines in this location and should therefore resubmit similar comments for this application. The Clerk read out the previous comments submitted. Cllr. Mrs. White said that the applications were basically similar and this one would still use thousands of tons of concrete which would remain in the field forever. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should not submit any comments. Cllr. P. Coward seconded the proposal.

Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Parish Council should submit the same comments as previously submitted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Jeans but not carried with a vote of 1 in favour, 5 against and 2 abstentions.

Cllr. Hazzard's proposal not to submit any comments was then put to the vote and carried with a vote of 6 for, 1 against and 1 abstention. This was then put forward as a substantive motion and **RESOLVED** not to submit any comments with a vote of 7 for and 1 against.

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

##### **a) Wiltshire Council's Parking Strategy Consultation**

- i) Summary of consultation document
- ii) To decide on Parish Council's response strategy

The Clerk presented members with the consultation documents and pointed out that it was not, in her opinion, a particularly 'user friendly' consultation exercise. The main consultation summary document was 50 pages long, the Mouchel Technical report was 187 pages long and the consultation questionnaire form consisted of 34 questions. The deadline for responses was 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Within these documents Wiltshire Council had placed Mere into Band 4 and were proposing various options for parking charges in the two car parks – ranging from 20p per hour to £5.00 all day & 10p per hour or 50p per day on a Sunday. Wiltshire Council were offering those Parish & Town Councils in Band 4 towns, to take over the costs of operating and managing the car parks as an alternative to parking charges being set by Wiltshire Council. Members had a long discussion about how they felt that car parking charges would affect the town, its residents and visitors and members also expressed concern that the Parish Council did not have enough information to decide whether or not it could take on responsibility for the car parks (despite having asked Wiltshire Council for this back in March). However, it was unanimously agreed that Mere Parish Council needed to fight these proposals and to make every effort to keep Mere free from car parking charges. It was also agreed that, if the battle was lost, the Parish Council needed to keep an open mind regarding taking on responsibility for the car parks in order to keep parking free in Mere.

As part of the Parish Council's strategy to oppose the proposed car parking charges, it was agreed that a letter drop should be made to as many households in Mere as possible and councillors were willing to assist with this. It was

also agreed that the Blackmore Vale Magazine and Mere Matters should be asked to raise awareness and that Dr. Andrew Murrison, MP should be asked for further support. It was agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. White would attend the Area Board Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August to present the Parish Council's views and that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman & Clerk would be delegated authority to complete the questionnaire response on behalf of the Parish Council.

#### 436. General Items

- a) **Attachments to Street Lighting Columns** – the Clerk read out a letter received from Mouchel who are responsible for the maintenance and structural safety of the street lighting equipment (on behalf of Wiltshire Council). Mouchel were asking Parish & Town Councils to contact them if they planned to attach any item (festive lighting, hanging baskets, banners etc) to a Wiltshire Council street lighting column. Members noted this information.
- b) **Suggestions for South West Wiltshire Area Board Transport Initiative** – the Clerk informed members that the Area Board had been allocated £17,000 to fund small-scale transport and highway improvement schemes in the community areas. The money is to be used for schemes that improve safety, increase accessibility and sustainability by promoting walking, cycling and public transport, or improve traffic management. Proposals needed to be submitted to Richard Munro by 31<sup>st</sup> July.

The Parish Council agreed to submit the following proposals:

- Free car parking
  - Footpath over Lynch
  - Cycle way along Burton Path
- c) **Volunteer Award** – the Clerk informed members that Wiltshire Council & NHS Wiltshire were planning the first Joint Wiltshire VCS Awards in 2010. There were 6 team categories: Partnership Working; Innovation; Best Community Initiative nominated by an Area Board; Most Inclusive Approach; Community Leadership; Volunteer of the Year. The deadline for entries is Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> August. Members noted this information.
  - d) **Suggestions & Criticisms of Area Boards** – The Clerk read out an email from Richard Munro (South West Wiltshire Area Board Manager) in which he said that he had heard that some parish councils are angry about Area Boards – the amount of badly-constructed surveys, poor timescales, not listening, etc. and asking for our experiences. Members agreed that they should defer comment until after 25<sup>th</sup> August.
  - e) **Grants available to improve Countryside Access** – The Clerk read out a letter from Wiltshire Council regarding a third round of the Parish Improvement Grants Scheme now called the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme. The scheme is aimed at helping town and parish councils to make innovative improvements to countryside access in their area for residents and visitors and provides match funding to parish & town councils and can also be used to help lever in other funding sources. Bids must be submitted by Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010. Members felt that this money would be better used to provide the necessary maintenance to our existing footpaths.

**437. Payments:** Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the following accounts should be approved for payment. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote.

Cash	Mobile Phone top-up fee	£10.00
Sydenhams	Timber for bench repairs on Long Hill	£20.13
Cash (Staples)	Stationery	47.22
Cash (Dell)	Ink Toner	74.03
Forge Garage	Fuel & Oil for July	176.00
Rochford Garden Machinery	Strimmer Line	33.03
M. J. Abbott	Pipe insulation for Wellhead allotment water supply	22.94 (already pd)