

# Mere Parish Council

*PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD*

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

**Present:** Councillors: Mrs. M. White (Chairman), Mrs. L. Traves (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, D. Hope, R. Hughes, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, B. Norris, D. Sealy & R. Sims.  
Also PC Richard Salter, Mrs. A. Howell, Mrs. V. Norris and Louis Stanton

## **Public Session**

Mrs. Adrienne Howell thanked the Parish Council for their efforts made so far on the discussions with the Environment Agency and Wessex Water. However, she felt that the Parish Council should keep pressing the campaign to reinstate the river, stressing the amenity value of one of Mere's walks and the historical context of Burton. She explained that residents had been in contact with the MEP, Julie Girling, who has taken an interest in the matter and is coming to Mere on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be available to meet members of the Parish Council from 2.00 p.m. Mrs. Howell asked if the pavilion could be used for this meeting. Regarding maintenance of the river, Mrs. Howell said that it was a shame that the Environment Committee of the Parish Council had fallen by the wayside and said that residents needed the Parish Council to become active in the maintenance of the river as it needed clearing. She said that the river was very, very overgrown with weed and there was a risk of flooding, especially if we have flash floods. Regarding the riparian ownership responsibilities, Mrs. Howell explained that residents had contacted their insurance companies who had said that if the footpath side of the river is not cleared and floods are caused as a result, then the insurance companies would look to those responsible for compensation. Also, the volunteers needed somewhere to put the weed that is taken out of the river and asked if the Parish Council could provide somewhere, either at the allotments or a communal compost heap or, perhaps Wiltshire Council could provide a large green bin for residents or an extra green bin for those riparian owners.

Mrs. Valerie Norris said that she lives at The Pound and is responsible for the river from where it leaves Yapp Brothers to where it enters Springfield Road and at the moment there was no water in the river. Mrs. Norris has a dipping well which is stone built which has gone from 1ft deep to 2" deep. Mrs. Norris said that there used to be a little stream at the bottom of Mr. Yapp's garden but this has now gone and the pressure has gone from the springs and there is nothing living around the rivers apart from rats.

Wiltshire Cllr. Jeans said that, following the last meeting, he had received concerns from councillors regarding the application for an order to stop up the highway rights at Lower Mere Park Farm. The councillors thought that they were being asked for their view as consultees rather than actually being in a position to determine the application. Cllr. Jeans said that he had also been approached by other residents who claimed that the road was used as a public highway. Members agreed that, in view of the fact that there has been a change in material considerations and in view of the fact that they did not realise that the Parish Council was in a position to determine the application rather than just act as consultees, the matter should be raised again at the January meeting and that Mr. & Mrs. Armishaw should be informed of the situation and invited to attend the meeting.

The Chairman informed members that following a meeting of the committee that had been set up after the inaugural 'Heroes Helping Out' meeting, Lt. Col. Botsford had pulled out of the project and the funding that he had secured can no longer be used because the funding goes with the person and not with the project. The Chairman felt that this was a sad situation but Lt. Col. Botsford had found it necessary to pull out following some criticism from committee members. Some of the remaining committee members, however, were keen to form a group of community emergency volunteers and the Clerk and Chairman were liaising with them regarding this project. Cllr. Sims confirmed that there were parishioners in Kington who were also keen to offer emergency support. The Clerk was asked to write to the original

committee members to stress the Parish Council's regret that Col. Botsford's project had not been given the opportunity to become established and also to write to Lt. Col. Botsford and H. M. Land Forces to express the Parish Council's disappointment and regret that the project was not given the opportunity to 'get off the ground' and to reiterate that the project met with the full support of the Parish Council. Cllr. Sims informed members that he had been to Wilton on a half-day induction course on Speed Indicator Devices and confirmed that the Area Board had recently purchased such a device which could be used in Tisbury, Wilton & Mere and surrounding villages.

**Apologies for absence** – None received

#### **68. To receive Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. White, declared a personal interest in planning application S/2011/1652

Cllr. E. Mitchell declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application 2/2011/1322/PLNG

The Clerk declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute Number 74b)

Cllr. R. Hughes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute Number 74b)

**69. Minutes** – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 7.11.11

Cllr. Mr. David Hope completed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Councillor and Undertaking to Observe the Code of Conduct.

#### **70. Matters Arising**

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report + Report on Neighbourhood Task Group meeting** – PC Richard Salter explained to members that there was now a new way of publicising the monthly newsletters via a new website [www.mereneighbours.co.uk](http://www.mereneighbours.co.uk) but, due to the Data Protection Act, it will be necessary for everyone to register in order to receive the new monthly newsletter. At the last Neighbourhood Task Group meeting it was decided to adopt two new priorities, one of which was speeding vehicles and the other was inconsiderate parking. There have been 22 domestic heating oil thefts in the Tisbury area in the last 10 – 14 days, all the properties targeted have been isolated and there have been no similar crimes in the Mere area as yet but please be vigilant and it may be a good idea to purchase locks for your oil storage tanks. PC Salter apologised for not being present at the last meeting but there was a major incident in Semley and it was therefore important for him to attend Semley Parish Council meeting which was held on the same night.

**b) Wiltshire Councillors Report** – Cllr. Jeans said that the Area Board has a lot of grant money left over and it may not be possible to roll this over into the next financial year so he has therefore asked if it would be possible to use some of it for Mere's skatepark. The Clerk confirmed that the skate park funding would be discussed at the Annual Budget Meeting. Cllr. Jeans said that there were also funds available from the Area Board that can be used for small-scale highway and footpath projects. Cllr. Jeans also spoke about Wiltshire Council's current programme of work to deliver community campuses across the county and he said that he recently found out that if it wasn't for this campus programme, Mere would not have kept its police station. He encouraged the Parish Council to think of services that could be provided in Mere under the campus project.

**c) Mere's Rivers & River Maintenance** – Cllr. R. Coward said that whilst he agreed with everything said by Mrs. Howell in the public session, he felt that this was no longer a local issue as most of the rivers in Wiltshire were now extremely low. Cllr. R. Coward said that it was wild cress that was causing the weed congestion problem at the moment. The Chairman said that this was largely because the bed was so dry and there was no water running through it. Cllr. R. Coward said that if volunteers or riparian owners wanted to get together on a weed clearance project, he would be happy to help. Members agreed that the Parish Council should inform Wiltshire Council that the householders' insurance companies have threatened to seek compensation from the land owners on the other side of the river if the weed is not

cleared. It was agreed that Councillors would be present at the meeting with the MEP at 3.00 p.m. on 3<sup>rd</sup> February and that the Parish Council would make the Andy Young Pavilion available for use. Cllr. Norris said that we needed to stress, at this meeting, the economic and amenity effects.

**d) Lease for Car Parks & Public Toilets** - the Clerk confirmed that she had met with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr. Jeans to examine the draft lease for the Salisbury Street Car Park and send back comments to Wiltshire Council's Solicitor. The Clerk was also liaising with Tisbury Parish Council and Wilton Town Council and it had been established that they had similar issues with the draft leases.

**e) Xmas Lights** – the Clerk thanked Cllr. Jeans for all his help and explained that it had been necessary to apply for permission to light the tree on the island from Wiltshire Council and to Southern Electric and that Wiltshire Council would only allow the electrical connection to be carried out by an ASLEC qualified electrical engineer and that Cllr. Jeans had been very helpful in identifying someone that Wiltshire Council would accept. It was also necessary to complete a risk assessment and method statement for the erection of the lights and to purchase some more lights for the clock tower island. Cllr. Jeans confirmed that both he and the Clerk had spent a number of hours dealing with the bureaucracy, rules and regulations associated with the Xmas lighting. The Clerk also thanked Cllr. Mitchell for organising and co-ordinating the erection of the lights and also to Cllr. P. Coward for the loan of his cherry picker. It was confirmed that the switching on ceremony would take place at 6.00 p.m. tomorrow night and Cllr. Mrs. Traves agreed to judge the Xmas lighting displays.

## **71. 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/2011/1748/LBC

Location: The Boardroom House, The Square, Mere.

Proposal: Part removal of lath and plaster partition on the second floor.

Cllr. Hope said that he had not had an opportunity to look inside the building but he did not think that this partition would be a significant issue and would not want it to impede the completion of the building. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the application should be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting or discussion.

### **Cllr. Mrs. Lesley Traves in The Chair**

Application Number: S/2011/1652

Location: Mere Lecture Hall Salisbury Street Mere Warminster.

Proposal: Change of use of part of the Mere lecture hall (ground and first floor office) to residential accommodation

Cllr. Hope said that he had visited the site and that the proposed accommodation would be just about feasible although it would be small. Cllr. Mrs. Traves felt that the lack of light would be an issue and she had concerns about future occupants complaining about the noise from the Drama Studio next door or noise from events held in the Lecture Hall. Cllr. Mitchell said that he, too, was concerned about potential noise issues jeopardising the future of the Lecture Hall. Cllr. Norris was concerned that there was no parking which would mean another vehicle parking on Salisbury Street but Cllr. Hope pointed out that the premises was already used for office space so the parking aspect would not be an issue. Cllr. Hughes proposed that the application should be recommended for approval on condition that the approval is subject to a Section 106 Agreement to ensure that the accommodation being provided is tied to the Mere Lecture Hall and cannot be sold off separately. This is to preserve the purpose of the Mere Lecture Hall and to enable the Lecture Hall Committee to retain control over occupants and to stop occupants from complaining about noise/events being held in the Lecture Hall. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sealy and carried with a vote of 7 for, 2 against and 3 abstentions. Cllr. Mrs. White, having declared a personal

interest, refrained from discussion or voting. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting.

### **Cllr. Mrs. Mary White in The Chair**

The following planning application has been sent to us by North Dorset District Council

Application Number: 2/2011/1322/PLNG

Location: Two Counties Farm, Shaftesbury Road, Mere.

Proposal: Change of use of land to station 2 No. static caravans for holiday use, camping area, touring caravans and tents. Erect toilet block.

Cllr. Hazzard said that he had been to look at the site and, as an owner of mobile holiday homes himself, he was aware of how popular Mere is for people to want to come and stay. He stressed that the application was to provide accommodation for fishing, not just for his own lakes but also for others in the vicinity, throughout the year and felt that the Parish Council should support this for year-round use. Cllr. Hope felt that the proposal was well sited. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd asked if there would be any rules and regulations to stop people living in the caravans all year round but Cllr. Hope confirmed that this was a matter for compliance and not a material consideration. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should approve the application for year-round use. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote.

### **72. Allotments**

**a) Proposal to move electricity pole into land at Southbrook Allotments** – The Clerk informed members that she had been approached by Mr. David Coulter who was developing the site at Newmead Cottage and had asked if the Parish Council would have any objection to an electricity pole being moved into the allotment site about 3 metres out from the boundary fence – the pole would have 2 stays also erected on the allotment land. Cllr. Hill proposed that the Parish Council should have no objection as long as the Duchy of Cornwall had no objection.

### **73. Open Spaces, Recreation Grounds, Play Areas & Sports Grounds**

**a) Proposed Dog Control Orders – letter from Wiltshire Council** – the Clerk informed members that Wiltshire Council intended to make new Dog Control Orders which will consolidate those made by the predecessor authorities and was now consulting on the following proposals, with a view to bringing in new orders on 1 May 2012:

1. Cleaning up after a dog has fouled – A comprehensive order will be made covering most land in towns and villages to which the public have a right of access.
2. Dog Exclusion – dogs will be excluded from all enclosed children’s play areas and from areas covered by an existing order.
3. Dogs on Lead – this will not be used generally, except to confirm an area already covered by an existing order.
4. Dogs on Leads, at the instruction of an authorised officer – A comprehensive order will be made covering the same land as would be covered under 1 above. It is not envisaged that this power will be used except where it appears that a dog is not under proper control.

Wiltshire Council pointed out that Parish Councils also have the power to make Dog Control orders and to enforce them using their own officers, subject to certain restrictions.

Cllr. Norris proposed that the Parish Council should support the proposals as outlined above. Proposal seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

b) Report on Sports Development Meeting – CH – very good meeting attended by nearly every sports groups and all sports are booming.

### **74. Finance:**

**a) Payments** – Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the following accounts be approved for payment. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

Cash	Inktoner (toner for printer)	57.09
D & H Pengelly	Farm Environment Plan &	132.84

	HLS Application Advice	
Bow Fire Protection	Service & Inspection of extinguishers + equipment	76.81
4 Counties Window Repair	Replacement sealed unit to Andy Young Pavilion	536.00 (already pd)
Sydenhams Ltd	Guttering fascia bracket for AYP	2.83 (already pd)
Lite	Xmas lighting strings	300.00
Cash	Reimbursement for Blackmore Vale Advert	9.42
MacLachlan Solicitors	Legal costs for the Duchy of Cornwall & Wiltshire Council in respect of leases for swimming pool & bowling green	850.00
David Harness	Tree Felling in Recreation Ground	1470.00
Blachere	Xmas Lighting	565.80
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	414.05
Cash	Reimbursement for Zone Alarm Internet Security	42.99
Imprest Account cheque nos. 2750 - 2754	Salary, PAYE, Petty Cash & Pension	3841.99
Scats Countrystores	Signs for Rec Play Area + Swimming Pool	75.10
Post Office	Road tax for Diahatsu	215.00

**b) Quotations for scrub clearance along fence line at Long Hill** – Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, both the Clerk and Cllr. R. Hughes left the room whilst this matter was discussed. Cllr. Mrs. Traves took the minutes and confirmed that the quotations had been sent directly to the Chairman so that the Clerk was unaware of any quotations received. The same specification had been received for all quotations and Cllr. R. Coward had spoken to all contractors. The quotations received were as follows:

Mr. N. Maitland	£3,450.00
Rob Pearce Ground Maintenance	£3,972.00
Hughes & Bargery	£5,250.00
Bourton Fencing Ltd	£5,550.00

His being the lowest quotation, Mr. Neil Maitland was awarded the job. Councillors R. Coward and D. Sealy were delegated to check that work was being carried out in accordance with the specification and to the required standard.

**c) Quotations for continuation of drainage and paths at new cemetery** – making a recommendation to the finance committee. £8,297 – Paul Millard is the lower quotation. C. Hazzard – put forward to the finance committee that we go forward with the lowest quotation. Cllr. Mrs. Traves seconded this proposal which was carried with a majority vote. Councillors R. Coward and R. Hughes declared a personal interest and refrained from voting or discussion.

## 75. General Items

**a) Invitation to host & organise a Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile** – it was agreed that this invitation should be emailed around to the sports clubs to see if they wanted to get involved.

**b) Date of next meeting** – It was agreed that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

Fire Alarm Tested in Andy Young Pavilion