

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 7th November 2011 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors: Mrs. Mary White (Chairman), Mrs. Lesley Traves (Vice-Chairman), R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, B. Norris, Mrs. R. Porter, D. Sealy & R. Sims.
Also: Mr. & Mrs. Armishaw, Jane Batten, Derek Stone, Alexandra Moorland, I Sheppard

The Chairman convened the meeting at 7.30 p.m. and welcomed everyone present.

Public Session

Mr. Armishaw stated that he was the owner of Mere Park Farm and that the Parish Council would be dealing with applications for his property tonight, one of which related to the stopping up of highway rights. He wanted to reassure the Parish Council that the bridleway and footpath are not to be changed and they are only applying for the roadway to be stopped up because it only goes to the farm and there is no turning area. Mr. Armishaw explained that he had put in a new footpath area and bridlegates with top openings and there was no intent to stop people using the footpath. The other application relates to the fact that there were a pair of cottages on the farm with 2 back doors and 2 front doors but they had been knocked into one cottage. Mr. Armishaw said that they now wanted to turn them back into two cottages. He also said that there was another application for a new house on the site which will replace the existing 9-bedroom farm house. The new house will be approximately 24% larger than the original but will be within the permitted development rights. Mr. & Mrs. Armishaw had already removed 5,000 sq feet of buildings that were attached to the old farmhouse. The new house is in the same location as the original house, and can only be seen from one aspect at Higher Mere Park Farm. It will be a Lutyens style house, build of local brick.

Jane Batten said that she was speaking in a professional capacity on behalf of 4Children who were requesting permission from the Parish Council for four families to camp on Duchy Manor grounds for 2 days each (total of 8 families) during the first week in August. Jane also said that 4Children would like to offer to hold a fun day for Mere families on the Wednesday of that week which would include a Bouncy Castle, Falconry Display etc. This would be a pilot project which 4Children would hope to extend if it proved to be successful.

Mr. Ian Sheppard said that he felt the Parish Council's letter to the Environment Agency was terrific and had covered all the points raised. He was pleased to inform members that Wiltshire Wildlife would be appointing a chalk stream officer who starts work in December. Ian had sent the Clerk a link to a website called 'Our Rivers' which seemed to have been set up as a campaigning site. Mr. Sheppard also wondered if this would be a good time to send a note to the riparian owners along Waterside, as the stream is invaded with weed and if we get a flash flood, the water could back up. Mr. Sheppard said that the residents could form working parties under the guise of the Parish Council and he also asked if there was anything that Wiltshire Council could do to help. Cllr. Jeans said that every Area Board within Wiltshire has raised their concerns about the lack of water in Wiltshire's rivers and the issue is certainly not particular to Mere. Cllr. Jeans did say, however, that it may be possible to get a financial grant. Mr. Rodney Coward said that he drove to Kingston Deverill yesterday and he noticed that the Wylde was flowing as well as ever and he cannot think why it hasn't dried up like all the other rivers.

Cllr. Clive Hazzard said that he thought the Parish Council ought to congratulate Mere Firework Festival for their fantastic event. The Clerk and Chairman confirmed that this had already been done.

The Clerk informed those present that the Mere & District Chamber of Trade were holding a breakfast meeting with Sowing SEEDS this Wednesday, 9th November, 7.45 – 9.00 a.m. at The George Inn. Sowing SEEDS is a Local Action Group that covers South West Wiltshire and North Dorset and has a funding

programme to invest in new business in South Wiltshire or North Dorset involved in rural products, services or skills until 2013.

The Clerk said that Cllr. Mrs. Hurd had confirmed that the Church Fete would be held on the second Saturday of June (9th) next year and that the Parochial Church Council were not planning any specific celebrations for the Jubilee apart from a Civic Service of Celebration to be held at St. Michael's Church on Sunday, 3rd June at 10.30 a.m. The PCC hoped that local organisations and dignitaries will attend, obviously including members of the Parish Council. The PCC were also happy to offer use of the church, the Grove Building and the Vicarage Field if the Parish Council wished to stage any events.

Cllr. Brett Norris asked if the Parish Council could remind Wiltshire Council to clear the culverts at Warminster Hollow as he had noticed a lot of water pouring down the road during a recent rain downpour. The Chairman reminded members about the Remembrance Sunday service to be held next Sunday. The Chairman also expressed concern about recent issues relating to the footpaths in the Southbrook/Burton/Limpers Hill area. Apparently one farmer has ploughed up a footpath and planted across it in one field and there are reports that another farmer is harassing and abusing walkers as they walk along a footpath running through his field. Cllr. George Jeans said that he was aware of these issues and action was being taken.

Apologies for absence received from Councillors Mrs. Jane Hurd and Philip Coward. Also from PC Richard Salter who is attending another parish council meeting and PCS Jake Noble .

57. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr. C. Hazzard declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 65 a) [recipient]

58. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 3rd October 2011 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a majority vote of those present on 3.10.11

59. Deferred Item: Casual Vacancy – to vote again on co-option to fill Casual Vacancy. Members were informed that, since the last meeting, Mr. Peter Mason has withdrawn his candidacy. The Chairman therefore informed members that they were voting for one candidate only – Mr. David Hope. Mr. David Hope was co-opted as a Parish Councillor with a vote of 9 members in favour – an absolute majority.

60. Matters Arising

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report + Report on Neighbourhood Task Group meeting – the Clerk reported that she had attended the Neighbourhood Task Group meeting on 17th October where PC Salter had reported on the outcome of recent priorities and where the group had discussed local community priorities that may reflect local policing needs. The following priorities were agreed: 1) Beauty spot thefts at King Alfred's Tower, Kilmington & Stourhead Car Parks, 2) Speeding traffic at Castle Street, Mere & 3) Inconsiderate parking around Mere town centre and surrounding residential areas. Cllr. Sims reported that he understood that a Speed Indicator Device had been purchased for the area to use and he was going to Wilton to see how this worked.

b) Wiltshire Councillors Report – Cllr. Jeans reported that there was an issue with street lighting at present as there were a number of street lights not working throughout the town and Wiltshire Council were being very un-cooperative about repairing them. With regards to the footpath issue, Cllr. Jeans said that he had been in contact with the footpath warden who had confirmed that the farmer was wrong to dig up a historic footpath which had been compacted.

c) Mere's Rivers – To consider responses received to Parish Council's correspondence (at time of printing agenda, no response, other than an acknowledgement has been received). The Clerk confirmed that she had received a response, via email, today which she duly read out. Cllr. R. Coward said that for the Environment Agency to say that there has been no ecological damage is absolute rubbish and he was not at all happy with the response. It was agreed that the Parish Council should ask the Environment Agency for permission to publish their response on the parish website and to circulate it to interested parties. The

Chairman said that it was important for the Parish Council to keep up the pressure. The Parish Council agreed to ask the Area Board to raise the issue on our behalf and it was agreed to raise 'River Maintenance' as a future agenda item. The Chairman said that the Historical society would be interested in having copies of the minutes of the public meeting and any other correspondence/information for their archives.

d) Lease for car parks & public toilets – the Clerk informed members that she had corresponded with Wiltshire Council's Locum Solicitor regarding the draft lease for the Salisbury Street Car Park and he had said that whilst he understood the Parish Council's need to see the draft lease for the Castle Street Car Park, he was still investigating the Council's title and believed that it would be helpful for the Parish Council to let him have a note of the issues it had regarding both sites now so that he could seek instructions upon those that relate solely to Salisbury Street Car Park, investigate any that relate to the title to the Castle Street Car Park and seek instructions from colleagues on other issues that may not be legal in nature (e.g. condition and Japanese Knotweed problems). He was also seeking instructions regarding the lease for the public toilets. It was therefore agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr. Jeans would meet with the Clerk to examine the draft lease for the Salisbury Street Car Park and send back comments to Wiltshire Council's Solicitor.

e) Castle Hill & Long Hill - Higher Level Stewardship Agreement – update – Cllr. R. Coward reported that the HLS agreement is up and running and the Parish Council has drawn up a specification to send out to contractors for clearance of the fence line. BBC Countryfile came to Mere last Friday, filming with the youth workers as they were carrying out improvements to the footpaths. They were really impressed with the work that is going on: their edited footage will be aired on Sunday, 20th November. Unfortunately, there was an incident in the afternoon when Jaki Farrel was accosted by a resident who verbally abused her, verbally attacked the youth and made false accusations and threatened to padlock the bollard. The whole incident was witnessed by the presenter of BBC Countryfile. Cllr. Coward said that this is the second time that this resident has made accusations and that Cllr. Coward had been to see the resident last year to try and reason with him but without success. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to this man to inform him that it is Parish Council land and that the youth development team are carrying out work on behalf of the Parish Council and if the Parish Council authorises them to drive on the field they are entitled to do so.

61. 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/2011/1457
Location: Chantry Cottage Church Street Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Erection of conservatory to link existing house to garage and various internal alterations

Application Number: S/2011/1458
Location: Chantry Cottage Church Street Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Erection of conservatory to link existing house to garage and various internal alterations

Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above applications be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with majority vote. (In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting).

Application Number: S/2011/1494
Location: Lower Mere Park Farm Mere Park Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Erection of a replacement dwelling and the re-establishment of dairy cottage as two separate dwellings

Cllr. R. Coward proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Hill and carried with a vote of 9 for and 2 abstentions. (In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting).

Application Number: S/2011/1495

Location: The Old Rectory Church Street Mere Warminster.
Proposal: 1 x Horse Chestnut, remove up to three lower branches

Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a unanimous vote.

Application Number: S/2011/1529
Location: Latimer Coach House, Castle Hill Lane, Mere.
Proposal: Conversion of garage to residential use.

Cllr. Hughes proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Norris and carried with a vote of 6 for and 5 abstentions. (In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting).

***b) Response to Draft National Planning Policy Framework** – Members were happy with the response sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government and particularly pleased that mention was made that we are running out of water as this was a very relevant point at the present time.

62. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Transport & Traffic

a) Highway between Lower Mere Park Farm and Lower Park Cottages, Mere – proposed application to the magistrates' court for an order to stop up highway rights – Cllr. Hughes said that he assumed that Wiltshire Highways would be only too pleased to release their liability and proposed that the Parish Council should grant consent to Wiltshire Council to make an application to the Magistrates for an Order providing for the stopping up of public vehicular rights over the area shown shaded orange on the plan and all highway rights over the area shown pink on the plan on the grounds that they were unnecessary for public use and on the understanding that footpath and bridleway rights would remain unchanged. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 9 for and 2 against.

b) Street Lights – reporting and dealing with faults – as Councillor Jeans had previously reported, it is becoming more and more difficult to get street lights repaired. Wiltshire Council used to send someone around the villages during the night to identify faulty street lights but this is no longer being done and they are expecting the Parish Councils to identify and report the faulty street lights. They also need the street lamp column number, or if there is no number, then a nearby house name and address so that they can locate the faulty lamp. At the present time there are street lights out in Dark Lane, Boar Street and The Fields. The Clerk said that she would try and walk around and get the street column numbers.

63. Allotments

a) Request for shed on allotment plot 115 at Southbrook – the Clerk informed members that the allotment holder was requesting an 8' X 6' shed to replace an existing 6' X 4' shed on the southern side of his allotment at Southbrook. Cllr. R. Coward proposed that permission should be granted for the shed and this was approved with a majority vote.

64. Play Areas, Sports Grounds & Open Spaces

***a) Request from 4Children to camp in Duchy Manor grounds** – Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should support this request on condition that any tents must be set well away from the cricket wicket, the grounds are to be left in a clean and tidy condition with no tent pegs left in the ground, the Children's Centre will be responsible for carrying out its own risk assessments and be responsible for providing its own insurance to cover such an event. It was also agreed to raise the matter with the sports groups at this month's Sports Development Meeting to ensure that there are no conflicts and that the exact location of camping could be left for the Childrens Centre and the Clerk to agree. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a vote of 9 in favour and 1 abstention.

65. Finance

a) Payments: Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a majority vote. Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Cllr. C. Hazzard left the meeting whilst this matter was discussed.

Playsafety Limited	RoSPA Annual Play Area safety inspection	£262.80
Wessex Water	Water supply to Manor Road Allotments (Jack Paul Close) 23.3.11 – 26.9.11	84.91
Wessex Water	Water supply to North Road (Wellhead) allotments 23.3.11 – 26.9.11	52.75
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Repairs to Husqvarna ride-on	27.96
Rochford Garden Machinery	Strimmer line	26.95
Wessex Water	Water supply to new cemetery 23.3.11 – 26.9.11	26.36
Tincknell Fuels Ltd	Gas oil	193.72
Hoare Banks Stonemasons	Refund of cemetery fees wrongly charged	175.00
Cash	Reimbursement for stationery order (Staples)	134.55
Wyntok Ltd	Subscription Renewal Health & Safety for Local Councils	95.00
Grove Building	Hire of hall (26.9.11)	30.00
Royal British Legion	2 X Poppy Wreaths for Remembrance Sunday (X1 to be reimbursed by Wiltshire Council)	50.00
North Street Nurseries	Winter/Spring planting 2011/12	688.80
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	213.00
Cash	Mobile phone top-up	20.00

CPRE	Membership renewal	29.00
Scats	Sundries	16.50

***b) Policy R2: Provision of New Outdoor Sport & Recreation Facilities – evidence of need required by Wiltshire Council** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, members all agreed that the Clerk was capable of completing this and informing Wiltshire Council of the Parish Council’s need and requirements.

66. General Items

a) Xmas illuminations – the Clerk pointed out that it had been agreed by the Parish Council, in April this year, to apply for grants to purchase small LED bulbs to illuminate the clock tower this year. However, enquiries for grant funding had not proved to be successful and the question now was whether the Parish Council should purchase the strings of bulbs. It was agreed that the Parish Council should purchase the bulbs and it was agreed that there should be white lights on the clock tower and coloured lights on the tree. The Clerk was asked to contact Melinda Emby to enquiry whether or not she would be interested in arranging a switching on ceremony this year.

***b) Invitation to take part in Christmas Tree Festival – The Parish Church of St. Michael the Archangel** – it was agreed that the Parish Council should submit a Xmas Tree for the festival. Cllr. R. Coward kindly agreed to provide the Xmas Tree and the Chairman agreed to supervise the decorations with the Vice Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. Porter.

c) To set date and membership for Annual Budget Meeting – it was agreed that the Annual Budget Meeting would be held on Tuesday, 13th December at 7.00 p.m. and that the following councillors would attend:

Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Cllrs. P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, G. Jeans & B. Norris

67. Clerks Report

The Clerks Report was confirmed and adopted on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward and seconded by Cllr. Hazzard.

Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground

a) Skate Park – project management and funding – Cllr. Hazzard confirmed that the Youth Club were still keen to have a skate park but he was not aware that any further progress had been made on this project. Cllr. Hazzard said that, obviously, grants would need to be applied for and the project needs to be managed but he said that the mistake made with the MUGA was that we tried to do it ourselves. He was proposing that this project be taken forward with a project manager, someone who can apply for the grants, apply for the planning permissions and oversee the tendering and quotation process, appoint the builders and oversee the building. The Council agreed that Cllr. Hazzard should take this matter forward. There was further discussion on whether or not the kicking wall should be removed and it was agreed that this matter would be discussed at the Sports Development Meeting next week to assess views of the various sports clubs.

b) Payment: It was unanimously agreed that the following payment should be made:

Wessex Water	Supply to recreation ground	31.43
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