

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 10th January 2011 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors E. Mitchell (Chairman), M. Hall (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, Mrs. R. Porter, D. Sealy, R. Sims, S. Squires, Mrs. L. Traves and Mrs. M. White.
Also: PCSO Jake Nobles, Mr. L. Stanton, R. Potter & M. Whatley.

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

Mr. Sims asked whether the Parish Council had ever thought of nominating members of the community to become Freeman of the Parish. The Chairman responded that this had been discussed many years ago but the Parish Council felt it would be too difficult to decide who should be nominated and who shouldn't and whilst some people might be pleased, others might be offended.

Mr. Whatley voiced his concern over the state of the tarmac surface of the Salisbury Street car park and the implications this may have for the Parish Council if they take on the management of the car parks. The Chairman said that the Parish Council would not accept responsibility without an independent survey.

Mrs. Traves raised concern about the new gabion retaining wall along The Lynch. Wiltshire Cllr. Jeans said that this was under investigation.

Mrs. White asked if it would be possible to get our empty grit/salt bins refilled but Wiltshire Cllr. Jeans reported that this would not happen as Wiltshire Council were not refilling the salt/grit bins but keeping all their available salt/grit for road gritting.

Mr. Sims reiterated that the drain covers in Salisbury Street, opposite Bramley Hill were sunken and a hazard for cyclists/motorcyclists.

Apologies for absence received from PC Richard Salter

480. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Jeans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 482 (f) & 486 (b)

Cllr. Hazzard declared a personal interest in planning application S/2010/1865

481. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 6th December 2010 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a majority vote of those present on 6.12.10. Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of Budget Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th November 2010 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a majority vote of those present on 16.11.10.

482. Matters Arising

***a) Co-option of councillor to fill casual vacancy** – Members considered the personal statements for the following nominees - Ted Henson, David Hope and Brett Norris - which had been distributed by the Parish Clerk for nominees. Cllr. Sims nominated Mrs. Maureen Bell who was present at the meeting. Mrs. Bell was given the opportunity to give her personal statement verbally. Since one of the nominees was present, members agreed that it would be fairer to carry out the voting by secret ballot rather than a show

of hands. A clear majority vote for Mr. Brett Norris was received after two rounds of voting. (Full voting results are available from the Clerk.)

b) Neighbourhood Policing Report – PCSO Jake Noble reported on the crimes and incidents since 1st December. He said that there had been a theft of a rear number plate and two incidents of criminal damage + window smashed on a vehicle. An agricultural vehicle had been stolen and a Sat. Nav. stolen from a vehicle. The local priority was still King Alfred’s Tower and the neighbourhood police would continue to patrol although the number of incidents had reduced. The Chairman raised concern about thefts from agricultural premises and PCSO Jake Noble confirmed that there had been others in the surrounding area and asked for people to let the police know if they saw anything suspicious.

c) Wiltshire Councillors Report – Cllr. Jeans reported that there were no Wiltshire Council leased farms in Mere any longer as they had all been handed back to the Duchy of Cornwall. Cllr. Jeans also stated that at many Wiltshire Council meetings, the Leader of the Council, Jane Scott, favours inclusive meetings where public participation during the meeting is encouraged. Cllr. Jeans wondered whether the Parish Council might consider this and asked for this matter to be raised on a future agenda.

d) Report from Community Safety Representative – Cllr. Sims had nothing further to report.

e) Report from Transport Representative – Cllr. Sims had no news to report.

***f) Car Parking Strategy**

- i) Decision of Wiltshire Council in regard to the Parking Strategy for Wiltshire.
- ii) Consideration and discussion of Business Plan for Management and funding of Mere Car Parks & Public Toilets
- iii) To decide answers to questions in the summary of the Business Plan (Page 4)

The Chairman reported that, at a meeting held on 14th December, Wiltshire Council had decided to implement charges for Band 4 Car Parks unless the Town or Parish Councils agree to a lease. The Clerk reported that the Council had agreed to delegate authority to a Wiltshire Council officer and member, with the advice of legal representation, to negotiate and agree leases and legal agreements with relevant parish and town councils for implementation from 1st April 2011.

Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m. to allow for public participation

Mr. Jeans said that he had come to the meeting with written pledges from local businesses to a total value of £4000 contribution per annum (subject to trading conditions) to be made to the Parish Council in order to keep the car parks free of charge. Those businesses were: Southern Co-Operatives, Mere Pharmacy, Jeans, Yapp Brothers, F. J. Chalke & Son, Walnut Tree Inn & Mere Surgery.

Meeting resumed at 8.15 p.m.

Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room whilst members discussed the matter.

The Clerk had prepared a ‘Business Plan’ in order to help members reach a decision over whether or not it wanted to take on responsibility for the two car parks and/or public toilets and whether or not it agreed with the framework conditions for the leases.

Cllr. Hall said that no-one was surprised at the outcome of Wiltshire Council’s decision and that in order for the Parish Council to take on the car parks and public toilets, with the pledges and contributions from local businesses, it will cost the Parish Council between £3,000 and £3,600 per year which is about £3.00 per Band D rate-payer. Cllr. Hall said that he had serious reservations over the suggestion of incorporating the car parks within the Recreation Ground charity unless the scheme of the charity could be changed or the Charity Commission agreed that the car parks would further the object of the charity. He said that as Parish Councillors, members had no financial liability, but this was not the case as Trustees. Cllr. Hall felt that the Parish Council should commit to go ahead on the basis that the car parks would not be

incorporated into a charity but, in the meantime, open discussions with the Charity Commission to explore the possibilities.

Cllr. P. Coward pointed out that the last government was talking about bringing in a car parking tax for businesses and he said that all the employees would be the first ones to park on the road which would bring the town to a standstill.

There was further discussion about the allocation of spaces and, in particular, a disabled parking space outside the Doctor's Surgery and further discussion about the fact that the Parish Council could not be assured of a long-term commitment for contributions from the respective businesses.

Cllr. Hall proposed that the Parish Council should aim to take on responsibility and management for the two car parks in Mere and the public toilets (under separate leases), subject to all the issues concerning our ability to raise money from the businesses in the way that we propose. The Car Parks and public toilets to be leased to the Parish Council, or to a charity with the Parish Council as sole trustee (should it prove to be possible to incorporate them within an existing or new charity after talks with the Charity Commission) and subject to a 12-month get out clause on a 2-year lease. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

483. 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/2010/1853/S173

Location: BARNES AT BURTON GRANGE, MERE.

Proposal: VARIATION CONDITIONS 2, 9 & 14 OF PLANNING PERMISSION S/2010/0137 TO ALLOW REVISIONS TO THE FENESTRATION TO NORTH BARN.

Cllr. Hughes proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

Application Number: S/2010/1865/FULL

Location: DWELLING ADJOINING 1 & 2 BRIMLEY COTTAGES, MERE.

Proposal: CONSTRUCTION OF CAR PORT.

Cllr. R. Coward proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sealy and carried with a majority vote. Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a personal interest, refrained from discussion or voting.

Application Number: S/2010/1900/FULL

Location: TALBOT COTTAGE, HAZZARDS HILL, MERE.

Proposal: ERECT TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO SOUTH ELEVATION AND FORM NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS.

Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hughes and carried with a majority vote of approval and 1 abstention. Cllr. Jeans also abstained from voting in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor.

Although prior notification of this application had not been given on the agenda, members decided that it should be considered at the meeting as the consultation deadline would not extend to the next meeting.

Application Number: S/2010/1913/HERN

Location: LORDSMEAD HOUSE, EDGEBRIDGE, MERE.

Proposal: REMOVE UP TO 25M OF HEDGE ON THE NORTH WESTERN BOUNDARY (NEAREST THE ROAD) OF THE FIELD IMMEDIATELY SOUTH WEST OF LORDSMEAD HOUSE.

Cllr. Hughes proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

***b) South Wiltshire Core Strategy Examination** – invitation to a Procedural Meeting to be held on 28th January 2011 – Cllr. Jeans said that he would be attending the meeting.

484. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths & Transport

***a) To approve Mere Parish Council's Draft Ice & Snow Clearance Programme (attached)** – Members were happy to approve the Draft Ice & Snow Clearance Programme and agreed that the Clerk should submit this to the Parish Council's insurance company for clarification on public liability insurance cover.

b) CATG (Community Area Transport Group) schemes

Footpath over The Lynch – the Clerk confirmed that she had met with Mr. Tom Gardner from Wiltshire Highways, on 9.12.10, to look at the possibility of creating a footpath over the green area behind The Lynch. Mr. Gardner had advised that the easiest and cheapest route would be to follow the existing unofficial footpath from just above the bridge to the area between the bungalows at the back of Lynch Close. The route is steep but could be modified with long shallow steps or sloping ramps and the existing seating area could be enhanced significantly. However, the cost is likely to be in the region of £30K which is out of reach for the CATG scheme. Also this route may cause some upset to residents of Lynch Close. The second route, following the existing hedge line, adjacent to the road, would be far more costly as it would require a large amount of earth moving. Tom Gardner suggested that this project may be more appropriate for a Parish Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) but this requires match funding from the parish council and the parish council would be responsible for getting all the quotes, permissions etc., although the Parish Council could apply to Travelplan for funds towards their match funding if the route is heavily supported by school travelplan. Cllr. Jeans confirmed that the first route would meet with objections from residents at Lynch Close.

Double-yellow lines in Salisbury Street to create passing place outside Lecture Hall – the Clerk confirmed that the scheme for a short stretch of double-yellow lines outside the Lecture Hall to create a passing place (similar to that in Castle Street) has been put forward from funding from the Community Area Transport Group.

c) Temporary closure of C303 Limpers Hill (Part), Burton, Mere – members noted the information

d) Job list for Parish Steward

- repair pot-hole in Salisbury Street car park.

485. Parks & Amenity Spaces, Play Areas etc.

a) Results of Survey of Long Hill & Castle Hill Wildlife Site – May 2010 – The Clerk read out a letter from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust which summarised the results of their wildlife survey season in support of the Parish Council's application for Higher Level Stewardship. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust had submitted a summary report card. Members noted the contents of the letter with interest.

b) Castle Hill - Request for hand rails along two flights of steps at entrance from Manor Road – the Clerk informed members that the Parish Council had received requests to provide hand rails for the two flights of steps along the entrance to Castle Hill from Manor Road. The groundsman had expressed an interest in carrying out the work. Members felt that it was a good idea to erect these handrails and that the Parish Council should apply for a Community Area Grant if it becomes necessary.

486. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments - Cllr. Hall proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Squires and carried with a unanimous vote.

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| Mere School | Changing Rooms – Gas 13.9.10 – 7.12.10 | 163.64 |
| Mere School | Pavilion, bowling green – Water 13.9.10 – 7.12.10 | 22.97 |
| Mere School | Changing Rooms – Water 13.9.10 – 7.12.10 | 98.52 |
| Mere School | Changing Rooms, MUGA & Office – Electric 13.9.10 – 7.12.10 | 160.28 |
| MrFlag.com Ltd | 2 new flags (1 X Union & 1 X St. George) | 218.33 (already paid) |
| Society of Local Council Clerks | Annual Membership Subscription | £151.00 |
| D & H Pengelly | Farm Environment Plan & HLS Application Advice | 580.60 |
| Viking Direct | Heavy Duty Bin Bags | 51.08 (already paid) |
| Scats | Protective clothing (work boots) | 38.23 |
| Cash (Amazon order) | Internet Security 1year subscription | 17.99 |
| T. J. Thornley | New computer | £520 (already paid) |
| Southern Electric | Supply to clock tower | 17.10 |
| A. McCann | Work to repair loose slabs at Mere Bowls Club | 131.00 |
| Forge Garages | Fuel & Oil + MOT for Diahatsu | 99.85 |
| Imprest Account (cheque Nos. 2693 - 2698) | Payroll & Petty Cash | 6039.22 |
| Calor Gas Ltd | Gas for AYP | 89.78 |
| Cash | Dell - Printer Cartridge | 78.66 |

b) Budgets – To adopt recommendations made by Budget Committee as set out in Minutes of Budget Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 16th November 2010. – Cllr. Hill proposed that the recommendations of the Budget Meeting be approved and adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a unanimous vote of members present in the room. Having declared an interest in this agenda item, Cllr. Jeans left the room whilst the matter was discussed.

c) To approve Precept upon Wiltshire Council for 2011/12 – Cllr. Hall proposed that the Parish Council's Precept upon Wiltshire Council for 2011/12 of £86,250 be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a unanimous vote & the Chairman signed the Precept Request Form.

487. General Items

a) Conduct of local authority members – Abolition of the Standards Board regime (information only) – The Clerk informed members that she had received information about the broad package of changes that the government intended to put in place to abolish the Standards Board regime. It is intended to effect the abolition of the Standards Board regime through the Localism Bill which will receive Royal Assent late-2011. The present conduct regime will continue to function in a normal manner, considering, investigating and determining allegations of misconduct, until a fixed date (“the appointed day”), probably two months

after the Bill receives Royal Assent. This means that until the appointed day, an allegation of misconduct can be made; after the appointed day, no further allegations of misconduct can be made under the standards board regime.

****b) Invitation to attend a Wiltshire Council Budget Forum Meeting***

The forums will be held at:

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| Chippenham Town Hall - | Tuesday 11 January 2011 | 6 - 9pm |
| Devizes Corn Exchange - | Thursday 13 January 2011 | 6 - 9pm |
| Salisbury City Hall - | Tuesday 18 January 2011 | 6 - 9pm |
| Trowbridge County Hall - | Wednesday 19 January 2011 | 6 - 9pm |

No members were able to attend the meeting. The Clerk said that she would attend the Salisbury meeting

488. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity

a) To approve Annual Return to Charity Commission - deferred

489. Clerks Report

To adopt Clerks Report and request future agenda items – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Clerks Report be confirmed and adopted. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote.