

# Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012 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, D. Hope, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, B. Norris & R. Sims.  
Also Mr. R. Parsons, L. Stanton

Meeting convened at 7.33 p.m. with **Public Session**

Mr. Louis Stanton reported the depth of potholes at Swainsford and said that some were 5.75" deep. Cllr. Jeans said that he would pass this information on to the highways department.

Mr. R. Coward said that he had received a complaint regarding dog control along Waterside and that on two occasions a dog owner has allowed her dog to go into the river after a duck. On one occasion it killed the duck and on the other occasion it injured a duck. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the person concerned.

R. Sims raised the matter of a fallen brick wall along a footpath at Long Hill/Bramley Hill.

**Apologies for absence** received from Councillors R. Hughes, Jane Hurd & D. Sealy. Also PC Richard Salter & PCSO Jacob Noble

## 138. To receive Declarations of Interest

G. Jeans declared a personal interest in Minute No. 144a)

**139. Minutes** – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 11.6.12

## 140. Reports

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report to include report on Neighbourhood Task Group Meeting held on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> June** – the Clerk reported that the Mere Neighbours Newsletter for June had been published and contained the new priorities identified by the Neighbourhood Tasking Group which would be:

- Evening patrols of Mere to prevent anti-social behaviour and minor criminal damage, especially on Friday and Saturday evenings which is when the incidents seem to be occurring most.
- Speeding in West Knoyle especially between 07:30-08:30hrs and 17:00-19:00hrs

Also, thanks to new volunteer staff (Mr. Roy Sims), the Mere police station would be open between 10:00hrs-12:00hrs on various dates with the aim of having the police station open every Tuesday depending on what hours the volunteer is available. The dates will be advertised on the Wiltshire police website: <http://www.wiltshire.police.uk/index.php/policing-in-your-area/county/2791?npt=EV>

**b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report to include report on South West Area Board Meeting held on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> June** – Cllr. Jeans reported that Cllr. Mrs. Bridget Wayman had been elected Chairman of the Area Board for the year. Area Board grants of up to £350 would now be available to any group for projects that were aimed at building a stronger community. The application process had been simplified, and the applicant does not have to be a formal group with a constitution. Cllr. Jeans said that the Speed Indicator Device, purchased by the Area Board, would now be allocated to the general highways stock as it was not possible to provide insurance for volunteer use. Cllr. Jeans also reported that the the Wiltshire Draft Core Strategy has also moved on. Following the consultation the strategy has been amended to take account of

many of the responses received. It is now in the Inspectors hands, and assuming everything is approved it will be adopted early 2013. However, Cllr. Jeans expressed his concern that the Quarryfields Industrial Estate was previously earmarked as a Principal Employment Site within the Draft Core Strategy but this elevated status has subsequently been removed and the Woodlands Road Employment Site has instead been allocated as a Principal Employment Site within the Core Strategy. Cllr. Jeans could not understand why the Quarryfields Industrial Estate's allocation had been downgraded and said that he had no issue with the Woodlands Road Employment Site being allocated as a Principal Employment Site but he was concerned that the expectation is for the Woodlands Road site to have the potential to employ more people than the Quarryfields Industrial Estate – this was not the case at the present time and Cllr. Jeans felt that the Quarryfields Industrial Estate, with its potential for expansion and better road network should have equal or higher status than the Woodlands Road Employment Site. The Parish Council unanimously concurred with Cllr. Jeans' concerns and agreed to raise an objection with the Inspector.

## 141. Planning

a) 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/2012/838/FULL  
**Location:** Faith Cottage North Road Mere Warminster.  
**Proposal:** Renewal of extant planning permission for S/2009/0889, to erect new two storey dwelling and form vehicular Access

The Clerk read out an email from Mrs. A. Howell objecting to the above application.

Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that the Parish Council had even more reason to reiterate its previous recommendations for refusal now that Faith Cottage had been substantially extended. Cllr. Hope proposed that the Parish Council should object to the application for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would cause long term harm to the local area by the inappropriate development of a restricted size garden plot, having regard to paragraph 53 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. It would be detrimental to Faith Cottage, which has recently been substantially enlarged in size and scale, leaving it with a disproportionately small and constricted curtilage and causing loss of amenity and a poor outlook.
3. It would constitute a cramped form of overdevelopment with detriment to the character of North Street and dwellings opposite.
4. It would be detrimental to North Street in terms of the lack of turning facilities for the proposed off street parking space and loss of street parking.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 6 for and 2 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans abstained in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor)

**Application Number:** S/2012/868/FULL  
**Location:** Orchard House, Southbrook, Mere.  
**Proposal:** Alterations to roof including four new dormer windows and four new Velux windows. Provide escapee door from attic floor with balcony

Cllr. Hope informed members that the application previously considered by the Parish Council in May had now been withdrawn. The only difference with this new application appeared to be that this application omits parking and turning area but otherwise it looks similar. Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Parish Council should recommend approval of the application. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Norris and carried with a vote of 5 for and 3 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from voting.)

**Application Number:** S/2012/874

**Location:** 14 Walnut Road Mere Warminster.

**Proposal:** Single storey rear conservatory

Cllr. Mitchell proposed that the above application should be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 6 for, 1 against and 1 abstention. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from voting).

## **142. Matters Arising from recent meetings**

**a) Discussion on possible expansion opportunities for Mere Surgery** – Following the discussion with Dr. King at the last Parish Council meeting, members discussed various issues:

Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that she felt that now would be a good time to approach the owners of the Old First School site again regarding acquisition of this site in order to relocate and expand the Mere Surgery. She also wondered if the acquisition of some land from Mr. & Mrs. Ransley would enable the surgery to make a small two-storey extension on the eastern side. However, she said that her husband, being a local architect, had suggested that the surgery could extend the first floor out over the car park in a northerly direction in such a way that still allowed parking underneath the extension and Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that if the recycling skips could be relocated, this would help with the demand on parking spaces. Cllr. Rodney Coward said that relocating the recycling skips to the Quarryfields Industrial Estate and extending the surgery in a northerly direction towards the centre of the car park would result in the loss of less parking spaces than it would if it extended it out towards the west.

Cllr. R. Sims felt that the surgery should investigate all possibilities relating to the Old First School site.

Cllr. Hazzard said that the doctors were not asking the Parish Council to come up with designs and or solutions; they merely wanted the parish council to add support with any approaches and negotiations they may make to third parties, whether that is Wiltshire Council or individual private owners. Cllr. Hazzard felt absolutely certain that the people of Mere would want the surgery to stay in the central location in Mere and would accept the loss of a few parking spaces if that was the necessary sacrifice to keep the surgery in such a central location. The Chairman said that she understood that the Doctors were asking for the Parish Council's support in facilitating any plans that may come forward to allow them to seek funding and enable them to extend their premises. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that, subject to the viewing and approval of plans, the Parish Council should support and help facilitate the doctors and doctors' surgery with proposals for expansion and/or extension so that it can offer more services locally for patients. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a vote of 6 for, 0 against. (Cllr. G. Jeans and B. Norris abstained from voting).

**b) Mere Town Football Club** – New football pitch – the concerns relating to the ploughing of the football pitch, previously raised by Cllr. R. Coward, had now been alleviated since the pitch had now been levelled and grass seed sown.

**c) Skate Park – update on Feasibility Study/Business Plan and report on meeting held at Mere Youth Development Centre** – The Clerk reported that quotations for the equipment had been submitted by three companies and ranged from £38,000 to £70,000 but the quotations were not like for like. For example, one company's quotation is for a concrete bowl type design and the others are based on a tarmac surface with add on equipment. Some of the quotations include the surfacing and others do not. Since the tarmac surface treatment seems to make up a large part of the costs involved, Cllr. Hazzard was now in the process of producing a specification, with professional advice, so that we can tender for the tarmac surfacing separately. A meeting in the Youth Club was held on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> June attended by Parish Councillors, the youth workers and youth club members. All were shown possible designs (based on quotations received) and it was quickly revealed that the concrete bowl design (the most expensive) was not a popular choice amongst the youth. Cllr. Norris said that he had attended this meeting and he thought it was poorly attended and he did not think that there was real support for this project anymore. Cllr. Norris was concerned that a lot of time and expenditure may be spent on a white elephant and that the Parish Council would be better spending the money on keeping open the amenities we already have rather than another amenity that would require future maintenance. Cllr. Jeans said that he was convinced that this facility was needed and Cllr. Hazzard said that he did not want to see the project shelved again as it had much public support.

**d) Report on Mere's Rivers meeting held on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> June + report on Wessex Water's Public Exhibition on the Water Supply Grid** – Cllr. Norris said that he would prefer to postpone the full report on the Mere's Rivers meeting until the Minutes are available. However, he did attend Wessex Water's Public Exhibition and explained that Wessex Water were designing a new water supply transfer system called the water supply grid where they were proposing to pump water from Corfe Mullen to Kingston Deverill and then along to Salisbury. Mere water will also be pumped into this pipeline. Wessex Water was currently carrying out an environmental impact assessment on the pipeline and was proposing to submit a planning application for the scheme by the end of summer 2012. Wessex Water was inviting feedback on the scheme. On a more local issue, the Mere Rivers group were hoping to have a stall in the town centre on 14<sup>th</sup> July where water saving devices would be distributed.

**e) Mere Swimming Pool – to consider repair/refurbishment reports and quotations (as attached)** - Mr. Parsons very kindly attended the meeting to answer questions from councillors and said that the pool would not be open for use this summer although the committee members would use the time to raise funds to carry out repair and refurbishment works in March next year. They would like to change the heating system, re-landscape the surrounds, add a new liner for the pool, have a new boiler shed, new shower, changing rooms and toilet facilities, a disabled lift system and decking area. The Clerk felt that, since it would be necessary to seek quotations and grants for all this work, this was the ideal opportunity to seek funding to provide for a retractable cover/enclosure for the swimming pool which would help to solve the frost problems, heating costs and unauthorised entry problems and also to seek funding for alternative energy power (solar/wind) to help with heating costs. The Clerk also pointed out that this would be a more attractive proposition for the larger funding organisations such as Sport England. Both the Parish Council and Mr. Parsons felt that this was a good suggestion and it was agreed that the Parish Council would give Mr. Parsons and the swimming pool committee its full support for its efforts with fundraising etc.

**f) Suggestions for pedestrian & highway surface treatment in The Square in order to slow traffic (arising from Annual Parish Meeting)** – The Clerk said that this matter had been raised prior to and at the Annual Parish Meeting but had not yet been discussed fully at a Parish Council meeting. Cllr. Hope said that the site lines for pedestrians to cross the road in The Square were not very good and he felt that something fairly simple like a distinctive surfacing treatment in The Square would alert drivers to the fact that they had driven into a special area and needed to take care. Cllr. Jeans pointed out that even a simple scheme such as a distinctive surface treatment for The Square would require Traffic Regulation Orders and such a scheme was likely to cost well over £50,000. Cllr. Jeans said that Wiltshire Council would not even consider spending this kind of money under the present economic climate and he did not know of any other avenues of funding. Cllr. Hazzard said that it was comparatively recently that The Square was refurbished and as part of that refurbishment work the Parish Council had tried to get a pedestrian crossing in The Square but the safety criteria was not met which is why the pedestrian crossing was put further down the road. The Parish Council generally felt that there was little point in pursuing this suggestion as the Highways Authority would not have the funds to initiate it.

#### **143. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport**

**a) Highway & footpath issues for parish steward + street lighting faults** - The following issues were reported for the Clerk to pass on to the relevant departments:

- Street Light No. 9 outside house no. 6 at Jack Paul Close flashes all night.
- Footpath across the Meads – obstructions.

#### **144. Finance, Policy & Resources**

**a) Payments** – the payments listed in the payment schedule were approved with a unanimous vote of those present, on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal interest, left the room whilst this matter was discussed.

Cash	Reimbursement for extra bunting and flags for Diamond Jubilee event	£58.68
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	190.00
Imprest Account – cheque Nos. 2794 - 2802	Wages, Petty Cash, PAYE, pension etc.	6010.63
Cash	Travel expenses – Standards Framework meeting in Salisbury	31.72
Hitachi Capital Invoice Finance (A. D. Mills Contracting)	Ploughing, levelling, rolling and seed Mere Football Pitch	3000.00
RBL Poppy Appeal	Poppy Wreaths for Wessex Memorial & Remembrance Sunday	51.00
MacLachlan Solicitors	Legal work to date in connection with leases for Swimming Pool & Bowling Green	1140.00
MacLachlan Solicitors	Registration of Bowls Club Lease	290.00
Rutter & Rutter Solicitors	Aviva - Insurance for Husqvarna ride-on mower	169.40

**b) Localism Act 2011 – New Standards Framework and Code of Conduct**

Members must make a resolution tonight to adopt a Code of Conduct (please refer to report submitted on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012) – Cllr. Hazzard said that, whilst he wanted to accept the Clerks recommendation of adopting the Wiltshire template code, he was unable to accept that parish councillors should be penalised and not offered the same rights as members of the public. Cllr. Hazzard therefore proposed that the Parish Council should adopt Wiltshire Council’s template code with the addition of the relevant paragraph from the NALC template code (Paragraph 11 from their Legal Briefing L08-12) that will allow parish councillors to speak as a member of the public in the public session. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 6 for and 2 abstentions. With reference to the reports and briefings provided by the Clerk in such a short space of time, the Parish Council asked for a note of appreciation to the Clerk to be recorded in the Minutes.

**d) Quotation for curtains for Andy Young Pavilion** – the Clerk informed members that a quotation had been received to make up 8 pairs of curtains (4 each side of the pavilion). The quotation included the cost for lining and headings but did not include the cost of fabric which would require approximately 60m of fabric. Members felt that the quotation was prohibitive and that it was not necessary to have curtaining on both sides of the pavilion. The Clerk was asked to get further quotations for just one side of the pavilion. As this matter was raised initially due to acoustic issues with the pavilion, the Clerk asked members if the new seating arrangement had made any difference. Cllr. Hope, who initially raised this matter, said that the seating arrangement was slightly better.

**145. General Items**

**a) Application by Gillingham Town Council to designate a neighbourhood area** – the Clerk informed members that she had received consultation notification from North Dorset District Council that Gillingham Town Council had applied for the designation of a neighbourhood area under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The area proposed covers the whole of the parished area of Gillingham and will form the basis for a neighbourhood

plan. This is a formal regulatory stage on the designation of the neighbourhood area and not consultation on the neighbourhood plan itself which will follow in due course. Members had no comments to make.

**b) Casual Vacancy** – The Clerk confirmed that, following the resignation of Cllr. Mrs. Porter, notices of a vacancy had been posted around the town and that 12<sup>th</sup> July is deadline date to call an election. The Parish Council will therefore know, shortly after 12<sup>th</sup> July whether or not an election is required or whether a co-option can take place at the September meeting.

**c) Forthcoming meetings:**

No monthly meeting in August.

Members noted that the Clerk would be on annual leave from 5.7.12 – 15.7.12

South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting – 15.8.12

**146. Staff Issues** – the Clerk and Chairman informed members that the Groundsman, Mr. Suter, was on indefinite sick leave and that the new part-time assistant groundsman was doing a good job to keep everything in order. However, he was struggling with adverse weather conditions and without any help it was proving to be a battle to keep everything up together. Members unanimously agreed that the Council should seek help for the grounds maintenance in the form of an outside contractor with their own machinery and public liability insurance. A budget of £3,000 was agreed for this help and this task was delegated to the Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Cllr. R. Coward suggested that it might be a good idea to consider seeking an ‘Apprentice Groundsman’ and it was agreed that this matter would be raised at the Annual Budget Meeting.

**147. Future agenda items:**

- Tipper truck at cemetery car park.