

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 6th February 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), P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, D. Hope, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell & R. Sims

Also: Mr. & Mrs. Armishaw, R. Cleal, R. Potter, L. Stanton & Ben Marshall

Meeting convened at 7.31 p.m. with **Public Session**

Mr. Armishaw said that he was here again to ask the Parish Council to confirm its decision to stop up the land to Lower Mere Park Farm. Mr. Armishaw said that there was no turning point on the road and no parking places and that the road only went to the farm. People would still be able to walk and ride horses down the lane and he is only asking for public vehicular rights to be stopped. Mr. Armishaw said that the any issue relating to the closure of the gate was not relevant to the application.

Mrs. Traves read out a note written by Mrs. Leece with suggestions for celebrating the Queens Golden Jubilee.

Cllr. Hazzard said that he was very sad to hear that the vicar, Paul Barnes, was leaving Mere. He thought he was wonderful and was always very helpful. Cllr. Hazzard suggested that the parish should write to the bishop to convey our appreciation and gratitude for the work that Rev. Paul Barnes carried out in Mere.

Cllr. Hope seconded this proposal which was carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. R. Hill, Mrs. J. Hurd, B. Norris & D. Sealy.

84. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr. D. Hope declared a personal interest in Minute No. 86 c) [as member of the Ramblers Association] and a personal interest in Minute No. 89a)

Cllr. R. Sims declared a personal interest in Planning Application S/2012/66

Cllr. Mrs. Traves declared a personal interest in Planning Application S/2012/66

Cllr. Jeans declared a prejudicial interest in Planning Application S/2012/146 [relative] and in Minute No. 91a) [payee]

85. Minutes – Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 9th January 2012 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 9.1.12

86. Matters Arising

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report - none

b) Wiltshire Councillors Report – Cllr. Jeans reported that he had today attended a Licensing Committee meeting and that Wiltshire Council was seeking to harmonise a lot of the licenses. Cllr. Jeans had asked for Moviola films to be exempt. Wiltshire Council has sent out information on licenses necessary for Jubilee and Olympic Celebrations but they were making efforts to simplify the processes. Cllr. Jeans explained that Wiltshire Council was bidding for £16 million funding to bring superfast broadband to Wiltshire. Cllr. Mitchell asked Cllr. Jeans if he could do anything to get the yellow lines repainted in the centre of Mere as they have now worn away and can hardly be seen.

***c) Application to stop up highway between Lower Mere Park Farm and Lower Park Cottages, Mere** – the Chairman explained that each member had received a folder containing all correspondence relating to this matter. Cllr. P. Coward said that he had read every document but he felt that a lot of the objections that had been put forward were not relevant because footpath and bridleway access would still be

maintained. Cllr. R. Coward said that he had read the documents and made a site visit and could see no reason to oppose the application. The Chairman confirmed that the gate was not relevant to this application and the application referred only to taking away the public vehicular rights. Cllr. Hope said that, as Wiltshire Council would be saving money on any future road maintenance, he hoped they might see their way to putting a bridleway sign on the road. Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that she was concerned that people may be reluctant to use the bridleway or walk along the footpath in and amongst cattle and she therefore felt that the status quo should remain. Cllr. Mitchell said that he was born on the neighbouring farm and his father was always envious of this farm having a track maintained by the council so he could not understand why anyone would want to take on this responsibility themselves. Also, there are several claims amongst these papers saying that no-one uses the track so he could not understand why anyone would want to go to all this effort to stop public highway rights. Cllr. R. Coward explained that farmers are not allowed to put dangerous animals in a field with a public footpath and Cllr. P. Coward said that he would rather not pay his taxes to maintain this road. Cllr. Jeans said that he had taken advice from the Highways Department who have confirmed that it would be possible to turn around on the road with a small vehicle doing a 4 or 5 point turn. He also said that he would support whichever decision the Parish Council made on this matter but confirmed that the Parish Council's decision was significant as the Cabinet Member (Cllr. Dick Tonge) would be unwise to approve this without the Parish Council's approval and that the Parish Council would need to give reasons for objecting to the application as it could be taken to the Magistrates Court. Cllr. P. Coward proposed that the application be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a vote of 3 for, 2 against and 3 abstentions. Proposal is carried. The Clerk was asked to write separately to Wiltshire Council to ask them to install footpath waymarking signs along the route.

d) Queens Diamond Jubilee Celebrations – The Clerk read through a list of celebration events that she had currently been notified of. Cllr. Jeans explained that Wiltshire Council had earmarked funds to be allocated through the Area Boards to help with celebrations. There would be £1000 available for the smaller villages and £2000 for Mere, Tisbury & Wilton but an application needed to be submitted in the very near future. The Clerk said that she had spoken to Mr. Bill Deeker who had said that, if he was not busy, he would be very happy to organise some kind of firework display at a very sensible cost to the parish council. The Clerk said that she had also spoken to Mr. Deeker about having flambé(s) on Castle Hill as an alternative to a beacon and that these could be supplied but the flame would only be about 2' high. Cllrs. P. Coward and R. Coward felt that the Parish Council should put a brazier on the hill and they agreed to organise the design and supply of something (with an ash tray). It was agreed that an application should be submitted for funding towards the fireworks, bunting and brazier. Cllr. R. Coward reminded members that Cllr. Hughes would be planting fruit trees in Kingsmere and felt that this could be called the Jubilee plantation and sponsors could be invited to help pay for the trees. Cllr. C. Hazzard said that insurance would need to be applied for the bunting and that it would be better to pay someone professional to put the bunting up across the street. Cllr. Jeans said that he had a Royal Oak tree and would be very pleased if this could be planted in the Recreation Ground as a Jubilee Tree. It was also agreed that a notice should be placed in Mere Matters asking for volunteers.

e) Mere's Rivers - Report on residents meeting with Julie Girling, MEP – the Chairman confirmed that Julie Girling MEP met with Wessex Water in the morning and then walked the Mere rivers with residents and Cllr. Rodney Coward – the rivers, at this time, had a good flow of water. A meeting was then held in the Andy Young Pavilion which went reasonably well. Julie Girling is appreciative of the work that has been done by Andrew Murrison MP and reported on the Water Framework Directive which is a new piece of European legislation which promotes a new approach to water management through river basin planning. The Chairman said that it would be a good idea to keep Julie Girling in the loop on any possible future proposals, problems and developments.

87. 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/2012/146
Location: Newlands Boar Street Mere Warminster.
Proposal: T1 - Scots or Black Pine - Crown reduce by 20 percent, leave branches near vertical around crown. Reduce lower diameter by four metres.

Cllr. Jeans, having declared a prejudicial interest in this application, left the room whilst this item was discussed. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above application should be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present.

Application Number: S/2012/130/FULL
Location: Whitehill Cottage, Whitehill Lane, Mere.
Proposal: Alterations to existing stable to raise height. Provision of upper level hay loft and use of part of the building for leisure purposes.

Cllr. Mitchell said that he was not in favour of this application as he was not aware that the current owner had kept any horses for 10 years. Cllr. Hope said that he was intrigued that the applicant wanted to increase the roof height in order to provide a climbing wall. Cllr. Hope proposed that the application should be refused for the following reasons: "The proposed alterations would result in a building that would be out of scale and character and would take on more of the characteristics of a new dwelling rather than an outbuilding ancillary to an old cottage." Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a vote of 5 for and 2 abstentions (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from discussion or voting).

Application Number: S/2012/127/FULL
Location: Land adjacent to Downsvie, Southbrook, Mere.
Proposal: Amendments to Planning Approval S/2011/1341 to include change from double car port to single car port and change the gable ends from natural slate to slate quoins with render.

Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. D. Hope and carried with a majority vote. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from discussion or voting).

Application Number: S/2012/66/CU
Location: Lander House, Castle Street, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Change of Use from shop to residential

It was pointed out that this application was retrospective. Cllr. Hope proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr Hazzard and carried with a vote of 4 for, 0 against and 4 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from discussion or voting).

Application Number: S/2012/9
Location: 15 Whitemarsh Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Single storey extension

Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hope and carried with a majority vote. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from discussion or voting).

Application Number: S/2012/107
Location: Castle Hill Barn Castle Hill Lane Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Fell x 1 ash

Cllr. Hope said that there was no arboriculturalist report accompanying the application and as it was quite a prominent tree he wondered why the applicants could not reduce the crown. Cllr. Mrs. Traves proposed that the above application be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr Sims and carried with a vote of 5 for, 1 against and 2 abstentions. (Cllr. Jeans, in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, abstained from discussion or voting).

b) Report on Neighbourhood Planning meeting held in Gillingham on 11.1.12 – Cllr. David Hope had produced a full and concise report of the meetings he had attended (available on request). He said that the government has funded some front runners to make neighbourhood plans and there will be a second wave for which Gillingham is going to apply. We should be clear about what is going on over the border

because Gillingham is a big growth area. There was another meeting in Shaftesbury, on the same subject, a few days later which Cllr. Jeans and Cllr. Hope attended.

c) Developers Contributions for Affordable Housing – the Clerk said that she had raised this an agenda item because she had been made aware that Wiltshire Council was proposing (within the Wiltshire Core Strategy) to impose very large charges on developers by way of a contribution towards affordable housing – as much as £15000 on a single house development. Cllr. Jeans confirmed that Wiltshire Core Strategy was proposing that this levy should be charged on developments above 2 houses and by 2016, if the development is not carbon neutral, the developer would have to find another £10,000 per. The Parish Council agreed that a letter should be sent to Wiltshire Council opposing this proposal as it would make any future small developments unsustainable and would restrain any hope of improving the economy in rural areas.

88. Open Spaces, Recreation Grounds, Play Areas & Sports Grounds

a) HLS Scheme – the Clerk confirmed that work was starting on the scrub clearance around the fence line and all the necessary consent applications had all been submitted. The next stage was to produce specifications for the tendering process for the fencing. The Clerk also confirmed that a quotation had been received back in November from Mr. Millard to install a water pipe to serve the water trough at £1945 + VAT. The Clerk was reluctant to go out to tender on this matter because time was fast becoming an issue. Members agreed that Mr. Millard should carry out this work at the price quoted. Cllr. R. Coward abstained from voting or discussion.

b) Signing of sub-leases for Bowling Green & Swimming Pool – the Clerk informed members that draft sub-leases had now all been approved and the solicitor was in the process of sending out the leases for signature but signatories needed to be identified. It was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should sign the leases

c) Policy R2 and skate park project – the Clerk confirmed that she had been liaising with Wiltshire Council as a sum of Policy R2 Developers Contributions was due to expire. The Clerk had been able to secure these funds which had now been earmarked towards the skate park project.

d) Review of 3-month trial permission period for Military Style Fitness Classes at Duchy grounds – the Clerk informed members that Mrs. Harkin had been in to see her as she had now been operating her fitness classes for 3 months. The maximum number of attendees was 6 which has happened twice but the average number is 4. The Clerk also confirmed that she had received no reports of clashes over grounds/facility uses. Members agreed that Mrs. Harkin should continue with the classes with a further review in 6 months time.

89. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway and footpath issues for parish steward + street lighting faults

Jobs for parish steward:

- litter and rubbish at Gillingham Corner out towards Gillingham
- cut vegetation back from street light nearest lower pinch point in Pettridge Lane.
- cut hedge to prevent visibility obstruction at junction Pettridge Lane/The Lynch (write to estate agents)
- on pavement outside Butt of Sherry, large kerbstones are tilting.
- cut back vegetation on to prevent visibility obstruction on junction Southbrook/Shaftesbury Road

Cllr. Jeans said that he had received a petition about the dangers of the roundabout outside the Walnut Tree Public House. It was agreed that the Parish Council should send a letter in support of this. (Cllr. Hope declared an interest and refrained from discussion or voting).

***b) Waiting restrictions – Wiltshire Council's new procedure for dealing with waiting restrictions** – members noted the information in the Clerks Report. The Clerk informed members that there was some uneasiness about this new procedure, amongst parish & town councils, because it would entail more work for the parish & town councils and the new procedure was decided upon without any prior consultation with parish & town councils.

90. Allotments

a) Issues relating to building works adjacent to allotment sites at Southbrook and Wellhead –

Southbrook – the Clerk had reason to believe that developers for the plot adjacent to Downsview had used the allotment lane at the rear to gain rear access for groundwork vehicles. She also had reason to believe that the Estate Agents marketing the property known as Downsview were indicating that it had rear vehicular access. Upon checking this with the Duchy of Cornwall the Clerk had contacted both the developers and the estate agents to inform them that neither property currently had any vehicular access to the rear and that any legal challenges in establishing historic rights or otherwise, would need to be conducted with the Duchy of Cornwall as land owners.

Wellhead – the Clerk informed members that the owner of Faith Cottage had commenced work on extending the cottage and she had raised concerns that building materials and safety fencing was being erected outside the cottage boundary and on the allotment land. It was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should talk to the owner to see if an amicable agreement could be sought, possibly involving the need for a licence and license fee.

b) Request for greenhouse – the Clerk had received an application to erect a small greenhouse at Wellhead allotment site. Members approved the application subject to the recommendation that polycarbonate panels or glass safety film is applied to the greenhouse panels.

91. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments – the following payments were approved on proposal by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a majority vote of approval. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a prejudicial interest, left the room whilst this item was discussed and did not vote. The Clerk also asked members whether they would approve the purchase of a new bulb for the overhead projector which would cost somewhere in the region of £200. It was agreed that this bulb should be purchased.

Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service & repairs to Husqvarna ride-on	152.85
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service & repairs to lawn mower	69.60
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service & repairs to hedgecutter & Stihl blower	105.60
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Service & repairs to Kawasaki Brushcutters (X2)	111.36
Shaftesbury Garden Machinery	Purchase of grinder	58.80
Jeans	Oil filled heater for office	69.99
Sydenhams	Post Fix + sawn timber	43.24
Cash	Mobile phone top-up fee	20.00
Scats Countrystores	Signs for Long Hill & Castle Hill	107.06
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	101.00
Imprest Account Cheque Nos. ???? - ?????	Salaries, PAYE, Petty Cash & Pension	?????
MrFlag.com	Flags for Castle Hill	242.40
Newlands Training	Training courses for groundsman	411.00

b) Renewal of lease for office – the Clerk confirmed that she had been liaising with Wiltshire Council again about this matter. Wiltshire Council had asked if the Parish Council would have any objection in reducing the length of the lease to 6 years and 364 days so that it did not need to be registered with the land registry as this would save time and money (any leases for 7 years or over are now legally required to be registered). Members raised no objection to this.

c) Release of funds to purchase Public Access Defibrillator – it was agreed that the PAD should be ordered and that it should be erected on the property known as Barton in Castle Street (by kind permission of Mr. Gillard)

d) To set date for insurance and risk assessment meeting – it was agreed that the insurance and risk assessment meeting should be held on Tuesday, 14th February

e) Register of Interests – the clerk informed members that under the Localism Act 2011, the New Standards Regime was requiring that Parish Councils publish the Register of Members' Interests on their website. The Clerk was aware that some parish councillors from neighbouring towns and parishes have expressed concerns about this as it was possible that this personal information could be open to misuse and a fear that this could be another hindrance in encouraging people to stand as parish councillors. However, the requirements for what must be included on the register will be changing so we do not yet know what information is required to be published on the website. The Clerk was more concerned about the new code of conduct and hoped that the new local code would offer parish councillors the same rights as members of the public in the same way that was offered in Paragraph 12 (2) in the Code of Conduct 2007. It was agreed that these concerns should be pointed out to Wiltshire Council accordingly.

92. General Items

a) Market for Mere? – the Clerk confirmed that she had met with an officer from Wiltshire Council (Tom Ince) who was tasked with doing research as to which towns might want or benefit from holding a regular market. Mr. Ince was going to look around the town to see where it might be practical to hold a market and to talk to some of the shopkeepers to gauge opinion. He was also going to conduct a survey amongst parishioners to see if there would be a demand for a market. The Clerk advised him to put something into Mere Matters.

b) Wiltshire Police Authority Service to the Community Award – the Clerk explained that she had received details about this award scheme. Nominations were being sought from the public and nominees could be a Police Officer, Community Support Officer, Special Constable or a volunteer – the only criteria is that you believe their service to the Neighbourhood Policing Team has been outstanding. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should nominate PC Richard Salter and this was agreed on the understanding that Cllr. Hazzard would help with the nomination form etc.

b) Report on Wiltshire Council's Budget Consultation Forum meeting held on 31st January 2012 – the Clerk and Chairman had attended this meeting which was very poorly attended. Those present were tasked with a primitive budgeting exercise and given 'choices' as to where money should be spent and what resources should be cut or lost in order to fund this expenditure. The Clerk said that the results from this and other similar exercises revealed that a reduction in street lighting would be likely.

c) Community Planning Event, Dinton Village Hall on Monday, 5th March at 6.30 p.m. – invitation from Chairman of South West Wiltshire Area Board – it was agreed that Councillors Mrs. Traves, George Jeans, Roy Sims and David Hope would attend. The Clerk had also expressed a wish to attend this event. As so many councillors and the Clerk would be at this event it was agreed that the March Parish Council meeting should be held a week later, on Monday, 12th March.

d) Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning Event - 21st February 2012, Corn Exchange, Devizes – 5.30pm – 8.30pm – Cllr. Jeans said that he would be attending this event.

***e) Enhancing the Visitor Economy – Initiative being developed by AONB team and bid for funding to the Sowing SEEDS programme** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report, it was agreed to submit a letter of support.

f) Consultation on the proposed submission draft Wiltshire & Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Development Plan Document – noted.

g) Set date for Annual Parish Meeting – it was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Wednesday, 25th April in the Grove Building if possible.

93. Clerks Report – The Clerk report was confirmed and adopted.

Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity

a) Submission of Annual Return to Charity Commission – the Clerk confirmed that the Annual Return had been submitted on 17th January 2012 using the figures adopted at the end of year income/expenditure summary.