

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 4th March 2013 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors Mrs. L. Traves (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward (from 7.30 – 8.10 p.m.) G. Jeans, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, D. Hope, R. Hughes, Mrs. J. Hurd, Ann-Marie Long, E. Mitchell, B. Norris & R. Sims.

Also: Mr. H. Bell, Mrs. S. Catley, Mrs. R. Cox, Mrs. A. Howell, Mr. R. Jefferies, Mr. F. Legge, A. Mead, Mr. L. Stanton, Mr. D. Stone, Mr. R. Stone, Mrs. Barbara Thomas, & Mr. C. Tuck.

Public Session

Mr. Hamish Bell, representing Mere Chamber of Trade spoke about the grant funding of £14,000 over the next two years that has recently been awarded from Wiltshire Council's South West Wiltshire Area Board. He confirmed that the grant had been awarded for a community project to encourage tourism and boost business in Mere. There are 8 special projects within the proposals and a launch meeting will be held on 1st May in the Grove Building between 7.00 – 7.30 p.m.

Mrs. Adrienne Howell spoke about the Old Band Hut and said that the Mere & District Linkscheme has been in need of a home for storage, meetings and interviews and had begun negotiations with Salisbury District Council for the old band hut some years ago. The Linkscheme had subsequently made a request to the Parish Council to take back the hut and consider the Linkscheme as a tenant. Mrs. Howell said she was here again tonight to ask the same thing. She understood that there were other groups or parties interested in use of the band hut but none have had such a long interest as the Linkscheme. However, she said that the Linkscheme would consider sharing.

Mr. Richard Jefferies said that he had looked at the building and reported that it was in a very sorry state internally. However, he was able to raise a voluntary workforce to help put the building back into use if the Parish Council could purchase the materials. Mr. Jefferies interest lay in using the building for a community craft centre but said that he thought the building could accommodate shared usage.

Mr. Allan Mead said that he had recently carried out a leaflet campaign against dog fouling and was aware that some people had been reported as a result of allowing their dogs to foul footpaths and public open spaces. As a result of this, he would like to ask the Parish Council to take a stronger approach if there are continued reports of repeat offenders – perhaps with a view to making prosecutions and/or the use of cameras. Cllr. Jeans proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Mead for taking the initiative of doing a leaflet drop. It was agreed that the issue of prosecutions and/or cameras would be raised on the next agenda.

Mrs. Adrienne Howell said that she had put in a request for the parish steward to clean up leaves and mud along Old Hollow & The Fields and along Clewes Lane, Waterside and White Road. The Clerk confirmed that this request had been submitted and the parish steward's response would be read out during the meeting.

Mrs. Cox spoke about HGV vehicles driving along The Lynch and said that she is suffering damage to her property as a result of these vehicles. Mrs. Cox added that, on the assumption that permission is given for houses to be built on the Brush Factory site, there needs to be much bigger and better signage to stop these heavy vehicles from travelling along The Lynch.

Mr. Frank Legge stressed that the problematic vehicles did not just relate to the Brush Factory and Mr. Philip Coward explained that Satellite Navigation Systems were at fault and were sending these large vehicles along this route.

Mr. Roy Sims said that a member of the public had been into the police station complaining that someone had been onto the allotment site and taken the top off all his plants. Mr. Sims wondered what inspections were made of the allotments. Mr. Mitchell explained that when he was Chairman, the allotments were inspected regularly and the Clerk said that she visited the allotment sites on a regular basis.

Mrs. Howell said that the Parish Council used to have an Environment Committee that inspected all the open spaces, including the allotments and play areas etc., and she suggested that this might be reinstated.

Mr. Jefferies said that he had offered his services to update and renew the parish website.

The Chairman will convene the Parish Council meeting after the public session (please note that members of the public are no longer permitted to speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman).

Apologies for absence received from Councillors R. Coward, D. Sealy and from PC Richard Salter

201. To receive Declarations of Interest and to consider requests for dispensation.

Cllr. P. Coward declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 205 b) but said that he would be leaving the meeting before this item was discussed.

Cllr. Jeans declared a personal interest in planning application S/2013/252 and a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 206 c) and a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 208 a)

202. Minutes – Cllr. Sims proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 4th February 2013 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Ann-Marie Long and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 4.2.13.

203. Matters Arising

a) Community Transfer of assets (Band Hut & Croquet Club) – Progress Report & interest for community use of band hut – The Clerk confirmed that the South West Wiltshire Area Board had approved the transfer of the two assets to the Parish Council and that she had since received the Copies of Land Registry Titles along with Draft Transfers from Wiltshire Council. As discussed in the Public Session, the Clerk confirmed that she had also received a proposal from Mr. Jefferies to use the building as a Community and Craft Workshop. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the parish council should put a plea in Mere Matters to see if there are any other groups that would be interested in using this building and then to set up a meeting with these groups to discuss their usage proposals etc. Cllr. Jeans said that he would be prepared to fund the repairs to the flooring of the band hut at no cost to the Parish Council.

c) Update on car park & public toilet leases – The Clerk confirmed that the Leases had now been completed and the car parks and public toilets fell under the Parish Council's responsibility with effect from 25th February 2013, although Wiltshire Council had agreed to continue with the toilet cleaning contract until 1st March. The toilet block had been added to the Parish Council's insurance schedule with effect from 25th March 2013. Cllr. Hazzard requested that 'dedicated parking for Mere Surgery' be raised as a future agenda item.

e) Appointment of toilet cleaner/attendant – the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had appointed a new member of staff, Mrs. Margaret Beaumont, as a toilet cleaner/attendant who started work on 1st March under a 6-month fixed term contract.

204. Reports

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – The Clerk informed members that PC Richard Salter had sent his apologies as he had already committed to attending Semley & Sedgell Parish Council meeting this evening. He also apologised for not attending a Parish Council meeting in Mere for some time but, since he was still working without a PCSO, his flexibility was somewhat restricted. The Clerk confirmed, however, that she would be attending a Neighbourhood Task Group meeting tomorrow evening so she would pass on any issues or concerns to PC Salter at that meeting.

b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report to include report of South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting held on 6.2.13 – Cllr. Jeans reported that, in addition to the grant for the Chamber of Trade, the South West Wiltshire Area Board had approved grants for the Youth Football Club to obtain a storage container (£1,400) and Mere Town Football Club had been awarded £5000 for the purchase of equipment for the upkeep of the football pitches.

Cllr. P. Coward left the meeting at 8.10 p.m.

205. 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)

Parish or Ward: ZEALS
Application Number: S/2013/152
Location: Land adjacent to Dead Maid Quarry Industrial Estate Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Vary condition 1 of S/2009/0191 (outline application for a mix of b1 & b8 uses) to extend the time allowed to implement the permission

Cllr. Hope proposed that the above application should be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. B. Norris and carried with a unanimous vote.

Parish or Ward: MERE
Application Number: S/2013/252/FULL
Location: Mere Surgery, Dark Lane, Mere. Warminster.
Proposal: Installation of a photovoltaic panel system on the south-east facing pitched roof

Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the above application should be recommended for approval. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal interest, abstained from voting.

Parish or Ward: MERE
Application Number: S/2013/278
Location: Maple Field Chetcombe Road Mere Warminster.
Proposal: Replace existing shed with detached 2 bay garage with external staircase to a storage area above garage

Cllr. Hope felt that it was quite elaborate to have a double garage with roof lights and a dormer but felt that it could be permitted with the use restricted to garage and storage. Cllr. Hughes proposed that the application should be approved on condition that the garage is tied to the house known as Maple Field, Chetcombe Road so that it cannot be sold off or occupied separately and that the use should be restricted to that of garage and storage. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Norris and carried with a vote of 8 for, 0 against and 1 abstention. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans refrained from voting or discussion.

b) Report on meeting held on 12th February with C. G. Fry & Son & Brimble Lee to discuss two planning applications 1) for the erection of a new factory building and associated works on Land adjoining Dead Maid Quarry and 2) residential development of land at the existing Hill Brush site on Woodlands Road, Mere – The Chairman confirmed that an informal meeting had been held with Parish Council Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Jeans & Cllr. Norris, Mr. Tony Brimble, David Lohfink & Philip Fry of C. G. Fry & Son on 12th February when members had been shown the same plans as had been displayed at the Public Consultation Meeting. This informal meeting gave an opportunity for members to ask questions about the two planning applications and it was explained that C. G. Fry & Son hoped to submit a planning application in June/July this year and that, if approved, the whole process would probably take in the region of 3 years with the building of the new factory taking place first. The Chairman said that she had also attended the public consultation event and was pleased to see that so many members of the public had attended and were providing feedback. She said that C. G. Fry & Son had proved to be good developers to work with on the Huntsgate Development and hoped that they would take account of the feedback. The Chairman confirmed that these representatives had indicated a willingness to attend a future Parish Council meeting, if requested. Cllr. Jeans asked for 'vehicle access and highway suggestions in relation to this development' to be discussed at a future meeting.

c) Water Harvesting for New Developments – Cllr. B. Norris – deferred.

206. Open Spaces, Play Areas, Sports Grounds, Allotments & Cemeteries

a) Concerns raised about barbed wire on Long Hill – The Clerk said that this item had been raised due to the fact that a resident had complained that the footpaths around Long Hill were extremely slippery in wet conditions and that it was possible that someone could fall and grab hold of the barbed wire fencing to break their fall. The resident had questioned the need for barbed wire fencing in this location and expressed concern that the Parish Council could be negligent if someone had an injury due to the barbed wire.

Members concluded that it was not possible to take the barbed wire fencing down as it was necessary to contain cattle and livestock on Long Hill and said that it was common practice to have barbed wire fences adjacent to footpaths in the rural countryside. Members felt that walkers should have a responsibility to take due care when walking on footpaths in wet weather and slippery conditions.

b) Children's Centre request for Camping holiday at Duchy Manor Grounds – the Clerk confirmed that the Children's Centre had asked if they could repeat last year's successful camping holiday. They envisaged doing this during the week commencing 29th July with the same set up as before i.e. up to 4 family tents plus staff tents from lunchtime on the Monday to lunch time on the Friday. On the Wednesday they would hold a family fun day and invite the people of Mere and surrounding villages to attend. Members unanimously agreed to allow use of the grounds at Duchy Manor for this purpose.

c) Replacement of floodlight bulbs on MUGA – Cllr. Jeans, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the room whilst this issue was discussed. The Clerk explained that three of the lights were not working on the MUGA. The Clerk was concerned that insufficient funds had been budgeted to pay for replacing the bulbs, given the cost of replacing them previously. It was agreed that the bulbs should be ordered and work carried out at the lowest cost possible.

d) To set date for Sports Development meeting – the Clerk explained that the date previously agreed for the next Sports Development Meeting (17th April) clashed with the date set for the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that the Sports Development Meeting should be re-scheduled for Wednesday, 24th April.

207. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & footpath issues for parish steward + street lighting faults – The Clerk confirmed that she had submitted a long list of jobs to the Parish Steward and had received a response stating that he had repaired the potholes at Cunnage Lane and one at Springfield Road. He confirmed that there were leaves at Old Hollow, The Fields, Clewes Lane and White Road but nothing that required clearing urgently. He would get around to siding out Waterside but this was not a priority. He had repaired a couple of potholes at the bottom of Clewes Lane and was raising a ticket for a gang to cut out the root and repair the path and also raising a ticket for the roadmender to repair the holes at Barrow Street. The roadmender had repaired holes at Limpers Hill last week and he did not think it was necessary for anyone to do a specific survey on potholes as the Area Technician, Driven Inspector and the Parish Steward were all out and about in the area picking up defects. The Parish Steward also confirmed that he had been out to Angel Lane twice to clear the mud from the layby but was unable to carry out the works due to parked cars. Cllr. Jeans said that he had bollards so if the Parish Steward wanted to come and collect some bollards to put in Angel Lane, he could do so. It was agreed to request the following jobs:

- Cut back hedge on the junction of The Lynch & Pettridge Lane (Edgebridge side)
- Assess drains along Salisbury Street & Castle Street – all drains seemed to be sunken and drain covers causing noise issues

b) Issues relating to HGV's using The Lynch – the Clerk explained that she had received copies of correspondence from Mrs. Rosemary Cox relating to HGV's driving down The Lynch and causing damage to her property. The Clerk said she was aware this was discussed at the CATG meeting which was being discussed next on the agenda.

c) Report on CATG meeting held on 28th February 2013 – The Clerk confirmed that the Chairman had attended the meeting and provided the following report: *'Tony Deane, Chairman of the meeting suggested at one point that, as there seemed to be a lot of items from Mere on the agenda, perhaps it would be a good idea if we make up a 'masterplan/wish list' of problems or things that need attention. On the weight limit signage at Water Street, George Jeans suggested that the signpost on the island showing Woodlands Road going straight on should be improved and updated with the arrow slanted more as it could be mistaken at the moment to indicate Water Street and perhaps to have a weight limit sign included on it. Tim Gardner (Traffic Engineer) will have a look at the sign and the problems at Water Street and The Lynch to see what is the most practical solution. I brought up the satnav problem, particularly with foreign drivers and that with the present weight limit sign the drivers are committed to the road by the time they see it and both issues will be taken up, with Wiltshire Council hopefully communicating with MPs and satnav companies to get a better system if possible. On The Lynch and Pettridge Lane junction, George has asked*

the Traffic Engineer to clarify the correct road width so that the hedges and verges can be cut back to the maximum road width. The work on the Walnut Road roundabout will take place in the next four weeks. The Traffic Engineer is going to look at the corner before the Hovis House on the West Knoyle road in view of the recent accidents there. Pedestrian safety in The Square resulted in the decision that very little can be done, even if a pedestrian assessment is undertaken (and that means volunteers counting everyone in The Square for a day) as sight lines preclude any other form of crossing, coloured roads would not make a difference and as current parking does cause the traffic to slow, it must be left to pedestrians of all sorts to take care in crossing the road or use the zebra crossing further down.’ Wiltshire Cllr. George Jeans confirmed that he had spent a lot of time on discussing options relating to the issue of HGVs travelling along The Lynch and improving the signage to stop them from driving down there. He also said that with regards to the Walnut Road roundabout, he had suggested that the roundabout should be substantially enlarged in relation to the proposed new development off Woodlands Road but at the moment all they’re going to do is move the give way lines forward.

208. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments – Cllr. Hope proposed that the following payments should be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the room whilst this matter was considered.

Paint & sundries for ceiling in changing rooms	Sydenhams	27.49
Sydenhams	Sundries	7.15
Brodrick-Barker & Co.	Solicitors fees in connection with leases for toilets, car park & office	1310.00 (already paid)
Jeans	Repairs & modifications to light on Castle Hill	200.38
Wessex Water	Supply to cemetery 1.4.13 – 31.3.14	97.54
Duchy of Cornwall	Allotment land rentals 29.9.12 – 24.3.13	322.06
The Consortium	Public Toilets – Cleaning Products & Materials	90.40
Hill Brush Company	Public Toilets – Cleaning Materials	142.15
Cash reimbursement (Stop Slip Ltd)	Safety non-slip shoes for toilet cleaner/attendant	28.50
Aon UK Ltd	Additional premium for toilet buildings insurance (up to renewal date 1.6.13)	121.80
J. H. Rose & Son	Scalpings for Wellhead car park	180.96
Southern Electric	Supply for Xmas tree lighting	61.99
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	56.00
Imprest Account – cheque Nos. 1894 - 1901	Petty Cash, Wages, Pension & PAYE	???????
WALC	Training day – HMRC Real Time Information (Clerk)	42.00
N. Maitland	Scrub Clearance on Long Hill	4840.00
Scats Countrystores	Weed control	79.85

b) Update Mere website – the Clerk explained that the website was in need of updating and modernising. The Clerk had met with Tim Thornley who had designed and managed the present website on a volunteer basis. Mr. Thornley had been working on some design ideas and had said that the cost of creating a new website would be in the region of £800 but Mr. Thornley would be prepared to do the work for £400 in view of the fact that it was for the community of Mere. The Clerk also reminded members that there had been another offer to create a new website from Mr. Jefferies. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that Mr. Thornley should be asked to create a new website for the parish. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote.

c) Recruitment for Groundsman's Assistant – the Chairman and Clerk explained that, owing to the timescales involved, the amount of work involved and the lack of resources available to the Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman, it had been agreed, following consultation with members of the Budget Committee, to appoint Octopus Personnel to deal with the recruitment of a permanent groundsman's assistant. Octopus Personnel will do all the advertising and shortlist the applications as well as take up references and they also offer a 12 week guarantee. The fee charged by Octopus Personnel will range from £1318 to £1521, depending on the rate of pay offered but Octopus Personnel were confident that they could find someone suitable at an hourly rate which is less than we are currently paying. The Parish Council's existing Fixed-Term Groundsman's Assistant had been invited to apply to Octopus Personnel. Members were happy that Octopus Personnel had been appointed to help with the recruitment.

d) Estimate for the legal work for transfer of the old band hut and the bowling green – The Clerk confirmed that she had approached Brodrick-Barker & Co for an estimate for the legal costs in transferring the two properties and to assign a lease between the Parish Council and the Croquet & Boules Club. Brodrick-Barker & Co had estimated that the Transfer of both properties would cost in the region of £600 + Land Registry fees and that as far as the lease to the Croquet and Boules Club was concerned, the transfer of the freehold would automatically pass the rights and liabilities to us and no assignment was necessary. Cllr. R. Hughes proposed that the Parish Council should instruct Brockrick-Barker & Co. to proceed with the legal work, as detailed. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Ann-Marie Long and carried with a unanimous vote.

209. General Items

a) Report on Mere Rivers meeting held on 6th February 2013 – Cllr. Brett Norris gave a report on the meeting – report attached.

b) Consultation on Draft Police & Crime Plan - Consultation ends Sunday, 10th March (document available to view on <http://www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk/Transparency/Police-and-Crime-Plan.aspx>) - The Chairman urged councillors to comment on the consultation document.

c) Annual Parish Meeting – date & venue already set – Grove Building, Wednesday, 17th April – suggested Agenda items – Cllr. R. Sims requested that 'On Street Parking' should be raised as an agenda item for the Annual Parish Meeting

d) Invitation to enter Best Kept Village Competition 2013 – Cllr. Norris proposed that the Parish Council should not submit an entry for the competition. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 7 for and 2 abstentions.

d) Forthcoming meetings – Members were informed that there was an Extraordinary South West Wiltshire Area Board meeting to be held on Wednesday, 13th March at 7.30 p.m. at Nadder Hall, Tisbury.

Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity

Trustees approved the following payment:

Roland Heming	Tree surgery on beech trees in Recreation Ground	350.00
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Meeting closed 9.00 p.m.