

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

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

Present: Councillors Mrs. Lesley Traves (Chairman), B. Norris (Vice-Chairman), M. Cassidy, P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, D. Hope, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, J. Jordan, Ann-Marie Long, E. Mitchell & R. Sims.

Also: Mr. P. Down, M. Silk, Mr. D. Stone, Mr. R. Stone, Mr. T. Snook, Jenny Seward, Mr. & Mrs. G. Lynch & Steven Davy-Osborne (Western Gazette)

Public Session

Mr. Gary Lynch from Upper Water Street said that he understood that PC Salter had brought up an issue relating to a dispute over the river at last month's meeting. Mr. Lynch said that there was a gentleman who had been carrying out work on the river from Landers Bridge, approximately 200m upstream for the last 18 months. This gentleman was not a riparian owner but he has been damming the river, taking weed and bringing in foreign plants and this work was detrimental to the river. This gentleman received no payment for the work but is under the impression that he has the backing of the Parish Council. When the riparian owners had asked the gentleman to cease work there had been a confrontation. Cllr. Norris explained that he was the Parish Council representative on the Mere Rivers Group which is led by Mr. Ian Sheppard and the Rivers Group take advice from Dorset Wildlife. Cllr. Norris said that the Parish Council has very little control of the rivers as such. Cllr. R. Coward said that perhaps he ought to make comment as he had helped the gentleman in question put a board across the river a couple of years ago and helped put some bullrushes in and in his opinion this work had improved the river as there is now somewhere for the ducklings to swim and the water voles have returned to the river. If the dam board is removed, the water level in that area will drop by about 6" and the ducks will not be able to swim there. Mr. Lynch said that Sarah Williams from Dorset Wildlife had confirmed that the natural vegetation had now gone and there was now so much algae in the river that it was difficult to get anything to grow and what does grow is eaten by the ducks. The riparian owners have not given their permission for this work to be carried out. Cllr. R. Coward said that he was prepared to take some of the blame for this misunderstanding.

Mr. Peter Down representing Mere Town Football Club said that he had attended the last Sports Development meeting where several issues had been raised and were subsequently presented to the Parish Council for discussion tonight. Owing to the continued success of the Football Club, it had been noted by the Football Association that the emergency access into the football pitch is not up to standard. The football club would like, if possible, to put a vehicular gate into the football pitch from the Duchy Manor site into the Recreation Ground near the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), adjacent to the existing pedestrian gate. Mr. Down also said that dog fouling in the Recreation Ground seems to be at an all time high. He has been involved in football for the last 20 years and it is now taking far too long to pick up the dog poo from the pitch before they can play. Mr. Down also said that on match days, when the First Team are playing, the existing car park is not coping with the number of cars. When there is a local Derby match, they can have 100 – 150 spectators. Even on training nights, on a Tuesday and Thursday evening, the car park is full up. If permission is given by the Parish Council to erect a building on the Recreation Ground Car Park it will use up parking spaces. This is likely to result in people trying to park wherever they can which may block up Queens Road and White Road. Cllr. R. Coward asked if the Football Club could use the Duchy Manor site for parking and Mr. Down explained that the officials and players all park on the Duchy site but spectators don't. Cllr. Jeans asked if the football club would have any objections if the car park was made bigger and Mr. Down said that this would be a good idea.

Cllr. Sims reported that Wiltshire Council had re-awarded the transport contract to Connect2Wiltshire and that the timetable in this area has changed in that there will be normal service between 9.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. but the bus will operate as a school bus before 9.30 a.m. and after 3.30 p.m.

The Clerk said that she had been asked to report that the footpath between Waterside and The Fields known as Stepping Stones had been walked on several occasions recently and that both she and Cllr. Jeans had been liaising with Wiltshire Council to get this small stretch of public footpath cleared and waymarked.

Apologies for absence received from Cll. R. Hughes, PC Richard Salter & PCSO Peter Tscherniawsky

63. To receive declarations of interest from members and to consider requests for new DPI dispensations.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Mere Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

- Cllr. Mrs. J. Hurd declared a personal interest in planning application 13/04778/FUL
- Cllr. P. Coward declared a personal interest in planning application/13/4802/FUL
- Cllr. G. Jeans declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 71 a)
- Cllr. C. Hazzard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 71a)

64. Minutes – the Clerk pointed out an amendment to the last sentence of the Public Session had been made as follows: *Mr. Hope said that he had been approached by a farm tenant of Duchy land near the Walnut Road development about dog fouling & who had submitted a requested that the Parish Council install a dog poo bin on Mill Lane at the point where the Monarch's Way path and a cross-field path join the lane.* With this amendment, it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 7th October 2013 be approved as a correct record of proceedings on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 7.10.13.

65. Matters Arising

a) Proposals relating to Walnut Road/Shafesbury Road junction – Minute 55b) – with reference to the discussion at last month's meeting, Cllr. Jeans said that if anyone got hurt on the Walnut Road/Shafesbury Road roundabout, he did not want the finger of blame pointed at him through lack of trying. There was a further general discussion about road signage, physical traffic calming measures and junction layouts. Cllr. Hill said that the Parish Council needed to make a cohesive decision on its preferred option in relation to this highway & junction treatment. It was therefore agreed that a working group of councillors give this matter further appraisal and consideration in order to present a report to the next meeting. The following councillors volunteered to form the working group: Cllrs. D. Hope, J. Jordan, E. Mitchell, M. Cassidy & R. Sims.

***b) Minute 56 a) Incident in the Recreation Ground, Saturday 5th October & Draft Policy for user groups to facilitate the landing of air ambulance** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report which contained an account of the incident which occurred on 5th October following investigations by Cllr. Norris and a draft policy for the clearance of sports grounds and recreation grounds in the event of an air ambulance landing. Members RESOLVED to adopt the draft policy and that it should be sent out to all user groups, asking them to sign it and add that their officials should also get a copy of the policy.

c) Sign de-cluttering and minor signing requests – Minute 59 c) – Cllr. Jeans confirmed that he had attended the Chamber of Trade meeting but that this matter was not discussed at this particular meeting although he was aware that this was something that the Chamber of Trade was looking into. The Clerk was asked to write to the Chamber of Trade and find out what their proposals were in this respect.

66. Deferred items

***a) Highway, Traffic & Transport Priorities** – Draft Plan to approve and prioritise (draft plan attached) – members agreed amendments to the Draft Plan and agreed that this should be submitted to the Community Area Transport Group for comment/consideration and that the Plan should be updated on a regular basis by the Parish Council.

***b) To approve Budget/Expenditure report at 30.9.13 (report attached)** – The Clerk reported that, owing to time restrictions at meetings, the Parish Council had not approved the June Budget/Expenditure report (Q2) which showed an overall predicted shortfall of £6385. The Clerk had now prepared the September Budget/Expenditure Report (Q3) which shows an overall predicted shortfall of £2107.98. The Clerk explained the adjustments she had made to our reserves or estimated expenditure and summarised the major adjustments as follows:

- We have managed to make a saving of £948.89 on our predicted insurance costs. This is largely due to the fact that we have changed insurer and opted for a 3-year deal which saved costs. We also have all our vehicles (tractor, ride-on & Diahatsu) under one policy now.
- Estimated costs on the maintenance of the floodlight on Castle Hill has increased by £350.98. This expenditure was approved by the parish Council at last month's meeting.
- Estimated costs on the repair of play equipment has increased by £1507, this is largely due to the maintenance issues at Castle Hill Play Area, following last year's RoSPA Inspection Report.
- Labour expenses and estimated labour expenses have increased by £6240 but this has been offset by the reduction in grounds staff wages of £12,823. Overall there is now an estimated reduction of £6500.

RESOLVED to approve the Budget/Expenditure report on proposal made by Cllr. Sims, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote.

Matters Arising from Sports Development Meeting held on 2nd October 2013

c) Proposals from Mere Town Football Club for gates (emergency vehicular access) from Duchy Manor into Recreation Ground (either side of Burton Path) – members were concerned that the expectation of the ambulance having to come past the Recreation Ground entrance at White Road, turn off left at Yapp Brothers, along Water Street, Ivymead and Springfield Road and then through Duchy Manor to get to the Recreation Ground seemed like quite a roundabout route. Mr. Down pointed out that there were two separate incidents last year where two youths broke their legs and on one of these incidents the ambulance could not get through the Queens Road/Car Park entrance of the Recreation Ground. It was pointed out that gates would be required on both sides of Burton Path and members unanimously agreed to raise no objection in principle, subject to being presented with full details of the materials and plans for the gates and subject to the Football Club funding the project.

d) Dog Fouling in the Recreation Ground – Cllr. Norris confirmed that PCSO Peter Tcherniawsky was happy to put signs up in the Recreation Ground if the Trustees would support it. Members agreed that they would be happy for him to put signs up. It was also agreed to discuss this matter further with the police to see what can be enforced, as the situation had now become intolerable.

67. Reports

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – none.

b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report – Cllr. Jeans said that, after having spent a day at Cirencester recently, he was now more aware of the implications of not having a Neighbourhood Plan and he felt that the Parish Council ought to look seriously at the issue of Neighbourhood Planning. The Clerk explained that there was an item, later in the agenda, inviting members to a Neighbourhood Planning event and that perhaps this matter should be raised on next month's agenda, when there might be more information available to members.

68. Planning

a) Applications: (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council's website <http://planning.wiltshire.gov.uk/Northgate/PlanningExplorer/ApplicationSearch.aspx> – and type in the relevant application number)

Application Ref: 13/04778/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Ground floor side extension
Location: 2 Fennel Road, Mere. BA12 6RT

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd, having declared a personal interest in the above application, abstained from voting or discussion.

Application Ref: 13/04802/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Change of Use of annex to self-contained 1 X bedroom unit
Location: Ground Floor, The Old School House, Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Sims, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting. Cllr. P. Coward, having declared a personal interest in the above application, abstained from voting or discussion. Cllr. R. Coward abstained from voting.

Application Ref: 13/04840/TCA
Application for: Work to Trees in a Conservation Area
Proposal: Remove 1 X Fir Tree
Location: Angel House, Church Street, Mere.

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Hope and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting.

Application Ref: 13/04881/FUL
Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of 3 bed dwelling – amendments to approved scheme for plot 1 under S/2012/0127 to include a single storey rear extension.

Location: Downsview, Southbrook, Mere. BA12 6BG

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a majority vote. Cllr. Hope abstained from voting. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting.

Application Ref: 13/04978/FUL

Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of detached garage/home office

Location: Broadwater Farm, Woodlands Road, Mere. BA12 6JT

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Hope, seconded by Cllr. Hill and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting.

Application Ref: 13/05103/FUL

Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Proposed rear extension and conversion of existing store to residential

Location: North Cottage, Barrow Street, Mere. BA12 6AB

Resolved to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. P. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a majority vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting.

b) New TCA procedures – The Clerk reported that Wiltshire Council has agreed to trial changes to its procedures for assessing applications to carry out works to trees within conservation areas (TCA applications). Presently, the TCA application procedure involves the owner of the tree notifying Wiltshire Council of their intention to either fell or to carry out works to the tree. Wiltshire Council then has 6 weeks in which to decide whether or not the tree should be protected by a tree preservation order. Under the current procedure, Wiltshire Council notifies the parish/town/city council and requests representations within 21 days. Following this Wiltshire Council's tree officers assess the application, taking into account the representations received. They then make a decision which is to either raise no objection or, in a very small number of cases, to make a tree preservation order. In the event of the Council not issuing a decision before the expiry of the 6 week period, the landowner is entitled to proceed with the works. In the changed procedures, a 21 day consultation will still take place with the parish/town/city councils. However, after this, assessment of the application by Wiltshire Council's tree officers will only take place in the event of an objection being raised by the parish/town/city council. Should there be no objection or support from the local councils, or should there be no response, Wiltshire Council will assume that there is no objection to the proposal. The tree officers will retain a discretionary ability to intervene in all applications, but it is anticipated that this will be rarely exercised. The trial will begin on 1st October 2013 and will last for six months at which point its success will be assessed. Local Councils are reminded that where an objection to a TCA application is made and/or a TPO is requested, the tree must:

- be good specimens which are healthy and stable;
- be prominent (that is, of public amenity value); and
- have no obvious significant defects

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

***a) Proposals for siting and building specification for a club house in the Recreation Ground for Mere & District Railway Modellers (proposals attached)** – Cllr. Jeans pointed out that the football club had raised concerns that the car park in the Recreation Ground is not big enough and that proposals for a building in the car park would exacerbate their parking problems so Cllr. Jeans asked if the Parish Council was happy to extend the car park. Cllr. Hazzard said that he was not in favour of digging up the recreation ground to put tarmac down but he would consider the possibility of installing an overflow car park with porous paving grids that the grass can grow through. Cllr. Rodney Coward asked the Council if any members felt that the derelict swimming pool site might be a more suitable site for this building and Cllr. Mitchell added his support for this idea. Cllr. Mitchell said that Mere Town Football Club is growing and putting a building on the Recreation Ground would jeopardise their expansion. Cllr. Hope said that as there was a pavilion in the recreation ground car park, it does not seem unreasonable to put another building back there but Cllr. Philip Coward pointed out that things have changed since that time and there is

a lot more sports usage in and around the Recreation Ground. Cllr. Cassidy said that when Mr. Snook had informed the Parish Council of the influx of people that turned up for their open days, he was surprised by the numbers and wondered if the Recreation Ground would provide sufficient car parking for their own purposes. Mr. Snook confirmed that he had been directed to this site by the Parish Council and he had spoken with Cllr. David Hope at length in an effort to get a solution to their problem. Cllr. Hazzard said that he was greatly in favour of supporting any organisation, especially one that had a good following, but finding the right location would be a problem and he was not convinced that the recreation ground or the swimming pool site was suitable. Cllr. Jeans said that he would not be happy about putting a building on the swimming pool site and said that, whilst he acknowledged that something needed to be done about the swimming pool, he felt that the future of Mere Swimming Pool was a separate issue that needed public consultation and that the Annual Parish Meeting was probably the best avenue for this. Cllr. Jeans added that the Band Hut was probably better suited for other purposes but that there may be room to accommodate the Railway Modellers next to the Andy Young Pavilion. He did feel, however, that another building on the recreation ground would make better use of the area and that the problems could be resolved by extending the car park. He added that the model railway club had the funds and was an extremely active group. Cllr. Philip Coward asked if it would create problems to put a new building somewhere near the Andy Young Pavilion. The Chairman suggested that other user groups should be consulted on these proposals. It was generally agreed that the Parish Council wanted to support the Model Railway Club, wanted them to prosper and stay in Mere but that the Parish Council needed to look at the wider picture. To this end, it was agreed that members would look at the car park in the recreation ground and come back to the next meeting with their thoughts as to whether the Recreation Ground was an appropriate place for the proposed Railway Modellers Club building and thoughts as to how the car parking area might be extended in order to overcome the parking problems.

b) Quotations to replace equipment in Walnut Road Play Area – The Clerk informed members that it had become necessary to remove a piece of play equipment in the Walnut Road Play Area due to the fact that it had become damaged and unstable. The Clerk had obtained some quotations for replacement equipment and reported these to the Council. However, Cllr. Cassidy said that it did not appear that the equipment was missed and he had received no complaints about it and it was therefore agreed that the Council would not replace this equipment.

70. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Proposals for Parish Council to provide service for snow/ice clearance within parish – Cllr. G. Jeans confirmed that following the meeting he had attended at High Post, he had persuaded Wiltshire Council to agree to let Mere have an Epoke mini bulk salt spreader. This device weights $\frac{3}{4}$ ton and will fit on the Parish Council's trailer but we will then only be able to hold $\frac{1}{4}$ ton grit. Cllr. Jeans had also persuaded Wiltshire Council to allow us entry into the Mere Salt Depot to obtain salt to fill the Epoke machine and persuaded them to agree to two local farmers holding a blade machine to move snow. Wiltshire Council were allowing these on condition that a protocol was followed in order to authorise the use of these devices which will require a co-ordinator within the parish. Cllr. Jeans suggested that the Clerk should carry out the role of co-ordinator. Wiltshire Council would also supply 1 ton pallets of white salt which came in individual 25kg bags which could be distributed to shopkeepers and service providers like the library and doctors surgery. The Clerk said she had some reservations about this proposal mainly relating to the fact that this was another service that the Parish Council would be taking on from Wiltshire Council which would have financial implications for the Parish Council but also because she was unsure of the insurance implications. Cllr. Norris said that it was not very nice towing a trailer in the ice so perhaps the Parish Council should look at providing some kind of vehicle that the Epoke device could be mounted on in the long term. RESOLVED, on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a vote of 12 for and 1 abstention, that the Parish Council should accept these devices and implement an ice and snow clearance programme as authorised by Wiltshire Council and co-ordinated by the Parish Clerk.

71. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments – Members approved the following payments. Cllr. Jeans & Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the room whilst this matter was discussed. The Clerk pointed out that with reference to Jeans invoice for work to the MUGA, they had only charged for reconnecting and re-checking the wiring and a fee for the cherry picker. The labour fees for M. Jeans and G. Jeans had been given free of charge. Members gave a vote of thanks for this gesture.

The Consortium	Public Toilets – toilet rolls & toilet seat	73.15
Sydenhams	Geotextile membrane for footpaths along Long Hill	189.23

Rochford Garden Machinery	Nozzle pack, chainsaw trousers & boots, chain oil, guide bar & chain	293.76
CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)	Membership subscription	29.00
Orchard Street Furniture	Memorial Seat	651.05
Cash	Reimbursement for sundries for flag pole	24.42
Jeans	Repairs to light on Castle Hill	112.28
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil for October	266.70
Imprest Account – cheque Nos. 2912 - 2917	Wages, Petty Cash Reimbursements, PAYE & Pension	3231.20
North Street Nurseries	Winter planting	840.00
Scats	Protective clothing, tools & sundries	96.56
Jeans	Repair lines in MUGA and fit 2 X new bulbs	354.60
Cash	Mobile phone top-up	40.00
Ryan Morse	Ground work (7.10.13 – 22.10.13)	590.00
Ryan Morse	Grounds work (23.10.13 – 5.11.13)	520.00
The Cumbria Clock Company	Service town clock	222.00
T. F. Builders Ltd	Scalping for footpaths at Long Hill	182.51
Toolstation Ltd	Purchase of tools agreed at last meeting	471.08
Cash	Reimbursement for Knapsack Sprayer (Mole Valley Farmers)	114.98

a) To set date & membership for Budget Meeting – it was agreed that the Budget Meeting should be held on Wednesday, 11th December at 7.00 p.m. in the Parish Council office. Membership would be:

Councillors: M. Cassidy, P. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, G. Jeans, J. Jordan, B. Norris, Mrs. L. Traves

***b) To approve report of Staffing Panel Meeting held on 29th October 2013 (report attached)** – Resolved that the Parish Council should approve the proposals contained within the report on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Jordan and carried with a unanimous vote.

***c) Council Tax Support (formerly Council Tax Benefit) – Impact on Town and Parish Councils** – with reference to the information in the Clerks Report it was Resolved to approve and submit the Clerk's draft consultation response.

72. General Items

a) Xmas lights – The Clerk confirmed that she had applied for all the necessary permissions to erect the Xmas Lights and that Mr. Tony Bridgeman from Atkins had agreed to come out and switch on the lights from the street light at the Parish Council's convenience.

73. Forthcoming meetings.

Wiltshire Council's Invitation to Neighbourhood Planning Event. Events to be held on:

- Tuesday, 19th November (5.45 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. at Warminster
- Thursday, 28th November (5.45 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.) at Calne

Cllr. Norris said that he would try and attend the meeting in Warminster and Cllr. Hope & Cllr. Jeans hoped to attend the meeting in Calne.

74. Clerks Report – RESOLVED to approve and adopt Clerks Report on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. R. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote.

Future agenda items:

- Defibrillator
- Report on Rivers Meeting

Items for Parish Steward:

- Drain by Castle Street Car Park is sinking

*Further information on these items in Clerks Report

Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground – Trustees meeting

a) Proposals from Mere Town Football Club for gates (emergency vehicular access) from Duchy Manor into Recreation Ground (either side of Burton Path) – In their capacity as Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity, members agreed with their decision made during the Parish Council meeting. (Minute No. 66 c)

b) Dog Fouling in the Recreation Ground - In their capacity as Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity, members agreed with their decision made during the Parish Council meeting. (Minute 66 d)

c) Proposals for siting and building specification for a club house in the Recreation Ground for Mere & District Railway Modellers - In their capacity as Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity, members agreed with their decision made during the Parish Council meeting (Minute 69a). Cllr. P. Coward requested that, when looking at the Recreation Ground, could members look to see if there is an area that could be specifically allocated for free running dogs.

Payments

Resolved to approve the following payment on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. B. Norris and carried with a unanimous vote.

N. Maitland	Felling of dangerous tree in Recreation Ground following storms damage	£300.00
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