

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 1st December 2014 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Cllr. Mrs. L. Traves (Chairman), B. Norris (Vice-Chairman), N. Beale, M. Cassidy, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, J. Jordan, E. Mitchell & R. Sims
Also Mr. & Mrs. Layard, Mr. R. Kimber, Mr. D. Stone, Mr. R. Stone, Mr. L. Stanton

Public Session

The Chairman will re-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).

Clive Hazzard stated:

As many of you will remember at the last Parish Council meeting I stated that I have 2 very good friends who live in Downside Close who I know have had concerns over the road. I listened to the presentation given by your spokesperson which was long and very detailed. I was keen to support the residents of Downside Close and proposed that the council should offer whatever help it could. I however, knew nothing about all the correspondence that had taken place prior to that meeting with Wiltshire Council, the highways agency and even the MP, or their responses. Subsequent to the last Parish meeting I have received by post and email long letters on the subject, which I have read carefully.

I have some major concerns regarding these letters;

1. The writer does not sign them but just finishes with Downside Residents – are all the residents aware of what is being written in their name, surely the writer should put their name to what is written.
2. It seems obvious that Wiltshire Council have now had enough of receiving letters from you and have labelled you Vexatious Complainers which certainly has not helped your cause.
3. Throughout your letters there are derogatory remarks and accusations made against Councillor Jeans. I have known Councillor Jeans for many years and know him to be an honourable man of high integrity and intelligence. He takes his roles as a Wiltshire and a Parish Councillor very seriously and spends many hours helping the residents of Mere and I find that the remarks made against him in your letters offensive.
4. Your cause is not well served by the amount and length of the letters you send. In fact, it could well put people off reading them altogether. Clear and concise points that perhaps the Parish could help with would be a great improvement. Also any correspondence to the Parish Council should go through the Clerk and not to individual parish councillors at their home addresses.
5. I sympathise with the residents of Downside Close and would like to be able to help them get the problems sorted but I feel a different approach is now needed, perhaps with someone else taking the lead who has not already upset so many people.

I will be proposing in the council meeting that we should continue to support the residents of Downside Close but that the deluge of emails sent to the Parish Clerk & councillors should stop and if in any future correspondence there are any unsubstantiated or derogatory remarks made about either the parish council or any councillor, all help should be withdrawn and legal advice will be taken.

Mr. Layard said that many of the residents they had spoken to today could not be bothered to come to the Parish Council meeting tonight. He said that today, after weeks and weeks of trying to address these problems, they had found out that the developer has now registered the parent title which means that the residents will now need to try and sort this out with the Land Registry. The vast majority of residents were not going to pay their management fees. Mrs. Layard said that the Council could decide whether this was all lies or not but said that the liability for the wall has been investigated since 2012 when the MP asked for clarification of who is responsible for the wall.

The Chairman said that the Parish Council does not have the remit to cope on the level that Mrs. Layard would like us to.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. P. Coward, PC Richard Salter & PCSO Peter Tcherniawsky

218. 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. Traves declared a personal interest in Minute No. 222a) planning application 14/09699/FUL
- The Clerk, Lindsey Wood, declared a personal interest in Minute No. 220a)
- Cllr. Jeans declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 225a)

219. Minutes – RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 3rd November 2014 as a correct record of proceedings on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a majority vote of those present on 3.11.14

220. Matters Arising

a) Issues relating to Downside Close (Oval Homes) Development (see Minute 211c) –The Clerk had prepared a report on the planning history, decision notices and Section 106 agreements in relation to this site/development. She also presented Councillors with the following statement: ‘I have written to Wiltshire Council’s Area Highway Engineer to ask for advice and information on what can be done about getting the roads, pavements and street lighting adopted. After a second reminder 3 weeks later, I have managed to get a reply confirming that the highway is not adopted and therefore isn’t public highway over which the Highway Authority have any influence locally. Records show that the developer obtained a Part 1 Certificate from the Highways Authority in October 2011 (confirming that they had a basic road and drainage system in situ) but they have not progressed to a Part 2 Certificate which would have indicated that the roads and drainage had achieved pre-maintenance period and ultimately adoptable standard (essentially fitness for purpose at finished levels etc.) The Area Highway Engineer has given me the contact names of other officers from Wiltshire Council who would be dealing with this site in relation to the Part 2 Certificate.

I have subsequently (28.11.14) spoken with the Highway Development Control Manager at Wiltshire Council regarding the adoption of the road. He tells me that he has recently had a site meeting with Mr. Broadway and told him what needs to be done in order for the road to be adopted. Wiltshire Council has informed Mr. Broadway that there needs to be definite signs of progress and a deadline has been given. If there are no definite signs of progress by the expiry of this deadline then Wiltshire Council will be calling in The Bond. Having obtained copies of the Planning Decisions & Conditions and the Section 106 agreements relating to the two planning applications which I have summarised above, I have been informed verbally that Wiltshire Council has discharged all the planning conditions except the ones relating to the footpath and they are satisfied that the section 106 agreements have been adhered to. I have written to Wiltshire Council asking for written information to support the claim that the conditions relating to the wall have been discharged. I do not feel that I am able to write to the Highways Agency until this information has been received. Wiltshire Council has told me that they will endeavour to supply me with this information before the next Parish Council meeting on 12th January.’

Cllr. Jeans stated that he had been told that any issues relating to the exterior wall will not hold back the adoption of the road. Cllr. Hazzard reiterated his proposal, given in the public session, that the Parish Council should continue to support the residents of Downside Close but that the deluge of emails sent to the Parish Clerk & Councillors should stop and if in any future correspondence there are any unsubstantiated or derogatory remarks made about either the parish council or any councillor, all help should be withdrawn and legal advice will be taken. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Norris and carried with a unanimous vote. Cllr. Jeans said that he would be quite prepared to meet any residents to discuss issues of concern. Cllr. Jordan wanted to compliment the Clerk & said that these three paragraphs show that things are happening.

b) HLS Scheme & Fencing of Castle Hill for grazing of goats (see Minute 189c) + email from Mr. Mark Brodier objecting to fencing of Castle Hill – The Clerk reported that the fencing has started and archaeology work has been carried out. The gating plans have been altered slightly in order to allow for disabled access. The Clerk

read out an email from Mr. Brodier to which Cllr. Coward replied stating that the goats are being introduced for conservation purposes and both English Heritage and Natural England are keen to see this done. The alternative is to pay our grounds staff to trim the hill which is very costly and also very hazardous. Access to the hill will not be impaired.

c) Xmas Lights – the Clerk reported that permission has been sought from Southern Electric to provide an unmetered supply of electricity to the lights on the tree. However they have not yet issued a certificate. The Area Highway Engineer is in approval of the lighting scheme but the Clerk is still seeking final approval from Balfour Beatty Living Places. Insurance enquiries and risk assessments have all been carried out. With regards to the lighting on the clock tower, the lights on the lime trees have been erected and when the lighting was tested it showed that one of the strings going up the roof of the clock tower was not working. The fault was traced to the transformer and Jeans Electricals have replaced this and wired it up so that it now all works. Hopefully, everything can now all be switched on for Friday evening's celebrations, as planned: Mere Cancer Research UK are holding a Victorian Christmas Street Market in Mere on December 5th 6pm- 9pm. This event will include the Mere Official Christmas light switch on and Father Christmas in the clock tower (hosted by Mere Carnival Club). 25 stalls and lots of entertainment including a puppeteer, local male acapella group, hot roasted chestnuts and local shops open late.

d) Multi Use Games Area Floodlights – The Clerk explained that the cherry picker was hired to erect the smas lighting and at the same time to change the bulbs on the floodlights in the Multi Use Games Area. Unfortunately, the lights are still not working which leads her to conclude that there must be a fault with the wiring or columns. Cllr. Jeans said explained that the columns are powered from one cable that comes from the changing rooms – obviously there is power there to all lights as one of the lights is working. Cllr. Jeans was confident that the correct bulbs had been purchased and said that he felt the best option was to try and assess why the lights were not working and if necessary to rob pieces from the other light fittings to try and get one or more of the other floodlights working although he did stress that his cherry picker could not access the lighting column nearest the swimming pool. RESOLVED to ask Cllr. Jeans to proceed with his investigations, as suggested on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd, seconded by Cllr. Hazzard and carried with a unanimous vote.

e) Play Equipment for Castle Hill Play Area – the Clerk reported that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had chosen the play equipment from the three quotations provided. The one chosen was the most expensive at about £9k but provided the most value for money in terms of apparatus. The R2 request has been submitted and approved and the play equipment providers have been asked to proceed at their earliest convenience.

221. Reports & Consultations

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – Cllr. Sims reported that PCSO Peter Tcherniawsky is off sick at the moment. Parish Councillors wished him a speedy recovery.

b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report – Cllr. Jeans stated that the youth club building is likely to need Parish Council financial support to the tune of £5k which the council will have to consider at the budget meeting this week.

222. 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: 14/09902/FUL

Location: The Town Mill House Mill Lane Mere Warminster Wiltshire BA12 6DA

Proposal: Amendments to conservatory roof, remove rear lobby & construct infill extension, insert new conservation rooflights.

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Norris and seconded by Cllr. Sims with a note pointing out that although this area is located within the flood plain, the Parish Council is not aware that this property has flooded in the last 10 years. Proposal carried with a majority vote. In order not to compromise is position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Cllr. B. Norris in The Chair

Application: 14/09699/FUL

Location: Wren Cottage Burton Mere Warminster Wiltshire BA12 6BR
Proposal: First floor extension

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Mitchell, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote in favour. Cllr. Mrs. Traves, having declared a personal interest in the above application, refrained from voting or discussion. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Cllr. Mrs. Traves in The Chair

Application: 14/10970/FUL
Location: 47 Long Hill Mere Warminster Wiltshire BA12 6LR
Proposal: Two storey extension

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Jordan, seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a majority vote in favour. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

b) Report on Planning Seminar for Parish Councillors held by Wilsons Solicitors in Salisbury on 4.11.14 – The Clerk reported on the seminar (more detailed report available upon request).

c) Report on Wiltshire Council Annual Planning Training event held in Salisbury City Hall on Wednesday, 12.11.14 – Cllr. Jeans said that knowledge is always a big help when responding to planning applications and development plans and he said that the Clerk was very knowledgeable as she had picked up a lot of information.

223. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults – Cllr. Hazzard reported that there was a bollard covering a pothole along Castle Street at the top of the Nursery drive which had been there for months and months. Cllr. Jeans said that he would try and have this dealt with by the end of the week.

224. Buildings, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Sports Grounds, Allotments, Car Parks & Cemeteries

a) Poor standard of footpath reinstatement following excavation work carried out by Southern Electric in new cemetery – Cllr. Hill reported that back in the summer the electricity board came along and dug a big hole in the new cemetery alongside the footpath because there had been an electrical cable fault. Although they reinstated the footpath and ground, it has now become apparent that they simply filled the hole in with clay and just sprinkled gravel on the top. They did not relay the teram membrane because the footpath is now all boggy and wet and they did not reinstate the correct kerb stones. RESOLVED to ask Southern Electricity to return and reinstate the cemetery footpath to its original condition on proposal made by Cllr. Hill, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote.

225. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments – RESOLVED that the following payments be approved on proposal made by Cllr. Hughes, seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the room whilst this matter was discussed.

*Green Flow	Service & repairs to Urinals in Public Toilets	114.60
John Cribb & Sons Ltd	3 X bulbs for floodlights for MUGA (£98.00 + VAT each)	352.80 – Already Paid by cheque
Mainstream Digital	Telephone call charges 1.10.14 – 30.10.14	9.24 – Paid by DD 14.11.14
Scats/Mole Valley	Cleaning products for public toilets + grounds sundries	39.14
Sydenhams	Andy Young Pavilion gutter brackets, post fix & timber. Guttering for chapel	118.46

British Legion Poppy Appeal	2 X Wreaths for Remembrance Sunday	50.00 (GJ has reimbursed the PC for his wreath)
Jeans	Cleaning of mop heads + rubbish bags	47.54
Plantworld Nurseries	Roses for war graves	139.00
Office Depot	Stationery + wall clock for pavilion	95.20
I. R. Rennie (Fire Matters)	Fire Risk Assessment for changing rooms & Andy Young Pavilion	282.00
Wessex	To carry out Legionella Risk Assessment	210.00
Eon	Electricity for public toilets 14.10.14 – 11.11.14	52.89 (Already paid by DD)
Bow Fire Protection	Service fire extinguishers	69.01
Jeans	Repair hot water heater in public toilets	30.00
Jeans	Fit & repair downlighters in Clock Tower. Plugs and trace fault for Xmas lights on clock tower	104.86
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil for November	127.22
Imprest account – cheque Nos. 3011 - 3018	Petty Cash, Wages, PAYE & Pension	5077.32

*Please note that Clerk now entered into a 3-year service contract with Green Flow for urinals in Public Toilets

b) Wiltshire Council's withdrawal of funding for deployment of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and requests for opinions on whether or not Town & Parish Councils would be prepared to contribute towards their retention– the Clerk read out a letter from Wiltshire Council as follows: 'As part of setting the 14/15 budget, Wiltshire Council approved the withdrawal of funding for deployment of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs). They have continued to be installed while discussions with the police have taken place to explore whether alternative funding could be identified within the speed watch funding stream, that approach has been declined. Prior to instructing their final withdrawal, I would be grateful if you will canvass your Town and Parish Councils, inviting them to consider whether SIDs represent sufficient local importance such that they would be prepared to contribute towards their retention. If such support from towns and parishes was forthcoming, it may be possible for the use of SIDs to continue, but that support would need to be universal. The annual cost of deployment is around £75,000 – a rough calculation suggests around £4,200 divided between town/parishes in each Area Board per year.' – Cllr. Jeans said that it is statistically proven that they do reduce speeds and that local people do appreciate them and Cllr. Hazzard agreed. Cllr. Mitchell said that he felt that this was yet another example of Wiltshire Council cutting their costs and expecting the parishes to pay and he proposed that the Parish Council should not make any contribution. Cllr. Hill seconded this proposal but it was not carried with a vote of 5 for and 6 against. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the Parish Council should make a contribution of £200 and this proposal was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote in favour.

226. General Items

a) Housing Needs Survey for Mere – The Clerk reported that as part of their house building programme, Wiltshire Council is carrying out housing needs surveys in the parishes where they are considering small sites

for development. Although they have housing needs data for Mere from the council's housing register, it would be advisable for them to carry out a survey to establish the affordable housing needs of people who already live in Mere, rather than just those who may be asking to move to Mere from any other area. The surveys are valid for 5 years, and they would like to prioritise Mere for a housing needs survey early next year (the earliest date available in their timetable is February). The surveys could be ready for delivery to the Parish Council during week beginning 2nd February and they would have a closing date of 3rd April (allowing a week or two for surveys to be delivered). The Clerk has contacted the Housing Team to say she wasn't sure that the Parish Council would be prepared to deliver 1357 surveys by hand and experience has shown us in the past that this is quite a job that entails a lot of work as some of the outlying houses are miles apart. The Housing Team has made some enquiries about posting the surveys which would cost £990 but there is no budget within Wiltshire Council for those costs and asked if the Parish Council is able to fund postage or if the Area Board would cover the costs. The Housing Needs Survey is currently being revised and the new survey is likely to be less weighty and estimated costs of delivering the new version is £651 but this won't be ready for some time yet and will miss Wiltshire Council's preferred time slot. It was agreed, on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd, that we should do nothing about this at the present time but that we should ask the Housing Team for further information on the survey (an example survey) and discuss the matter again at a future meeting.

b) Decision on display banners on the Clock Tower to advertise community events - It was agreed that display banners would be permitted for the following community events:

- Carnival
- Cancer Research
- Xmas Fair
- Church Summer Fete

The Clerk was asked to reinforce the need for banners to be made from Corex Board.

c) Application for funding for free Life Drawing Classes in Mere for children aged 17 – 18 (Laura Rich & Andrew Walworth) – Cllr. Jeans explained that he had sent a letter out to all parishes explaining that future applicants for Area Board Grants must get backing and commitment from the Parish Council, with a financial contribution and hence a request had been received for the free Life Drawing Classes in Mere. Members agreed to support this application.

227. Forthcoming meetings

- Market Town meeting in Wilton on 22nd January (5 representatives may attend) –
- Next Parish Council meeting (12th January 2015)

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

*Further information on these items in Clerks Report

Note: Members are reminded that the Parish Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.