

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 12th January 2015 at 7.30 p.m. in Mere School Hall, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors: B. Norris (Chairman), N. Beale, M. Cassidy, P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, J. Jordan & Mrs. K. Symonds.

Also: P. G. Andrews, R. Ball, R. Branscombe, R. Cave, F. Connelly, D. Featherstone, P. Ferrari, P. Fitzgerald, R. E. Flower, P. E. Gear, D. Hemsley, E. Henson, R. Horne, S. Horne, Mr. & Mrs. R. Kimber, M. Lear, C. Liddell, N. Maitland, D. Morris, M. Mudge, G. Nugent, PC Richard Salter, Q. Skinner, L. R. Stanton, W. M. Wilds,

Meeting convened at 7.30 p.m. with 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).

Mr. Skinner from Castle Ground Farm gave his objection to planning application 14/10556/FUL and stated that Planning Policy for Traveller Sites states that local planning authorities should strictly limit new traveller sites in open countryside that is away from existing settlements. Mr. Skinner pointed out that the Romany Gypsy site at Dilton Marsh quoted by the agent as a similar pitch is completely different from the open countryside position of this plan. He said that he had visited the site at Dilton Marsh which is tucked away in a railway embankment and he spent half an hour there and not one car passed by. The site at Mapperton Mill can only be described as open countryside, extending as it does over nearly 4 acres of highly visible land. Mr. Skinner said he was also concerned that there had been no consultation response received from the Highway Authority. PC Richard Salter disclosed the police accident statistics for the B3092, as requested by the Parish Council. He reported that in the last 5 years there had been 3 injury collisions reported to the police in that area. We do not keep information on non-injury statistics.

Mr. P. Fitzgerald from Penselwood said that he was aware of at least 3 accidents that have taken place on the double bend and he would suggest that accidents would be exacerbated if this planning application were to be granted.

Mr. Liddell presented the meeting with some photographs he had recently taken of the site which, he said, shows how badly the site floods. He said this would mean that the horses would be grazing in water and also has implications for the proposed septic tank.

Mr. Frank Connelly said that he owned some land within half a mile of this planning application and pointed out, as could be seen from the recent photographs, that there is a very large area of standing water at the existing entrance to the site and with further hardstanding proposed, this water will run off onto the road. Mr. Connelly said that there was an existing traveller site which is largely unused in Shaftesbury.

Mr. Clive Hazzard said that he wanted to praise the Mere Cancer Research Group for organising the Victorian Xmas Market evening on 5th December. He said that the evening was well organised and extremely well attended, although there was one slight chaotic moment when the electricity in the clock tower was blown. However, Jeans Electricals came to the rescue and the evening was a great success. Mr. Hazzard also said that the Parish Council's Xmas Tree in the church was provided by Cllr. Hughes and then decorated by Cllr. Jordan and he wanted to thank those councillors. Mr. Hazzard also wanted to thank the Mere Rivers Group for the work they had done on the river along Waterside and said that it now looked much nicer.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. E. Mitchell, R. Sims & Mrs. L. Traves

228. 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.

- **GJ Finance**
- **P. Coward – Finance**

- **Clerk – 5a)**

229. Minutes – to approve Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 1st December 2014 and for Budget Committee to approve Minutes of Annual Budget Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd December 2014. Amendment to Budget Meeting BN 6 for Amendment to 1.12.14 – Kate Symonds present 10 for

230. Matters Arising

a) Issues relating to Downside Close (Oval Homes) Development (see Minute 220a) – report attached – although the Clerk had prepared a report which had been distributed to members, she informed members that she had been requested, by Mrs Layard and also by Wiltshire Council’s Head of Legal Services, to defer any discussion on this subject until the February meeting in order to allow extra time for responses to recent enquiries and research. Members were happy to agree to defer the matter until February.

b) HLS Scheme & Fencing of Castle Hill for grazing of goats (see Minute 220b) – The Clerk confirmed that the fencing had now been completed and the goats were happily installed on Castle Hill. The Parish Council had now received a report on the results of the archaeological monitoring during the fencing works and this had revealed that no artefacts or archaeologically significant deposits were recovered, either from the subsoil or topsoil. With reference to the HLS Scheme works programme (Year 4), the Clerk informed members that she was hoping to prepare the specification for tendering next week.

c) Xmas Lights – The Chairman firstly thanked Cllr. John Jordan for judging the Xmas Lights this year and reported that Mr. & Mrs. Morris of 47 Downside Close had won the prize for best Xmas light display and they had been presented with their prize. The Clerk explained to members that the Parish Council would be hiring a cherry picker to carry out some hedge cutting work and would also make use of it to remove the xmas lights from the tree but she wanted members to make a decision regarding the lights on the clock tower and whether or not they should be removed. Cllr. Hill said that he did not mind the lights around the masonry of the clock tower but he was keen to see the strings of lights and wires removed from the clock tower roof. this year. RESOLVED with a vote of 9 for and 3 abstentions, to remove wires and light strings from clock tower.

231. Reports & Consultations

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – PC Richard Salter reported on the crimes that were in the monthly bulletin and relevant to Mere. Cllr. Jordan asked if PC Salter had noticed whether or not there was more friction with younger residents in the centre of town now that they have far less provision in the way of youth services. PC Salter said that he had not noticed any dramatic difference.

b) Wiltshire Councillor’s Report – Cllr. Jeans reported that the Wiltshire Core Strategy would be approved and adopted at the next full council meeting on 20th January. Cllr. Jeans also reported that he was hoping to get the dropped kerb at the bottom right-hand corner along Bramley Hill reinstated.

232. 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: 14/10556/FUL

Application for: Full Planning

Proposal: Change of use of land to 1 No. Romani Gypsy pitch & associated works including 1 No. mobile home, 1 No. day room, 1 No. touring caravan, 1 No. septic tank, stables, hard standing, new access and keeping of horses.

At: Land at west side of B3092, Mapperton Hill, Mere, Wiltshire. BA12 6LH

The Chairman reported the following: The land is situated on the west side of the B3092 at Mapperton Hill, Mere, Wiltshire. The size of the plot is 1.8 hectares or 4.44 acres. The site is on both Mere Parish & Zeals Parish boundaries and very close to the county border with Dorset. Both Zeals Parish Council and Gillingham Town Council have been included as consultees on this planning application. Mere Parish Council received the

application in mid-December with a response deadline set for 1st January. Fortunately, thanks to Cllr. Jeans and our Clerk's swift intervention, the consultation deadline has been extended to 13th January, allowing us all a bit more time to discuss and respond to this application. The site is in the open countryside for planning purposes and falls within the Special Landscape Area (SLA) identified in the 2011 Salisbury District Local Plan. SLA's are landscapes of County importance and is a non-statutory designation protected through County Structure Plans and Local Plan policy. The site is just outside the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site is in Flood Zone 1 which is categorised as being at low risk of flooding. On Wiltshire Council's website there are a number of objections to this planning application. Mere Parish Council has received two letters of objection. The Chairman pointed out that they were aware that the applicant for the site may not necessarily be the person that will occupy the site.

Cllr. Jeans said that Wessex Water was revising the flood plains and confirmed that recent photographs and local knowledge would show that this site is flooded to quite a depth for a large part of the winter time.

Cllr. Jordan said that he has looked at Wiltshire Council's planning portal and seen the letters objecting to the application. However, he wanted to point out that he had held conversations with people around the town who did not object to the application and he thought it was worth mentioning that public opinion was not wholly unanimous.

The Chairman said that he had serious concerns about highway safety and whether this was a suitable situation for such a planning application – he added that his first cousin was killed on that road, his second cousin was also killed on that road and he had been in a road traffic accident himself on that road.

Cllr. R. Coward said that he had no objection to one Romany Gypsy family living in the area at all but he does think that it is the wrong place and it is inappropriate. Cllr. P. Coward agreed and said that he thought it was an extremely dangerous road and this would be his grounds for objection.

Cllr. Jeans said that he would abstain from voting on this matter at the Parish Council meeting so as not to compromise his position as a Wiltshire Councillor when he attends the planning committee. He did point out, however that he had requested for the application to be considered by a planning committee (rather than delegated to an officer) due to the visual impact upon the surrounding area. He also pointed out that there was an objection letter on the Wiltshire Council website purporting to be from Mr. Malcolm Lear. Mr. Malcolm Lear was attending the meeting tonight and could confirm that the letter had not been written by him and was in fact a forgery. Cllr. Jeans said that Wiltshire Council is about to adopt the Core Strategy which identifies that there is a shortfall of Gypsy & Traveller Sites in Wiltshire. Furthermore, Wiltshire Council has no Development Plan Document for Gypsy & Traveller Sites and so they may find themselves in a difficult position. Cllr. Jeans said that he had noted comments about highway safety and about flooding and said that if there were going to be animals on the site then it would need to be drained adequately to ensure animal welfare. He said that the site would impact on the AONB and it could be seen quite clearly from Castle Hill & other local beauty spots. With regards to the sustainability question, Cllr. Jeans said that if you were to apply to build a house in this location it would be refused on grounds of sustainability but the Government's Policy for Gypsy and Traveller sites would deem that this was a sustainable location for a traveller site.

The Chairman, Cllr. Norris, proposed that the Parish Council should recommend refusal of the planning application on the grounds of 1) Highway Safety, 2) Flooding and Land Drainage, 3) Visual Intrusion, Loss of Amenity & Site Screening and 4) Refuse Collection. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Beale and carried with a vote of 11 for and 2 abstentions. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting.

The Chairman also proposed that at the planning committee, if Cllr. Jeans feels that Wiltshire Council are minded to approve the application, the Parish Council should give him authority, on our behalf to put forward any necessary conditions that he feels appropriate. Cllr. Jordan felt that it was important to state these conditions beforehand. Cllr. P. Coward proposed that any potential conditions should be added to the Parish

Council's consultation response and it was agreed, on a vote of 11 for and 2 abstentions, that the following should be added to the Parish Council's consultation response:

In the event that Wiltshire Council members/the planning committee is unable to support the parish council in objecting to this planning application, we would like to request, without prejudice, that conditions should be placed upon any agreement/permission so as to ensure:

1. The occupier(s) must meet the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as set out within the PPfTS.
2. Prohibit the site from being occupied by more than one mobile home and 1 touring caravan
3. Ensure that the site is not used for any business operations
4. To ensure that effective measures are taken to drain the land adequately so as not to cause a negative impact on flooding for adjoining land and the B3092 and for the welfare of animals. Also so as to provide a suitable and sufficient infiltration system to allow effective dispersal of the discharge from the septic tank.
6. To provide an adequate visibility splay to the highway whilst balancing the need to provide adequate screening of the site. (The Parish Council feels that careful consideration needs to be applied to this as there could be a contradiction i.e. hedges on the road side would need to be maintained to a low level in order to maintain the visibility splay but this will, conversely, make the site more visible)
7. Ensure that there are no bonfires (particularly given the close proximity of the busy B3092)

The Parish Clerk was thanked for the work carried out in preparing a report for members in relation to this planning application.

Application Ref: 14/11983/LBC
Application for: Listed Building Consent
Proposal: Alteration of first floor letting room walls to better use space
At: The George Inn, The Square, Mere. BA12 6DR

RESOLVED that the Parish Council should recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. P. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote.

b) Wiltshire CIL – Examiner's note and hearing sessions – The Clerk informed members that on 27th & 28th January, the CIL Examination hearing sessions will take place at the Civic Centre, Trowbridge, starting at 10 a.m. Prior to this, Wiltshire Council is consulting on a further modification to the Wiltshire CIL Draft Charging Schedule [the Clerk confirmed that she had read the Statement of Modifications and these seemed to relate to MOD Service Family Accommodation and the argument that it should be exempt from CIL). Members felt that, as the Parish Council had raised no objection to the draft Charging Schedule and could see no reason why the Modification Statement would alter this position, then there was no reason to attend the hearing sessions.

c) Update on Planning decisions for The Hill Brush Factory site (report on Planning Committee meeting held on 10th December 2014) which includes possible uses for the infrastructure funds - The Clerk stated: 'As many of you will know, the planning application for the Hill Brush Company site was approved at Wiltshire Council's planning committee meeting held on 10th December. It has been widely known that the developer's contribution for infrastructure is £600k. Wiltshire Council has indicated, via Cllr. Jeans, that they will be using £443,802 of that money towards Education, Waste Collection containers and off-site youth and adult open space. However, they have indicated that the amount left over (£155,578) could be used for two of the three Parish Council projects identified (you may recall that we identified the need to upgrade the Walnut Road Play Area, the need to upgrade the footpath from Edgebridge to Angel Lane and the need to remove the existing mini roundabout). Wiltshire Council have said that the highway works along the Shaftesbury Road would not be an appropriate use of this money but have indicated that the other two projects could be funded although they will need some cost data to justify the Parish Council projects.' The Clerk asked the Council if they were happy for her to proceed with getting quotations to:

Provide wet-pour safety surfacing on the Walnut Road Play Area throughout

Widening and surface treatment to level the footpath from Edgebridge to Angel Lane

The provision of some solar powered lighting along the footpath from Edgebridge to Angel Lane

The Clerk also raised the question that if Wiltshire Council was using part of their £443,802 towards off-site youth and adult open space then why could this funding not be directed towards the Walnut Road Play Area.

On proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote, members agreed that the Clerk should proceed on this basis that the footpath works should take priority over the play area. Members added a further qualification to this proposal - they did not want the Parish Council's part in this process to have any impact that could cause a delay in the progress of the S.106 agreement between the developers and Wiltshire Council. (Cllr. P. Coward abstained from discussion or voting on this matter).

233. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults – the following issues were reported/updated:

- Drain cover at the top of Nursery Drive –(Cllr. Hazzard said that a very poor effort to repair had been made).
- Hedges at junction of Limpers Hill/Shaftesbury Road causing visibility obstruction.
- Shrubs overgrown along Copehagen Lane (Castle Street to Church Street) causing obstruction

b) Notice of Temporary Closure of Upper Water Street – the Clerk informed members that she had received notification of Temporary Closure of Upper Water Street which will come into operation on 9th February and is anticipated to be required until 27th February in order to carry out gas main replacement works.

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

Mere Youth Club

a) Notice of expiry of tenancy – the Clerk reported that Wiltshire Council as tenant, had given notice that the tenancy for the youth club will end on 31 March 2015.

b) Is the Parish Council/Charity happy to grant a lease to Seeds4Success to take over the building – see attached Proposal for the management of Mere Youth Centre from 1st January 2015 – Cllr. R. Coward said that he thought that Jaki Farrell had provided the Parish Council with an extremely good report and proposed that the Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity should provide a lease agreement with Seeds4Success for the use of the Youth Club Building to provide youth services and that the lease should allow Jaki, as Service Manager, the ability to utilise the building as best meets the needs of the youth service and allowing her to generate further income by sub-letting to appropriate groups if necessary. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd said that she would second this propose but would like to ensure that the Parish Council does re-evaluate this agreement after a 3-year period (as suggested in Jaki's report). Cllr. Coward was happy to encompass this condition and the proposal was carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

c) Financial contribution towards the Youth Service - The Chairman confirmed that, at the Annual Budget Meeting held on 3rd December, it was agreed that £1000 should be held in reserves and £4000 should be budgeted to allow for any expenses on the youth club building or donations to Seeds4Success and that this particular subject should be discussed in further detail at the next Parish Council meeting. The Chairman said that he wondered what councillors felt about the idea of suggesting that the £4000 should be held by the Parish Council for Seeds4Success to use throughout the year for match funding purposes on grant applications that they want to make for the provision of youth services. However, Cllr. Hazzard said that it would be too restrictive if the money could only be made available for match funding and he proposed that the money should just be handed over to Seeds4Success as a donation for youth services for the

2015/16 financial year and that they should be allowed to use the money as they feel appropriate (reporting to the Parish Council at the Annual Parish Meeting in the normal manner). Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

235. Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments – RESOLVED to approve payments set out in payment schedule on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Beale and carried with a majority vote. Cllr. Jordan declared a personal interest and abstained from voting. Cllr. Jeans declared a pecuniary interest and left the room whilst this item was discussed. Cllr. P. Coward declared a pecuniary interest and left the room whilst this item was discussed.

Mainstream Digital Ltd	Telephone call charges 3.11.14 – 28.11.14	13.49 Paid by DD 15.12.14
The Hill Brush Company Ltd	Litter pickers, brushes etc	58.94 – Paid 18.12.14
The Consortium	Toilet roll dispenser	20.39 – Paid 18.12.14
Sydenhams Hire Centres Ltd	Hire of Cherry Picker etc	84.00 – Paid 18.12.14
N. Maitland	HLS Scheme – Fencing Castle Hill	3844.00 – Paid 18.12.14
Cash	Petty Cash (Postage, stationery + internet security)	56.06 – Paid 18.12.14
Scats	Cleaning products for public toilets, grounds sundries, pipes and water trough	419.97
Seton UK	Fire Safety signs	135.78
Batsford Timber Ltd	Timber for gates & fences – Castle Hill	2749.39
Hygiene Supplies Direct Ltd	2 Sanitary Bins + liners for Public Toilets	78.91
The Consortium	Toilet rolls for public toilets	125.20
Eon Energy	Electricity for public toilets	7.49 – Paid by DD on 7.1.15
Jeans	Xmas Lights (bulbs, fuses, cable ties)	16.00
Community Heartbeat	Adult Defibrillation Electrodes	53.00
AC Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring of new fencing on Castle Hill (as required by English Heritage)	456.00
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil – December	73.06
Rochford Garden Machinery	Ethanol Shield	8.99
Jeans	To replace 2d lamp & ceiling pull cord after damage (public toilets)	50.99
Southern Electric	Unmetered charge of electricity used in clock tower	17.10
Jeans	To repair lights in public toilets	45.98
Imprest Account – cheque Nos. 3019 - 3028	Petty Cash, Wages, PAYE & Pension	7504.49
Sydenhams	Water pipe for trough	145.17

T. J. Young	Service of machinery (4 invoices)	222.42
Cash reimbursement (Sydenhams)	Postcrete for Mere Footpath Group	27.00
Mere School	Hire of school hall	15.00

b) To adopt recommendations made by Budget Meeting, as shown in Minutes of Budget Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd December 2014 - RESOLVED that the recommendations should be approved by the Parish Council on proposal made by Cllr. Hill, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote.

c) To approve Precept on Wiltshire Council for 2015/16 – RESOLVED to approve the precept of £105,002.13 on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds, seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

d) To review Financial Regulations and Standing Orders - deferred

236. Forthcoming meetings

- Rivers Group meeting to be held on 18th February at 10 a.m. at Andy Young Pavilion. There will be representatives from Wessex Water and Wiltshire Wildlife.

Cllr. Jeans said that he wanted to thank the school for the use of the hall tonight and for providing the use of projector and screen.

Future agenda items:

Cllr. Jordan asked about the situation regarding the Clock Tower – Cllr. Norris said that this is being looked into with a view to getting repairs started this year.

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

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.

MERE PEACE MEMORIAL SPORTS AND RECREATION GROUND

Registered Charity No. 1093497

Minutes of a meeting of the Trustees held on 12th January 2015 at 9.01 p.m.

Mere Youth Club

a) Notice of expiry of tenancy - the Clerk reported that Wiltshire Council as tenant, had given notice that the tenancy for the youth club will end on 31 March 2015.

b) Is the Parish Council/Charity happy to grant a lease to Seeds4Success to take over the building – see attached Proposal for the management of Mere Youth Centre from 1st January 2015 – The Clerk pointed out that members now needed to consider these matters as Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity rather than as Parish Councillors. Members agreed that they were happy to reach the same conclusion as Trustees as they would as Parish Councillors in that the Charity should provide a lease agreement with Seeds4Success for the use of the Youth Club Building to provide youth services and that the lease should allow Jaki, as Service Manager, the ability to utilise the building as best meets the needs of the youth service and allowing her to generate further income by sub-letting to appropriate groups if necessary. This agreement to be re-evaluated after a 3-year period.