

Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 3rd October 2016 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

Present: Councillors: B. Norris (Chairman), J. Jordan (Vice-Chairman), C. Hazzard, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, R. Parsons, R. Sims, Mrs. K. Symonds & Mrs. L. Traves

Also: Julio Bianconi, Judy Bickerstaff, Jacqueline Clarke, R. Pearce & P. Sheldon, Mr. & Mrs. Stone, Rev. Carol Wilson-Barker

Public Session

The Chairman will convene the Town 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).

Jacqueline Clarke of 20 Walnut Road said that she wanted to raise a concern regarding Mere Town Council's objection to the planning application for the proposed extension of Mere Doctors Surgery, as seen in the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4th July. She asked if the Town Council could assure her that every avenue had been thoroughly investigated to mitigate the impact on the car parking spaces including the re-design of the car park and the relocation of the large and unsightly recycling bins. Mrs. Clarke felt that people would prefer to drive to a newly located recycling area than drive to a newly located doctor's surgery. Mrs. Clarke also said that there were parking bays being occupied in the long term by people using the car park and respectfully asked that her concerns are acknowledged so that we could all benefit from living in such a lovely town.

Mrs. Judy Bickerstaff of 1 Whitemarsh said that she was organising the Xmas Community Lunch which was to be held in the Grove Buildings. However, there was a requirement for more cooker space and kitchen facilities than the Grove Building could supply and she wondered whether it might be possible to use the kitchen in Mere School. The Chairman said that this matter would be discussed by the Council during the meeting as it had been raised as an agenda item.

Mr. P. Sheldon of 1 Duchy Cottages, North Road said he had come along to the meeting in order to object to the planning application for 2 Duchy Cottages. He said that he had a single-storey kitchen extension with roof lights and the two-storey extension proposal for No. 2 Duchy Cottages would block out all the morning sunlight from his property and they would not get any natural daylight into their kitchen during the morning. He would also be unable to maintain his own property because the gap between his property and the proposed extension would be too small to allow for any maintenance. Mr. Sheldon said that the proposed annexe would be approx. 10m from the main house and would appear to be a self-contained property which worried him as No. 2 Duchy Cottages had a right of way into the rear of the garden along No. 1 Duchy Cottages and this could, in effect, become a right of way for another property too. Mr. Sheldon also said that the garage extension would block out light from his side garden and he was concerned that this large garage would become a workshop and would not be used as a garage and that the cars for this proposed 4 or 5 bedroom property would subsequently all be parked out on North Road which is already chock-a-block of an evening time. Mr. Sheldon also added that he was worried that a lot of the building materials would need to be taken down the path at the side of his property which is only 1m wide.

Mr. Giulio Bianconi of Trevordale said that at last month's meeting, the Town Council discussed donating a small amount of money towards the installation of lavatories for St. Michael's Church but unfortunately voted against this. Mr. Bianconi said that the Church is going through a re-ordering process to make it more accessible and part of that process was the installation of 2 lavatories. He said that there were now many secular events being held in the church and also a large number of visitors came along because it was such a significant building in terms of architecture. The requested sum of £100 was a tactical vote because the Church was putting in an application to the SWWAB which would be greatly strengthened if it had the financial support of the Town Council. Mr. Bianconi stressed that the toilets would be the responsibility of the church to maintain and he made a plea to the Town Council to discuss this matter again and reconsider its previous decision. Mr. Jeans said that he had offered to pay the £100. Mrs. Hurd said that there seemed to be a discrepancy over whether or not the toilets would be open for public use and said that her understanding was

that they would be there for the use of people using the church and not open for public use and she thought there was a big difference.

Mr. Sims requested that the contact details for the goat farmer be distributed to all Town Councillors.

It was pointed out that the zebra crossing in White Road is in need of remarking.

Mrs. Hurd said that the old Mere First School had been broken into at least 3 times in the last month and said that if it is not practical for the owner to store goods there any longer, perhaps it may be an idea to resurrect the idea of purchasing the site.

The Chairman said that he had organised a community litter pick on Saturday. He said that it was his fault the numbers were so low because he could only organise it at short notice.

Lindsey Wood said that she had informed Councillors, at the last meeting, of her objection to the planning application for No. 2 Duchy Cottages, in particular the large 2 storey extension. She said that she would not take up councillors' time in reiterating this objection save to say that this objection still stands.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. M. Cassidy, P. Coward, R. Hill, R. Hughes & PCSO P. Tcherniawsky

59. 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 Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

- Town Clerk, Mrs. Lindsey Wood declared an interest in Planning Application 16/08146/FUL and said that she would leave the meeting whilst this matter was discussed.
- Cllr. G. Jeans declared a personal interest in Planning Application 16/08982/TPO and a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 65a) and 65c)
- Cllr. C. Hazzard declared a personal interest in Planning Applications 16/07933/FUL & 16/07933/FUL

60. Minutes – RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 5th September 2016 on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 5.9.16. RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday, 19th September 2016 on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 19.9.16.

61. Reports & Consultations

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – A Community Policing Report for the meeting was provided and distributed to members and public present (report attached).

b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report (to include report on recent Community Area Transport Group meeting) – Cllr. Jeans informed members that the SWW Area Board meeting would be held this Wednesday and would showcase the new Nadder Centre in Tisbury. Cllr. Jeans felt that it was likely that this would be the venue for most future Area Board meetings. With regards to the Community Area Transport Group, Cllr. Jeans explained that the Clerk had sent a letter into the meeting to ask them about prioritising Castle Street for the Major Maintenance Programme for resurfacing but it was pointed out that we needed to make contact with a different officer (Cllr Jeans would get the name of that officer). Regarding grants, the SWW Area Board has some funding available for grants. Cllr. Jeans said that he intended to support the application from St. Michaels Church for funding for the toilets because he believed it would be of benefit to the community and he wanted to see a SWW Area Board plaque on those toilets. However, as he was the councillor that originally suggested that the SWWAB should not support grants that are not supported by the relevant town or parish council, he is now in a difficult position and would support the request for the Town Council to reconsider its decision. Members were aware of a 6-month rule on previous resolutions and the Chairman said that the matter was discussed a month ago and he would look at the rules and regulations to see if the Town Council could reconsider the matter again.

***c) Report on meeting held at Gillingham Town Council regarding proposals to remove beds from Shaftesbury Hospital & agreement on response – Cllr. Brett Norris (further information distributed)** – with reference to the information distributed to members, the Chairman said that at a public meeting at Shaftesbury on 5.9.16, the Dorset Commissioning Group stated that they are proposing that Shaftesbury Hospital would become a community hub and would no longer have beds. The Chairman said that for as long as he could remember, Shaftesbury Hospital beds have been used by the people of Mere for recovery after intense medical care or a stop gap while arrangements can be made to support them at home. The official consultation period concerning the closure of beds at Shaftesbury Hospital is now underway and will run to the end of the year with decisions being made in February 2017. A meeting was held at Gillingham Town Hall on 15.9.16 and all the town and parish councils have been invited to make a

collective response. The Chairman said that he would like Mere Town Council to support Shaftesbury and Gillingham Town Council's views as he believed they were also in the interests of the people of Mere. Members were happy to support the views expressed by Shaftesbury Town Council & by Gillingham Town Council. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds pointed out that when her husband was ill there was no prospect of anyone in Wiltshire occupying a bed in Shaftesbury.

d) Report on Mere Carnival – Cllr. C. Hazzard said he was sure that members were all very much aware that the carnival went through a very rough patch with very few committee members, helpers and money. He said that the carnival costs about £5k to put on and the committee has to work very hard with the fundraising to achieve that £5k. Cllr. Hazzard wanted to thank the committee for all their hard work. Cllr. Jordan had taken on a great deal of responsibility towards the carnival procession. Cllr. Jordan said that it was thanks to all the carnival committee members that the processions took place but said that there were one or two small incidents that affected the procession this year; someone fell ill and an ambulance needed to gain access and the fire brigade needed to attend a generator fire. However, all in all there were some good floats although the collection was slightly down on last year. The Chairman conveyed the Council's appreciation to the committee.

62. 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 No: 16/08146/FUL
Proposal: Proposed two storey rear extension, garage and annex
At: 2 Duchy Cottages, North Road, Mere. BA12 6HG

Due to a declaration of interest, the Town Clerk, Mrs. Lindsey Wood, left the meeting. Cllr. John Jordan recorded the meeting:

There are five letters on the Wiltshire planning site. The drawings are not so good quality online. Cllr. Hazzard visited the properties 1 2 and 3 and said that the planning proposal virtually doubles the size of the house and that the proposed extension is very close to the property boundary of No. 1 – only 1 foot away. All the other houses have single storey extensions but this double-storey extension is quite different - it will overshadow the rooflights of the kitchen at number one and will shadow the back of the house at number 3. The annexe is a very large building nearly a bungalow. The garage is of considerable size. Cllr. Parsons said that the elevation plans showed the shadow and the light lost. Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that this was overdevelopment of the sight and would cause deprivation of light. There is limited access and the annexe appeared to be a separate dwelling. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds said that the Duchy covenant for a single residence is an issue and confirmed that the annexe could not be occupied separately but she said that this could not be left to the Duchy to enforce. She also said that a large sign on the existing garage indicated that the garage is used as a workshop. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd said that an expert was needed to establish the loss of light. Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that size was an issue and she could not find any evidence of a planning application of a similar sized extension on a terraced house in order to compare it with. Cllr. Jeans said that in order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, he would not be voting on this application as a Town Councillor. However, he pointed out that a shading impact report could be requested and he felt that the house should follow the ribbon development, otherwise it would create a precedent. Extensions should be submissive to the main building and should be less than 50%. He said that the annexe was a self-contained property in the garden and there was no justification for this in the planning application.

RESOLVED, on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Jordan and carried with a vote of 9 for and 1 abstention (Cllr. Jeans) that the Town Council object to this planning application for the following reasons:

- By reason of its size and mass, the extension is not subservient to the existing building and increases the volume of the existing property overmuch.
- The extension is inappropriate for the character of the area and would not be in keeping with the surrounding properties.
- Approval of this application could set a precedent for other properties in the area to follow which would spoil the character of the area.

- The proposed extension will be too close to other neighbouring properties, causing concerns regarding construction and damage to neighbouring properties & future maintenance issues.
- Due to the close proximity of neighbouring properties and the size of the extension a shading impact report should be provided.
- The proposed annexe needs a design statement to justify the need.
- The proposed annexe is out of keeping with the character of the building.
- The garage is very large and could create overshadowing issues for neighbouring properties. There is also a concern as to whether a garage of this size could be constructed within the space without causing damage to neighbouring property.

The Town Clerk re-entered the meeting and resumed post:

Application No: 16/07933/FUL
 Proposal: New single storey orangery extension to provide additional dining/lounge accommodation with adjacent external patio area.
 At: Bramley House, Castle Street, Mere. BA12 6JN

RESOLVED that the above application be recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. Mitchell, seconded by Cllr. Jordan and carried with a vote of 8 in favour and 2 abstentions (Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a personal interest in this application, abstained from voting. Cllr. Sims also abstained). In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Application No: 16/08165/HRN
 Proposal: Removal of approx. 10m of hedgerow
 At: Mere Water Treatment Works, Burton, Mere. BA12 6BR

The Town Clerk informed members that this application had already been approved by the Planning Authority.

Application No: 16/08982/TPO
 Proposal: T1 – Weeping Ash Tree – minor crown thin (5%), deadwood removal, 2m max reduction of lateral branches to clear road & balance tree.
 At: The Manse, Boar Street, Mere. BA12 6DD

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded By Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a majority vote. (Cllr. Jeans, having declared an interest in this application refrained from voting or discussion).

Application No. 16/07933/FUL
 Proposal: New part single storey/part two storey bedroom extension and additional vehicular parking at Bramley House Residential Care Home
 At: Bramley House, Castle Street, Mere. BA12 6JN

RESOLVED to recommend refusal of the above application on the grounds of inadequate car parking and overdevelopment of the site on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 7 for and 1 against. (Cllr. Hazzard, having declared a personal interest in this application, abstained from voting). In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting:

The Town Council is unable to support this planning application on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site and inadequate car parking provision.

The Town Council now understands that the proposal for additional vehicular parking has been removed from the application as the car parking area conflicted with the arboricultural report and could not be supported on arboricultural grounds.

The Town Council has taken into consideration the fact that there is a proposed Orangery extension (Application Ref: 16/07933/FUL) currently open for consultation on this building and the fact that there is an approved application to provide a new build 13 bedroom Specialist Care Unit (Application Ref: 15/12639/FUL & 16/02694/VAR) for the site. We are also mindful of the fact that there is a pending planning application for the development of two new residential units to be

situated on the site where there are currently 19 garages at the rear of Bramley Hill (to the north of the Bramley House site). With all this development in the vicinity, the Town Council feels that it is unable to support this planning application due to the lack of parking provision and the current problems with on-street parking which will only be exacerbated once the other developments have taken place in the area. In addition to this, the Design & Access Statement accompanying this planning application states that the approval under 15/12639/FUL & 16/02694/VAR to provide an additional three parking spaces would be superseded by this application. Therefore, we deduce that these three additional car parking spaces will no longer be provided. Bramley House currently caters for 36 residents with a total staffing of 36 full time or part time carers and other staff, all contained in the existing Bramley House building. The new 13 bedroom Specialist Care Unit will require additional staff and this proposed development will add a further 5 bedrooms, increasing the number to 41 residents (although it is noted that no additional staff will be required). However, it is not just staff parking that is a cause for concern. At weekends in particular, visitors parking around the site can cause obstructions and visibility problems for road users and pedestrians. It is not uncommon for visitors to park their cars around Bramley Hill residential estate and all along the Homefield residential estate, often parking on bends and on junctions.

b) Notice of Public Consultation Meeting to be convened by Richborough Estates to view/discuss development proposals for Land adjacent to B3092/Gillingham corner – Wednesday, 19th October, 3 – 7.30 p.m. in The Grove Building, Church Street, Mere.

63. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults – The Clerk explained that the Parish Steward scheme was now back up and running and the Clerk had now received a programme of visits and a list of tasks. All tasks needed to be submitted to the Parish Steward via the Town Clerk who was the appointed contact for the scheme. It was agreed to send the list of tasks that can be undertaken by the Parish Steward to all councillors.

b) Policy to stop long term parking in car parks – Cllr. Jeans said that he had asked for this to be raised on the agenda because he was aware that car parking was an acute problem in Mere and thought that the Town Council should try and make it more difficult for people to park in the car parks long-term in order to free up some of the spaces for short term use. Cllr. Jeans reiterated that when SDC used to operate the car park there was a set of rules stating that you could not park your car for more than 24 hours and he was in favour of bringing back those rules. It was agreed to make enquiries with Wiltshire Council as to whether it might be possible to re-introduce some restrictions on long-term parking and to seek clarification on what Wiltshire Council is prepared to enforce. also ask for their help with enforcement for vehicles that are not parked between the lines. Cllr. Jeans also proposed that we should ask the Parking Ambassadors to ticket vehicles that are not parked within the lines in the car park. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote.

c) Request for Age UK Information Bus to use Salisbury Street Car Park for 2-3 hrs one day between 24.10.16 – 28.11.16 – The Clerk said that the Age UK Information Bus would like to use Salisbury Street on Monday, 14th November between 10.30 & 12.30 and would take up approximately the same space as the Mobile Breast Screening Unit. Members were happy to approve this and the Clerk said that it would be necessary to put up notices and bollards prior to the event.

64. Buildings, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Sports Grounds, Allotments & Cemeteries

a) Annual RoSPA Play Area Inspection Reports – the Clerk informed members that the Play Area Inspection Reports had all been received. There was one extra this year as the Skate Park was now added to the inspection list. There were no 'High Priority' or 'Urgent' matters requiring immediate attention and the office staff and grounds staff were working on carrying out the more routine issues that had been identified which related mostly to potential finger entrapments and trip hazards (uneven or broken/damaged safety surfacing).

b) Higher Level Stewardship Scheme: Castle Hill & Long Hill. Additional Capital Works funding. – the Clerk was pleased to report that, following a visit from Natural England earlier on in the year they had now offered some extra Capital Works funding for the clearance of scrub from the back of Castle Hill. In order to receive the funding the work needed to be carried out this winter and also needed to be carried out under conditions approved by Historic England re: Ancient Monument

65 Finance, Policy & Resources

a) Payments — Cllr. Hazzard said that he had visited the cemetery and felt that the new path was extremely soft. Cllr. Hazzard proposed that the cheque for Gartell & Son should be signed but not posted until they had compacted the gravel and made the path harder. Proposal agreed. RESOLVED to approve payments set out in payment schedules attached (August & September) on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote of those present. (Cllr. Jeans, having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, left the room whilst the matter was considered).

b) Conclusion of Audit – Accounts for year ending 2015/16 – the Clerk reported that the external audit had been completed on 6.9.16 with the report: ‘On the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Other matters not affecting our opinion which we wish to draw to the attention of Mere Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2016 is: Low level of reserves – We note that the council holds a low level of general reserves, approximately 9% of the annual precept for 2015/16 after allowing for reserves that are earmarked for specific purposes. The council should consider the level of general reserves required and consider taking steps to increase the level of reserves in future years if it considers it necessary.’

c) Quotations for fixed wire testing on council premises – (Cllr. Jeans, having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, left the room whilst it was considered). The Clerk said that three quotations had been received for carrying out the Fixed Wire Testing on Town Council properties. The quotations having been received from Gary Stevens Electricals, Wessex Group & Jeans Electricals. The cheapest quotation had been received by Jeans Electricals and it was agreed that they should be asked to carry out the work.

d) The 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement: Technical Consultation Paper (consultation closes 28.10.16) – The Chairman said: ‘In brief this consultation is about business rates being paid directly to the county council and also about bringing in a 2% community charge cap on large councils of £500,000 or more with a £75.46 charge on a band D house. At first glance it doesn’t affect us until question 6 page 14 of the consultation when it asks should a cap be put on all parish and Town councils. It was agreed that the Town Council should object to any proposals to place a cap on Parish & Town Council precepts but as the consultation closed on 28.10.16 – members were happy to delegate the Council’s response to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk.

66 General Items

a) First Responders – reduction in calls to Fire Brigade as First Responders – Cllr. G. Jeans confirmed that the Mere First Responders had received an 80% drop in calls lately and it was felt that this was a move to reduce costs. The Clerk gave a report of an incident which took place on 29th August at which an elderly lady, who had fallen off her bicycle had to wait 50 minutes for a First Responder to arrive and a further 20 minutes before an ambulance arrived. Members agreed that the Town Council should write in to the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT) with a copy to Angus McPherson the Police & Crime Commissioner and to point out, in strong terms, how vital the Fire Brigade First Response service was to Mere and surrounding area.

b) Xmas Community Lunch – The Chairman permitted Mrs. Bickerstaff to speak who reiterated what she had said during the public session. Cllr. John Jordan said that he was not sure whether the school kitchen was appropriate as their kitchen goes through a deep clean during the holidays. However, he said that he would be happy to talk to the people at the Children’s Centre to see if it would be possible to use their cookery classroom which housed 5 or 6 cookers.

c) Safe Places initiative – The Chairman explained that a meeting was held on 26th September to discuss the setting up of a ‘Safe Places’ initiative in Mere. The aim of the project is to establish ‘Safe Places’ across Wiltshire that provide an environment for people who may require additional support when out and about in the community e.g. during times of anxiety, fear or distress. Businesses and organisations who are part of the Safe Places project will display an A5 size round Safe Place sticker in their window to alert people that they are a ‘Safe Place’.

People can choose to carry an ICE card (In case of emergency), which they can show when they use a Safe Place in order to obtain the support they require. These ICE cards are available through the Safe Places scheme and can be obtained from members of the steering group and local libraries.

People can also choose to show other emergency and support cards where appropriate, for example, dementia help cards. Hamish Bell, Chairman of Mere Chamber of Trade, was going to contact various shop owners to gauge interest in the town.

67 Forthcoming meetings/events

- C. GH. Fry & Son Development - Public Consultation Event on two planning application for the existing Hill Brush Factory Site – Wednesday, 5th October 2016, 2.00 – 6.30 p.m., The Grove Building, Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS
- South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting – 6.30 pm Wednesday, 5th October, Nadder Centre, Tisbury
- Community First AGM – Wednesday, 12th October 2016 at The Town Hall, Devizes at 5.30 p.m.
- Mere Literary Festival – various events – 12th – 16th October. (Award Ceremony, Sunday, October 16th at 3.00 pm in Mere Lecture Hall).
- Age UK Wiltshire AGM – Tuesday, 18th October 2016 at 2.00 p.m., Devizes Sports Club, London Road, Devizes. SN10 2DL
- Richborough Estates – Public Consultation Event to view/discuss proposals for development of land adjacent to B3092/Gillingham Corner – Wednesday, 19th October 2016, 3.-- - 7.30 p.m., The Grove Building, Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS
- WALC – Councillor Training – Saturday, 12th November 2016 at Rushall Village Hall, Pewsey, SN9 6EN

Note: Members are reminded that the Town 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

Dog Fouling in Recreation Ground, particularly football pitches - Cllr. G. Jeans said that he had raised this due to the number of complaints that he was receiving and the feedback he had seen on Social Media (Facebook – Mere Mutters). Cllr. Jeans said that he had informed PCSO Pete who said he would monitor the situation. It was also agreed that more notices would be put up and that the Town Council should try and get the dog warden out to investigate the problems.

