

# Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.**

**Present:** Cllrs Brett Norris (Chairman), John Jordan (Vice-Chairman), M. Cassidy, P. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, R. Hughes, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Jeans, E. Mitchell, R. Parsons, R. Sims, Mrs. K. Symonds, Mrs. L. Traves

**Also:** R. Flower, R. Morris, Lt. Cdr. Keith Broach, D. Stone & R. Stone.

## **Meeting convened at 7.30 p.m. with 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).*

Mr. D. Morris from 47 Downside Close asked if there had been any progress on the roadwork situation for Downside Close. He said that a recent sale of No. 53 Downside Close had been lost because of the unadopted roads. He also said that the footpath at the back of Downside Close had recently become extremely muddy and he had put bark chippings on the footpath which had helped the situation. He wanted to thank Lewis Wood for supplying the bark chippings.

Mrs. Symonds said that she had recently had cause to erect posters to advertise activities in the town and that 2 or 3 of the posters advertising church events had been torn down. She said we were lucky to have so many activities taking place in Mere but hoped that the Chairman might put something in his report for Mere Matters asking people to take down posters for events that had taken place and not leave posters on noticeboards or telegraph poles for events that went on for a whole year.

Mr. Parsons said it was quite noticeable that in the last few months the Co-Op delivery drivers had become more aggressive and they were mounting pavements, tooting horns and on one occasion, had actually hit one of our parishioners. He said that the lorry driver was unaware that he had hit a pedestrian. Mr. Parsons reported that the Co-Op received 4 – 5 deliveries per day. It was pointed out that some years ago, deliveries for this supermarket used to wait outside Mere, either in Chetcombe Road or near the Quarryfields Industrial Estate and come in to deliver one at a time. Mr. Morris suggested that the Co-Op should provide a member of staff to act as a banksman when deliveries were being made.

Mr. R. Sims said that the *Wiltshire Life* publication had a Wiltshire Town of the Year award and wondered if Mere wanted to enter.

Mr. Sims also said that the 'Steep Hill' sign along Warminster Hollow was still missing and that the drain outside The George was still blocked.

The Clerk read out a letter from Mere Cancer Research to thank the Town Council for help with the Christmas Market 'You were very kind in allowing us the use of the Town Square and your 'men' to hang the banner, without you this event just would not have been such a great success. We raised an amazing total of £919.46.'

Cllr. Sims said that a further £200 had since been raised by selling cakes the next day.

Mr. Sims reported that from 8.2.16 there will no longer be a National Express bus from Shaftesbury – passengers will need to travel to Wincanton. However, train services from Gillingham will be more frequent with more carriages. The Passenger Transport group is trying to co-ordinate with buses so that stops at Gillingham are better timed with trains.

## **Apologies for absence received from Cllr N. Beale & PCSO Peter Tcherniawsky**

### **88. 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.*

- Cllr. E. Mitchell declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 93 d)

**89. Minutes** – The Minutes of Town Council meeting held on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 were approved as a correct record of proceedings on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a

unanimous vote of those present on 7.12.15. The Minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting held on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 were approved as a correct record of proceedings on proposal made by Cllr. Jordan, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 2.12.15.

## 90. Matters Arising

**a) Update on traffic management scheme for Mere (see email from Julie Wharton 1.12.15)** – The Clerk confirmed that the scheme had been forwarded to the Traffic Regulation Order team for processing on 7<sup>th</sup> January. The legal team then have to advertise the orders for public consultation. Once the consultation period has passed, they then need to draw up the orders. Once the legal work has been completed then the physical work can be done which will need to be scheduled in for the new contractors. Cllr. Jeans said that the whole process was likely to take a few months yet. The Clerk said that she had got some contacts to start discussions about phase 2 of the scheme which was the remarking of the parking bays in Salisbury Street Car Park.

**b) Results of Children's Centre Consultation** – The Chairman reported that at a Cabinet Meeting, Wiltshire Council had agreed to keep the Children's Centre in Mere open 3 days a week and indeed, it had been agreed to keep 17 Children Centre's open throughout Wiltshire instead of the 15 originally proposed. The Chairman said that Wiltshire Council would be calling for more volunteers to help out in the Childrens Centres.

**\*c) Mere Rural Housing Needs Survey – draft survey results report for comment attached** – with reference to the draft survey results which had been distributed to members, Cllr. Jordan said that he felt the results were rather lopsided as the vast majority of respondents were older, long-term residents and thus an accurate and correct figure of the real needs of Mere may not have been reflected. He said that to say that over the next 3 years we only need 14 houses is vastly underestimated. Cllr. Jeans said that the survey should have been carried out door-to-door. It was RESOLVED to write back to say that although there is no discrepancy with the draft report, the Town Council does acknowledge the sentence in the last page of the report : 'This report provides a description of the affordable housing need only of those who responded to the survey, and as such may underestimate the total affordable housing need in the parish.' Moreover, given the fact that nearly half of respondents were aged 65+ and over 80% of respondents were owner-occupiers, the Town Council does not feel that the results of the survey give a true and accurate representation of the people of Mere and the Town Council feels that there are more than 14 houses required in Mere.

## 91. Reports & Consultations

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report** – A report, prepared by PCSO Peter Tscherniawsky, was distributed to members along with copies of the Mere Neighbourhood Police Team Newsletter. Cllr. Sims spoke about Cyber Crime scams and the return of lost or stolen wallets.

**b) Wiltshire Councillor's Report** – Cllr. Jeans said that he would be attending an Extraordinary Meeting of Wiltshire Council's Environment Select Committee tomorrow where the new Highways Contract would be awarded. He also reported that Wiltshire Council was running a scheme where households who could not get access to superfast broadband, could apply to have free installation of satellite broadband.

## 92. 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: 15/12301/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Proposed rear garden room extension.  
At: 8 Oak Lane, Mere, Wiltshire. BA12 6FJ

RESOLVED that the above application be recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. Sims, seconded by Cllr. P. Coward and carried with a majority vote. In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from discussion or voting.

Members were informed that a planning application had just been received for a detached 13-bedroom care unit at the rear of Bramley House. This application would be considered at the next Town Council meeting.

### **93. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport**

#### **a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults**

- Angel Lane – potholes. It was also reported that mulch had been dumped in the hedge and the road had been narrowed. With regards to the hedge surrounding the vicarage field, it was agreed that the Clerk should write a friendly letter to the church reminding them that it is a church responsibility.

**b) Possibility of bus shelter in The Square (last month's public session)** – The Chairman pointed out that this matter had been discussed in the past and that the Town Council does not have the budget to provide a bus shelter which would cost at least £2,500. It was agreed to defer any discussion on this matter until we know what bus services we will be getting in Mere following Wiltshire Council's bus service review. In the meantime, Cllr. Jeans said that he would make enquiries about moving the bus stop to the car park, where a shelter could more easily be incorporated.

**c) Community Litter Picking Initiative**– the Clerk reported that at the Area Board meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015, members agreed to fund a community litter picking initiative. Each Parish Council can apply to SWW Area Board for up to 10 litter pickers, 10 safety tabards and 2 handiloops. The Area Board would particularly like to encourage participation in the 'Clean for the Queen' event on 4-6 March 2016. If Parish & Town Councils want to participate in this initiative, then the Area Board needs to know how much equipment is required by end of Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> January. RESOLVED to express an interest in the initiative.

**d) Notice of making an Order – Public Path Diversion & Definitive Map and Statement Modification order, Highways Act 1980 & Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – The Wiltshire Council Mere 39 (part) Diversion and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2015** – Having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, Cllr. Mitchell left the room whilst this matter was discussed and took no part in discussions or voting. The Clerk reported that the order to divert Footpath No. 39 Mere (part) has been made to remove the footpath from the working yard so that a locked gate can be installed to improve security and to provide a more pleasant walk for the public with superior views. The diversion route will have a recorded width of 2 metres. The Town Council had previously been consulted on this and had made no objection. RESOLVED to write back confirming that the Town Council is happy with the diversion route and the Modification Order.

### **94. Finance, Policy & Resources**

**\*a) Payments** – RESOLVED that the payments as set out in the payment schedule attached to the agenda be approved and cheques duly signed by authorised signatories at the meeting.

**b) To adopt recommendations made by Budget Meeting, as shown in Minutes of Budget Meeting held on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015** – RESOLVED that the recommendations should be approved by the Parish Council on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds, seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a unanimous vote. The Chairman pointed out that subsequent to the Annual Budget Meeting, the Council had received two quotations to replace the Town Council office windows with UPVC double glazed units with tinted glass. The cheapest quotation had come out at £1281 + VAT and the office lease expired in 2020. Members agreed that this figure should be added to the budget requirements for 2016/17 to allow for the replacement windows.

**c) To approve Precept on Wiltshire Council for 2016/17** - RESOLVED to approve the precept of £117,126.24 on proposal made by Cllr. Hill, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote.

d) To review Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

## 95. General Items

**a) Public consultation on the cost of policing in 2016-2017** – the Clerk reported on information she had received from Angus Macpherson, the Police and crime Commissioner stating that a public consultation had begun on 5.1.16 on the cost of policing in 2016-17. He was considering an increase of 1.9% which amounts to £3.12 per year or 6p per week for the average home (Band D property) in Wiltshire. The consultation runs until Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. Angus Macpherson will be making presentations at various Area Board meetings and further information is available on the Wiltshire Police website [www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk).

**b) Nominations for Buckingham Palace Garden Party 2016** – the Clerk reported that Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) has been allocated places for two councillors and their spouses/companions to attend a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016. This year, WALC is seeking nominations of members with long service (and one accompanying guest). **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Raymond Hill and his wife should be nominated.

**c) Local Housing Panel meetings** – the Clerk informed members that the first round of Local Housing Panel meetings for 2016 had now been arranged – there were two meetings to be held in Mere – one on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> February between 19.00-20.30 at Mere Lecture Hall and one on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February between 10.30 – 12.00 also at Mere Lecture Hall.

**d) Judging of Xmas Lights** – The Chairman thanked the judges for judging the Xmas Lights this year and also thanked Cllr. Jeans and the judges for giving out prizes. The winner this year was Geoff & Pat Sams of Lynch Close.

## 96. Forthcoming meetings/events

- **Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations** – The Clerk asked members whether the Town Council wanted to enter Mere in the official programme of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations. **RESOLVED** that Mere's celebrations should become part of the official programme and that the Council should have a bonfire beacon on top of Castle Hill, lit by the Chairman of the Town Council. Councillor Jeans said that he wanted a proper firework display on Castle Hill. It was further agreed to send Her Majesty congratulations on her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday from the Town Council
- **Wiltshire Council's 'Rising to the challenges of 2016 and beyond' series of meetings** – the Clerk reported that Wiltshire Council were holding a series of meetings regarding their budget preparation. The meetings were to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb, 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb & 10<sup>th</sup> Feb in Devizes, Chippenham, Trowbridge & Salisbury respectively.

Meeting closed at 8.37 p.m.

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*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.*