

# Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere, BA12 6EW**

**Present:** Councillors J. Jordan (Chairman), A. Colman, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, R. Hill, Mrs. J. Hurd, G. Ings, G. Jeans, A. Mead, E. Mitchell, B. Norris, Mrs. L. Traves & R. Sims

Also: Mrs. A. Harris, Mrs. A. Beall, V. Phillips, G. Avory, R. Stone & D. 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).*

Annie Harris spoke about Community Speedwatch and wondered whether this was a scheme that the Town Council had considered. She also said that she did not see why there couldn't be rumble strips coming into Mere to slow traffic down. She said that she would like to see something being done to slow the traffic down when coming into Mere. The Chairman informed Mrs. Harris that the Town Council was discussing the matter of Speed Indicator Devices during the meeting which may be of interest.

Mr. Vernon Phillips said that he would like to compliment the editor of Gillingham News for his excellent reporting and coverage for Mere.

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from C. G. Fry & Son stating that they had now received their revised permission for Phase 1 and their detailed permission for Phase 2 at the old Hill Brush site at Woodlands Road and they have programmed the groundworkers to start work next Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> July. This will be within Phase 1 which is at the western (Woodlands Road) side. Mr. Lohfink said *'we do appreciate that development work always causes a degree of nuisance but we will keep this to a reasonable minimum and, as before, do let us know if there are any concerns.'*

The Clerk read out a letter from Mrs. Adrienne Howell & Alan Lawrence *'we wish to thank Mere Town Council for the excellent repair to the vandalised Lawrence seat and to commend the craftsmanship of Mr. Chard. The seat was donated to Mere Parish Council by our mother on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday to commemorate her parents and brothers – she being the last of the family brought up in Old Hollow. All six of her brothers served this country in the armed forces and two lost their lives in the world wars. The seat, therefore, is of much sentimental value to us both and we enclose a donation to help cover the cost of the repairs.'*

Mr. Roy Sims reported that, by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. Sainthill of Dewes House, there will be a coffee morning in aid of Mere Cancer Research on 15<sup>th</sup> July at Dewes House (entrance is via Salisbury Street Car Park).

The Chairman reported that Bournemouth White Lining will carry out relining of the Salisbury Street Car Park during the weekend of 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> July (weather permitting). He said that there were no community events listed in Mere Matters nor in Mere Library for that weekend.

**Apologies for absence** received from Cllrs. P. Coward and Mrs. K. Symonds

## **34. 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. C. Hazzard declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 41a)

**35. Minutes – RESOLVED** to approve Minutes of Town Council meeting held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017 on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 5.6.17

## **36. Matters Arising**

**a) Clock (Mere Clock Tower) – update on grant application for an auto-regulator**– with reference to Minute 29d) the Chairman confirmed that the Town Council had made a grant application to the South West Wiltshire Area Board which will be considered at the Area Board meeting on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr. Jeans said that he would support the Town Council’s application.

**b) Dog Fouling & Code of Practice for Dog Walkers** - The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken to the dog warden for this area, whose name is Cat. He had told her about the efforts that Cllr. Mead has made and also sent her Cllr. Colman’s suggestions. He is hoping that she will come along to meet myself, Cllr. Mead & Cllr. Colman.

**c) Leases for car parks and public toilets** – With reference to Minute 30h) the Clerk said that at the present time the office is carrying out investigations:

- 1) Contacting Parking Management Operators to find out feasibility of charging and whether or not there is a self-sufficient way this could be carried out.
- 2) Writing to local business
  - a) to find out whether they would prefer to contribute to keep the car parks free of charge or whether they would prefer us to charge for parking after an initial free period (say 2 hrs free)
  - b) Whether we should treat both car parks the same
  - c) If free, should we restrict parking to a time limit i.e. 12 hours or 24 hours maximum

The Chairman said that it is the general feeling of the last meeting that we want to pursue this and we are chasing up sets of prices and ways and means that parking can be managed. Cllr. Colman said that there may be an opportunity to get a management company to come in who will sort out refurbishment, cleaning and management of the toilets. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd said that she has visited several toilets and some seem to be easier to clean than others. Hopefully, we will have something that we can consider seriously at the budget meeting.

**d) Street Cleaning** – The Chairman informed members that the Town Council has appointed Mr. Cliff Stafford as street orderly. He will be starting work in the next week or two. Unfortunately our old street orderly barrow has broken beyond repair and so we have had to order a new one. When the barrow arrives, which should be in the next 7 – 10 working days, then Mr. Stafford can start work.

**e) Lloyds Bank mobile bank route and siting** – The Clerk informed members that the Town Council was still awaiting confirmation from Lloyds Bank as to the times and venue of the mobile banking facility.

### **37. Reports & Consultations**

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report** – Cllr. Sims said that he had attended the South Wiltshire Area Community Safety Partnership Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June where it was reported that 40 new police officers are being trained, some of which will come to the Southern area and the police aim to have 500 special constables by the end of next year. The Fire Service were also represented at this meeting and reported that the first responder service is coming back although the fire service will no longer be responding in fire engines but will use cars instead. The Fire Service is desperate to recruit new retained fire fighters and anyone living in Dorset & Wiltshire can request a free home check service.

**b) Wiltshire Councillor’s Report** – Cllr. Jeans reported that he had Chaired the South West Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership meeting and advised that the police now have two drones in operation which is a fantastic tool that trained specials can use. He said that Mr. Robin Chard, a local volunteer, had produced some excellent work in repairing broken and dilapidated seats and benches around the town and he wanted to thank him for doing such a good job. Cllr. Jeans said he was very pleased to hear that the Town Council now has a street cleaner.

### **38. 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 Number: 17/04732/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Internal alterations to meeting room; new entrance doors and paving; alterations to boundary wall.  
At: Mere URC, Boar Street, Mere. BA12 6DD

The Chairman informed members that the previous application, considered by the Town Council in March 2017, had been refused by the Planning Authority due to the fact that the removal of the front boundary wall and the removal of the stone piers and gates would have an adverse impact on the Mere Conservation Area. This planning application is therefore a new one and includes the retention of the front wall, stone piers and gates. Cllr. Norris said that he felt these plans were better than the previous ones. Cllr. Hill proposed that the planning application be recommended for approval and said that if it was going to make the building more usable then he was all for it. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hurd. RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application with a vote of 12 for and 1 abstention. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting). Cllr. Jeans confirmed that he had requested that this application be taken to committee if the planning officer was minded to recommend refusal.

Application Number: 17/05153/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Single storey rear extension (amendment to planning permission 17/00320/FUL)  
At: 12 Walnut Road, Mere. BA12 6FG

The Chairman reminded members that the Town Council had considered a conservatory extension for this property in March 2017 which the Town Council and Planning Authority had approved. He assumed that the applicant's had now decided to amend the conservatory for a single storey extension instead and confirmed that it was of similar size and orientation. RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Mitchell, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 12 for and 1 abstention. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting).

**b) Draft Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan – Advance notice of consultation** – the Clerk advised that Wiltshire Council had published the draft Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, along with accompanying evidence reports, for formal consultation. It sets out proposals that:

- revise, where necessary, existing settlement boundaries in relation to the Principal Settlements of Salisbury and Trowbridge, Wiltshire's Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages; and
- allocates new sites for housing to ensure the delivery of homes across the plan period in order to maintain a five year land supply in each of Wiltshire's three Housing Market Areas over the period to 2026.

Comments are invited on the draft Plan and supporting evidence bases documents during the 10 week consultation period, which runs from **9:00am on Friday 14 July 2017 until 5:00pm on Friday 22 September 2017**.

There will be 4 public exhibitions held as part of the consultation. The events will be open between 12 noon and 7pm as follows:

Neeld Community & Art Centre, High Street, Chippenham	Monday 17 July 2017
Guildhall, Market Place, Salisbury	Wednesday 19 July 2017
Town Hall, St Johns Street, Devizes	Monday 24 July 2017
Atrium, County Hall, Trowbridge	Wednesday 26 July 2017

Officers from the Council will be available during the day to answer questions about the draft Plan and we would encourage people to attend and find out more about what the draft Plan proposes in their area. The Clerk said that she was intending to go to this event and said that other councillors may like to attend as this would be the subject of further discussion at the September meeting.

**\*c) Neighbourhood Planning** – members noted the Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Cllr. Norris reiterated that the steering group had agreed that the area of the Neighbourhood Plan should be defined by the parish boundary. Cllr. Jeans asked that he be involved in the process and Cllr. Norris said that the Steering Group would certainly be asking him to join them, especially when they start talking about planning. Cllr. Jeans said that he was hoping that there would be some social housing in the town and that this was something that would come out of the plan. The Clerk was asked to submit the answers to the initial neighbourhood planning questions raised by Wiltshire Council and to ask for a Planning Officer to be allocated to provide advice and guidance and possibly make a presentation to the Steering Group.

**d) Progress update on new bungalows to be built at Bramley Hill** – The Clerk confirmed that Wiltshire Council had emailed to say that they were now preparing contracts for the construction process of the two bungalows with a provisional date for starting on site being 24<sup>th</sup> July. Ahead of demolition of the existing 17 garages, they are currently refurbishing 4 garages elsewhere on Bramley Hill for the four tenants who currently rent garages on the site to be demolished to move into. The developers will carry out letter drops to neighbours and nearby properties to ensure that local residents are aware of the imminent demolition/construction works. The Clerk said that Cllr. Jeans had previously raised his concerns that these two bungalows should benefit Mere residents and the Clerk said that she had written to Wiltshire Council pointing out that raising local awareness will be the key to locals bidding on the bungalows and the subsequent allocation. Wiltshire Council had replied that they would provide wording and leaflets at the most appropriate time in accordance with the project plan. The Chairman stressed the importance of councillors spreading the word to ensure that these bungalows benefit Mere residents.

### **Emergency Item**

**Introduction of Electronic Planning Consultations** – the Clerk read out a letter from the Wiltshire Council's Planning Department: 'For a number of years, we have been considering how we can address the ever-increasing costs of printing and posting hard copies of the planning applications to you for consultation. Last year we received more than 8000 applications. We will in future be sending you a notification electronically, with a link to the website, to enable you to view the documents on the day the application is registered. This will give your councillors longer to comment (likely to be around 28 days rather than the current 21 days). This will also give better access to the plans for your councillors without waiting for circulation of the hard copies. This letter is to inform you that as from Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017 all applications for consultation will be sent electronically on the day of registration. We realise that this will be a change to the way that we have been working and as such we need to help you with this. We are happy to give some training sessions on how best to use the website and comment on planning applications to help make this transition easier.' The Clerk said that she was unhappy about this move because she was aware that some members found it difficult & slow to download plans from the website and indeed two members did not even have access to email, one not having a computer at all. She also said that it was not as easy to compare existing and proposed plans on the website whereas you could view the paper plans side-by-side to compare existing and proposed elevations. Lastly, she did not feel that it was possible to make accurate scaled measurements from printed plans taken from the website. Cllr. Norris said that when someone submitted an application they needed to pay Wiltshire Council a lot of money to process it and the postage costs to Parish & Town Councils should be encompassed within these costs. **RESOLVED** to lodge an objection to this decision on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Mead and carried with a unanimous vote. Cllr. Jeans said that this matter was being discussed at the Full Council meeting next week and that he would support the Town Council in this objection.

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

**a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward & street lighting faults** – The Chairman reported that Cllr. Mrs. Symonds could not attend the meeting but had prepared some maps identifying areas for members to take responsibility for. The Chairman also reported that several councillors and parishioners

had been using the MyWiltshire App and had a measure of success, for example, Cllr. Mead had reported an issue at Lynch Close which had been dealt with very efficiently.

**b) Dark Lane Wall** – The Chairman reported that he had managed to get Wiltshire Council’s surveyor to come down and have a look at the wall which was in poor condition. The surveyor had made safe one aspect of the wall and had contacted the Chairman to say that he had received agreement from the owners to make some repairs (making a start this week).

**c) Fingerpost signs** – The Clerk distributed photographs of the three fingerpost signs that the Town Council’s groundsmen had refurbished. She explained that the South West Wiltshire Area Board had set aside funding for a grant towards their refurbishment last year and the Clerk was now going to seek reimbursement for the cost of materials/labour etc.

#### **40. Buildings, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Sports Grounds, Allotments & Cemeteries**

**a) Removal of mini recycling site from Salisbury Street Car Park** – The Clerk said that she had received an email from Waste Management at Wiltshire Council stating: *‘I am writing to inform you of the council’s intention to permanently close the mini recycling site network across the council. One of which is located within your area. The council needs to continually review it’s waste and recycling services provided to Wiltshire residents to ensure that they remain efficient and cost effective. Due to increased kerbside recycling, we have seen the use of all mini recycling sites significantly reduce and therefore it is no longer cost effective to continue to provide this service when Wiltshire residents are now able to recycle the same items at the kerbside. The council has also closed several mini recycling sites over the past year due to direct requests from landowners. The network has reduced from 14 sites in 2014 to just 7 sites currently. Given the above, the council has decided that it will cease providing mini recycling sites as they are no longer a cost effective means of collecting material for recycling. We therefore wish to inform you that the mini recycling site located at Salisbury Street Car Park will close on 18 July 2017, with the containers being physically removed shortly after this date. In order to inform current users of the removal of this site, we will shortly be placing posters on the containers with details of the removal date and alternative recycling options. In addition landowners, local councillors and area boards have been also advised of the changes. If you would like to ensure that we inform a certain group of residents please contact us with the relevant contact information and we will endeavour to extend the communications to those residents where possible. The council will arrange for the removal of any permanent signs or infrastructure originally installed by the council, once the containers have been removed, and current arrangements for site cleansing will remain in place for a limited period following the site closure, in order to deal with any littering that may result.’*

Cllr. Jeans said that he had met with two senior officers of Wiltshire Council owing to complaints he had received about the removal of the mini recycling site at Mere. However, there were no intentions of giving in. He said that they only had 7 sites left and the saving to be made by closing the 7 sites is only £6,000. Wiltshire Council need to save £1m but Cllr. Jeans said that he pointed out it was going to cost them a lot to remove the stopper kerbs which were put in as part of the infrastructure. Cllr. Jeans said that a lot of people have to bring recycling bins through their house because they don’t have anywhere to store them and a lot of people do not qualify for assisted collection but cannot manage their recycling bins. Cllr. Jeans said that he had asked whether it would be possible for the Town Council to provide this service but had subsequently found out that the recycling skips were specially made. Cllr. Norris said that he was not in favour of picking up the cost to continue a mini-recycling site at Mere. Cllr. Mead said he thought it was a good idea that the recycling skips were going to be removed as the demand on car parking was more urgent than the demand for recycling skips and he proposed that the Town Council should raise no objection to the removal of the mini recycling site. Proposal seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a majority vote of approval. (Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting).

**b) Painting of litter bins, street signs, street lighting, railings etc. (G. Jeans)** - deferred

#### **41 Finance, Policy & Resources**

**\*a) Payments** – to approve payments set out in payment schedules attached – Having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, Cllr. Hazzard left the meeting and took no part in voting or discussion. **RESOLVED** to approve payments as set out in payment schedule attached on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a unanimous vote of those present.

**b) Letter from Mr. Graham Swanson** – the Clerk read out a letter from Mr. Swanson who used to live in the area, with his wife, from 1973 to 1994. Sadly, his wife died in 2011 And Mr. Swanson had arranged with the Clerk to have a memorial tree planted in Mere Cemetery in memory of his wife. He said '*I regularly visit Mere and have been very impressed by how well James & Josh look after the cemeteries. They are very enthusiastic and tell me they really enjoy this and their other tasks in Mere. Yesterday, in inclement weather, they were very skilfully trimming the grass around many many graves with two ride-on mowers and a strimmer. I have at long last decided to annually subscribe to the parish for this and the other floral work that your Council carries out. My first annual payment was sent to your bank today.*' Members agreed that a thank you letter should be sent back to Mr. Swanson.

**c) Does the Town Council wish to purchase a Speed Indicator Device (SID)** – The Clerk informed members that the South West Wiltshire Area Board (SWWAB) had launched a South West Wiltshire Community Speed Indicator Initiative 2017, the purpose of which is to allow more parishes to have use of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) on their roads. The SWWAB will give up to a £1500 grant to the first 5 parishes (or consortia) applying this fiscal year. It is estimated that this will be about 50% of the purchase price. Parishes or consortia will purchase the SID together with all the necessary batteries, posts, brackets etc. and will fully insure the SID against theft damage and any third-party liability. Cllr. Jeans confirmed that Mere has a Speed Indicator Device in White Road and there is a Community Area SID that is shared between Mere, West Knoyle & Kilmington. He pointed out, however, that the SIDs that just show the MPH are designed only to be operated for a 2-3 week period which is all the battery life permits although the ones with smiley faces can be left on continuously. The SIDs with smiley faces can be left up continuously however.

Cllr. Norris asked how many Speed Indicator Devices were working in the area. Cllr. Jeans said that there was one working, in White Road, at the moment. Members generally agreed that they were effective and that it would be a good idea to have one that could be used continuously, maybe moved around from place to place and it was **RESOLVED** that we should apply for a grant for a Smiley Face Speed Indicator Device for the parish of Mere (not consortia) on proposal made by Cllr. Hazzard, seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a vote of 9 for and 4 against.

## **42. General Items & Consultations**

**a) Community Litter Pick for September** – Cllr. B. Norris would like to organise a volunteer litter pick for 24<sup>th</sup> September. The Chairman agreed to mention this in his report for Mere Matters

**b) Suggestions from Mere's younger residents (letters distributed)** – the Chairman explained that some of the pupils of Mere School had been working on a project of writing persuasive letters and had thus written letters to the Town Councillors to persuade them to put on events or provide facilities in Mere. Members had already received their letters and gave examples of the requests received:

- Motor Bike and Quad bike race on White Sheet Hill
- Food Festival at 8.00 pm on 13<sup>th</sup> August every year
- Permanent Fun Fair
- Amusement Arcade
- Shiny new factory
- Big lake for fishing and boating
- Opticians
- Cinema
- Swimming Pool
- Pot Holes repaired
- Park
- Chocolate Factory

The Chairman asked members to respond to the pupils personally or to hand them back to him if they were unable to respond personally so that he could reply.

#### **43. Forthcoming meetings/events**

**a) Wiltshire Council's Planning Training Events** – the Clerk informed members that Wiltshire Council would be holding a Planning Training event at the Nadder Centre, Tisbury on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September. The training sessions will provide an introduction on how planning applications are dealt with, how decisions are made, what parish & town councils can and cannot take into account, Government changes to the planning system and an introduction to the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Clerk said that she had provisionally booked some places on the training event and would like any councillors that may be interested in attending to let her know. Cllr. Mrs. Hurd said that she would like to attend.

#### **44. Future agenda items**

None

**Meeting closed at 9.06 p.m.**

*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.*