

Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 5th March 2018 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere, BA12 6EW

Present: Councillors J. Jordan (Chairman), Mrs. K. Symonds (Vice-Chair), A. Colman, P. Coward, R. Coward, C. Hazzard, G. Ings, G. Jeans, A. Mead, E. Mitchell, B. Norris, R. Sims, & Mrs. L. Traves
Also: Mr. Michael Streeter (Gillingham & Shaftesbury News), R. Flower, G. Avory, F. Legge, Sally Brett, Dick Morris. Spence Gunn & Clare Shaddick, Marilyn Johnson & Mr (café)

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. Frank Legge of The Lynch said that he was following up on the discussion held last month when residents put forward traffic proposals for The Lynch . The Chairman explained that this matter had not been raised on this month's agenda because the Town Council had not yet received any advice from the Highways Authority on how to proceed with the suggestions made.

Marilyn Johnson from Angel Corner Tea Rooms said that she had noticed that the Town Council would be discussing a request for support for brown tourism signs for Hillbrush and she wanted to make a plea that the tourism signs also directed people to the Town Centre. Philip Coward said that he was aware that the application for brown tourism signs was very difficult and that any submission has to be specific. For example, to have a brown sign on an 'A' road you were required to have 100,000 visitors a year. Ms. Johnson said that there are a lot of facilities that could suffer if the town was not included in this signage. Mr. Tim Merrell of Barrow Street said that the residents of the area were most grateful for the recent highway resurfacing works and that he was sure that councillors would understand that when the A303 is closed there is a lot of traffic that comes through Barrow Street which has concealed entrances, horses, children, elderly & farm machinery. Unfortunately, drivers do not always understand nature of these narrow lanes and it would be helpful if we could have some signage to try and help slow the traffic down. George Jeans said that he had been approached by Creative Director from Wiltshire Rural Music who were asking for a banner in the centre of town to advertise their event in April. Members agreed that the policy of having banners needed to be adhered to as there were other organisations within the town who had applied for banners and had their requests denied.

Brett Norris states that Mere litter pick would take place on Sunday, 15th April. All volunteers to meet at Clock tower at 12.00 pm and finish at 2.00 p.m. Sonya will put a notice on Social Media (Mere Mutters) and the Chairman would mention it in his report for Mere Matters.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. R. Hill & Mrs. J. Hurd

115. 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. Jeans declared a personal interest in Minute No. 122b)
- Cllr. P. Coward declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 123a)

116. Minutes – RESOLVED to approve amended Minutes of Town Council meeting held on Monday, 5th February 2018 on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds, seconded by Cllr. Colman and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 5.2.18

Amendment: Page 1 – Public Session - Line 22 –She also informed members about a forthcoming grave talk.

117. Matters Arising

a) 150th Anniversary, Mere Clock Tower – The Chairman thanked Michael Streeter for obtaining some old news articles about the Clock Tower and read out some excerpts: From Times, 150 years ago said that the construction design was approved and on 27th June 1868, it had been built and was waiting for the clock to be installed. On 11.9.1868 – the farmers of the area who wanted to commemorate a bountiful harvest, had mustered around the clock tower and walked along to the church. After prayers, the group went across to the National School Rooms where a sumptuous dinner was laid on by The Talbot. The Chairman said that these documents would help to plan some events for celebrating the anniversary.

***b) New General Data Protection Regulations and requirement for Data Protection Officer** –The Clerk had attended a Briefing Session on 25.1.18 organised by Wiltshire Association of Local Councils and held in Warminster. The session was led by the National Association of Local Councils Solicitor & Head of Legal Services. The Clerk had prepared a summary report which was distributed to members with their agenda papers. Cllr. Jeans said that he too, had been receiving advice from Wiltshire Council.

c) Road naming for development at Woodlands Road – The Clerk reported that the three additional road names submitted to C. G. Fry & Son were: Sweep Street, Stock Street & Pitch Pan Lane.

d) Centenary of the end of the First World War (Battle's Over – a Nation's Tribute)

Poppies for lampposts – The Clerk stated: 'As you know, the Town Council had ordered 25 large poppies to go on the lamp posts around town (similar to that which Wincanton has had over the last 3 years). However, when it looked as though this could extend to over 100 poppies, I thought that I had better seek permission from highways. Unfortunately, the Area Highways Engineer has said that there is an application procedure for anything that is attached to street lighting columns but from his part he would not want them sited close to junctions, on bends, or on the approaches to pedestrian crossing points and they would need to be mounted no less than 2.1m from ground level and a minimum of 0.5m set back from the edge of the carriageway. Erectors will need to be covered by their own public liability insurance for £5m minimum, have carried out their own documented risk assessment and wear suitable chapter 8 reflective clothing. The street lighting department say they need to know the dimensions, wind releasing properties and weights to give approval in principal and only then would they look at suitable locations, mounting heights etc. Concrete columns cannot have anything attached. An application form (SL3) needs to be sent to the Senior Lighting Engineer a minimum of 12 weeks before erection work is to commence. I have spoken to Wincanton Town Council and they confirm that they did not seek permission from highways department. I wonder, given the amount of red tape involved in this, whether the Council might like to think about other options: - put the poppies on people's private gates, gate posts & gutter pipes and/or 'plant' the poppies on the south side of Castle Hill. . Cllr. Sims said that he had been collection money and had a significant contributor so he felt that they should be consulted. It was therefore agreed to defer any final decisions until the next meeting. Members also discussed the life-size WW1 infantryman silhouettes being sold by RBL and the Chairman said that two of the soldiers right by the war memorial would be very poignant. Cllr. Jeans said that should it be required, the Town Council could put in for an emergency Area Board grant.

Commemorative Tree Planting –The Chairman said that the tree planting had gone well and been well attended by members. He thanked all councillors for coming along and Cllr. P. Coward for donating and providing the tree guard. The Chairman said that the Town Council would be purchasing a plaque to be situated by the tree.

118. Reports & Consultations

a) Neighbourhood Policing Report – the Clerk handed out copies of the Community Policing Report which focused on Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs)

b) County Councillor's report – Cllr. Jeans said that he had written a comprehensive report for Mere Matters but he wanted to report that the community had worked well together to tackle the difficulties faced by some local and some stranded motorists on the A303 during the recent bad weather. The Chairman said he had been talking to the Clerk and that they planned to talk to the fire service about

putting together an emergency plan to discuss strategies to deal with stranded motorists and other issues arising from the recent bad weather.

119. 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: 18/00408/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Provision of new vehicular access previously approved for detached house with no current vehicular access (Resubmission of S/2007/940)

At: Fairhaven, Pettridge Lane, Mere. BA12 6DG

The Chairman pointed out that the Town Council had recommended approval of this planning application in 2007 but that it had subsequently lapsed. **RESOLVED** to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Symons, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a unanimous vote.

Application Ref: 18/00405/FUL (Amended Plans)
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Conversion of existing bank to create 3 no. 2 bed and 1 no. 1 bed flats with parking

At: Lloyds Bank Plc, The Square, Mere. BA12 6DP

The Clerk pointed out that the amendments related to changes to include 2 more parking spaces, making it 5 in total and the removal of a very small outbuilding at the back. Members pointed out that the amended application form was still stating 3 car parking spaces. Cllr. Mrs. Traves said that nothing about this application made her change her view. **RESOLVED** to recommend refusal of the application for the following reasons:

Overdevelopment – the Town Council felt that the proposal would represent overdevelopment of the site which would result in a cramped form of development that would be detrimental to future occupiers.

Insufficient parking – the amended plans make provision for 5 off-street parking spaces. However, the Town Council has doubts as to whether one of these parking spaces (No. 5 on the block plan) is viable as it is adjacent to an access doorway for the property to the north which, presumably, would need to be kept clear. This proposal does not, therefore, meet the minimum car parking standards. Given the case that individual dwellings generate their own separate, duplicate trips (deliveries, visitors, servicing etc.) added to the routine daily parking demand from residents, the Town Council feels that having 4 residential units on this site will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the already congested on-street parking in Mere town centre or in the Manor Road/North Street vicinities. (The parking congestion in North Street and Manor Road has already caused potential problems for emergency vehicle access).

Proposal seconded by Cllr. Mitchell and carried with a unanimous vote. In his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr. Jeans abstained from voting on this application but he did point out that he had asked for the planning application to be called into committee but pointed out that if the conversation was reduced to two flats then he may withdraw this request.

Application Ref: 18/01587/TCA
Application for: Work to Trees in Cons. Area
Proposal: Fell 2 Fir Trees
At: 21 Castle Hill Crescent, Mere. BA12 6HL

RESOLVED that the above application be recommended for approval on proposal made by Cllr. Ings, seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

b) Ref: Planning Application 16/12217/OUT - Next steps in appeal process for Appeal by Richborough Estates for Outline Planning to develop land at Castle Street, Mere - deferred

c) Update on new bungalows being built at Bramley Hill – Cllr Jeans said that the work was on schedule and that the properties will be advertised in March and by the end of April the new tenants should be known.

d) Report on Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on 27.2.18 – Cllr. Norris reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had held a productive meeting. Terms of Reference had been agreed and the Neighbourhood Plan website is up and running. The group were proposing to promote the plan at the Cancer Research May Fayre and Mere Church Fete and in order to do this, they needed to produce some leaflets which would cost in the region of £100. As the steering group did not want to apply for any funding before the end of the financial year, Cllr Norris proposed that the Parish Council should lend the steering group £100 in order to get the leaflets printed. Proposal seconded by the Chairman and carried with a unanimous vote. Cllr. Norris reported that other issues discussed by the group had been whether the Neighbourhood Plan should cover the period to 2026 or to 2036 and how to engage young people and also the referendum.

120. Highways, Rivers, Footpaths, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway & footpath issues for Parish Steward, Wiltshire online reporting & street lighting faults –The Chairman informed members that he had written to Wiltshire Council's cabinet member, Bridget Wayman, to see what can be done about the poor state of the road at White Road (that is the small stretch of White Road that runs alongside the Mere Social Club). Cllr. Jeans said that he was aware that there were about 20 faulty street lights in Mere at the present time and was having difficulties in getting them repaired. The Clerk was asked to write to Wiltshire Council to make it clear that the Town Council is not happy about the long delay in attending to street lighting repairs. Cllr. Sims asked about refilling the salt bins and the Clerk explained that Wiltshire Council would refill their salt bins and the Town Council would find out about refilling the two private salt bins.

***b) Highways Newsletter March 2018** - noted

c) Notice of temporary road closure of Shaftesbury Road from its junction with Wet lane for a distance of approximately 190m in a southerly direction– 22nd March for two days. The Clerk explained that the temporary closure was to enable BT Openreach to access overhead structures. Access will be maintained for residents and businesses where possible, although delays are likely due to the nature of the works.

d) Request for signage to slow traffic in Barrow Street – Cllr. Jeans said that he had discussed this with the Clerk earlier as he had a similar experience in Stourton and Bells Lane, Zeals where the parish council wanted to erect signs but after a meeting with the Area Highways Manager it had been agreed to paint SLOW on the road surface. RESOLVED to approach the Area Highway Manager or the Community Area Transport Group to see if some measures (either signs or painting SLOW on road surface) could be taken to make drivers aware that they should drive slowly in Barrow Street. Cllr. Jeans said that he would be prepared to erect the Speed Indicator Device along Barrow Street if requested and suggested that Mr. Merrell should contact him informally about this.

e) A303 Stonehenge Public Consultation - see: <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-stonehenge-2018/> - Cllr. R. Coward explained that he had gone along at about 4.00 p.m. but they were packing up to leave due to the fact that it was snowing quite heavily. They did say that they may come along again though. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds said that the presentation was similar to the one they had carried out before.

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

***a) Mere War Memorial: War Memorials Trust – Grant offer for war memorial restoration** – The Clerk reported that the Town Council offices had submitted a grant application to the War Memorials Trust (WMT) at the end of 2017 for a grant towards the cleaning and restoration of Mere War Memorial. This took longer than anticipated because most of the approved stonemasons we approached for the three quotes required were either too busy to undertake the work or declined to quote. We contacted WMT

explaining that we had only been able to obtain two quotes to date, and wanted to submit the application ahead of the December 2017 submission deadline. WMT agreed to accept the grant application with two quotes providing we submitted evidence that demonstrated that we had been unable to obtain further quotes. The quotes were as follows:

Salisbury Cathedral Works Dept £10434 plus VAT

Kelland Conservation

(based in Street, Somerset) £7039 plus VAT

We have now received written confirmation from WMT of a grant offer of up to £4,460 which represents 75% of the eligible costs given in the quote by contractor Kelland Conservation. In our application we stated our preference for Salisbury Cathedral Works Dept to carry out the cleaning and restoration of the War Memorial, even though their quote was higher. This is because they have previously worked on the Memorial, understand its structure and we have been happy with the work they have carried out. However, Andrew McMaster of WMT explained in his telephone call, prior to the award of the grant, that because of Historic England grant procurement restrictions a grant offer has to be made based on the lowest quote obtained, in this case from Kelland Conservation. He understands the reason for our preference for Salisbury Cathedral Works Dept but stated that although they are not able to officially recommend a stonemason, WMT has experience of Kelland Conservation's work and Andrew McMaster spoke positively about the standard of their work. With the award of 75%, this figure plus £2600 already in the Mere Town Council budget should be sufficient to cover the cost of cleaning and restoration carried out by Kelland. As the War Memorial has recently been listed we contacted Wiltshire Council to enquire whether listed building consent would be required for the proposed works. Jocelyn Sage, Senior Conservation Officer, replied as follows: *'I am aware of Sue Kelland's reputation and conservation accreditation and the specification suggests only repairs and gentle cleaning. I do not, therefore, consider listed building consent is required. The only question I would have relates to the lettering. I feel that this should only be painted if there is evidence of it having been painted in the past, however I appreciate that there may be a local desire for greater legibility of the names.'* Members confirmed that the lettering had been painted black in the past and it was RESOLVED to request that Kelland Conservation carry out the work as quoted (which includes the black lettering) at their earliest convenience. Proposal made by Cllr. P. Coward, seconded by Cllr. R. Coward and carried with a unanimous vote.

b) Boiler repairs in Andy Young Pavilion – the Clerk reported that she and the Chairman had met with Wessex Building Services manager and engineer about the ongoing saga with the boiler in the Andy Young Pavilion (at present the heating is working but the hot water is not). Wessex Building Services have now presented the Town Council with the bill which has been substantially reduced due to the amount and number of call outs and a number of the parts have been provided at cost price or free of charge 'under warranty'. Still, the amount owed to Wessex could have purchased us a new boiler. Wessex Building Services have telephoned Vaillant (makers of the boiler) who have agreed to come out free of charge and assess the boiler.

c) Request to erect shed on allotment at Wellhead – members agreed to the request for a replacement shed at Wellhead allotments. Members also unanimously agreed to delegate decisions on allotment sheds to the Clerk as long as they are a maximum size of 8ft X 6ft. Anything larger than that should be brought to the Town Council for decision.

d) Letter from Wilsons Solicitors regarding cemetery extension land – The Clerk said that she had received a letter from Wilsons Solicitors on behalf of the people who had purchased The Chantry last year. Their clients wanted to inform the Town Council that, 'if there were an opportunity to do so, they would be very interested in buying the whole or part of the Council's field lying to the south of The Chantry. Their clients realised that the Council may well wish to retain some of this land for the potential expansion of the cemetery, but would very much like to be considered as genuine buyers in a potential sale of part of it, now or in the future. They are fully aware of the fact that there are restrictive covenants affecting the land and wish to reassure the Council that they only intend to use the land for the grazing of sheep. RESOLVED that the Town Council is not interested in selling part of any of the land. Proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Traves and carried with a vote of 12 for and 1 abstention (Cllr. R. Sims)/. Members

did agree, however, to ask the owners of The Chantry if they were interesting in leasing some of the land for sheep grazing during the summer period.

122 Finance, Policy & Resources

***a) Payments** – RESOLVED to approve payments set out in payment schedules attached on proposal made by Cllr. Mrs. Traves, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote.

b) Car Parks and sponsorship pledges by local businesses – The Chairman reported that, as agreed in the meeting of 23rd October 2017, 22 letters had recently gone out to business requesting sponsorship in order to help the Council to keep the facilities free to use and asking the businesses to respond in time for tonight’s meeting. Unfortunately, only half of the businesses had responded. Members expressed their disappointment at this considering the strength of feeling expressed by businesses at the meeting in October and it was agreed that the Council should write again to those businesses that had not responded. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a personal interest, refrained from discussion or voting on this issue.

123. General Items & Consultations

a) Visit Hillbrush – request for support for brown tourism signs – Cllr. P. Coward declared a pecuniary interest and left the room whilst this matter was discussed. The Clerk confirmed that she had received an email from the Executive PA & Admin Manager at Hillbrush stating that they would like to apply for brown tourism signs on some local ‘distributor’ roads to help bring additional business not just to the visitor centre, but into the town too. She was hoping that this was something that could be raised at the next Town Council meeting for discussion and to get the Council’s thoughts as to whether or not they would support this. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds said that she was sure the cost of the brown tourism signs was borne by the applicant. Cllr. Norris said that only two of the signs on the map were within the Mere parish boundary and so he felt that the Town Council could only really express an opinion on those two signs. Cllr. R. Coward felt that the application should be supported and Cllr. Hazzard said he agreed and it would be nice if we could get people into the town centre too. Cllr. Mrs. Symonds felt that whatever the signs say, it is not going to harm Mere & Cllr. Jeans felt that it should be supported but to express the Town Council’s hope that it may be done in a manner which may also bring people into the town. The Chairman said he was very pleased to note that the Hillbrush address was still Mere whereas, in fact, they are within the parish boundary of Zeals. RESOLVED to indicate the Town Council’s support for brown tourism signs for Hillbrush and to express the Town Council’s hope that it may be done in a manner which may also bring people into the town on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a vote of 11 for and 1 abstention.

b) Annual Parish Meeting – Members were reminded that the meeting would be held on Wednesday, 25th April 2018 in The Grove Building.

The following specific agenda items were requested:

- Centenary of the end of the First World War
- Mere Neighbourhood Pan

124. Forthcoming meetings/events

Cranborne Chase AONB – Annual Planning & Transportation Seminar – Achieving Community Benefits from Dark Night Skies – 20th March 2018, 9.30 a.m. to 4.15 pm, Dinton Village Hall. SP3 5EB

125. Future agenda items

- Dog Fouling – Cllr. A. Mead

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.

*Further information on these items enclosed/attached
Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.