

# Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in Duchy Manor, Springfield Road, Mere, BA12 6EW

**Present:** Councillors A. Colman, R. Coward, G. Ings, G. Jeans, J. Jordan, A. Mead, B. Norris, R. Pester & Mrs. K. Symonds.

**Also:** D. Drewett, J. Elvin, J. Gammie & Mary Harbert, Dick Morris, G. Avory, Hilary Gladding & David Barker, I Sheppard & Vivien Sheppard.

**Due to the absence of Clive Hazzard (Chairman) and Eric Mitchell (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. John Jordan in  
The Chair**

## Public Session

*The Chairman will convene the Town Council meeting after the public session (please note that once the meeting has been convened members of the public are no longer permitted to speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman).*

**Please Note:** By entering the meeting room you are consenting to the use of your name being recorded in the Minutes. The meeting may also be recorded by the press or members of the public. Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council or its committees is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them so doing and by choosing to film, record or broadcast proceedings they accept that they are required to indemnify the Council, its members and officers in relation to any such claims or liabilities.

- Mr. John Elvin spoke regarding the application to move Footpath Mere26 (Minute No. 43a) and said that he supported the proposals to relocate the footpath.
- Mr. David Drewett, speaking on the same subject, pointed out that this site is just one of many where the footpath sign is missing and said that Wiltshire Council has a statutory duty to provide a footpath sign where it meets a metalled road. He therefore asked that a request be submitted to the Highways Authority to include proper signage with any changes that are made.
- Mr. John Gammie, Chairman of Mere Carnival Committee spoke in connection with Minute No 46a and explained that he had received no response to repeated requests from the owner of the field on Gillingham Corner but also reported that the current tenants of the field had been put on 'standby' to receive one month's notice to quit at any time and had also been informed to tell Mere Carnival that they could not use the field for the fairground. Mr. Gammie said that he was hoping that the Town Council might be able to help find an alternative site for the fairground.
- Hilary Gladding and David Barker, speaking on behalf of Mere Croquet Club (Minute No. 44b) said that they were keen to continue the lease on the premises at Steep Street on a year-by-year basis.
- Mr. Rodney Coward asked if there was anything the Town Council could do to persuade Wiltshire Council to cut the low branches of the beech trees along Manor Road.

**Apologies for absence** received from Cllrs. Clive Hazzard, Eric Mitchell, Raymond Hill, Roy Sims, Lesley Traves, and Philip Coward

**38. 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. R. Coward declared a personal interest in planning application 19/05541/FUL

**39. Minutes – RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019 on proposal made by Cllr. Rodney Coward, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 3.6.19

#### **40. Matters Arising**

**a) Water abstraction from Mere – response from Environment Agency (see Minute No. 31a)** – Mr. Ian Sheppard spoke with reference to the discussion on the letter from the Environment Agency last month, and confirmed that the relationship between the Mere Rivers Group and the Environment Agency has often been difficult but the Rivers Group felt that the letter they sent to the Town Council was disrespectful and almost rude and some of the facts stated were inaccurate. He said that the equipment that Wessex Water use to measure the depth and flow of the river is not sensitive enough to read low flows and it will not read trickling river flows. He did report, however, that he had held a site meeting with the Chief Executive of Wessex Water, Colin Skellett, and they walked the streams together. Mr. Skellett seemed to be very understanding of why the people of Mere are so passionate about the streams and was very supportive and has subsequently sent details of a plan for stream support trials. This will mean that Wessex Water can abstract up to their licensed limit but some of that licensed limit will be piped back into the stream where needed and when levels are low. Mr. Sheppard said that whilst this sounds good in theory, he doubted that it would have a beneficial effect on the little springs. He said that at the present time the river levels were dropping: the Ashfield was running well, the Mill Pond at Burton still had water but Wellhead is dry and Steep Street is only just flowing. The Abstraction Incentive Mechanism has now kicked in because levels are low. The Rivers Group have written letters to MP and Ministers but unfortunately they are always fed back down the line and end up with the CEO of the Environment Agency. Mr. Sheppard was thanked for this report and members acknowledged all the work being done by the Mere Rivers Group. Cllr. R. Coward said that, having walked along the river recently, it was easy to see that there has been a huge improvement in the wildlife over recent years. Cllr. Jeans raised his concern that the Environment Agency keep implying that the Shreen & Ashfield Waters are winterbournes and everyone agreed that the local knowledge was there to prove otherwise (watercress beds, mills etc.). **RESOLVED** to defer any further action until further details of the plans for stream support were known.

**b) Relocation of Public Access Defibrillator (see Minute 22b)** - The Clerk reported that the defibrillator that was in Castle Street and developed a fault has now been repaired under guarantee (with only a week left) and returned to the Town Council offices. The Town Council has agreed that it should be relocated to the old BT telephone kiosk in The Square which the Town Council adopted from BT following its decommissioning as a working telephone box. Jeans Electricals have confirmed that there is still a 'live' electrical supply to the telephone box and so we have asked BT what the procedure would be for connecting to and using the supply in order to have the defibrillator in the kiosk. BT have responded to say that they work closely with the Community Heartbeat Trust and they have given them written consent to connect defibrillators. Once the defibrillator has been installed, and provided we notify BT, they will guarantee to retain the power supply for 7 years. We would also need to sign a new revised contract, signing to confirm that the defibrillator cabinets complies to the clauses within the contract. Jeans Electricals have given us an approximate installation cost of £100 (materials and labour). The only other issue is that we really do need a new cabinet as the old one has rusted out and Community Heartbeat have a specially adapted cabinet for telephone kiosks. The quotation for this is £525. **RESOLVED** to purchase the new cabinet and proceed with the arrangements, as advised above.

#### **41. Reports & Consultations**

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report** – The Clerk reported that she had received an email from the Police Community Co-Ordinator stating that there would be drop in sessions at the Nadder Centre in Tisbury on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 9<sup>th</sup> September & 14<sup>th</sup> October. Whilst members felt that this was a positive step, they were unhappy about all the meetings being held in Tisbury and it was **RESOLVED** to write and ask if some of the sessions could be held in Mere – either at the Mere Police Station or in another available venue in Mere.

**b) County Councillor's report** – Cllr. Jeans reported on road closures. He also confirmed that the next South West Wiltshire Area Board meeting would be held in Mere and that Drug & Alcohol Abuse would be an agenda item for the meeting.

## 42. 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: 19/04804/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Proposed single dwelling on site of existing dwelling  
At: Rick Stones, Castle Hill Lane, Mere. BA12 6JB

Cllr. Ings said that he did not think the proposed dwelling was too dissimilar to the one which the Town Council had approved previously. RESOLVED to recommend approval of the application but to request that conditions are put in place to provide adequate screening and planting in order to maintain privacy of occupiers of Beechcroft. Proposal made by Cllr. Mead, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a vote of 6 for, 1 against and 1 abstention. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr Jeans abstained from discussion or voting)

Application Ref: 19/05076/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Extension and alterations to existing bungalow  
At: Homemere, Southbrook, Mere. BA12 6BG

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Mead and carried with a majority vote. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr Jeans abstained from discussion or voting)

Application Ref: 19/05063/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Erection of a single storey extension on the rear (north-east) elevation.  
At: 2 New Cottages, Shaftesbury Road, Mere. BA12 6BN

Cllr. Ings said that he did not think this extension would affect anyone as it was a single-storey extension and there were open fields at the rear of the property. RESOLVED to recommend approval on proposal made by Cllr. Ings, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a majority vote. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr Jeans abstained from discussion or voting)

Application Ref: 19/05329/REM  
Application for: Reserved Matters  
Proposal: Reserved matters application for 'Phase 1' of the above outline application including scale, phase specific appearance and materials, phase specific landscaping and phase specific access and parking layout.

At Land adjacent to Dead Maid Quarry Industrial Estate, Mere. BA12 6LA  
The Clerk pointed out that this application related to land that was actually within the parish boundary of Zeals.

Cllr. Jeans said that this was a welcome application as the site had been allocated for employment use for 25 years but nothing had been done to implement its use. He said that the landowners needed to understand that the outline planning permission was a gift which could be allocated elsewhere in the event that it is not be taken up within the permission period. Members felt that this would be a great opportunity for Mere and would be a good employment opportunity and it was RESOLVED to send the following submission:

The Town Council feels that this would be a great opportunity for Mere and the surrounding area and strongly supports this application. The Town Council has been waiting for 25 years to see this land developed for employment usage – since it was allocated within the old Salisbury District Local Plan. Indeed, the Town Council had been discussing whether or not we should ask for this employment allocation to be removed from the new Local Plan when it is reviewed and to consider seeking alternative employment or economic land allocations for Mere as we feel that Mere has embraced a considerable amount of housing development since that time but very little employment/economic development other than the transfer of the Hill Brush Factory.

Application Ref: 19/05541/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Single storey rear extension  
At: North Cottage, 1 Barrow Street, Mere. BA12 6AB

RESOLVED to recommend approval of this application on proposal made by Cllr. Mead, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a majority vote. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr Jeans abstained from discussion or voting)

Application Ref: 19/05141/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Construction of fishing lake, 2 holiday cabins, access track and eco toilet  
At: The Islands Carp Fishery, Cunnage Lane, Mere. BA12 6AA

Cllr. R. Coward, having declared a prejudicial interest in this planning application, left the room whilst the matter was discussed and took no part in discussion or voting. Cllr. Ings said that he thought this would be another asset for the town. The Chairman said that it is one of the best fishing lakes he has seen and they take care to maintain the footpath so he could not see why the application should not be supported.

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. Mead and carried with a majority vote of those present.

Application Ref: 19/05819/TCA  
Application for: Work to Trees in a Conservation Area  
Proposal: Horse Chestnut T1 – Fell  
At: L. C. Hill & Son, Water Street, Mere. BA12 6DZ

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Colman and carried with a majority vote in favour and 1 vote against.

Application Ref: 19/06100/FUL  
Application for: Full Planning  
Proposal: Erect single storey extension  
At: Apple Tree Cottage, North Street, Mere. BA12 6HH

The Chairman pointed out that this was not within the Conservation Area. RESOLVED to recommend approval of the application on proposal made by Cllr. Pester, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a vote of 7 for, 1 against and 1 abstention. (In order not to compromise his position as Wiltshire Councillor, Cllr Jeans abstained from discussion or voting)

Application Ref: 19/04349/LBC  
Application for: Listed Building Consent  
Proposal: Replacement door and windows (retrospective)  
At: Balcony Cottage, The Square, Mere. BA12 6DW

RESOLVED to recommend approval of the above application on proposal made by Cllr. Norris, seconded by Cllr. Ings and carried with a unanimous vote.

PLANNING APPEAL NOTIFICATION - 18/11273/FUL - 2 Duchy Cottages, North Road, Mere - Planning Inspectorate APP/Y3940/D/19/3226621

The Clerk informed members that the above Appeal Notification had been received and that the Inspector would receive the Town Council's previous comments in relation to this planning application. However, as it was a Householder Appeal there was no opportunity to submit further comments.

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

**a) Application to move Footpath MERE 26 at Charnage Farm, Mere** – The Chairman reported that the Town Council had received notification of an application to move footpath MERE 26 at Charnage Farm – the applicant had applied for the change to move the footpath from the private garden of a cottage giving two options – Option A is to extinguish the route of the path through the garden and the alternative being to use the existing footpaths in the area and Option B is to move the path to a new route north through the field and then across the northern end of the outdoor horse arena. This will be accessed via two pedestrian gates at either side of the horse arena, the path would have a width of 2m and be fenced within the horse arena to minimise the public contact with horses. A small gap would be required in the fence within the horse arena to allow the opening of a field gate. Wiltshire Council were asking for the Town Council's observations regarding the proposals and which option would be preferable.

RESOLVED to recommend approval of Option B the diversion of Mere 26 as shown on the plan dated 19.6.19 on condition that this is an official Right of Way diversion and not a permission path. Proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Symonds and carried with a unanimous vote. The Clerk was also asked to point out that if this option is approved, the Town Council would like a signpost erected where the right of way leaves the hard surfaced road.

**b) Notice of temporary road closures for Mere Carnival, 14.9.19** – noted.

**c) Notice of temporary road closures of B3095 (Part) Gillingham Road and B3092 (Part, Mere/Zeals/Stourton/Maiden Bradley – 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July (weekdays only) between the hours of 09.00 and 15.00** - noted

**d) Notice of temporary road closure of Manor Road (from its junction with North Street to its junction with Castle Hill Lane) to enable Wessex Water to repair damaged pipework on 12<sup>th</sup> August until 16<sup>th</sup> August 2019** – Cllr. R. Coward said that he thought this would cause problems as it is in the middle of harvest time and the harvest vehicles cannot be diverted along North Road. Cllr. Jeans said that he would give the farmers the contact details for the contractors so that they could make arrangements for the harvest vehicles.

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

**a) Damage to fences at Duchy Grounds/MUGA caused by fallen branch of beech tree and quotation for repair** – the Clerk informed members that the recent high winds had taken out a large branch of a tree on the southern boundary of the Recreation Ground and this had fallen across the fencing of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in Duchy Manor. Unfortunately, this was not covered by the Town Council's insurance as the Town Council had not elected to cover walls and fences. The Clerk had asked three companies for quotations but only one had responded and that was Fencewize at a cost of £880 + VAT. RESOLVED to proceed with the work on the basis outlined above.

**b) For the Town Council to consider granting an extension to the lease for Mere Croquet & Boule Club** – The Clerk confirmed that the Croquet Club had held its open day in June and had a good turnout, recruiting some new members and was optimistic for the next year at least. The proposal therefore was to ask the Council to consider granting an extension of the lease for at least one more year to cover the 2020 season. Hopefully, this extension would not involve significant legal costs to the club. The Clerk had sought advice from the solicitor and confirmed that it would be more cost effective to offer a longer lease with a reasonable termination clause than it would to incur solicitors charges to extend the lease year-on-year. The Council's solicitor had said that she could do a lease for 6 years and 364 days (so it will not have to be registered at the Land Registry) and put in a break clause so that, for example, after 12 months (say) the tenant can give 6 months (say) notice to vacate. The solicitor said that she would put a ceiling of £500

(plus VAT) on her costs and if it looked like much more work would be required, she would come back to us before incurring more costs. Cllr. Jeans said that the Town Council supports sport in the town and whilst the lease extension will cost us money, he pointed out that the club is self-financing and covers its own expenses. **RESOLVED** that the lease should be extended for a further 6 year and 364 day period with a break clause after a year on proposal made by Cllr. R. Coward, seconded by Cllr. Colman and carried with a unanimous vote.

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

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

**b) Quotations for Legionella Risk assessments** - deferred

**c) Report on Mere Town Council's grant application to SWW Area Board for fingerpost signs** – the Clerk reported that the Town Council had been successful and had received £400 in grant funding to build and install a new fingerpost sign at Swainsford.

#### **46. General Items & Consultations/Briefing Notes**

**a) Help requested by Mere Carnival Committee in seeking suitable location for fairground** – Mr. John Gammie explained that he had written to the owner of the field on the corner of Castle Street/Gillingham Road but had received no response from them. He had, though, discovered that the current tenants of the field had been asked to be ready to receive a month's notice at any time and had been asked to tell Mere Carnival that they couldn't use the field. Therefore, the Carnival Committee were faced with a dilemma of where the fairground could go and they had wondered about using the field at the end of Angel Lane. Cllr. Norris said that he thought the large vehicles would knock out all the kerbs along Angel Lane & Cllr. Pester said that he thought it would be quite a struggle for any articulated lorries to get through the narrow part of Angel Lane. Cllr. Mead suggested the Recreation Ground but it was felt that the Queens Road entrance would be too restrictive. Cllr. R. Coward suggested that the car park might be a suitable location to consider. Cllr. Jeans said that the fairground people have always had a policy of putting right any damage that they do and he confirmed that Mr. Mason had indicated his agreement to have the fairground in the field at the bottom of Angel Lane. Cllr. Mead asked about having it in Manor Road but Cllr. R. Coward said that he wouldn't want to encourage it as the field has been used to grow corn and there is no turf on there to act as a protective layer and therefore if it rains that week everyone would be knee deep in mud. He said that they would also need to get the field planted by the end of September. Agreed that Carnival Committee should invite Mr. Cole to come to Mere to view sites and assess whether or not any would be suitable or accessible.

**\*b) SWW Area Board – setting local community priorities (see email from Karen Linaker 5.6.19)** – the Clerk said that she had been asked by the Area Board Manager to respond to the setting of local priorities and had responded as follows: *“If you want my own comments as Town Clerk – I would suggest that the priorities in Mere are, at the present time, drug usage amongst teenagers and young people. The Town Council is frequently coming across evidence of drug use in public places – our sports grounds, recreation grounds and play areas – with drug paraphernalia being left behind by young people. Also, members of the public are frequently contacting me to inform me about young teenagers collecting drugs from flashy cars in and around the town. Obviously, I have reported this to the local police but I would say that it is a worry to a lot of local people. Highway safety and infrastructure is also another obvious concern to people in Mere and something that I, and the Town Council, are often receiving complaints about. Particularly, badly designed junctions or mini-roundabouts, and on-street parking which causes difficulties for access by emergency vehicles.”* Members were happy to concur with the Clerk's response, agreeing that Alcohol and Drug Misuse was the highest priority.

#### **47. Briefing Notes:**

**Councillors Briefing Note No. 19-017 The Launch of the Salisbury Central Area Framework** – members noted the information and commented that better transport connections between Mere and Salisbury would encourage more people into the City.

#### **48. Forthcoming meetings/events**

- Wiltshire Neighbourhood Watch AGM – Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> July from 10.30 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. in The Bay Window Room at Wiltshire Police Headquarters, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
- South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting – Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 6.30 p.m. in The Grove Building, Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS – The Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Hazzard would be attending this event.
- The Chairman or a representative from your parish council is invited to attend a presentation by Sara Froud, North Dorset Locality Manager, on the options for beds at Westminster Memorial Hospital. The meeting will be held in the Jubilee Room at Gillingham Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham SP8 4QR, on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July commencing at 7.30pm. – Cllr. Norris said that he was hoping to attend this meeting.
- Planning Workshops 2019 – AONB is organising planning workshops for parish & town councillors and their officers, community & volunteer organisations and local residents to help understand the planning system in an AONB. Workshops on 3.9.19 between 9.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. at Dinton Village Hall or 10.9.19 between 9.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. at Sixpenny Handley Village Hall. Costs £48 /delegate (including VAT) – Cllr. Jeans confirmed that he would be attending this event.

**49. Future agenda items** – None requested

**Date of next meeting** – The Clerk pointed out that the next scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019 although it may be necessary to hold an extra meeting some time during August, depending on the number of planning applications received and consultation deadlines and any other issues that may arise needing an urgent Council decision.

*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 9.16 p.m.

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**Addendum – Minute No. 40a)**

Dear Mr Sheppard

I promised you an update following our meeting on 30 May.

Let me start by confirming our commitment to supporting flows in the Shreen and Ashfield streams through the village. Although the Abstraction Incentive Mechanism has made a substantial improvement, it clearly has not fully resolved the problem so we are keen to work with yourselves and the Environment Agency to find a permanent long-term solution.

Following discussions with our team, it seems that some form of stream support will provide the best solution, but to test its effectiveness we will need to undertake trials involving overland temporary pipework. We will design a stream support trial for Ashfield during this autumn and also explore options for

the Shreen. When we met, we discussed the potential for recirculation of stream flow on the Shreen, and we have since uncovered one design drawing from the early 1970's for such a scheme, but we have not found any confirmation that this was implemented. Recirculation does have its merits so we will include this in our options for further consideration.

Our proposed schedule for undertaking the trials and associated work is set out in the table below.

Time	Monitoring	AIM	Activities
Summer 2019	Weekly monitoring of flows and regular quarterly updates to MRG	To be applied, triggered by stream flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete analysis of 2018 trial</li> <li>Investigate recirculation as a mitigation option</li> </ul>
Autumn 2019			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design Ashfield stream support trial</li> <li>Explore stream support and recirculation options for Shreen</li> </ul>
Winter 2019/20			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation with MRG on 2018 and 2019 trial findings, and stream support trial proposals</li> <li>Obtain permissions for trial from EA and relevant landowners</li> <li>MRG to obtain local buy in for trials</li> </ul>
Spring 2020			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If permissions granted install trial pipeline etc.</li> <li>Undertake stream support trials</li> </ul>
Summer 2020			
Autumn 2020			
Winter 2020/21			

We will require Environment Agency approval for the trials and we would also like your group's support in helping achieve permissions for routing the temporary pipework.

Our team will maintain contact with flow updates and arrange a meeting towards the end of the year to discuss the results so far and the proposals for 2020.

Hope that's helpful.

Yours sincerely

Colin Skellett

Group Chief Executive