

Mere Town Council

TOWN CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Covid-19 Response & Strategy

Following Government Advice the Town Council took the decision to take the following measures to help prevent the further spread of the Covid-19 virus and to mitigate the risk to our staff and visitors.

The Town Council office will be closed for personal callers until further notice. We aim to keep a presence in the office and can be contacted by telephone on 01747 860701 or email lindseywood@merewilts.org. We also have intercom between the office and the outside entrance to the building

All fenced and gated play areas with play equipment in are closed and locked. The Skate Park is closed and the Multi Use Games Area is closed and locked. The Recreation Grounds and open green spaces will remain open.

The Andy Young Pavilion and Duchy Manor Changing Rooms will be closed.

The Public Toilets in Salisbury Street Car Park will be closed.

Mere Cemetery will remain open unless we receive guidance that it should close.

All allotment sites will remain open unless we receive guidance that they should close.

Our grounds team will continue with litter collection, street cleansing, grass cutting and grounds maintenance but it will be a reduced service as we need to take measures and risk assessments to ensure that this work can be carried out within government guidelines.

This is an unprecedented time but the health and safety of our staff, councillors and the community is our priority. The council is concentrating resources to make sure vital services are maintained and concentrating efforts to support the community during this difficult time.

There will be no Town Council meetings until further notice. Members of the Town Council have agreed to suspend Standing Orders and introduce Delegated Powers to ensure the day-to-day running of the Town Council and our services, albeit reduced services. The delegation will be made by the Clerk, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr. Jordan (as past Chairman). If there are any decisions that need to be made by the Town Council as a whole, then these will be done via email with written records kept of opinions, comments and decisions. A monthly report will be published on the website and sent out to councillors giving details of decisions that has been made and work that has been carried out by the Council.

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT – 6th APRIL 2020

1a) To approve Draft Minutes of Town Council meeting held on Monday, 2nd March 2020 - Draft Minutes approved.

2) Matters Arising:

a) VE Day Celebrations - The Clerk reported that the national commemorations to mark VE Day 75 on 8 May are being scaled back and the government is working on new plans to ensure the nation can still thank the Second World War generation on VE Day in May and provide the fitting tribute they deserve. Local councils are instead being encouraged to support local digital solutions for celebrations. Once this immediate crisis abates, communities may also be encouraged to turn their attention to planning for VJ day on 15 August

b) Water bottle refilling station – it was agreed to defer this matter until the Town Council is able to meet again.

c) Review & assess the effectiveness of internal control measures – the Clerk raised concerns that if this is not carried out then the Chairman will not be able to tick the relevant box on the Annual Return. However, she was also aware that NALC and SLCC were in talks with the Government about extending the deadline for the Annual Return. It was agreed that the Clerk should explore whether the Review and assessment of the effectiveness of internal control measures could be carried out remotely, via email.

d) The Great British Spring Clean – The Great British Spring Clean has also decided to postpone its annual event and relaunch later in the year, with the postponed campaign hoping to take place between 11 and 27 September 2020

3) Mere's Local Resilience Forum & Community Support Group

The Clerk reported: "I am proud to say that Mere acted relatively quickly in the response for community support during this Covid-19 crisis situation. Mere Town Council and the Mere Resilience Forum worked together, liaising with the local Doctors surgery, pharmacy, businesses, foodbanks and other local organisations to establish a team of telephone coordinators and an army of volunteers headed by Mr. Richard Jefferies who is the Local Resilience Coordinator. The Mere Community Support Group is now up and running and working very successfully – all the details are in this month's Mere Matters which has become a Covid-19 Edition. (Details are also on the Mere website). Amazingly, volunteers managed to deliver a copy of the magazine to every household in Mere and so there should not be any residents without access to help or support. We have two foodbanks in Mere which are proving invaluable and gaining much support. We estimate that we have about 150 volunteers helping in the community. Wiltshire Council has set up a wellbeing hub to support vulnerable people and is signposting parishioners to us for support and vice versa: If it turns out that the support they need is beyond our remit, i.e. social services – then we will pass them on to the Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub or ask the Wiltshire Hub to contact them direct. Wiltshire Council have compiled a directory of local community groups and an online map showing what groups are available and where. Our support network is constantly being reviewed with feedback from volunteers, businesses and recipients being key to improving how we can offer assistance – indeed the volunteers who are carrying out practical tasks have just been issued with ID lanyards to enable them to provide a better shopping service and the Town Council has just ordered Hi-Vis jackets for the volunteers to wear. Richard has also set up a new 'Listening Service' where volunteers have signed up to support those who feel lonely and anxious or unnerved by what is happening. We are confident that we are making a real difference and many recipients have been humbled by the assistance given to them. There are numerous comments on Facebook from residents who are saying how lucky and proud they are to live in Mere and I have also received emails and seen a number of comments from people living far away who have relatives in Mere saying how wonderful it is to know that their relatives are being looked after by the community."

4) Planning Applications

Application Ref: 20/01376/FUL

Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Proposed erection of a single storey garden room to rear
At: Tithings, Castle Street, Mere. BA12 6JQ

Delegated decision – No objection

Application Ref: 20/02088/LBC
Application for: Listed Building Consent
Proposal: Proposed erection of a single storey garden room to the rear
At: Tithings, Castle Street, Mere. BA12 6JQ

Delegated decision – No objection

Application Ref: 20/01653/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Demolition of rear single-storey extension and detached garage. Erection of single-storey extension with garage.
At: Conifers, Woodlands Road, Mere. BA12 6BY

Delegated decision – No objection

Application | Ref: 20/01783/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Single storey rear extension & first floor side extension.
At: 2 Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS

Delegated decision – No objection

Application Ref: 20/01945/LBC
Application for: Listed Building Consent
Proposal: Replace 16 no. single glazed timber windows with new double glazed timber windows
At: Barrow Street Farm, Barrow Street, Mere. BA12 6AB

Delegated decision – No objection

Application Ref: 20/02642/TCA
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: T1 – Magnolia tree – reduce canopy by up to 3m & thin 15%
T2 – Liquid Amber tree – canopy reduction by up to 4m & shape
T3 – Yew tree – reduce canopy by up to 2m – 3m & clean canopy by up to 10-15%
G1 – Crack Willow Trees – pollard to 10m – 12m
At: The Chantry, Church Street, Mere. BA12 6DS

Delegated decision – No objection

5. Finance, Policy & Resources

- a) **Payments**- The Clerk pointed out that the payment schedule is split into two parts to help with year-end accounting. Please note that all rates bills are in line with what we expected (all slightly higher than previous year)

Delegated decision - The payment schedule attached was approved and the Clerk authorised to make electronic payments

COUNCILLORS' REMOTE DECISION REPORT – 16th April 2020

Application Ref: 20/01804/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Proposed refurbishment of existing dwelling including removal of existing roof keeping the existing first floor structure, new half storey over and new roof.
At: Rick Stones, Castle Hill Lane, Mere. BA12 6JB

COUNCILLORS DECISION - SUPPORT

10 Town Councillors have submitted comments: 6 Support, 3 object and 1 abstained.
A full summary of councillors' comments is available upon request.

Application Ref: 20/01093/FUL
Application for: Full Planning
Proposal: Carport and new vehicular access
At: Talbot Cottage, Hazzards Hill, Mere. BA12 6ES

COUNCILLORS DECISION - SUPPORT

1 Town Councillor has declared an interest and declined to vote or comment. 9 Town Councillors have submitted comments: 6 Support, 2 object and 1 abstained.
A full summary of councillors' comments is available upon request.
