

# Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010 at 7.30 p.m. in The Andy Young Pavilion, Springfield Road, Mere.

**Present:** Councillors: E. Mitchell (Chairman), M. Hall (Vice-Chairman), P. Coward, R. Hill (from 7.45 p.m.), R. Hughes, G. Jeans (from 7.50 p.m.), D. Sealy, R. Sims, S. Squires & Mrs. M. White.

Also P. C. Richard Salter and Sgt. Ashley

## **The Chairman convened the meeting at 7.30 p.m. with the Public Session**

Mrs. White pointed out that she had recently discovered that the information point in the library is now only open two days a week and said that the library supervisor had now taken on the task of selling tickets for local events in order to help the people of Mere and to help maintain the opening hours of the library. Cllr. Mrs. White said that when the old Information Point and Tourist Information office was moved into the library the Parish Council was assured that it would be fully staffed during library opening hours.

Mrs. White said that she had passed the Film Show accounts to the Clerk but wished to inform the Council that they would not be distributing funds this year because the balance of funds at just over £400 was too small and it would be better to hold this over for a further year.

Mr. Sims informed members that the Sowing Seeds Group would be meeting this Thursday at Riversmeet and that they had £2.58 million to spend over the next 3 years.

**Apologies for absence** were received from Councillors C. Hazzard and Mrs. Traves.

## **453. To receive Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Jeans declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 455 g) Xmas Lights. He left the room whilst this matter was discussed.

**454. Minutes** – Cllr. Mrs. White proposed that the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010 be approved as a correct record of proceedings. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of those present on 6.9.10.

## **455. Matters Arising**

**a) Neighbourhood Policing Report** – P. C. Richard Salter introduced Sgt. Ashley and thanked the Parish Council for supporting Mere Carnival. P. C. Salter said that the carnival went off spectacularly well and this was all down to the hard work and organisational efforts of the committee members and helpers.

The Mere police had seized half a dozen cannabis plants from Mere which had now been destroyed. Cllr. Coward asked if the police felt that there was a significant drug problem amongst young people in Mere and P. C. Salter replied that it was no better or worse than any other town of a similar size. P. C. Salter reported that on 29<sup>th</sup> September a series of cars were damaged in Manor Road and it is thought that the offenders might have caused the damage deliberately. There has also been a series of outbuilding burglaries, most of them have been around East Knoyle and have involved the theft of petrol driven machinery. The neighbourhood policing team will be carrying out rural patrols.

**b) Wiltshire Councillors Report** – Cllr. Jeans told members that he had been informed that the Customer Services provision at the Mere Information Centre had been cut to two days a week due to a lack of

customer enquiries. He said that he was previously told that any reduction in services would be a subject of consultation at Area Board level but this had not happened. There followed a long discussion about a reduction in services, including the Tourist Information Service and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to Wiltshire Council to ask for clarification and seek further information on the future service provision at Mere Information Centre.

**c) Report from Community Safety Representative** – Cllr. Sims reported that there had been a theft of catalytic converters which had been removed from vehicles in F. J. Chalke's Forecourt. He also reported on a recent local scam where a pair of people had been posing as representatives of Age Concern and asking to check windows of elderly residents.

**d) Report from Transport Representative** – Cllr. Sims reported that the Connect2 service was taking around 35 – 40 passengers per day + school children. He did state, however, that there may be concerns over future funding for this service.

**e) Community First Responders** – with reference to last month's Council discussion, the Clerk informed members that she had written to the Mere Fire Station Watch Manager, Richard Pester, who said that he had made enquiries within the Fire Service and had been informed that any Community First Responder scheme would be an addition to what is already in place, i.e. the retained fire fighters responding to medical emergencies. Therefore, the Community Responder would be backing up the fire service personnel until the ambulance arrived. The Clerk had also enquired with the Mere Surgery but had received no response. The Clerk also informed members that a Community First Responder Roadshow would be taking place in Mere Lecture Hall on 9<sup>th</sup> October where it was aimed to raise awareness of the scheme and to recruit some volunteers to train as CFR's.

**f) Public Access Defibrillator** – Cllr. Jeans said that he felt very strongly that Mere ought to apply for three of these: one for the Duchy Manor site, one for Castle Street and one for Walnut Road/Clements Lane/Southbrook. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should register an interest for three units and make further investigations relating to costings/funding.

**g) Xmas Lights** – The Chairman explained that he was in favour of the Council erecting low-voltage lights on the existing tree in the island in The Square and said that this would be better from a Health & Safety point of view and would also save a lot of expense as he could not see how the Parish Council could justify the current level of expense at the present time. Cllr. Philip Coward agreed and said that the costs would be absolutely horrendous if all the people involved submitted invoices for their time and equipment. Cllr. R. Coward said that he felt a proper Xmas tree was essential and that a lot of people would be very disappointed. Cllr. Hughes pointed out that whatever tree the Council used, the lights would need to be changed for health & safety reasons or a barrier would need to be erected around the tree. Cllr. Hall proposed that the Parish Council should proceed with the Chairman's suggestion of erecting low-voltage lighting on the existing tree if we are allowed to do so by the Highway Authority.

Proposal seconded by Cllr. S. Squires and carried with a vote of 7 for, 1 against and 2 abstentions. Cllr. P. Coward said that he was prepared to loan the use of the Brush Company's cherry picker to erect the lights on the existing tree. It was further agreed to erect clear light bulbs on the Clock Tower as in previous years. Cllr. Jeans, having declared a prejudicial interest, left the room whilst the above matter was discussed.

#### **456. Highways, Transport, Rivers & Footpaths**

**a) Parish Steward** – the Clerk was asked to pass on the following job requests to the Parish Steward:

- pothole in Salisbury Street Car Park, near doctors surgery
- strim weeds obstructing footpath at the end of Mill Lane
- spray weeds around car park in Castle Street

- sunken drain outside Dewes House

**b) Local Transport Plan – report of meeting with South West Wiltshire Community Areas Transport Group and Local Transport Plan Workshop** – review of scheme requests in Mere and selection of schemes – the Clerk informed members that she had attended a meeting in Tisbury where it had been agreed that, of the five schemes submitted for Mere, three should be put forward for further investigation. The three being:

- footpath for The Lynch
- short length of double-yellow lines to create passing place outside Lecture Hall in Salisbury Street
- disabled parking space for Mere Town centre.

#### 457. Finance, Policy & Resources

**a) Payments** – Cllr Mrs. White proposed that the following payments be approved. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Sims and carried with a unanimous vote of approval:

Mere School	Gas – Changing Rooms – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	44.40
Mere School	Electricity – Changing Rooms – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	62.89
Mere School	Water – AYP – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	262.52
Mere School	Water – Cricket Wicket – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	91.88
Mere School	Water – Changing Rooms – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	28.13
Mere School	Water – Swimming Pool – 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	420.03
Mere School	Electricity – Swimming Pool = 9.6.10 – 13.9.10	251.57
Sydenhams	Acrylic sheet to repair vandalised noticeboard on MUGA	60.79
BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Water supply to new cemetery	26.09
BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Water supply to Wellhead allotments 19.5.10 – 14.9.10	131.41
BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Water supply to Jack Paul Close allotments 16.3.10 – 15.9.10	137.70
Cash	Reimbursement for ZoneAlarm subscription fee – 2 years (internet security)	47.62
Southern Electric	Supply to clock tower	16.85
Forge Garages	Fuel & Oil	115.01
Mazars	External audit fee for year ending 31.3.10	646.25
Imprest Account – cheque Nos. 2677 - 2682	Wages, PAYE, Pension, Petty Cash	6059.98

**b) To review Standing Orders & Financial Regulations** - deferred

**c) Maintenance of churchyard** – The Chairman reported that a member of the public has complained about the time and money that Mere Parish Council was spending on the maintenance of Mere Churchyard which was not met by annual financial contribution made by the Parochial Church Council, and had asked why, if we could maintain one church yard, we were not maintaining the others. Cllr. P. Coward explained that this was because St. Michael’s Churchyard was actually a closed churchyard and these are transferred to the local authority which would, at the time, have been Salisbury District Council. Cllr. Coward said that the Parish Council maintained the churchyard in order to keep it to a high standard as a visitor attraction as well as a community facility. Cllr. Hughes said that, as this had been brought up by a member of the public, the Parish Council must take some action. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to Wiltshire Council to see if they would make a financial contribution towards the maintenance and also to write to Parochial Church Council to ask them if they could increase their contribution.

#### **458. General Items**

**a) Wiltshire Council's Flood Awareness event** – invitation to attend event on 19<sup>th</sup> October at Salisbury City Hall from 1 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. – there were no councillors available to attend the event.

**b) Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Ltd Annual General Meeting 2010** – Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00 p.m. in Devizes – there were no councillors available to attend the event.

**c) Parish Councillor Casual Vacancy** – the Chairman informed members that Cllr. Martin Peirce had resigned due to his increasing work commitments. The Clerk confirmed that the Returning Officer at Wiltshire Council needed to be notified of the vacancy and a Notice of Vacancy needed to be displayed in Mere, which would inform the electorate of their rights to request an election. If ten electors requested an election, then an election would be held, otherwise the vacancy could be filled by co-option.

#### **459. Mere Peace Memorial Sports & Recreation Ground Charity**

Cllr. R. Coward proposed that the following payments should be authorised. Proposal seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried with a unanimous vote of approval.

BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Water supply to old cricket club pavilion	8.56
BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Water & sewerage service to old Rutter Pavilion	29.73

**460. Budget meeting** – it was agreed that the Annual Budget Meeting should be held on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> November with the same membership as last year.

Meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.