

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
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The Annual Parish Meeting was held at Mells Barn on Tuesday 17 May 2011 at 7.00 p.m. Edmund Costelloe was in the chair, supported by 9 members of the Council. The County Councillor, the District Councillor and five residents attended. The Clerk was in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Chairman called for nominations for chairman. It was unanimously agreed that Edmund Costelloe be re-elected chairman

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman called for nominations for vice chair. It was unanimously agreed that Ros Wallace be re-elected vice chair.

- 3. DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE** were signed by the Chairman and by the ten councillors present who had been elected without contest. It was resolved that Peter Lowth could make his declaration at the next meeting.

4. MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING OF 11 MAY 2010

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 May 2010 were approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman.

5. REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION TO EXTERNAL BODIES

Abi Blanche-Martin was re-elected as Police Community Support Officers Steering Committee representative and Steve West as Quarry Liaison Committees representative.

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Mr Peter Lowth.

7. REPORT FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Matthew Ellis reported that although Somerset County Council's Rural Services Fund had been able to make a substantial grant towards the setting up of Mells Café during the past year it had been a hard year financially for the County Council as a result of reduced income from Government and the aging population continuing to stretch the social budget. Rather than reduce care for the elderly, measures had been taken to reduce spending in the Somerset Waste Partnership. This had led to the potential closure of Coleford Recycling Centre; the SWP board

had decided to keep it open, however, with reduced hours and charges for use. Fly tipping may increase as a result of these measures; the public were urged to monitor the situation and report any instances to Mendip District Council. The situation will be monitored after six months.

8. REPORT FROM AND MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

As Cllr Ed Drewe had only just been elected as district councillor, Matthew Ellis advised that Mendip DC's budgetary constraints were slightly easier as it had no history of debt. Mr John Macdonald pointed out that Frome Library had introduced reduced hours and that no rubbish had been picked up by the Somerset Waste Partnership for a month during the snow last winter. Mr West Senior asked why only plastic bottles could be recycled. Cllr Ellis advised that it was currently uneconomic to recycle multi types of plastic but that Mendip DC was continuing to monitor the situation. Mr Macdonald reiterated his concerns at the lack of snow clearing in Frome car parks during the winter.

Cllr Ed Drewe introduced himself and offered to deal with specific problems, especially with planning issues as he had had many years' involvement in this area.

9. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER

In PCSO Yvonne Mears's absence the Clerk read her report for April.

10. REPORT FROM CHAIRMAN, BARN COMMITTEE

Mr John Earl advised that Mells Tithe Barn continued to provide a vital village facility. Although rental income is still only £430 more than in 2006 and bank interest on cash reserves had markedly reduced, hire charges had been kept to 2009 levels in order to assist villagers in the current economic climate.

Planning consent had finally been approved for the replacement of kitchen and WC windows and will be carried out shortly. Applications for funding had been made to local bodies. Problems with roof tiling would have to be addressed during 2011.

Mells Barn continues to be regularly used by a number of local clubs and for numerous family celebrations.

The Parish Council asked Mr Earl to convey its thanks to the Barn Committee for their work during the year.

11. RECREATION GROUND REPORT

The Chairman reported on behalf of Mells Sports & Recreation Company Limited, which is about to hold its first board meeting. Major progress is expected in the next month or two. By taking over the lease this umbrella company will give the Supporters Club members some legal protection.

The Vice Chair acknowledged the hard work the Chairman has put in on this matter over the past two years.

12. SPEEDWATCH REPORT

In the absence of David Thomson, SpeedWatch Co-ordinator, the Clerk reported that more volunteers were needed in order to carry out trials. Mr Thomson was willing to test the speed of motorists passing the Shop if volunteers came forward to assist.

13. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON CURRENT YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

The Chairman noted that key events this year for Mells were the passing of Lord Oxford and the construction and opening of Mells Café.

As well as its normal duties the Parish Council had purchased new grit bins, started the process for the renewal of White Bridge, set up the new company for the administration of the Recreation Ground and sent its minute books to Taunton for safe-keeping, as well as maintaining the precept at the same level for the third year running. One planning matter had caused particular concern and this was being pursued at a higher level.

The Chairman thanked the Vice Chair, all councillors and the Clerk for their work during the year. The Vice Chair thanked the Chairman for all his work and added her thanks to Mr Bobby Hanscomb for his work on Mells Village Shop and Café through the year.

14. PARISH DISCUSSION FORUM

Mr West Senior was concerned about visibility near the bridge in Lower Vobster. Laurel bushes were protruding into the road and forcing vehicles into the middle of the road. Repairs to the bridge had cracked in the winter cold. Mr West's garden wall had been knocked down by HGVs again; this was due to confusing and inconsistent signage in spite of a 20' mandatory restriction being confirmed by SCC but never enforced. Clerk to contact Leigh-on-Mendip Council as confusing signs began at Soho Cross.

Mr John Macdonald advised that a number of people had expressed concern that increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic outside the Shop, together with additional manoeuvring plus traffic speeding down Lime Kiln Hill had increased the danger of accidents. It was reported that the matter had already been raised to Somerset Roads who had repainted the white lines at Woodlands End and would improve the SLOW road markings on Lime Kiln Hill.

Mr West Junior advised that trees growing into the road between Lower Vobster and Coleford were forcing vehicles over the central white line while negotiating the corner at St Edmund's Court. Clerk to report.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55 p.m.