

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
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A meeting of Mells Parish Council took place on Tuesday 2 March 2010 at Mells Barn.

- 1. PRESENT:** Lady Asquith, Ms Abi Blanche-Martin, Mr E Costelloe (Chairman), Mrs M Jennings, Mrs J Mann, Lord Oxford, Mr V Turner, Mr C Tye, Mr S West and Miss H Wynter.

The County/District Councillor attended. The Clerk was in attendance.

- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Ms R Wallace (Vice Chair).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were declared on behalf of Clare Asquith and Lord Oxford for item 10.

- 4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 10 January 2010 had been circulated. It was resolved that the minutes be adopted. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

5. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

The County Council had kept council tax to last year's level with most streamlining taking place at County Hall so parish services should remain at a similar standard. Members of the public are encouraged to ring up to report potholes as this forces action even if holes are not deemed deep enough for repair. Cllr Ellis will pass on to the portfolio member concerned the complaints of parish councillors about the recent poor quality of pothole filling.

Cllr Ellis will be taking the new chief executive on a tour of the area to appraise her of local issues.

Mendip District Council has increased council tax by 1.3% (about 5p per household per week for Band D) specifically to provide a district wide house to house collection of cardboard and plastic to commence in the autumn.

6. MATTERS ARISING

- a) **Parish Warden Steering Committee:** Abi Blanche-Martin reported that Yvonne Mears is currently the sole PCSO in the area and is operating without a beat manager. There has been a spate of opportunist thefts of cars left open with engines running in the cold weather. Large 30mph stickers are available for wheelie bins to act as a reminder to motorists on bin emptying days. Clerk to obtain and advertise in Parish Magazine.

All local villages are now SpeedWatch trained. A traffic unit will come out to help with SpeedWatch with 2 weeks' notice. Clerk to ask for volunteers for SpeedWatch in Parish Magazine.

- b) **Quarry Liaison Committee:** Steve West advised that a meeting of the Halecombe Local Liaison Group would be held on 18 March.

- c) **White Bridge improvements:** Jane Mann reported that suggested designs for a new bridge would be produced following a forthcoming meeting between John Mann and Raymond Asquith.
- d) **Erosion of footpath from Top Lane to White Bridge:** Chris Tye had obtained one quotation and was contacting other firms.
- e) **Warning signs at Woodlands End/Great Elm finger post:** The Chairman and Chris Tye had had a meeting with Jeff Bunting who had proposed putting the fingerpost on a widened verge outside the boundary of The Pound. He would inform the Chairman of the date of a visit by a road safety expert to assess the hazards at this junction at a busy time.
- f) **War Memorial plinth:** Humberts had confirmed that the War Memorial was still in the ownership of Mells Estate. Clare Asquith would ask Humberts to obtain the necessary permissions and estimates.
- g) **Gritting salt:** The Chairman had contacted Jeff Bunting to confirm that the County Council will provide grit for a bin supplied by the Parish.
- h) **Large scale maps for councillors:** Clerk had made enquiries and was awaiting a reply from the relevant department at Mendip DC.

7. PLANNING

- a) **Single storey rear extension (excluding raised timber decking), 3 Egypt Cottages, Top Lane, Mells:** application for lawful proposed development confirmed.
- b) **Proposed re-pollarding of Sycamore trees in a Conservation Area, Rossendale, Top Lane, Mells:** Parish Council recommended approval.
- c) **Erection of buildings and installation of gasifier and electricity generation plant, Buckland Down:** The Chairman reported that as this was an application to burn wood chip on a commercial basis for the generation of electricity on a site with established planning permission for a small power station it was likely to receive approval. The Chairman to write asking for the site to be screened from the direction of Mells and for traffic to be directed away from Mells.
- d) **Proposed pruning of a Silver Birch and a Copper Beech in a Conservation Area, Rashwood Lodge, Mells:** Parish Council recommended approval

8. LETTERS FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL None

9. LETTERS FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

- a) Maintenance of the public rights of way network, currently delegated to Mendip District Council, will be centrally managed by Somerset County Council from 1 April 2010. This should produce no adverse effect on the level of service provision.

10. LETTERS AND REPORTS

- a) Frome Running Club requested permission to hold their annual race *The Mells Scenic 7* on Sunday 26 September 2010. Permission was granted.

11. RECREATION GROUND

- a) The Chairman reported that Mr Tiff Pike had formally agreed to become a director and company secretary of the new company. Dr Piers Jennings had also agreed to serve as a director. The Chairman would be actioning all the necessary legal work in conjunction with the solicitors and Mells Estate and would be putting together a pack of the relevant documents

for the directors. The Recreational Supporters Club had suggested various items for inclusion in the constitution of the new company; it would be sensible for the Parish Council to reserve the right to nominate a director.

12. DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

- a) It was resolved to make a grant of £100 to Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau
- b) It was resolved to make a grant of £50 to Age Concern Frome
- c) It was agreed that St Margaret's Hospice, Yeovil was too far away to be of direct benefit to many residents of Mells.

13. ACCOUNTS

- a) JK Costelloe
Clerk's salary – December (paid by standing order) £ 259.20
January (paid by standing order) £ 259.20

14. RECEIPTS None

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Chris Tye reported that the stonework seat in the Lutyens shelter at Woodlands End was eroding badly. Clare Asquith would pass this onto the Estate.
- b) Mells Village Shop Management Team requested that the rubbish bin outside the Shop be moved one foot to the left. Clerk to action.
- c) Vince Turned advised that Hanson plc has been contacted about the slipping tiles on the barn roof of Mells Green Farm and are arranging for quotations.
- d) Monica Jennings was retiring as a Parish Council nominated trustee of the Mells and Vobster Community Trust in May 2010. The Clerk to approach suggested replacements.
- e) Helen Wynter reported that unsightly timber had been dumped above the river near the almshouses. Clerk to contact the quarry.
- f) Monica Jennings reported that an incomplete pig's carcass had been dumped on Conduit Road. Clerk to action.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 6 April 2010 7.15 p.m. Mells Barn.

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