

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
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A meeting of Mells Parish Council took place on Tuesday 5 April 2011 at Mells Barn.

1. **PRESENT:** Countess of Oxford & Asquith, Mr E Costelloe (Chairman), Mrs M Jennings, Mrs J Mann, Mr C Tye, Ms R Wallace (Vice Chair), Mr S West and Miss H Wynter.

The Clerk was in attendance. PCSO Yvonne Mears was also present.

2. **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE:** received from Ms Abi Blanche-Martin.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Clare Oxford declared an interest in Items 5(d) & (e) and 10.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 8 March 2011 had been circulated. It was resolved that the minutes be adopted. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- a) **Police Community Support Officers' Steering Committee:** PCSO Yvonne Mears reported on the sudden rise in non-dwelling burglaries in Mells , particularly at Woodlands End Barns, and in domestic sheds. Increased patrols had been arranged and residents were advised to look up valuables in sheds.
- b) **Quarry Liaison Committee:** Steve West advised that Halecombe Quarry would be applying for permission to put in a balancing lake feeding into Mells Stream. Continuity of water might be an issue.
- c) **Signposts at Woodlands End:** The new signs at Woodlands End would be ordered early in the new financial year. It was agreed to ask for the finger post currently in the garden of The Pound to be relocated at the triangle at the top of Lime Kiln Hill with directions to Mells and Coleford/Vobster.
- d) **Feasibility of footpath across Mells Green:** Clare Oxford reported that Christopher Jerram had inspected the proposed site and was to contact both the quarry representative and Becky Askew.
- e) **White Bridge improvements:**
- i) Missing corner connection reported.
 - ii) Mells & Vobster Community Trust had pledged £5,000 towards the bridge's replacement, subject to the work being completed to coincide with the Diamond Jubilee.
 - iii) Mendip Community Support to supply funding advice.
 - iv) Friends of River Frome to view plans in May.
 - v) The Rights of Way Warden (Bridges), Somerset CC, visited the site with Jane Mann and Clerk. Following her inspection of White Bridge she advised that the steel beams were corroding and that repairs would be required soon. Somerset CC offered its support and will grant £4,000 in April 2012 with certain conditions.
 - vi) Clerk has applied to the Waterways Trust for a Wildlife Grant for funding to thin the woodland on river bank, re-landscape and provide benches.

- f) **Travellers site at Coleford:** Cllr Matthew Ellis is aware of the potential problem and will lobby on the Parish's behalf.
- g) **Mells Park trees opposite Halecombe Quarry entrance:** Mells Park agent had confirmed that trees in question are responsibility of Somerset CC. Clerk to action.
- h) **Availability of footpath grant:** Somerset CC is considering our request.

6. PLANNING

- a) **Proposed felling of trees in a conservation area, The Old Forge, Little Green, Mells:** No objections from Mendip DC.
- b) The Chairman advised parish councillors that a letter had been distributed round Mells concerning possible future house building in the village. The large number of houses mentioned in the letter had led to concerns from residents about the value of their properties. The Chairman explained that the matter had been misunderstood, that the total number of new houses designated for Mells in Mendip's current Plan is 5 and in the revised Plan, 10. Such houses would only be built if land became available and if a developer were to be interested.

7. LETTERS FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) **Re update from Chief Executive, Somerset CC:** Noted.
- b) **Re the Chief Executive, Somerset CC's plans to join forces with Devon CC to bid for government funding to bring superfast broadband speeds to the area:** the Chairman would complete the survey, giving the Council's support and seek further support from business people in Mells and Vobster.
- c) **Re notification of committee date for erection of building and installation of gasifier & electricity generation plant, Buckland Down:** noted.

8. LETTERS FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL: None

9. LETTERS AND REPORTS

- a) **Re Somerset Waste Partnership new recycling charges and opening times:** noted.
- b) **Re Somerset Art Works Annual Review and request for grant for access to arts activities for disadvantaged groups:** it was agreed to give a grant of £30 to Somerset Art Works.

Clare Oxford left the meeting at this point.

10. RECREATION GROUND

- a) The Chairman advised that the assignment of the lease to the new company was in hand.

11. ELECTION

- a) The deadline for delivery of nomination papers had been noon on 4 April.. Publication of statement of persons nominated would take place at noon on 6 April and the deadline for withdrawals of candidature was noon on 7 April.

12. INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

- a) The Parish Council reviewed the effectiveness of its system of internal control and found it adequate for its purpose.

- b) It was agreed to adopt the revised Internal Instructions omitting a specific requirement to review the effectiveness of the internal audit in compliance with new regulations effective from 31 March 2011.
- c) The Parish Council verified the continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register Receipt of annual audit papers.
- d) The Clerk advised that the Audit papers for the year to 31 March 2011 had been received.
- e) Notice of Appointment of Date for Exercise of Electors' Rights to be posted by 14 April.
- f) Annual Return to be sent to auditors by 1 June.
- g) Peter Molony had agreed to carry out the internal audit. It was agreed that the Clerk should purchase a suitable bottle for him as a gesture of thanks.

13. FINANCIAL UPDATE TO 31 MARCH 2010

- a) The Clerk circulated revised figures which were noted.

14. ACCOUNTS

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| a) SALC | | |
| | <i>(Affiliation Fee Year 2011/12)</i> | £142.52 |
| b) Age Concern, Frome | | |
| | <i>(Grant)</i> | £ 100.00 |
| c) Viscount Asquith's 1999 Settlement | | |
| | <i>(Recreation Ground Rent 25/03/11 – 23/06/11)</i> | £ 125.00 |
| d) Mells Barn Management Committee | | |
| | <i>(Hire of Barn for 2010 PC meetings)</i> | £ 200.00 |
| e) JK Costelloe | | |
| | <i>(Clerk's salary – (Feb) paid by standing order)</i> | £ 259.20 |
| | <i>- (Mar) " " " "</i> | £ 259.20 |
| | <i>(Clerk's expenses (Jan/Feb/Mar 2011))</i> | |
| | Phone calls | £ 3.57 |
| | Double ink cartridge | £39.99 |
| | Car mileage | £53.95 |
| | Stationery | £ 3.52 |
| | Postage | £ 6.34 |
| | | £ 107.37 |

15. RECEIPTS

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| a) Barclays Business Saver Account | | |
| | <i>(Interest December 2010-March 2011)</i> | £ 1.27 |
| b) Mendip District Council | | |
| | <i>(Precept 2011/20112)</i> | £9,000.00 |

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- a) Clerk to ask David McClew to cut back footpaths for £220.
- b) Mary May had resigned as Parish Footpaths Officer. Chris Tye agreed to take on the role. Mary May was thanked for her work over many years.
- c) Clerk advised that due to new Revenue & Customs regulations it was necessary for the Parish to register for PAYE.
- d) Clerk to check on progress of pothole mending.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Following Annual Parish Meeting, Tuesday 17 May, 7.00 p.m. in Mells Barn.