

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
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A meeting of Mells Parish Council took place on Tuesday 30 August 2011 at Mells Barn.

1. **PRESENT:** Ms Abi Blanche-Martin, Mr E Costelloe (Chairman), Mrs M Jennings, Mr Peter Lowth, Mrs J Mann, Mr V Turner, Ms R Wallace (Vice Chair), Mr S West and Miss H Wynter.

The Clerk was in attendance. The Somerset County Councillor and Mr John Macdonald also attended.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Mr C Tye and from the Mendip District Councillor.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Jane Mann declared an interest in Items 4(c) and 5 (c) and Clare Oxford in Items 5(c) and (g).

4. **THREAT TO DISPENSING PHARMACY AT MENDIP COUNTRY PRACTICE**

- a) The Parish Council was briefed by the Chairman on a second application to set up a new pharmacy in Coleford and expressed its concern at the negative impact either would have on Mendip Country Practice. Cllr Matthew Ellis had also sent letters objecting to these applications.

Mr John Macdonald suggested that, should one of these applications be approved, the way forward would be through the planning system with objections to increased traffic and the lack of sustainability of double driving.

The Countess of Oxford & Asquith arrived at this point.

- b) The Parish Council, with one abstention, approved letters from the Chairman to NHS Primary Care objecting to the setting up of a new pharmacy in Coleford.

5. **REPORT FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

- a) Parish councillors expressed concern about the illegal construction on the highway outside Meadowbank in Top Road. Cllr Ellis undertook to ensure that steps were taken to reverse this situation which Somerset Highways and the Mendip Enforcement Officer were already aware of.
- b) **Planning contravention at junction to Mells Down Farm:** the Chairman reported that it had now been agreed that the site belonged to the British Rail Residuary Body and that the Enforcement Officer had served a notice on them to take action. He advised that the resolution of this problem would probably be lengthy.
- c) Cllr Ellis advised that under the terms of the boundary review now in progress the boundaries of the county council seat were likely to alter.
- d) The new Localism Bill will affect how services are delivered. The planning process will give more power to parish councils and a village plan might give the Council more weight in planning applications.

Cllr Ellis and Mr Macdonald then left the meeting.

6. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 12 July 2011 had been circulated. It was resolved that the minutes be adopted. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

7. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a) **Police Community Support Officer's Steering Committee:** Abi Blanche-Martin reported on a recent meeting.
- b) **Quarry Liaison Committee:** Steve West advised that due to concerns expressed at a possible lack of water flow in Mells Stream following new quarry pumping procedures, an hydrologist had been asked to consider water levels in the area. Mr West urged members of the public who wished to report HGV vehicles contravening weight and length restrictions to make a note of number-plates and of times of day when reporting contraventions to quarry companies.
- c) **White Bridge:** The Clerk reported that John Mann expected to have final plans and a presentation ready for a public consultation on 4 October and that a notice inviting residents had been placed in the forthcoming parish magazine. The Chairman advised that *Awards for All*, to whom an application for a grant had been made, had been in touch and that a reply could be expected in the near future.
- d) **Recreation Ground/tennis courts surface:** Peter Lowth advised that growth around the tennis courts was too advanced to be sprayed now but that this could be done after growth had died back in the winter. Much work would have to be done to get the courts back into decent condition. The Chairman reported that following the forthcoming first board meeting to approve the assignment of the lease the new company would be operational.
- e) **Registration of sewerage treatment systems:** Up-to-date information from the Environment Agency stated that while the government is reviewing the registration of small sewage discharges it is not necessary to register.
- f) **Planning training session:** Monica Jennings, Chris Tye and Helen Wynter attended a recent training session organised by Mendip DC. The Chairman to let Mendip District Councillor know that the session was badly organised and generally unsatisfactory.

8. **PLANNING**

- a) **Conversion of redundant building to holiday accommodation, former telephone exchange, Vobster Cross:** Refusal of permission by MDC.
- b) **Proposed felling of trees in a conservation area, land to the rear of The Almshouses/grounds of Lavender House, Top Road, Mells:** MDC no objection.
- c) **Variation of condition 3 on planning permission to extend opening hours from 19.00 to 22.30 hours, Mells Village Shop:** MDC approval with conditions.
- d) **Demolition of existing garage and conservatory, single storey extensions and alterations to dwelling house, 1/2 St Edmunds Terrace, Upper Vobster:** Parish requested decision to be left to planning officer.

- e) **Proposed pruning of a willow tree in a Conservation Area, Bridge Cottage, Mells:** Parish recommended approval.
- f) **Proposed felling of three trees in a conservation area, Hazelwood, Top Lane, Mells:** MDC no objection.
- g) **Extensions and alterations, Great Green Cottage, Mells Green:** MDC approval with conditions.
- h) Notification of approval of details reserved by condition 3 material and 4 landscaping at Virginia Cottage, Upper Vobster.

9. LETTERS FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) **Re Chairman's Awards for Service to the Community:** Noted.

10. LETTERS FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

- a) **Re Polling Districts and Polling Places Review:** Noted.

11. LETTERS AND REPORTS

- a) **Re Mells Church of England First School Fund Raising Appeal:** Clare Oxford as a governor advised that an extra classroom was needed to accommodate a necessary expansion essential for the survival of the school. Clerk to seek clarification about what the requested grant was needed for and to advise the school of the annual limitation on grants it can bestow.
- b) **From Director of Care and Repair:** it was noted that the service was still in operation.

12. ACCOUNTS

- a) JK Costelloe
(Clerk's salary – (July 2011)) £ 259.20

It was agreed to pay the above account.

13. RECEIPTS: None.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Clare Oxford to alert the Estate to the broken corner stone on the war memorial.
- b) It was agreed to ask Chris Rowe to cut the war memorial hedge before Remembrance Sunday.
- c) Steve West commented on the new heritage lighting in Mells. It was noted that this had been installed without consultation with the Parish Council.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 4 October, 7.15 p.m. in Mells Barn, following the Public Consultation for White Bridge Replacement commencing at 6.15 p.m.