

**MELLS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**mellsparishcouncil.org.uk**

A meeting of Mells Parish Council took place on Tuesday 3 April 2012 at Mells Barn.

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

The Clerk was in attendance.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Mr C Tye.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Abi Blanche-Martin, Jane Mann and Peter Lowth declared an interest in Item 11.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 6 March 2012 had been circulated. It was resolved that the minutes be adopted. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a) **Parish Warden Steering Committee:** Peter Lowth attended the meeting at which he and Terry Drake agreed to liaise over SpeedWatch .
- b) **Quarry Liaison Committee:** No meeting had been held.
- c) **Length restrictions signs for Vobster Bridge:** The Clerk had reported to Jeff Bunting the Council's concern at the lack of progress with this matter over the past 20 years.
- d) **Village dust levels)** The Clerk advised that she had been
- e) **Trees outside Halecombe Quarry)** unable to deal with items (d) to (g)
- f) **Repair of the bridge near Vobster Cross)** due to the amount of time given
- g) **Outstanding potholes at Upper Vobster)** over to the White Bridge project.

6. **PLANNING**

- a) **Re removal of painted metal framed single glazed windows from classroom block and replacement with polyester powder coated aluminium framed double glazed windows, Mells First School, Mells Green:** Mells PC recommended leaving to case officer. Objections from MDC conservation officer.
- b) **Works to 15 trees within the school grounds, Mells First School, Mells Green:** Mells PC recommended approval.

7. **LETTERS FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL**

- a) **Temporary road closure, Old Wells Road, Egford Hill and Murder Combe:** documentation on notice board
- b) **Temporary Road Closure, Poples Lane, Mells:** documentation on notice board
- c) **Temporary Road Closure, Top Lane, Mells:** documentation on notice board
- d) **Re Application to upgrade public footpaths FR4.56 and FR 10/9 to bridleways (Upper Vobster):** SCC had refused to make an order due to insufficient evidence.

## 8. LETTERS FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

- a) **Re Mendip Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment:** In a survey undertaken to find out what land resources are available for new housing development, either brownfield sites which either have or could have been granted planning permission or greenfield sites which can be shortlisted for further consideration, the map supplied for Mells indicates only sites which would require a change to the plan or sites not considered suitable for development.

## 9. LETTERS AND REPORTS

- a) **From Isabelle Tucker re speeds limits and traffic issues in Upper Vobster:** Mrs Tucker asked the PC to support a speed restriction of 20mph in Upper Vobster Lane; councillors declined to take the matter further as Somerset Highways would not support the measure nor could any speed restriction be policed.
- b) **From Sedgemoor District Council re rural housing seminar:** noted.
- c) **From Mells First School:** Ms Fiona MacIntosh, a school governor, had written to thank the Parish Council for its grant of £3,000.

## 10. RECREATION GROUND

- a) It was agreed to approve the sum of £300.00 + VAT for Thrings in Swindon, (the Estate's solicitors) to provide a Licence to Assign.
- b) It was resolved that Hedleys Solicitors shall represent Mells Parish Council as well as the Mells Sports & Recreation Company Limited and that should a conflict of interest arise the company will appoint its own solicitors.
- c) It was noted that Hedleys' costs should be no more than £600 + VAT plus disbursements.

## 11. WHITE BRIDGE

- a) The Clerk circulated an up-to-date record of the Council's funds and future expenditure. The new bridge superstructure had been put in place after removal of the old bridge on 15 March and the balustrade was currently being constructed on site. Publicity had been achieved in local newspapers and magazines. The grant of £5,000 from the Mells & Vobster Community Trust had been received and a letter of thanks sent. Clerk will contact Somerset CC once the bridge is finished for inspection and will request payment of the grant.
- b) The Parish Council required further explanation of the high quotations for hardcore for crane, stonework and anchor padstones. Clerk to request an itemised account for materials and labour. John Mann to send the Clerk details of how the stonework did not match up to the specification.
- c) Following a site visit by councillors on 28 March it was agreed to approve a quotation from Greg Randall of Tarmac Services for making good the tarmac and resiting the footpath on the south side of the river according to the plan proposed by John Mann. Chris Tye had assumed responsibility for the tarmacking operation. It was noted that Chris Tye would pay for making good the tarmac on the north side of the bridge. The Estate agreed to assume responsibility for future maintenance of the land on the south side of the bridge.
- d) The plaque working party at its site meeting on 28 March proposed extending the existing stone wall on the north side to accommodate the stone plaque. It was agreed to accept this plan. The cost would be met by

either Mells Parish Council or the Mells & Vobster Trust, subject to approval at their next meeting. Councillors had recommended that the tree in the middle of the wall be felled and it was agreed to carry out this work. It was agreed to accept a quotation of £1,750 from Applegate Stonewalling Co. to rebuild the wall, incorporating the plaque, and digging out the tree root. Chris Rowe had not responded to requests to provide a quotation for the tree felling. Peter Lowth would obtain another quotation and forward to the Clerk. Permission had been obtained from the owner of Stradbrook Ford to fell the tree.

It was agreed to go ahead with one of Roger Griffin's designs for the plaque at a cost of £685. Clerk to obtain a free lottery stainless steel plaque to be placed on the wall.

- e) Re official opening, invitations and parish party, Jane Mann would design some posters to go up around the villages. An invitation to all residents of Mells and Vobster would be sent to the Parish Magazine and press releases would be sent to the local press. Chris Tye would be asked to take photographs. Arrangements to satisfy insurance were noted, including a risk assessment to be put on file. A list of invitees was agreed.

## 12. FINANCIAL UPDATE TO 31 MARCH 2012 : noted.

## 13. ACCOUNTS

a)	Somerset Forge Ltd <i>(Supply &amp; fit new bridge to site, fence &amp; crane hire, site work resin bonded flooring and removal of old bridge)</i>	£10,572.00
b)	Stuart Mitchell Joinery <i>(Interim payment for construction of balustrade for White Bridge)</i>	£ 1,000.00
c)	Hedleys Solicitors LLP <i>(provision of licence to assign in respect of Mells Recreation Ground)</i>	£ 360.00
d)	SALC <i>(Affiliation Fee Year 2012/13)</i>	£ 145.56
e)	Age Concern, Frome <i>(Grant)</i>	£ 100.00
f)	Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau <i>(Grants for 2011 + 2012)</i>	£ 200.00
g)	Viscount Asquith's 1999 Settlement <i>(Recreation Ground Rent 25/03/12 – 23/06/12)</i>	£ 147.50
h)	JK Costelloe <i>(Clerk's salary – (Mar))</i>	£ 259.20
i)	JK Costelloe <i>(Clerk's expenses (Jan/Feb/Mar 2012)</i>	
	Postage stamps	£ 41.52
	A4 paper	£ 4.99
	Double black ink cartridge	£ 39.99
	Temporary signs for White Bridge	£ 78.15
	Phone calls	£ 9.82
		£ 174.47

It was agreed to pay the above accounts. Clerk requested to purchase another book of 100 2<sup>nd</sup> class stamps before the price rise at the end of April.

**14. RECEIPTS**

a) HM Revenue & Customs (VAT refund)	£ 821.03
b) Mells & Vobster Community Trust (Grant for White Bridge)	£ 5,000.00
c) Barclays Business Saver Account (Interest 5/12/2011-4/3/2012)	£ 1.27

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) Audit papers for the year to 31 March 2012 had been received. The notice of appointment of the date for the exercise of electors' rights to be posted by 18 April. The annual return to be sent to the auditors by 1 June. It was agreed to ask Peter Molony to carry out the internal audit and to buy him a suitable bottle as a gesture of thanks.
- b) Monica Jennings asked if the cotoneaster on the Rectory wall could be cut back as it was impeding the pavement. Clerk to action.

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Following Annual Parish Meeting, Tuesday 1 May, 7.00 p.m. in Mells Barn.