

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
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A meeting of Mells Parish Council took place on Tuesday 1 May 2012 at Mells Barn.

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

The Clerk was in attendance.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Mrs J Mann. It was agreed to allow Mrs Mann 6 months' leave of absence from the Parish Council for health reasons.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Abi Blanche-Martin, Chris Tye and Peter Lowth declared an interest in Item 10.
4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held on 3 April 2012 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 Officer's Steering Committee:** Nothing to report.
 - b) **Quarry Liaison Committee:** Steve West missed the last meeting but would obtain the minutes and update the Council if necessary.
 - c) **SpeedWatch:** Peter Lowth to obtain equipment direct from David Thomson in order to speed up progress.
 - d) **Village dust levels:** Clerk had reported to Somerset CC.
 - e) **Trees outside Halecombe Quarry:** Vegetation and trees had already been cut back, signing and lining works should be completed in approximately twelve weeks.
 - f) **Repair of the bridge near Vobster Cross:** Temporary site protection measures are checked twice weekly. As yet, no date when the engineer can progress this scheme had been provided but work should be done within next three months.
 - g) **Outstanding potholes at Upper Vobster:** Reported to Somerset CC.
 - h) **Cotoneaster on Rectory Wall:** Reported to Somerset CC.

6. **PLANNING**

- a) **Works to 15 trees within the school grounds, at Mells First School:** No objection from Mendip DC.
- b) **Demolition of existing UPVS conservatory and making good of existing walls. Replacement of existing rear door and casement window. Internal alternations to plasterboard partitions and opening up staircases. Install new fan-light window over existing bathroom door at 3 Hollycroft, Mells:** Parish Council recommended approval.
- c) **Proposed pruning of trees in a Conservation Area, Ems Cottage, Top Lane, Mells:** Parish Council recommended approval.
- d) **Application for prior notification of proposed agricultural development for the erection of a new barn for storing agricultural**

machinery and fodder at Lyndhurst, Station Road, Mells: Notification that prior approval is not required.

- e) **Installation of a timber clad temporary modular classroom, Mells First School:** To be considered by the Regulation Committee on 3 May.
- f) **Erection of double garage and associated hard standing and steps at Hazelwood, Top Lane, Mells:** Mendip DC approval with conditions.

7. LETTERS FROM SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

- a) **Replacement of windows at Mells First School:** Withdrawal of application.

8. LETTERS FROM MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL: None.

9. LETTERS AND REPORTS

- a) **From Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau:** Acknowledgement and thanks for grant of £200.
- b) **From SALC re new Code of Conduct:** Noted.
- c) **From Somerset Age UK:** Acknowledgement and thanks for grant of £100.

10. WHITE BRIDGE

- a) **Update on progress:** Bridge was open to public on Maundy Thursday by which time tarmacking and path adjustments had been made. The plaque had been ordered from Big Lottery and Roger Griffin asked to proceed with cutting the commemorative stone which was expected to be ready by 11 May. The Big Lottery End of Grant Report had been completed and sent off as required. Somerset County Council had been informed that the bridge was complete. The Clerk had had a meeting with Rachel Pearce who would inform her in the next few days whether the bridge met with the required standards. If this were the case their grant should be forthcoming within a month. A financial update on White Bridge income and expenditure was circulated.
- b) **Landscaping:** It was agreed to accept the quote from *Freecall Maintenance* to replacement the run of wall on the north eastern side of White Bridge and incorporate Roger Griffin's commemorative stone for £1,745 including labour and materials. Chris Tye would speak to Chris Rowe who had not produced a quotation for felling the tree in the existing wall. It was agreed that Chris Tye could accept an estimate from Chris Rowe up to £600 for felling and stump removal. Chris Tye would co-ordinate the walling and tree-felling operation.
- c) **Parish party:** A draft press release was circulated which would be sent to the local press. A general invitation to the parish Jubilee party would appear in the parish magazine. A draft poster was circulated. The Vice Chair agreed to laminate copies which would be posted on lampposts throughout Mells and Vobster. A risk assessment had been placed on file as required by insurance. The working party would take care of all other arrangements for the party which were in hand.

11. INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW

- a) The Parish Council reviewed the effectiveness of its system of internal control and found it adequate for its purpose.
- b) The Parish Council verified the continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register.

12. ANNUAL RETURN

- a) It was resolved to approve the Council's accounting statement and annual governance statement for 2011- 2012. The Vice Chair signed the statement of accounts, the annual governance statement and bank reconciliation which were currently available for inspection by the public with a notice to that effect on the notice board.
- b) It was noted that the statement of accounts had been approved and signed by the internal auditor, Peter Molony.

13. REVIEW INSURANCE

- a) Chris Tye, having reviewed the Council's insurance policy, recommended continuing the present arrangement which was adequate for the parish's needs.

14. ACCOUNTS

a)	MJ Moore		
	<i>(Hardcore for crane)</i>	£ 140.00	
	<i>(Stonework for bridge)</i>	£ 260.00	
	<i>(4x anchor padstones for bridge rail support)</i>	£ 600.00	
			£ 1,000.00
b)	Stuart Mitchell Joinery		
	<i>(Balance of making & fitting oak balustrading to White Bridge)</i>		£ 2,000.00
c)	Viscount Asquith's 1999 Settlement Trust		
	<i>(Orange barrier fencing for White Bridge)</i>	£	119.40
d)	Broker Network Ltd		
	<i>(Insurance Premium 2012/2013)</i>	£	786.72
e)	Mells Barn Management Committee		
	<i>(Hire of Barn for parish council meetings 2011)</i>	£	200.00
f)	JK Costelloe		
	<i>(Clerk's salary – Apr)</i>	£	210.80
g)	HM Revenue & Customs		
	<i>(Income tax deduction – Apr)</i>	£	48.40

It was agreed to pay the above accounts.

15. RECEIPTS

- a) Mendip District Council
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| <i>(Parish precept 2012/130)</i> | £ 9,000.00 |
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16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Mells Village Shop had offered to donate a spare green grit bin to the Parish Council. On agenda for next meeting.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 12 June, 7.15 p.m. in Mells Barn.

The Chairman and the Clerk left the meeting.

18. PARISH CLERK

- a) Following a letter of resignation from the Clerk with effect from 25 May 2012 the vacancy for clerk had been advertised in the Parish magazine and the Frome Standard.
- b) A letter of thanks had been sent to the Clerk thanking her for the outstanding contribution she had made during her six years' service including the provision of a Parish website and the completion of the White Bridge Project brought about by her sterling work over the past 12 months.
- c) In recognition of the many unpaid extra hours involved with the White Bridge Project, and particularly including the successful applications for funding, it was unanimously decided that the Clerk should receive an extra payment of £500 with her final salary on 25 May in lieu of overtime.
- d) It was also unanimously agreed that the Council would reimburse the Clerk who had kindly offered to support and mentor her replacement during a handover period. It was agreed that an hourly rate of pay of £20 would be appropriate for a period of one month. However, after subsequent discussion with the Chair, it was agreed that this point would be put on the agenda for the next meeting for further deliberation as to whether or not an hourly payment was a feasible arrangement.