

## MELLS PARISH COUNCIL

(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

### Minutes of the meeting of Mells Parish Council on Tuesday 12th November 2019 at Mells Barn

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**1. PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr E Costelloe, Cllr S West, Cllr A Brady (left approx. 8.30pm), Cllr D Seviour, Cllr H Leakey, Cllr J Henderson, Cllr J Seewooruttun

**In Attendance:** Joy Book – Clerk Cllr A Barkshire (District Councillor)  
Neil Rogers, Regional Manager - Truespeed

**Members of the public:** 1

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** The Countess of Oxford & Asquith

**Absent :** Cllr L Turner, Cllr V Turner

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Neil Rogers, Truespeed, explained:-

- that most villages around Mells will be getting Truespeed services in the next year.
- Truespeed has won the National Award for the best rural provider across the UK.
- Can guarantee 200mb upload & 200mb download and have the capability to future proof by reaching speeds of 10,000mb upload & download
- There needs to be a 30% take up before Truespeed can go to their investor (Aviva). Numbers are currently short of this. Another 50 sign ups are required to enable the project to go ahead. (One business sign up is the equivalent to 10 individual sign ups). If 20 more properties sign up, Truespeed would canvas door to door to try to increase the number to the required 30%.
- Funding of £250,000 would be invested in Mells for the infrastructure. (Approx £4,000/per property)
- The Barn, school, shop would receive free broadband for life.
- Standard installation costs £120 although most properties would be eligible to receive free installation.
- Truespeed are currently building their own network but hope to have an open network in the next few years which would enable users to access their services via other providers.
- Monthly cost for phone and broadband is currently £47.50.
- Mobile phones can be connected to the wifi which would greatly improve the signal at no extra cost.
- The installation would include Vobster if there were sufficient sign ups.
- The system relies on using BT/Western Distribution poles and has minimal earthworks.
- Rural farms can access the services but there could be a significant installation cost if they are not on a direct route.
- Truespeed's website has all the latest news and can be used to sign up.
- Truespeed guarantee a 1 day fix time for businesses and 4 days for private residences if there is an outage of their services.
- Installation would be within 12 months once the necessary sign ups are received.

A discussion regarding alternative providers followed. It was noted that Voneous offer a very good short term solution but unfortunately cannot, at present, guarantee speeds more than 30mb and the service can be affected by atmospheric conditions.

Also, in light of Connecting Devon and Somerset's recent announcement that they are going out to tender again which will cause further delays if that route is followed, it was agreed (John Henderson proposed, and Edmund Costelloe seconded) that the PC would support facilitating Truespeed coming to the village. The PC will now look into ways of progressing the project.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019:** Minutes had been circulated previously Edmund Costelloe clarified Item 8. iii. Asset List – the Tithe Barn Lease should be added to the Parish Council asset list as the Tithe Barn Management Committee were a Sub Committee of the Parish Council and not the leaseholder in their own right. It was then resolved that the minutes be adopted and were duly signed by the Chair.
6. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS:** Councils are now in purdah so no meetings or decisions can take place. Somerset CC has declared a Climate Emergency with a view to working towards carbon neutrality by 2030. The main areas they will be looking at are transport, power generation, house insulation, agriculture and land use. The Woodland Trust are offering free for community land. Possible sites will be looked into. Cllr Barkshire wondered if consideration could be given to electric car charging points being installed in Mells.
7. **APPROVAL OF TWO NEW MELLS CHARITY NOMINATIVE TRUSTEES:** The PC gave their approval of the two people who were proposed for the role of Trustee by the charity - Dr Guy Worsdall, a semi-retired GP and Mrs Lise Lambton, a solicitor.
8. **MEETING DATES FOR 2020:** Clerk requested that the Annual Parish Meeting take place in April next year rather than May. All in favour.
9. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**
  - i. **Superfast Broadband to Mells:** As above.
  - ii. **Old Telephone Exchange:** No overnight occupation was noted on a recent visit by Enforcement. If evidence to the contrary can be recorded eg. lights on late at night, vehicles parked all night Enforcement will re-investigate. The Enforcement Officer currently responsible for the Exchange has now left and it is unknown whether a replacement has been found. To be followed up with Enforcement next month.
  - iii. **Vehicles parked in Recreation Ground car park and signage:** Clerk to obtain quotes for various different types of sign.
  - iv. **Footpath FR10/15 DEFRA Conservation Walk Notice:** No further information.
  - v. **Overgrown hedges:** Clerk has written to the owner. No action appears to have been taken to date.
  - vi. **Overgrown trees in Longfield:** Clerk is still trying to establish who owns this land. Aster has submitted a map to show it is not their land. MDC have been contacted but have not responded. Clerk to chase.
10. **HIGHWAY ISSUES:**
  - i. **Fingerpost finial:** Clerk to chase.
  - ii. **Speed management on School Hill:** Due to the absence of the Traffic Manager from Highways, items are being added to a list for attention on their return.
  - iii. **Pot holes – The Talbot:** Highways were spotted in the vicinity today so it is hoped some action will be taken.

**11. PLANNING:**i. **New applications:**

**2019/2731/TCA:** Fell 7 leylandii, Sycamore – remove 2 lateral north facing branches, thin and reduce crown to reduce excessive leaf fall. Area to west of Almshouses to be replanted with low height ornamental fruit trees (x3) and grass – For planning officer to decide

**2019/2637/TCA:** Apple trees x 3 – reduce to previous pruning cuts. Reduce height and lateral branches by 1m to leave a height of 4m and overall lateral crown of 3m – For planning officer to decide

**2019/2734/TCA:** Works to Alder, Ash, Common Ash and Norway Spruce – Riverside, Holes Lane – For planning officer to decide

**Mendip decisions:**

**2019/2312/TCA:** Works to Elaeagnus, reduce to 1.8m and shape – Ashcroft, Little Green – Approved

**2019/2320/APP:** Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (finished floor levels) on planning consent 2019/0660/HSE – Approved

**2019/2475/AGB:** Application for prior notification of agricultural development for a proposed building – Mells Colliery, Station Road – Prior approval is not required.

**12. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- i. **Somerset Highways winter service:** Highways has re-evaluated their routes and several have been re-instated in this area. Clerk asked for the grit bins to be inspected with a view to them being topped up. SCC will no longer provide the grit pick up service due to previous poor take up in the past.
- ii. **Vehicles parking in front of Vobster Inn:** Resident had raised concerns about vehicles parking on the triangular piece of land between the noticeboard, post box and seat. Visibility is poor as a consequent when pulling out of the junction to look up the hill. An accident occurred there on 8 November. Clerk to ask Highways to assess.
- iii. **British Legion – Poppy appeal:** Thank you for donation of £42.00 for wreath.
- iv. **Pension Regulator:** Clerk has submitted the re-declaration of Compliance which has been acknowledged as completed by the regulator.

**13. PAYMENTS, RECEIPTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Balances as at 28 October 2019: HSBC - £13,499.40. Barclays - September 2019 £5,310.82

- |      |   |   |             |
|------|---|---|-------------|
| i.   | J Book  | Clerk's Salary & expenses (October)               | £244.51     |
|      |   | Trip to Mells (@ 45p/mile)                        | 3.60        |
|      |   | Phone line rental                                 | 5.50        |
|      |   | Utilities   | <u>4.00</u> |
|      |   |   | £13.10      |
|      |   | British Legion Poppy Appeal – wreath and donation | £42.00      |
|      |   | HMRC PAYE (Period 8)                              | £53.00      |
|      |   | C G Rowe – war memorial hedge cutting             | £75.00      |
|      |   | Approved - all in favour                          |             |
| ii.  | <b>Receipts:</b> None   |   |             |
| iii. | <b>Preliminary budget discussion for 2020/2021:</b> Clerk presented a draft budget and requested consideration be given to any possible extra expenditure for the next year.  |   |             |
| iv.  | <b>Preliminary precept discussion for 2020/2021:</b> Clerk will add any additional items to the budget prior to the next meeting when the precept will be discussed. Precept demand needs to be with MDC by 17 January. |   |             |

**14. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA/ITEMS TO REPORT:**

- i. **Temporary advertising banners – The Barn:** The school had enquired whether it would be possible to place temporary banners on The Barn to advertise events. This would not be permitted.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 10<sup>th</sup> December at 7.15pm**

Meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Print Name.....