

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

**Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on
Tuesday 8 June 2021**

01.06.21 PRESENT:

Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr Edmund Costelloe, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Helen Leakey, The Countess of Oxford & Asquith, Cllr John Henderson, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Jeremy Poynton

In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk, Cllr Alison Barkshire – District Councillor

Members of the public: None

02.06.21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr David Seviour **Absent:** Cllr Vince Turner

03.06.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

04.06.21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

05.06.21 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES HELD ON 11 MAY 2021

Previously circulated. The minutes were then approved and signed by the Chair.

06.06.21 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

i. Unitary Council poll result:

Approximately 25% (111,000) of residents voted.

35% wanted One Somerset (amalgamation of all 4 district councils and Somerset CC)

65% Stronger Somerset (Two new unitary councils, one for Western Somerset, one for Eastern Somerset)

ii. MDC – Zero carbon neutral by 2030:

MDC has undertaken a survey of all major emissions and found that only a third reduction is likely to be met. Reduction in levels for new build housing is limited and farming shows very high emissions. Tree replacement should be encouraged when one has been felled.

iii. National constituency boundary changes:

The consultation process has now begun for changing Frome's constituency boundaries. The proposal will include Shepton/Evercreech to the south and Bradford on Avon to the north. The process may take up to 2 years.

07.06.21 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: None

08.06.21 MATTERS ARISING

i. Superfast Broadband:

The Voneous installation is running behind. They wish to engage with the community and are looking at ways to do this.

ii. Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane:

Clerk to see if Highways are now able to do a site visit.

iii. Telephone box – painting:

The school is interested in using the box. Clerk to go back to them to request specifics before any work is carried out on the box.

iv. New Mells Community Trust and Halecombe Community Trust representative:

John Henderson will attend the Quarry Liaison meeting on 9 June to discuss the prospect of having a new trust based on the Halecombe Community Trust model.

The Section 106 Halecombe Community Trust is now in place and currently has £22,000 available. The money is accumulated at 2p/tonne. The expected amount per year, going forward, will be in the region of £12,000. This amount will be available to the four nearest parish councils. Leigh on Mendip will get a double share as they are the closest. Mells would be in line for around 1/5th of this amount if there were suitable applications. It was agreed that Cllr West would be the Mells PC representative on the Trust with Cllr Henderson stepping in if Cllr West is unable to attend a meeting.

v. Footway by quarry:

This will be discussed at the Quarry Liaison meeting on 9 June.

vii. Improvements to Vobster Cross bus shelter and litter bin:

Highways do not own the verge. Clerk to contact Mells Park as it may belong to the adjacent farm which is owned by Mells Park.

viii. Footpath narrowing by Lavender Cottage:

Cllr Asquith will speak to the owner regarding the barbed wire.

vi. Slow down sign – Upper Vobster:

Forwarded to Traffic Management for consideration.

vii. 30mph speed limit - Vobster:

Forwarded to Traffic Management for consideration.

10.06.21 HIGHWAY ISSUES:

i. Visibility issues on junctions due to vegetation:

Alan Brady offered to cut back the vegetation on the triangle at the top of Lime Kiln Hill which has significantly reduced visibility for drivers to see oncoming traffic.

11.06.21 PLANNING

i. New Applications:

2021/0796/HSE: Erection of side and rear extension, car port and associated access – 1 Underhill Cottages, Little Green – no objections

2021/1202/TCA: Fell Robina tree to ground level – Lavender House, Top Lane – for planning officer

ii. Planning decisions:

None

iii. Other matters:

None

Old telephone exchange:

Complaint was sent to Stuart Brown – Chief Executive, Ros Wyke – Leader of MDC and Julie Reader-Sullivan Head of Service. MDC has responded that it has been passed to the planning team. No response has been received to date. Cllr Barkshire reported that two enforcement officers have recently left.

iv. Quarry Applications

SCC/3838/2021/ROMP, SCC/3795/2021, SCC/3837/2021/IDO, SCC/3836/2021/IDO - Periodic review of Old Mineral Permission

SCC/3833/2021: Removal of Condition 2 to enable extractions of limestone to recommence at Bartlett's Quarry prior to the permanent cessation of extraction at Torr Works Quarry.

SCC/3833/2021: Variation of conditions 1 and 39 of Schedule B of ROMP decision to amend duration of permission for Bartlett's Quarry

The Bartlett's application is very similar to the previous one despite the quarry claiming to have addressed all issues previously raised by SCC.

The Somerset Mineral Plan needs to be fully reviewed and a county wide consultation undertaken to assess the impact of quarrying over the next few decades.

Although limits to the tonnage removed is given in the application, there is no guarantee that these will be adhered to. Concerns were also raised about the effect of significant further quarrying on the water table.

Whatley and Torr use trains overnight but the numbers are limited due to the time taken to load each train. Trains cannot go through London or the South East between 6am – 9pm.

There has been a slippage in work practices recently and these need to be addressed and form part of any approval.

Three abstentions based on the applications in front of the councillors however all were concerned about the future of quarrying in the area if more quarries are simultaneously in operation. The end result could leave the area with a ‘moonscape’ appearance. A motion was carried to object to the applications. Clerk to draft response.

12.06.21 CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter from Whatley Quarry Action Group who are engaging with the quarry community to reduce the noise levels. Representatives from the group hope to attend the July meeting.

13.06.21 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

i. Payment of Accounts:

Clerk’s Salary & expenses (May)	£266.55
HMRC PAYE (Period 3)	£63.20
Mells Sports and Recreation Company Ltd	£835.78

ii. Receipts: None

14.06.21 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

i. Roped off footpaths:

Concerns have been raised by residents about the roping off of various footpaths. Cllr Asquith explained that the footpaths are not official although they have been used for many years. The recent increase in walkers using the paths has led to this action being taken. Cllr Asquith will look into whether there is a workable solution.

ii. Ash dieback:

The Estate is doing its best to remove any dangerous trees which is proving to be a huge operation. Cllr Barkshire mentioned that the Woodland Trust is giving free trees to communities.

iii. Stiles/gates - Vobster: Despite offering to buy and install new stiles/gates resistance has been met from SCC footpaths who say a special type of insurance is required to install them. The Ramblers Association maybe able to assist.

iv. Cllr Edmund Costelloe resignation:

Cllr Costelloe gave a brief background to the PC which was started in the 1880s. He commented that the PC has always been a friendly and effective one since he joined almost 20 years ago and he had enjoyed his tenure. Cllr Earl thanked Cllr Costelloe for everything he had achieved. A presentation of the recently found ‘Parish Council Cup’ was then made.

15.06.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 13 July 2021 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____

