

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL

(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

**Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on
Tuesday 13 July 2021**

01.07.21 PRESENT:

Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Helen Leakey, The Countess of Oxford & Asquith, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Steve West, Cllr David Seviour

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

Members of the public: 4

02.07.21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Jeremy Poynton, Cllr John Henderson

Absent: Cllr Vince Turner

03.07.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

04.07.21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

i. Voneous:

Three members from the company attended to apologise for the delays and road diversions. They hope to keep the diversions to an absolute minimum but have to respect the terms of their licences when undertaking the work. Build work will be complete by September with installation to properties by mid September. They claim there is a 60-70% take up in village. They are possibly looking at going into Vobster which comes under Phase 2 which is currently at the planning stage. Some areas may need to have cable run from their fibre supply.

ii. Whatley Quarry Action Group (WQAG):

There are six members of the group which has mainly been formed to address the noise at night, from blasting, lorries and movement of rock. Group would like to join with Whatley, Chantry and Mells PCs to form a unified voice and possibly a working party with the parishes. They understand that the quarry is important for employment but complaints are being made almost daily (around 200 complaints from the villages already this year) by residents who get the same response. Current consents have been in place for around 26 years and almost 10 years ago they should have been reviewed. Much has changed over this period. The quarry shape and size has grown, machinery has been replaced and ownership has changed. Whatley is no longer the relatively small, locally-focused company it was. International guidelines and legislation in terms of noise-related disturbance have also evolved and much more is now understood about the links between noise disturbance and mental and physical health.

The group has met many times with the quarry and most recently with Ian Strachan the Strategic Development Manager.

Noise monitoring is averaged out over a ten minute period so it does not reflect the true intensity of some of the noises over the short period they may have lasted. Monitoring is only undertaken periodically when they change their processes.

Cllr Leakey commented that there are large lorries moving around the village late at night who have no need to be doing so.

Cllr West advised that he was willing to be contacted at any time if there was an issue so he could investigate and report back to the quarry. Cllr West also reported that the quarry is looking into ways of reducing noise by installing acoustic buildings over the working areas.

WQAG were asked to provide a list of the salient points of their research to date.

05.07.21 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES HELD ON 8 JUNE 2021

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

06.07.21 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

i. Mendip DC eco project fund :

Applications can be made for up to £2,000 for projects that fit the criteria. Cllr Barkshire wondered if the parish council would consider not cutting verges so much to encourage wildlife. Cllr Earl replied that this is possible in some areas but would prove dangerous in other areas where it would affect driver and pedestrian safety.

ii. Somerset Waste:

Due to the shortage of HGV drivers Somerset Waste are still experiencing problems. Any uncollected rubbish/recycling will be collected within 48 hours of notification.

07.07.21 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: None

08.07.21 MATTERS ARISING

i. Superfast Broadband:

As public participation.

ii. Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane:

A site visit with Highways has been arranged for next week.

iii. Telephone box – painting:

The school is very interested in using the box as a book swap. It was agreed not to re-paint at present to ensure it was getting sufficient usage to warrant the cost of refurbishment.

iv. Footway by quarry:

The quarry has inspected the footway and agree it could be improved. Several people have now approached them and they are beginning to be more receptive to doing something about it.

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

The vegetation around the shelter has been cut back. The owner, Mells Park, has given consent to put a litter bin by it and improve the access. Mendip DC's contractor has agreed to empty a bin at this location. Clerk will look at bin options.

vi. Visibility issues on junctions due to vegetation:

Thanks were extended to Cllr Brady who had cut back the triangle at the top of Lime Kiln Hill. Vegetation also needs to be cut back by the Boys and Girls crossing which Cllr Asquith will arrange.

Two contractors have come forward who would be willing to cut back the footpaths. Cllr Seewooruttun will meet with the one who has the earliest availability and show them the areas that require cutting back now and the ones that require more regular cutting back throughout the year.

vii. Footpath narrowing by Lavender Cottage:

The barbed wire fencing has been installed to keep deer and stock out of the field.

viii. Stiles/gates – Vobster:

Clerk will contact the Ramblers Association. Cllr Seviour will forward photos and locations of the stiles.

- ix. Roped off footpaths:**
The roped off footpaths are not designated footpaths but their usage has been permissive for many years. Cllr Asquith reported that regretfully these areas will remain roped off due to maintaining and protecting the farming land and livestock. Sheep are especially susceptible to dog mess. The increase in people with dogs walking these routes has led to the decision to close the route to all walkers.
- 10.07.21 HIGHWAY ISSUES:**
None
- 11.07.21 PLANNING**
- i. New Applications:**
2021/1463/HSE: Erection of a garage - Lavender House (Formerly The Firs) Top Lane Mellis Frome Somerset BA11 3QN incorporating **2021/1468/CLP** Erection of shepherds hut - Lavender House (Formerly The Firs) Top Lane Mellis Frome Somerset BA11 3QN – Cllr Earl & Cllr Seewooruttun will arrange a site visit as there was some queries about how this application fitted in with the one passed earlier in the year.
2021/1501/TCA: Reduce crown – 1 x sycamore, 4 x alder. Fell 6 x ash – Ems Cottage, Top Lane – for Tree Officer
- ii. Planning decisions:**
None
- iii. Other matters:**
APP/Q3305/W/20/3263809 & APP/Q3305/Y/20/3263811: The Cottage, Little Green – An appeal has been lodged against the recent planning refusal for the works
Upper Vobster Farm:
Concerns have been raised about the continuing expansion of the business. **Clerk to raise issue with planning.**
- iv. Quarry Applications:**
Bartletts Quarry is going to appeal. Torr is looking to move scalpings to two fields near Asham wood. This would involved 100s of dumper trucks. The plan seems to be to wash and sell it on in years to come. 30-50% is silt and soil and concerns were raised as to where this would be tipped.
- 12.07.21 CORRESPONDENCE:**
None.
- 13.07.21 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS**
- i. Payment of Accounts:**
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Clerk's Salary & expenses (June) | £266.48 |
| HMRC PAYE (Period 4) | £63.30 |
| Alan Aked – internal audit | £60.00 |
- ii. Receipts:** None
- 14.07.21 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**
- i. Co-option of councillor:**
Clerk will inform Mendip DC of casual vacancy and arrange for the necessary election notice to be posted for the statutory 14 days.
- ii. Quarry Liaison meeting:**
Next meeting is 10 August. The quarry will not form a new Trust for Mellis but would be happy to consider any applications as they arise from various organisations.

iii. Overgrown vegetation:

The area by the Rectory wall is overgrown and a shrub is encroaching onto the pavement. The contractor will be asked to cut it back.

v. Barn Lease:

John Macdonald has agreed to take over the negotiations.

15.07.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 10 August 2021 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____

