

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL

(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 9 November 2021

01.11.21 PRESENT:

The Countess of Oxford & Asquith – Stand in Chair, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Jeremy Poynton, Cllr Helen Leakey, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Vince Turner

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

Members of the public: One

02.11.21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr John Earl, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr John Henderson

Absent: None

03.11.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

04.11.21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

05.11.21 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2021

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

06.11.21 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

i. Climate Literacy Training:

Cllr Barkshire wanted to raise awareness that these courses are specifically aimed at Parish Councils and give advice on climate change, carbon footprints and what a PC can do. Various dates to attend are available and for a small fee you can have your attendance accredited.

ii Unitary authority:

A Draft Statutory Change Order is being put together. It is still undecided whether elections will take place May 2022 or 2023, after the switch over has been made. Somerset CC believe there is a need for 100 councillors but the government is looking at 85. The transition to a unitary authority is likely to cost £16.8 million of public money although it is believed an overall saving of £80 million will be achieved over the coming years. It is likely there will be some selling of assets to release some money. Price Waterhouse Coopers will be overseeing the transition at a cost of £664,000.

07.11.21 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: None

08.11.21 MATTERS ARISING

i. Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane:

Cllr Philip Ham has met with Highways. They are not keen on box hedges but have not ruled them out completely. They are currently swaying towards kerbstones and wooden bollards that would be more in keeping with the surroundings.

ii. Footway by quarry:

Cllr Henderson had raised this at the recent quarry liaison meeting, The quarry reported that this would need to be included with the adoption of the road and were not forthcoming with a plan to move this forward.

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

The new litter bin has been installed in the village and the old bin has been moved to the bus shelter to see if it encourages drivers to leave less waste in the area. If proved to be successful,

a new bin will be purchased for that location. Cllr West will meet with the contractor again to discuss options to improve the access. Concerns were raised that water would run back into the shelter if the hardstanding isn't installed correctly.

iv. Stiles/gates – Vobster:

Clerk now has the photos and will ask the Footpaths Department for advice on how to proceed.

v. Telephone box:

Quotes to be sought for refurbishment.

vi. Defibrillators:

The defibrillators will be despatched shortly. Clerk will arrange for the electrician to install them. All the defibrillators in the parish will be registered on a national data base. A video on how to use the defibrillators is available on the PC website.

vii. Vobster churchyard:

No response has been received regarding the offer of the PC taking on the care of the graveyard for one year to enable it to be improved. Clerk will follow up.

viii. Co-option of councillor:

No applications have been received to date. *Post meeting note: An application has been made and candidate has been invited to attend the next meeting.*

ix. Quarry noise:

The quarry has recently purchased further equipment to lessen noise. Cllr Barkshire is making enquiries about the use of trains as the figures in circulation do not appear to add up. Noise during the day seems to be pretty constant. Cllr West is receiving regular communications from a resident and will, where possible, visit the area where there is an issue, at the time of the issue. Reports of noise at a later date are difficult to substantiate and establish what the cause may have been. More individuals need to report the noise to get action. A small working group of 3-4 councillors maybe formed to address this issue.

x. Doctor's walk footpath:

Contractor did not feel that this footpath was in too bad a condition but will monitor and include in his schedule when necessary. Cllr Asquith will follow up on whether this footpath is the responsibility of the Estate or not.

xi. White Bridge notice:

This is covered in algae and just needs a thorough clean which Cllr Leakey will attend to.

10.11.21 HIGHWAY ISSUES:

i. Accident near Vobster Crossroad:

Cllr Brady reported that there had been quite a nasty accident near the small bridge. A hedge at Upper Vobster needs cutting back as it is very difficult for drivers to see when pulling out. Cllr Turner will speak to the landowner.

11.11.21 PLANNING

i. New Applications:

2021/2121/FUL: Creation of external storage area with erection of shed and installation of two shipping containers (retention of works already started) – Land at Quarry Lane to Somers Hill, Leigh on Mendip. This area of land has been subject to increasing in size over the years and no one seems to know who owns it. There were no objections to the application but Clerk to query ownership.

2021/2442/FUL: Erection of 1 no dwelling and detached garage, formation of new access and associated development – Land adjoining Acrewood, Little Green. Cllrs Seewooruttun, Asquith and Leakey will visit site. Concerns were raised that this land is outside the development boundary which would set a precedent is approved.

ii. Planning decisions: None

iii. Other matters: None

iv. **Quarry Applications:** No further information.

12.11.21 CORRESPONDENCE:

None

13.11.21 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: HSBC 28 October 2021 - £14,356.99
Barclays 20 September 2021 - £5,318.02

i. Payment of Accounts:

Clerk's Salary & expenses (October)	£266.35
HMRC PAYE (Period 8)	£63.40
C G Rowe – war memorial hedge cutting	£90.00
Mells with Vobster PCC – graveyard grant	£1,000.00

ii. **Receipts:** Clerk has submitted an invoice to Mells Park Trust for the Annual Community Grant of £1,000.

14.11.21 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

i. Sustainable Energy:

Cllr Barkshire has submitted information to the magazine on how to insulate older homes.

iii. Area by Vobster Inn:

The noticeboard is looking quite tired and is probably not worth refurbishing. Clerk will look into replacement options. When the defibrillator has been installed on the wall it was felt that it would be a good idea to discourage parking in front of it. Clerk to ask Highways if they have any objections to placing a couple of tubs on their land in front of the pub.

15.11.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____