

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL
(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on
Tuesday 11 October 2022

01.10.22 PRESENT:

Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Karen Punter, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Clare Asquith

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

Members of the public: One

02.10.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr John Henderson

Absent: Cllr Vince Turner

03.10.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr Asquith declared an interest in planning application 2022/1952/TCA.

04.10.22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

i. **Quarry noise:** Resident acknowledged that quarry noise during the day was a fact of life but raised concerns about the noise at night. The quarry had recently received 39 complaints all (except 2) were about unacceptable noise between the hours of 11pm and 7am. The following are the main comments reported by resident:-

- Noise levels vary due to wind direction (South/south westerly appears to affect Mells, northerly Whatley) and even which side of a house you are in.
- Despite the quarry's mitigating measures a handheld device has registered consistent levels all year.
- It is 27 years since the last review and a lot has changed. The quarry is deeper and wider and working in different areas. The previous framework is out of date.
- SCC recent survey results have not been published.
- Need to stop lorry traffic coming down Holes Lane as there is no reason for it.
- The working practices during the night at the quarry need monitoring.
- The nature of the noise is loading trucks with a JCB, revving and reversing trucks, tipping stone into the crusher and the noise as it works its way through the crusher.
- Now would be the ideal opportunity to seek reduced levels whilst the applications are under review. It will be difficult to enforce if there is no acceptable levels in place. Resident is worried that the same environmental standards will be passed again.

Cllr Asquith reported that lack of sleep is a proven health and safety issue and many illnesses can be attributed to disturbed sleep.

The original bund no longer protects the surroundings from noise as it is now in close proximity to the edge of the quarry. It either needs to be moved or raised to be effective.

Cllr West offered to undertake fact finding visits at the quarry with the resident to establish what the working practices are, see what mitigating systems are in place and what could be improved. Cllr West reported that the quarry has rubber lined 5 dumper trucks and the majority of the lorries travelling along Holes Lane are going to the cement works.

05.10.22 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

- i. **Unitary authority:** The Chief Executive is now in place.
- ii. **Somerset Energy Saver** is a free, online hub with advice for residents on how to make energy-saving changes to their home. <https://somerseenergy saver.co.uk/>
- iii. **Cycle racks:** Mendip DC is inviting residents for their thoughts on proposed locations. Details on parish council website. Closes 4 November.
- iv. **Tree consultation Strategy:** This is to raise awareness of old trees or trees that matter when planning applications are being considered.
- v. **Somerset Economical Development strategy:** Is the strategic framework for the delivery of future growth activities across the District, in a rapidly changing economic landscape and is looking at government innovation sites eg. The 616-acre old ordanance factory site by junction 23 of the M5 motorway which has the potential for an onsite rail terminal, business and up to 750 houses.
- vi. **Local Community Networks:** There is an informal consultation taking place (details on parish website) to look at the options for how the areas should be divided. Councillors will read the available information and respond by the deadline.

06.10.22 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: None

07.10.22 APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 9 AUGUST 2022 (no meeting held in September 2022 due to the official period of mourning for HM Queen Elizabeth II) Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

08.10.22 MATTERS ARISING

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:**
Highways has requested a more detailed plan of the proposal. Clerk will arrange for this to be done. **Clerk will also look into whether there are any planning issues that may need to be approved and likely costs prior to the work being carried out.**
- ii. **Telephone box and defibrillator:**
The box has been painted and the defibrillator and case have been delivered. Clerk to arrange for the defib to be fitted.
- iii. **Quarry noise:**
As the Parish Council are not copied into the emails sent to the quarry it is hard to report back at the meetings on whether there has been any issues or not. It was therefore suggested that residents should email the Clerk with the complaints which would be logged and subsequently reported on at each meeting.
- iv. **Rectory bus shelter:**
Cllr Seewooruttun has cleared the drain but water is still accumulating in front of the shelter. Cllr Asquith to look at options to improve this.
- v. **White Bridge – railings:**
No quotes have been received. It was decided that the option of vertical posts along the bridge would be very **costly so firm mesh will be installed instead. Clerk to seek quotes.**
- vi. **Barn lease:**
The solicitor has responded and time needs to be taken to review the response and raise any issues.

09.10.22 LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORKS – as 05.10.22 vi.

10.10.22 APPROVAL OF RE-ELECTION OF MELLS CHARITIES NOMINATIVE TRUSTEE – Mr Peter Alcaraz All in favour or Mr Alcaraz continuing in the role.

11.10.22 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

i. **Footway by quarry:**

The timescale for the alterations to the footway by the quarry is unknown.

ii. **Vobster speed limit:**

CLlr Seviour to annotate map with areas of concern.

12.10.22 PLANNING

i. **New Applications:**

2022/1957/HSE: Alterations for front and rear dormers. Hollow House, Stock Hill, Vobster – no objections

2022/1952/TCA: 3 Ash – fell. Mells Green – for the Tree Officer

ii. **Planning decisions:** None

iii. **Other planning matters – Upper Vobster Farm**

2022/0979/FUL: The application is showing as ‘undecided’ on the Mendip DC website.

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

13.10.22 CORRESPONDENCE: Previously circulated

14.10.22 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: HSBC 28 July 2022 - £16,495.13

Barclays June 2022 - £5,320.32

i. **Payment of Accounts – for September**

Clerk’s Salary & expenses (August) £270.91

HMRC PAYE (Period 6) £64.60

J W Witt (112012) emptying of bins at Rec Ground (DD) £67.54

SALC affiliation annual fee £164.50

London Hearts – defibrillator & cabinet £1,371.00

Bank charges £13.00

Payment of Accounts – For October

Clerk’s Salary & expenses (September) £271.11

HMRC PAYE (Period 7) £64.40

British Legion – Wreath £19 + donation £31 £50.00

J W Witt (113296) emptying of bins at Rec Ground (DD) £66.70

Chris Ingrem – painting phone box £795.00

Aboracadabra – cheque re-issued (lost in post) £78.00

ii. **Receipts:** £1.64 Barclays Bank interest

iii. **New bank account:** Clerk to re-send information to those who will be signatories on the account.

15.10.22 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

i. **Abandoned cars in rec car park:**

Two have been moved. A third is promised to be moved. The owner of the fourth vehicle is unknown. There is also an abandoned untaxed vehicle parked near to the entrance of the Barn. Clerk to report the vehicle to the police.

ii. **Fast traffic coming down Lime Kiln Hill:**

Traffic appears to be coming down the hill faster than the speed limit (30mph sign may be obscured due to vegetation at present). Previous attempts to have the Great Elm road being given priority so drivers on Lime Kiln Hill have to give way to those exiting from Great Elm and requests to move the 30mph sign further up the hill have not moved forward. **Clerk to request rumble strips or hatching.**

- iii. **Vobster cross bridge:** Clerk to ask Highways when the repairs are scheduled.
- vi. **Trees in river by Vobster bridge:** Clerk to contact owner of Mells Park to request their removal before the winter sets in and the water levels rise.
- vii. **5Alive:**
The magazine is currently around £200 a month short due to less advertisers and increasing printing costs. A suggestion was made that they should seek funding from the Quarry Community Fund.
- viii. **Trees in river by ironworks:**
Cllr Asquith will assess the trees on the Estate land. The owner of the land further along is unknown but some is the responsibility of the quarry.
- ix. **Shop – early closing hours:**
A few people have raised that the shop closing time does not suit people who work and wish to drop in to get a few items on the way home. Cllr Asquith said that the footfall later in the day is very low and this was probably the reason the decision was taken to close earlier. Cllr Asquith will mention it to the shop committee.

16.10.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____