

**MELLS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)**

**Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 14 February 2023**

**01.02.23 PRESENT:**

Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Steve West, Cllr John Henderson, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Karen Punter, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Vince Turner (from 7.30pm)

**In Attendance:** Joy Book – Clerk

**Members of the public:** 3

**02.02.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Barry Clarke - Mendip Central and East Somerset Councillor

**03.02.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**04.02.23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

i. **Pavilion improvements:** PC were presented with plans to extend the pavilion which would double the size of the current male changing room, move the showers and add a small female changing room with shower and a disabled toilet. The extension would be the same width as the existing building but would extend the length by 6.1m.

It is hoped that funding from the English Cricket Foundation and Football Foundation will cover most of the expected £90-100k . However no funding will be forthcoming at present because the lease has less than 4 years to run. The football club lease the pavilion from the PC who in turn lease it from Lord Asquith. The PC and Estate will look into extending the lease.

All present were supportive of the proposal. The PC would submit the planning application as the leaseholders and will cover the fees which are half price for a PC.

ii. **Nicola Edwards, Village Agent for Community Council for Somerset:** CCS can provide a wide range of services to help local communities. They also look at inequality in rural areas eg. transport and housing issues, what works well and what support maybe required. They can help with all aspects of mental and physical wellbeing (eg. addictions, ethnic minorities, patients leaving hospitals, carers, finding homeless accommodation, adult social care with complex needs, support for those affected by cancer, cost of living, physio and occupational therapy) or signpost you to an organisation that can help. They also work with Rotary and Lions.

Somerset Village & Community Agents provide confidential, practical community-based solutions. A CCS Village Agent can be contacted directly, or by referral through your Doctors surgery or Adult Social Care Services. Leaflets will be available in the café and details will be put in the magazine.

iii. Somerset Conservation want to put Mells on the map. The volvo parked near the Barn has been moved further along the road. The owner is known.

**05.02.23 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** None submitted but regular updates/information received during the past month.

**06.02.23 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** None submitted but regular updates/information received during the past month.

**07.02.23 APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2022**

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

### 08.02.23 MATTERS ARISING

- i. **Telephone box and defibrillator:** *Post meeting note: Now installed and working. Clerk has registered its location.*
- ii. **Quarry noise:** The PC has not received any complaints this month. However, recent monitoring in Mells and Whatley had shown there was a breach of conditions in Whatley which is being investigated to establish whether the noise was actually caused by the quarry. The night time decibel limit is 42 and it registered 47 which is the day time limit. Quarry has spent £40k in the last year on noise reduction.
- iii. **Rectory bus shelter – accumulation of rainwater:** Highways have arranged an inspection.
- iv. **White Bridge – railings:** This mesh is now in place. Thanks were extended to Alan Brady for carrying out the work.
- v. **Barn lease:** The diocese solicitor who was dealing with the lease has retired so the process is not moving forward at present.
- vi. **Trees in river by Vobster bridge:** Cllr West has spoken to Mells Park and they are happy for the tree to be removed in the better weather.
- vii. **5Alive:** The magazine appears to have funding for the rest of 2023. **Clerk to contact the other PCs to discuss its future after this period and whether they would be happy to help with some funding and how much.**
- viii. **Dog waste bins:** The quarry has very kindly agreed to fund up to £1,344.54 for three dog waste bins. Clerk has invoiced the quarry for £1,262.55 which is the cost of the bins (ex VAT) as this is the actual cost to the PC who will claim the VAT back. Following discussion it was agreed to see if the additional bin for the recreation ground would be better placed at the other end by the gates. Clerk to ask Mendip DC if this location is acceptable for emptying. *Post meeting notice: The damaged bin in Fairview has been replaced and another bin installed alongside it.*
- ix. **Emergency/contingency plan and warm spaces:** Clerk was given the names of several people within the village who had agreed to help and will add their contact details to the plan.

### 09.02.23 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:** Mendip DC has said that the proposal is lawful. Mells has been approved for one bike rack (each rack holds 4 bikes) and it is highly likely a second rack will be given. Mendip DC's contractor will install them if everything is in place by the end of March. If not, they will provide up to £1,500 funding for the PC to source their own contractor to carry out the work. The piece of land is now subject to an audit to establish if the proposal is safe as the area is unlit and there would be obstructions on highways land. Clerk has applied for a S115E licence to start this process.
- i. **Footway by quarry:** No further information. It is hoped they will start work before the nesting season.
- iii. **Vobster speed limit:** Cllr Seviour will supply the requested information.
- iv. **Fast traffic coming down Lime Kiln Hill:** Clerk to chase again.
- v. **Vobster cross bridge:** Clerk to chase again.
- vi. **Vobster – drive carefully signs:** Cllr West will attend the next Vobster Trust meeting and present them with the options.

### 10.02.23 PLANNING

- i. **New Applications:** None
- ii. **Planning decisions: 2022/2276/CLP:** Placing of barrel planters and large stones – Land at 372993 148984 Holes Lane to Top Lane: Proposal is lawful
- iii. **Other planning matters:**
  - a) **Old telephone exchange:** No further information.
- iv. **Quarry applications:** Cllr West had attended the Whatley Liaison meeting and reported that the ROMP review is dependent on the outcome of the Westdown application.

**11.02.23 CORRESPONDENCE:** Request from Citizens Advice Mendip for a donation: £200 agreed.

**12.02.23 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Bank account: HSBC 28 January 2023 – £9,526.76  
Barclays December 2022 - £5,323.29

**i. Payment of Accounts**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (January)	£295.44
HMRC PAYE (Period 11)	£70.40
J W Witt (117554) emptying of bins at Rec Ground (DD)	£69.70
3 x dog waste bins and fixings	£1,515.16
Somerset CC – S115E licence for triangle of land	£165.00
TSO Host domain renewal	£9.54
Alan Brady – fitting white bridge mesh	£150.00

**ii. Receipts:** HMRC Vat refund £744.88

**iii. New bank account:** All the forms have been completed and returned to Lloyds.

**13.02.23 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

- i. Local Community Networks:** There are concerns that the local network is becoming Frome centric and not meeting the needs of the rural villages. Cllr Punter agreed to attend meetings if she can by zoom. Cllr Asquith agreed to be the back up attendee.
- ii. Layby by Vobster bus shelter:** This is being used to dump litter and it was suggested that it should be filled in to deter this happening. It is believed the land is owned by Mells Park who do not have an issue with it being filled in. Clerk to confirm that it is not Highways owned land.
- iii. Somerset Bus Partnership:** Looking at trying to link rail and bus routes to encourage use of public transport. A link from Westbury to Radstock is unlikely as the infrastructure is not in place due to a length of single track near Frome. Five buses go into the centre of Frome but none currently go to the train station.
- iv. Bin in recreation ground:** This is being used by residents for their residential waste. This month's bill has an excess weight of 80kg which has cost the PC an extra £20. PC will look at locking the bin when events are not being held on the recreation ground.
- v. Defibrillator pads – Post office:** These have been replaced. Clerk will arrange re-imburement.
- vi. Mells Pipeworks:** The buildings are constantly lit and appear to be brighter recently. Clerk to contact and establish if there have been any recent changes.

**14.02.23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_