

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL (mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 11 July 2023

01.07.23 PRESENT:

Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Alan Brady

In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk

Members of the public: 2

02.07.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr John Henderson, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr Karen Punter, Cllr Barry Clarke - Mendip Central and East Somerset Councillor

03.07.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

04.07.23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

05.07.23 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: (Report sent in absence)

- i. **Three-year Council Finances:** When the 2023/24 budget was agreed in February 2023 the forecast gap over the next three years was outlined as £100m. However the latest Executive report states that the expected gap for 2024/25 of circa £40m will now be considerably higher. The report also states that it is imperative that action be taken to identify significant savings. The same Executive report also shows an accumulative budget gap of £98.8m in 2026/27.
- ii. **Waste Services Industrial Action:** Waste Service members of the Unite union intended to start industrial action on 12 July but this has now been postponed for two weeks.
- iii. **Customer Access Points:** From July, Customers who need in-person help or advice from Somerset Council can find support in all Somerset Libraries. They will be able to set up virtual, face-to-face meetings on the spot so people can speak directly to a member of the Customer Service team. The support will be provided during library opening hours, which, in most cases, includes weekends.
- iv. **Surface dressing programme:** The Highways team have started to surface dress (a recognised maintenance technique for sealing a road, improving skid resistance, and preventing water getting under the surface) some roads as part of the summer maintenance programme. The work can only be carried out in dry weather, so the Council's surface dressing programme is flexible, and dates can change at short notice. Roads which are being surface dressed can be found here: www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/surface-dressing/.

06.07.23 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 13 JUNE 2023

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

07.07.23 MATTERS ARISING

- i. **Barn lease:** A draft lease has been returned to the Diocese. If agreed, it will be passed to the Barn committee and finally to the PC for approval.
- ii. **Pavilion improvements:** Awaiting planning decision. Funding the planned improvements will be an issue as there is only a few years left on the lease. The Recreation Ground insurance had increased by nearly £800 which was not acceptable to the PC. After discussion it was agreed to pay £1,082.07 with Mells Sports and Recreation Ground Company paying the rest. The Company will need to find a way to fund the insurance in the future as this is fast becoming an expense the PC cannot afford.
- iii. **Millennial seat:** Cllr Brady has repaired this bench and the one by the Cricket Pavilion.

08.07.23 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:** Consultation period ends 16 July. If no objections are received, it is hoped the licence will be issued for signing and the works can move forward. *Post meeting notice: One objection has been received. The objections raised will now be investigated and according to how complicated they are to address, there maybe an increased fee for the PC to cover.*
- ii. **Footway by quarry:** No action has been taken yet.
- iii. **Vobster – drive carefully signs:** Clerk has accepted the new quote which was £273 higher than the previous one.
- iv. **Passing places – Selwood Street:** Clerk to chase Highways again. The placement of larger signage in strategic places (by the Post Office, the garages by The Talbot and near Longfield) around the village is being looked into. Cllr Seewooruttun will investigate.
- v. **Accidents on Park Corner:** No response from Highways. Clerk to chase white lining.
- vi. **Fingerposts:** No response from contractor. Clerk to chase.
- vii. **HGVs – Top Road:** No response from Highways. Clerk to chase.

09.07.23 PLANNING

- i. **New Applications:**
2023/1095/TCA: Fell box elder, reduce cherry by 1m – Crofters, Little Green – for tree officer.
2023/1230/VRC: Application to vary/remove condition 2 on planning approval 2021/2442/FUL – wider bi-fold doors, addition of doors and Juliet balcony – Land adjoining Acrewood, Little Green – no objections.
- ii. **Planning decisions:** None
- iii. **Other planning matters:**
a) **Old telephone exchange:** Awaiting further information from the Enforcement Officer.

10.07.23 CORRESPONDENCE: None

11.07.23 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds: 30 June – £18,100.22
Barclays at 20 June 2023 - £5,341.01

i. **Payment of Accounts:**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (June)	£365.84
HMRC PAYE (Period 4) – no payment due overpayment on account	£0.00
Insurance premium - Zurich	£456.56
J W Witt – bin emptying	£100.63
West Country Handyman (footpath strimming)	£150.00
Defib Sales and Training Ltd – defib training	£358.80
Recreation Ground Insurance	£1,082.07
Alan Aked – internal audit	£60.00

- ii. **Receipts:** Barclays interest - £11.11
- iii. **Internal Auditor's report:** There are no noted concerns and all internal processes have been carried out correctly.

12.07.23 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Land being sprayed with weedkiller:** The land near Gay Street has been sprayed on several occasions which has drifted into a residents garden causing harm to their plants. Owner/tenant will be asked to refrain from spraying near the property.
- ii. **Allotments on edge of parish:** The Estate offered the land for Coleford residents to use as allotments. Vehicles are currently unable to exit from the far end due to a large stone blocking

the gate. Clerk to ask the Estate Manager to arrange for its removal to reduce the numbers of vehicles exiting near the Quay.

- iii. **Vobster bridge repairs: No response from Highways. Clerk to chase.**
- iv. **Overgrown bush by Honeysuckle Cottage, Vobster: Clerk to request it is cut back.**
- v. **Cycle track:** The bridge as you take the route through Great Elm down to Buckland is now opened. It is currently gravelled but will be tarmacked later this year.
- vi. **Lime Kiln Quarry:** The site has recently been sold. Both the new owner and their plans for the quarry are unknown. Any changes to the quarry would be subject to a planning application. The PC will ensure the parish is notified when one is submitted and will also monitor the condition of the roads.

13.06.23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 12 September 2023 at 7.15pm in the Barn. **No meeting in August.**

Meeting closed at 8.05pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____