

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL (mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 13 August 2024

- 01.08.24 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr Clare Asquith
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk, Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Council
Members of the public: 0
- 02.08.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr David Seviour
- 03.08.24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 04.08.24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None
- 05.08.24 APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 9 JULY 2024**
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.08.24 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
- i. **Reduction in Council Tax support:** Somerset residents are being encouraged to have their say on possible changes to a scheme which offers financial support to working age adults on low incomes. options for consideration include reducing the maximum available discount from 100% to 75%. More information can be found at <https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/ctr/> The consultation runs until 1 October, with any changes coming into effect from 1 April 2025. Clerk to write expressing concerns.
 - iii. **Enforcement officers:** There are now 4 officers at Somerset Council which are dealing with 1,000+ cases. Cases where there is a health and safety issue will be prioritised.
 - iv. **Saxonvale:** The saga of this site continues. After deliberation Acorn's proposal was accepted, only for them to later withdraw.
- 07.08.24 MATTERS ARISING**
- i. **Barn lease:** As the PC does not have a common seal it was agreed that Cllr John Earl and Cllr John Henderson would sign the lease when it is ready.
 - ii. **Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** The Estate Manager has no issue with the lease being with the Company although this is not the directors preferred option. Clerk to request the directors attend the October PC meeting to discuss the way forward.
 - iii. **Councillor vacancies – Co-option:** Clerk to put a notice in the magazine and on Mells Matters.
 - iv. **Silt under Vobster bridge:** No further information. (Ask David to follow up)
 - v. **Quarry noise:** The primary works shut down at 11.30pm and re-open at 6.00am. It is the movement of stock at night to load onto the trains which appears to be the cause of noise at night.
 - vi. **Debris accumulating by White Bridge:** This has now moved past the bridge.
 - vii. **BT Cabinet:** The cabinet is still in situ.
- 08.08.24 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:**
- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:** Cllr Turner will look into getting some topsoil raked over the area. The plan is for the grass to be allowed to grow longer near the walled area to encourage wildlife and to have a more formal cut area at the front for picnicking/seating. The memorial tree will be near the wall.

- ii. **Fast traffic by Claveys Farm & Park Corner:** Cllr Seewooruttun has spoken to Sara Davies at Highways and reported:-
Claveys - Evidence is required of incidences and repeat offenders. Possibility of a speed indicator device, but the PC would have to fund this.
Park Corner – reflector panels will be placed behind the give way signs to make them more noticeable, reinstatement of the white lines and the addition of rumble bars will be scheduled.
- iii. **Traffic on Holes Lane:** Sara Davies, Highways is looking into this.
- iv. **Speeding cars through Vobster:** Cllr Brady reported that the police will drive through the village at random times during the evening for the next 2-3 weeks.
- v. **Dirty fingerposts/signs near the quarry:** Clerk to send contractor information to Whatley PC.
- vi. **White lines – Woodlands End:** Highways has forwarded their planned improvements to the white lining etc in this area.
- vii. **Streetlights – Longfield:** Cllr Barry Clarke was asked to assist and now 5 out of the 8 streetlights are working.

09.08.24 PLANNING

- i. **New applications:**
2024/1135/FUL: Change use from commercial storage (B8) to residential (use Class C3). Single storey extension & erection of garage – The Engine Shed, Upper Vobster – no objections
- ii. **Planning decisions:** None
- iii. **Other planning matters:**
 - a) **Old telephone exchange:** There is evidence of continuing building works.
 - b) **Quarry applications:**

10.08.24 CORRESPONDENCE:

- i. **Idverde – grounds maintenance changes:** Somerset Council is looking at moving verge cutting, litter/dog waste bin emptying and other services to be supplied inhouse (from June 2025) so their current contractor (Idverde) is offering to continue the services either as a full asset transfer or on a maintenance agreement. They currently cut 3128 sq metres around the village. To await further information from Somerset Council.
- ii. **Somerset Council – charges for litter and dog waste bin emptying:** It is the intention of Somerset Council to charge for every litter/dog waste bin empty from April 2025. The figure of £7.82/per bin lift was mentioned as being what other councils are currently charging although the actual figure is yet to be confirmed. Mellis has 6 dog waste bins (although it is hoped that the two in Fairfield will be classed as one lift) and 4 litter bins. If all are emptied on a fortnightly basis (at the price above) this is an additional cost of around £1,830 to the parish council which would need to be added to the precept.

11.08.24 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds: 25 July – £12,087.29
Barclays at 20 June 2024 - £10,429.86

- i. **Payment of accounts:**

| | |
|--|---------|
| Clerk's Salary & expenses (July) | £319.57 |
| HMRC PAYE (Period 5) | £76.60 |
| J W Witt – bin emptying (139978) | £79.42 |
| 12 Cloud monthly payroll fee | £6.00 |
| Defib Warehouse – pads to shop defibrillator | £130.80 |
| Nigel Dunster – war memorial tidying | £20.00 |
| SALC affiliation fee | £170.98 |
- ii. **Receipts:** None
- iii. **Transfer of funds to the Barclays account:** Clerk has calculated the expected expenditure for the rest of the year and it was agreed a further transfer of £3,000 to the Barclays account would be made to gain more interest.

- iv. **Barclays account – setting up direct debit:** Both Cllr Earl and Cllr Henderson now have limited access to online banking (they can only see statements and not action anything). Cllr Henderson to contact Barclays to see how they can access more functions.

12.08.24 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Overgrown vegetation on triangle at top of Lime Kiln Road:** Clerk to ask contractor to cut back to improve visibility on the junction.
- ii. **Fingerpost on triangle at top of Lime Kiln Road:** Clerk to ask contractor to repaint it.
- iii. **Water leak:** Cllr Brady reported that the recent leak has now been fixed.
- iv. **Works at Bridge Cottage:** To be monitored.

13.08.24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 8 October at **7.15pm** in the Barn

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____