

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL

(mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of the meeting of Mells Parish Council on Tuesday 9th July 2019 at Mells Barn

1. **PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl, - Chair, Cllr H Leakey, Cllr S West, Cllr J Seewooruttun, The Countess of Oxford & Asquith, Cllr J Henderson, Cllr V Turner,

In Attendance: Joy Book, Clerk

Members of the public: None

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr E Costelloe, Cllr D Seviour, Cllr A Barkshire (District Councillor)
Absent : Cllr L Turner, Cllr A Brady

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** John Henderson declared an interest in planning application 2019/1465/HSE and took no part in the decision making process.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 11th JUNE 2019:** Minutes had been circulated previously and it was resolved that the minutes be adopted. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

6. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS:**

7. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**

- i. **Superfast Broadband to Mells:** A revised plan should be available from Connecting Devon and Somerset by the end of this month. A copy will be sent to John MacDonald to review. Voneous previously offered a line of sight system which was not suitable for Mells due to the topography. However, they are now moving towards fibre so they maybe revisited to assess what service they can offer now.
- ii. **Old Telephone Exchange:** The Enforcement Officer was surprised to hear that an Enforcement Order had been placed on the property. This apparently had never been carried out so the parish council had been misinformed previously. The officer listed that their role is to identify the matter in law, affirm intentions and circumstances, make planning judgements when called to do so and exercise enforcement action which is only taken as a last resort. This is considered a fair system and where the matter becomes more complex and contentious, the council must be able to demonstrate, notwithstanding timeframes and weight/pressures of all considerations, that a reasonable process has been followed and that all opportunities have been exhausted before taking enforcement action. The progress of this case is slow and if the owner continues to show further delay the next step in the process would be considered. The officer concluded that he is employed by the council to monitor such cases but is not charged to speed things up unnecessarily but to simply pursue due process and skills of persuasion to reach a solution.
- iii. **Asset List:** The list needs to be updated and a column added to reflect the actual value of the items now taking into depreciation. A query was raised about the tractor shed and machinery which still apparently in the ownership of the parish council according to the list. Clerk to contact the Mells Sport and Recreational Company Ltd to establish whether they are now responsible for these items. Jan Seewooruttun will assess the insurance for the to see what it covers. A discussion followed about the future of the pavilion which is

falling into disrepair. Previously fees from the organisations using the pavilion paid for the utilities, insurance etc but it was agreed around 5 years ago to form a company to oversee it. Community investment over the years has dwindled dramatically. The play area is run by a subsidiary of the company. The PC will discuss the matter over the next few months and raise awareness for the need for fundraising. Clerk to contact Edmund Costelloe for clarity of the structure of the company and finances. Clare Asquith felt the venue would be ideal for a youth club. This will be re-visited when the venue is fully functional.

- iv. **Grievance Panel members:** Clare Asquith and Helen Leakey agreed to be on the panel.
- v. **Broken stile – Vobster:** Clerk has followed up with Somerset but has not had a response.
- vi. **Giant Hogweed:** The weed by the bridge has sprung up again. Clare Asquith to action its permanent removal.

8. HIGHWAY ISSUES:

- i. **Fingerpost finial:** Clerk has contacted several departments at Highways and not received any responses. There is a list of contractors that undertake works on fingerposts and these will now be contacted direct by the Clerk.
- ii. **Road surface by The Talbot:** Highways has carried out an inspection and marked a couple of areas for attention although it would appear that this will not address the issue which is not evident unless there has been a lot of rain.
- iii. **Lack of 30mph signage in Vobster:** Clerk has contacted Highways but has not received a response.

14. PLANNING:

- i. **New applications:**
2019/1465/HSE: Single storey timber conservatory – Stoneleigh, Somers Hill to Mells Green – No objections
- ii. **Mendip decisions:** None

15. CORRESPONDENCE:

- i. **Road closure - Whatley Quarry:** The recent road closure for much needed works, resulted in large lorries driving around and through the village. Signs indicating that works were being undertaken only appeared the day before and no proper diversion was put in place. It is believed that due to the emergency nature of the works there was not time to follow the normal warning and signage procedures. The repairs have significantly improved the road surface.
- ii. **Landrover track – Mells Green:** A landrover has been seen off roading by Mells Green. Matter to be reported to police if the registration plate can be recorded.
- iii. **Vehicle speeding towards people:** A white Audi has been driving at people in Mells and Frome. The police are aware of who the driver is.
- iv. **Highways - Old Wells to Frome Road Consultation:** No action.
- v. **Overhanging branches – Longfield:** Aster's contractors are currently very busy undertaking other works but it is hoped that the works will be carried out by the end of July.

16. PAYMENTS, RECEIPTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Balances as at 28 June 2019: HSBC - £15,903.89. Barclays £5,305.52

- i. J Book Clerk's Salary & expenses (June) £244.51

Trip to Mells (@ 45p/mile)	3.60
Phone line rental	5.50
Utilities	<u>4.00</u>

£13.10

HMRC PAYE (Period 4)

£53.00

Jon Goode – footpath clearance

£30.00

Approved - all in favour

ii. **Receipts:** None

iii. **Internal Auditor's report:** The Internal Auditor has approved the accounts and found all matters to be in order.

iv. **External Auditor – Exemption Certificate:** The external auditor has confirmed receipt of the signed exemption certificate and is not expecting to carry out an intermediate review.

v. **MDC Election costs:** Invoice received from MDC for the recent uncontested election. Total cost £118.50 (election services £35.00, Postage £16.50, Printing £22.00 and Clerical £45.00).

13. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA/ITEMS TO REPORT

i. **Bus shelter – Vobster Cross:** The roof has developed a hole and a new sheet needs to be installed. Clerk to find out who carried out the previous repair/contact or another local builder.

ii. **Length measurement restrictions on signs:** Steve West had spoken to a lorry driver by the bridge to the pipeworks and was told that the signage nearby had given a maximum length of 26ft. A lorry had recently got stuck on Vobster bridge and he wondered if signs are still being put up in feet and this is misleading drivers who are reading it for metres. Clerk to investigate.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 13th August at 7.15pm

Meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Print Name.....

[Handwritten signature]
[Handwritten name: JANE GARDNER]

[Handwritten date: 13/8/19]