

## UNCONFIRMED

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

#### **Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 11 June 2024**

**01.06.24 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Alan Brady,  
**In Attendance:** Joy Book – Clerk  
**Members of the public:** 3

**02.06.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Council

**03.06.24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**04.06.24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

i. **Quarry & cement lorries on Holes Lane:** Resident had previously forwarded a video which gave an insight to their concerns regarding the number of heavy vehicles using Holes Lane. The vehicles are causing damage to boundary walls and making it incredibly dangerous for anyone walking/cycling in the area. Cars are frequently having to pull into resident's driveways to allow the lorries through. This has created a pile of debris in one resident's garden of wing mirrors, trims etc. Lorries are having to back up to the crossroads to help alleviate the congestion which can last for over 20 minutes.

It is believed this route was originally agreed due to the road having the lowest population of houses, however the cement and quarry works have increased significantly over the years and it maybe time to review the situation. Cllr Seewooruttun understood that lorries loaded with pipes should leave Marshalls by going to the right which avoids Holes Lane but it appears not all are adhering to this. Clerk to confirm this instruction with Marshalls and if correct, request that Marshalls reiterate this to their drivers. Clerk will also contact the quarry to see if they can reduce movement down the road and Highways to see if there is need for a review or any signage that may help.

The Estate will look at cutting back the overhanging trees which are causing vegetation to accumulate on the highway and therefore reducing the available road area.

ii. **Mells Fete:** This was a great success and brought the community together although it only just broke even. The organisers are looking at running it for two years then having a year off. They are also looking at including the Recreation Ground to help raise funds for it.

Somerset Highways has confirmed that pedestrians should not be charged to access a highway. It would be acceptable to request a donation or if a fixed fee is charged, another access point that is not on the Highway could be used.

**05.06.24 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AND PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 14 MAY 2024**

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

**06.06.24 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**

**Voluntary redundancies update:** In total 201 applications for voluntary redundancy have been accepted by Somerset Council at a total cost of £12.8m with an expected ongoing wage bill reduction of £8.2m. The Council needs to reduce the number of staff by approximately 25%.

**Compulsory redundancies update:** The Council has launched a 45-day consultation on restructuring with those receiving compulsory redundancy leaving the authority between November 2024 and March 2025.

**General Election Voter Registration:** For residents who have recently turned 18 or just moved home, it is important to act to ensure that they are registered to vote in the General Election. The deadline to register is midnight on Tuesday 18 June. Applications can be made on line at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm Wednesday 19 June. Those who are registered to vote at the polling station but do not have an accepted photo ID can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate before the deadline at 5pm on Wednesday 26 June via: [www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate](http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate) The deadline to apply for a proxy vote is 5pm on Wednesday 26 June.

**Safe disposal of small gas canisters:** Due to the increasing number of gas canisters being put out with recycling, crews have had to manually check recycling ahead of the automated sorting process to avoid fires. The Bright Blue Bag can be used to recycle empty aerosol bottles but should never be used to dispose of gas canisters. Gas canisters must be taken a local household recycling site.

**Road surface dressing:** Somerset Council's new partner Kiely Bros are launching a programme of road repairs across the County's network this month. Details of this year programme can be found at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/surface-dressing/>

**Volunteer to help Home Library Service Users:** The Home Library Service (HLS) is looking for people who can lead teams of volunteers in Bridgwater, Wellington, Yeovil, Frome, Chard and Crewkerne. The HLS is free and available to anyone who cannot visit a library in person – the housebound, carers, or people vulnerable because of their health. The Lead Volunteers liaise with Somerset Libraries, keep in touch with local volunteers and arrange cover for sickness, and use their local knowledge to support customers and the Home Library Service

#### **07.06.24 MATTERS ARISING**

- i. **Barn lease:** Cllr Earl reported that the 30 year lease on the paddock is nearly finalised. Once in place, the money ring fenced to upgrade the car park, which includes a path for wheelchairs, will be released to start those works.
- ii. **Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** No further information.
- iii. **Councillor vacancies – Co-option:** No applications have been received to date.
- iv. **Silt under Vobster bridge:** No further information.
- v. **Old GPO box on verge – road to Leigh on Mendip:** Openreach has agreed to remove it but could not give a timescale.
- vi. **Crates by defibrillator – Post Office:** These are now being placed away from the access to the defibrillator.
- vii. **Trees overhanging telephone lines – Little Green:** An Openreach engineer has visited the site but the outcome is unknown.
- viii. **Quarry noise:** The noise levels have been much better recently but this is due to the wind going in a northerly direction. Cllr West mentioned that he did not think that some of the noise was due to drivers changing gear as they come up the steep face as the lorries are automatic. Cllrs Asquith and West will visit the viewing platform together and assess where/what the noise is coming from. The quarry is thinking about putting CCTV cameras on the viewing platform as there has been some vandalism.

#### **08.06.24 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:**

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:** The levelling work has been delayed. Cllr Earl to make enquiries.
- ii. **Overgrown bush by Honeysuckle Cottage, Vobster:** Highways has visited the site again and correspondence will be forwarded to the owner via the letting agent.
- iii. **Stone baskets on Park Corner:** No further information.
- iv. **Fingerposts by Vobster Inn and leaning post top of Conduit Hill:** The Vobster post has been refurbished and stabilised. Cllr West will straighten the Conduit Hill post.
- v. **Fast traffic by Claveys Farm:** Clerk has contacted Highways regarding the installation of camera signs but has not received a response yet.

vi. **Public path diversion order – FR10/4, FR10/5 & FR10/6:** No objections.

#### 09.06.24 **PLANNING**

i. **New applications:**

**2024/0907/TCA:** Lawson cypress (fell) – The Beeches, Top Lane: For planning officer

ii. **Planning decisions:** None

iii. **Other planning matters:**

a) **Old telephone exchange:** No further information.

b) **Quarry applications:** No further information.

#### 10.06.24 **CORRESPONDENCE:**

i. **Email from resident regarding the number of wild animal deaths on roads:** Resident has approached several organisations to raise awareness of animal deaths on the road and wishes for various actions to be taken. Clerk had advised that any extra signage etc would need to be approved by Highways who are very short of funds at present. Clerk to write to resident suggesting that they write an article about their concerns for the magazine.

#### 11.06.24 **ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Bank account: Lloyds: 31 May 2024 – £16,773.93

Barclays at 20 March 2024 - £10,394.07

i. **Payment of accounts:**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (May)	£319.57
HMRC PAYE (Period 3)	£76.60
J W Witt – bin emptying (137394)	£108.62
Recreation ground grant towards annual insurance fee	£1,357.26
Parish Council annual insurance	£484.49
Hadyn West – footpath strimming	£90.00
12 Cloud monthly payroll fee	£6.00
Nigel Dunster – clean and weed war memorial	£20.00
Alan Aked – Internal audit	£60.00

ii. **Receipts:** None

iii. **Barclays account:** No further information.

iv. **Internal auditor's report:** Annual accounts have been approved with no concerns raised.

v. **Financial regulations:** NALC issued updated regulations in April which the Clerk had adjusted to meet the needs of Mellis PC's financial situation. All present agreed to adopt the previously circulated regulations.

#### 12.06.24 **ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

i. **September meeting:** The clerk is away for the September meeting so it was agreed to cancel it.

ii. **Overgrown vegetation near junctions:** Many thanks were extended to Mark Jones who has strimmed several areas near junctions around the village.

iii. **Pot hole repairs:** Some repairs have been 'patched' but the work is rather poor and unlikely to last long.

iv. **Lock up:** The Estate will see if anything can be done to improve the appearance without being too invasive.

v. **Street lights – Longfield:** Cllr Seewooruttun has been in contact with Somerset County and National Grid to have the lights repaired.

**14.06.24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 9 July 2024 at **7.15pm** in the Barn

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

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

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

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