

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL (mellsparishcouncil.org.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 13 December 2022

01.12.22 PRESENT:

Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Karen Punter, Cllr John Henderson, Cllr Clare Asquith
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk,
Members of the public: One

02.12.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Alison Barkshire – District Councillor, Cllr Barry Clarke - Mendip Central and East Somerset Councillor **Absent:** Cllr Vince Turner

03.12.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

04.12.22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

i. **5Alive magazine:**

The long term future of the magazine is still under threat despite the recent financial help offered for which he is very grateful. Revenue from advertisers is the main income but some have withdrawn due to costs. Most advertisers run from April to March so Peter plans to increase the costs then but more advertisers may leave because of the increases. Costs for printing 800 copies a month have gone up from £400/month to £550/month. Enquiries maybe made to establish if 800 copies are still required as this could reduce some of the costs although not that dramatically, but a saving nevertheless. One PC has offered £100/month which will cover the costs of two magazines a year.

The PC asked for a business plan to give a better idea of the likely shortfalls for the coming year and one idea to help was to underwrite costs to £1,000 if it was required but hopefully not all of that amount would be required. To be reviewed at the next meeting.

05.12.22 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

- i. **Unitary Authority:** Mendip DC are very occupied progressing everything to go Unitary.
- ii. **Free carparking** from 17th December in towns.
- iii. **Energy efficiency MDC**, in partnership with Lendology, are offering loans to householders wanting to improve energy efficiency in their home. www.lendology.org.uk or tel: 01823 461099.

06.12.22 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Apologies received

07.12.22 APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2022
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

08.12.22 MATTERS ARISING

i. **Telephone box and defibrillator:**

The defibrillator has not been installed yet. Cllr Asquith to follow up.

- ii. **Quarry noise:**
Clerk reported that there had been 15 complaints from 2 people in the last month, all but 2 were received between 8-14 November.
- iii. **Rectory bus shelter:**
Cllr Asquith reported that the land in front of the bus shelter is not owned by the Estate. Clerk to approach Highways. Chair will provide photos.
- iv. **White Bridge – railings:**
Chair has received a quote for £150 for the supply and fitting of a safety mesh. Quote was accepted and contractor will be asked to commence the work.
- v. **Barn lease:**
No further information.
- vi. **Abandoned cars in rec car park and Selwood Street:**
Post meeting note: Mendip DC will be placing a notice on the vehicle on 15 December if they can get emailed permission to enter the land as it privately owned by the Estate. The notice will give the owner 14 days notice to remove their vehicle before further action is taken. The abandoned Volvo has been reported to the Police by Mendip DC.
- vii. **Trees in river by Vobster bridge:**
One tree has been removed but another is in a perilous situation and will become an issue if water levels raise. Clerk to approach Mells Park Estate again.
- viii. **5Alive:**
As 04.12.22.
- x. **Shop – early closing hours:**
Cllr Asquith reported that when this was trialled previously there was not enough uptake to make it worthwhile. A suggestion was made that perhaps one night a week could be late opening. Cllr Asquith to follow up.

09.12.22 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:**
Clerk has submitted an application for Certificate of Lawfulness which has now been verified.
- ii. **Footway by quarry:**
The hedge appears to have been cut back but there has been no other obvious changes to the verge.
- iii. **Vobster speed limit:**
Cllr Seviour will submit all the required information over the Christmas period. Cllr West to look at the details for the village signs.
- iv. **Fast traffic coming down Lime Kiln Hill:**
Highways has not responded to request for hatching/rubble bars. Clerk to chase.
- v. **Vobster cross bridge:**
Details have been forwarded to the Bridge team but they have not responded. Clerk to chase.
- v. **Blocked drains – Selwood Street:** These have been cleared.
- vi. **Dog waste bins:** Neighbourhood Services have not responded to request to increase the emptying frequency. The quarry have received a request from someone asking if they would fund a litter bin. The origin of this request is unknown. Clerk to approach the quarry to see if they would fund one/two dog waste bins. *Post meeting note:* The quarry would be interested and have asked for an approximate cost.
- vii. **Emergency/contingency plan and warm spaces:**
Various names have been put forward as possible contacts in the case of emergency. All will be approached to establish if they would be willing or not. The Barn and church will be put forward as places of refuge for Mells and the Vobster Inn for Vobster. Venues to be contacted

to confirmation that they can be used. The café is also free after 3.00pm. Clerk to look into funding for warm spaces.

10.12.22 PLANNING

i. **New Applications:**

2022/2205/HSE: Erection of single storey extension to west elevation, single storey porch to south elevation and a timber framed conservatory to the north elevation – Vobster House, Stock Hill – no objections

ii. **Planning decisions:** None

iii. **Other planning matters – Old telephone exchange:**

Enforcement has responded saying that an operational development gains immunity after a period of 4 years. The owner has been contacted and informed Enforcement that they will be tidying up the property week commencing 12 December and will be appointing an agent in the new year with a view to securing residential permission.

iv. **Quarry applications:** No further information.

11.12.22 CORRESPONDENCE: None

12.12.22 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: HSBC 28 October 2022 - £14,257.87
Barclays June 2022 - £5,320.32

i. **Payment of Accounts – for November**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (November)	£271.11
Mendip District Council – planning application fees and maps	£167.50
HMRC PAYE (Period 9)	£64.40
Mells with Vobster PCC – Churchyard grant	£2,500
J W Witt (115482) emptying of bins at Rec Ground (DD)	£66.70
Viscount Asquith's 1991 Settlement Trust Fund rent increase arrears to Sept 2021 and rent to March 2023	£465.00

ii. **Receipts:** £1,000 Mells Park annual solar array

iii. **New bank account:** Clerk has submitted the required information and everyone has passed the first part of the verification process. Forms will now be forwarded by Lloyds for completion. The whole process will take at least 6 weeks. The Barclays Bank mandate is ready to send.

iv. **Budget and precept:**

To be confirmed at the next meeting.

v. **Clerk's salary increase:**

NALC has issued the scales for 2022-2023. Scale SCP has risen from £10.63/hr to £11.63 equating to an increase of approximately £364 per annum back paid to April 2022.

13.12.22 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

i. **Police meeting:** Cllr Punter had attended the recent Police meeting and reported that the police are keen to engage with communities. Clerk to invite PCSO to meeting.

ii. **ROMP review:** Following on from the presentation by Whatley PC, Cllr West had made some enquiries. There is no ROMP review being carried out and there is unlikely to be one in the near future as there is no one to undertake the task. Therefore it was felt that it was inappropriate to carry out a questionnaire at this time within Mells. Clerk to inform Whatley PC. However, a unbiased and independent questionnaire to all Mells residents to gauge whether they are affected by the quarry in any way would be advantageous as there are no figures to reflect this.

14.12.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 10 January 2023 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Printed name: _____