

**UNCONFIRMED**

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

**Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 9 January 2024**

- 01.01.24 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl - Chair, Cllr Steve West, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun  
**In Attendance:** Joy Book – Clerk,  
**Members of the public:** 0
- 02.01.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr John Henderson, Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr Barry Clarke - Mendip Central and East Somerset Councillor
- 03.01.24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 04.01.24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None
- 05.01.24 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2023**  
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.01.24 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** (report sent in absence)
- i. **Council's Financial Position:** As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced a 6.1% increase in Core Spending Power for Somerset Council. In November, Somerset Council's Executive declared a financial emergency with a projected budget gap of £100m for 2024/25. The Council is currently inviting the public to have their say on finances and council services. The consultation is open to everyone and can be found at [www.somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/budget-consultation-2024-2025/](http://www.somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/budget-consultation-2024-2025/) or can be completed in libraries across Somerset. The consultation closes on 22 January.
- ii. **End of Charges for DIY Waste:** Following a recent change of Government legislation current charges for disposing of construction and demolition materials including: asbestos, plasterboard, hardcore and rubble from household DIY projects have been removed. Each calendar month every household will be able to take up to eight, 50 litre sacks (or equivalent 2m sheets of asbestos or plasterboard) free of charge to a recycling site over a maximum of four visits in a month. Households will need to pre-book trips to dispose of this DIY waste, telling the council the amount of material they are disposing (up to 8x50 litre sacks per month) and the number of times they will need to visit (up to four visits per month). Disposal of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble in excess of the free allowance can be paid for online.
- iii. **Health Research Grant:** The National Institute for Health and Care Research has awarded Somerset £5m over five years to form a Health Determinants Research Collaboration – a new research partnership to improve health and reduce health inequalities across the county. Somerset's HDRC will focus on the building blocks of good health such as housing, education and the physical environment to tackle the root causes of health inequalities and wider deprivation.
- 07.01.24 MATTERS ARISING**
- i. **Barn lease:** Slowly progressing. Letters are being sent to the PCC and Diocese in the next few days.
- i. **Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** Discussions regarding the lease and financial way forward have begun as there is now only two years to run on the lease.
- ii. **Overgrown bush by Honeysuckle Cottage, Vobster:** Highways have inspected the area and are following the matter up.

- iii. **Councillor vacancies – Co-option:** Prospective co-optees can now be approached. Clerk to advertise the two vacancies in the magazine.
- iv. **Vobster noticeboards:** Cllr Brady has inspected the boards and quoted £84 for all the repairs, which was approved. Many thanks were extended to Alan for all the work he has done for the PC and shop which is greatly appreciated.
- v. **LCN's – councillor to attend:** Cllr Asquith agreed to attend the meetings.

#### 08.01.24 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane and area in front of Vobster Inn:** Arrangements are being made to purchase the planters.
- ii. **Accidents on Park Corner:** The lines have now been re-instated.
- vi. **HGVs – Top Road:** Highways is looking into the matter.
- iv. **Pothole – near Vobster bridge:** This is not deemed to be on highways land. However a further photo, more accurate photo, will be sent to Highways of its location.

#### 09.01.24 PLANNING

- i. **New Applications: 2023/2397/VRC:** Application to vary condition 2 of planning approval 2021/2442/FUL (erection of 1 dwelling and detached garage, formation of new access and associated development) – Land adjoining Acrewood, Little Green. The plans show that the porch area which will now be two storey to incorporate an additional bathroom – no objections.
- ii. **Planning decisions:** None
- iii. **Other planning matters:**
  - a) **Old telephone exchange:** No further information.

#### 09.01,24 CORRESPONDENCE: None

#### 11.01.24 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds: 29 December – £10,487.36  
Barclays at 20 December 2023 - £5,373.97

- i. **Payment of accounts:**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (December)	£319.57
HMRC PAYE (Period 10)	£76.60
J W Witt – bin emptying (130931)	£100.63
TSOHost – website annual hosting fee	£86.26
Cllr Alan Brady – noticeboard expenses	£84.00
- ii. **Receipts – Barclays interest** £18.65
- iii. **Finalisation of budget for 2024/25:** No changes were made to the previously presented budget.
- iv. **Finalisation of precept for 2024/25:** It was agreed that, in the light of Somerset Council probably withdrawing services in the near future that the PC would need to cover, the precept would rise from £13,000 to £15,000.

#### 12.01.24 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Silt under Vobster bridge:** Cllr Seviour to contact the River Authority.
- ii. **Quarry open meeting:** This is being held on 18 January to show and discuss the future plans for the quarry.
- iii. **Old GPO box on verge:** Clerk to establish who is responsible for it and ask them to remove it.
- iv. **Drains – Rectory Corner:** The drain has been cleared but the grid has been left at an angle with a cone on it. Clerk to follow up with Highways. The recently reported blocked drains in Vobster have been cleared with the contractor working all day in the rain. Clerk to thank Highways for resolving the blockages.

- v. **Abandoned car – Selwood Street:** The car has been present for several weeks and at first appeared to be awaiting a tyre repair but has subsequently appears to be losing more pieces. *Post meeting note: Car is currently insured and taxed so although it is unsightly, there is little that can be done.*
- vi. **PCSO meetings in Café:** Cllr Brady reported that these will recommence and be held monthly. PCSO Will Mortimer will attend. Café will advertise the date once it has been confirmed.

**13.01.24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 13 February 2024 at the later time of **7.15pm** in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

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

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

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