

UNCONFIRMED

MELLS PARISH COUNCIL (mells-pc.gov.uk)

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 10 June 2025

- 01.06.25 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Clare Asquith
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk
Members of the public: 0
- 02.06.25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr Steve West, Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Council
- 03.06.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 04.06.25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None
- 05.06.25 APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES, ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2025**
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.06.25 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (Forwarded prior to meeting)
- i. £101million Budget Gap:** Somerset Council must find £101million in savings for the next financial year to balance its budget.
 - ii. New Finance Officer:** Somerset Council has appointed its third Interim Chief Finance Officer (CFO) in under a year. Having failed to appoint a suitable permanent CFO, a further interim has been appointed at a cost of £270,000 for nine months— £120,000 above the total annual budget allocated for the post. This additional cost is having to be met through the capitalisation directive.
 - iii. Pay & Grading Review:** Somerset Council will spend up to £3 million on external consultants to carry out a pay and grading review for staff, following the creation of the unitary authority in 2023.
 - iv. Safe Vape Disposal:** Re-usable and non re-usable vapes must be kept separate from other recycling and put out in a small, clear tied bag, such as a sandwich bag, on top of one the recycling boxes.
 - vi. Somerset on Screen:** Somerset Council has reported that film and TV productions generated more than £4 million for the county's economy in the 2024/25 financial year. Much of this economic boost benefited local hospitality, accommodation, and catering businesses. Screen Somerset, the Council's dedicated film office, supported a range of projects, including the upcoming adaptation of *The Salt Path*, filmed in locations such as Cheddar and Minehead.
- 07.06.25 APPROVAL OF UPDATED STANDING ORDERS** (previously circulated)
The changes include a further amendment to SO18 to comply with the recent changes to procurement legislation and to ensure consistency with the Model Financial Regulations. (18.a.v, 18.c, 18.d and 18.f of the 2022 revision). Standing Order 14 has been updated to better reflect code of conduct requirements and SO14.a-c have been removed. The language in the document has been updated to use gender-neutral terms in line with NALC policy and the civility and respect programme.

All in favour of approving the amendments.

08.06.25 MATTERS ARISING

- i. **Paddock lease:** No further information.
- ii. **Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** The directors are awaiting various quotes. Based on these, they will make a proposal to the Estate on how they will be funded and possible terms for the new lease.
- iii. **Councillor vacancies – Co-option:** No one has expressed an interest.
- iv. **Fallen tree across path:** Further investigation is required to establish who is the landowner.

09.06.25 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Condition of grass triangle – Bottom Lane:** The new grass is beginning to establish.
- ii. **Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** Highways has responded to the questions raised last month and more consideration needs to be made into how this can be moved forwards.
- iii. **Park Corner:** The white lining has been reinstated and a new reflective give way sign has been installed.
- iv. **Layby by Vobster bus shelter:** Cllr West will put together a proposal of how the works will be carried out for Highways

10.06.25 PLANNING

- i. **New applications:** None
- ii. **Other planning matters:** None

11.06.25 CORRESPONDENCE:

- i. **Possible purchase of highways land:** A local parish council has recently purchased some land from Highways for £1. There are a few small areas of land the parish council would be willing to take ownership of so Clerk will follow up to establish the process and costs. **Update:** Only Somerset owned land can be devolved but not Highways, which is the areas the PC are interested in owning.
- ii. **Email from resident regarding speeding in Longfield:** It was felt that on the whole traffic is within the limit although there are some that are driving too fast. No action to be taken at present.
- iii. **Email from resident regarding litter bin for bus shelter at Rectory Corner:** Litter is regularly left around this area and the councillors agreed to purchase a litter bin.
- iv. **Email from resident regarding iron works:** Resident had recently visited the iron works and was unhappy with the stagnant water around it. The water is slightly lower than normal which is reducing the flow of water. A tree is causing some obstruction and the owner has agreed to move it.

12.06.25 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds at 30 May 2025 - £15,108.48
 Barclays at 20 May 2025 - £13,068.50

- i. **Payment of accounts – April**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (May)	£334.88
HMRC PAYE (Period 3)	£80.40
J W Witt (152423) bin emptying	£81.58
Easy website monthly fees (hosting & support)	£39.60
Cloud Payroll	£6.00
Zurich annual insurance premium (544187597)	£420.65
Alan Aked – Internal audit	£60.00
- ii. **Receipts:** None
- iii. **Internal auditor's report:** The internal auditor has approved the accounts and reported no issues with the accounting methods.

13.06.25 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Precept:** The chair wanted consideration to be given to increasing the precept quite significantly to allow the parish council to function at a higher level which would facilitate it helping with larger village projects which are currently out of the PC means.

14.06.25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 8 July 2025 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Printed name: _____