UNCONFIRMED

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

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 10 March 2026

01.03.26 **PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Steve West, Cllr David Seviour,
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk **Members of the public:** None

02.03.26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Councillor

03.03.26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

04.03.26 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

05.03.26 **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2026**
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

06.03.26 **SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (report forwarded by email prior to meeting)

i. **Somerset Council budget:** The Government has rejected the 11% Council Tax Rise which is beyond the 4.99% council tax referendum threshold. The Local Government Minister has written to Somerset Council raising significant concerns about its financial position in response to a request for £30 million of Exceptional Financial Support. The Conservative Group has tabled a budget amendment setting out proposals which could deliver a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan, by holding several vacant posts, alongside phased workforce, reduction in agency staff reliance and proposes targeted investment in planning enforcement, additional capacity for SEND, and a recurring £500,000 uplift for gully emptying and road sweeping. The Government has confirmed it will pay off up to 90% of Somerset Council's £116 million special educational needs and disabilities deficit, subject to the Council agreeing a plan to bring future spending under control.

ii. **Concerns Raised Over Pothole Costs and Repair Standards:** Particular issues have been highlighted on the A359 between Bruton and Nunney, Questions have also been raised about inspection regimes, intervention thresholds, the durability of repairs and the process for assessing vehicle damage compensation claims.

iii. **Residents Invited to Shape the Future of Adult Social Care:** Somerset Council is inviting residents, unpaid carers and organisations to share their views as it prepares a new Adult Social Care strategy for 2026 to 2029. Take part in the consultation ***by 27 March*** here: https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/adult-social-care/somerset-adult-social-care-strategy-2026-2029/

07.03.26 **MATTERS ARISING**

i. **Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** This is now with the solicitors.

08.03.26 **HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:**

i. **Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** Cllrs West and Seviour are in the process of completing the paperwork and will present the documentation at the next meeting. Clerk to approach Coleford PC to see if there would be any funding available from the developers of the planned new estate in Coleford, to help alleviate the impact that could arise from the increase in traffic through Vobster village.

09.03.26 PLANNING MATTERS – None

10.03.26 CORRESPONDENCE:

i. **Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance – grant request:** All present agreed a grant of £500.

ii. **Footpaths report:** Very grateful thanks were given to Nicki Hillman who had forwarded an extensive list of all the works she had carried out or arranged to be carried out on the footpaths around the parish. She raised concerns regarding footpath FR10/54- 55, adjacent to the Alms houses, which was flagged as being overgrown three times last year. The PC agreed that the contractor would be asked to cut it bi-monthly during the growing season.

11.03.26 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds as at 10 March 2026 - £4,993.18
Barclays as at 20 February 2026 - £12,993,72

i. **Payment of accounts – February**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (February)	£334.88
HMRC PAYE (Period 12)	£80.40
Grist Environmental (P299581) bin emptying	£69.58
Easy website monthly fees (hosting & support)	£36.96
Cloud Payroll (CS-S26-19019)	£6.00
Lloyds Bank monthly fees	£4.25
Shaun Robinson – bin emptying (Inv 7)	£143.00
Citizens Advice grant	£200.00
Defibrillator pads	£75.54

Receipts:

a) £1,000 - Mells Park Trust grant for solar arrays
b) £464.40 - HMRC VAT refund

12.03.26 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

i. **Defibrillator/CPR training:** Clerk to look into putting on another training session.

ii. **Police meeting:** Cllr Brady reported that their main issues in the area are flytipping (report any sightings to Somerset Council) and hare coursing.

iii. **White Bridge – handrail:** This requires sanding down and revarnishing. Contractor will submit a quote and fix the Great Elm sign by shop.

iv. **Vobster litter pick:** Around 30 bags were filled. There was an issue with Somerset Council initially saying they would not collect the waste but at the last minute they agreed to do it. However, the waste has been there for two days. Cllr West will enquire whether there is a date for its collection, otherwise the PC bin contractor will be asked to remove it.

v. **Dog fouling and public spaces consultation:** Cllr Seewooruttun will complete the consultation and request that the churchyards and play area are included.

13.03.26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 14 April 2026 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Printed name: _____