

**UNCONFIRMED**

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

**Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 11 August 2026**

- 01.08.26 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Steve West  
**In Attendance:** Joy Book – Clerk and Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Councillor  
**Members of the public:** Two
- 02.08.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Vince Turner, Cllr David Seviour
- 03.08.26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 04.08.26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**  
i. **Mr Owen King, Planning and Development Office and Cllr Steve Turner, Chair Planning Officer and Co-Chair of the Frome LCN regarding the Frome Area Movement and Place Plan:** Frome Town Council is putting together a transport plan and is approaching all the local councils and villages in the area to find out what issues they experience with road safety, cycling, walking, bus and rail service, speeding and connections to other forms of transport, essential services and connecting local areas via footpaths. The plan has been half funded by Somerset Council and matched by Frome Town Council and a travel consultant has been brought onboard. They will be running a Citizen Engagement Platform survey for anyone to complete. During the discussion the following were raised as points of concern:-
  - Holes Lane – lorries from the quarry and Marshalls
  - Tourist traffic in the village
  - Lack of signage, especially HGV
  - Bus service only going to MSN and back rather than onwards to Bath
  - Speeding (Cllr True will look into organising a Speedwatch group)
  - Improvement to rail services
  - Improvement to road surfaces

Engagement with the parishes and stakeholders will continue up until Christmas and they are hoping to put all the data gathered together in the spring with the first draft being ready by the summer
- 05.08.26 APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES HELD ON 14 JULY 2026:** Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.08.26 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR**  
i. **Signing of Acceptance of Office form and completion of Registrable Interests:** Caroline True gave a brief outline of her career, interests and reasons why she wished to be a councillor. All present, welcomed Caroline to the parish council. Cllr True then completed the above forms.
- 07.08.26 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**  
i. **Government Issues Best Value Notice to Somerset Council:** The notice describes the council as being in a "fragile financial position" and identifies weaknesses in financial management, continued reliance on Exceptional Financial Support, low reserves and instability in financial leadership.  
ii. **New Chief Finance Officer Appointed:** Lizzie Watkin takes up the role from 31<sup>st</sup> July.

- iii. **Councillors Back Stronger Financial Oversight:** Somerset Council has agreed to introduce enhanced monitoring of its Financial Management Improvement Plan following the independent Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) review.
- iv. **Planning Enforcement Review Rejected:** Somerset Council has voted against proposals brought forward by the Conservative opposition group to carry out a review of its Planning Enforcement Policy and associated procedures. The Council's administration said work is already underway to strengthen the service through a business and argued that resources, rather than the policy itself, are the main issue.
- v. **Automatic Free School Meals Registration:** Somerset Council has supported proposals to introduce an automatic "opt-out" system for registering eligible children for free school meals. The new approach aims to automatically identify eligible pupils using existing council data, while allowing parents to opt out if they wish.

## 08.08.26 ASSERTION 10

- i. **Approval and acceptance of IT, Email and GDPR policies and Data map:** All present approved the previously circulated policies.

**09.08.26 MATTERS ARISING**

- i. **Public Space Protection Order – regarding dog fouling:** It is hoped that the new order will be in place for all public open spaces for September. Another order regarding the use of leads in public opens spaces is also being put through.
- ii. **Defib battery replacement - Vobster:** This has been replaced.
- iii. **Grit bins:** The one by the school is empty. Cllr West will check the Upper Vobster bin.

### 10.08.26 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** No further information. Clerk to contact Highways.
- ii. **Condition of Selwood Street:** Clerk has reported the issue and some tarmacking has been undertaken but several large pot holes remain which have caused injuries to pedestrians. The Estate will cut back the bush by Selwood House.

## 11.08.26 PLANNING MATTERS

- i. **New applications:**  
**2026/1429/TPO:** Willow – repollard to contain tree – 1 Rectory Cottages. For information purposes only.
- ii. **Other planning matters: Lime Kiln Quarry new access road consultation queries** – A response has been received from Ruth Amundson (Senior Planner Minerals and Waste) who confirmed that the procedure met the minimum statutory advertisement requirement for this type of application as set out in paragraph 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. However, there was a delay in sending out the letters which should have been sent on 29 April but were actually sent on 13 May. However an extension was granted. A planning application for the land is very unlikely to be received for a year or two as the land now needs to settle before any development can be considered.

**12.08.26 CORRESPONDENCE:**

- i. **Recreation Ground lease update** – Email from Tiff Pike requesting confirmation of previously discussed funding by the parish council for the next 3 years.

### 13.08.26 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds as at 11 August 2026 - £9,576.41  
Barclays as at 19 July 2026 - £13,064.41

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|----------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>i. Payment of accounts – August</b> |         |
| Clerk's Salary & expenses (July)       | £334.88 |
| HMRC PAYE (Period 5)                   | £80.40  |
| Battery for Vobster defib              | £198.00 |

|                                                         |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Grist Environmental (P337859) bin emptying – Rec Ground | £107.87 |
| Easy website monthly fees - hosting & support) (4226)   | £36.96  |
| Cloud Payroll (CS-S27-05299)                            | £6.00   |
| Lloyds bank monthly fee (491985887)                     | £4.75   |
| Shaun Robinson – dog/litter bin emptying (Inv 12)       | £117.00 |
| Metal bin liner for bin near shop                       | £24.99  |
| SALC councillor training (3323)                         | £25.00  |

ii. **Receipts: None**

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

- i. **184 Bus service:** The Saturday service is being reinstated on 5 September and will run to the same schedule as the week day service.
- ii. **Vehicles parked in Recreation Ground car park:** The trailer has been removed. The car owner has been contacted and said that it would be removed but to date it hasn't so they have been contacted again. The van has two different number plates and has been reported to Somerset Council who require the land owners permission before they will access the site. Cllr Seewooruttun has been in contact with the Estate's management to obtain this permission. Signs will be put up on the gate stating that long term parking is not permitted.
- iii. **Audi parked in Fairview:** This is untaxed and not MOT. If it is still there in a couple of weeks the Police have said they would arrange for it to be removed.

**14.07.26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 8 September 2026 at **7.15pm** in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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

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