

UNCONFIRMED

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

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 14 July 2026

- 01.07.26 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr David Seviour (7.30pm onwards), Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Steve West
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk and Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Councillor
Members of the public: Two
- 02.07.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Vince Turner
- 03.07.26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 04.07.26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Concerns were raised that the new access does not comply with the planning application as the plan appears to show the new access as being smaller than the old entrance which it is not in reality. Many conditions were added to the approval of the planning and queries were raised as to whether they had been adhered to. The planning notices were delivered to nearby residents only 5 days before the consultation closing date with very few people receiving a notification. The Clerk mentioned that she thought it was only legally necessary to post a notice on the site and if the planning authority chooses to notify residents further away, that is out of courtesy. The Chair reported that in depth environmental studies would need to be undertaken due to the nature of the landfill before any development could be considered. Clerk to follow up on the short lead time for responses and whether the site notice was posted in accordance with the regulations and for the required period of time. Clerk will find the measurements of the new access in the planning documents to see if they are in line with the installed access point.
- 05.07.26 APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES HELD ON 9 JUNE 2026:** Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.07.26 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**
- i. **Somerset Council Financial status:** Sales of commercial properties are expected to generate a £90 Million loss from the sale of its commercial property. The authority inherited 48 investment properties that were originally purchased by the former district councils for £301 million. The Council's debt exceeds £1.125Billion and expects to spend just over £50 million this year on debt repayments and interest.
 - ii. **Adult Social Care** rated 'Requires Improvement' despite the Adult Social Care budget being £80m larger for the 2024/25 financial year than it was in 2022/23. Children's Services have also been Downgraded by Ofsted after an inspection in April and May 2026. Services for care leavers remained rated Good.
 - iii. **Planning Performance Shows Delays in Decision Making:** During 2025/26, the proportion of minor applications decided within target timescales fell from 85% to 76.7%, while "other" applications determined on time fell from 92.5% to 83%, below the Government's 85% performance threshold. The report also shows that 1,137 planning enforcement investigations were open at the end of March 2026, an increase from 877 at the end of 2024.
- 07.07.26 ASSERTION 10**
Clerk is still sourcing a suitable data map.
- 08.07.26 MATTERS ARISING**
- i. **Public Space Protection Order – regarding dogs:** This could apply to all public spaces.
 - ii. **Café:** Due to re-open mid August as a franchise.

09.07.26 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** A TRO will be raised for consultation in a couple of weeks.
- ii. **Condition of Selwood Street:** Clerk has reported. To be monitored.

10.07.26 PLANNING MATTERS

- i. **New applications:**
2026/1223/TCA: T1 & T2 - Ash - Remove all deadwood from crown. 10-15% reduction on NE aspect. T3 - Ash - Remove all deadwood from crown. 10-15% thin to improve airflow - 3 Hollycroft Fairview To Park Hill Mells Frome Somerset. For information purposes only.
2026/1241/CLE: Application for an existing lawful development certificate for confirmation that a material operation carried out at Prospect Cottage constitutes an implementation of planning permission 2024/0620/FUL - Prospect Cottage Top Lane Mells Frome Somerset. For information purposes only.
2026/1248/HSE: Demolition of existing rear conservatory, erection of replacement rear extension and modification to side elevation timber balcony - Hollow House Stock Hill Vobster Frome Somerset. No objections.
- ii. **Other planning matters:** None

11.07.26 CORRESPONDENCE: None

12.07.26 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds as at 14 July 2026 - £12,858.05
Barclays as at 19 June 2026 - £13,064.41

- i. **Payment of accounts – July**

Clerk's Salary & expenses (June)	£334.88
HMRC PAYE (Period 4)	£80.40
Grist Environmental (P318433) bin emptying – Rec Ground	£156.18
Grist Environmental (P333131) fuel surcharge	£0.30
Easy website monthly fees (hosting & support) (3570)	£36.96
Cloud Payroll	£6.00
Lloyds bank monthly fee	£4.25
Shaun Robinson – dog/litter bin emptying (Inv 11)	£143.00
Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Ltd - Mells Sport & Recreation Company Ltd annual insurance premium (G19740357)	£2,682.15
- ii. **Receipts:** Barclays interest - £37.49

13.07.26 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Neighbourhood/Village Plan:** As the Estate owns significant areas of land within the village and all applications have to be subjected to and meet the criteria of Somerset's Local Plan, it was again decided not to pursue this route .
- ii. **Broken dog waste bin – Fairview:** This has been fixed and the repair will be monitored.
- iii. **Local PCSO – monthly surgeries:** These will return on a monthly basis once the café re-opens in August.
- iv. **Resignation of Councillor:** Cllr Freeman tendered her resignation which was accepted due to her moving away from the parish. Clerk to inform the Monitoring Officer at Somerset. As two vacancies have already been declared, immediate co-option can be made if a suitable candidate is found.
- v. **Crash – Park Corner:** Cllr Seewooruttun will report the serious crash which occurred last week to Highways.
- vi. **Grass cutting – triangle by shop:** Cllr Seewooruttun will arrange for this to be cut.
- vii. **Defib training and new battery:** Cllr Seviour reported that the training was very good and worthwhile running. He also reported that the battery in the Vobster Inn defibrillator cabinet is showing low charge. Clerk to purchase a new one.

viii. Grit bins: Somerset Highways have requested a report on the levels of salt in the bins around the parish. Clerk to report back once they have been inspected.

14.07.26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 11 August 2026 at **7.15pm** in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Printed name: _____