

UNCONFIRMED

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

Minutes of Mells Parish Council held in the Barn on Tuesday 9 June 2026

- 01.06.26 PRESENT:** Cllr John Earl – Chair, Cllr John Henderson – Vice Chair, Cllr Jan Seewooruttun, Cllr Alan Brady, Cllr Claire Freeman, Cllr David Seviour, Cllr Clare Asquith, Cllr Steve West
In Attendance: Joy Book – Clerk and Cllr Barry Clarke – Somerset Councillor
Members of the public: One
- 02.06.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Vince Turner and
- 03.06.26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Asquith declared an interest in all the planning applications and was removed from the discussions.
- 04.06.26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Resident raised the recent construction of an additional access road from the Pennys site on Lime Kiln Hill. **Post meeting note:** On further investigation the parish council had received an application in May 2024 (SCC/4095/2024: Restoration of Lime Kiln Hill Quarry – Lime Kiln Quarry) and had no objections. The access point further up the hill was considered an improvement. The Parish Council believes there will be an application for development on the site in the future but is unable to do anything until an application is presented.
- 05.06.26 APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON 12 MAY 2026**
Previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 06.06.26 SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**
- i. **Somerset Council Financial status:** An independent review by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has awarded Somerset Council an overall one-star (out of 5) rating for financial management, describing arrangements as "weak. Somerset Council has confirmed that it has spent £18.9 million on consultants and external advisory support since becoming a unitary authority in April 2023. Temporary Chief Finance Officer, Clive Heaphy will remain in post until April 2027 after the council's latest attempt to recruit a permanent replacement was unsuccessful. This extension is expected to cost approximately £291,000. The council will be getting £10 million less next year for schools and spends a significant amount of the budget on children's homes and care.
 - ii. **Planning Enforcement Backlog:** Somerset Council has acknowledged a significant backlog of planning enforcement cases, particularly in parts of the former Mendip area.
- 07.06.26 ASSERTION 10**
Clerk is still working on the data map.
- 08.06.26 MATTERS ARISING**
- i. **Defibrillator training:** This will take place on Tuesday 30 June and is currently oversubscribed.
 - ii. **White bridge railing:** This has been varnished and the contractor has submitted his invoice which was approved.
 - iii. **Footpath by Alms House and grass cutting of triangles of land:** The works have been carried out and the contractor will monitor and cut accordingly.

- iv. **Public Space Protection Order:** Cllr Seewooruttun reported that the churchyard can only be included if ownership can be confirmed and the parish council are responsible for maintaining it. The Parish Council is considering paying the churchyard grounds contractor direct next year (up to a fixed amount) instead of offering the money as a grant which should meet the requirements of the order.

09.06.26 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

- i. **Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** Cllr West has visited 40 houses and received no objections to the proposal to reduce the speed limit. The clerk will now submit the necessary documentation to Highways to start the process.
- ii. **Vegetation on Vobster bridges:** Highways has removed the tree and cut back the vegetation on both bridges.
- iii. **Moving finger post by Vobster Inn:** This has now been fixed.

10.06.26 PLANNING MATTERS

- i. **New applications:**
2026/0983/TCA: Cherry tree (originates from rear garden of Rock House which is in the conservation area) overhanging boundary and encroaching on Cherry Tree Cottage – prune overhanging canopy by up to 2 metres away from cottage and reshape remaining canopy – Cherry Tree Cottage, Woodland End – *for notification purposes only*
2026/0982/TCA: Clear all self seeded and previously coppiced sycamore, lilac and willow on bank from steps to Ivy Cottage to footpath leading up to 3 Rock. Sycamore – fell – Ivy Cottage, Fairview - - *for notification purposes only*
2026/0951/FUL: Widen existing access in the farm – Branch Farm – no objections.
- ii. **Other planning matters:** None

11.06.26 CORRESPONDENCE:

- i. **Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance:** Thank you for donation.
- ii. **Email from Owen King, Planning & Development Project Officer, Frome Town Council – Frome Area Movement and Place Plan:** Request to meet councillors to discuss key locations they should be aware of. Clerk to invite Mr King to the August parish council meeting.

12.06.26 ACCOUNTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank account: Lloyds as at 9 June 2026 - £14,234.25
Barclays as at 20 May 2026 - £13,026.92

- i. **Payment of accounts – June**
- | | |
|---|---------|
| Clerk's Salary & expenses (May) | £334.88 |
| HMRC PAYE (Period 3) | £80.40 |
| Grist Environmental (P318433) bin emptying – Rec Ground | £156.18 |
| Easy website monthly fees (hosting & support) (2495) | £36.96 |
| Cloud Payroll | £6.00 |
| Lloyds bank monthly fee | £4.25 |
| Shaun Robinson – dog/litter bin emptying (Inv 10) | £136.50 |
| Chris Rowe – mowing & strimming | £360.00 |
| Defib Sales & Training Ltd – defib training | £418.80 |
| Defib Sales & Traiing Ltd – pads for shop defib | £73.20 |
| White bridge repair – varnish & labour | £73.62 |
- ii. **Receipts:** None
- iii. **Internal auditor's report:** The internal auditor has approved the accounts and raised no areas of concern. The clerk will submit the exemption certificate to the external auditor by the deadline date of 30 June. The Notice of Public Rights and Publication notice was advertised on the required date of 1 June.

iv. **Quarterley accounts and budget control:** The clerk had previously circulated the accounts for the first quarter which were approved and then signed by the Chair.

13.06.26 ITEMS TO REPORT / ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- i. **Condition of Selwood Street:** Clerk to report to Highways.
- ii. **Neighbourhood Policing monthly meetings:** An alternative venue has not been put in place whilst the café is closed and are likely to be postponed until the café reopens.
- iii. **Café:** Several applications have been received and are currently being considered. Interviews will take place mid to late June.
- iv. **December meeting:** The Clerk informed the parish council that she is unavailable for the scheduled date and advised that the Barn was not available the following Tuesday. It was therefore decided that December's meeting would be cancelled.

14.06.26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 14 July 2026 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Printed name: _____