

HOLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
MENDIP DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

www.holcombepc.org.uk

Clerk: Vickie Watts, Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
clerk@holcombepc.org.uk 07971 516916 - 01749 880428

**DRAFT Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 3rd March 2020 at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors Present Cllr Graham Crowe (Chair)
 Cllr Phil Gait
 Cllr Simon Brand
 Cllr Terry Dumbrell
 Cllr Anne Golledge
 Cllr Robert Mitchell
 Cllr Sue Robinson

In attendance: District Cllr Townsend and the Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes and 4
 members of the public

Public forum.

There were no points raised.

1 Apologies for absence

Cllr Stephenie Chorley, District Cllr Ham and County Cllr Pullin had sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

Cllr Brand declared in interest in agenda items 6.2 and 10.5 payments so would not take part in the discussion or vote.

3 Co Option of new Councillor

Mr Peter Jennings attended the meeting, introduced himself and explained why he would like to be co-opted onto the parish council. He has lived in the village for over 20 years and had previously been a Parish Councillor some 12 years ago when he had to stand down due to work commitments.

It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Brand that Mr Jennings be co-opted. The Clerk will arrange for a Holcombe email address to be set up for Cllr Jennings and will update the contacts on the notice board, website and at Mendip District Council. The register of interest form has been completed and will be sent to MDC by the Clerk.

VW

VW

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstentions

The Clerk will arrange for the consent to co-option form to be signed.

VW

4 Minutes of previous monthly meeting held on 4th February 2020

The draft minutes for the abovementioned meeting had been circulated to all Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Golledge and seconded by Cllr Robinson that the minutes were an accurate record so were signed by the chairman Cllr Crowe. The Clerk to upload minutes to the website.

VW

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against & 1 Abstentions

5 Action points from last meeting and matters arising.

All actions have been completed or were to be discussed during this meeting apart from:

- District Cllr Townsend explained that Certificate of Lawfulness applications are for Parish Council information rather than as a part of formal consultation. If the Parish Council does have facts that can be proven to contradict that of the applicant then the Planning Office may take it into account.
- Cllr Robinson explained that the cost of the emergency kit agreed at the last meeting is more than budgeted. Cllr Robinson has applied for a grant which will cover the cost and will notify the Council when the response is known.
- Cllr Chorley did not attend but had emailed to say that she had not yet spoken with the parishioner who had a complaint about Silver Street but this would be done before the next meeting.

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- Cllr Chorley hadn't been able to scan and send the conveyancing documents to Councillors, due to IT issues but it was hoped this would be circulated soon.

6 Highways

6.1 Discuss the diesel spill and crash on Holcombe Hill at 8pm on 25/02/20

The Clerk explained that she had spoken to the homeowner whose property had been damaged during the recent crash on Holcombe Hill. The police were not investigating the incident and it was believed to be an unfortunate accident. No one had been hurt during the crash.

Cllr Dumbrell had reported the diesel spillage on the hill at around 1pm via the Somerset County Council Highways website and also using the non-emergency number 101 who said that they would also contact SCC Highways. District Cllr Townsend confirmed that he would raise this with Somerset Highways to ask if this had been investigated. The police would not disclose whether any representatives had attended the scene to inspect the spillage.

AT

It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Gait that the Clerk would invite residents to report accidents in writing to evidence the issues within the village and support future action to reduce speed and improve road safety.

VW

6.2 Discuss damage to property caused by commercial vehicle on Charlton Rd

Two parishioners attended the meeting to ask what was going to be done about the number of commercial vehicles passing through the village? On the 26th February a coach was passing two Penny lorries on Charlton Road which caused the wall of Inglecroft to be struck by the coach. There is a concern that there could be a serious incident involving a pedestrian or cyclist if no action is taken. Erosion to the road edge and verges due to the width of vehicles passing is also a concern.

Cllr Crowe explained that we have previously tried to get contractors to use routes without passing through the village but this has since stopped. The Parish Council has now secured 2 meetings with Somerset Highways representatives on Thursday the 5th March and Tuesday the 31st March. It is hoped that this will give the Parish Council an opportunity to discuss the issues that Holcombe experiences and potential resolutions.

It was asked whether a one-way system for HGV and commercial vehicles could be the solution. This was discussed with Penny's when they first started at Cookswood but this has since stopped.

The Clerk was asked to liaise with SCC Highways and establish how weight limits for bridges are calculated.

6.3 Agree items to be discussed at meeting with SCC Highways Representative planned for 31/03/20

It was agreed that Cllr Dumbrell, Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Robinson would join the Clerk in meeting with Sara Davis on Thursday 6th March at 1pm.

It was agreed that the priorities would be as follows:

1. What traffic management options are there to reduce traffic speeds in Holcombe, particularly on Holcombe Hill and Charlton Road?
2. What options are there to stop or reduce the number of lorries using Holcombe as a through route?
3. What options are there to move the 30-mph limit to the outskirts of the village on Brewery Road, in accordance with the Highway Code?
4. What is the process for getting dropped kerbs installed?
5. What options are there to improve safety on the corner between the Holcombe Inn and the Playing Field crossroad?
6. Can duck warning signs be erected in Charlton Road to minimise the possibility of accidents?

For all of these, what actions do we, as a Parish Council, need to take to ensure options are implemented within a reasonable timeframe?

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7 Planning Applications

- 7.1 2020/0182/FUL - Erection of a general-purpose agricultural building.
Southmead Farm Charlton Road Holcombe Radstock BA3 5EX

All Councillors have had the opportunity to consider the plans prior to discussion. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Mitchell that the application should be approved. Clerk to notify the planning department.

VW

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstention

7.2

- 2020/0326/FUL - Conversion of barn to a dwelling
Manor Farm Longleat Lane Holcombe Radstock BA3 5DZ

The applicant attended the meeting and outlined that he had consulted with the immediate neighbours and explained that he had undergone pre application advice from Mendip District Council. A thorough application with supporting reports had been submitted. The conversion is for a 2-bedroom bungalow which the applicant intends to live in as they wish to downsize. A-Grade energy efficient, with the appearance of an agricultural building and will sit comfortably in its surroundings. It will have its own access using the old farm entrance with a new layby created to include sufficient visibility splay. 2 neighbours have submitted letters of support.

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the discussion. It was proposed by Cllr Golledge and seconded by Cllr Mitchell that the application be approved. Clerk to notify the planning department.

VW

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against & 1 Abstentions

8 Planning updates

2020/0008/TPO – Works to trees within a TPO M1109. The Oasis, Brewery Lane, Holcombe
Mendip District Council approved with conditions

2019/2470/FUL – Demolition of existing garages and creation of 2 x 3 bed semi detached homes
Mendip District Council approved with conditions

9 Discuss whether to enter Village of the Year 2020

Cllr Brand said that it was a simple process to enter the competition whereby you have to quote 5 reasons why Holcombe is village of the year. The prize is £2000. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Gait that the Parish Council should not take the lead on this but the competition can be advertised for members of the Parish to enter if they so wish.

Vote: 6 For, 1 Against & 0 Abstentions

Cllr Brand voted against this proposal. The Clerk to promote the competition on Facebook.

VW

9 Reports

- 9.1 PCSO report – No report had been submitted.

- 9.2 District Council Report – District Cllr Townsend reported the main issues from the Full Council Meeting on 25th February were:

Council Tax - It was agreed that the Mendip DC element will increase by £5 a year for the average Band D taxpayer. This is exactly the same sum as last year's increase and is the maximum sum allowed without a referendum. However when this was submitted to Central Government for endorsement it was discovered that one element thought to be an allowable exclusion from the calculation had in fact to be included, which then meant the referendum threshold was exceeded. As a result an Emergency Full Council Meeting was called for Thursday 5th to agree a new lower increase in time for the new demands to be posted out.

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Capital Strategy - The previous administration had agreed a limit of £80 million for borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board for commercial investment to raise income to make up for the shortfall caused by the reduction in funding from central government. Council were asked to approve an increase to £160M of which £50M would be for regeneration projects in the District. Concern was registered that the £50M must be soundly invested in solid assets that will provide a reasonable return.

Corporate Plan - The new Plan was formally launched. It's stated key Aim is "To build a fairer, greener and more vibrant Mendip that values our distinctive towns and rural communities".

Climate Emergency - The public presentation on the County led programme for carbon neutrality by 2030 was held at Mendip on 15th February. Many questions arose, including the assertion that farming contributed a third of the greenhouse gases in the county, and why was the carbon free electricity produced by Hinkley B not included in the equation? We were encouraged by Council to use green energy suppliers and promote tree and hedge planting. Involvement of Parish Councils will be promoted. Also measures to discourage car parking with engine idling are being pursued, particularly near schools.

Council Restructuring - In addition to the County-led Unitary structure, Mendip wanted to look at the savings that could accrue simply from the 4 Districts working even more closely together. Council were persuaded that other options should also be explored including for example a relationship with BANES as Frome is clearly looking towards Bath rather than Taunton. There was much suspicion about the reality of the projected savings.

Anti-Semitism - We have been asked by Central Government to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition and include the principles in its way of working. Councillors were happy with the principle but without negating it in any way were concerned that to do so would put Anti-Semitism on a different plane from other forms of discrimination and voted to action the Equalities Board to review it in a wider context.

During the Cabinet Meeting on 2nd March a new Somerset Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy was agreed. This is the work carried out locally by Mendip's Housing Options Team working with other agencies such as the YMCA. In 2020/21 we have secured Central Government funding of over £400,000 to support this work. Special emphasis is placed on early intervention and supporting the young, and ex-service veterans. The Mendip rough sleeper count for one night in the Autumn of 2019 was 13, the lowest level for at least 8 years."

9.3 Somerset County Council – County Cllr Mike Pullin did not attend and did not provide a report

10 Finance

10.1 Income - The following income had been received during the previous month:

Somerset County Council	Improving Lives grant towards the cost of the playing field path	£1000
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It was agreed that the Clerk would write a letter of thanks to County Cllr Mike Pullin for his support on this application.

10.2 Bank Reconciliation - The Clerk had prepared the bank reconciliation which was checked after the meeting by Cllr Mitchell and found to be in order.

10.5 Payments

The following payments were presented for payment by the Parish Council:

Vickie Watts – Clerk Salary	£262.28	& Expenses	£33.84	£296.12
		Simon Brand – Ink cartridges		£27.48
One Stop promotions Ltd - 3 Flags (Union Jack, St Georges cross & Somerset flag)				£185.93
		KSS CRC Ltd (BGSW Division) – Community payback		£72.00
		Julia Evans – Bark for Jubilee Gardens		£43.09

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The following payment was presented for payment by the Holcombe Playing Field committee:

Vickie Watts – Materials for the Community Pay back team to complete jobs on the playing field £59.37

It was proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that all payments should be made. Cheques were then signed by Cllrs Crowe and Cllr Dumbrell

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against & 1 Abstentions

11 Approve request to use the Playing Field Car Park

A request had been received from Rev Clarissa Cridland to use the Playing Field car park for a wedding at St Andrews on the 16th May @ 2pm. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Robinson that the request be approved.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstentions

The Clerk to notify Rev'd Clarissa Cridland and the car park neighbours that the application has been approved.

VW

12 Update on Truespeed Broadband installation at the village hall

The Clerk confirmed that Truespeed had completed the installation and the service was now running. The login details are on the notice board. The Clerk will now cancel the PlusNet supply.

VW

13 Update on VE Day celebrations

The next meeting will take place on the 12th March starting at 7.30pm at Cllr Gollodge's house.

ALL

Cllr Brand said that the Parish Council had allocated £2K towards funding the event but it is currently predicted to be £1700 which doesn't take into account any income which could be generated from quiz etc. Cllr Brand asked if we should contact key employers in the village for a donation towards the event and should we apply for a Mendip District Council, Shape Mendip Lottery grant as we did for the Gala last year? All Councillors agreed that Cllr Dumbrell and Cllr Gait would approach local businesses for donations and Cllr Brand will apply for a MDC Lottery grant if timing allows.

Cllr Brand explained that the Shepton Mallet Big Band has been booked at a cost of £450. A member of SMBB is a sound engineer and has offered to provide a system which all performers can use at a charge of £300. This compared to a quote of £600 from Themes who supplied the system for the 2019 Gala. It was agreed by all Councillors that the quote from SMBB of £300 should be accepted.

Cllr Brand said that a Dance instructor Kay Alford has agreed to run dance lessons for 6 weeks starting March 20th from 1900 to 2000hrs to encourage parishioners to get involved and learn to dance in time for the VE Day 75 celebrations. Cllr Brand suggested that this be a free event for Holcombe residents to encourage them to get involved and attend the main event.

It was proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Mitchell that the dance instructor Kay Alford be paid £25 per session and that the dance sessions will be free to Holcombe residents.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstentions

14 Update on the Flag Pole, Risk Assessment and review MDC planning process to obtain consent

The foundation and base have been installed inside the field close to the Lychgate. The pole will be installed in a few weeks which will take approx. 45 minutes, when a demonstration will also be given.

The 3 flags have now been received. Cllr Brand proposed that a flag policy be agreed.

VW

Risk Assessment – will need this with method statement. Cllr Crowe will add this to risk assessment document once the flag pole has been installed.

VW

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MDC planning process – All Councillors agreed that this had been an unnecessary process. Cllr Dumbrell had researched and could not find why MDC should insist on planning because it was a 10m pole rather than 4.6m pole. MDC say that the planning office has to be self-funding but it is questionable why the fees had to be paid for advertising. In order to submit the 2 applications a technical plan of the pole which had to be done by a professional was required. Luckily the volunteer provided his time and experience free of charge for the Parish Council and if this had not happened the costs would have been much higher.

It was agreed that Cllr Dumbrell would put together a letter which District Cllr Townsend will take up with the Mendip District Council planning department.

TWD
AT /VW

15 External meetings

Tues 10th March from 10 – 1pm – Introduction to Domestic Energy Efficiency & Changing Energy related behaviour at MDC Council Chambers

Tues 10th March from 6 – 8pm – Parish Council Workshop at MDC Council Chambers

Thurs 19th March from 6.30pm to 8pm - One Somerset Council Unitary discussion at Frome Town Council Chamber, Town Hall

Sat 28th March 10am – Litter pick. Meet at Holcombe Playing Field Car Park

Sat 25th April 10 until 1pm - New date for First Aid & Defibrillator training Holcombe Village Hall

16 Councillors Report

16.1 Village Hall – The next meeting will be the AGM on 24th March, when Steve Blount will be retiring.

16.2 Playing Field – Cllr Chorley had sent in a report to say that last month's Soup & Roll lunch went well, raising £35 profit. The next will take place on Saturday, 21st March.

16.3 Cemetery – Rev'd Clarissa Cridland had stated that the committee considering the faculty had requested a detailed plan for the proposed path which will add expense and delay. This had not been highlighted at the original meeting which was disappointing. Clarissa stated that her architect believed this should not be required and therefore the request would be challenged. The Parish Council will be notified as soon as there is news.

17 Correspondence

17.1 An email had been received requesting that the kissing gate should not be removed as it was part of Holcombe's heritage and prevented cyclists or motorcyclists from using the route as a cut through. After careful consideration it was agreed that the swing gate would be removed but the arch would remain meaning it would not be easily negotiated on 2 wheels. This would be monitored for 3 months.

RM

It was agreed that the Clerk would reply to the resident explaining what would be now take place – the arch will be left and the gate would be kept during the period of monitoring. The Clerk would ask the residents to keep a written record of any disruption during the period of monitoring.

VW

17.2 CPRE Newsletter and request for funding. This will be considered at April meeting

17 Dates for next meeting

Tuesday 7th April 2020 – Parish Council meeting

Meeting finished 21.50hrs