

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 / 01479 880428

In line with government guidance, recommended social distancing and self-isolation rules for those who are vulnerable during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed that from June, meetings would be conducted virtually. This has been achieved using "Zoom" software.

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Virtual Meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors Present

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

In attendance

The Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes and 2 members of the public

1. Public forum

- 1.1. A resident attended the meeting and explained that she had moved to the village prior to the lockdown and was keen to learn more about village life and in time might like to get involved with the Parish Council or village events.
- 1.2. Mr Simmons attended the meeting and explained that he wanted to speak in relation to the variation of the license proposed for the Duke of Cumberland public house.
- 1.3. Cllr Gait expressed concern over the amount of ducks on the lane near the junction of Silver Street which he felt could cause an accident. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Somerset Highways to install the agreed duck warning signs as a matter of urgency. It was suggested that the Police be notified to see if there is anything else that could be done.

Action: Clerk to contact Somerset highways and Police.

2. Councillor resignations

Steph Chorley and Bob Mitchell had both submitted letters of resignation which had been circulated to all Councillors. The Chair expressed thanks to both of them for the time they had given to the Council and asked the Clerk to write a letter of thanks.

The Clerk confirmed that she would notify Mendip District Council (MDC) of the resignations and would advertise the Notice of Vacancy on the notice board, Facebook and website.

*Action: Clerk to write letters of thanks.
Clerk to notify MDC of resignations and advertise vacancies.*

3. Apologies for absence

Cllr Peter Jennings, District Cllr Alan Townsend and District Cllr Philip Ham had all sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

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4. Declaration of interests and dispensation

There were none.

5. Minutes of previous monthly meeting held on Tuesday 1st September 2020

The Clerk had circulated the minutes prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Golledge and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that they should be agreed as they accurately reflected the meeting.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to upload the new version to the website.

A member of the public asked why a 20mph limit could not be implemented on the hill to make it safer. The Chairman said that this could be raised under the agenda item later in the meeting.

6. Action points from last meeting and matters arising

All actions had been completed or will be discussed as an agenda item during the meeting.

7. Report

7.1 PCSO

The Clerk confirmed that a report had been received for the Frome Rural beat North which had been circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk had met with PC Toni Lines who will be joining the team next month. She wanted to understand our policing concerns and discuss how we can work more closely together in the future.

7.2 District Council

Full Council – District Cllr Townsend has been appointed as full-time member of the Planning Board was extended, and is also a full time Audit Committee member, to join Mr Gait!

Highways - Vobster road out of Coleford was recently closed and the signed diversion to the north of the village was to turn left at Lipyeate Cross, along Brewery Lane, then right along Charlton Rd. Clearly Somerset Highways take the view that this route is safer than Charmborough Lane.

Climate Change – District Cllr Townsend said that he had learned that a Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal is to be carried out to assess suitable locations in Mendip for solar farms or wind turbines.

Unitary - The LibDem majority on Full Council ensured that Mendip voted for the Stronger Somerset approach with East and West Somerset as the two Unitaries.

Planning - Prompted by the recent experiences with the 11 months for the 63 dwellings at Coleford and now the 51-week resolution period for a single house at Budds Croft District Cllr Townsend is carrying out a review of Mendip's recent turnaround times for applications. He asked that the Parish Clerk notifies him of any other applications that appear to have taken an unreasonably long time. District Cllr Townsend also confirmed that the Planning Inspector will not restart his examination of the Local Plan Part 2 until late November at the earliest. Thus, extending still further the time when Mendip cannot demonstrate a forward 5-year supply of housing

7.3 County Council

No report had been received.

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8. Planning Applications

8.1 - 2020/1694/HSE – Sunnycroft Common Lane Holcombe Radstock Somerset Demolition of existing front and rear porches. Erection of front porch and a single storey rear extension.

Cllr Dumbrell explained that he had reviewed the application on the planning portal but when he and other Councillors looked last week the application seems to have been removed but it is not clear why. Cllr Dumbrell said that Mendip District Council have not consulted the neighbours although when Cllr Gait spoke with them they were in support of the proposed application.

Cllr Dumbrell said that the application was straightforward and modest and he therefore proposed that the application should be approved which was seconded by Cllr Gait.

Cllr Gait requested that the Clerk should also mention to the Mendip Planning Office that the location plan provided was inaccurate as the information relating to the neighbouring property was not correctly detailed. The Clerk will also ask why the application is no longer on the planning portal and whether it was withdrawn or removed in error.

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to notify the planning office

8.2- 2020/1298/TPO – Goodwood, Charlton Road, Holcombe T1 Ash Tree M1046 – Works felling trees due to Ash die back

Cllr Dumbrell said that unfortunately the protected tree is dying from Ash Die back and it therefore needs to be felled. It was proposed by Cllr Dumbrell that the application be approved which was seconded by Cllr Gait on the proviso that a tree be planted to replace the diseased tree.

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to notify the planning office

8.3- WK/202005298 - Variation application for a premises licence

Duke of Cumberland Inn, Edford Hill, Holcombe, Radstock, Somerset, BA3 5HQ
Councillors listened to local residents concerns on how extended hours would impact on their lives. The proposal was for 10am until 1am. After much discussion it was proposed by Cllr Dumbrell that the Council would recommend refusal of any extension beyond 23.00hrs due to the negative impact on local residents which was seconded by Cllr Robinson.

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to notify the planning office

The Clerk to ask Mendip District Council to confirm the licence details and clarify if the farm shop will have a different licence from the micropub or is it one licence for the establishment. The Clerk to ask why the neighbours were not notified of the application.

8.4 - Application 2020/0242/FUL- Duke of Cumberland Inn, Edford Hill, Holcombe, BA3 5HQ
The conversion of a free house into a farm Shop and kitchen cafe. Attached micropub and side extension for added seating areas. First Floor Alterations for 2 separate staff accommodations. (change of description & additional documents received 17/08/2020)
It was agreed that an extra meeting would be held via Zoom on Tuesday 20th October 2020 @ 7.30pm to consider the amended application.

Action: Clerk to notify the planning office

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9. Planning Updates.

2019/2466/FUL – Land South of Budds Croft, Brewery Lane, Holcombe
Proposed erection of single storey 2 bed dwelling house and associated works.
Mendip District Council refused

2020/1315/APP – Manor Farm, Longleat Lane, Holcombe, BA3 5DZ
Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (material schedule) 8 (wildlife enhancement) on planning consent 2020/0326/FUL
Mendip District Council approved

2020/0606/CLE – Paddock Lodge Lane, Off Holcombe Hill, Holcombe
Application for a certificate of lawful existing development for the existing access to the dwelling Paddock Lodge
Mendip District Council approved

2020/0915/HSE – 1 Croft Road, Holcombe, BA3 5EE
Erection of a 2-storey rear extension and loft conversion forming gable end and roof alterations for full dormer to the rear.
Notice of Appeal received

10. Update on One Somerset (Including response to Survey) and Stronger Somerset

Latest correspondence received from the One Somerset team invited Councillors to attend 1 of 4 virtual meetings taking place during October. Dates had been circulated to all Councillors who were encouraged to attend. There is no need to book a place in advance.

11. Update on Community Project Funds 2020

The deadline for applications is 31st October. Cllr Brand and Robinson will meet prior to the 3rd of November to discuss the applications before the final approval at the full council meeting on the 3rd November.

Action: Agenda item for November

12. Website Accessibility Statement 2020

The Clerk confirmed that the review of the Parish website had been completed by a company called Geowhizz who had then completed the statement which had been uploaded to the website to ensure that the Council was compliant with the new law that came into force on the 23rd September. The charge for the review and statement was £100 plus VAT.

13. Finance

1. Bank Reconciliation - Cllr Golledge agreed to check the bank reconciliation ahead of the November meeting.
2. 2nd Quarter budget review – The Finance working party had considered the figures for 2nd quarter budget review and recommended that everything was in order and as expected for this period of the year. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Brand that the budget should be signed by the Chair as an accurate reflection of the finances as at the 30th September 2020.

3. Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

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5. Consider request for direct debit to be set up for monthly payment to Geeking IT Simple
Geeking It Simple have requested that the Parish Council sets up a direct debit to cover the cost of the monthly licences, namely £47.78 each month. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that the direct debit be set up.

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to complete the direct debit form

6. Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were presented for payment. It was proposed by Cllr Dumbrell and seconded by Cllr Brand that all payments be made.

V Watts	Salary & expenses	£ 430.46
Sue Robinson	Emergency kit	£ 51.74
Mountain & Forest Outdoor Ed Co Ltd	Bench repair	£ 65.00
Geowhizz Ltd	Web accessibility	£ 120.00
One Stop Promotions	Flag pole base	£ 88.80
Geeking It Simple	Monthly licences x 2	£ 95.56

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

14. Discuss and agree future of the Playing Field Committee in its current format

Cllr Crowe explained that due to the Coronavirus the Playing Field Committee have not been able to fund raise during the year in the way that they had hoped and as result have a bank balance of approx. £1130, £1000 of which is a grant received from Wainwrights for the playing field path. The ring-fenced charity money (£7717) is now held with Hodge Bank and cannot be used for ongoing maintenance or projects.

Cllr Crowe explained that it had been agreed at a previous meeting that the Parish Council would underwrite the ongoing maintenance costs of the playing field and therefore proposed that a grant should be awarded of £1500 to ensure that the bills for the remainder of the playing field financial year (31st December 2020) are covered. The Parish Council will review the year end accounts before deciding how to provide ongoing financial support during the Parish Councils next financial year 01/04/21 to 31/03/22. This was seconded by Cllr Dumbrell.

Vote: 5 For; 0 Against and 1 Abstentions

A cheque for £1500 was written for the Holcombe Playing Field, which the clerk will pay into their bank account

There was a conversation about how the playing field will be managed in the future. The Clerk confirmed that at present the committee were happy to continue to manage the field providing the ongoing maintenance costs are covered by the Parish Council. They will continue to organise fund raising opportunities where possible and apply for grants to support any projects.

It was suggested that it might be beneficial if the overall managing of the field came under the management of the Parish Council and that some of the Playing Field committee then become Parish Councillors, which would streamline the process. It was noted that the Charity Commission regulations may have an impact on whether any such change was possible.

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It was agreed that Cllr Crowe will meet with the Playing Field committee to discuss how the future managing of the playing field will progress.

15. Discuss and agree action plan for the proposed Playing Field path

There had been discussion between the Parish Council and the Playing Field committee around the exact location of the path which had caused some debate. The Parish Council felt strongly that the path should follow the perimeter of the field as much as possible to allow maximum use of the playing field, apart from near the play equipment where it was agreed it would cut across to the corner of the car park near to the zip wire. Subsequently the original quote was inflated by £7K for this longer route which included some materials which the contractor had failed to include in the original quote. This meant that the path had gone from approx. £10K to £17K which the Parish Council felt was a large sum of money which ultimately would come from Parishioners precept and a small grant and therefore careful consideration should be given before agreeing to continue. The playing field committee have since written to the Parish Council to say that they believe the decision on whether the path should go ahead and any subsequent project management should be passed over to the Parish Council, which all agreed. Cllr Crowe thanked the Playing Field committee for the time that they had put into the project. He said that he felt it was important to look forward and build on what had been done to date but to progress with due diligence.

It was proposed by Cllr Crowe that the first requirement was to instruct a contractor to provide a detailed plan with exact location and length. A detailed specification will be needed to enable new quotes to be sought. This information can then be presented to the Parishioners in order that they have an opportunity to comment on the proposals. Cllr Brand suggested that the information be presented to the public alongside other projects with costings.

It was agreed that when seeking quotes, the contractors would be asked for examples of other paths that they had completed so that visits could be made and the question of maintenance can be considered.

It was agreed that Cllr Crowe would lead the project with the support of Cllr Dumbrell.

Action: Clerk to seek contractor to provide detailed plan and specification

16. Playing Field Payments from Parish Council funds

The playing field committee had approved the following invoices and requested that they be signed to come from the Playing Field bank account.

Cranmore Parish Council	Covid Signage	£ 34.00
Came and company	Annual insurance	£ 820.43

17. Councillor Reports/Updates

17.1 Highways – The Clerk confirmed that an email had been received from Sara Davis of Somerset Highways just prior to the meeting, which provided the results of the recent surveys that had been completed around the village. The results will be discussed at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to circulate the email. Agenda item for November

17.2 Village Hall – Cllr Golledge said that the hall is only open to regular users all of whom are complying with government guidelines. Steve Blount has now stood down as Chairman with Helen James taking over the role. He will remain as a committee member during the transition period.

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17.3 Somerset Association of Local Councils – The Clerk had received details of various training dates, which will be circulated to all Councillors. If Councillors wish to attend then they should notify the Clerk.

Action: Clerk to circulate the email

17.4 Mendip District Council multi user path network – The Clerk had attended a virtual meeting which outlined their intention to open up an extensive network of multi user paths to enable people to cycle or walk to work as well as for recreational purposes. The hope is to link places like Frome, Shepton Mallet and Wells with neighbouring villages. There are local plans to link Leigh on Mendip with the Colliers Ways cycle path at Mells, which will involve improving a current footpath and bridleway to allow a safe cycle route. The Clerk will be kept informed of how the project progresses.

18. Update on the Cemetery path

The Clerk reported that the faculty had been approved so the path can progress. The Clerk had already asked the contractor to schedule in the start date as soon as possible. The Diocese architect needs to meet with the contractor on site before the work starts and again at the end of the project.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the contractor and architect to ensure prompt start date.

19. Agree application for bids invited for Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund 2020-2021

The email had been circulated regarding funding available. It was agreed that Cllr Golledge would consider a project which could be suitable for the village and bring back to the November meeting for discussion.

Action: Cllr Golledge to compile a proposal. Agenda item for November meeting.

20. Discuss how future meetings will be conducted

The majority of Councillors expressed concern about returning the hall for meetings. It was therefore agreed that the November meeting will be held using Zoom. This will be considered again at that meeting. .

21. Correspondence

Climate emergency virtual meeting 24/10/20 11am – 2.15pm

Letter confirmed One Somerset consultation dates:

08/10/20 @ 7pm

14/10/20 @ 7pm

15/10/20 @ 1pm and 7pm

22. Next Parish Council meeting

Tuesday 3rd November 2020