

HOLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
MENDIP DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

www.holcombepc.org.uk

Clerk: Vickie Watts, Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB
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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 2020, meetings would be conducted virtually. This has been achieved using "Zoom" software.

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Virtual Meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 3rd November 2020 at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors Present

Cllr Graham Crowe (Chair)
Cllr Simon Brand
Cllr Terry Dumbrell
Cllr Philip Gait
Cllr Peter Jennings
Cllr Sue Robinson

In attendance

District Cllr Philip Ham, the Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes and
1 member of the public

1. Public forum

There were no points raised.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Anne Golledge and District Cllr Alan Townsend both sent apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of interests and dispensation

There were none.

4. Approve Minutes of previous meeting

The Clerk had circulated the minutes from the meetings held on Tuesday 6th and 20th October 2020 prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Brand that they accurately reflected the meetings and should therefore be approved.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

5. Action points from last meeting and matters arising

The Clerk confirmed that all actions had been completed or would be discussed under the relevant agenda item tonight apart from:

- At the meeting on the 20th October it was minuted that the Clerk would write to the owner of the shoot but since then the Parish Council has been copied into the correspondence from Clarissa Cridland to the owner. The owner has apologised and the Clerk felt that it was now unnecessary for the Parish Council to also write. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Gait that the Parish Council would not write.
- The Clerk confirmed that she had emailed Sara Davis of Somerset Highways for further information relating to the survey but is yet to receive a response.

Action: Clerk follow up Sara Davis for a response.

6. Reports

1. PCSO

The Clerk had circulated the report which covered the Rural Beat North.

2. District Council

District Cllr Ham and Townsend emailed the following report:

BUDGET ISSUES – It was confirmed that Mendip District Council's 2020/21 year end could show a deficit of £2.4m, due to a combination of revenue shortfall from car parking, licence fees, planning fees etc, and additional spend on COVID related issues. Some further support from HMG is expected to reduce this to c£1.3m which can be funded from reserves. The outlook for 21/22 is very uncertain with the end of the Rate Support Grant, reorganisation of the Business Rates contribution and delays in returns from commercial property investment.

CABINET 12th OCTOBER - Alternative funding sources are being pursued such as Municipal Bonds, working with other councils, and Crowdfunding. Parishes are being invited to submit claims to Mendip District Council to cover the costs of COVID related work. A plea was made for Parent and Child parking spaces in Mendip District Council's car parks.

SCRUTINY – An Extraordinary meeting was held on 19th October to review the County-wide Climate Emergency Policy. The Climate Emergency was declared by the previous Council in February 2019 and a great deal of work has gone into preparing a strategy but Members were unanimous in that it was long on hot air but short of action. Parish involvement will be encouraged.

PLANNING - Natural England have advised that the level of phosphates in the protected parts of the Levels exceed the internationally agreed (Ramsar) levels. As a result, all new planning applications for dwellings or expanded livestock provision are on hold if they would drain into the Levels.

Cllr Townsend's examination of planning delays continues with input from Holcombe Parish Council.

CABINET 2nd NOVEMBER - The plan for Mendip District Council to provide 160 affordable houses with a target of 60 for social rent was presented. These would be on Mendip District Council owned sites which were identified for development 2 years ago. Mendip District Council's partner in the enterprise is Aster. The Easthill site in Frome opposite ASDA aroused controversy because it is a greenfield site.

The Climate Emergency Strategy agreed at Scrutiny was endorsed for consideration by Full Council on 9th November.

A fuel poverty and carbon emissions paper was presented. It was agreed that resources will be made available for a promotional campaign with targeted interventions aimed at residents on lower incomes and those at risk of fuel poverty living in poor housing.

HIGHWAYS – Cllr Townsend has reported the issue of parking opposite Croft Rd to Sara Davis and invited her to a site visit. It would be a good opportunity to raise the issue of signage at the Cross if this was felt to be a contributory factor in the recent accident.

3. County Council

Cllr Pullin did not attend and no report had been received.

7. Planning Applications

2020/2157/FUL - Meadow View Farm, Charlton Road, Holcombe, Radstock, BA3 5ET
Erection of agricultural building for storage of hay, straw and machinery and part lambing shed

All Councillors had considered the application prior to the meeting. The applicant attended and explained that as part of the conditions for the rural business park he is not able to house animals on that site, hence the creation of the new farm across the field, which is now known as Meadow View Farm. He said that he needed the extra space to allow him to lamb his sheep inside as due to the woodland adjacent to his land there are problem crows which will attack the new born lambs. The new shed would also be used to accommodate hay, straw and machinery. Meadow View Farm has its own purpose-built access which also provides a passing place on Charlton Road. In time the farm will generate employment.

It was noted that the neighbours had not been consulted on this application.

It was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Gait that the application should be recommended for approval.

Vote: 5 For, 1 Against and 0 Abstentions

Cllr Crowe voted against the proposal on the grounds that Mendip District Council Planning Office did not consult with the neighbours and therefore failed to follow their own procedures

8. Planning Updates

2020/1298/TPO - T1- Ash Tree- M1046- Fell due to Ash die back.
Goodwood Charlton Road Holcombe Radstock Somerset
Mendip District Council approved with conditions

9. Finance

1. Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk will complete the reconciliation and drop to Cllr Golledge for checking.

2. Decision on Community Project Funds 2020

Cllr Brand and Robinson had considered the applications ahead of the meeting. Cllr Brand reported that Grants had been received as follows:

Ladies Club - £100.76 for 3 air pumps (flasks)

Welcome Club - £180.00 for Medical screen & curtains and £80 – 100 for a printer
Village Hall - £254.99 for security cameras

Cllr Brand proposed that the Ladies Club be awarded £100.76 for the 3 air pumps (flasks) and the Welcome Club be awarded £180.00 for the medical screen and additional curtains.

Cllr Brand stated that the Welcome Clubs request for a printer did not fit with the criteria of the grants being general office equipment.

Cllr Brand expressed surprise that the request did not include the installation costs or the provision of the power supply. He was concerned whether these cameras provided the best solution and how the data would be captured and stored. He also questioned whether the data could be used in criminal proceedings if damage was recorded. Although the Councillors agreed in principle to increasing security at the Village hall it believed that further investigation was required from a security expert to ascertain how this could be done. Once this had been obtained the Parish Council would consider financial support of the scheme.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Robinson that the Parish Council would write the cheques for the Ladies Club - £100.76 for the 3 air pumps and £180.00 for the Welcome Club medical screen and curtains. The Clerk would also write to the Welcome Club and the Village Hall to explain the Parish Councils decisions. It was agreed that the deadline for applications be extended to the end of November.

Action: Clerk to contact all applicants with the Parish Councils decisions. Clerk to re-advertise for a further month to allow additional applications. Agenda item for December.

3 Parish Council Payments:

The following payments were presented for payment:

V Watts – Salary £479.95 & expenses £25.46 totalling £505.41
Community Project Fund, Ladies Club - £100.76
Community Project Fund, Welcome Club - £180.00
Coleford PC - Clerk training with SALC £10.00

It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that the payments be made.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

10. Update and discussion on the proposed Playing Field path

A plan had been circulated to all Councillors showing the location of the proposed path along with a specification. It was questioned why the path shown, cuts across from the car park to the Lychgate dividing the play area from the rest of the field. Cllr Dumbrell said that it was a logical route providing a direct, dry path across a part of the field which can be very wet and boggy. It also ensured that there was no cycling or running near the children's play area whilst offering a clear definition of the areas. The route would also be slightly shorter than following the perimeter.

It was agreed that the Clerk would put the plan showing the proposed route along with a basic specification on Facebook and the Parish website to keep parishioners informed. It would state that the path would be the same style as the one recently installed at the Holcombe Old Church and that quotes are now being sought

Once 3 quotes have been obtained it can be presented to the parishioners again along with other project options to establish feedback as to whether the project should go ahead.

**Actions: Clerk to put together a document to update the Parishioners and post on Facebook, the website and noticeboards.
Clerk to seek 3 quotes
Clerk to research grant funding**

11. Update on the Cemetery path

The Clerk had circulated photographs of the newly installed path at Holcombe Old Church which has eliminated the risk of slipping on grass or mud when accessing the Parish Council Cemetery.

During the installation the contractor disposed of the earth over the wall onto the neighbouring field. The Landowner had contacted Rev'd Clarissa Cridland to say that permission had not been sought. Clarissa has apologised to the land owner and the apology had been accepted. Clarissa has asked that the Parish Council does not write to the landowner as the matter has been dealt with. However, if there are any subsequent complaints from the landowner on this matter, Clarissa has said that she will deal with it.

Cllr Crowe said that with any future projects it was essential that terms of reference are put in place so that all parties can be clear about what is expected of them and this should also be minuted.

It was suggested that the Chairman might like to speak with Clarissa Cridland to say that there should have been a conversation with the Parish Council before the email was sent to the complainant.

12. Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund 2020-2021

Cllr Gollidge had circulated suggestions which Holcombe Parish Council could take forward. The deadline for the 2nd round of funding is in January. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask the Village hall committee if they would give permission for the installation of solar panels on the Village hall. If agreement is given then the Clerk will seek quotes for consideration.

**Action: Clerk to seek permission form the Village Hall committee
Clerk to seek quotes for installation of solar panels on the Village hall
Agenda item for the December meeting.**

13. Councillor Reports/Updates

1. Highways

- Road closure of Brewery Lane, Holcombe will take place from the 12th November for a total of 7 days. This is to allow Western Power to complete work.
- A letter had been received regarding the recent road traffic accident at the cross roads of Holcombe Hill and Charlton Road with Brewery Lane and Stratton Road. It was suggested that a roundabout should be installed to slow traffic. It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to say that the Parish Council has been working with Somerset Highways to obtain data which it is hoped will be used to find a solution to reduce speed in the village.
- A letter of complaint had been received regarding inconsiderate parking on Stratton Road which has meant that larger vehicles have been unable to access Croft Road. This could mean that the emergency services may not be able to enter the road which could have disastrous consequences. This has been reported to the PCSO who have said they will monitor the situation. The Clerk has also asked District Cllr Townsend to raise the inconsiderate parking with Somerset highways to see if they are able to help.
- Cllr Dumbrell said that he had sampled the statistics from the recent traffic survey. There are more long vehicles travelling on Holcombe Hill than on Brewery Lane, Charlton Road or Stratton Road. However, it is clear that the data received has not been quality controlled. It appears that the equipment relies on the vehicles travelling at an even pace and the data could be corrupted as the traffic was stopping at the pinch points where the devices were sited. It was agreed that the Clerk would discuss this with Sara Davis and request that the data is provided in the raw format and not as a PDF. It would also be useful to know the make and model of the kit used.

**Action: Clerk to respond to the letter proposing installation of roundabout
Clerk to contact Sara Davis regarding survey data
Agenda item for the December meeting**

2. Playing Field

The Clerk confirmed that the Halloween event, Horror on Holcombe Hill was an enormous success with very positive feedback. £784.10 was raised in 4 hours. The next meeting will take place Wednesday 4th November 2020.

3. Village Hall

The Village hall will be closed from Thursday 5th November due to the 4 weeks lock down

4. Somerset Association of Local Councils

The Clerk had circulated training dates to all Councillors who should notify the Clerk if they wish to attend.

5. Emergency Plan

Cllr Robinson asked if the Parish Council could purchase 50 face masks to be split between the 2 battle boxes in case there was an emergency during the pandemic. The request was approved and Cllr Robinson will make the purchase.

Vote: 6 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Cllr Brand asked for a vote of thanks to Cllr Robinson for undertaking the film work completed with Somerset Prepared promoting the benefits of having an emergency plan. It was agreed that the Clerk would put a link to the film on Facebook and the website to publicise that Holcombe has an emergency plan in place.

Action: Clerk to promote the Emergency plan film on Facebook and website

14. Note use of the Playing Field car park on 31/10/20

A request to use the Car park for the Halloween event had been sent to all Councillors prior to the event. The Clerk had also contacted the neighbours who were content that the car park could be used for the additional hour beyond the agreed conditions. It was agreed that this would be counted towards one of the twelve uses per year.

Action: Clerk to update the log

15. Discuss how future meetings will be conducted

In light of the current announcement that there will be a 4-week lockdown from 5th November the December meeting will take place via Zoom. This will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

16. Correspondence

Cllr Brand confirmed that Rev'd Clarissa Cridland had invited him to lay a virtual wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at the virtual Remembrance Day service which will take place via Zoom. Cllr Brand will then lay the actual wreath at 10.30am and will upload a photograph to the Facebook page.

Somerset Association of Local Councils: Standards Consultation. – It was agreed that no action was required.

17. Next Parish Council meeting

Tuesday 1st December 2020

Meeting finished at 21.25hrs