

**HOLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
IN 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

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 2nd January 2024 at Holcombe Village Hall**

Councillors Present Cllr Brand (Chairman)
Cllr Davies
Cllr Eade
Cllr Emery
Cllr Gait
Cllr Govier
Cllr Kerr
Cllr Stratford

In attendance: There was 1 member of the public present.
Somerset Cllr Edric Hobbs
Clerk Vickie Watts taking the minutes.

1. Public forum

There were no points raised

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Roberts and Somerset Cllr Tony Robbins sent apologies, which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of interests and dispensations

Cllr Emery declared an interest in Agenda point 10.5, payments.

4. Approve Minutes of previous monthly meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2023

The minutes had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Eade that they accurately reflected the meeting and should be approved.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

5. Action updates from last meeting

All actions had been completed or would be covered as agenda items during the meeting apart from:

- Consider quotes to install 3 x new toughened glass panels in the Lychgate

6. Reports

- 6.1 PCSO – PCSO Will Mortimer provided the Crime statistics for the last month which had been circulated to all Councillors.

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- 6.2 Somerset Council – Somerset Cllr Hobbs attended the meeting and reported that Somerset Council is consulting with the public on how best to address the financial emergency and balance the 2024/25 budget. The decision will be made by the full Council on the 20th February. The most that they would be able to increase their Precept would be 4.99%.

The creation of the proposed Farmshop car park may help the case for extending the 30mph zone out towards Stoke St Michael. Cllr Hobbs suggested working with Stoke St Michael's Parish Council as the car park falls within their parish, to see if this can be progressed.

7. Planning Applications

There were none.

8. Planning Updates

There were none.

9. Consider the proposal to set up a voluntary group to review future developments in Holcombe

The Councillors discussed the draft response presented by the chair to work with Mr Durkin in establishing a group to review future developments in the village. It was agreed that terms of reference (TORs) would need to be developed as a first step to specify the type and nature of the work to be conducted and its relationship with the PC

It was proposed that Cllr Brand, Cllr Gait and Cllr Davies should meet with Mr Durkin to agree TOR.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

Action: Cllr Brand to draft a response to Mr Durkin and arrange a convenient time to meet.

10. Finance

10.1 Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk had prepared the bank reconciliation which will be checked by Cllr Emery before the next meeting.

10.2 Discuss and the 3rd Quarter Budget review for 2023/24

The Clerk had shared the spreadsheet with a draft of the 3rd quarter budget review for 2023/24 for consideration. The position as at the 31st December 2023 was:

Total income to date: £14,116 against budget of £14,731

Total payments to date: £16,628 against budget of £23,000

It was proposed by Cllr Stratford and seconded by Cllr Kerr that the review should be approved and signed by the Chair.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

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10.3 Discuss Budget and Precept for 2024/25

The Clerk had shared the updated spreadsheet with a draft of the budget for 2024/25 for consideration along with the calculation showing how any percentage increase to the Precept will impact on parishioners' council tax.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Govier and seconded by Cllr Davies that the precept should be increased by 10% thereby delivering an income of £14,389 to the Parish Council. This 10% increase will amount to an additional 6 pence per week per Band D household. Based on the presented budget this would continue to utilise the reserves over the next 3 years to cover the predicted costs plus factoring in how Somerset Council's financial emergency may impact on the parish over the coming year.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to submit the precept request to Somerset Council

10.4 Consider quotes to install 3 x new toughened glass panels in the Lychgate

Clerk to seek further quotes to include the cost of installation for consideration at the February meeting.

Action: Clerk to seek quotes. Agenda item for February

10.5 Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were presented for payment:

Vickie Watts – Salary & Expenses	£315.46
Village Hall Hire – Oct to Dec	£ 54.00
Elaine Emery – Floral displays	£ 29.68
Vickie Watts – ASW Solar panel	£ 93.25

10.6 Playing Field Payments:

There were none.

It was proposed by Cllr Kerr and seconded by Cllr Gait that the abovementioned payments for the Parish Council should be approved.

Vote: 7 For; 0 Against; 1 Abstention (Cllr Emery)

Action: Clerk to purchase the ASW Solar panel

11. Highways

11.1 Update on installation Auto Speed Watch

Cllr Stratford reported that the solar panel was required to ensure maximum overage each day. It was agreed that the Clerk would purchase the additional solar panel at a price of £93.25 which would solve the problem.

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11.2 Update on existing issues already reported to Somerset Highways (SH)

Somerset Highways engineer Sara Davis (SD) responded to our email regarding the 30mph limit in Oakhill which she explained related to an old order which needed to be rectified. The slight extension on the original order was put in by SH on review as the original sign location was deemed not suitable; this was not at the request of the parish council.

SD said that they have no reason to change the existing 30mph limit which runs outside Holcombe Farm Shop, but if the Parish Council wished to then there will be a charge as with other speed limit changes.

She said that if the 30mph zone was moved further out, then it was likely to dilute the message to motorists approaching the Farm Shop, just at the point you need them to be at 30mph. If the parish are experiencing antisocial driver behaviour, including speeding, please report this to Avon and Somerset Police via their webpage.

With regards the 30mph limit on Brewery Lane, the posts are scheduled to be moved this financial year with the associated road markings being added the following year.

11.3 Report of new issues

The street light on Kingsway is still not working despite being reported 18 months ago. Clerk to ensure that this is chased up.

Action: Clerk to action

12. Councillor Reports/Updates including Highways, Playing Field, Village Hall, SALC, etc

SALC: Cllr Govier will be attending SALC training on the 15th and 22nd January 2024.

13. Meetings/Training to attend

11th January 2024 time TBC – Local Community Network meeting @ SHAPE Mendip. Cllr Gait to attend.

14. Correspondence

28/11/23 – Email from a resident regarding litter in the car park with an offer to act as key holder to lock the gate to the car park. It was agreed that the Clerk would acknowledge the email but respond to say that the council will monitor

Action: Clerk to respond

15. Next meetings

Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 6th February 2024 @ 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 20.23hrs