

**HOLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MENDIP DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET**

**[www.holcombepc.org.uk](http://www.holcombepc.org.uk)**

Clerk: Vickie Watts, Gallant Hill Farm, Foxcote, Radstock, BA3 5YB  
[clerk@holcombepc.org.uk](mailto: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 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 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30 pm.**

*Councillors Present*

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

*In attendance*

District Cllrs Philip, Alan Townsend and the Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes and member of the public.

**1. Public forum**

The Chair welcomed the members of the public and explained that as Mendip District Council had not yet registered the planning application for the wildlife pond at Meadow Cottage, that we would not be able to discuss it.

The applicant said that the planning application contained detailed reports which the Parish Council would benefit from before any consideration.

Members of the public highlighted their concerns over the work that had been done to create the pond which they said had caused flooding to their land and property which are further down the hill.

Cllr Crowe encouraged all interested parties to attend the February meeting when it is hoped the application will have been validated and full planning reports will be available to Councillors to aid consideration of the application.

**ACTION: Agenda item for February**

**2. Co-option of Councillor**

The Clerk confirmed that a parishioner had expressed interest in one of the vacant positions. It is hoped this may soon be filled.

**3. Apologies for absence**

There were none.

**4. Declaration of interests and dispensations**

There were none.

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**5. Approve Minutes of previous meeting**

The Clerk had circulated the minutes resulting from the meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020. It was proposed by Cllr Golledge and seconded by Cllr Gait that the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and should therefore be signed by the Chair

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

**ACTION: Clerk to upload to the website**

**6. Action points from last meeting and matters arising**

All actions had been completed or would be discussed under the relevant agenda item later in the meeting.

**7. Reports**

1. PCSO - An area newsletter had been circulated to all Councillors but it did not give specific information relating to Holcombe.
2. Mendip District Council report

District Cllr Townsend and Ham submitted the following joint report:

PLANNING - As previously mentioned, Mendip has the problem of excessive Phosphate levels on protected (Ramsar) sites on the Levels. At the moment applications for some 1500 houses are on hold. Mendip have at last asked DHCLG to get a grip of Natural England who appear to have imposed the ban without consultation. We are assured that the ban on new building on sites that drain into the Levels will not have an effect on building elsewhere, but there is nothing to stop speculative applications.

Local Plan Part 2 Examination – this has now concluded. The requirement for an additional 505 dwellings in the north east of the District was the main issue. Gladman did not take part in the hearing or seek to promote Anchor Rd, Coleford as an alternative. Coleford was not discussed and at no point was it suggested it should be included. This gives some grounds for optimism. The Inspector will produce his report in January and if he recommends any changes to the 5 sites proposed there will be a further consultation with a target of issuing the final report in April.

Holcombe PC are asked to consider registering an objection to the re-submission of the Gladman application in Coleford. The original refusal by Mendip District Council was on the grounds of Harm to the countryside. Though Gladman have still not submitted the promised further Landscape assessment. The substandard highway network is already a cause for concern and this development would have a major impact. We are very keen that Mendip should record this as a further reason for refusal

MENDIP SOCIAL HOUSING - After much debate Council finally agreed to pause the programme to allow proper consultation with the affected communities in Frome, Glastonbury and Street and examination of the whole process, including the selection of Aster.

UNITARY REORGANISATION - On 3<sup>rd</sup> December a special meeting of Full Council voted to promote the case for Stronger Somerset to DHCLG. This is the proposal for 2 councils, East and West Somerset, to replace the existing structure.

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MENDIP FINANCES - The year end forecast is for a deficit of £2.2M from the Budget spend of £17.1M. The interim budget for next year shows a deficit of £1.2M but there are many issues still to be resolved. Full Council has agreed the Tax Base for next year, i.e., the number of dwellings that will pay Council Tax. Meanwhile much officer time is being dedicated to issuing the government relief funding to local retail and hospitality – some £20M so far.

3. Somerset County Council report

County Cllr Mike Pullin did not attend and no report had been provided.

**8. Planning Applications**

1. [2020/2248/HSE](#) - Glen View Villa, Holcombe, Radstock, BA3 5DN  
Conversion of single storey double garage into ancillary use (living room)

Cllrs Dumbrell explained that this work had already been completed. The changes match in with the existing building and therefore should be recommended for approval. It was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Brand that the application should be recommended for approval on the basis that it blends with the existing building and complies with the Holcombe Village Design Statement.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

**ACTION: Clerk to notify the planning office.**

2. [2020/2201/OTS](#) - Land Off Anchor Road, Lipyeate Cross To Luckington Cross, Coleford  
Outline planning application for the erection of up to 63 dwellings with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS), a vehicular access point from Anchor Road. All matters reserved except for means of access (resubmission of 2019/2345/OTS)

District Cllr Alan Townsend explained that **Gladman's** have submitted an appeal on application 2020/2201/OTS which had been previously rejected by the Mendip District Planning board. The application is yet to be validated but once it is, they will decide the type of appeal, set a timescale and appoint an inspector.

The appeal will run alongside the abovementioned new application so District Cllr Townsend encouraged Councillors to concentrate on the latest application and submit a response. District Cllr Townsend believes that Highways is the main cause for concern. He said that recently there have been 3 diversions set up by Somerset County Councils Highways department all of which have avoided Charmborough Lane in the diverted routes. District Cllr Ham said that evidence had been received from Coleford residents and haulage companies stating that they avoid using Charmborough Lane with Brewery Lane, Holcombe being the preferred route.

Cllr Brand said that the target dates set for consultation on the Mendip Planning portal had passed. Could we be sure that any response submitted by Holcombe Parish Councils would be accepted? District Cllr Townsend said that the planning officer had confirmed that once the revised landscape assessment report is submitted by the applicant, the consultation period will start again to allow interested parties time to consider and respond.

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Cllr Crowe proposed and Cllr Gait seconded that a letter objecting to the application should be submitted to Mendip Planning highlighting the impact the development would have on the local road network would be unacceptable as the roads are not appropriate for any increase in traffic.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

**ACTION: Cllr Crowe to draft a response.**

**9. Planning Update**

1. 2020/1350/APP – Approval of details reserved by conditions 10 (footpath) on planning consent 067642/009. Plot North of Wayside, Common Lane, Holcombe, Refused by Mendip District Council.

The original planning condition stated that the property should not be occupied until the footpath had been installed. There is evidence that it is being lived in and it was therefore agreed that the Clerk will write Tracy Aarons of Mendip District Council asking that action be taken.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

**ACTION: The Clerk to write to Tracy Aarons.**

2. 2020/1298/TPO – T1 Ash Tree, M1046 – Fell to the ground due to Ash die back Goodwood, Charlton lane, Holcombe Approved with conditions by Mendip District Council
3. 2020/0915/HES – 2 storey extension loft conversion forming masonry gable end and roof alterations for full dormer to the rear of 1 Croft Road, Holcombe Appeal allowed by the Planning Inspectorate

**10. Finance**

1. Bank Reconciliation  
Cllr Golledge to check the reconciliation prior to the next meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to complete the reconciliation.**

2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter budget review 2020/21  
The Clerk confirmed that the Finance working party had met prior to the meeting and considered the accounts up until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Gait that the accounts should be signed off as a correct record for the period.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

3. Discuss and agree Budget & Precept for 2021/22  
The Finance working party had met to consider the draft budget prepared by the Clerk to help with setting the precept. Some changes were made and the amended spreadsheet had been circulated to all prior to the meeting. There were no questions raised. It was proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that the precept should remain the same as last year at £11865 with no increase. It was acknowledged that any shortfall would come from the Parish Councils reserves.

**Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention**

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**ACTION: Clerk to submit the Precept request to Mendip District Council**

4. Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

V Watts – Salary £314.45 & expenses £29.03 totalling £343.48  
Jeremy Weare Cemetery grass cutting £697.20  
Jeremy Weare Playing field grass cutting £1263.60  
Holcombe Playing Field Maintenance grant £3000.00

Cllr Golledge proposed and Cllr Gait seconded that the payments should be made.

**Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**

5. Playing Field Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

Midsomer Norton Community Trust – Xmas market umbrellas £157.50

Cllr Golledge proposed and Cllr Gait seconded that the payments should be made.

**Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**

**11. The Office of National Statistics Census 21/03/21**

The Clerk had circulated information received about the Census to all Councillors. It was agreed that the Council would help to publicise the Census to encourage support using social media, notice boards and parish website.

**12. Update and discussion on the proposed Playing Field path**

The Clerk confirmed she had received some quotes but was expecting to receive more. After discussion it was agreed that the quotes would be considered at the February meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to chase up outstanding quotes  
District Cllr Ham regarding the offer of free materials.  
Agenda item for February to consider quotes received.**

**13. Consider quotes received for work on trees at the Playing Field**

The Clerk confirmed that 2 quotes had been received. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek 1 further quote before selecting a contractor at the February meeting

**ACTION: Clerk to seek further quote.  
Agenda item for February to consider quotes received.**

**14. Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund 2020-2021**

It was agreed that Cllr Golledge would submit an application from the fund, to cover the cost of 500 trees. If successful a tree would be offered to each home owner who is able to plant one and some at the playing field to replace the trees that will be removed due to Ash die back, subject to approval by the Playing Field Committee.

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Cllr Gait said that if there were any leftover, he had sufficient land to use them.

Cllr Dumbrell had circulated detailed information about how hot water can be taken from coal mine water beneath Holcombe. Everyone agreed that this was an interesting idea but one that would take Cllrs Dumbrell knowledge and experience to bring to fruition. It was acknowledged that there would not be sufficient time to prepare a bid for this round of funding, but that work could start to in order that we are prepared for any future funding opportunities.

**ACTION: Cllr Golledge to submit the grant application**  
**Cllr Dumbrell to put together request for future grants**

**15. Councillor Reports/Updates**

1. Highways – It was agreed that the Clerk would try to arrange a Zoom meeting with Sara Davis of Somerset Highways to progress the proposed highway improvements including the introduction of dropped kerbs in Holcombe. District Cllr Ham will also assist with the installation of dropped kerbs.

It was noted that there had recently been an incident on Charlton Road which resulted in extensive damage to a garden wall and damage to a telecom/broadband/power pole. The Clerk to add the details to the list of accidents within the village.

**ACTION: The Clerk to arrange Zoom meeting with Sara Davis.**  
**District Cllr Ham to also speak with Sara Davis regarding the installation of dropped kerbs**  
**Clerk to record latest incident in the village for future reference.**

Road closure at Quarry Lane to Somers Hill, Leigh on Mendip.  
Expected to commence 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and last 5 days

Burnt House Lane to Tadhil Lane and Susanna's Lane to Dark Lane, Stoke St Michael  
Expected to commence 4<sup>th</sup> January and last for 12 days

2. Playing Field – The Clerk confirmed that the Christmas Market had been a success and raised £788.55 making a total of £1300 when combined with the Halloween event for the Playing Field.
3. Village Hall  
Cllr Golledge confirmed that there had been no meeting since October. The Clerk to complete the user agreement for both the Parish Council and on behalf of the Playing Field Committee ready for the coming year in the event that the hall is required.
4. Somerset Association of Local Councils  
Cllr Gait attended the Annual General meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020. A volunteer is sought to take on the role of representative for the Somerset Playing Field Association. It normally meets 3 or 4 times a year, is an interesting role and doesn't take up much time. The representative need not be a member of SALC County Committee but would feed back to the Committee anything of interest. If interested, contact Justin Robinson at SALC.

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**16. Discuss how future meetings will be conducted**

In light of the current restrictions and views of the Council it was agreed that the February meeting will take place using Zoom.

**17. Consider request for Royal Mail Parcel point in the village**

The Clerk had received a request from a resident asking if the Parish Council would consider asking Royal Mail to install a Parcel Box unit at the cross roads next to the post box to allow individuals to easily dispatch parcels without the need to leave the village. Councillors felt this was a good idea but wondered if parking might be an issue. The Clerk had emailed Royal Mail and was currently awaiting a response.

**18. Correspondence**

Update from Somerset County Council regarding One Somerset – Emailed to all.

**19. Next Parish Council meeting**

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

The meeting ended at 21.50hrs