

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 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 2nd February 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 5 members of the public.

1. PUBLIC FORUM

Cllr Gait highlighted that there are issues with the sewage system on Holcombe Hill with sewage leaking out into parishioners’ gardens. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Wessex Water to highlight concerns over the sewage system which appears to be failing and not fit for purpose.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Wessex Water

2. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS

The Clerk confirmed that there was no one to co-opt at this point.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Clerk had circulated the minutes resulting from the meeting held on Tuesday 5th January 2021. It was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Golledge 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 apart from:

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1. [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)
It was agreed that a letter objecting to the application should be submitted to Mendip office highlighting the impact the development would have on the local road network which would be unacceptable as the roads are not appropriate for any increase in traffic.

ACTION: Cllr Crowe to draft a response to the Planning Officer.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

2. [2020/2604/FUL – Meadow Cottage, Holcombe Hill, Holcombe, Radstock. Construction of a wildlife pond \(retrospective\) and proposed change of use of agricultural land as an extension to the existing garden.](#)

The applicant said that they had commissioned a report which had highlighted that there were no links between the creation of the pond and the spring. They have provided data on the rainfall which shows an increase over recent times. The applicant stated that the spring is 8m away from the pond. It has been said that there were drains running across the land but there was no evidence that they were damaged during any ground work.

A neighbouring land owner said that the land has been wetter than ever over recent years. He said that he had not seen the applicant remove any trees that did not require attention.

A resident said that not all of the objections which had been submitted were showing on the planning portal. They stated that the storm drains were there for a reason and now they have been removed it is causing flooding. The report commissioned shows estimations rather than accurate measurements.

Another resident said that they had submitted an impact report. The flood storage land had changed and the ongoing flooding is having a serious impact on their lives.

The applicant responded to the points raised.

Cllr Crowe asked the Clerk to check if any members of the Parish were waiting to join the Zoom meeting. The Clerk confirmed that there were none.

Cllr Dumbrell said that the perched water tables on the hill were not always visible. Drainage becomes disturbed by construction. The report provided does give advice on mitigation but it is unfortunate that the measures proposed have not been completed.

Cllr Gait said that he felt it was difficult to comment on an expert report when they have said that it is not causing a problem, however Cllr Gait invited Mendip District Council to investigate the report further. He went on to say that he did not understand why a change of use was required to accommodate the wildlife pond. Garden status would give the go ahead for further structures which could further impact on the problem.

Cllr Brand highlighted that the Parish Council were being asked to consider 2 aspects, the retrospective application for the pond and the change of use of the land. He went on to say that Councillors were not experts on the issues relating to the installation of the pond and water course and therefore should not comment. As the land subject to the change of use falls outside the permitted development line, he was hesitant to agree to the request as it could set a precedent which could allow for further development.

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After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Gait that permission should be refused for both elements of the application on the basis that:

- The area east of Holcombe Hill in which this lies has a long history of seasonal springs, flooding, bogging and ponding.
- The Parish Council cannot be clear on the effects that the installation of the pond has had and turning the field into a garden could have on this flooding.
- The report commissioned by the applicant had solutions to mitigate the flooding which are yet to be actioned by the applicant.
- The report commissioned by the applicant has not fully investigated the flooding situation or the change in water flows in the area before and after the creation of the pond.
- Not all comments were available to view on the planning portal because they had not been uploaded.
- The land subject to the change of use would take the proposed garden outside of the village development line.
- Approval would permit future structures to be built and landscaping work to be done which could further exacerbate any flooding.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against & 0 Abstentions

ACTION: Clerk to notify the planning officer

8. PLANNING UPDATES

- 8.1 2020/2248/HSE – Conversion of single storey double garage into ancillary use (living room) Glen View Villa, Holcombe Hill, Holcombe, Radstock, BA3 5DN
Mendip District Council approved with conditions
- 8.2 2020/1537/NMA – Application for a non-material amendment to permission 2017/2056/FUL for the re-positioning of the windows and material changes to the car port
Sunnyholme, Charlton Rd, Holcombe, Radstock
Mendip District Council refused
- 8.3 2020/2534/HSE – Demolish existing garage and erect larger garage, repair, rebuild and extend outbuilding, remove hedge in front garden and replaced with stone wall to match existing and create a wider access gate to allow for additional car parking space.
An extension has been granted to allow the Parish Council to consider this application at our March meeting.

ACTION: Agenda item for March

- 8.4 2020/1350/APP – Approval of details reserved by conditions 10 (footpath) on planning consent 067642/009. Plot North of Wayside, Common Lane, Holcombe, Radstock
The Clerk said that Mendip District Council Planning Officer, Carlton Langford had emailed in response to the Clerks request, stating that the applicant needs to submit technical information regarding the construction of the footpath, access and boundary wall construction to support the application. He said that Somerset County Council Highways department or a private engineer could help to provide the information required.

ACTION: Clerk to write to the Applicant to highlight what is required by Mendip District Council Planning office to secure approval of the application.

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9. REPORTS

9.1 PCSO - An area newsletter had been circulated to all Councillors but it did not give specific information relating to Holcombe.

9.2 Mendip District Council report

District Cllr Townsend and Ham submitted the following joint report:

Mendip District Council has released a statement highlighting how Covid 19 has impacted on the Council and how they have set new priorities, which are saving lives, delivering statutory services and economic recovery. A statement was also released explaining how the planning service had been affected. It states:

- Delays in planning decisions and consultation responses are likely with uploading of comments target of 5 days being extended to 10.
- Site visits and site notices are not taking place due to the restrictions.
- Decision notices to Parish Councils are also suspended until further notice.
- Requests for extensions in time from the planning officer are likely.
- Suspension of Duty Officer service and Pre-application process.
- Planning enforcement will only be making site visits in respect of work on Listed Buildings, Trees with TPO's
- A new process for Parish Councils to submit comments will be introduced soon.

The statement also highlighted 2 consultations which are currently taking place, the Review of the Local Validation List for Planning Applications with a response deadline of 05/02/21 and the Mendip Landscape Character Assessment with response date of 28/02/21.

Local Plan Part II – The interim report on the main modifications has been received and upon brief inspection it appears that there are no changes which would impact on Holcombe or Coleford.

Responses are still welcomed for the consultation on the Gladman application for 63 houses at Lipyeate.

Saxonvale, Frome – Outline permission has been approved for 300 mixed work, business and accommodation.

Cabinet – The Finance officer has produced a balanced budget for the coming financial year which will be agreed at the full council meeting on the 22nd February. Council tax will rise by 3.1% which equates to a £5 increase for a band D property.

Climate emergency – Mendip's target of being Carbon Neutral by 2030 was reported to Cabinet as being unachievable in the real world, with a 40 to 47% reduction being more possible. A massive consultant's report produced 2 years after the Climate Emergency was declared has concluded that we have generation opportunities with solar PV, and potential emission reductions from road transport, domestic heating and agriculture. The latter is highly controversial with the farming community.

Phosphate levels in the water on the Somerset Levels continues to be an issue.

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The Clean Air act which will be coming into effect in Bristol and Bath will push more traffic onto our roads meaning our air will become more polluted.

A meeting had been held with Sara Davis of Somerset Highways where they discussed the Duck Signs for Charlton Road, Speeding on Holcombe Hill and Dropped Kerbs. There was also a discussion about Charmborough Lane and the regular delays experienced as a result of large vehicles meeting. Delays are caused as one vehicle then has to reverse to an appropriate wider point to allow the other vehicle to pass. It was suggested that a one-way system incorporating Charmborough Lane, Charlton Road, Dark Lane, Brewery Lane and back onto Charmborough Lane. This would not be to everyone's liking.

Cllr Ham confirmed that Mr Rick Massey's offer to supply the stone required for the proposed Playing Field Path still stands.

An application to make the Royal British Legion Building in Coleford an Asset of Community Value is going to be submitted. If this is successful it will ensure that the community would have the chance to purchase the building before it was sold on the open market. Letters of support are welcome and should be sent to the Clerk at clerkcolefordsomerset@gmail.com There is also an online petition which people are encouraged to sign. It currently has 280 signatures.

9.2 Somerset County Council report

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

10. FINANCE

10.1 Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Golledge checked the reconciliation prepared by the Clerk and confirmed it to be in order.

10.2 Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

V Watts – Salary £225.08 & expenses £34.91 totalling £259.99

V Watts – To be reimbursed for Wix Web hosting £86.40

SALC – Planning Training event £25.00

10.3 Playing Field Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

Lynne Cox – Printing costs £88.15

Cllr Dumbrell proposed and Cllr Robinson seconded that the payments for both the Parish Council and the Playing Field should be made.

Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions

It was noted that the payment of £3K made to the Playing Field Committee in January was to come from the current financial year and not 2021/22.

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11. CONSIDER AND AGREE CONTRACTOR FOR GRASS CUTTING 2021/22 & 23

The Clerk confirmed that 2 quotes had been received as follows:

Jeremy Weare Ltd – Total for the year for Playing field and cemetery £2136 plus VAT
LSJ Gardening Services - £3840 – no VAT payable

It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Golledge that Jeremy Weare Ltd should be awarded the contract for the next 3 years on the basis of the quote received.

ACTION: Clerk to send the contract to Jeremy Weare Ltd for signing

12. CONSIDER QUOTES FOR THE PROPOSED PLAYING FIELD PATH

The Clerk confirmed that 5 quotes had been received. The total cost of the path will be in the region of £14K. £3K of which is stone material. It has been confirmed earlier in the meeting that Rick Massey's offer to supply stone materials free of charge still stands. It was proposed that a working party meeting should be held on Tuesday 9th February to consider the quotes and discuss in more details ahead of making the decision at the March Parish Council meeting.

Vote: 6 For; 0 Against: 1 Abstentions

**ACTION: Clerk to arrange Zoom meeting for 09/02/21. Clerk to circulate quotes.
Cllr Dumbrell to circulate spreadsheet showing breakdown of costs
Clerk to post on Facebook to say that a further meeting will take place next week.
Agenda item for March**

13. CONSIDER QUOTES FOR WORK ON TREES AT THE PLAYING FIELD

The Clerk confirmed that 3 contractors had provided quotes to fell 2 large ash trees, 5 smaller ash trees and dead wood and crown clean 2 large oak trees near the car park. The quotes received were as follows:

Isaac Gregory Tree Surgery £ 2300 No VAT
Tibbs Tree Surgeons Ltd £2730 + VAT
Fosseway Tree Services £4390 + VAT

It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that Isaac Gregory should be asked to provide his insurance certificate and method statement to include his traffic management plan. If this is to be found in order then the Council would like to accept his quote and invite him to complete the work.

Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions

ACTION: Clerk to ask Chris Issaac or insurance certificate, method statement and traffic management plan

14. CONSIDER QUOTES FOR WORK AT JUBILEE GARDENS

The Clerk confirmed that 3 quotes had been sought but only one had been received. Ben Windel had quoted £150 plus VAT to remove the shrubs at Jubilee Gardens as requested by the volunteer gardener, as agreed at a previous meeting.

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It was proposed by Cllr Dumbrell and seconded by Cllr Golledge that Ben Windel should be asked to complete the work.

Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions

ACTION: Clerk to notify Ben Windel that quote has been accepted to complete the work

15. COUNCILLOR REPORTS / UPDATES

- 15.1 Highways – A temporary road closure notice has been received for Brewery Lane. Work is expected to start on 22nd February and last for 4 days.
- 15.2 Mendip District Council Parish Forum - Cllr Brand reported that he had attended the virtual Parish Forum with the Leader of the Council Ros Wyke giving an update on the priorities of the Council during the pandemic. The second part of the meeting gave those that attended the opportunity to ask questions which was very informative. There is a second session which will take place on 04/02/21.
- 15.3 Somerset Association of Local Councils – Cllr Golledge reported that she had attended the ‘Responding to Planning’ training run by SALC, which she found to be worthwhile.

16. Discuss potential Solar panels and Textile bank at the Village Hall

Cllr Brand reported that he had seen in a local magazine how the installation of solar panels at Farmborough Community Shop had reduced its energy bills and attracted grants to offset the installation costs. He went on to say that he felt this was something that should be investigated for the Village Hall.

Cllr Brand said that he thought it may be worth considering the installation of a textile bank at the Village Hall for the locals to deposit their unwanted clothes and to raise money for the parish. Local collection points are often full and therefore there is clearly demand for more bins. Ashwick & Oakhill have recently installed one and are paid £300 per tonne.

ACTION: Cllr Brand to do some research on the textile bank. Cllr Golledge to speak with the Village Hall committee regarding exploring the possibility of installing solar panels on the Village Hall. Agenda item for March meeting.

17. MEETINGS TO ATTEND

There were none.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

CPRE newsletter – To be passed to Cllr Golledge

Exclusive Memorials application for Memorial for Nora Ann Gay – The Clerk said that the design was within the parameters set by the Council and should be approved. All Councillors agreed that the Clerk should notify the applicant.

ACTION: The Clerk to notify Exclusive Memorials

19. DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 2nd March 2021 - Cllr Crowe said that due to work commitments, he would not be able to attend.

The meeting ended at 21.50hrs