

**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.

**DRAFT - Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Virtual Meeting, which took place on  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 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*

County Cllr Mike Pullin (Part), the Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes and no member of the public.

**1. Public forum**

Cllr Gait asked the Clerk to contact Mendip District Council for an update on the pavement at Mount Carmel, on Common Lane.

**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 be filled early in the new Year.

**3. Apologies for absence**

District Cllrs Alan Townsend and Philip Ham had sent their apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

**4. Declaration of interests and dispensations**

Cllr Robinson and Cllr Brand declared an interest in agenda item 10.4 Payments, as both had submitted claims for expenses.

**5. Approve Minutes of previous meeting**

The Clerk had circulated the minutes resulting from the meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020. It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Jennings that the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and should therefore be signed by the Chair

**Vote: 6 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention**

**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 this meeting.

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**8. Reports**

1. PCSO

No report had been received.

2. Mendip District Council report

District Cllr Townsend and Ham submitted the following joint report:

Last week a hastily arranged Mendip Cabinet meeting had been called to debate the Council's proposed Affordable and Social Housing Delivery Programme - this involves the selling off to Aster of 5 Council owned sites to develop social housing. The sites are in Frome, Glastonbury and Street. Cabinet initially approved the proposal on 2nd November but it was subject to Call in to Scrutiny because a number of Councillors expressed concern over the suitability of the locations, the choice of Aster and lack of visibility of value for money. The Easthill site by the cemetery in Frome has caused a major reaction because of the threat to the green space and its ecology, the disturbance to the cemetery and the concentration of some 77 social houses on a site well away from the town centre.

Debate at Scrutiny was curtailed but a reference back to Cabinet to re-examine the issues was agreed. Cllr Ham as Chairman resigned because for the third time the role of Scrutiny had been inhibited by the inability to fully scrutinise and affect decisions.

On 3rd December a special Full Council Meeting will be held to endorse the Stronger Somerset Business Case for submission to DHCLG. This will be a rubber-stamping exercise of the Proposal for 2 separate unitaries in the county - East and West Somerset. Full Council will also debate an urgent motion to consider the Social Housing policy. In addition to the issues noted above there is much concern that there was no consultation with local communities about the housing developments. Over £400k has already been spent on this exercise.

Cabinet will meet next week to review the Council's financial position and the effects of the pandemic.

Planning: District Cllr Townsend and Ham were pleased to be able to support at the Planning Board the application for the house at Manor Byres and the Board gave their approval.

Coleford Parish Council have agreed unanimously to oppose the resubmission ref 2020/2201/OTS by Messrs Gladman of their application for 63 houses on Anchor Rd. Over 200 objections have already been submitted. Can we please ask Holcombe Parish Council to support us in our opposition?

**Action: Cllr Dumbrell to look into the resubmitted application to establish whether Holcombe Parish Council did respond to the original application as a Council.**

*County Cllr Mike Pullen arrived 19.45hrs*

3. Somerset County Council report

County Cllr Mike Pullin joined the meeting. The complicated business of Unitary is ongoing. Council have now voted on the last business case which will be submitted by 8<sup>th</sup> December. A request to have the elections delayed by at least a year has also been made, but the decision will be with central government.

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Cllr Pullin said he had spoken with Sara Davis of Somerset County Councils Highway department regarding the data collected during the recent surveys and she has confirmed that this will be made available to us in the raw format as requested.

*County Cllr Mike Pullen left the meeting 19.55hrs*

**8. Planning Applications**

There were no applications to consider.

**9. Planning Update**

- 9.1 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 have approved an extension to allow the Parish Council to consider this application at its next meeting to be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> January.
- 9.2 2019/2466/FUL – Proposed erection of single storey 2 bed dwelling house and associated works. Land off Budds Croft, Brewery Lane. Holcombe .  
Mendip District Council confirmed Appeal lodged by the applicant.
- 9.3 2020/1694/HSE – Demolition of existing front and rear porches. Erection of front porch and a single storey rear extension.  
Sunnycroft, Common Lane, Holcombe, Radstock.  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions.
- 9.4 2020/1101/FUL – Manor Byres, Longleat Lane, Holcombe, Radstock.  
Mendip District Council notified that the application is to be considered by the planning board.
- 9.5 2020/1947/APP – Moores Farm, Moores Farm Lane, Holcombe, BA3 5ES  
Application for approval of details reserved by condition 10 (Swallow mitigation) on planning consent 2017/2411/FUL.  
Mendip District Council approved.
- 9.6 2020/0242/FUL – The Conversion of a free house into a farm shop and kitchen café. Attached micropub and side extension for added seating areas. First floor alterations for 2 separate staff accommodations.  
Duke of Cumberland Inn, Edford Hill, Holcombe, BA3 5HQ.  
Mendip District Council approved with conditions.

**10. Finance**

**10.1 Bank Reconciliation**

Cllr Golledge had checked last month's reconciliation which was in order. It was agreed that the same would be done this month.

**10.2 Decision on Community Project Funds 2020**

The Clerk confirmed that 3 additional applications had been received as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Coleford Scouts	To provide Scout Manager & Zoom	£ 250
Holcombe Youth Football Club	White line machine	£ 400
Kilmersdon School	Towards playground improvements	£5000

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It was noted that there was £1519.24 left in the budget. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Robinson that the following payments should be made:

1 <sup>st</sup> Coleford Scouts	To provide Scout Manager & Zoom	£250.00
Holcombe Youth Football Club	White line machine	£400.00
Kilmersdon School	Towards playground improvements	£869.24

**10.3 Discuss and agree Budget & Precept for 2021/22**

The Clerk had circulated the draft budget for setting the precept for consideration by all. It was asked whether the Council had committed to the £500 payment to Mendip CAB long term or as a one off. It was suggested that there be an increase in the amount allocated for the Floral gateways in light of the potential risk of having another stolen or damaged as has previously happened.

It was suggested that a line be added in the budget for £2k for the removal of 5 trees with ash die back in the Playing Field. If this work needs to be done within the current year end then this will come from reserves.

It was agreed that the Finance working party made up of Cllr Crowe, Cllr Gait, Cllr Brand and the Clerk will meet prior to the January meeting to further consider the budget.

**10.4 Parish Council Payments**

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

V Watts – Salary £400.51 & expenses £21.23 totalling £421.74  
V Watts - Planter for Stratton Road £37.75  
Combe Garden Maintenance – Cemetery Path £950.00.  
S Robinson – Facemask for emergency kit £35.50  
S Brand – Ink cartridge £21.48  
1<sup>st</sup> Coleford Scouts - To provide Scout Manager & Zoom £250.00  
Holcombe Youth Football Club - White line machine £400.00  
Kilmersdon School - Towards playground improvements £869.24

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

**Vote: For 5; Against: 0 Abstentions 2**

**11 Update and discussion on the proposed Playing Field path**

The Clerk confirmed that the information about the proposed playing field path has been compiled into a document and posted on Facebook, the notice board, at the entrances to the playing field and the village website to consult with parishioners. The Clerk confirmed that to date there has been 35 positive responses and not any saying that it should not go ahead.

One of the most common questions was whether dogs would be allowed to use the perimeter path. There was a long discussion which covered opinions from both points of view. It was apparent that the existing footpath from the car park to the gate exiting at the far end of Charlton Road allows dogs to be walked directly across the playing field. This is governed by Statutory law which states dogs must be kept on leads whilst on a footpath.

It was decided that a decision would need to be made on this subject if, after consultation, the path was to go ahead.

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The Clerk has sent the invitation to quote out to 10 contractors inviting them to quote for the installation of the path. It was agreed that the Clerk will send an invitation to Ryan the previous contractor who was offered the contract. District Cllr Ham will be asked to contact Rick Massey to establish if he will still provide materials free of charge

**Action: Clerk to follow up quotes and liaise with District Cllr Ham regarding the offer of free materials.**

**Agenda item – Consider quotes received.**

**12 Discuss and agree request from the Ramblers Association to use the Playing Field Car Park**

The Clerk said that a request had been received from the Ramblers Association to use the car park on Sunday the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2021 from 10.30 til 4.00pm. They anticipate approximately 10 cars for the organised walk. The organiser lives in the village and predicts that other member of the parish will be attending the walk.

It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Jennings that the request should be granted.

**Action: Clerk to notify the organiser and the residents that live adjacent to the car park.**

**13 Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund 2020-2021**

Cllr Golledge had compiled a list of potential schemes which the Council might like to consider ranging from micro forests, orchards, open days and solar panels on the Village Hall.

Cllr Golledge to establish what level of information is required for the application form and recirculate the proposals with her top 4 specified. The deadline for the next submission is the 14<sup>th</sup> January.

**14 Councillor Reports/Updates**

**14.1 Highways**

Temporary Road Closure TTRO 394754ME Whitehole Hill, Leigh on Mendip will be closed for 5 days commencing 14<sup>th</sup> December.

The Clerk confirmed that she had been copied into an email between Sara Davis of Somerset Highways and County Cllr Mike Pullin which confirmed that the raw data gathered during the recent surveys from round the village would be supplied to the Parish Council rather than just in PDF format

Sara Davis also confirm that the new stop sign for the give way junction of Stratton Road and Charlton Road has been ordered and scheduled for repair.

**14.2 Jubilee Gardens**

An email had been received from Julia Evans reporting that she has had a big clear up of leaves and cutting back at Jubilee Garden this week. The following requests were made:

1. Could some more mulch be purchased? (Probably 6 bags)
2. Purchase bulbs for the left-hand side and possibly one or two shrubs to add to the plants grown to by Julia.

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3. Tree /shrub work

3.1 The enormous shrub on the left as come in from Stratton Road is an absolute menace - incredibly vigorous, suckers, and has an extremely irritant dust. Could we engage someone to remove this and paint the stump?

3.2 The viburnum (pink flowered on the right by bus shelter) needs to be radically thinned – Julia has offered to do some of this but may need additional help.

**Action – Clerk to advise that there is still £200 available in the budget and will seek quotes for the tree/shrub work.**

14.3 Playing Field

Cllr Crowe explained that the Parish Council had agreed to underwrite the maintenance costs of the playing field which is believed to be in the region of £3K. A cheque for £1.5K had been paid to the Playing Field Committee to provide sufficient funds for the remains of their financial year which is the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The Parish Council will review the year end accounts to establish if the estimated sum of £3k is a sufficient grant for the coming financial year. By paying the grant in advance it will allow some working capital to organise events to raise further funds.

Cllr Crowe proposed and Cllr Brand seconded that the sum of £3K be paid in advance and reviewed annually.

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

The Halloween event ‘Horror on Holcombe Hill’ was an enormous success and raised £700 profit over a few hours.

The Christmas lights on the tree and the lychgate are now illuminated for the festive season.

As mentioned earlier in the meeting quotes for work to the trees on Holcombe Playing Field will be sought by the Clerk.

14.4 Village Hall

Cllr Golledge confirmed that there had been no meeting since the last Parish Council meeting. The Hall is currently closed due to lockdown and discussion has started as to whether it should reopen to regular users at this point.

The Annual General Meeting will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

14.5 Somerset Association of Local Councils

Free Mental Health Awareness session – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 starting at 11am

Annual General Meeting held using Zoom – 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 starting at 6pm

**15 Review Parish Council dates for 2021**

The Clerk had circulated the Parish Council meeting dates for 2021 which included a March litter pick and the annual meetings.

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

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

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**17 Correspondence**

War memorial newsletter  
CPRE newsletter  
Mind in Somerset newsletter

**18 Next Parish Council meeting**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021