

**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 5th March 2024 at Holcombe Village Hall**

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

In attendance: 6 members of the public present.
Clerk Vickie Watts taking the minutes.

1. Public forum

Mr Durkin thanked the Council for advertising the Community Development Group in the Parish magazine. There had been a good response from people interested in joining the group.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Kerr, PCSO Will Mortimer, Somerset Cllrs Edric Hobbs and Tony Robbins sent apologies, which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of interests and dispensations

Cllr Davies and Roberts declared an interest in the planning application ref :2024/0289/PAA - Change of use of an agricultural building to a 1no dwellinghouse

4. Approve Minutes of previous monthly meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024

The minutes had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Davies 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:

- The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted Curtis Ilott to ask for an update on the additional inscription for the obelisk from Jubilee Gardens. He said that he had been waiting for the words to be inscribed.

Action: Clerk to resend

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6. Reports

- 6.1 PCSO – PCSO Will Mortimer did not attend but confirmed he would send the latest crime report by email.

On Sunday 14th April and Sunday 12th May 2024 the village PCSOs' Will Mortimer and Louise Perry will hold drop-in sessions at Holcombe Farmshop. This will be an opportunity for members of the community to come and discuss any issues that they may have.

An email had been received from Avon & Somerset Police asking residents to get in touch regarding any concerns they have regarding Glastonbury festival. It was agreed that Holcombe had no issues to raise.

- 6.2 Somerset Council – A Somerset Council report was received on 12th February which had been circulated to all Councillors. The highlights related to the current financial situation of the Council and the coming Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner election which will take place on 2nd May 2024.

7. Planning Applications

- 7.1 2024/0163/OUT - Outline application for the erection of up to 75 dwellings, associated infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity enhancements, all matters reserved except for access from Anchor Road

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. Cllr Brand outlined the application and highlighted the following points:

Highways - The increase of construction traffic during the build and residential traffic would result in increased danger to all road users, degrade the road surfaces even more and generate more air pollution.

Infrastructure - The pressure on public services (especially medical and schools) in the local area would be unsustainable without additional resources being resourced and built.

Visual impact - This represents increased urbanisation which would have a negative impact on the nature and character of the surrounding villages.

Bio diversity - The application gives short shrift to the effect on wildlife and biodiversity; the requirement to provide 10% BNG is not adequately addressed.

Policy - Coleford has already delivered more than double the minimum requirement and the Local Plan Part II states that the Council does not consider the need for new village allocations.

The planning authority recently rejected an application to build 4 houses on a nearby site (2023/1424/OUT) therefore it would be incongruous to permit a significantly larger development to proceed.

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Members of the public agreed with the points raised. It was noted that if both applications (Gladman and Rainier) were developed, the impact on Brewery Lane would be considerable.

It was proposed by Cllr Stratford and seconded by Cllr Roberts that the application should be refused on the grounds specified above. Cllr Brand to draft the response for the Clerk to submit to the Planning Officer.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer

- 7.2 2024/0289/PAA - Change of use of an agricultural building to a 1no dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This includes associated operational development. Field to the South of Cedarwood House, Holcombe Hill, Holcombe

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. Cllr Davies and Roberts expressed an interest so did not participate in the discussion or vote.

Cllr Brand outlined the application and after discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Govier that the application should be refused on the basis that the proposed development lies outside of the village development line and the proposed entrance could represent a safety hazard to road users on the hill.

Vote: 5 For; 0 Against; 3 Abstention

Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer

8. Planning Updates

There were none.

9. Finance

9.1 Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk had prepared the bank reconciliation which was checked and agreed by Cllr Emery.

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

The Clerk presented 3 quotes for consideration to supply and fit 3 x laminated glass panes to the Lychgate. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Emery that the quote received from Unit Glass for £796.70 including VAT would be accepted.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to place the order with the supplier

- 9.3 Parish Council Payments: The following invoices were presented for payment:

Vickie Watts – Salary & Expenses	£ 314.59
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9.4 Playing Field Payments: There were none.

It was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Eade that the abovementioned payment for the Parish Council should be approved.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

10. Highways

10.1 Update on Auto Speed Watch (ASW)

Cllr Stratford said that due to the lack of sun the unit had not worked for many hours each day which had also impacted on the opportunity to refine the set-up, but it was hoped that this will be achieved as the weather improves. Cllr Roberts reported that the data has shown a maximum speed of 49mph and some repeat offenders.

The Clerk confirmed that Somerset Highways had said that they had not removed the ASW sign from the 30mph post which was relocated on Brewery Lane. It was agreed that a replacement sign would be purchased.

Action: Clerk to place the order

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

Cllr Gait confirmed that the street light outside the property Apple Trees on Common Lane is not working.

Action: Cllr Gait to report via the Somerset website

10.3 Report of new issues

There were none.

11. Agree Litter pick date

After discussion it was agreed that the litter pick would take place on Sunday 14th April 2024 from 10am to 12noon. Clerk to arrange refreshments to be enjoyed after the event.

Action: Clerk to promote

12. Update on the grant request for a bench at Jubilee Garden. Consider purchasing bench from Parish Council funds

The Clerk presented a quote for a Highbarn 3-seater bench made from recycled materials for Jubilee Gardens at a price of £407.66 plus VAT. It was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Eade that the bench should be purchased.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

Action: Clerk to place the order.

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13. Update on D-Day Celebrations

Cllr Brand ran through the timetable of events for the evening and said that volunteers would be required during the day to help put up the small marquees and set out the hall. Councillors were encouraged to help if possible. It was agreed that a planning meeting would be held to finalise details on Tuesday 26th March at 1830hrs at the Duke subject to confirmation.

Action: Cllr Brand to confirm if the meeting is not to go ahead

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

LCN Highways and Traffic working group:

Cllr Brand and Cllr Roberts attended the Highways & Traffic sub group meeting at SHAPE Mendip to gain an understanding of what is envisaged by establishing this group. 6 parishes were represented out of a total of 18 from the Shepton LCN and Cllr Martin Lovell accepted the role of Chair for future meetings. Somerset Highways will send representatives from the department to provide subject matter expertise where required by the agenda items.

The group will provide local representatives the opportunity to discuss issues that affect their parishes and make recommendations to the LCN but it has no resources. The sub group will be endorsed at the next LCN on 11th March which Cllr Brand will attend. The Highway group will then meet on a quarterly basis, which Cllr Roberts agreed to attend.

Highway Maintenance Devolution:

An email had been received from Somerset Council outlining the options for local enhancement to routine highways maintenance services. It included information on the role of the Highway Steward and how parishes could pay into the scheme. It also stated in response to the financial emergency, the highways service plans to reduce the budget from April 2025 for reactive maintenance activity (hedge trimming, gully emptying, drain jetting and treating noxious weeds). Planned programmes will continue but they will have less funding to react to issues as they arise although they will always address those issues which present an immediate safety hazard.

Somerset Highways are inviting Parishes to get ready for this change and consider providing an enhanced level of service in their locality, either through undertaking or ordering certain agreed types of works, or through buying-back an agreed level of service.

Action: Parish Council to consider options at a future meeting

Bird boxes - Cllr Kerr accepted an offer of 5 bird boxes made by the Midsomer Norton Men's Shed group for erection around the village. Cllr Stratford fitted 1 in Jubilee Garden and the old church and 3 on the playing field. Thanks were expressed to all involved.

*Action: Cllr Kerr to pass photographs to the Menshed group for promotional purposes.
Clerk to promote on the website.*

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15. Meetings/Training to attend

11/03/24 @ 7pm - Local Community Network at Shape Mendip.
14/04/24 10 – 12noon – Village litter pick

16. Correspondence

29/02/24 - Public consultation on the Local Plan Part II Limited Update to 12th April from Somerset Council. It was agreed that no response would be sent.

January 2024 – Re-enrolment and re-declaration from Pension regulator. 2nd address to be updated to the Chair. Clerk to complete before the 2nd April.

17. Next meetings

Annual meeting of the Parish on Tuesday 19th March 2024 @ 7.30pm
Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 2nd April 2024

The meeting finished at 21.00 hrs