

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

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 7.30 pm at Holcombe Village Hall**

Councillors Present Cllr Simon Brand
 Cllr Phil Gait
 Cllr Helen Kerr
 Cllr Simon Eade
 Cllr David Roberts

In attendance: There was 1 member of the public.

1. Public forum

1. A member of the public attended the meeting and expressed concerns over the inconsiderate parking at the junction of Common Lane on Holcombe Hill where he recently witnessed a near miss between two cars which nearly resulted in a school child being hit.

Action: Clerk would report to the PCSO and notify Somerset highways and ask what can be done.

2. Apologies for absence

District Cllr Philip Ham, District Cllr Alan Townsend, County Cllr Tony Robbins and County Cllr Edric Hobbs sent their apologies which were accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

4. Approve Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday 1st November 2022

The Clerk had circulated the minutes prior to the meeting. Cllr Kerr proposed that they were an accurate record of the meeting and should be approved which was seconded by Cllr Gait. The minutes were duly signed.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to upload to the website

5. Action updates from the last meeting

All actions had been carried out or would be discussed later in the meeting as an agenda item apart from:

1. Due to illness, the Clerk had been unable to arrange a meeting with the Miners Welfare representative to agree the location of the miner silhouette. It is hoped that a meeting will take place in the New Year.

Action: Clerk to revisit in the New Year

6. Co-option of Councillors

Councillors were encouraged to seek potential Councillors.

Action: Clerk to advertise the position.

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7. Reports

1. PCSO – A generic area newsletter had been received which highlighted what the neighbourhood policing team have been concentrating on during the last month. There was no mention of Holcombe within the report and no crime statistics given for the Mendip East area.
2. District Council report – District Cllrs Townsend and Ham did not attend but submitted the following report:

FULL COUNCIL - Due to “lack of substantive business” the Full Council meeting scheduled for 19th December has been cancelled.

PLANNING – Cllrs Townsend and Ham attended appeal on 8th November against Mendip’s refusal of 47 houses on Coalpit Lane, Stoke St Michael. The Inspector was the same that handled the Gladman appeal at Coleford, though on this occasion he did agree carry out an accompanied site visit, which meant he was able to appreciate first-hand the objections: - the harm to the setting of the Listed buildings at the Mill, the general harm to the countryside, and sustainability in terms of highways and facilities.

The developer was successful in the appeal at Wanstrow against Mendip’s refusal of 4 houses. However, they did not have the Listed Building defence or the same highway issues. Harm to the countryside was not seen as a significant issue.

SCRUTINY - The Board meeting reviewed the debrief from this year’s Glastonbury Festival. The main concern expressed by local residents was about noise nuisance outside permitted hours. Although Mendip are the Licensor, they considered that any drug concerns were matters for the police. The other major issue was crowd control and the experiences of people who had been swept about by mass movements of humanity.

HIGHWAYS

Common Lane – there have been complaints about highway safety at the junction with Holcombe Hill. There have been several near misses in the last month due to restricted visibility for those emerging from the Lane as a result of cars parked dangerously close to the left of the junction.

Action: Clerk to include this reference with the incident raised in the public forum

Pitcot Lane – The flooding by Upper Barlake Cottage has been cleared

Stoke Bottom – flooding by the Fairy Cave junction reported, also the worsening edge erosion east of the Stoke Bottom Farm entrance. Two recent accidents noted at Long Cross and the Beacon Cross.

ON THE MAP - Disappointed that Clarissa had announced she was saying Goodbye to OTM, Dawn, Adam and Alan Townsend have volunteered to produce a new magazine for 2023. They are grateful for the help they have received already from the existing team and look forward to working with everyone to produce the magazine which they hope will be representative of all aspects of the communities of Holcombe and Coleford.

3. County Council report – No report was received.
4. Update on Unitary – The minutes from the recent Town and Parish Clerks Working Group, which are held fortnightly, will be circulated to all Councillors.

8. Planning Applications

2022/2178/HSE – Cherry Springs, Holcombe Hill, Holcombe Single storey side and rear extension.

All Councillors had considered the plans to the meeting. Cllr Brand outlined the details of the application and noted that there were no breaches to the material planning considerations. There were no objections recorded on the Mendip planning website. After a brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Kerr that the application be recommended for approval.

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Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to notify the planning officer

9. Planning Updates

2022/0659/FUL – Tan Farm, Holcombe, Radstock

Cllr Gait stated that the conditions 7 (Construction Environment management plan) and 8 (European Protected Species Mitigation Licence) had been approved so work can now commence. It was also noted that there had been an application for non-material amendments approved by Mendip District Council, which approved a change to the colour of roof tiles, the type of timber to be used for the cladding, additional windows and location of windows.

Action: The Clerk to liaise with Cllr Townsend to ask why these were passed as minor amendments and why the Parish Councils are not informed of minor amendment applications.

10. Consider quotes for Phase 2 of the work at Jubilee Garden – to slightly adjust the layout to improve safety and visual impact of the garden.

A meeting had been arranged for the 9th December with a contractor and Julia to discuss the proposal. After discussion it was agreed that:

- Paving slabs would be preferred
- The remaining iron structure that formed the kissing gate should be removed
- Sleepers would be used for raised bed
- That a 2-seater bench would be included

Action: Agenda item for the January meeting.

11. Pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge

All councillors had read the pledge and agreed that it should be adopted.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

12. Consider the offer from the Church to hold the book of condolence for the Queen Elizabeth II for future reference

Rev'd Clarissa Cridland had agreed to hold the Holcombe book of condolence used to record parishioners' messages relating to the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: The Clerk to deliver the book.

13. Review Cemetery fees and rules

The Clerk had circulated the rules to all Councillors prior to the meeting for consideration. After discussion it was agreed that they should remain the same.

The Cemetery fees would be reviewed at the January meeting.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Cemetery fees to be an agenda item for January

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14. Consider memorial application

The Clerk had received a request for a memorial to be considered with elements that were outside of the current rules. As the Council had given the Cemetery rules due consideration under the previous agenda item it was agreed that the Clerk would inform the member of the public that any application must comply with the rules which will remain unchanged.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to inform member of the public of the decision

15. Finance

1. Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Gait to check before the January meeting

2. Approve increase to monthly cost of email and IT support from Geeking IT Simple

It was agreed that the increase to the monthly rate of 30p per licence (currently 6 licences) should be accepted.

3. Consider and approve NALC Clerk pay award agreement for 2022

It was noted that the NALC pay award for April 2022 had been published. The Clerk is currently on pay scale SCP 19 - £13.48 with the new rate being £14.48. Councillors agreed that the Clerks salary award should be accepted and back dated to the 1st of April which amounted to £174.25.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

There was a further discussion around the Clerks salary where it was proposed that the hourly rate should be increased to be at the same rate as used by Coleford Parish Council from the 1st of April 2023. This will be an agenda item for the January meeting.

Action: Agenda item for January

4. Agree 4th signatory for bank accounts to enable online banking with 'NatWest Bankline'

It was agreed that Cllr Gait would be added as the 4th signatory for the bank.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions

Action: Clerk to complete the bank mandate

5. Discuss budget and precept for 2023/24

The Clerk had provided a draft budget for 2023/24 for discussion. Councillors went through each line and some changes were made. The Clerk will amend the budget with the suggested changes and establish if the Council is tied into a contract period with Geeking It Simple for email and website hosting before further discussion at the January meeting.

Action: Clerk to update the draft budget and seek clarification from Geeking It Simple. Agenda item for January

6. Income

£500 had been received from the History Group which had now disbanded.

Action: Clerk to write a letter of thanks and explain that it will be used to help fund a new bench for jubilee garden.

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7. Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were presented for payment:

V Watts – Salary £323.52 and Expenses £20.46	£ 343.98
V Watts – Back pay	£ 174.25
Holcombe Playing Field Grant	£3000.00
SG Manufacturing Ltd – Monthly hire of SID	£ 378.00

Playing Field Payments

Big Wood Play Systems	£576.00
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It was proposed by Cllr Kerr and seconded by Cllr Gait that all payments should be made.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

16. Highways

1. Update on installation of Speed indicator device

Installation and training had been arranged for Sunday 4th December but SG Manufacturing did not arrive. It has therefore been rescheduled for Sunday 11th December.

Action: Clerk to return the signed agreement

2. Update on existing issues already reported to Somerset Highways

The Clerk has written on numerous occasions to the Somerset Highways engineer Sara Davis for an update on the outstanding issues but to this point has not received any acknowledgment.

Action: Clerk to liaise with District and County Councillors to press for a response.

3. Report of new issues

There were no new issues reported.

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

Somerset Association of Local Councils

New training dates had been circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk should be informed if bookings are required.

18. Meetings/Training to attend

There were none.

19. Correspondence

CPRE Magazine – Passed to Cllr Gait

War Memorial Trust magazine – Passed to Cllr Kerr

Two emails had been received from members of the public regarding large number of ducks being on the roads which has resulted in several being killed. As the birds are raised and released for shooting the owner is not required to keep them housed due to Bird flu restrictions as they are not classed as poultry if released.

Action: Clerk to write to the members of the public to inform them

20. Next meetings:

Parish Council meeting Tuesday 3rd January 2022