

**HOLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET**

www.holcombepc.org.uk

**Clerk: Debbie Widdows, 19A Union Street, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2PU
clerk@holcombepc.org.uk 01749 880428 / 07872 857885**

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Meeting, which took place on
Tuesday 7th January 2025 at Holcombe Village Hall**

Councillors Present Cllr Davies (Chair)
Cllr Eade
Cllr Emery
Cllr Gait
Cllr Govier
Cllr Kerr
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Stratford

In attendance: There were three members of the public present.
Clerk Debbie Widdows taking the minutes.

1. Public Forum

Item no. 7 – Claire Godden plus her partner of Honeycomb House (previously known as San Souci) on Stratton Road were in attendance re their planning application (see below).

Planning Applications

2024/2238/HSE 2 story side extension & rear first floor extension of loft (San Souci, Stratton Rd)

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. The residents of the dwelling outlined the application explaining that they wished to extend the top half of the house where there was already an existing balcony which was not insulated properly and needed to be fixed anyway. The house had not been renovated for at least 40 years and they were putting in a lot of time and effort and wished to stay in the village. They had a big family and they needed the space. They wanted to put in two bedrooms and two bathrooms at the back of the house which would increase privacy for both them and the neighbours on each side. The side wall was 3m away from the neighbour. The residents pointed out further that the house next door had been renovated in a similar way and aesthetically it would look better.

It was confirmed that the house was semi-detached.

After discussions it was agreed that the application should be recommended for approval on the basis that there were no planning reasons for refusal.

Vote: 8 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstention

It was discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 5th November 2024 in the public forum that the HGVs from outside the local area were not aware of the weight restrictions in relation to HGVs going through Stoke St Michael (SSM) which was causing problems in the village and surrounding areas. It was agreed that this issue should be highlighted to other local parishes. Joe Pearce (Pearce Transport) asked if the PC had any further comments regarding this. As this is an

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issue that affects all the surrounding villages, it was proposed that this should be highlighted at the next meeting of the LCN Highways sub group.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Brand sent apologies which were accepted by the chair.

3. Declaration of interests and dispensations

There were none.

4. Approve Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2024

The Clerk had circulated the minutes prior to the meeting for councillor consideration. It was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Eade that they accurately reflected the meeting and should therefore be approved and signed by the chair.

Vote: 5 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions (Councillors had not attended the meeting)

5. Actions/matters arising from the previous meeting

The following actions had been completed:

-) The new clerk, Debbie Widdows was appointed.
-) The verge cutting had been completed.
-) The final payments for previous clerk were processed.
-) The proposed dates for next year were deferred to be discussed at this meeting under agenda item 11.

6. Reports

6.1 PCSO – The PCSO report had been circulated since the last meeting and was noted.

The PCSO is due to visit Holcombe at Holcombe Hill, opposite woodland lane (or as near as possible) on the following dates:

5/1/25 15:30-16:30
2/2/25 15:30-16:30
2/3/25 15:30-16:30
30/3/25 15:30-16:30
27/4/25 15:30-16:30
25/5/25 15:30-16:30
22/6/26 15:30-16:30

Actions: Clerk to contact the PCSO to meet with him.

6.2 Somerset Council – This would be discussed under correspondence.

7. Planning Applications

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2024/2238/HSE 2 story side extension & rear first floor extension of loft (San Souci, Stratton Rd)
Discussed under public forum.

8. Report on Planning Updates

Planning Appeal 2024/0289/PAA field to south of Cedarwood House

It was noted that this had gone to appeal.

Cllr Jon Stratford said that in future if this application came back to the PC that he would need to declare an interest.

9. Finance

9.1 Agree Bank Reconciliation – Cllr Emery checked the bank reconciliation and found it to be in order.

9.2 Budget and Precept 2025/26

Cllr Gait went through the proposal to be submitted to Somerset Council highlighting:

) The proposal was an increase of 5%.

) The PC could justify a larger precept to undertake the additional work that Somerset Council has devolved to Parish Councils as a result of its financial crisis but it was felt that any increase above 5% would be a heavy financial burden for many parishioners. As the PC reserves are quite high, it was agreed that any shortfall would be funded from these reserves.

After discussions, it was proposed by Cllr Stratford and seconded by Cllr Emery to accept the proposal from Cllr Gait that: 1. The precept for 2025 be increased by 5%; and 2. That the annual VAT return should be done in-year.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

Action: Clerk would submit the precept to Somerset Council with Cllr Gait's guidance.

9.3 Consider and approve 3rd Quarter budget review 2024/25

A copy of the third quarter budget review had been shared with all councillors. After discussion it was agreed that the report should be approved and was duly signed by the chair.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

9.4 Citizen's Advice Request for support

After discussions it was agreed to give Citizen's Advice £500 as in previous years due the support they provide our parishioners. This was proposed by Cllr Emery and seconded by Cllr Gait.

Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

Action: Clerk to advise Citizen's Advice of this grant.

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9.5 Parish Council Payments:

The following invoices were presented for payment:

Vickie Watts (Salary & Expenses)	£79.56
Jeremy Weare Ltd (Strim cemetery)	£842.4.
Jeremy Weare Ltd (Grass cutting on Playing field)	£1,329.60
Simon Brand (Defibrillator Pads)	£159.95
Phil Gait (RBL Wreath)	£22.50
Village Hall (Hire of Hall for October and November)	£ 36
SALC Training (Councillor refresher training)	£25.00
Holcombe Playing Field Annual Donation (Annual grant)	£3000

It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Kerr that the cheques should be signed.

Action: Chair to ensure that cheques are signed.

10. Highways

10.1 Update on existing issues already reported to Somerset Highways

This was discussed under public forum.

10.2 Report of any new issues

Cllr Eade mentioned that after the previous storm, Nick Taylor had voluntarily cleared the fallen trees from an area along Charlton Rd. The Parish wanted to acknowledge this charitable work and to thank Mr Taylor.

Action: Vice Chair to send him an email.

10.3 The village sign on Stratton Road remains missing. Cllr Davies has approached Somerset Council (highways) regarding replacing the missing sign.

Action: MD to follow up with Highways

11. Parish Council Dates for meetings 2025

The Parish Council dates were discussed and approved.

Action: Clerk to distribute dates to all Councillors and post on the website.

12. Councillor Reports/Updates including highways, playing field, Village Hall, SALC etc.

There was a pothole on White Hole road. Cllr Roberts agreed to report it to Somerset Council.

The Christmas tree lights have been taken down. A bit of wire snapped, which is exposed and will be fixed.

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A new, charitable bank account for the playing field was being opened and signatories were being organised.

An AGM was being organised for the playing field.

Action: Cllr Robert to take a picture of the pothole and report it to Somerset Council.

13. Meetings/Training to attend

The clerk mentioned that when training was undertaken on her behalf, the costs could be split between Holcombe PC and Cranmore PC.

Action: Clerk to advise Chair which training courses she is required to undertake, when and why.

14. Correspondence

Mr Giles Simmons sent two emails to the Parish Council on 16 December 2024 titled "*disgusting state of bins*" which included pictures. A holding email was sent to him by the chair and this issue is to be discussed at the next meeting.

Cllr Emery signed the new yearly contract for the Village Hall and a copy was placed on file.

15. Next meetings:

4th February 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 20.30 hrs