

**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.

**Minutes from Holcombe Parish Council Virtual Meeting, which took place on  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 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 Ham and Alan Townsend and the Clerk, Vickie Watts taking the minutes. There were 15 members of the public present.

**1. PUBLIC FORUM**

Cllr Crowe thanked Cllr Jennings for standing in as Chairman whilst he had been out of the country.

A resident reported via Cllr Gait that one of the planning conditions, that there be no freestanding buildings or garages erected on planning consent 067642/009, Plot North of Wayside, Common Lane, Holcombe had been breached.

**Action: Clerk to report to MDC Enforcement.**

**2. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS**

The Clerk confirmed that there had been interest and she was hopeful to have someone to co-opt at the next meeting.

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. It was proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Brand 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**

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**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:

The Clerk to contact the applicant to establish if there is another possible location for the dog waste bin which was currently in the hedgerow bordering the property 1 Vale View, Common Lane, which may need to be relocated.

**7. REPORTS**

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

7.2 Mendip District Council report

District Cllr Townsend and Ham submitted the following joint report:

PLANNING - The 17th March Planning Board rejected the repeat application by Gladman's for 63 houses on Anchor Rd, Coleford. The reason was the same as for the previous application, the Harm to the Countryside caused by the Excessive Number of dwellings. Coleford is still working hard on its case against the appeal which Gladman submitted against the refusal of the original application. District Cllr Townsend asked if Holcombe Parish Council would write to the Planning Inspector to register their continued opposition to the development, to which the Council agreed.

**Action: Cllr Crowe to draft response**

The limited consultation on the Emerging Local Plan Part 2 finished on 22nd March. The Planning Inspector is scheduled to publish his draft final report in April.

SCRUTINY BOARD 18-3-21 - After limited debate Scrutiny endorsed Mendip's plan for installing electric vehicle charging points in 5 of its car parks. Very few will be of the highest power, and none will be in rural areas.

There was much debate about the performance of Somerset Waste Partnership in these difficult times. There have been particular issues in Shepton.

PURDAH - We are now in the period of Purdah prior to the May elections so we do not expect to see any decisions which could be seen to have political implications. The Annual Full Meeting of the Council has been brought forward to 26th April, within the purdah period. Questions are being asked about legitimacy.

7.3 Somerset County Council report

County Cllr Mike Pullin did not attend or provide a report

**8. PLANNING**

8.1 2021/0506/FUL - Redevelopment of stables with 1no. dwelling and detached car port, Land Adj 7 The Mead Brewery Lane Holcombe Radstock BA3 5EG

All Councillors had considered the plans prior to the meeting. Several parishioners attended the meeting and wrote letters objecting to the application including one from CPRE. The following points were highlighted as to why they felt the application should be rejected:

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- The stable was never part of no 7 The Mead, and is on greenfield.
- It is outside the village development line.
- Part of the ancient hedge would need to be removed impacting on the visual street scene and wildlife.
- Access would be onto a 40mph zone on a busy road.
- Parking would be a concern.
- The build would not enhance the area.
- The build is double the size and height of the stable plot.
- Holcombe has already met the housing target set by Mendip District Council.
- The build will have a negative impact of the street scene.
- There is no pavement for safe pedestrian
- The field is a valuable open space in the village.
- Sewerage is already an issue within the village.

A resident stated that as the nearest property their privacy would be impacted by the build. They confirmed they have planning permission granted for a first-floor extension which when built would overlook the proposed dwelling and vice versa.

The planning agent Mr Dan Foster spoke on behalf of the applicant and agreed that the development was outside the village development line and although Holcombe may have met the housing target set, these were only ever a guide and could be exceeded and would go towards the housing required by MDC. The majority of the footprint is on hard surface and of limited ecological value. The noise and disruption during the building process is not a planning consideration. He highlighted that if the stables were rented out the traffic generated by horse owners visiting twice a day would be considerably more than that of the proposed application. He encouraged the Council to consider the application before them rather than what may happen in the future.

Councillors noted that the bus service is not sufficient as a mode of transport for people to access full time work in neighbouring towns. For example, the first bus arrives in Frome at 9.43am. It is not sustainable and a car would be required. The proposed development would lie outside the development line and is ribbon development.

Mr Foster accepted that a small amount of the greenfield would be incorporated in the build which was single storey and would meet the needs of an ageing population or for those with mobility issues or disability.

It was proposed by Cllr Dumbrell and seconded by Cllr Gait that the application be recommended for refusal as it is outside the village development line, seeks to encompass greenfield into development and goes against the Holcombe Parish Council village design statement.

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

**8.2 2020/2604/FUL - Change of use of agricultural land as an extension to the existing garden. Meadow Cottage, Holcombe Hill, Holcombe, Radstock**

Councillors had considered the plans for the abovementioned application prior to the meeting along with letters of support and objection received from parishioners.

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A Parishioner stated that the land had already been made into a garden so was effectively a retrospective application. Historically it was 2 acres of wildlife meadow and formed part of a wildlife corridor from Quercus to the back of the concrete works. An old stable used to house bats but it had been removed and the bats had gone. There was a badger set and roe deer were regularly spotted in the area. Trees and plants have already been removed.

Another local resident said that the agricultural land acted as a flood plain. The noise and light pollution had also become a problem.

The applicant responded by saying that they had not disturbed nesting bats, the badger set was still active and the deer are still regularly visiting the meadow. When they moved in much of the area was covered in dense brambles which were swamping trees and other plants and was covered by thousands of plant pots. The meadow is now vibrant and full of life. They have not removed any trees apart from required maintenance. 25 trees have been planted along with new hedging. There are still 3 areas which are completely wild. The applicant stated that the flooding was not caused by them and was not relevant to this application. They did not want permitted development rights but wanted to be able to use the area as a family.

Another resident spoke in support of the application and said that the area had not been decimated and the wildlife corridor was still being used and active. They believed that the land was not big enough to utilise for agricultural use.

Cllr Gait said that he fully supported the work that the applicant was doing with the site but did not agree that it needed to be changed to a garden.

It was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that the application be recommended for refusal as it was outside the village development line and there was no good reason to change the land from agricultural to garden.

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

**8.3 2021/0609/HSE - Demolition of porch and side extension and erection of a wrap-around side and rear single storey extension. Woodington, Edford Green, Holcombe, Radstock**

All Councillors had considered the plans for the abovementioned application. It was agreed that the scale of the extension was acceptable but it was more a question of style and whether it fitted in to the surroundings. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gait and seconded by Cllr Jennings that the application be recommended for approval.

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

**Action: The Clerk to notify Mendip Planning Office of all decisions made**

**9. PLANNING UPDATES**

Appeal ref App/Q3305/W/20/3261275 land between Budds Croft and Swedish Cottage, Brewery Lane, Holcombe, BA3 5EF The Planning Inspectorate decided the appeal was allowed and the planning permission was granted.

2016/3169/FULL – A complaint had been received to say that a planning condition had been breached as an acoustic fence should have been provided along the northern boundary with the neighbouring equestrian land/use prior to the property being occupied. This has been reported to the enforcement officer at Mendip District Council.

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**10. FINANCE**

10.1 Bank Reconciliation – The Clerk has completed the bank reconciliation which will be dropped to Cllr Golledge for consideration prior to the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk to drop the reconciliation to Cllr Golledge**

10.2 Review Playing Field Accounts year end 2021 – The Clerk had circulated the year end accounts for the Playing Field for information only.

10.3 Review year end 2020/21 – The Clerk had circulated the Parish Council year end accounts 31/03/21 to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Crowe and seconded by Cllr Gait that the accounts should be approved and signed by the Chairman.

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

10.4 Parish Council Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment:

V Watts – Salary £380.65 and expenses £30.23 totalling	£410.88
Citizen Advice Mendip Donation	£500.00
Ben Windel – Removal of shrubs at Jubilee Gardens	£180.00
Julia Evans – Shrubs & Compost for Jubilee Gardens	£80.99
SALC Planning Training for Cllr Jennings	£25.00

Cllr Golledge proposed and Cllr Brand seconded that the payments for the Parish Council and should be made.

**Vote: 7 For; 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**

10.5 Playing Field Payments

There were none.

**11. REVIEW AND AGREE ASSET REGISTER**

The Clerk to send to all Councillors for consideration at the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk to email to Councillors. Agenda item for May.**

**12. REVIEW AND AGREE THE FINANCIAL RISK SSESSMENT 2021/22**

The Clerk to send to all Councillors for consideration at the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk to email to Councillors. Agenda item for May.**

**13. CONSIDER PURCHASING ITEMS TO COMMEMORATE VE DAY**

The Clerk had circulated information relating to the products being sold by the Royal British Legion Shop for perusal. It was proposed by Cllr Brand and seconded by Cllr Dumbrell that having allocated funds to celebrate last year's VE Day which had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, that a 4ft 10ins, right-handed freestanding Tommy with 'Lest we Forget' displayed at the foot, be purchased at a cost of £175 plus £25 shipping. This could be moved around the village as required and would be good investment.

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

**Action: Clerk to order the Tommy from the Royal British Legion Shop.**

**14. SOMERSET DAY FLY THE FLAG – DECIDE HOW HOLCOMBE SHOULD CELEBRATE THE DAY**

It was agreed that there would be no parish council run celebration but the Somerset Flag would be flown as suggested by Somerset County Council over the weekend of 8th and 9th May through to Somerset Day Tuesday 11th May. The Clerk will promote the website <https://www.somersetday.com/> via social media which has information on how the public can get involved if they wish.

**Action: Clerk to promote Somerset Day using social media**

**15. UPDATE ON THE PLAYING FIELD PATH**

Cllr Brand confirmed that Scott Construction hoped to start work on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and will take 2 weeks to complete the path. It has been agreed that Rick Massey will provide some of the materials free of charge. We hope that the play area will be able to stay open throughout the process. The proposed work on the trees will be completed prior to the start date and the Football Club will be able to continue with weekend use of the field. The work will be weather dependant and the window of 2 weeks could be extended if rain causes delays. The Clerk to include an update on the path in the April On The Map report.

It was asked if the footpath could be redirected to follow the route of the new path. The Clerk said that this was something that the Playing Field Committee would consider but it was understood that there was a back log of requests with Somerset Rights of and it may take some years to have that formally agreed.

**ACTION: Clerk to update the parish via On the Map**

**16. HIGHWAYS INCLUDING:**

- 16.1 Discuss issues relating to large lorries accessing Edford Green
- 16.2 Damage to land and property on Charlton Road
- 16.3 Consideration of data provided by Somerset Highways

Cllr Dumbrell said that he had not been able to review the data which had been captured by Somerset highways. District Cllr Ham said that Sara Davies the Somerset Highways Traffic Engineer was very supportive and if data was available showing areas of concern then she would help the Parish Council to come to a solution where possible.

Cllr Jennings agreed to review the data prior to the next meeting. This could then be discussed with Sara Davies of Somerset Highways.

**Action: Cllr Jennings to review the data. Agenda item for the next meeting**

**17. COUNCILLOR REPORTS / UPDATES**

- 17.1 Village Hall – Cllr Golledge said that the committee were looking to re-open the hall on the 17<sup>th</sup> May at the earliest. There is a Zoom meeting coming up when the final details will be confirmed.

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17.2 Playing Field – The Clerk confirmed that there would be a meeting this week to discuss Holcombe Olympics which would take place on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and would include the official opening of the Holcombe Playing Field Path.

**18. UPDATE ON POTENTIAL SOLAR PANELS AND TEXTILE BNL AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

The Clerk confirmed that she had received some information from Buckland Dinham Parish Council regarding a solar panel supplier which would be shared with the Village Hall Committee. District Cllr Ham said that the Somerset Climate Emergency fund would be available next year so it might be worth getting an application ready to present when it is launched. It was agreed that if this is to be done then the Village Hall committee would have to take the lead.

The textile bin has been installed in the agreed location on the playing field. It is not completely flat but this will be addressed when the contractors come to empty it. All Councillors are to encourage its use. The Clerk to continue to promote on social media. If it is overflowing please notify the Clerk who will report it to the contractors who have agreed that it would be emptied within 24 hours of being informed.

All proceeds will go to the Playing Field committee to help with the ongoing maintenance of the field. The total amount received will be deducted from the Parish Council annual grant.

**19. MEETINGS TO ATTEND**

Local Government Reorganisation virtual event – 07/04/21 Cllr Jennings to attend.

**DISCUSS THE RETURN OF FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS**

The Clerk had circulated information from the National Association which confirmed that the legislation allowing virtual meetings had not been extended by Central Government and therefore as of the 7<sup>th</sup> May they would no longer be legal and covid compliant face to face meetings would need to resume. The Annual meeting of the Parish and the Annual Parish Council meeting will both take place virtually.

**Action: Agenda item for the May meeting to discuss whether to put in place delegated powers.**

**20. CORRESPONDENCE**

- Mendip District Council – Latest update regarding Stronger Somerset. Emailed to all Councillors
- Somerset County Council – Latest update regarding One Somerset. Emailed to all Councillors
- Fosseyway Tree Services – Regarding Tree surveys and process for selecting contractors – Clerk to write and thank them for the email and confirm that the Council will consider the points raised.
- Mendip District Council – Email to confirm the Holcombe Village Design Statement will be relocated on the Mendip Website to be available with other Village Design Statements rather than with Conservation information.
- The Clerk had emailed the parishioners adjacent to the car park to inform them that the Parish Council had granted permission for the use of the car park for the Holcombe in Wonderland event.
- Cllr Dumbrell had written a letter of resignation which was sadly received by the Chairman. Cllr Crowe said that he was sad to see him leave but thanked him for the years of service that he had given.

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**21. DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 Annual Meeting of the Parish  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Annual Parish Council meeting

The meeting ended at 22.15hrs