

**HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the July Meeting**  
**Held in the King George V Memorial Hall on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023**  
**At 7pm**

**APPROVED**

**7.1**      **Present:**      **ACTION**  
                 **Councillors:** Adam Pilgrim (Chairman), Jane Lock and Sally Barker      **TO BE**  
                 Leslie Findlay Parish Clerk/RFO      **TAKEN**  
                 County Councillor Ray Radford  
                 Mr G Czapiewski (P3 Co-ordinator)

**7.2**      **Apologies:**  
                 District Councillor Gill Westcott  
                 Parish Councillors Nikki Orchard, Rupert Snook, and Frances Freeman

**7.3**      **Declaration of Interests:** None declared

**OPEN FORUM**

No matters raised

**7.4**      **Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters arising**  
                 The July Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record and  
                 unanimously approved by all Councillors.

**7.4.1**      **Matters arising:**  
                 Hedgerow at Wardmoor. The Chairman had raised the issue of the hedgerows by Wardmoor with  
                 DCC Historic Environment Team:  
                 *“At the Devon Historic Environment Record (HER), we curate the archaeological and historical  
                 records for the County, but apart from occasionally providing HER information to District  
                 councils regarding hedge bank removal applications (HRN), I’m afraid I don’t have  
                 any consultation role on the sort of damage to hedgerows that you describe and as it is  
                 partial damage from vehicles rather than whole hedge removal (as covered by the Hedgerow  
                 Removal Regulations 1997, which the above HRN applications relate to), I don’t think that it would  
                 fall under the Hedgerow Regulations, although it would be worth checking with your area’s  
                 District Council Planning Department perhaps. We do of course have an interest in historic hedges  
                 however and I understand the concern that some of the new farm vehicles do not fit very well in  
                 narrow Devon lanes and are a new cause of damage to hedge banks, with all the problems you  
                 mention.  
                 I have done a check of the Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) to make sure there are no  
                 hedge banks of historic significance recorded in the mapped area around Holcombe Rogus that you  
                 sent. I do not have any recorded hedge banks or significant historic features, which could be  
                 damaged along roadsides in the area, which I hope is of some reassurance to the local community  
                 recorded. “*

DCC had also commented in February when this issue had been raised:

*“Unfortunately, this is a common problem which the Council often receive complaints, however, as  
this location is in the proximity to a farm and with the increased size of vehicles currently being  
used within the agriculture industry this is something which the Highway Authority have no control  
over. It is difficult to restrict the movement of HGV’s as they are permitted to use any classification  
of road for access and deliveries even if there is a Weight Restriction in place (unless it is a  
structural weight limit). As a main through route, HGV’s are directed to use the most appropriate*

*route via motorways, dual carriageways and main roads. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do to restrict the size/type of vehicles accessing the highway. “*

**7.5 Environment**

PROW: Report attached

Canal Report: Report attached

**7.6 Highways**

**7.6.1** Work carried out: Nothing to report

**7.6.2** Repairs to be reported: 1. Large pothole by Dower House

2. Three drain covers broken

a. In Frog Lane – has been repaired by SWW

b. Beside Thatches – has been reported but not repaired yet

c. Junction of Frog Lane and South Street – has been reported but not repaired yet

**7.6.3** Road Closure from Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September. Road from Durleymoor Cross to Knowle Cross to renew communication pipe.

**7.6.4** Street lighting: DCC have confirmed it is still their intention to install the relevant equipment this financial year and trial some alternate lighting times/brightness's during the coming winter. Holcombe Rogus Parish is currently 1 of just 3 locations in Devon where they plan to trial this innovation with the aim of feeding any lessons into their wider policy in the future.

**7.7 Planning**

**7.7.1** Application discussed:

**23/01168/CAT** Notification of intention to reduce row of Beech trees (G1) up to height of guttering approx. 3 metres and dismantle 1 ash tree and 1 Sycamore tree to ground level within a Conservation Area at Ridgway Farm. *No objections.*

**7.7.2** Application taken out of Committee:

**23/00994/LBC** Listed building Consent for the removal of existing roof covering from rear roof and to replace with natural Spanish slate at 7 South Street – *no objections*

**7.7.3** MDDC Decisions:

**23/00905/CAT** Notification of intention to fell 2 Cypress trees within the Conservation Area at Holcombe Court – *No objections*

**7.7.4** Planning consultation on meeting Housing needs and Supplementary Planning Document runs from 17 July to 25 Aug 23. Councillors to review and send any comments to the Clerk for submission.

**ALL**

**7.7.5** The Prince of Wales Pub will be going for auction.

**7.7.6** Cllr Lock proposed that prior to MDDC discussing the Pondground Quarry application on the 13<sup>th</sup> September HRPC should hold a planning meeting to discuss any further objection that should be raised and for the Parish Council to be represented at the meeting. Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September was proposed, Clerk to confirm if Hall is available.

**LF**

**7.8 Mary Fewings Playpark**

**7.8.1** There was no further information on the cost of a basketball hoop, so this will be discussed further at the next meeting in September.

**7.8.2** There were no issues raised at the monthly inspection.

**7.8.3** It was agreed that the park must always be always open to all members of the public and the Council will not make any bookings or accept funding for parties to be held in the park.

**7.9 Clerk/Finance**

**7.9.1** The following income had been received: June interest £37.20

**7.9.2** Expenditure paid:

Life Save Technology £28.00 for Defibrillator Service

Vision ICT £48.00 for transfer to Google Analytics (approved April 23 Meeting)

Vision ICT £144 for Data Backup subscription (approved May 23 Meeting)

DALC £18.00 for Cllr Freeman training course

ICO registration £35 (approved June Meeting)

<b>7.9.3</b>	It was resolved that the following expenditure was approved for payment by the RFO:			
	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>BACS/cheque</b>	<b>Payable to</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>7.9.3.1</b>	864.00	BACS	MDDC	For Playpark inspections. Paid in two instalments of £432 in July 23 & Jan 24.
<b>7.9.3.2</b>	156.00	BACS	MDDC	Litter bin emptying from Nov 22 to Apr 23
<b>7.9.3.3</b>	378.00	BACS	PKF	External audit invoice

**7.9.4** The bank statements and bank reconciliation for June were checked and signed by the Chairman. The summary of accounts as at July 23 were approved and signed by the Chairman. These are available to view on the website.

**7.9.5** The external audit had no comments to make and the conclusion of audit and certified AGAR are available to view on the Noticeboards, website and from the Parish Clerk on request.

**7.10 Training**

Cllr Freeman has attended the four DALC New Councillor courses.

**7.11 Matters brought forward for information or future agenda.**

**7.11.1** There are three Councillor vacancies.

**7.11.2** The Rural police team and the Tiverton Beat teams are both keen to promote more and better face to face meetings with the public. This is an election commitment from the PCC. They would be happy to attend PC meetings, from time to time, crime rate allowing. Clerk to contact both teams.

**LF**

- There is a Devon and Cornwall initiative, Alert, a 2 way community messaging system. **ALL**
  - Currently calls go to a call centre in Exeter, get triaged then assigned according to rules.
  - Alert gets information directly to local bobbies and potentially back to the community, who may respond/add details
  - This is described at alerts.dc.police.uk
- They acknowledged that Neighbourhood Watch has declined but it is planned to either resurrect it or replace it with something contemporary
- Both teams encourage residents to have domestic CCTV.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.35pm. There is no meeting in August. The next Full Council Meeting will be on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September following the Airband Project briefing at 6.30pm.

**ALL**

Adam Pilgrim  
Chairman  
Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

**REPORTS FOR HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**27<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023**

**CANAL REPORT**

The Annual Canal Visit by members of the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee was on 29th June. I attended on your behalf. Frances Freeman also came along.

The gathering was at Tiverton Basin at the later time of 7.00pm to accommodate those new Councillors who were attending a training session earlier in the evening. Overall, the attendance was poorer than usual but new Councillors were well represented.

Mark Baker, our Canal Manager, gave an update on his team's work to keep the canal corridor tidy and the waterway as clear of weed as possible.

His team have been granted new powers by Devon and Cornwall Police to help address anti-social behaviour in the canal corridor.

Unfortunately, the public toilets in the Basin have been badly vandalised again. Mark is keen to re-instate this important facility but is mindful that the work will erode his meagre funds.

The focus of the visit then shifted to our Parish; Lowdwells.

Lock Cottage and a couple of other nearby properties were flooded during the severe rainstorm in May. It appears that the watercourse beside the canal and Lowdwells Cottage overfilled, overwhelmed the old culvert system that passed through the old quarry workings and flushed large amounts of stone onto the road by the northern entrance to Burnhill Farm. Ian and Linda Murray took us into their garden to show us the watercourse around their house which revealed that their house had been a watermill, probably pre-dating the canal.

We were shown the course of the culvert away from the cottage which has been investigated by Devon County Council. A plan is being prepared to improve this so that the risk of flooding here will be reduced.

The visit finished at the entrance to Pondground Quarry for members to appreciate how close the controversial firing range is to the canal.

Mark Baker was thanked for organising the evening which opened the new Councillors' eyes to a part of the canal that some had not visited.

Adam Pilgrim.

**PLANNING REPORT**

Adrian Devereaux, the Planning Officer dealing with the Pondground Application, has advised that there will be a demonstration firing by Devon and Cornwall Police on 5th September for the benefit of new District Councillors.

We were advised by MDDC that Application 23/00905/CAT for removing two Cypress trees at Holcombe Court was approved.

I'm hoping that we will soon have a date for the Planning Training that was cancelled recently.

Adam Pilgrim – HRPC Planning Committee Chairman.

**HIGHWAYS**

No highways work seems to have taken place

No repairs to the faulty street light.

Massive street hole outside the Dower house on the way up to the church

*R Snook Councillor*

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Just a brief report to let you know that we have been briefed by members of the Planning Department on how little scope the District Council has for controlling developments involving commercial renewable energy projects, including Anaerobic Digestors about which there is a great deal of feeling locally due to the extra heavy vehicle traffic to which they give rise.

The Scrutiny Committee will in coming months be looking at how to make progress with the motion passed by Council on Rivers and Seas, identifying where new development may impact on storm

overflows of sewage into water courses in dialogue with South West Water. It will also be looking at how the Council can become more diverse and inclusive and represent all sections of the population, given that those in full time employment or with caring responsibilities may have difficulties in playing a part in local democracy. It will also consider the Three Rivers Development Project once all the independent reports on that have been received. Those meetings are open to the public.  
Gill Westcott

#### COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

This just a bit of update of what is going on regarding DCC's finance. Not aware of any/many problems up in your area, I know the condition of roads are always a problem, I am meeting with our Highways Officer next week and any burning problems can/will be brought to his notice.

DCC Members have received regular budget monitoring reports throughout 2022/23 in which budget pressures and risks have been identified. The outturn underspend of £156,000 is achieved after a contribution to the budget management reserve of £1.5 million and a carry forward of £500,000 into 2023/24 for Highways. The final outturn position is an improvement from the £3.6 million overspend forecast outturn which was reported to Cabinet on 8th March and a significant improvement on the £30.5 million forecast overspend at month 2 at which time there was a further £10 million risk identified relating to in year inflationary pressures. The organisational wide response to the financial challenges faced by the authority, resulted in £25.4 million of additional in year savings, income and alternative applications of funding being identified. Delivery of savings and additional income contained within the budget totalled £33.7 million against planned savings of £38.7 million.

Briefing Note / Position Statement from the Director of Children and Young People's Futures recognises the importance of pay awards in helping us to recruit and retain a strong and dedicated workforce, we are concerned that an unfunded pay rise would have significant impact on our maintained schools. The increase of £1,925 for NJC staff along with the proposed 6.5% for teachers represents an additional £13.8 Million in costs to DCC maintained schools in the 2023/24 financial year. This is an average of 7% of total schools funding of £185 Million (calculated as Schools Budget Share plus Mainstream Additional Grant).

Adult Care Operations and Health outturn is £4.8 million overspent, which reflects significant pressure on unit rates and higher residential and nursing placements volumes and complexity present throughout the year. These pressures have been partially offset by one off grant monies and underspends on staffing budgets which reflect the difficulty in recruiting care management staff

Devon County Cabinet are proposing the decommission the Mobile Library vehicles and provide £25K transition support for vulnerable users to continue to access alternative library provision. The Council would provide funding to help with the transition to other existing and new library services to ensure that the most vulnerable members of the mobile library community continue to access services they value. This has now been called to scrutiny for discussion. If scrutiny and make alternative suggestions, Cabinet do not have to except any suggestion/recommendations. The earliest any closure of the mobile library will not come into force is Sept.

Each of our county councillors has an annual locality budget, to be used as a fund of last resort, of £5,000 that they can use to respond to local needs within any financial year (April to March). Councillors can, if they wish, make grants to support projects or activities that benefit the communities they represent

Always pleased to follow up on ant issues that are causing concern.

Ray Radford  
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Willand & Uffculme Division  
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