

**HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the February Meeting**  
**Held in the King George V Memorial Hall on Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 7pm**

**APPROVED**

**2.1**      **Present:**      **ACTION**  
**Councillors:** Adam Pilgrim (Chairman), Frances Freeman, Rupert Snook, Sally Barker, Jane      **TO BE**  
Lock, Nikki Orchard & James Anderson      **TAKEN**

**District Councillors** Gill Westcott & Jane Lock  
Mr Gordon Czapiewski – P3 Co-ordinator  
Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Mrs Leslie Findlay  
7 residents attended

**Apologies:**  
County Councillor Ray Radford (report attached).

There was a short presentation by Annabel Beasley representing the Devon Resilience Innovation Project (DRIP) on the flood early warning system for the Lyner catchment. The Surface Water Flood Forecasting Pilot Project aims to provide alerts to communities when heavy rainfall is anticipated, to increase preparation time and resilience to potential surface water flooding. The technology is being developed so they would like to trial the alerts with members of the communities to improve the accuracy and usefulness of system. Community engagement is key to the success of this project! There were enough volunteers to ensure the project can now proceed in this area. The Council thanked members of the public for attending and for those that volunteered.

**OPEN FORUM**

No matters were raised.

**2.2**      **Declaration of Interests:** There were no declarations.

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

**2.3.1**      **Matters Arising:**

1. Timewells hedge- The hedge at Timewells has been cut back.
2. Aggressive dogs at Ford Barn Farm - The police have spoken to the owners of the dogs at Ford Barn Farm to make them aware of the concerns from the public and to request that the dogs are always kept under control.
3. Verge ploughing in Black Lane - The Clerk has been in contact with highways and they have confirmed that it is on the list to be actioned but not as a priority as the road is not part of the DCC gritted highways. The ditches and drains were cleared by the Highways Officer but the following day after a very heavy rainfall they were blocked again.
4. Old Vicarage wall – this is being actioned by the owner.
5. State of the District Debate – Cllr Snook will be attending, Clerk to inform MDDC.

**RS/LF**

**2.4**      **Environment**

**2.4.1**      **Public Rights of Way:**

Cllr Freeman has completed the annual survey of the footpaths with the assistance of Mr Czapiewski and only two footpaths required maintenance. The Clerk has applied for the annual grant and a further grant to cover the strimming.

**2.4.2** Canal Report

The next Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee meeting is on 4<sup>th</sup> March, members of the public are welcome to attend. If anyone has any issues, they wish to have raised they should contact Cllr Pilgrim.

**2.5** **Highways**

**2.5.1** There were no reports of work to report or have been received.

**2.5.2** Potholes around Wardmoor – The Highways Officer has visited the site and has reiterated how important it is for members of the public to report the potholes on the DCC website [Report a problem - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/report-a-problem-roads-and-transport)

**2.5.3** Flooding and potholes around Wiseburrow – These have been viewed by the Highways Officer and his report says

*“I can confirm I visited this site last Friday on the 09/02/24. Upon arrival, I noted the ditch opposite Wiseburrow Farm was overflowing. This ditch appeared to be full of silt. The culvert under the entrance to the field also appeared to be blocked. While on site I had a conversation with the landowner who agreed to clear the ditches along the road and to clear the culvert. While on site I walked the entire length of the road to the end of the water and managed to clear all known gullies on our system so they are visible. Several are blocked with silt and I have requested for these to be cleaned. This removed some of the water from the road but I do appreciate that there is still a large amount flowing.*

*I also noted two gullies discharging a significant amount of water onto the Highway. I attempted to rod these myself but unfortunately did not have any luck. I passed a request onto our contractor to clean and jet these gullies as a priority due to the damage these are causing to the road and this being a gritting route. I cannot give an exact timescale for this jetting to take place but I put this as high a priority as I can.*

*I noted the large pothole you have mentioned with the cone in. I have checked our system and this has already been reported. These will be assessed and actioned by our contractor. I will manage expectations however and pothole repair will probably be dependent on getting the water off the road first.”*

Clerk requested to raise this again with County Councillor.

Road Closures:

LF

**2.5.4** Road closures sometime between 1<sup>st</sup> April & 31<sup>st</sup> October for surface dressing and associated works:

Road from ~Durley Moor Cross to Frog Lane Holcombe Rogus

Road from Durley Moor Cross to Goldsmoor Cross Westleigh

Road from Trumps Cross to Goldsmoor Cross Westleigh

Road from Trumps Cross to Holbrook Hill

Advanced warning signs for the road closure will be placed on site at least 7 days before the planned commencement of work at each location.

**2.6** **Planning**

**2.6.1** Application discussed:

**24/00210/PIP** permission in Principle for the erection of a dwelling in 29 Fore Street  
*The Parish Council have concerns over this application, principally over vehicular access to the property, the proximity to the Primary School and the amount of off- road car parking space available. The surrounding roads are already heavily used for parked cars and the proposed dwelling is in a very populated part of the village. with narrow roads. This raises further issues over safety for so many vehicles in that area especially during the drop off and collecting times at the school.*

*The Council reserves the right to comment further if an application is submitted.*

- 2.6.2** To inform Council of decisions made by MDDC:  
**23/01827/FULL** Removal of Conditions 9 (timber windows only) and 11 (doors/windows dark stained or painted dark colour) of planning permission 02/01654/FULL at Squirrel Cottage – *refused planning permission*  
**23/01808/FULL** Erection of a dwelling and detached double garage at Orchard End – *Granted full planning permission with conditions*

**2.6.3** Cllr Freeman informed the Council about application 24/00166/PNAG prior notification for the erection of an agricultural storage building at land east of Battens Cottage. There was concern that the Parish Council had not been made aware of this application as a previous application had been refused on appeal but no comments are required as MDDC do not approve or refuse this type of application.

**2.7** **The Mary Fewings Playpark**

Councillors viewed the quotes from the following firms: Sustainable Furniture, gecoPlas recycled benches and Robert Dimambro before choosing the 3 recycled plastic 3 seat Wave Bench (costing £841.00) to replace the old bench. This will not be installed on the hard standing as that was too close to the fence (as indicated by the Inspector during the annual inspection) but anchored on the grass. *Clerk to action*

**LF**

**2.8** **Clerk/Finance**

**2.8.1** Income received since the last meeting:  
 Monthly interest in January £25.24

**2.8.2** Current balance of the account is £17,603.70  
 The bank statements and bank reconciliation for January were checked and signed by the Chairman

**2.8.3**

It was resolved that the following expenditure was approved for payment by the RFO:			
Amount £	BACS/cheque	Payable to	Comments
Expenditure approved by Chairman and Clerk outside of Council meeting:			
21.60	BACS	Vision ICT	New email address for Cllr Anderson
Expenditure approved at the Meeting			
170.00	BACS	Village Hall Trust	Room hire for 2024
360.00	BACS	PATAS	Internal auditor

**2.8.3.4** Cllr Anderson agreed to become a signatory on the account and this was unanimously approved by all Councillors. John Butler to be removed as a signatory. *Clerk to action*

**LF**

**2.9** **Correspondence**

All correspondence had been circulated to the Councillors.

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

**2.10.1** Councillor vacancies We have two vacancies, if anyone is interested, please contact the Clerk for further information. **ALL**

**2.10.2** Annual Parish Meeting – It was suggested that as there had been some interest in the DRIP Project that Lucy Jefferson the Culm Catchment Officer on the Devon Resilience Innovation Project should be invited to give a presentation. *Clerk to action.*

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm. The next Full Council Meeting will be on Thursday 28th March 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

**ALL**

Adam Pilgrim  
Chairman Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

County Councillor Ray Radford Report

I can't add much to my report in Jan, which is mostly about the budget. We have agreed this budget last week on 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. We had all been briefed by the Director of Finance, and the question always is, if you want to take something out or put something in, we have to come up with an alternative funding, which is very difficult, we only have so much funding to go around. As I have said before, Children and Young people and Adult services, is mandatory, we have to supply the service, no matter how much it costs to run.

We do get a 2% extra that we are able to add to the Council tax, without going to a referendum, which is an expensive exercise to cover Adult Services increases.

Council Tax – County Councils in England may increase Council Tax for 2024/25 by up to the referendum limit at 2.99% and social care authorities may also increase the tax rate by up to a further 2% specifically to fund adult social care costs, and therefore raise Council Tax by up to 4.99% overall without a referendum being required.

I thought you might be interested the impact of winter so far. This winter season has been relatively kind to the highway asset with only 24 days where the temperature has dipped below zero and a low of minus 7.3°. At the same point in 2023 there had been 38 days and a minimum temperature of minus 9.4°. This has led to a reduction in gritting treatments which has been below the 5-year average for November, December, and January. Up to the end of March 4,700t of salt has been spread compared with 11,700t at the same point in 2023.

Following the very difficult winter last year the Asset Management and the Network Response teams have worked very closely together through late summer and autumn to prepare for the winter season. As a result of this hard work and the milder winter, the service has recorded 5,500 safety defect potholes in January, while this is slightly below the 7 year average (5,926) it compares well to the 7,500 in 2023.

The significant reduction in the gritting operations mentioned above in turn frees up resources to continue the planned patching operations, again helping to reduce safety defect potholes across the county.

Devon County are not in a situation as many other County Councils are in of the fear of going bankrupt, we have managed and taken sometimes, unpopular decisions and been able to stay solvent.

A sign of this is we have had our Locality Budget increased, if there are any local clubs/organisations etc, that need I bit of funding, please apply.

Our new NHO is settling in well and will or will be making contact with Parish Clerks, as always, any road/flooding issues, always report them on the web, that will initiate a speedier attention.

Regards,  
Ray

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