

HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the March Meeting
Held in the King George V Memorial Hall on Thursday 28th March 2024 at 7pm

DRAFT

3.1 **Present:** **ACTION**
Councillors: Nikki Orchard (Vice Chair), Frances Freeman, Rupert Snook, Sally Barker, **TO BE**
Jane Lock, & James Anderson **TAKEN**

District Councillors Gill Westcott & Jane Lock

County Councillor Ray Radford (report attached).

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Mrs Leslie Findlay

Apologies:

Parish Councillors: Adam Pilgrim

OPEN FORUM

No matters were raised.

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

3.3 **Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters arising**

The February Minutes were approved and signed by the Vice Chair as a true and correct record and unanimously approved by all Councillors.

3.4 **Chairmans Report**

The Chairmans report is available to view on the website

3.5 **Environment**

3.5.1 **Public Rights of Way:**

The bridge on Footpath 6 near Fenacre Farm has been mended by DCC.

3.5.2 Cllr Freeman had been approached by a member of the public who was concerned about the damage that was incurring to the hedges and verges within the Parish by the increasing large vehicles using the country lanes and vehicles preferring to go up onto the verges instead of reversing back to pass other vehicles. Councillors agreed that there was very little action the PC could take on this matter, as previously discussed last year (see Feb 23 Minutes) but it was suggested that perhaps the best way to approach the drivers would be through a social media campaign.

3.5.3 **Canal Report** – available to view on the website

3.6 **Highways**

3.6.1 The potholes on the Wiseburrow road have increased and the water is continuing to pour across the road making it extremely dangerous. Cllr Radford will raise this with the Highways Officer. We are still waiting for DCC to jet the drains under the road which will allow the potholes to be filled in. **RR**

3.6.2 The road from Minnows Campsite to Holcombe Rogus will be closed from 6th – 10 April.

3.7 Planning

3.7.1 Application discussed:

3.7.1.1 **24/00210/PIP** permission in Principle for the erection of a dwelling in 29 Fore Street (revised drawings) – *The original comments that HRPC submitted are still relevant to the revised drawings.*

3.7.1.2 **24/00471/LBC** Listed Building Consent for the replacement of 2 velux windows on rear roof at 7 South Street – *No Objections*

3.7.1.3 **DCC/4358/2023 (Uplowman Parish)** Retention of existing deposition and temporary landfill site for the deposition of additional inert waste and a construction waste recycling facility with associated works including temporary buildings, access and landscaping. *This application is not in the parish of Holcombe Rogus but all the local facilities i.e. SPAR shop, Post Office, games pitch, tennis courts are in Sampford Peverell and therefore the residents of Holcombe Rogus are going to be impacted. The Parish Council has grave concerns about the extra traffic that will be passing through Sampford Peverell and up towards Uplowman. The bridge over the canal is already narrow and the recent narrowing of the road for a new footpath has already made it difficult for HGV vehicles to pass. This road is already extremely busy with local traffic without this extra increase. It should be noted when the A361 is closed (repairs/accident) all traffic is diverted through Sampford Peverell and this would only exacerbate the situation. Other routes into Uplowman are country roads which are also totally unsuitable for HGV's and increase in volume of traffic. Holcombe Rogus strongly objects to this application.*

3.7.2 To inform Council of decisions made by MDDC:

24/00224/PNAG Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural building at Fenton Farm – *No objection prior approval not required*

3.7.3 The planning minutes dated 14th March 2024 were approved and signed by Cllr Orchard. Available to view on the website.

3.8 The Mary Fewings Playpark

3.8.1 The new wavy bench is now in situ. The PC are very grateful to both Cllr Barker and Cllr Snook for accepting the delivery and having it secured in place.

3.8.2 The Clerk confirmed to MDDC that they wish for the no dog rule as laid out in the Mid Devon Public Spaces protection (Dog Control) is to continue in the playpark.

3.8.3 There were no comments in February monthly inspection.

3.9 Clerk/Finance

3.9.1 Income received since the last meeting:

3.9.1.1 Monthly interest in February £19.86

3.9.1.2 Lightsource SPV 13 annual income £7280.91

3.9.2 The bank statements and bank reconciliation for February were checked and signed by the Vice-Chair. Current balance of the two account is £23,607.48. The Playarea Reserve Fund has now been closed.

3.9.3 It was resolved that the following expenditure was approved for payment by the RFO:

Amount £	BACS/cheque	Payable to	Comments
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3.9.3.1	Expenditure approved by Chairman and Clerk outside of Council meeting:		
3.9.3.1.1	8.00	BACS	L Findlay
3.9.3.1.2	29.00	BACS	L Findlay
			Parish News
			For Malware subscription (paid by credit card and reimbursed)
3.9.3.1.3	248.00	BACS	P Russell
			Internal Audit (authorised Feb 24)
3.9.4	Expenditure approved at the Meeting		
3.9.4.1	25.00	BACS	Canal Trust
3.9.4.2	112.00	BACS	SLCC
3.9.4.3	1945.50	BACS	L Findlay
3.9.4.4	75.77	BACS	L Findlay
3.9.4.5	150.00	BACS	L Findlay
3.9.4.6	20.70	BACS	A Pilgrim
			Annual Membership 2024
			Annual Membership 2024
			Clerk wages Sept – Mar
			Clerk expenses
			Broadband assistance
			Cllr expenses

- 3.9.4.7**
- It was resolved that Cllr Anderson and Cllr Freeman would be added as authorised signatories to the account. The Parish Council were fully aware that if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the “Add or Remove Authorised Signatories” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section
 - if we change the Signing Rules in the “Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section
 - and the current mandate will continue as amended.
- Mr JH Butler will be removed as a signatory. Clerk to action

LF

3.9.5
3.9.5.1 The Clerk submitted the summary of accounts for

1. Solar Fund - £13,185.58. Clerk to advertise that a grant for any capital purchase for the parish may be submitted to the Council for consideration. One suggestion was for a grant towards a mini-bus for use by the village. There were several concerns over this suggestion and Cllr Lock will seek further information for the Council. Councillors also agreed that the Clerk should also approach Mark Baker (Canal Ranger) to see if there were any projects that could be considered as a way of assisting with the shortage of funding available to them.
2. Public Rights of Way - £56.24

LF

Both statements were signed by the Vice-Chair.

3.9.5.2 Following the recommendations of the Internal Audit it was resolved that the following Policies would be adopted by the Parish Council

3. Amended Risk Management Policy
4. Amended Health and Safety Policy
5. Business Continuity Plan
6. Updated Financial Reserves Policy

And amend Financial Regulations at Para Contracts 11b delete “£25,000 or more” and insert “£30,000 (to include vat) or more.” *As required by the Public Contracts (amendment Regulations 2022) came into force on 21 Dec 2022. This makes two changes to the Below Threshold Regime:*

7. *The contract value limits have been amended:*
 - a. *from £10,000 to £12,000 for central government authorities; and*
8. *from £25,000 to £30,000 for sub-central authorities*

3.10 **Correspondence**

All correspondence had been circulated to the Councillors.

PCC Notice of Election has been published on the website and Notice boards.

The Council have read the email from the 7 concerned citizens but will be taking no further action.

There had been a comment about a section of Frog Lane not being lit by street lamps at night. The street lamps are due to be changed so no further action to be taken at present.

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

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

3.11.2 Annual Parish Meeting – This will take place on Thursday 25th April. As requested by several residents Lucy Jefferson the Culm Catchment Officer for the Devon Resilience Innovation Project (DRIP) will be giving a short presentation at the beginning of the meeting to discuss flooding in our local area.

3.11.3 Cllr Snook attended the State of the District Debate and his report is available to view on the website.

3.11.4 Councillors raised their concern over the legitimacy and requirement for the neighbouring parish of Burlescombe to be changing its status to that of Town Council. Clerk to investigate further for clarification from DALC. **LF**

DALC response is “There will be no gain from changing the name from parish and town. They would still have to adhere to the same legislation, will have the same powers and responsibilities. There is no additional funds for town councils – towns do get extra attention for various reasons – but this is linked to the economy, business, population, indices of deprivation etc etc – not because of their name. The only change they’ll see is the name, and they can call their chairman a mayor instead.”

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05 pm. The next Full Council Meeting will be on Thursday 25th April 2024 following the Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Hall which starts at 7pm. **ALL**

Nikki Orchard
Vice Chair
Holcombe Rogus Parish Council

Dear Members

At Month 10 (Jan) it is estimated that budgets will effectively break-even by year end, with a small overspend by £291,000 currently forecast. This is an improvement of £4.3 million compared to the Month 8 (Nov) forecast.

It is worth noting that Devon County has managed its finances very well, and taken necessary action when needed to, while other County Councils around us have run into serious financial problems.

On Wednesday 14 February, councillors agreed a 4.99 per cent increase for our part of the council tax for this coming financial year.

It comprises 2.99 per cent for general services with an extra two per cent specifically for adult care.

It means an extra £1.56 a week on their bill for the average Band D householder.

It allows an increase of 10.4 per cent in spending on children's services, six per cent on adult services and 4.7 per cent on climate change, environment, and transport.

Councillors also agreed an extra £1.5 million to boost regular road drainage since the target budget was set last month to tackle the increase in potholes caused by this winter's heavy rainfall.

Agreement was also given to bring the homelessness budget back up to £1.45 million to support the work of district councils and homeless organisations for another year.

This is a well-constructed budget increasing expenditure for adults and children and looking after the old, the young and the vulnerable who account for almost four fifths of the budget.

We have a finite amount of money to spend and we have to allocate it to protect those most in need. But we will ensure that we get the best possible value from every pound we spend on behalf of our residents.

A six-week public consultation was launched on Monday 12 February, on the draft proposal to create a Combined County Authority (CCA) for Devon and Torbay to oversee new powers and funding transferred from Government.

The ground-breaking devolution deal [announced by Levelling Up Minister Jacob Young last month](#), proposes to create the CCA, which would be a formal partnership of elected members drawn from the councils of Devon and Torbay, including district councils, together with representatives from business and education.

People are being invited to have their say on how the CCA would work, the powers that it would have and the functions it would be responsible for. These include investment in local economic growth, delivering affordable housing, improving public transport, and meeting net zero ambitions. Further information about our joint consultation with Torbay Council and details of how to respond are available at www.devontorbaydeal.org.uk

By far the biggest issues raised at Parish Council meetings are roads and their maintenance, very rarely anything about Adults and children's services, with a combined budget of £588.7k out of

County's overall revenue budget of £743.3k. That only leaves £155k to run all other services, including Roads/Highways.

Devon has the largest road network in England with 8,953 miles of roads, whilst Cornwall has over 4,500 miles of roads (Department for Transport (DfT), 2022).

In 2023, we assessed 57,000 public reports of potholes of which 12,000 were ultimately assessed as duplicates. We repaired over 53,000 potholes.

Each report we receive is assessed onsite by a trained highway safety inspector. We do not ignore any reports that we receive, however, we do have to prioritise our funding as we cannot afford to fix all of the problems that are reported to us.

We prioritise repairing potholes, on roads, that have a 40 mm (4 cm) vertical edge and are 300 mm (30 cm) wide as these are the biggest risk to highway users.

All reports should be assessed onsite within seven calendar days. Following the assessment, repairs will be carried out by the end of the next working day, seven or 28 calendar days (depending on the outcome of the assessment) if confirmed as a priority pothole.

We will repair smaller potholes, and other road surface issues, as and when resources are available and as part of our [planned works programmes](#).

We have employed extra repair gangs, to increase repairs, hopefully with better weather we will catch up.

We have had our Locality Budget restored for small donations to local organisations/clubs etc. they would need to apply to Locality Budgets at County.

If anyone has any issues that they are not sure about, by all means contact me, I may be able to help.

Regards,

Ray

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Ray Radford

Devon County Councillor

Willand & Uffculme Division

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