# HOLCOMBE ROGUS PARISH COUNCIL
## Minutes of the November Meeting
## Held in the King George V Memorial Hall on Thursday 23rd November 2023
## At 7pm

**APPROVED**

**11.1** **Present**: **ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

Councillors: Adam Pilgrim (Chairman), Jane Lock, Sally Barker, Nikki Orchard and Rupert Snook
District Councillor Jane Lock
Mr Gordon Czapiewski – P3 Co-ordinator
Mr James Anderson – attending prior to co-option in January
Leslie Findlay Parish Clerk/RFO

**Apologies**: County Councillor Ray Radford & District Councillor Gill Westcott

**OPEN FORUM**

No issues raised

**11.2** **Declaration of Interests:** Cllr Pilgrim declared a personal interest in Item 11.9.3.2.4

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

The October Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record and unanimously approved by all Councillors.

**11.3.1** Matters arising:

**11.3.1.1** The Police are following up on complaints about the aggressive dogs at Ford Barn Farm.

**11.3.1.2** Timewells House hedge: There has been another complaint about the laurel hedge at Timewells House encroaching on the highway. Clerk had written a letter to Mr Finch requesting that the hedge was cut back. So far, this has not been actioned so Councillors agreed it would be reviewed at the January meeting.

**11.3.1.3** Highways were informed about the dangerous location of the road closure signs.

**11.4** **Police Report**

The latest Police Report is available to view on the website. www.holcomberogus-pc.gov.uk

**11.5** **Environment**

**11.5.1** PROW The invoice from Stuart Britton for the strimming along Footpath 15 had been received (£400) and once paid will leave £56.24 of income remaining in the P3 account. Chairman signed off the updated Account Summary.

**11.5.2** Westleigh Quarry: The Quarry Manager has kept the Council informed of when blasting will take place at Fenacre. *Clerk has posted details on Facebook.* There have been repeated requests for the siren to be sounded prior to a blast which the Quarry have agreed to reinstate.

**11.6** **Highways**

**11.6.1** Work carried out: The road to Sampford Peverell has been tarmacked in places and currently pothole free!

The two new signposts (in the centre of the village and Durleymoor Cross) have been installed.

The sign at Four Elms has disappeared. Cllr Snook to investigate further before reporting to DCC. **RS**

**11.6.2** Grit bins: Councillors to check any grit bins in their locality and report any deficiencies to the Clerk.

**11.7 Planning**

**11.7.1** Councillors discussed the following applications:

**23/01712/CAT** Notification of intention to remove a group of trees consisting of 2 Birch, number of Maples and 3 Cherry trees, repollard 1 Lime tree to above ground level, reduce the easter aspect of 1 field Maple to a line approximately 2.5m from fence and reduce the height by 3m within the Conservation Area at Webbers Church of England School. *No Objections*

**23/01707/CAT** Notification of intention to remove 1 tulip Tree (T1) within a Conservation Area at Buehills. *No objections*

**23/01722/CAT** Notification of intention to remove 4 branches and shorten 2-4 branches from 1 Sycamore tree within the Conservation Area at Pear Close. *No objections*

**11.7.2** To inform Council of decisions made by MDDC:

**22/02235/HOUSE** Replacement roof to include the integration of solar tiles, 3 replacement rooflights and installation of additional rooflight at Squirrel Cottage – *Approved with conditions*

**22/00907/FULL** Retention of disused quarry for use as two firing ranges at Devon and Cornwall constabulary Pondground Quarry - *refused*

**11.8 Mary Fewings Playpark**

**11.8.1** The Land Registry application is progressing.

**11.8.2** Councillors discussed two further issues regarding the transfer and it was agreed that

1. The Council do not wish to take any action regarding the "blue land". It is the Council's view that the playground has been there for many years and the risk of anyone making a claim for that land and therefore preventing access is very low. It was thought that DCC maintain the area as highway despite what the Highways Plan sets out and it was suggested that the PC could speak to DCC about possibly including this area as adopted highway.

2. Under the terms of the transfer, there are limited the transactions the Council are permitted to undertake in order to protect the land's continued use as a playground and nothing further. However, as a result of changes that have had to be made to the transfer to get the matter through the Land Registry, (in general terms) the sellers must consent to any transaction (even if permitted). Councillors decided that the risk was such that it is not worth taking this any further, the circumstances in which this would be an issue are limited and the sellers would be willing to assist.

**11.8.3** Mr James Anderson volunteered to dismantle the old bench that had adverse comments in the latest annual inspection. Councillors were shown various replacements for the bench and chose a recycled plastic 3 seat wave bench from Sustainable Furniture. Clerk tasked to investigate if the firm provide the brackets for installing the bench. Clerk to obtain a second quote for a similar item and this will be discussed further at the January Meeting. **LF**

**11.9** **Clerk/Finance**

**11.9.1** Unauthorised Nat West payment**:** Nat West have confirmed that the unauthorised payment from the current account was their mistake and have transferred the money back into the account. They have credited the account with a further £150 as compensation for the time required to deal with this matter and stress caused. The Chairman proposed and Councillors unanimously agreed that the full amount should be given to the Clerk who had dealt with the matter.

**11.9.2** The following income had been received:
October interest £46.58
Compensation from Nat West £150

**11.9.3** **Expenditure:**

**11.9.3.1** Expenditure paid:
Ken White sign £66 (already approved Sept Minutes 9.9.3.7)

**11.9.3.2**

| It was resolved that the following expenditure was approved for payment by the RFO: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Amount £** | **BACS/cheque** | **Payable to** | **Comments** |
| 300.00 | BACS | L Findlay | Increase in wages as per NALC pay scale SCP 13 |
| 362.10 | BACS | Vision ICT | Website Hosting and support for 2024 |
| 78.00 | BACS | Vision ICT | Biennial free for .gov.uk domain |
| 18.00 | BACS | A Pilgrim | Travel expenses |
| 400.00 | BACS | S Britton | Footpath strimming |
| 492.67 | BACS | MDDC | DCC verges grass cutting |
| 1055.57 | BACS | MDDC | Playpark grass cutting (7 cuts) and hedges twice |
| 15,000.00 | BACS | DCC | Contribution for street lights (from Reserves) |

**11.9.3.1** 300.00 BACS L Findlay Increase in wages as per NALC pay scale SCP 13

**11.9.3.2.2** 362.10 BACS Vision ICT Website Hosting and support for 2024

**11.9.3.2.3** 78.00 BACS Vision ICT Biennial free for .gov.uk domain

**11.9.3.2.4** 18.00 BACS A Pilgrim Travel expenses

**11.9.3.2.5** 400.00 BACS S Britton Footpath strimming

**11.9.3.2.6** 492.67 BACS MDDC DCC verges grass cutting

**11.9.3.2.7** 1055.57 BACS MDDC Playpark grass cutting (7 cuts) and hedges twice

**11.9.3.2.8** 15,000.00 BACS DCC Contribution for street lights (from Reserves)

**11.9.3.3** The bank statements and bank reconciliation for October were checked and signed by the Chairman.

**11.9.3.4** Risk Management Meeting
Cllrs Pilgrim and Freeman attended the Risk Management Meeting at Ayshford House on Monday 20th Nov. The Minutes from the Meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman. The Minutes are available to view on the website.
Matters arising:

1. Financial Regulations currently stated that the Clerk should obtain 3 quotes for any invoices above £100. Councillors agreed and approved this should be amended to above £500 and for two quotes. *Clerk to action.* **LF**

**11.9.3.5** Precept
Councillors discussed the draft Precept document which showed a 5% increase in the Precept. However, there was some concern that as MDDC are raising their precept by 6.75%, the 5% increase would be insufficient to cover the costs. Councillors were very aware of keeping the Precept as low as possible and it was resolved that the 2024/25 precept would be raised by 5.5% to £12,245 and any shortfall will be found from the reclaiming of vat, interest, and the reserve in the current account. This will not affect the General Reserve Fund.

**11.9.3.6** It was resolved that the DALC subscription will be paid by MDDC and the precept payment adjusted accordingly.

**11.9.3.7** BACS payments
It was resolved to allow the Clerk to continue using BACS payments. This was approved by all Councillors. (Financial regulations para 6.9).

**11.10** **Training**
Clerk attended webinar on Budgeting and setting the Precept.

**11.11** **Matters brought forward for information or future agenda**.
There are currently three Councillor vacancies. James Anderson will be co-opted onto the Council at the January Meeting. **LF**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm. The next Full Council Meeting will be on Thursday 25th January 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall. There is no Full Council Meeting in December.

Adam Pilgrim
Chairman
Holcombe Rogus Parish Council