

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 4th July 2012 in the Old School, Batcombe, commencing at 8.00pm.

Present - Councillors: Chris Wildridge – Chairman, Jayne Cox, Iona FitzGerald, Bryan Mead, Ian Sage and Yvonne Sommer.

Also Present: The Clerk – Rob Sage and two members of the public.

3363 – Apologies for Absence: Liz Hollis, David Stevens - District Councillor and Gloria Cawood - County Councillor.

3364 – Declarations of Interest: The Chairman, Iona FitzGerald and Jayne Cox declared personal interests in item 3368 as recipients of free tickets for the Sunrise Festival. Yvonne Sommer declared a personal interest in item 3372 as a neighbour of Holly Cottage, Westcombe. Ian Sage and Jayne Cox declared personal interests in item 3374 as relatives of the Clerk.

3365 – Public Participation: Bruno Cristofoli reported that there would be a combined 18th and 21st birthday party at Pennysquare Barn on July 7th which would have security in place. There would be nothing the next weekend as there would be no summer ball this year. There would be a 40th birthday party on July 21st and a 21st birthday party on July 28th.

Louise Nicholson expressed a concern about parking in Kale Street. The Chairman reported that he had received an e-mail from Dot Cox on the same subject, noting that Bruton Town Council were gaining access to an area for car parking and asking if the Parish Council could do the same. It was noted that the Parish Council had the power to provide car parking but would need to identify a suitable site near to Kale Street and find the funds to purchase the land and convert it into a car park.

3366 – Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6th June 2012 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3367 – Matters Arising: Shepton Mallet Hospital – The Parish Council had received responses from the Chief Executive of the Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and the District Councillor to the letter expressing the Parish Council's concerns at the proposed closure of beds. Annual Grants – A letter of thanks had been received from Mendip Community Transport for the grant of £100.

3368 – The Sunrise Festival: The Chairman and the Clerk had received some complaints about noise from the Festival disturbing residents. Bryan Mead also reported complaints about the noise and about the mud on the main road. Louise Nicholson reported that the sound monitor for the Festival had been staying with her and had gone to see people who complained. The Chairman noted that the Festival had a noise management plan with the main stage functions finishing at midnight. Numbers at the Festival were limited to 11,000 this year rising to 12,500 next year but this included Festival staff. Following complaints two years ago the Parish Council was invited to attend the pre and post Festival meetings with South Somerset District Council. The Chairman estimated that 184 free tickets had been supplied to residents of Batcombe at a cost of about £6,000 to the Festival and noted that the

Festival boosted local businesses. Iona FitzGerald noted that the weather had made conditions at the Festival very difficult. The Clerk was asked to place a piece in the parish magazine asking residents to make comments to Liz Hollis about the Festival for her to report to the post Festival meeting.

3369 – Code of Conduct: The Clerk reported that the Parish Council would need to adopt a Code of Conduct within the next few months. Copies of a model code produced by NALC were distributed to Councillors along with recommended changes to Standing Orders. There was also a model code produced by the Monitoring Officers of the principal councils in Somerset. It was decided to leave the adoption of the Code to the September meeting. There would be a training evening on the Code of Conduct at Nunney Village Hall in August.

3370 – Footpaths and Highways: The road from Batcombe to the A359 had been closed for 5 days for drainage works by Lower Farm. Bryan Mead reported that work had also been done on the track by Valley View Farm to stop water running across the road.

The Clerk reported on a strimmer project where the County Council would provide a strimmer for volunteers to maintain the footpaths in the parish in return for the Parish Council part funding the training of the volunteers. Given that participation in the project would probably mean a reduction in the grant the Parish Council would receive for the maintenance of the footpaths, the Council decided against taking part.

3371 – Playing Field – Maintenance Report: The annual inspection of the Playing Field by RoSPA would have taken place in June. The Clerk reported that the old gate in the Playing Field had been forced open, pulling off the upright bar from the left-hand side of the gate. The Clerk had put the gate back together and padlocked the chain around the diagonal bar. It was agreed that the gate should be replaced in the coming year.

The PCC had requested permission to hold the village fete in the Playing Field on the August Bank Holiday Monday, August 27th. This was agreed on the understanding that the PCC would clear up the Field afterwards. It was also agreed to authorise an extra cut of the Playing Field the Saturday before the Fete.

Iona FitzGerald reported that £650 had been raised for the Playing Field improvements at the Sunrise Festival. With £1,185 from the sponsored walk, there was a total of £2,790 raised for the Playing Field improvements. It was suggested that the working group should present a proposal in September to purchase a piece of equipment for the Playing Field. It was also noted that there was money available from the County Councillor for grants for projects concerned with health and well-being.

3372 – Planning Applications: There were no planning applications to consider.

Planning Application Updates: Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the coach house at Westcombe Stables to a self contained annexe had been refused as the proposal would result in harmful breaches into the historic fabric of the listed building. The District Councillor had reported that the District Council would be willing to negotiate with the applicant over the proposal but the applicant had not been interested.

A proposed single storey extension at Holly Cottage, Westcombe had been approved as permitted development. As it was considered to be permitted development the Parish Council had not been consulted. The Council had also been notified that there had been an appeal against the refusal of permission for the two storey extension at Holly Cottage. The government had amended the procedures for appeals for household planning permissions which meant that the Parish Council no longer had the opportunity to provide additional

comments on the application, although its original comments on the application would be considered by the Planning Inspector. The appeal would be decided by an exchange of written statements and a site visit by the Inspector.

3373 – External Auditor’s Report: The Clerk showed Councillors the external auditor’s report which stated that there were no items of concern to report. The notice of the closure of the audit had also been displayed on the Parish Council notice boards.

3374 - Authorisation of payment: Councillors authorised the following payments:

£287.27	Insignia Ltd – Diamond Jubilee commemorative tokens. Other village organisations had and would contribute to the cost of the tokens.
£96.00	Mr G Sparkes – Grass cutting for June.
£144.00	Moore Stephens – Audit Fee.
£636.44	The Clerk – Salary for 1 st Quarter.
£159.00	Post Office Ltd – PAYE on Clerk’s salary.
£166.62	The Clerk – Expenses for 1 st Quarter.

3375 - Other Business - Matters of Information: The public consultation on the Conservation Area Appraisal has begun and would run until July 19th. Copies of the draft appraisal had been placed in The Three Horseshoes, the Church and the Heritage Centre.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council website now had a list of recent planning applications with a link to the District Council’s planning application search webpage.

Bryan Mead had handed in a letter of resignation from the Council as he was moving from the village, and stated that he had enjoyed serving on the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked him for his contribution to the Council.

3376 – Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 1st August 2012 at 8.00pm in the Old School, Batcombe, if required. Otherwise Wednesday 5th September at 8.00pm in the Old School, Batcombe.

Chris Wildridge

5/9/12