

# BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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## You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 6.45pm in the Jubilee Hall, Batcombe

*Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.*

### Agenda

**1. Apologies and Acceptance of Reasons for Absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

*Councillors' Register of Interests forms have now been published on the Mendip District Council website. This means that Councillors need only declare interests that have not been disclosed in the Register of Interests. However, it would be good practice to declare any interests.*

**3. Public Participation – Open village meeting for any member of the public to raise any issue relevant to Batcombe Parish**

*The Chairman can invite members of the public to speak at this or any other appropriate point in the meeting.*

**4. Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015** to be agreed and signed. *Enclosed.*

**5. Matters Arising** – information updates only.

*Nothing at present that does not appear elsewhere on the Agenda.*

**6. Footpaths and Highways**

*The Chairman received a complaint about the skip opposite Church Farm. This has been raised with Somerset Highways who own the land it is on. They will inspect the site and act accordingly – a licence is required to place a skip on land belonging to Highways.*

**7. Coney Wood**

*The Woodland Trust have sent a draft 25 year lease. The main clauses of the lease are as expected: to use the wood only as amenity woodland and to allow the public access at all reasonable times; to manage the property in accordance with good woodland management; to maintain a tree and shrub canopy of not less than 75% of the area of the property (the Parish Council would be required to replace trees lost to fire, flood, storm or similar event but not epidemic disease); to maintain in a stock proof condition all boundary fences; not to interfere with the flow of water and to preserve the existing water features and pond; to keep the property free from litter; not to allow the property to become contaminated by pollution. There are a total of 41 clauses in the tenant's covenant with the Woodland Trust and these need to be considered carefully. It should be noted that if the Parish Council fails to maintain the Wood in the condition required by the lease, the lease allows the Woodland Trust to put right the failure and charge the Parish Council the cost of doing so.*

*The Chairman has asked David Stevens, who is a solicitor, to look at the lease and comment on it. David has done this free of charge, but with the caveat that he cannot except any responsibility or liability for the Parish Council entering into the lease. David's comments also need to be considered and he has raised some questions on which advice needs to be taken. Given the limited time at this meeting I recommend that the Council leaves the discussion of the lease until after the election.*

## **8. Playground - Maintenance Report**

*Geoff Sparkes has begun cutting the grass in the Playing Field. The mole(s) continue to be active. Many thanks to all those who helped with the work in the Playing Field and especially to Ian and Justin for organising and installing the new fencing.*

## **9. Planning Applications**

*None at present.*

### **Planning Application Updates.**

*The application for the demolition of the existing playroom and construction of a single storey extension at Lower Eastcombe Farm has been approved. The application to fell the Monterey Cypress with a Tree Preservation Order at Fir Tree Cottage has been approved on condition that a replacement tree be planted following the felling.*

## **10. Emergency Plan**

*The Chairman would like the Emergency Plan to be adopted at this meeting. Given that the Plan will be out of date once the Parish Council election has taken place, I would suggest that the Plan is adopted in principle and then updated after the election.*

*The Somerset Local Authorities' Civil Contingencies Unit would like the Parish Council to nominate three or more Emergency Community Contacts to be a point of contact between the community and the authorities: to liaise with local residents with identified roles; identify and pass on information about vulnerable residents to the appropriate authorities; identify severe and dangerous road conditions restricting transport; and pass information to and from the community. It would seem logical if these Emergency Community Contacts were the members of Community Emergency Management Team outlining in the Emergency Plan. However, given that two members of this team are the Parish Council Chairman and Vice Chairman, this would need to be confirmed after the election.*

## **11. Authorisation of Payment**

£40.00 Community Council – Annual Subscription for 2015/16.

*Payment of this subscription will need to be made by resolution under the s.137 power.*

£433.74 Read Agriservices – Fencing and associated materials. *Includes VAT of £72.29.*

£225.00? Oaktree Garden Products – 50 bags 70l 10/50 ML Playbark. *Invoice not yet received.*

£957.96 The Clerk – Salary for 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

£108.44 The Clerk – Expenses for 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

## **12. Other Business – matters of information only.**

*It has been reported to the Council that there is a possibility that one of the tenants in the parish's affordable housing may be moving. As previously in similar situations, Hastoe Housing and the District Council's Housing Options Manager have been asked to ensure that any vacancy be filled in accordance with the Section 106 agreement. I have received a response from Hastoe Housing that any vacancies would be advertised through Homefinder Somerset.*

*New legislation requires all employers to provide an automatic pension scheme for their employees. The level of the Clerk's salary means that the Council will only have to provide a scheme if the Clerk requests it and will not have to make any contributions. However, there are still a number of legal*

*duties on the Council, the first of which is to nominate a member of staff to receive communications from the Pensions Regulator.*

**13. Date and Time of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 7.30pm in the Old School Rooms, Batcombe. *This is the Annual Parish Council Meeting at which the Parish Council Chairman is elected for the year. It will also be the first meeting of the new Council following the election on May 7<sup>th</sup>.*

*Rob Sage*

Rob Sage – Clerk

1<sup>st</sup> April 2015