

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage

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You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 8.00pm in the Old School, 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

It is the Councillors' responsibility to declare any interests they may have in any item on the Agenda. If you are uncertain please ask the Clerk before the meeting.

3. Public Participation – Open village meeting for fifteen minutes 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 at any other appropriate point in the meeting.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 7th June 2017 to be agreed and signed. Enclosed.

5. Matters Arising – information updates only.

Annual Grants from the Parish Council – Letters of thanks have been received from the Village Hall Trust, Mendip Community Transport and Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau for the grants agreed at the last meeting.

6. District and County Councillors' Reports

An opportunity for the District and County Councillors to report on matters relevant to the parish, either in person or in writing.

7. Affordable Housing

To note that the landowner in Westcombe who was offering land for affordable housing has decided to withdraw that offer. We are still awaiting a response from the Diocesan Board of Finance regarding the glebe field in Batcombe.

8. Footpaths and Highways

The Chairman to report on progress in informing our County Councillor and the new portfolio holder of the issues involved in the withdrawal of the presalting of the road through Batcombe.

The Chairman to report on developments regarding the footpath from Pugh's Bottom Farm to Eastcombe Lane.

9. SSE Networks Stakeholder Engagement Day - 6th September 2017

Following a personal complaint made the Chairman after the recent power cuts, SSE Networks have offered to come to the Jubilee Hall for a Stakeholder Engagement Day on September 6th to address concerns that they are not allocating spending to upgrade their network.

10. Playground - Maintenance Report.

To report back on the RoSPA inspection which is due to take place at 9.30am on Thursday 29th June. Our insurers were happy for the saddle unit to be replaced on the zip wire by a volunteer provided it was inspected by RoSPA before being used. Mainstay Projects have accepted an invitation to attend the inspection.

The mole continues to be active and there are also signs of badgers digging in the Playing Field.

The Annual Fete – *The PCC (via Rob Jones) have requested the use of the Playing Field for the annual village fete on the August Bank Holiday Monday (August 28th). In the past the Parish Council has agreed to close the Playing Field from 8.00pm on the Saturday evening and on the Sunday and the Tuesday morning to allow the preparation and clearing up after the fete to be done safely. [The Parish Council cannot close the Playing Field on the Monday as it is a bank holiday, but in practice this does not make a significant difference.] As last year Rob Jones would like to erect some storage tents on the Saturday.*

In the past the PCC have also requested that the Playing Field grass and hedge inside the Playing Field are cut back prior to the Fete. Geoff Sparkes of Gardens of Avalon is happy to do this each year and I will remind him when I next send him his cheque for last month's work. (The cutting of the hedge is an extra which Geoff charges at his hourly rate – last year it cost £36.) During previous Fete weekends the zip wire has been immobilised with a padlock and chain and an inspection of the Playing Field on the Tuesday afternoon ensured the Playing Field was been left in a safe condition for children to use. We will need to get a new chain as the old one went missing last year.

11. Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2017/1454/HSE

Replace doors and windows, block 5 no. windows, insert new windows in garage, render block elevations and carry out internal alterations.

Spring Cottage, Batcombe – Householder Application.

The case officer has allowed an extension for the Council to consider the application at this meeting and we have e-mail confirmation of the extension.

Planning Application No: 2017/1708/LBC

Masonry Works to Elevations.

Batcombe Lodge, Batcombe – Listed Building Consent.

Notification of this application has arrived as the Agendas were about to be printed. Hopefully, plans will be available by the time of the meeting.

Planning Updates.

The Chairman to report on correspondence with the head of the planning department at the District Council following the approval of the application for extensions at Ravenswood last month before the Parish Council could consider it. The case officer has no recollection of an extension to the consultation deadline being requested, although the Clerk has a message on his answerphone where the case officer acknowledges the request and states that it would not be a problem.

12. Planning Appeal:

Planning Application No: 2016/1657/FUL

Convert and extend stable building for use as holiday accommodation.

The Stables, Crows Hill, Batcombe – Full Application.

Mr David Willis is appealing against the District Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the conversion of the stables at Crows Hill to holiday accommodation. If we wish to make a representation to the planning inspector we need to do so by July 12th. The original application was considered by the Parish Council in August 2016 and refusal of permission was recommended. The Parish Council noted that the plans for the holiday accommodation were identical to those for a residential dwelling that had previously been refused permission and had an appeal dismissed with the planning inspector stating that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the countryside. The Parish Council also questioned whether the stables were redundant.

13. Consultation on the Listing of Westcombe War Memorial

Following the listing of Batcombe War Memorial earlier this year, Historic England are now considering the listing of the Westcombe War Memorial and we are invited to comment on their consultation report. The enclosed/attached report gives a brief history of the war memorial (taken from the Shepton Mallet Journal) and a description of the war memorial. (Page 3 of the report is just a map showing the location of the memorial and has not been included.) We have until mid-July to comment if we wish.

14. Review of Standing Orders

All Councillors should have a copy of the current Standing Orders that were adopted in February 2014 and are based on a model produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). If any Councillor does not possess a copy of Standing Orders, please inform the Clerk. Standing Orders were amended in 2016 to allow the electronic distribution of Agendas and papers to those Councillors who wished to receive them in this manner. The Council also suspended Standing Order 31 which only allowed recording with the Council's prior written consent as recording is now allowed under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. I am not aware of any further amendments that need to be made to Standing Orders.

15. Authorisation of Payment

Gardens of Avalon - £????.00 – Grass cutting in June. Invoice not yet received.

16. Other Business – matters of information only.

External Audit and Transparency Code Requirements – The Annual Return, approved and signed at the last meeting has been sent to the External Auditors, along with other required papers (bank reconciliations, explanations of variation, details of earmarked reserves, etc). The period for exercise of public rights has been advertised on the website. This period runs from June 15th to July 27th and during this period members of the public can ask to inspect the Parish Council's accounts and other financial papers, such as invoices. The items required to be published by July 1st under the Transparency Code are now available on the Parish Council website. These include signed copies of the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and the internal auditor's report as well as details of any payments made in the last year of more than £100.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 2nd August 2017 at 8.00pm in the Old School, Batcombe - only if required to consider planning applications - otherwise Wednesday 6th September at 8.00pm in the Old School, Batcombe.

Rob Sage