

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage

Tel: 01749 850934

e-mail: clerk@batcombe-parish-council-somerset.org.uk

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 7th March 2018 in the Old School, Batcombe, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present - Councillors: Chris Wildridge – Chairman, Mary Comley, Jayne Cox, Ian Sage, John Sommer and Justin Witcombe.

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

4477 – Apologies for Absence: Nigel Hewitt-Cooper – County Councillor.

4478 – Filling of Parish Council Vacancy by Co-option and Acceptance of Office: The Clerk reported that one person had expressed an interest in serving on the Council. The Chairman asked for nominations and Wiff Cox was nominated by Justin Witcombe. A vote to co-opt Wiff was taken by a show of hands and he signed his Acceptance of Office and took part in the remainder of the meeting.

4479 – Declarations of Interest: None.

4480 – Public Participation: None.

4481 – Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7th February 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4482 – Matters Arising: Allotments – The Clerk reported that he believed the outstanding allotments rent had been paid but would need to see a bank statement to confirm this.

Affordable Housing - The Chairman confirmed that he would attend the District Council's Rural Housing Seminar on March 28th. The other Councillors who had expressed an interest were unable to make that date. The Clerk to book the Chairman's place at the seminar.

Village Hall – Justin Witcombe reported that the date of the Village Hall's Pig Racing Evening had been changed to April 28th.

4483 – District and County Councillors' Reports: None.

4484 – Footpaths and Highways: The Clerk reported that the MP, David Warburton, was available to come to a meeting of parishioners from 10.30am to 11.30am on Saturday April 21st to hear their concerns about the lack of gritting. It was agreed to invite the MP, publicise the meeting and ask residents to send questions to the Clerk beforehand.

The Chairman reported that he had met with one of the residents of Kale Street, who informed him that they had not had a reply to their letter to Mr Woodman at the County Council, stating that they had sorted the obstruction in Kale Street (which had prevented the gritting lorry getting through). The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Woodman expressing the Parish Council's concern at the deep discourtesy shown to the residents of the parish by not responding to their letter of November 2017. The Clerk was asked to copy the letter to the County Councillor and the MP.

4485 – Shindig Weekender 2018 – Premises Licence Appeal: The Clerk reported that he had been informed by South Somerset DC that the organisers of the Shindig Weekender were planning to appeal against their decision to reduce the hours to which they can play music from 4.00am to 2.00am. Details of the appeal, which has to be made to the Magistrates' Court, were not yet known but any involvement of the Parish Council (as a third party) would depend upon a decision taken by SSDC's legal department. At the Chairman's request, the Clerk had contacted other local licensing authorities to find out how late similar music festivals were allowed to play music until and with one or two exceptions 2.00am was the latest time - with many having to stop at earlier times.

It was noted that Field Trip had also submitted a premises licence application for Gilcombe Farm and the deadline for representations was March 28th. Concerns about the use of lasers at last year's Field Trip were raised. The Clerk was delegated to make a representation and Councillors were asked to send any comments to the Clerk.

4486 – Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2018/0103/HSE Proposed single storey rear extension.

1 Alshilla Cottages, Westcombe – Householder Application.

The applicant spoken in favour of his application, which was for a single storey extension to the depth of the existing rear wing of the cottage. His neighbour had no objections as long as the extension was done in stone, apart from a slight concern about the patio doors. The Parish Council decided to recommend approval as there were no objections to the proposed extension.

Planning Application No: 2017/3363/FUL Proposed detached double garage with adjoining ground floor studio and further studio space on first floor over garage.

Holly Hill House, Holly Hill, Batcombe – Full Application.

This was a two-storey building on land behind The Old Post Office. The Parish Council had received an expression of concern that this building was larger than some dwellings in the parish and might in the future be transformed into a separate dwelling. Although there was no objection in principle to a garage and studio, Councillors expressed concerns that this building was too large, was not in keeping with the surrounding buildings which were in the Conservation Area and had no obvious linkage to Holly Hill House because of the distance from the main building. It was agreed to recommend refusal on a vote of 5 to 2. It was also agreed that recommend that, should a garage/studio be permitted, it should be a condition that the building remains ancillary to Holly Hill House and not be occupied separately.

Planning Application Updates and Report on Planning Training Session: There were no updates on any current applications but the Chairman had distributed a report on the planning training session run by the District Council that he and Mary Comley had attended. They felt the meeting was worth going to with some useful information, but over long and poorly presented.

4487 – Review of Risk Management Policy: A copy of the Risk Assessment and Management document had been distributed with the Agendas. There were no changes from the previous year and the policy was agreed.

4488 – Review of Insurance Policy: The Clerk noted that there was one more year to run on the Parish Council's three-year agreement with Came & Co. The level of insurance was considered to be adequate.

4489 – Review of Schedule of Assets: A copy of the Schedule of Assets had been distributed with the Agendas. The Schedule had been updated with the purchase of the purchase of the new notice board a year ago.

4490 - Authorisation of payment: Councillors authorised the following payment:

£26.80 water2business – Water supply to the Playing Field (July – January).

In the context of data protection issues to be raised later under Other Business (Minute 4493) it was agreed to authorise the Clerk to obtain a password protected hard drive to back up the Parish Council laptop. It was suggested approaching the supplier of the laptop to see if he could provide the hard drive.

4491 – Playing Field - Maintenance Report: Clare Kingston volunteered to consult with the young mothers who used the Playing Field to see what play equipment they wanted. She also volunteered to do another Bingo Evening to raise funds. The Clerk was asked to draft a letter for Clare informing businesses she was raising money for the Council, to assist with the donations of prizes for the Bingo Evening.

The seat in the Playing Field needed attention and the Chairman and Ian Sage agreed to meet to discuss it the following Friday.

4492 – Annual Parish Meeting: The Annual Parish Meeting would take place on Wednesday April 4th at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall. Sue Mountstevens, the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, was unable to make the date of the Annual Parish Meeting but offered to come on a different date. It was agreed to invite her to speak at the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting.

It was agreed that the focus of this year's Annual Parish Meeting should be the Parish Emergency Plan and residents should be encouraged to come and have a grumble as a preliminary to reviewing the Emergency Plan. It was noted that Justin Witcombe and Ian Sage had spent several hours clearing paths and roads during the recent snow. Bruno Cristofoli had been provided with a snowplough, but apparently it could not be used because the fittings had not been inspected.

Councillors volunteered to provide refreshments for the Annual Parish Meeting including cake.

4493 – Other Business - Matters of Information Only: The Clerk reported that the General Data Protection Regulation would be coming into force in May and would have an impact on the Parish Council. When the legislation had been finalised SALC would be providing training for Clerks. There could be an issue in that as public bodies Parish Councils will be required to appoint a Data Protection Officer - a role that can be filled by a member of staff but not according to NALC by the Clerk, which could pose a problem for small Councils whose only member of staff is the Clerk. The Clerk noted that Councils were advised to wait and see how it is suggested this issue is resolved.

Concerns were raised over the sign in the churchyard and the Clerk was asked to check if planning permission was required to erect it.

Justin Witcombe volunteered to collect up any bags of salt left at the end of the winter. It was agreed to discuss tubs for salt at the next meeting. Justin requested that the verges be ploughed back as the gulleys were some distance from the road. It was noted that the bad weather had resulted in a number of potholes.

The Clerk reported that the Kimber Classic Trial for mainly pre-war MG cars would be taking place on the afternoon of Saturday April 7th.

4494 – Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 4th April 2018 at 6.45pm in the Jubilee Hall, Batcombe - to be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm.

Chris Wilddridge
4th April 2018