

# BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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## You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 at 8.00pm 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**

*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 the Meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019** to be agreed and signed. *Enclosed.*

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

*Himalayan Balsam – I have spoken to one of the owners of land along the river, who is equally concerned about the spread of this invasive weed. He has made various attempts to remove it from his land without success and is open to suggestions.*

*Allotments – One of the allotment holders has reported that the leak from the water tank is getting worse and suggests that the water supply to the tank is turned off. Presumably the tank will need to be drained before the tap can be repaired.*

*Sewage Treatment Plant at Ash Tree Cottages – The Chairman to update on progress. The residents will have met with the District Councillor at the end of September.*

**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. Footpaths and Highways**

*No details have yet been received of the Community Snow Warden Scheme (Minute 4780 from last month's meeting).*

*A resident of Mill Lane has asked the Parish Council for help in persuading the landowners on either side of the lane to cut back the hedges which are now so overgrown that delivery drivers are unable to drive down the lane without damaging their vans.*

## 8. Playground.

**Maintenance Report:** *There is renewed evidence of moles in the Playing Field. The Parish Council agreed to ask the molecatcher to keep watch for the return of the moles and so the molecatcher was to be informed of their return.*

*The meeting of Councillors in the Playing Field following the last Parish Council meeting agreed that the multi-play apparatus was no longer safe to use and so it was removed the following Wednesday. Removal revealed that all the supporting posts apart from the central one under the bridge were seriously rotten. Thanks to Ian Sage for removing the equipment.*

*Concerns have been raised over the reason why the equipment deteriorated so quickly. It was installed in 2013 and was showing signs of rot within two years. It should be noted that the "Keep on the Grass" group who raised the money for the equipment wanted to use locally donated timber for the support posts and a local firm to design and install the equipment around these posts and the Parish Council agreed to this. The company guaranteed their own timber for 50 years untreated. Unfortunately, the problem was with the locally donated timber which the company stated would be "well treated below ground level prior to use".*

*The electricity cabinet box needs repairing. Options are to either fix a clasp that can be padlocked or to replace the locks on the existing cabinet. We have an offer from a local electrician to do the latter.*

*Concerns raised by the Fete committee - Ian has kept the tap from the bus shelter and it should be a simple job to replace it for the Fete each year. We have not determined whether the electricity tripping is due to a fault or to overloading. The anchor point for the picnic bench can be dealt with when the concrete slabs are placed under the table.*

*Justin Witcombe has proposed that the Playing Field hedge be laid, which would make the play equipment visible from outside the Playing Field and so less likely to be vandalised in future.*

**New Play Equipment:** *We have received some additional donations for the new play equipment and the total raised is now over £4,000. I will check with the bank for details of additional transfers and provide a total at the meeting. Mendip Signs have sponsored the play equipment with a contribution of £200. In addition, Clare Kingston has made applications to the Shape Mendip lottery and to other local grant making bodies. We need to obtain updated quotes for metal equipment before we can apply for a grant from Viridor Credits. Clare is also proposing to do another Bingo Evening.*

**Bonfire Party at Pennysquare:** *It has been proposed that we hold bonfire party at Pennysquare on Saturday November 9<sup>th</sup> to raise money for the play equipment. It has since been pointed out that this is the night of the Safari Supper in Batcombe and the organisers have asked if we could have the bonfire party on another night – possibly the Friday. It is proposed to have a bar organised by the Three Horseshoes, a BBQ, a small firework display and a best Guy competition. The Parish Council needs to agree this and a number of volunteer helpers will be needed. Enclosed is a risk assessment, which includes the conditions required by our insurers (in bold) and advice given by the District Council in italics. If we comply with all these conditions the event will be low risk but the conditions are quite demanding.*

## 9. Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2019/2283/TCA – Proposed Works to Trees in a Conservation Area: Reduce Magnolia to a 6ft pole (T1), reduce Apple tree by 2 metres all over. Coombe Cottage, Batcombe.

*Both trees are to the rear of Coombe Cottage. The Magnolia is considered to large for its location. It is hoped the pole will reshoot. The Apple tree is being reduced to keep it under control.*

### **Planning Application Updates.**

*None at present.*

## 10. Affordable Housing

*To consider the Parish Council's response to the continuing need for affordable housing in the parish in the light of the question raised by a member of the public at the last meeting.*

## 11. Bank Reconciliation and Budget Update

*Our Financial Regulations require that every quarter a bank reconciliation is produced by the Clerk, checked by a member of the Council, and reported to the Council as soon as possible after the end of the quarter. As we only have a short meeting in August the first opportunity to report on the bank reconciliation for the quarter to 30<sup>th</sup> June is normally the September meeting, but was overlooked last month.*

*Financial Regulations also require the Clerk to provide an update on the budget each quarter. Again, this would normally be done in September. The enclosed sheet with four columns of figures shows the accounts for last year, the budget for this year, receipts and payments to 5<sup>th</sup> September this year and a projection for this year based on expenditure to date.*

*Receipts are projected to be approximately £4,000 more than the budgeted figure because of the donations and fundraising for the new play equipment that was not included in the budget. The allotments rent will also be £220 more than budget because all the allotments are now taken and the vacant allotments were leased during the current year. In a normal year the rent of all ten allotments brings in £350.*

*The projection for the Playing Field expenditure is roughly £5,500 more than budgeted. This is because the budget only included as expenditure on the play equipment the £572 that had been raised and the £4,000 from the Parish Council funds put aside for this. Grass cutting is likely to be more than budgeted depending on the number of cuts required later in the year. Maintenance consists of £110 for the hedge trimming. Overall maintenance is likely to be around £200 less than budgeted as no play bark will be needed this year.*

*The projection for the expenditure on Administration is likely to be £1,000 less than the budgeted figure because the parish council election was uncontested and cost only £97.50 instead of the £1,200 budgeted for a contested election. Most other items of administration are projected to be roughly as budgeted although the insurance was £40 more than the budgeted figure.*

*The projection for the expenditure on grants is £40 less than budgeted as the Community Council no longer asked for a subscription. Other items is £50 more than budgeted because of additional expenditure on the allotments.*

*Overall the projected deficit of £4,620 is close to the budgeted deficit of £4,200. However, the healthier position at the start of the year means that the projected funds at the end of the year are around £6,520 – £1,800 better than expected when the budget was made. This is largely due to the fact that the election was not contested. It should be noted that approximately £1,000 of this figure will be earmarked for the allotments*

## 12. Authorisation of Payment

£???.00 Dominic Conway – Grass cutting in September. *(Invoice not yet received.)*

£1,021.02 The Clerk – Salary for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

£116.59 The Clerk – Expenses for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

## 13. Other Business – matters of information only. *Nothing at present.*

## 14. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30pm in the Old School, Batcombe. *Note the earlier start time.*

*Rob Sage*

Rob Sage – Clerk

25<sup>th</sup> September 2019