

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage

Tel: 01749 850934

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

Minutes of the Extra Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 25th November 2020 via Zoom, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present - Councillors: Mary Comley – Chairman, Jayne Cox, Peter Glaisher, Janet Jones, Ian Sage and David Stevens.

Also Present: The Clerk – Rob Sage and one member of the public.

4968 – Apologies for Absence: Apologies had been received from Justin Witcombe and from Michael Gay – District Councillor.

4969 – Declarations of Interest: Janet Jones declared an interest in the planning application for the broadband antenna at 12 Kale Street as the broadband champion for the village.

4970 – Acceptance of Grant for new Play Equipment from Viridor Credits:

The Parish Council had received an offer of a grant of £58,976 from the Viridor Credits Environmental Company for new play equipment in the Playing Field and had one month to formally accept the offer and the conditions of funding that went with it and to pay the Contributing Third Party Payment of £5,897.60 - giving net funding of £53,078.40. Copies of the Funding Agreement had been distributed to Councillors along with a copy of the offer letter.

One of the conditions of the funding was that an initial payment had to be drawn down with six months of the offer (i.e. by May 9th), and this needed to be for completed works and not just a deposit. The Clerk had checked with the three play equipment suppliers and in each case if the Parish Council were to place an order in January the equipment should be installed in March or April. The Clerk noted that Viridor Credits would pay the play equipment suppliers directly on request from the Parish Council, but that the Parish Council would need to pay the VAT and then reclaim it from HMRC. If the equipment was installed in late March or April payment for the VAT should not need to be made until the Parish Council had received its precept in the second week of April.

The Parish Councillors had checked the Funding Agreement and felt that it was OK. It was noted that the Parish Council needed to be clear who was responsible for insuring the equipment when it was delivered and before installation. The Clerk noted that Viridor Credits had split the grants into separate sums for different items and that while these were based on the lowest quote, one item was £1,000 higher than the other quotes which might be an issue if the Parish Council went with one of the higher quotes.

There was discussion of when the Working Party would need to meet to finalise which quote to recommend to the Parish Council for a decision to be made at the January meeting on January 13th. There was also discussion of how to consult with local residents before a decision on which quote was made. Details of the equipment in the three quotes would be placed on the Parish Council website and it might be possible to place information in the Village Hall depending on when what tier of restrictions the local area was in after lockdown. Janet Jones noted that there was an event in the Village Hall on Saturday December 5th and it might be possible to display the information on the quotes at this event. Decisions to be made at the next Parish Council meeting on December 2nd.

It was noted that the Funding Agreement stated that funding could be withdrawn if all the conditions were not followed and that particular care had to be taken over publicity which had to mention the role of Viridor Credits and be approved by Viridor Credits.

The Parish Council agreed unanimously to accept the offer from Viridor Credits and to authorise payment of the Third Party Contribution of £5,897.60 from the funds that had been raised for this purpose.

4971 – Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2020/2257/TCA Proposed works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1, T2 & T3 (Ash) - Fell. Batcombe House, Gold Hill, Batcombe – Works/Felling Trees in a CA. The trees were showing signs of Ash dieback and so the Parish Council decided to recommend approval.

Planning Application No: 2020/2229/FUL Installation of two antenna to chimney breast, an equipment cabinet and other ancillary thereto for broadband use. 12 Kale Street, Batcombe – Full Application. It was noted that this was a retrospective application as the antennae had already been installed and that planning permission was only required because the antenna were significantly higher than the chimney. The Parish Council decided to recommend approval as this would improve the reach of the wi-fi broadband signal in the village.

Ian Sage reported that the antenna would also shortly be installed on the church tower and he had been told that it did not require planning permission because it was a temporary structure. It was noted that there was an article about this in the parish magazine and on the Parish Council website.

The Clerk noted that there was another planning application to be considered at the next meeting. This was an application for extensions at Greenacres (formerly Cedar Lodge) on Baileys Lane in Westcombe. He also noted that he had been contacted by planning agents who would like to talk to the Parish Council at their January meeting about an application for a Para 79 house (a house of outstanding design that can be built in the countryside) at Valley View Farm. It was noted that there might be considerable interest in this which would need a more formally-run meeting.

4972 - Authorisation of payment: Councillors authorised the following payment:

£5,897.60 Viridor Credits Environmental Company – Contributing Third Party Payment.

4973 – Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

M Comley 2/12/20