

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 1st September 2021 at 8.00pm in the Jubilee Hall, Batcombe

*Please note that the Jubilee Hall will be well ventilated and seating will be well spaced.
The wearing of face masks will be optional.*

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 21st July 2021 to be agreed. *Enclosed/attached.*

5. Matters Arising – information updates only.

Allotments – the signed lease has not yet been returned by the owners of the field.

Farmfest – there were no reported noise issues in relation to the Farmfest music festival at the end of July.

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. A written report from the County Councillor for August has been circulated to Parish Councillors.

7. Footpaths and Highways

Kale Street will have been closed on Tuesday August 31st from 9.30am to 3.30pm to allow BT Openreach to undertake cabling works. Nothing else to report at present.

8. Playground – Maintenance Report: *The Opening Celebration can be considered a success despite the rain which meant the music and picnic had to be held in the Jubilee Hall. The Chairman has since met with a representative of Viridor Credits to check that we have done what we received the grant for.*

The plaque acknowledging those who contributed towards the new play equipment has been damaged and a decision needs to be taken on replacing it.

A quote was received from Jason Taylor of Wanstrow to cut the Playing Field grass. However, after undertaking one cut he felt that the Playing Field was too small to be easily cut with his mowing machine and so he declined to cut the grass on a regular basis. However, he didn't charge for the one cut he did and he suggested a colleague in Wanstrow, Kevin Gale, with a smaller lawnmower. Kevin has quoted the same price for a fortnightly cut as Dominic Conway was charging and I have asked him to cut the grass in the last week of August. I did let him know that the Parish Council would need to approve the awarding of the contract to him and he has provided a copy of his public liability insurance.

Gary Butler has cut the inside of the Playing Field hedge, which we normally get cut in August.

The latest water bill for the Playing Field shows that 13m³ of water (or 2,680 gallons) was used in the six months to the end of July. This was presumably what was used to water the new turf.

The company supplying the new gate for the Playing Field made a mistake on their invoice and did not include the VAT – so we need to pay an additional £164.24 to cover the VAT (which we will be able to reclaim). The VAT on the new play equipment has not yet been reclaimed.

Earlier in the year the Parish Council obtained a quote for work on the trees behind the cricket net. The tree surgeon would have charged £25 to obtain the planning permission for the trees works and so the Parish Council asked the Clerk to obtain the planning permission. The Clerk has not yet been able to do this due to the pressure of other work and recommends that the Council pay the £25 fee for the tree surgeon to make the application.

9. Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2021/1431/FUL - Erection of first storey extension, erection of annex to form staff accommodation and erection of store room

The Three Horseshoes, Batcombe – Full Application

In 1989 planning permission was granted for a two-storey rear extension to The Three Horseshoes but only the ground floor of the extension was constructed. The application is for a revised first floor extension to allow five bedroom units for letting on the first floor (currently three). The plans show alterations to the layout of the ground floor, additional patio space and parking, and the replacement of the current static caravan with a staff accommodation unit. Full details of the application can be found on the Mendip planning website at [Simple Search \(mendip.gov.uk\)](https://www.mendip.gov.uk) by entering the planning application number into the search engine.

Planning Application No: 2021/1848/LBC -

Internal and external alterations to include fenestration, demolition of external modern boiler house South View, Kale Street, Batcombe – Listed Building Consent

The proposed alterations include the relocation of the kitchen into the butcher's shop at the front of the house while preserving the features of the shop. It is also proposed to re-instate a sash window where the current front door of the house was installed in the 1990s. At the rear of the property the chimney will be replaced with a flue connected to a new woodburning stove, remove a small boiler house and replace the dormer windows so they can be used as a fire escape. Full details of the application can be found on the Mendip planning website at [Simple Search \(mendip.gov.uk\)](https://www.mendip.gov.uk) by entering the planning application number into the search engine.

Planning Application Updates.

The application for extensions to and refurbishment of Greenacres on Baileys Lane has been approved by Mendip District Council. The case officer's report states that "The application has been referred to the Ward Member because the Officer recommendation for Approval is contrary to that of the Parish Council. The application was referred to the Ward Member on 13th July 2021. No response was received. As per the scheme of delegation, the application is to be Approved as per the Officers Recommendation."

The District Council had no objection to the felling of the Bay tree at Church View.

10. Unitary Authority and Parish Council Elections

The next Parish Council elections are due to take place in May 2023. However, elections to the new unitary authority will take place in May 2022 and so there will be no District Council elections in May 2023. In the past election costs have been shared with the District Council so if Parish Councils have elections in May 2023 the cost to the Parish Council will be significantly increased. (The last contested election in Batcombe was 14 years ago and cost £933.) The County Council and One Somerset have asked SALC to consult with parish councils as to whether we would like elections to take place in May 2022 when costs would be shared or in May 2023.

11. Bank Reconciliation and Budget Update

Financial Regulations require that each 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.

Financial Regulations also require an update on the budget each quarter. The enclosed/attached sheet with four columns of figures shows the accounts for last year, the budget for this year, receipts and payments to 5th August this year and a projection for this year based on expenditure to date.

Receipts are projected to be approximately £12,500 more than the budgeted figure because of the VAT to be reclaimed on the new play equipment which was not included in the budget.

The projection for the Playing Field expenditure is roughly £16,500 more than budgeted, due to the money spent on the new play equipment and the cost of the new gate that was not included in the budget. This was mainly the VAT to be reclaimed. Grass cutting is likely to be less than budgeted (depending on the number of cuts required later in the year) because of the free cut provided. Maintenance consists of £110 for the hedge trimming. Overall maintenance is likely to be less than budgeted as we have new play equipment.

The projection for the expenditure on Administration is likely to be £100 more than the budgeted figure. While the Clerk's expenses and photocopying costs are likely to be less than budgeted, the cost of the Zoom subscription was not budgeted and the insurance premium was larger than budgeted because of the new play equipment being insured. The Parish Council should decide if it wishes to continue with the Zoom subscription.

The projection for the expenditure on Grants and Other Items are likely to be as budgeted.

Overall, there is a projected deficit of £2,300 compared to a budgeted surplus of £1,915. This is due to the net expenditure on the play equipment after the VAT is reclaimed and the cost of the new gate. However, the projected funds at the end of the year are £16,350 – around £5,000 better than expected when the budget was made. It should be noted that approximately £1,000 of this figure will be earmarked for the allotments

12. Annual Grants from the Parish Council

The Parish Council has budgeted for a grant of £300 to the Village Hall (£150 for our own meetings and £150 for committee meetings of other village organisations); for a grant of £200 to the Parochial Church Council for the maintenance of the churchyard and £200 for smaller grants to charities. For several years the Council has given two grants of £100 to Mendip Community Transport and Mendip Citizens Advice Bureau. In the past we have supported Victim Support Somerset; Mendip RELATE; the Bruton Carers Group; St Margaret's Somerset Hospice and Somerset Art Works.

The Council has the power to support the Village Hall Trust, to help maintain the churchyard, and to support the Citizens Advice Bureau, but grants to other charities must be made by a specific resolution under the section 137 power, which allows the Council to spend a limited sum on items in the interest of parishioners which it has no specific power to support.

13. Authorisation of Payments

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| £37.00 | Mary Comley – Opening Celebration expenses. |
| £150.00 | Frank Harrington – Live music at Opening Celebration. |
| £120.00 | Gary Butler – Grass cutting before Opening Celebration. |
| £110.00 | Gary Butler – Hedge cutting in Playing Field. |
| £41.58 | water2business – Water supply to Playing Field. |
| £164.24 | D & I Bridgeman and Son Ltd – VAT on new Playing Field gate. |
| £821.19 | D & I Bridgeman and Son Ltd – New Playing Field gate (<i>retrospective</i>). |

14. **Other Business** – matters of information only. *None as yet.*

15. **Date and Time of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 6th October 2021 at 8.00pm in the Jubilee Hall.

Rob Sage

Rob Sage – Clerk

25th August 2021