

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 2nd March 2022 at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall, Batcombe

*The wearing of face masks is no longer be compulsory –
but may be advisable in light of the number of Covid cases in 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 2nd February 2022 to be agreed and signed. *Enclosed/attached.*

5. Matters Arising – information updates only. *None that do not appear on the Agenda below.*

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. Allotments

Peter Glaisher to report on the meeting of allotment holders.

8. Footpaths and Highways

Storm Eunice has caused some disruption with a tree down in Crows Hill and stables blown into the road the other side of Higher Alham.

Two residents have reported a large amount of litter on the Alham road and a disturbing amount of fly-tipping in the lay-by on that road (there is a steep gully behind the lay-by that has long been used as a site for fly-tipping). The Chairman has asked the District Councillor to report this to Mendip as the residents were struggling to report it on the District Council website.

Mary Comley and Jayne Cox have undertaken a survey of roadside hedges in the parish that need cutting back and Mary has prepared a letter to send to the owners of the hedges. The Parish Council to consider whether to should place a notice in the parish magazine before sending out the letters. The letters will need to identify the particular issues being raised with each landowner.

9. Batcombe Conservation Volunteers Group

Following the success of the volunteer working parties to clear the Himalayan Balsam in 2020, Tom Price is wondering if the Parish Council would support the setting up of a Conservation Volunteers Group to work through the year on improving the green spaces in our community. Tom would like the Parish Council to provide public liability insurance for the volunteers. Our insurers would require a risk assessment for each activity and a list of the volunteers undertaking each activity and Tom would be willing to provide these. We would need to keep our insurers informed of what was happening but provided the group was a Parish Council working party they should provide public liability insurance.

10. Playing Field – Maintenance Report

The Parish Council agreed to review at this meeting the decision to take no action concerning the damaged sign in the Playing Field acknowledging the contributors towards the new play equipment.

Thanks to Tom Price and his volunteers for the work on the willow structure. The tree surgeon has raised the crowns of the trees overhanging the cricket net and undertaken maintenance work on the Oak tree in the corner of the Playing Field.

The Parish Council needs to consider location and type of bench to be placed in the Playing Field. It may be worth noting that the teak benches the Parish Council placed in the churchyard to mark the Queen's Silver and Golden Jubilees have lasted well with minimum maintenance. The Parish Council also needs to consider whether to order the new cricket mat and nets from Net World Sports given the poor reviews of the company on Trustpilot.

Sally Macdonald has been in contact to say that they are planning to hold the Village Fete on Sunday 28th August and would like permission to use the Playing Field.

11. Planning Applications:

Planning Application No: 2022/0239/VCR –

Application to vary condition 2 (drawings) of planning approval 2018/0450/FUL to improve build.

The Three Horseshoes, Batcombe – Variation or Removal of Conditions.

The proposal is to change the plans for the staff accommodation at The Three Horseshoes which already has planning permission. The new plans for the staff accommodation differ from those in the application for the extension to the main building which has not yet been decided.

Planning Application No: 2022/0342/TCA – T1 – Norway Maple – Reduce x 1m all over.

Ivy Wall House, Back Lane, Batcombe – Works/Felling Trees in a Conservation Area.

Full details of both applications can be found on the Mendip planning website at <https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the planning application number into the search engine.

Planning Application Updates.

The application for the demolition of the holiday let and erection of a single storey extension at Shortwood Farmhouse has been approved. The application for a steel-framed apex building to cover an existing slurry store at Horsehill Farm has also been approved.

12. Annual Parish Meeting

As noted at the last meeting the Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday April 6th. This year there will not be a guest speaker just a report on the last three years and an opportunity for questions. Usually in April the Parish Council hold a short meeting before the Annual Parish Meeting, starting at 6.45pm. Given that there is no speaker at the Annual Parish

Meeting, would the Parish Council prefer to hold a short meeting after Annual Parish Meeting instead of before it. This would be a short meeting, only dealing with urgent matters such as planning applications.

13. Review of Schedule of Assets

The Schedule of Assets should be reviewed annually before the independent examination. Enclosed is an updated copy of the Schedule with the new play equipment added. This increases the value of the Parish Council's Assets from £9,439 to £62,819. It should be noted that the values given are (mainly) the purchase price with no account made of depreciation or increase in value. It should also be noted that the current pedestrian gate has a value of £1,800 – this was the amount the Parish Council was advised would be its replacement cost when it was installed. When the new gate is installed, this value will be removed from the Schedule of Assets.

14. Review of Risk Management Policy and Insurance Cover

The Risk Management Policy should be reviewed annually before the independent examination. Enclosed is a copy of the Risk Assessment and Management document. This is mainly the same as last year's document, except that the risk of coronavirus transmission via the play equipment has been reduced from medium to low and the risk of transmission at meetings has been reduced from high to medium.

The Insurance Policy should also be reviewed annually before the independent examination and before it is due for renewal in June. Our current three-year agreement with Came & Co. to provide our insurance cover will come to an end this year, so we need to decide whether we wish to locate at alternative insurers. It should be noted that Came & Co are insurance brokers and that our actual insurance has been with Hiscox for the last three years. Three years ago Came & Company obtained three quotes for us to consider – the question is whether we wish to look for an alternative quote ourselves. There is also another insurance broker offering insurance services to Councils – BHIB Councils Insurance.

15. Authorisation of Payments

£330.00 Bruton Tree Care Limited – Tree works in the Playing Field.

This is a retrospective authorisation as the tree surgeon requested payment within 7 days of the invoice date.

16. Other Business – matters of information only.

Parish Council Elections – Nomination packs are now available to download from the District Council website at [Elections 2022 - Mendip District Council](#) Nomination papers should be hand delivered to the District Council Offices between 9.30am and 4.30pm from Tuesday March 22nd to Tuesday April 5th, (but no later than 4.00pm on Tuesday April 5th). Candidates are advised to submit their papers as early as possible. A list of persons nominated will be published on the District Council website by 4.00pm on Wednesday April 6th.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee – A resident has suggested that the Parish Council marks the Platinum Jubilee by planting trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy. The trees are provided free by the Woodland Trust. When the Parish Council has considered previous requests to plant trees the issue has been finding a suitable location.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6th April 2022 after the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall.

Rob Sage

Rob Sage – Clerk

23rd February 2022