

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage

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Minutes of a Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 2nd March 2022 in the Jubilee Hall, Batcombe, commencing at 7.30pm.

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

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

5183 – Apologies for Absence and Acceptance of Reasons for Absence: None.

5184 – Declarations of Interest: None.

5185 – Public Participation: None.

5186 – Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5187 – Matters Arising: None.

5188 – District and County Councillors' Reports: None. [*Written reports were received from the County and District Councillors after the meeting and distributed to Parish Councillors.*]

5189 – Allotments: Peter Glaisher had met with the allotment holders, who were happy to keep the allotments field tidy themselves. One of the allotment holders was willing to take on an extra allotment which would leave one vacant, although an allotment holder with two allotments had yet to pay for the allotments this year. Peter would follow up with the allotment holders in the Spring. An advert for the vacant allotment(s) would be placed in the parish magazine and on parish notice boards. **Action: Peter Glaisher.** A query was raised as to whether the Parish Council could set up a Facebook page. **Action: The Clerk.**

5190 – Footpaths and Highways: It was noted that Storm Eunice had caused some disruption with a number of trees blown down. Mary Comley noted that the subsidence on Hincombe Hill had not got any worse and volunteered to write to Somerset Highways to see when it would be repaired. Concerns were expressed about the drains in Westcombe and Mary Comley volunteered to write to Somerset Highways about the gulleys. **Action: Mary Comley.**

It was agreed to redo the list of hedges that needed attention with details of what the problem was and where, with photos to confirm the issues. **Action: Jayne Cox & Mary Comley.**

Two residents had reported a large amount of litter on the Alham Road and fly-tipping in the lay-by on that road. The Chairman stated that he had reported the issue to the District Councillor and would chase it up. **Action: The Chairman.**

5191 – Batcombe Conservation Volunteers Group: Following the success of the volunteer working parties who cleared the Himalayan Balsam in 2020, Tom Price asked 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 the community, by providing public liability insurance for the volunteers. Tom was asked to provide a list of the activities that might be

undertaken. A decision was left to the new Council after the election as the insurers would need to be consulted and might change in June.

5192 – Playing Field – Maintenance Report: The Parish Council reviewed the decision to take no action concerning the damaged sign in the Playing Field acknowledging the contributors towards the new play equipment and decided to replace the sign with no changes.

Thanks were expressed 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. It was noted that there was a problem with children poking with sticks at the earth on the bank by the multi-play equipment. Mary Comley volunteered to plant strawberry plants to bind the earth. There were also issues with gaps in the hedge and it was suggested filling the gaps with hazel sticks.

Various suggestions were made for the location and type of bench to be placed in the Playing Field and it was agreed to arrange a meeting of the Working Party to consider the options available. **Action: The Working Party.**

The Parish Council decided to order a new mat, nets and stumps for the cricket net from Net World Sports despite poor reviews of the company on Trustpilot.

Sally Macdonald had asked permission to hold the Village Fete in the Playing Field on Sunday 28th August. It was unclear if the Fete was being organised by the Parochial Church Council and this would need to be confirmed as the Parish Council's insurance would not cover the Fete but the PCC's would as the event's organiser. **Action: The Clerk.**

5193 – 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 was to change the plans for the staff accommodation at The Three Horseshoes which already had planning permission. The Parish Council decided to recommend approval as there were no objections to the proposed changes.

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. The Parish Council decided to recommend approval as there were no objections to the proposed tree works.

Planning Application Updates: The application for the demolition of the holiday let and erection of a single storey extension at Shortwood Farmhouse had been approved, as had the application for a steel-framed apex building to cover an existing slurry store at Horsehill Farm. Concerns were raised that the Parish Council's comments on the Shortwood Farmhouse application had not been considered and the Clerk was asked to write to the case officer. **Action: The Clerk.**

5194 – Annual Parish Meeting: The Annual Parish Meeting would take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday April 6th. As there was no guest speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting, it was agreed that the Parish Council would hold a short meeting to deal with urgent matters after the Annual Parish Meeting instead of before it.

5195 – Review of Schedule of Assets: An updated copy of the Schedule of Assets had been enclosed with the Agenda. The addition of the new play equipment to the Schedule increased the value of the Parish Council's Assets from £9,439 to £62,819. It was noted that the values given in the Schedule are mainly the purchase price with no account made of depreciation or increase in value. It was also noted that the current pedestrian gate had a value in the Schedule of £1,800 – as this was the amount the Parish Council was advised would be its

replacement cost when it was installed – and when the new gate is installed, this value will be removed from the Schedule of Assets.

5196 – Review of Risk Management Policy and Insurance Cover: A copy of the Risk Assessment and Management document was enclosed with the Agendas. This was largely the same as the previous year’s document, except that the risk of coronavirus transmission via the play equipment has been reduced from medium to low risk and the risk of transmission at meetings has been reduced from high to medium risk.

The Parish Council’s current three-year agreement with Came & Co. to provide our insurance cover would come to an end on June 1st this year, and there was the option of considering an alternative insurance broker. It was agreed that the Clerk should approach BHIB Councils Insurance for a quote. **Action: The Clerk.**

5197 - Authorisation of Payments: Councillors authorised the following payments:

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

This was a retrospective authorisation as payment had been requested within 7 days.

£22.56 water2business – Water supply for the Playing Field (six months).

5198 – Other Business – matters of information only:

Parish Council Elections – Nomination packs were available to download from the District Council website and needed to be hand delivered to the District Council Offices from Tuesday March 22nd to no later than 4.00pm on Tuesday April 5th. The Clerk was asked to obtain seven paper nomination packs. **Action: The Clerk.**

Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – A resident had suggested that the Parish Council marked the Platinum Jubilee by planting trees as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy, as the trees were provided free by the Woodland Trust. It was noted that finding suitable locations for the trees was the problem.

Jayne Cox raised a concern about parking on Kale Street which meant it was difficult to get through with larger vehicles and Peter Glaisher raised a concern about a dog walker from Evercreech who was seen with nine dogs that were not under control.

5199 – Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6th April 2022 in the Jubilee Hall immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm.

Janet Jones

6/4/22