

# BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

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## You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 8.00pm in the Old School, 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 Meetings held on Wednesdays 25<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022 to be agreed and signed. Enclosed/attached.**

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

*Jubilee Beacon – Thanks are due to Tom Price and Ian Sage for organising the lighting of the Jubilee Beacon on Burnell. All went well and the beacon could be seen clearly from the Jubilee Garden below the Jubilee Hall. We have received an e-mail from the Pageantmaster thanking us for taking part.*

*Audit – All the required items have now been e-mailed to our external auditors PKF Littlejohn and we await their external auditor's report. These items included confirmation of the dates for the period when local electors may exercise their rights to examine the Parish Council's accounts. These dates must cover a period of 30 working days that include the first ten working days in July. For the Parish Council they run from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> 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.*

**7. Allotments**

*The allotments field owner is still concerned about the state of the field and has approached Peter Glaisher about this. In the past the Parish Council has offered vacant allotments for a reduced price for the remainder of the summer and I suggest we do so again.*

## **8. Footpaths and Highways**

*At the last meeting it was agreed that the Parish Council would pay for Tom Price to undertake strimmer training and that the Council would purchase a strimmer for him to use on the footpaths in the parish. Tom has done some research into available courses and machines (circulated to Councillors by e-mail) and recommends the Somerset Training course at Castle Cary at a cost of £125 + VAT plus £32 + VAT for the assessment; and the Mitox 360 UX Brushcutter available from Read Agriservices at a cost of £260 + VAT. Tom has also obtained a quote from Read Agriservices for protective equipment and fuel - £44.99 for a forestry helmet; £23.50 for overalls; £8.33 for 1l of engine oil and £16.88 for 5l of mixed fuel (all prices before VAT).*

*Fingerposts – before the pandemic there was a programme organised by the County Council to provide volunteers with instruction in the restoration of fingerposts and the Parish Council was considering getting involved. I understand from Jayne Cox and Michael Gay that there may be an opportunity to take part in this again and Michael has provided a contact e-mail if the Parish Council would like to get involved. I don't have any other details at this stage, but am aware of some parish councils who organised volunteers to paint their fingerposts before the pandemic.*

## **9. Playground - Maintenance Report**

*We have not yet received the annual safety inspection report for the Playing Field undertaken by RoSPA. The inspection will have taken place at some point in June.*

*Thanks to Ian Sage for the installation of the new self-closing pedestrian gate for the Playing Field. Thanks are also due to Ian for the installation of the new GWR seat near the multi-play equipment, moving the low seat to the bottom of the Playing Field, and the installation of the new bench in the bus shelter.*

*Our insurers have no problems with the Cricket Club using the cricket net in the Playing Field for practice.*

## **10. Batcombe Community Volunteer Group**

*Tom Price has produced a draft schedule of activities for the Community Volunteer Group to undertake in the parish (attached). The suggested activities raise a number of issues to be considered by the Council. Our new insurers are happy to insure the Volunteer Group provided risk assessments are undertaken, protective equipment such as gloves and stout footwear are worn, and any hazardous work undertaken by professional contractors. Volunteers should use non-powered tools only and only cleaning materials that can be bought from shops. The Parish Council is a registered data controller so can collect and store personal data of volunteers provided permission is granted. We have existing privacy notices that can be adapted and a consent form can be produced.*

## **11. Planning Applications**

Planning Application Nos: 2022/1051/HSE & 2022/1052/LBC –

Installation of replacement glazing, roof lights, one additional roof light, one window to North West elevation and internal alterations including replacement staircase, creation of ensuite bathroom, demolition of modern partition walls, reinstatement of door way and creation of new door way. Kings Hayes, Gold Hill, Batcombe. Householder Application & Listed Building Consent.

Planning Application Number: 2022/1309/VRC –

Application to vary condition 2 (drawings) of planning approval 2018/0450/FUL to drawing 1820/P/06. To amend the design of the building to better suit the needs of the refurbished pub replacing 'as proposed' elements of the drawings with new 'as proposed' drawings as shown on new drawing 1820/P/06.

The Three Horseshoes, Batcombe. Variation or Removal of Conditions

*Full details of all the 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 a first floor extension, detached plant room building and installation of extraction system at The Three Horseshoes has been approved.*

## **12. Review of the Social Media Policy and the Press and Media Policy**

*Copies of the Social Media Policy and the Press and Media Policy are attached (and can be downloaded from the Parish Council website). These have not been reviewed for some time so any comments welcome. The main point about the Press and Media Policy is that formal contact with the Press (which is quite rare) should be left to the Chair and the Clerk to ensure a consistent approach in line with the Policy. Fortunately we have a good relationship with the parish magazine which is the main way of communicating with local residents.*

*All Councillors should be aware of the Social Media Policy when using social media and beware of appearing to represent the Parish Council when posting personal comments. It has been suggested that the Parish Council set up a Facebook page and before this is done the Social Media Policy needs to be adapted accordingly. I would suggest similar provision to that for the website in section 4.5 of the Social Media Policy. I would also suggest that one or possibly two people are appointed to manage the Facebook page and ensure that all posts are in line with the Social Media Policy. Other Councillors who wanted to add content to the page could send material to this person(s) to be posted.*

## **13. Effective Communication**

*This item has been included at the request of Tom Price. Tom would be interested in getting an agreement on how councillors communicate effectively with each other. We are all busy people and he thought it might be helpful to agree a model for preventing excess email communications. For example, the reduced use of “reply all” to initial group emails where the response is not needed to be sent to all and NRN where no response is needed by the sender etc. Tom also felt that it would be useful to get agreement that, if email is considered the most effective means of communicating with each other, a reasonable response time is adhered to before follow up emails are sent etc.*

## **14. 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.*

## **15. Authorisation of Payment**

- £240.00 Kevin Gale – Grass cutting in the Playing Field in June (3 cuts).
- £1,183.48 The Clerk – Salary and expenses for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (*see attached sheet*).
- £15.00 Somerset Playing Fields Association – Annual Membership.
- £125.00 Somerset Association of Local Councils – 5 x New Councillor training courses.

## **16. Other Business – matters of information only.**

*Nothing at present.*

## **17. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022, if required for planning applications. Otherwise, Wednesday September 7<sup>th</sup> at 8.00pm in the Old School.**

*Rob Sage*

Rob Sage – Clerk

30<sup>th</sup> June 2022