

# 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> March 2024 at 7.30pm 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**

*This is necessary as any member who is absent for six months, without the Council accepting their reasons for absence, automatically loses their seat on the Council.*

**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 Chair can invite members of the public to speak at this or at any other appropriate point in the meeting. Tim Chater has indicated that he wishes to speak about permission for work in the Playing Field as part of the Village Clear Up on March 29<sup>th</sup> and about progress on the Tourist Levy.*

**4. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to be agreed and signed.**  
*Enclosed/attached.*

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

*Allotments – One of the vacant allotments has been taken by a resident of Westcombe. She was charged £25 for the remainder of this year.*

**6. Somerset Councillors' Reports**

*An opportunity for the Somerset Councillors to report in person or in writing.*

**7. Shepton Local Community Network**

*Peter Glaisher to report on the LCN Highways and Traffic Subgroup meeting held in February. The date of the next full LCN meeting is Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Shepton Mallet and Jayne Cox has volunteered to attend. The Agenda has been distributed to Councillors and this is an opportunity to inform Jayne of views on any of the items on the Agenda.*

**8. Footpaths and Highways**

*Road Closures – Hincombe Hill was closed for five days in February while drainage works were undertaken. A wooden post and rail fence was erected in the gap in the hedge by the drop into Pugh's Bottom Farm at the same time. It was also hoped that the access to the pipe under the road from the field above Hincombe Hill could be dug out while Highways were working on the road. In*

addition, Back Lane and the road in front of the Round House was closed for 6 hours (9.30am to 3.30pm) to allow Openreach to replace telephone poles. Moor Lane is currently closed to allow the repair of the lane where it has slipped into the stream running alongside the lane. The repair should be completed by the time of the meeting. It was originally planned to do the repair in March, but as Moor Lane is the only access to Thornhill, the residents there who run a business from home contacted the Somerset Councillor who arranged a quicker response.

Footpath Obstruction – the concern about access to Footpath SM 2/18 by the Old Chapel was passed onto the landowner. No response has been received but there is currently no issue with access to the footpath.

#### **9. Playing Field - Maintenance Report**

Kevin Gale has undertaken a cut of the Playing Field in February. Grass cutting is not usually needed in February but I asked him to keep an eye on the grass due to the mild weather and the fact he wasn't able to undertake a final cut in November.

The Church are organising a village tidy-up on Good Friday which may include work in the Playing Field, possibly trimming the willow structures. One of the churchwardens, Tim Chater, is planning to come to the meeting to discuss what is planned – see Public Participation above.

#### **10. Planning Applications**

None at present.

**Planning Application Updates.** Nothing to report.

#### **11. Review of Schedule of Assets**

The Schedule of Assets should be reviewed annually before the independent examination and an updated copy of the Schedule is attached. The only changes from the last time the Schedule was updated (a year ago) are that the deeds of the Playing Field and War Memorial Garden are now stored in the Heritage Room instead of with the NatWest Bank and the filing cabinet has been located in the Jubilee Hall basement. As a result, the value of the Parish Council's Assets is unchanged at £62,857, although it should be noted that the values given are (mainly) the purchase price with no account made of depreciation or increase in value.

#### **12. 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 essentially the same as last year's document as there have been little change in the risks to the Council, although the risk of coronavirus transmission has been reduced from medium to low.

The Insurance Policy should also be reviewed annually before the independent examination and before it is due for renewal in June. We are currently two years into a long-term agreement with BHIB Councils Insurance.

#### **13. Annual Parish Meeting**

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall (with a short Parish Council meeting beforehand at 6.45pm). At the last meeting it was suggested that the focus this year should be on farming and Jayne Cox volunteered to see if a speaker from Lackham College could attend to facilitate a discussion about the issues currently facing farming. It has also been suggested that our MP Sarah Dyke should be invited to the meeting and this has been done.

#### **14. Authorisation of Payment**

£90.00 – Mr K Gale – Grass cutting in February.

**15. Other Business** – matters of information only.

*We have received a letter from Inspector Matthew Reed in charge of Mendip Neighbourhood Policing informing us that at this year's Glastonbury Festival the Neighbourhood Policing Team will not be deployed on the festival site but will work with surrounding communities. The inspector would like to know if the Festival has any impact on our community that the Team could help with.*

*There is an issue that has arisen between the Church and the Village Hall Trust over payment for tables, chair and crockery etc and room hire and corkage for village events and Peter Glaisher would like the Parish Council to consider whether we could suggest a way forward.*

*In general, any Councillor can ask for an item to be added to Agenda, if relevant to the parish. It would be helpful if such requests could be received at least ten days before the meeting as this allows the Clerk and Chair to consider whether items are relevant to the Parish Council and to ask for further information if required.*

**16. Date of Next Meeting** - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 at 6.45pm in the Jubilee Hall  
to be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm.

*Rob Sage*

Rob Sage – Clerk

28<sup>th</sup> February 2024