

BATCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Rob Sage

Tel: 01749 850934

e-mail: clerk@batcombe-parish-council-somerset.org.uk

You are Summoned to the Monthly Meeting of Batcombe Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 4th July 2018 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 Meeting held on Wednesday 6th June 2018 to be agreed and signed. *Enclosed.*

5. Matters Arising – information updates only.

Data Protection – the Privacy Notice is now in place on the Parish Council website (under “Parish Council Documents” and on the “Contact Us” page. Audit – all the required audit and Transparency Code papers have now been published on the website (on the “Audit and Transparency Code” page).

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. Affordable Housing – Proposed development in Westcombe

Councillors to report back on an informal meeting with Mr Pat Bridgeman, the potential developer of the Westcombe site, to follow up on issues raised at last month's meeting.

Mr Nigel Humphreys has given the Parish Council the name of a local landowner whom he states is willing to offer land for affordable housing and has stated that this landowner will contact the Parish Council. Nothing has yet been received from the landowner.

8. Allotments

The allotments field is looking much better. The owners are happy for us to have a bonfire on the allotments field to burn the wooden rubbish that has accumulated in the top corner. Three allotments are still vacant but are being kept under control.

9. Footpaths and Highways

The County Council have informed us that the road to Bruton will be closed (between the Batcombe Vale campsite entrance and the Hedgestocks crossroads) for 9 days from July 12th to allow BT Openreach to carry out repairs to a faulty aerial cable. There is a notice on the road that says the closure will be for two days from July 12th and from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

We wait to hear if our MP has made any progress in getting the presalting of the road through Batcombe re-instated.

Somerset Highways stated that they would look into the provision of a No HGV sign at the Hedgestocks crossroads at some point in June, and we have not heard anything yet.

10. Playground - Maintenance Report.

The annual inspection of the Playing Field by RoSPA will have taken place in June and we may have the report by the time of the meeting – depending on when in June the inspection was undertaken.

A meeting was held with Clare Kingston to hear what the parents would like in the Playing Field. They would like to see the nest swing re-instated and it was suggested it could go in where the tree stump had been provided there was sufficient fall space, which might mean having to move the monkey bars. Opinions were divided over the willow structure, with many younger children liking it. The parents would also like to see the goal nets replaced and the goalmouths levelled. It was also suggested that additional seating was needed and the existing bench be raised. Clare was willing to fundraise to help with the cost of these items.

The insurers have stated that the Parish Council is covered for the mole catcher working in the Playing Field, provided the Parish Council takes responsibility and he is not acting independently. The insurers ask that we undertake a risk assessment and put up warning signs if we consider this is appropriate.

The Annual Fete – *The PCC (via Rob Jones) have requested the use of the Playing Field for the annual village fete on the August Bank Holiday Monday (August 27th). In the past the Parish Council has agreed to close the Playing Field from 8.00pm on the Saturday evening and on the Sunday and the Tuesday morning to allow the preparation and clearing up after the fete to be done safely. [The Parish Council cannot close the Playing Field on the Monday as it is a bank holiday, but in practice this does not make a significant difference.] Rob Jones would like “take over the Playing Field at 4.00pm on the Saturday to erect some storage tents.*

In the past the PCC have also requested that the Playing Field grass and hedge inside the Playing Field are cut back prior to the Fete. Our grass cutter is unable to do this as he doesn't have a heavy duty hedgetrimmer, so we will need to get someone else in to cut the hedge back. The zip wire will be immobilised with a padlock and chain during the Fete and an inspection of the Playing Field on the Tuesday afternoon ensured the Playing Field was been left in a safe condition for children to use.

11. Planning Applications:

None at present.

Planning Application Updates.

None at present.

12. Emergency Plan

Following the recent lightning strike and the damage to various electrical items in different households in the parish, the Vice Chairman asked for the Emergency Plan to be discussed at this meeting. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Preb Mark Ellis have held a preliminary meeting to consider reviewing the Emergency Plan (notes from the Chairman attached). The Chairman proposes establishing a Working Party to review the Emergency Plan.

13. Administration

The Chairman has asked for this item to be included to allow preliminary discussion of items to be considered at the September meeting.

14. Review of Financial Regulations

Our Financial Regulations were adopted in June 2014 and are based on a model produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), with some amendments agreed by the Council where the model was not appropriate for a small Parish Council. Certain figures in the Regulations are set by the Council and should be reviewed annually. These are:

1.14 – ii) The suggested figure in the model was £5,000 (presumably based on a large town council with committees that have delegated powers to spend up to this amount.) The Council agreed £100 to cover items paid for by the Clerk and then reclaimed such as stamps. The same figure is used in Regulation 4.1.

4.5 - £500 is the figure recommended in the model regulations. This would allow for emergency safety work to be carried out in the Playing Field.

4.8 – The recommended figures for reporting variances against budget (£100 or 15% of the budget) seem appropriate.

5.5 c) – The figure of £10,000 allows the Clerk to transfer the precept to the reserve bank account (at the same bank) to earn interest.

6.18 – The limit for transactions on a debit card issued to the Clerk is academic as no such card has been issued.

11.1 – The figure of £60,000 is the EU Procurement threshold.

12.2 – The figure in the model was £250. £25 means that the sale of any moveable property would need to be authorised by the Council.

All Councillors should have a copy of the Financial Regulations. If any Councillor does not have a copy, please inform the Clerk. (Copy enclosed for our most recently co-opted Councillor.)

15. Authorisation of Payment

£160.00 Dominic Conway – Grass cutting in June.

£120.00 Scrumpy's Groundworks – Removing tree stump in Playing Field.

£15.00 Somerset Playing Field Association – Subscription.

£996.72 The Clerk – Salary for 1st Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

£100.16 The Clerk – Expenses for 1st Quarter. *See enclosed sheet.*

16. Other Business – matters of information only.

I have been notified by Sue Mountstevens' PA that the local elections will take place on May 2nd 2019 and the pre-election period will thus start on March 18th which means that Sue cannot speak at the Annual Parish Meeting on April 3rd. She would be happy to come and meet the Parish Council at another date outside of that period.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 4th July 2018 at 8.00pm in the Old School.

Rob Sage

Rob Sage – Clerk

27th June 2018