Balderton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Centre on Wednesday May 4th 2022 at 6.30pm.

PRESENT — Cllr Ms White chairing the meeting, one hundred and three residents, twenty-four non-resident members of public, two invited representatives of the YMCA, a representative of the local press and the Clerk to the Council.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and asked that only one person speak at once, that different opinions be respected and that the meeting be held in a cordial manner. If those present could not comply with these requirements, the meeting would be closed.

APOLOGIES — were accepted from Parish Cllrs Mrs Lee, Mallard, Roberts M.B.E. and Scott.

22/01 **Minutes**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 21st 2021 were taken as read and approved, having been previously signed at a subsequent meeting of the Parish Council. The following items were discussed from the minutes:

1. **Re Minute 21/01.1 Village Pavements** Mr Holland again enquired what progress had been made following his request that pavements be made to suit the needs of pedestrians primarily ahead of vehicle driveways. This issue was again with the County Council at the time but the authority's response was that it was not feasible to review all the areas at once, problem areas should be reported separately to allow the local Inspector to assess each case. He was still not satisfied with this response and again referred to Baines Avenue as an example of a more pedestrian friendly pavement area. The Chairman undertook to raise this issue once again with the County Council.
2. **Re Minute 21/04 Dog Control Orders** Mr Holland asked what progress had been made regarding the exclusion of assistance dogs for the Dogs on Leads order at Lakeside. He advised that he was in receipt of an e-mail from the District Council stating that the Parish Council had not commented on the Orders during a consultation exercise; this was not the Chairman's understanding. Mr Holland undertook to forward a copy of the e-mail to the Council for further enquiries to be made.

22/02 **Chairmen's Reports**

Cllr Allen reported as Allotment Sub Committee Chairman. There are currently twenty-seven tenants and thirty-nine people on the waiting list. The water bill for the allotments does seem to be reduced on previous years and appreciation was expressed to the tenants for not wasting water. Further tenant representatives were considered necessary as allotment holder Mr Fairbairn has now recently become a Parish Councillor. Mr Holland asked whether the quarterly allotment inspections could be reported back to the Amenities Committee so that they can be recorded in the minutes.

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Cllr Mrs Brooks reported as Chairman of the Amenities Committee and asked that appreciation be recorded to the groundstaff for their hard work. A zip wire style piece of play equipment has been installed on the playing field and the Council is grateful that 50% of the funding for this was secured from the County Council. The long-standing flooding issue on the playing field may be caused by a silted-up drain in the Masefield Crescent area and the District Council has agreed to clear this in the current financial year. Anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem on the playing field and causes difficulties for the Dance Studio; enquiries are being made to see what alterations can be made to the building's canopy area to prevent young people congregating there.

Cllr Mrs Hurst reported as Chairman of the Planning Committee. It has been a very busy year with some major developments in the village, along with the more routine domestic extensions. An application for 117 houses on the Highfield School site was objected to; this is still under consideration by the District Council. The development at Flowserve of 322 houses went through on appeal sadly; the hearing was held remotely over 3 long days. The gypsy site at the end of Main Street which was granted temporary permission, has now been vacated and changed hands. An application is now being considered for 5 flats on the site.

Cllr Ms White reported as Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, and of the Council. She thanked her Vice Chairman Cllr Allen, the Committee Chairmen and all members for their commitment through another difficult transient year, returning to face to face meetings, after a year of virtual ones. Appreciation was extended to the Deputy Clerk and Clerk, groundstaff and attendants who have all again worked very hard to support the Council. A resume of the Council's accounts was outlined; income still being down compared to pre-pandemic levels. Major repairs to the bowling green irrigation system have been undertaken this year and two air conditioning units have been replaced in the Village Centre. Necessary repairs to a boundary wall in St. Giles Churchyard for which the Council is responsible could run into many thousands of pounds and external grant funding sources will need to be explored. The former café building is now being used as a children's Dance Studio, with age ranges from 3 to 18; this is particularly encouraging news after REACH closed the café in March 2020. The Council is doing all it can to support the new business proprietor to deal with the anti-social behaviour that is experienced at times. Anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem in general on the playing field and at Lakeside, and although law enforcement patrols have been increased recently *all* incidents throughout the village must be reported to the Police on 101 or 999 if a crime is in progress.

22/03 **Balderton Parochial Charity**

Copies of the Charity's accounts for 2021/22 were circulated and duly noted. Cllr Mrs Brooks advised that just a couple of grants have been made this past year and that if anyone knew of someone in need to please refer them to the Charity.

22/04 **Friends of Balderton Lake**

Mrs Joy Sellars and Mrs Christine Hopkinson outlined a proposal to form a group, 'Friends of Balderton Lake' to work alongside the Council and look at planting schemes, creation of wildflower areas, information boards etc., and to engage with schools and young persons' groups to learn about environmental issue, review water safety equipment etc.

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22/05 **Questions Raised**

Mr Holland expressed caution regarding the Council's responsibility for the Churchyard Wall work, urging for checks to be made with the Southwell Diocese regarding the exact details of the Closed Churchyard Order; these will be undertaken.

Mrs Wendy Clarke asked what the Council is doing to help young people find something to do, believing that a lack of organised youth activity contributes to the anti-social behaviour problems experienced in the village. The Council will give consideration to setting up a Working Party with a view to engaging with young people, County Council Youth Services etc. to ascertain if the Council can help in some way. The YMCA has undertaken considerable consultation and engagement with young people in relation to its facilities at the Sports Village and offered to share those findings with the Council.

Several residents then went on to question the safety of allowing the YMCA to undertake kayaking and canoeing on the Lake. The quality of the safety and ecology reports undertaken to date were challenged. The potential harm to wildlife from the boating was considered substantial and the Council was accused of entering the agreement with the YMCA without adequate consultation. Residents considered that the two drownings on the Lake (one of which was a suicide) prove it is not a suitable place for safe activity. The meeting became increasingly heated in nature, and people would not allow the YMCA representatives or Councillors to respond or be heard.

After numerous warnings regarding poor behaviour, the Chairman declared the meeting to be closed at 8.20pm.

J O Buseker
19/3/25