Balderton Parish Council Amenities Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 7pm

Attendees: Balderton Parish Councillors: Debbie Moore (Chair), Ronalie Bright, Jane Buxton, Karen Callingham, Joy Sellars, Dean Scott.

Staff: James Brown (Head Groundsman), Hilary Colvin (Assistant Parish Clerk/Operations Manager).

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Meeting agenda pack with reports can be found on our website:
https://www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk

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35. Declarations to record the meeting
The meeting was not recorded.

36. Apologies for absence - Mandie Elson, Simon Forde, Vanessa Bracegirdle, Jean Hall and Roy Fairbairn.

37. Declarations of interest
No declaration of interest.

38. Public Open Forum
No residents present

39. Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 13th August 2025
It was agreed that the minutes were an accurate record and duly signed by Councillor Moore.

40: Lake

a) To receive an update on actions and maintenance

The Head Groundsman reported that all Coir matting/baskets have been installed, the works included wire cages to deter ducks/birds from nesting or eating the plants. It was explained that it takes approximately three years for the plants to establish and that the planting is part of a rolling programme. In response to Councillor Callingham's question, the Head Groundsman explained that all the cages and any wire used is of a gauge compliant with current regulations so that birds and/or animals cannot get trapped in the cages, each cage also has a means of escape should an adventurous creature venture into the cage.

Winter coppicing of the trees will be completed by the end of next week (weather permitting). This is an annual process which helps improve the light and access to the lake and ensures that the trees grow healthy and strong. The planting of hedge plants is on-going, over 1,000 mixed-

hedging plants, which in time will grow into strong natural barriers and along Rowan Way eventually replace the fences, and therefore negate the maintenance of the fencing and adding more natural habitat for wildlife.

Wildflower seed sowing is scheduled for March 2026, the land needs to be thoroughly prepared, and the Head Groundsman is researching the best way to do this, he suggested removing the turf, which removes the grass and avoids any chemical spraying, this would involve a small hire charge approximately £70.00. It was agreed that this looked like the best option.

b) To agree any next actions

Following a comprehensive site visit from a weed cutting specialist, we have now received a quote for cutting the weed, if contracted this would be scheduled for July – August. Estimated 70-100 tonne of weed to be cut (dependant on growth). The first removal is likely to be the largest, however, it will be dependent on weather conditions. It would become part of the lake annual maintenance. The representative did say that because the lake is healthy, the weed has grown well. Weed will be left on the bank so the invertebrates can go back to the lake, the weed will then be stacked to dry and condense. It will involve a considerable amount of preparatory work from the grounds team to ensure a safe area for the boat to access the lake and to make several areas available around the lake where the weed can be left and then used as fertiliser. Cllr Buxton informed the committee that Grow Balderton would be interested in any weed that we were not planning to use.

Cllr Buxton arranging a meeting with GAC re their application for funding via the Angling Trust and also to investigate funding available from the Environment Agency. To be discussed further at Full Council January 2026 after next Lake Working Group meeting.

41: Cemetery

To agree that no further requests for memorial benches be considered

The Assistant Clerk explained that this item was incorrect, and it is for Councillors to note that if there was a request for memorial benches in the Garden of Remembrance then the only way this could happen is to cut a small section away of the deep hedge, and position a bench there. This would make room for up to three more benches**.** It was noted that in line with policy, requests for Memorial Benches and Trees are considered in September and January. However, the last Amenities Committee was cancelled, and due to this, coupled with the absence of the Clerk since September 2025, it was unreasonable to ask residents to wait any longer for a decision, especially over the Christmas period. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that there are three applications:-

Applicant 1: Request for a bench in the Garden of Remembrance, now siting bench at the lake
Applicant 2: Request for a bench at the lake
Applicant 3: Request for a bench for Mount Road Cemetery

All three application have now been accepted, and are being progressed, installation will be in January/February 2026. There are no outstanding requests for memorial benches. The Head Groundsman will review the Memorial Bench and Tree policy for clarity on the section relating to maintenance of benches.

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42. Village Centre

a) To consider the contract term renewal for the water and heating system

The existing supplier has offered either a one-year contract for £707.00 per annum or three-year contract at £707.00 per annum, guaranteed no price increase, plus 5% off any replacement parts. The Head Groundsman explained the Council has been using this contractor for over 20 years, they are experts in servicing public buildings water and heating systems and are reliable, professional and thorough. The Head Groundsman explained that the current contractors provide a comprehensive report after each service/visit. It was agreed to renew the contact for a three-year term.

b) To consider the contract quotation term renewal for the water booster pump set

The water booster pump is necessary to ensure that the water is sent round the Village Centre, including the sports changing areas. It is therefore essential that it is serviced and maintained, this was noted, and there were no objections to accepting the quotation for £266.20.

43. Assets

a) To review and arrange an Amenities asset audit

It was noted that this was necessary and that the Clerk would facilitate this and in due course inform Councillors on what their involvement would be.

b) To note the external provision for securing gates for three days over the Christmas period and the corresponding charge

Councillors noted that due to one of the attendants leaving, external provision was needed for the opening and closing of Heron Way car park and the opening and closing of Coronation Street Playing Fields over the Christmas break. At the time the agenda was published the quote had not been received. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that this was circa £111.00+VAT. However, it had now increased to a four-day provision with an updated quote due, which was expected to be circa £150.00 +VAT.

c) To recommend an increase to the budget line for ground maintenance equipment repairs to be identified from within the agreed grounds maintenance expenditure

The Head Groundsmen fed back that upon further inspection the blades could probably wait another year before they required sharpening.

44. Upgrades and Improvements

a) To consider the results of the public consultation to upgrade Coronation Street play park area or installation of an all-weather path

The Assistant Clerk gave the results of the resident's feedback: upgrade the play park area - 32 votes and installation of an all-weather path - 25 votes.

It was agreed that an upgrade to the playing field play park area would be a major asset. Councillor Bright suggested that the play park upgrade could also include an all-weather path. The matter will now go back to the Locum Clerk, to investigate both design and any funding and timings.

b) To consider any other ideas from the public consultation

The Assistant Clerk explained that there was only one suggestion which was for a bench and a tree at Brisbane Court, which isn't in Balderton Parish Council's remit.

c) **To create a priority list of potential amenity upgrades and improvements to be put forward to Full Council**
Councillors were unable to come up with a priority list, other than the original list created earlier in the year. It was therefore decided that this item would go back to the Locum Clerk for clarification.

45. Budget
To review the first draft budget and to make recommendations in relation to Amenities
There was confusion regarding what Councillors where reviewing, after a short discussion and in the absence of the Locum Clerk. It was agreed that this matter should go back to the Locum Clerk for clarification and deferred to the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 28th January 2026.

46. Correspondence
No Correspondence to consider.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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