

## Balderton Parish Council

Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held remotely on Wednesday March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 at 6.30pm

**PRESENT** Councillors Mrs Brooks (Chairman), Allen (Vice Chairman), Mrs Hurst, Mrs Lee, Lynch, Mallard, Mayall B.E.M., Mrs Newstead and Newstead

with two members of the public, Head Groundsman Mr Brown and the Clerk.

**3278 Apologies**

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Green, Roberts M.B.E., Scott and Ms White.

**3279 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Mrs Brooks and Mrs Hurst, as serving members of Newark & Sherwood District Council, declared a personal interest to any issue relating to the District Council. Cllrs Allen and Mrs Hurst declared a personal interest to minute reference 3285 Fees & Charges.

**3280 Public Participation**

The meeting was closed to take public comments. A resident asked if consideration could be given to sympathetically review the trees and shrubs located to the rear of their property in Grebe Close, including reducing the height of some Silver Birch trees. This request had been submitted in writing prior to the meeting. A suggestion for bug and/or bat boxes to be installed in that vicinity was also made by the resident.

A resident once again asked the Council to consider replacing the gate at Orchid Close, Lakeside with an alternative form of barrier that would allow adequate access for pushchairs and wheelchair users but still slow down cyclists along the pathway. He claimed that the gate and its closing mechanism, which is located behind his property, is noisy when used and that the constant noise is causing distress for his household. Committee members had undertaken to review the situation again at this meeting after adjustments were made to the gate by the groundsmen.

The meeting re-opened; both of these issues were scheduled agenda items and were taken as the next order of business.

**3281 Sliver Birch Trees**

Members gave consideration to the request that some large silver birch trees located behind a Grebe Close property be reduced in height and the area generally tidied up. Photographs of the area had been taken and circulated to members prior to the meeting. Mr Brown informed that though the trees may cast some shadow into gardens, they are not highlighted for height reduction work at this time according to the arborocultural inspection report that the Council adheres to. This may be different at the next scheduled formal inspection. The slightly 'crowded'

effect in that area helps deter young people from loitering there and causing nuisance. Boxes to increase wildlife and insect activity can be installed in the vicinity.

One resident was thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

3282 **Lakeside Gate**

Members gave further consideration to the reported noisy gate at Orchid Close. Mr Brown advised that an additional rubber barrier has been applied to the gate which now further ‘buffers’ the impact of the noise as it closes, and the catch mechanism has also been removed. Several Councillors had visited the site and taken time to watch people use it and could see no problem with the gate since the adjustments have been made.

One resident was thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

3283 **Clerk/Chairman’s Update**

A printed update of ongoing issues was circulated and noted; the update is published with the minutes. The following issues were discussed from the update:

1. **Re Minute 3271.2 Allotment Water** It has not been possible to obtain options of heavy duty push operated taps, and it has since been suggested that these could still be adjusted to use hosepipes. Members considered on balance to appeal to tenants not to use sprinklers, nor to waste water but to use it more sparingly, and if usage continues to be high then allotment rents will have to be reviewed. Notices will be displayed to this effect.
2. **Re Minute 3674 Heron Way Car Park** The vehicle that was parked there for many weeks has been moved following the Council’s letter. The owner made contact pledging to put his case in writing but this has not been received to date. One key holder made contact denying that their key had been handed to another resident and that they were still complying with the Council’s instructions.

3284 **Playing Field Flooding**

Since the last meeting the District Council’s Environmental Services Department had undertaken a site visit but could not help with the long-term field flooding issue. They could find no historical maps on their system referring to a drainage dyke alongside the playing field. The officer who attended suggested that it may be necessary to ultimately employ a specialist drainage engineer but that it was worth contacting the Internal Drainage Board to see if they could help; an e-mail has been sent to the local office and a reply is awaited.

3285 **Fees and Charges**

The Council’s fees and charges for the 2021/22 financial year were reviewed. Cemetery fees were not increased in 2020 and members did not consider it appropriate to increase them again, preferring to review them again in the Autumn. Sporting fees for Bowls and Cricket are scheduled to be increased again this year as previously agreed, so no further increases will be

implemented at this stage. The fees for a veterans' football team who have asked to play on Sunday afternoons was fixed at 70% of the regular adult team fees as they play approximately 70% the number of games that a regular league team plays. As they would be the only team playing on a Sunday afternoon it was considered appropriate to issue them with a changing room key to reduce staffing costs.

**3286 Gang Mowers**

The Ransomes gang mowers that were purchased for £19,000 in late March 2019 from Farmstar on Hawton Lane have been plagued with issues, almost from the start. Some sections of the mowers have been with a Ransomes' approved repairing agents in Lincolnshire for several months now. Very recent contact was made again with Farmstar's manager complaining about the poor service, and some progress would seem to have since been made. Ransomes undertook to replace certain parts and the agents have pledged that the units should be ready next week. Members agreed that if this is not the case a full refund should be requested from Farmstar, who should be advised that legal action will be taken if deemed necessary.

**3287 Public Space Protection Order Review**

The District Council is undertaking a consultation on the Review of the Public Space Protection Order (Dog Controls). The closing date for completed questionnaires is April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021; copies of the Review had been circulated to all committee members. Members considered that the Protection Orders are necessary and did not suggest any changes to those already in place, only that they should be enforced more readily.

**3288 Christmas Wreaths in Cemetery**

Discussion was given to setting a time line for removing Christmas wreaths from graves in the Cemetery. Mid-February was considered an appropriate time for their removal by Council staff if families have not taken them away by then. Notices will be displayed to this effect on the Cemetery gates at the beginning of December. A site meeting of the Cemetery Sub Committee members was considered necessary to address the number of unauthorised items that are on certain graves, such as solar lights, non-fixed memorials etc.

**3289 Highway Faults**

Members were invited to raise any new issues or faults to pass onto relevant authorities:

- a) The County Council's grassed area between Priory Close and Granby Drive is again being used as a vehicular access to a Priory Close dwelling, churning up the grass.
- b) Garden waste has been dumped in the electricity substation on Haddon Drive.

3290 **Correspondence and Information**

The following items of information/correspondence have been received and were noted:

- a) A suggestion from a resident that some outdoor gym equipment be installed on the playing field, sited well away from the children's play area. Members agreed to give future consideration to this request although the field drainage issue would need to be addressed first to ensure the area can be accessed at all times.
- b) The Lakeside limestone pathways are in need of resurfacing; this work can be undertaken by the groundstaff during the Autumn/Winter. Costings for the materials will be obtained for the committee's consideration.
- c) There has been an increase in crime and incidents of anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the playing field and Public Footpath number 1. Members asked that this be discussed at next week's Finance & General Purposes committee meeting and Police representatives will be invited to attend.

3291 **Future Agenda Items**

No further items were raised.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.05pm.