

BALSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 20th May, 2019 in the Sports Pavilion, at 7.30 p.m.

Present: A West, P Anderson, G Fiddy, D Paton, S Thurgood, K Reyes, J Kiddy, M Shaheer and J Scotland.

5 Public

1. **Apologies:** None
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th April, 2018:** The minutes were approved in May 2018.

3. **Matters Arising:** None

4. **Parish Council Chairman's report:** Annie West read her report. Balsham continues to be a thriving and popular village to live in. This is very much due to the many clubs and societies that are run by volunteers and supported by the residents of Balsham, which we all thank you for your time, enthusiasm and dedication in keeping these running. The new scout hut opened recently and is continuing to be a success. Not only do the clubs and societies make this village great but the pubs and shop, post office and the very popular new cafe (incidentally in the finals for 'Muddy Stilettos Best Local Business Award) give the village meeting places to socialise and to purchase produce and supplies.

The Parish Council for the first time in years had 6 vacancies after long standing councillors left or retired for a number of reasons. I was delighted that these spaces were quickly filled will Steve Thurgood, Karis Reyes, Debbie Paton, Gordon Fiddy, Tina Daniels and Mohammed Shaheer all new to the Parish Council. Parish Councillors give up precious time and for free to represent their village by being on the Parish Council all giving the reason to join as they wanted to make a difference to the village, they all live in. Tina sadly had to stand down recently, but her place was easily filled by Jules Scotland who was very keen to join us.

I have had my first year and experience of being the Chair, and for James Kiddy to be Vice Chair. Together with a brand-new council feel we have had a successful and productive first year.

The Balsham Buildings site is nearing completion, the Plumbs Dairy site has begun and the site on Linton road still waiting to commence building. All these sites will bring in new families to the village and hopefully more children for the school. The village will benefit from these new builds with money allocated from the S 106 fund to make improvements to different areas such as the pavilion and children's play equipment to name a couple.

The new zebra crossing is due to be built in the summer holidays this year and will include traffic warning flashing 20 mile an hour signs on the 3 entrance roads into the village warning there is a school approaching. This has been a long-awaited project, so we are delighted it is finally happening.

The two shared speed warning signs are being rotated around the villages and are collecting data about speeds and number of vehicles coming through the village. There are still problems with speeding, but this data collected from the speed cameras can be used to support future projects around traffic calming and speed restrictions.

It was good to see that the pavements in Dolls Close were resurfaced and the bus shelters on the High Street and opposite Nine Chimneys were both repaired. There are other roads

in the village that need repair and we bring this up at meetings and at the Combined Parish Forums where representatives from the eight Parish councils meet with officers from Highways and Planning. We can speak directly to the officers which is we find very useful especially if there are combined concerns of the Parishes.

We are trying to make the Parish Council more accessible and have recently started Pop up Parish Councils at the Old Butchers shop where the villages can meet representatives of the PC to ask any questions or bring up concerns they have in a more relaxed and informal setting. This is proving to be a successful and worthwhile venture. The PC has also been at the village HUB which is another new initiative in the village.

The Parish council continue to support the Parish Nurse project and the Ploughmen. The new Christmas tree on the green will now be an annual event as there is an electricity supply which enables a lit tree to decorate our village every Christmas. Thank you to Jan Ellam and the Balsham Ploughmen.

Steve Thurgood and Debbie Paton will give their own reports on the Allotment and the Pavilion, but I would like to thank them both for their hard work in leading on both these areas.

Lastly, I must thank Mike McCall for all his behind the scene jobs he does for the village which he does to a high standard and without most of the village realising who is responsible for them! Finally, a massive thank you to Tracy Coston our Clerk for her support, guidance and amazing organisational skills that keep the PC running so smoothly.

5. To receive Reports

a) **The Meadow School – N Connor, Headteacher:** No report received.

b) **Linton Village College – Principal report:**

It has been a successful year for LVC. The College has maintained Leading Edge status in recognition of our level of academic performance. Membership of the national network of exclusively high-achieving schools enables us to continue to raise achievement, develop innovative practice and exchange educational strategies locally and nationally.

It has also been a busy year for enriching trips and visits that have enhanced students' curriculum experience. This has included immersive language speaking trips to France and Spain as well as Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and day trips. The first week in June sees all of our Key Stage 3 students engaged in enrichment week activities with Year 9 students on a week's residential, Year 10 students on work experience while Year 11 are in full throes of their GCSE examination series. The Year 11 Ball returns to Chilford Hall this year on 28th June as a special evening to say farewell to our leavers.

LVC students have been victorious in two STEM challenge events this year, demonstrating their entrepreneurial, creative and problem-solving skills. There have also been a number of significant achievements in sport with LVC students progressing to high levels of competition in football, cricket and basketball; our Year 11 team won the district football finals at Cambridge United earlier this month.

There has continued to be a wealth of fantastic artistic performances this year. Our annual College production, *Annie*, was a real triumph and the Christmas concert, coffee and carols and dance show were also very well-received. The College is hosting a free Youth Arts Festival on Saturday 22nd June showcasing the arts in partnership with cluster primary schools and the Granta School.

The Chilford Hundred Education Trust, to which Linton Village College belongs, is currently considering strategic options for its future, including partnering with another local Multi Academy Trust. This has the potential for LVC to benefit from greater collaborative opportunities with other successful secondary schools in the locality. LVC has also been developing its relationship with community police. We have been developing joint educational initiatives, including knife-crime and drug awareness campaigns. With much greater accessibility and influences affecting young people and their risk-taking behaviours, it is important that villages work in partnership with schools to support and safeguard our children and communities.

c) Chairman, Church Institute Management Committee: Dick Paton.

This is my first report and I have firstly to acknowledge the great debt that we owe Jennifer Gooch for the many years she chaired and steered the Church Institute Management committee – she set an example that will be hard to emulate!

The Church Institute continues play a key role for the village and has a significant group of regular users including the weekly Bridge Club and monthly Picture house, Yoga and many children's groups It also hosts the Village Market and the new Granta Vale Community Hub.

A small number of users have been lost through the changing demographics in the village with some reduction of income and steps are being taken to broaden our outreach to users both in and out of the village through ACRE and social media.

Financial data has been provided for you by Gordon Fiddy, our Treasurer and reflect the current position which remains good and allowed the whole of the outside to be repainted during the year from our income and complemented the new double glazing installed previously through the Wind Farm grant.

The Institute is in very good shape BUT our current lease runs for 5 more years and we must review both long term intentions and the funding of desirable improvement which we consider important for the long-term benefits to Balsham and sustain this great venue for all.

These include disabled toilet access; ceiling and decoration work and the possibility of upgrading the kitchen facilities and the provision of wi-fi.

I would like to thank all the other committee members for their hard work and commitment to keep the Institute a vital community resource for Balsham.

d) Recreation Ground Committee: Steve Thurgood

In the past 12 months improvements have been made to the entrance of the recreation ground trying to prevent the boggy area in the winter months, the ditch has been cleaned out and the dead trees removed.

We still have Football (adults and colts), Cricket and Bowls teams using the recreation ground as their home ground. Grass cutting is taking place regularly in the growing months (we need to look at grass collection cuts over the sports areas when the grass is fast growing)

Dog fouling has been a big problem over the year, it's so disappointing to see parents having to get the shovel out before their children can have a game of football.

Improvements to the pavilion are in the pipeline with money coming from the first of the three major building projects taking place in the village, the same will follow in the children's play area as the second two projects complete.

e) Allotment report: Debbie Paton.

It has been a good year since taking on the management on the allotments where we have achieved quite a lot. 101 out of 103 plots which are spread out between Princes Close, the Hawthorns and Woodhall Lane have been rented out and have received all the income that was due around September 2018. We have one small vacant plot at the Woodhall Lane site which will be assigned to the community as part of our new scheme the Community Allotment currently being organised by Steve Jordon. There is also another half plot available at the Hawthorns which is good to go. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rob Ellam for clearing the rubbish away from a few of the plots and fixing the sewage inspection chamber lids near the Scout Hut and the water stop cock off Woodhall Lane. The area down near the access path has been cleared of all the rubbish making way for the wildflowers to thrive. All the plots now have their numbers printed onto plastic and staked into the ground making it easy to locate plots. We still continue to have problems with some dog owners, not all, keeping their dogs on a lead while walking through the allotment gardens which leads onto plots having been trampled over and defecated on. It seems that some of the "Keep Dogs on Lead" signs have been taken down and removed and our requests have been completely ignored. Now looking forward to another growing season ahead.

6. To receive accounts

- a) **Parish and allotments – T Coston:** The Clerk circulated copies of the accounts and there were no questions.
- b) **Balsham Charities – Ian Creek:** Chase up.
- c) **Church Institute – G Fiddy:** Copies of the accounts were circulated and there were no questions.

7. Discussion:

Cutting of Daffodils: The Daffodils have been cut too early near the Institute and Fox Road and Nine Chimneys. Clerk to speak to contactors.

Rosie Green Wood: Is there a management scheme? The PC agreed to take advice about what maintenance the trees required.

Community Orchard: The PC have agreed for a plot to be used as a Community Orchard and the PC suggested that a Community Chest Grant was applied for to fund tools and a shed.

Call for Sites: The PC were asked if the ‘Call for Sites’ information was available from SCDC. Cllr Batchelor agreed to find out when the information would be available to the public.

Signed

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Date:

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