*MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BALDERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL*

 *HELD ON TUESDAY 1st JULY 2025 AT MELLOR BROOK COMMUNITY CENTRE*

*PRESENT*

Aimee Barton Parish Clerk, Colin Everett Chairman
Parish Councillors Stella Brunskill, Roxanne Holroyd, Peter Barnes, John Kersey, Stuart Shorthouse and Jonathan Greenwood.

1 member of the public

Good evening to everyone and welcome to the meeting. There will be a section later within the parish council meeting where members of the public can speak.

*ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE*

PCSO’s and Vicki Gow (Headteacher of Balderstone)

*ITEM 2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST*

2.1 Register of Interests – Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interest.

2.2 No members disclosed any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter to be discussed at the meeting.

*ITEM 3 ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING*

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th May 2025 were accepted as a true record.

*ITEM 4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES*

No matters arising.

*ITEM 5 BOROUGH/COUNTY COUNCILLORS BRIEFING*

Borough Council – It is challenging to avoid political matters. Regarding current planning proposals, Stanley House is experiencing difficulties due to an application for a large house just outside its curtilage. The planning officers have faced significant opposition in court over this matter, which escalated to Manchester, where two barristers from London were involved to argue the case. Recently, it was reported that permission for this development has now been granted after the initial decision was overturned.

This situation highlights the importance of ensuring parish boundaries are correctly defined; even a minor oversight can result in an outcome being overturned. The council now has a contact at LALC and will receive updates about upcoming LALC meetings.

Last week, the issue of development on Branch Road was raised. Regarding the Tickled Trout, the council’s current stance is that, as it is located in Preston and outside our boundary, responsibility falls to Lancashire County Council and the highways authority. The issue was recently featured on television, underscoring the lack of alternative solutions for those affected.

Additionally, Preston City Council has formed a twinning arrangement with a location in Gaza. Any funding related to this partnership will be directed to the McDonalds Hotel, as it is supported by the Home Office.

At the last parish council meeting, it was agreed to write to Stephen Attkinson in hopes that he would engage with the parish council as his predecessor did. We await his response.

*ITEM 6 POLICE BRIEFING*

3 x vehicle thefts all older vehicles that were declared SORN and in the process of being broken up for parts when at some point over a two week period they have been removed from the land they were being stored on.

There’s also a couple of logs for BAE but they are to do with the protesters that attend from time to time.

Fireworks are illegal after 9pm.

*ITEM 7 MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC*

Regarding the Branch Road development the Parish Council will be aware that these fields were included in the local plan. A housing survey has been conducted, which indicates a clear demand for housing in Mellor Brook, though it does not specify precise needs. Currently, Mellor Brook has about 400 homes; an additional 120 houses would represent a 30% increase. The transport plan mentions footpaths to Mellor, but in reality, these do not exist. Similarly, claims of numerous local facilities are unfounded, as there are very few. Overall, this is not the ideal location for further development.

Thank you for your input.

*ITEM 8 MATTERS RAISED BY THE COUNCIL*

8.1 The update of the Parish Website.

There was an issue when the website displayed incorrect dates, prompting a discussion about updating it. One suggestion was to change the domain and website provider to a .gov.co.uk address. Another option would be to simply update the existing website, as switching to a different provider appears to be quite expensive. The Clerk will contact easywebsite to obtain a quote for any necessary updates. Parish Council members are also encouraged to review other websites that easywebsite manages for comparison.

8.2 Settlement Boundary

Stella has already highlighted the significance of this issue. The proposed settlement boundary must be addressed by November and, once set, will remain in place for ten years. The current boundary being proposed appears almost identical to the existing one. Application forms are being distributed, and officers are available to provide any further guidance if needed. An email regarding this was sent to Parish Council members on 6th May 2025. At the previous meeting, it was suggested that an extraordinary meeting be arranged to discuss this topic in more detail.

With the change in government, there may be changes in policy, but we must continue to work based on the local plan. There is a notable lack of infrastructure in the area. Reviewing the settlement boundary within Ribble Valley, it's clear that traffic in Mellor Brook has been impacted by the closure of Myerscough Smithy Road. Highways have consistently been a challenge for the community. Additionally, traffic has increased on the A59 due to the construction of the water pipeline from the Lakes to Manchester.

The question remains: what are we waiting for? Essentially, we’re waiting for the updated forms to be released. Adjusting the boundary would allow for additional land to be developed, but it seems unlikely that any extension will take place this time.

8.3 Bench on Whalley Road

The wall is deteriorating, and there have been some issues with the supplier. Is it possible for the PC to procure a replacement ourselves and handle the installation? The project involves more than just installing a new bench; the old one will also need to be removed. Please follow up with the supplier, as they did a commendable job upgrading the Millennium bench previously, offering the service at a competitive price. However, no deadline was set, so the Chairperson should reach out and encourage progress. Meanwhile, someone has been tidying the area surrounding the bench, and the council would like to thank them for their excellent work. RV council can provide litter-picking equipment to assist with the ongoing upkeep.

8.4 Branch Road Development

The application for 121 houses has been widely seen and will have a significant impact on the area. Because of its location, we are not the determining authority, but we can still comment on it. Given the substantial number of objections, will it automatically be referred to committee? It’s a major planning case, but it’s unclear how SRBC handles such applications. Planning is supposed to be non-political, but someone may need to formally request the committee referral for the Branch Road development—presumably, this has already happened, though it hasn’t reached committee yet.

Contact should be made with the local council for SRBC, especially as some seats were lost in the last election, and previous borough councillors have moved on. The current County Councillor is Stephen Attkinson. A borough councillor from SRBC may be able to ensure the application goes to committee, and the more objections received, the more likely this will happen.

Regarding our response as a Parish Council, attending the Samlesbury and Cuerdale PC meeting on 24th July could be valuable. It’s not clear whether Mellor has taken a formal position. Not all residents oppose the development; some see benefits, such as bringing more families into the area and supporting local schools. However, the key question is whether sufficient infrastructure is in place. Highways are a major concern, as is the need for sustainable transport. Schools are also critical, as although we have primary schools, there is no local high school.

The land was earmarked for housing years ago, with government pressure to release more land. One proposal is to use half the site for development and leave the rest as greenfield. This seems to be just the beginning—stage one—of wider changes. There are often differing perspectives between Ribble Valley and South Ribble councils regarding Mellor Brook.

It is important to raise issues about the development, including ensuring section 106 agreements benefit the local area and don’t simply go to Leyland. We could align with the majority of local residents, possibly by creating an action group outside the Parish Council to oppose developments like Causeway Farm. Previously, we had strong objections when land was not designated for housing, but this is different, as the Branch Road site is designated.

The development will definitely affect Balderstone and Mellor Parish Council as well. There have been 309 objections so far, with the deadline for submissions last Friday—though additional comments can still be made. If we respond, we should emphasise the lack of infrastructure and the highways situation, as these are key considerations.

Arranging a residents’ meeting and inviting a councillor to attend could be beneficial, with representatives from Balderstone PC also participating. The meeting could be held at MBCC, and councillors can advise on the proper format for submitting objections. The Chairman to draft a statement outlining the anticipated impact on Balderstone and Mellor Brook. It will also be interesting to hear the views of Samlesbury and Cuerdale. Not everyone opposes the development, but concerns are widespread.

8.5 Parish Notice Board

The notice board at the Fieldens Arms needs to be removed. A quote of £720 has been received to relocate it and install it in front of the Community Centre. Once the area has been cleared, the work will proceed. The board measures 6 feet by 4 feet, with half allocated for Parish Council notices and the other half for Community Centre information.

*ITEM 9 ACCOUNTS*

9.1 Expenditure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1/07/2025 | Clerk June/July Wage | £274.60 |  |
| 4/06/2025 | Audit | £120 | PAID |
|  | July Room Hire MBCC | £30? |  |
| 1/07/2025 | Quoted price for the notice board | £720 |  |
| 12/05/2025 | Peter Barnes | £90.39 | PAID |
| 1/07/2025 | LALC membership | £79.86 |  |
| 1/07/2025 | Insurance Renewal | £138.30 |  |

Expenditure

Proposed and second.

9.1 The bank statements, cashflow and bank reconciliation were all signed as a true record.

9.2 Confirmation of the £90.39 paid to Peter? Peter to send the receipt to the Clerk. Planter looking very nice.

9.3 The LALC membership was agreed. The next meeting is scheduled for July, to be held at the hotel in Langho, where discussions will focus on green spaces and strategies for securing grant funding. The bench project is considered as part of the green space initiative, and there is potential to seek a grant for it. LALC have expressed their willingness to visit and engage in further discussions with us.

9.4 The Insurance Renewal was agreed. The renewal terms for 2025-2026 will be with the PC within the next 7 days. Clerk to email around once it has come through.

 9.5 Regarding the Concurrent Grant the Clerk will fill in and send off the paperwork.

9.6 A reminder that the Community Enhancement donation as discussed at the last meeting has not yet been paid. A letter has been received from Vicki Balderstone School’s headteacher, thanking the PC for the £250 donation that was discussed at the last meeting. The school will be having a Grand opening in September from all the construction work that will be taking place over the summer. The school’s PTA have done an incredible job at fund raising which will go towards the school’s new adventure playground.

*ITEMS 10 PLANNING APPLICATIONS*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3/2025/0225 | BAE Systems Samlesbury Aerodrome Balderstone BB2 7LF | Erection of 8 non-illuminated signs of differing sizes positioned in five locations around the site, including 4 on roundabout. | BAE’s Community Liaison meeting was cancelled.  |
| 3/2025/0378 | Lower House Farm Bezza Lane Balderstone BB2 7LQ | Prior notification for proposed general purpose agricultural storage building 16.76m long, 13.72m wide, 6.8m high to ridge, 5m high to eaves under Schedule 2 part 6 of the GDPO. |  |
| 3/2025/0451 | Land South of Myerscough Road/West of Branch Road Mellor Brook | Consultation on South Ribble Borough Council application 07/2025/00406/FUL. Proposed residential development of 121 dwellings with associated landscaping, access/egress, car parking, drainage and other necessary supporting infrastructure. | Discussed earlier in the meeting.  |
| 3/2025/0464 | BAE Systems Samlesbury Aerodrome Myerscough Smithy Road Balderstone BB2 7LF | External raised platform to facilitate the relocation of existing plant equipment as part of an enabling works package to facilitate the future development of a manufacturing facility. |  |
| 3/2025/0495 | Bowker Farming Woods Brow Balderstone BB2 7LG | Prior notification for proposed cattle shed 36.4m long, 18.27m wide 5.06m high to eaves, 6.0m high to ridge under part 6 Class A of the GDPO. |  |

The most recent Community Liaison meeting with BAE was cancelled. The Parish Council should ensure it remains actively involved with BAE by expressing a clear interest in attending future meetings. For security reasons, BAE requires advance notice of who will be present at these meetings. It would be advisable for the Parish Council to send an email requesting that a new Community Liaison meeting be scheduled. Does anyone know exactly when the meeting was cancelled—was it last week? Balderstone is confirmed as being on the contact list.

*ITEM 11 AGREE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.*

Tuesday 5th September 2025 starting at 7.30pm held at Balderstone School.