

# WARREN AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the AGM 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 held in Mapledurham Pavilion

These notes support the information in the AGM presentation slides lodged on the WADRA website

**Present** Elisa Miles, Hayley Brommell, Martin Brommell, Sally Hart, Alistair McLean, Bob O'Neill, Pam Reynolds from the committee and 16 other members

**Apologies** John Heaps, Barbara Quick, Nick Haskins, Ceri Tanner, Cllr Sue Kitchingham and Cllr Paul Carnell.

**The minutes** of the 2021 AGM were agreed.

## **Introduction (slide 4)**

Elisa Miles welcomed members. In her opening remarks Mrs Miles outlined the range of work undertaken by a small committee and a few volunteers – more would be most welcome. A membership drive would be undertaken in the New Year. During the last year WADRA had featured in local media and had attracted event sponsorship. Contributions had been made to charitable causes. WADRA had collaborated with Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee and the main sports clubs using the playing field. Contact was being established with the new councillors representing the expanded electoral ward into which WADRA now fitted.

**Elections** No committee members were due for re-election and no nominations had been received for the committee vacancies.

## **Treasurer's Report (slide 5)**

Hayley Brommell presented the financial report 1 Sept 2021 to 31 August 2022. She highlighted the following:-

- Cost of hall hire charged by RBC
- The bench and plaque in memory of Robin Bentham, long term respected Chairman of WADRA
- The not-for-profit community café run by WADRA volunteers on Thursday afternoons; halted while the RBC charges were clarified and re-established with sponsorship. The MPF Management Committee had decided that WADRA should be charged for hall and kitchen use. Application had been made to Reading Lions for a small grant. Mrs Miles recalled that WADRA had made substantial contributions to the capital cost. While further improvements were needed, such as wifi and more soundproofing, she asked where was the incentive to contribute if WADRA was charged standard hire rates. Clarity was required about the source of funding for major maintenance. Mrs Appleton commented that Chazey Rd Jubilee group had considered hiring the hall as a wet weather contingency but the cost was prohibitive and compared unfavourably with other halls in the area. She suggested a price comparison with other halls be undertaken. Mr O'Neill said

that people were grateful for the café and noted that similar facilities elsewhere in the Borough received Council support.

The audited accounts were received.

**North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum ( slide 6 and 7 includes contacts)**

Speaking to ppt slides Martin Brommell explained the membership of North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum and commended the Chair, Nick Haskins and PC Vince Moore for their high profile work. He emphasised the importance of reporting issues to the police so that they are recorded. RBC was responsible for dealing with anti-social behaviour but, although they would record events, they were unlikely to attend. Pressure from residents had led to installation of CCTV at the playing fields which appeared to be having a deterrent effect.

**Mapledurham Playing Field Management Committee ( slide 8 )**

Regarding the Deed of Dedication WADRA pressure had led to a reduction in the percentage of the remaining land which RBC wanted to exempt for future development -from 25% to 4%. This latter figure is equivalent to the size of the new school.

In discussion Mrs Appleton observed that all of the land, including the school, was designated as publicly available open space on the local plan and asked if it had been amended. No one was aware that it had, although clearly much was no longer accessible to the public even though it is portrayed as Trust land. It was clear from the papers presented by RBC to the Trustees that they had not been given the full picture and without that they cannot start to resolve matters. It was apparent that there was a lack of adherence to procedure in the management of the area and it was suggested that residents turn up as silent observers to the next Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee meeting on Nov 23.

With respect to environmental concerns Mr Brommell commended the Head of School for her vigilance in monitoring parking in neighbouring streets and having assisted with WADRA event parking. Visiting football teams were less obliging and created problems in Chazey and River Roads on match days. Mrs Miles observed that more could be done to mitigate sound and light issues through planting etc but more collaboration was needed for WADRA to see the benefit of contributing.

**Mapledurham Field, Hall and Pavilion slides 9,10 and 11)**

Mrs Miles drew together the main issues that had arisen during the year which are itemised in the slides. She highlighted the plaque and bench unveiled in the memory of long time WADRA Chairman, Robin Bentham and his wife.

**Forthcoming events (slide 13)**

Elisa Miles announced future WADRA events including Halloween Parade, Camping gear sale, Christmas wreath making and a mini Christmas Market. Use would be made of social media to promote them.

**Planning Report (slide 12 )**

Alistair McLean reported that he received weekly updates from Reading Planning Department and made comment when appropriate or when asked by members. Of the 37 applications in the area 27 had been permitted. He had also commented upon the major housing proposal on the old Reading Golf Course. Of particular note were the proposal to build a large house at High Ridge UWA and a home with a basement at Meadow View, Blagrave Lane. He had stressed the need for surveys to assess the impact of the basement works on neighbouring properties.

Mr O'Neill thanked Mr McLean for his vigilance

### **Open discussion**

There was a general discussion about whether WADRA should react to ward boundary changes and the fact that three councillors now represented residents in the WADRA area.

It was agreed that WADRA's main focus should continue to be on protecting the interests of WADRA residents with particular focus on the Playing Fields. A dialogue should be maintained with CADRA.

The meeting recognised that residents from the wider neighbourhood use the amenities of the area and have an interest in preserving and enhancing the current area. It was agreed that WADRA should maintain a list of "friends of WADRA" and would communicate with them. Full membership and voting rights would remain with residents as laid down in the Constitution.

Nigel Stanbrook thanked the committee for their work.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm