

Bell Fields Trustees report to RPC 15 Dec 2020

The trustees appreciate the invitation from the Parish Council to provide an update on their activities and are pleased to do so in the interest of openness and transparency.

1. Since our last report to the PC, we have received a quote from an appropriately qualified contractor for the work he recommends to restore the UBF football pitch to a playable condition. We are seeking at least one other professional opinion and of course hoping that they recommend similar work. Once this is done we shall be happy to share further details with the PC.

We are advised that rather more substantial work is required to effect a lasting repair to the goal mouths.

2. We continue to engage with Barclays Bank to add signatories to the account that the 2 charities currently share. Once this is done we can consider setting up a second account so that each charity has its own account.
3. As we understand the situation, the 1861 Inclosure Award, without any amendments, remains the governing document for both charities. We have drafted simple straightforward updates to the governing document with the sole purpose of adding current best practice in terms of governance. For example, some rules for trustee meetings and how decisions are made and recorded. To be entirely clear, the trustees seek absolutely no change to the purpose of either charity.

We are aware that trustees appointed previously have sought to change the governing documents for both charities and look forward to their further cooperation in providing all the records we've requested. Once we know for sure that there have been no amendments effected, we propose to submit our amendments. However, before doing so, and to promote openness and transparency, the trustees intend to provide the pc with sight of the amendments.

4. The trustees have discussed the need for repairs to the boundary fence around the northern end of the UBF. With no current access to the charity's funds, and with the PC considering the question of who owns the land and who might therefore be responsible for maintenance of the fence, we conclude that any immediate repairs will have to be funded by the PC either as the owner of the land or as a grant to the charity.
5. We continue with our responsibility to ensure that the records of the 2 charities are accurate and complete and look forward to the further cooperation of the previously appointed trustees in providing additional documents. (A list of apparent gaps in the charities records has been compiled and shared.)
6. Finally, we must share our concerns around the records of the 2 fields held by HM Land Registry and the Official Government Custodian. The previously appointed trustees are on record as seeking approval from RPC to transfer the title (in line with advice they received), but at some point decided to execute the transfer without approval from RPC. Both HM LR and the CC rely on self-certification of the applicant and hence updated their records on the basis of what they assumed to be valid applications. Further, the transfer was to an entity that appears to be without

any legal foundation.

We do have concerns about the completeness and accuracy of record keeping by the previously appointed trustees and the general lack of evidence of effective governance. Of course, significant further disclosure by the previously appointed trustees may serve to address these concerns and we very much look forward to being able to report accordingly to the PC in the near future.

Ray Ride
Chair of the Trustees