

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council
17th September 2013, held at The Birbury, Birdingbury

Present

Councillors: D Turner (Chair), I Tipton, G Davy and T Healey, and Borough Councillor Hazelton and County Councillor Howard Roberts.

In Attendance

Joanna Bloomfield (Clerk) and two members of the public.

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence.**

Councillor Turner opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

2. **To accept apologies for absence.**

There were no apologies for absence to accept.

3. **Declarations of interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. **Representations from the public.**

A resident would be attending at 8.30pm to report on the Underground Coal Gasification meeting held in Rugby on 5th September.

5. **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.**

Borough Councillor Hazelton reported:

- The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Sport Centre in Rugby is now open and functioning. The final figure was £12m against an original quote of £24m, but designed with room for expansion. The centre is heated by wood chippings but with gas backup. The designated parking area for the centre is protected by a barrier to ensure parking is available for users. The facilities are a great credit and he urged the Parish Council to visit and spread the good news. Councillor Turner volunteered to write about it in her report in Birdsong. Although opening times shown on the website do not correlate with the actual opening times but this would be corrected.
- The RBC Audited Accounts for year-end April 2013 are to come in front of the Council for approval this week – interested parties can view them on the website.
- The Dunchurch Community Forum Meeting on 11th was well attended. Councillor Tipton displayed his lateral thinking when speaking on the issue of flooding in rural areas, particularly on ensuring drains are intact.

County Councillor Roberts reported:

- On Wednesday 25th the Fire Service throughout the area are to strike. Whereas normally there would be twenty-two appliances available, during the strike only eight will be available and so response times will be between 20-30 minutes. As all the forces in the area will also be on strike, they cannot be called on. None of the non-statutory services will be available. There will be

- reports in the media, residents need to be conscious of the strike.
- As a member of the Regulatory Committee, he has to remain neutral in discussions relating to Underground Coal Gasification. The County currently has an out of date Minerals Plan but a new one will reach its consultation period in March 2014. No application has yet been received but in the background County Councillors are working hard to understand the issues before it comes to Committee. Councillor Turner indicated that the Birdingbury Parish Council would write to the committee. She felt strongly that environmental issues had to be taken into account.
 - A temporary Locality Officer has been appointed to replace Mark Widdows. In his role, Paul Manhood initiates work or repair on Highways.
 - Parishes wishing to access a share of the County Councillors Grant Fund have until 1st November to apply. Priorities relate to the local strategy, particularly community involvement.
 - The Rugby Town Centre Enhancement Scheme consultation ends on 25th October 2013.

Councillors raised the issue of an enormous rut on Bourton Hill. Although this is not in Birdingbury Parish, the villagers use it more than others. In the last fortnight Highways had used asphalt planings and tarmac to infill some of the road edging but ignored the most dangerous part. Last time that Highways used planings, they had washed away. There were also problems by the sewage works. Councillor Roberts agreed a countywide policy was needed. Councillors discussed the problem of 48ton lorries through the village and up Bourton Hill and whether HGVs are appropriate to some of the routes. Lorries cannot be stopped without weight restrictions on the roads, but these themselves can cause problems. It was agreed that a 'quick fix' was required as cars could be grounded. Councillor Roberts agreed to add this to his list for Highways.

Councillors also raised the issue of flooding in Back Lane caused by run-off from Main Street. The incident happened on Saturday 27th July, and was reported to WCC on Monday 29th July. Councillor Turner expressed her dismay that having heard nothing by the time of the Dunchurch Forum (11th September), Louise Boffey looked into it but was told the incident report could not be found and issued another report reference number (the original reference has since been found). Councillor Roberts agreed this was not good enough and to always copy him in on any correspondence. Warwickshire County Council had reduced the number of jetting teams from three to one, to cover the whole of the County. Councillor Tipton passed to Councillor Roberts photographs showing the condition and location of the village drains, six of the thirty being blocked. The Parish Council was not in a position to say whether there is sufficient drainage until all the drains are working. When new sewer pipes were laid, the old sewer pipes were left in situ as storm gullies but the drain covers were not enlarged. Councillors stated that Insurance Companies will approach the County Council for recompense if drains are not cleared. Drains in rural areas block more quickly than urban areas and should be cleaned at least once a year but there is no schedule. Councillor Roberts suggested he arrange a site visit with Paul Manhood during daylight hours, with a Councillor in

attendance, to look at the drains at the same time as the roadside edge on Bourton Hill. Councillor Tipton said he did not normally work on a Friday. Councillor Roberts admitted to being confused by Highways, only 30% of work was quality controlled/checked, although they took the Councils money at end of day.

Councillors raised the issue of a missing Give Way sign on the Long Itchington Road. Originally this was on metal post with a weight restriction sign under. The post had been taken away leaving a jagged rusted stump. It was agreed to add this to the list for the site visit.

Councillors raised the issue of timing in regard to standardised speed limits in rural areas. Councillor Roberts said this was a matter of changing culture.

6. **Minutes of the last meeting.**

With the correction of item 6: Minutes of Last Meeting from July to June, the minutes of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th July 2013 were unanimously approved and signed as a true record.

Action

Clerk to correct minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 16th July for publication on the website.

7. **Casual Vacancy.**

Councillors discussed the Casual Vacancy that has arisen as the result of the resignation of Parish Councillor Morton since the last Parish Council meeting. Councillors agreed that the timing of the resignation and the requirements of RBC for the notification of the casual vacancy coinciding with the summer holiday period was not ideal. No applications for an election had been received, and despite leafleting the village, no-one had put themselves forward for consideration. Councillors felt it was important to fill the place but preferred that individuals approached the Council rather than Councillors asking individuals. It was decided that Councillor Turner should write a separate article for Birdsong appealing for villagers to consider becoming a Parish Councillor. This is to be circulated for Councillors to respond before being published. She would also bring the subject up at Swap Shop.

Action

Councillor Turner to write and circulate call for volunteers to the Parish Council.

8. **Underground Coal Gasification.**

A Birdingbury resident reported on the meeting held in Rugby on 5th November by the group 'No UCG Warks'. All parish councils within the pending licence area were invited to attend. Birdingbury is on the edge of the area so part of the consultation. The Clerk had received an email from Gareth Heard, organiser of the 'No UCG Warks' group who had hoped to attend. This had been circulated to Councillors and the Clerk read a relevant paragraph to the meeting. Councillors discussed how to proceed and decided that, in the first instance, the Parish Council should write to

WCC detailing their concern for the environmental issues and requesting to be kept informed and consulted with on any future development. Councillor Turner would write about the issue in her Parish Council Report in Birdsong and the issue is to be discussed further at the Parish Council meeting in October.

Action

Clerk to write to WCC expressing BPC concerns.

Councillor Turner to write about issue in Birdsong report.

9. **The Recreation Field.**

The full report from Morral Play was received after the Parish Council meeting in July. The report felt more serious than the visit. Councillors discussed the various issues raised by the report and agreed to seek a quote for remedial action. Councillors also agreed that they would apply to the County Councillors Grant Fund for a contribution to the cost.

Action

Clerk to acquire County Councillors Grant Fund application form.

10. **Flooding in Back Lane.**

This was extensively discussed under item 5. Councillor Turner thanked Councillor Tipton for attending the Dunchurch Forum to talk about flooding issues. Councillor Tipton felt that the message being received was for 'self-help' including parishes to clear drains themselves.

11. **The War Memorial.**

A second specialist company had been to inspect the War Memorial and the quote would be available within the next few weeks. Councillors asked that, once the quote had been received, the Clerk should apply to the War Memorial Trust and the County Councillors Grant Fund for contribution to the cost of cleaning and repair.

Action

Clerk to apply to War Memorial Trust and County Councillors Grant Fund.

12. **PCC/Allotment Rent.**

Correspondence had been received from the Parochial Church Council which meets tomorrow (18th September) when they will discuss the proposed increase in allotment rent.

13. **Reports from Councillors** (other than Planning and Highway issues).

Councillor Turner: At the Dunchurch Forum police reported that they had visited the recreation field 22 times during summer and found no misbehaving.

14. **Correspondence requiring action** (and not elsewhere on the Agenda).

Correspondence from Grow Organics was given to Councillor Tipton for forwarding to the chair of the Allotment Society.

15. **Financial Issues.**

15.1 The following cheques were approved for signing:

- MFM Grass Cutting July & August – 000548: £578.00
- Clerk’s fees July & August – 000549: £332.82
- Morral Play Services – 000550: £56.40
- Bark Chippings for Recreation Field – 000551: £85.40

15.2 The financial statement was circulated.

15.3 Councillor Turner reported she had undertaken an annual review and increased the Clerk’s salary to SCP 19. This was unanimously approved.

15.4 Councillors agreed that Councillor Healey be added to the list of cheque signatories.

Action

Clerk to arrange for Councillor Healey to be added to the list of cheque signatories.

16. **Planning Issues.**

- R13/1537 – Davenport Cottage, Back Lane.
Councillors Tipton and Davy visited the property and suggested that no comments be made by the Parish Council. This was communicated to RBC in line with their deadline and approval was received 17th September.
- R13/1172 – Abberley, Back Lane.
The planning application had received approval on 23rd July.

17. **Highways.**

As requested, the Clerk had written to Graham Stanley who had agreed to complete the dragon’s teeth lining in accordance with the original specification.

18. **Newcomers to the village.**

There were no newcomers to the village.

19. **Business considered urgent by the Chair** (and not elsewhere on the Agenda).

There was no business considered urgent by the Chair and not discussed elsewhere.

20. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 15th October 2013

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.37pm

Signed (Chair)

Date