Draft Minutes of the meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council

18th March 2014, held at The Birbury, Birdingbury

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| **Present** | |  |
|  | Councillors: D Turner (Chair), I Tipton, G Davy, T Healey and D Preston, Borough Councillor Hazelton and County Councillor Roberts | |

**In Attendance**

Joanna Bloomfield (Clerk).

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| 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.**  There were no representations from the public. |
| 5. | **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.**  Borough Councillor Hazelton reported:   * This year’s RBC Council Tax bills included a refund of 3%, the first time this had ever happened in Rugby or in any part of the country outside London. * Flood Forums are being piloted at Grandborough & Willoughby – it will be a multi-agency meeting with the opportunity to meet Severn Trent, etc. If the Forum is successful, it may be possible, under Parish Councils, to get flooding sorted out by the village, in the village with the appointing of a Lengthsman to look after the drains in each village. Councillors who wish to attend should enquire with Willoughby.   County Councillor Roberts reported:   * The Electoral Review has recommended to go for all out elections in an attempt to save money and is also looking at reducing the number of Councillors to between 30 and 35 as there is a potential black hole in the RBC forward budget. The WCC budget has increased by 1.999%. There is to be extra money for drain clearing and flood prevention work which has come from not pedestrianizing Rugby town centre. WCC Council Leader Izzie Seccomb attended the Community Forum. * There is no further news on the issue of Underground Coal Gasification. * WCC, RBC and SDC discussed the notion of forming a Unitary Authority and have decided to continue with discussions. This is not a take-over but starting from scratch – integrated services could save £17m a year. The smaller Districts were generally against the idea. Nothing will happen this side of the General Election. * Councillor Turner reported that Birdingbury Parish Council is waiting on good weather for repainting of the dragon’s teeth and repair of the ruts on Bourton Hill. Councillors discussed the amount that traffic has increased since the by-pass has been built, that Bourton Hill is definitely more of a problem than 7-8 years ago and wondered whether kerbs would be an option. Moving from a secondary to a primary route for gritting would help, but this would need a change to the whole route (which currently costs £30,000 a time). If it is icy, residents can ring and ask for the road to be gritted. Councillors also raised the issue of where a lorry fell into a ditch on the straight mile. Councillor Roberts reported that Highways are aware but cones put up to mark the incident have also fallen into the ditch. Substantial work is required but will have to wait for drier weather. He expressed surprise that there were not more accidents on the road considering the mix of cement lorries with horses and walkers. |
| 6. | **Minutes of the last meeting.**  The minutes of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 24th February 2014 were unanimously approved and signed as a true record. |
| 7. | **War Memorial Restoration**.  The Clerk reported that since the last Birdingbury Parish Council meeting, The War Memorials Trust had granted the entire amount asked for (£162.50) and that Michael Sheppard from Inspire Restorations has been asked to undertake the restoration. He has promised the restoration will be completed before August and would probably take place in May. Councillors discussed the form that the re-dedication should take. It was hoped to take place earlier than August and to include any veterans in the village. |
| 8. | **Underground Coal Gasification**.  There was no official news to report but it was understood that the water table throughout the country has risen considerably since the data used for safety reports was written, and this was being re-considered in a general way, not just for this UCG application. Councillors decided to continue putting the issue on the agenda. |
| 9. | **Section 106 Sale - notification**  The Clerk reported that notification had been received from the RBC Section 106 Officer confirming that the sale of a property in Master’s Court had complied with a Section 106 agreement - that is that the purchaser is a suitably complying purchaser and that the purchase price does not exceed 70% of the market value. |
| 10. | **The Recreation Field**  Councillor Turner reported that, as neighbours it was lovely to see the Recreation Field in use but there was still concern about the state of the seat. Tape has been wrapped around the worst of it but it requires repair as soon as possible. Councillor Healey reported that he had been to other local playing fields, neither of which had ‘Ownership’ notices in the way the Playing Field Inspector had suggested. Councillors stressed that any accidents need to be reported – the Chair will put this in the next Bird Song article, as well as a reminder about the disposal of rubbish. Wheelie bins are collected from the field on Mondays. The hedge still requires trimming but the date line does not apply. Councillor Turner thanked Councillor Healy for all his work in placing and filling the grit bins. Councillors considered whether the grit bin by the tree would be better placed by the manhole and Councillor Davy agreed to bring this to the attention of the Birbury Room Management Committee at their next meeting. It just remains to remove the old grit bin from outside the Birbury. |
| 11. | **Litterpick dates.**  It was confirmed that the litter pick would be on Saturday 5th April at 11.00am and the litterpicks from the Hovel would be made available. |
| 12. | **Reports from Councillors.**  Councillor Preston reported on the WALC Annual Briefing Day which, as a new Councillor, raised more questions than answers. He particularly brought to the Council’s attention the Sustainable Community Act which allows any Parish Council to submit an action to central government for consideration; protection for village greens, footpaths and public rights of way and the Growth & Infrastructure Act 2013. Councillors discussed the need to walk footpaths so that any infringements such as ploughing-up and broken stiles are reported, as well as the responsibility of walkers to use the paths properly and responsibly. The Chair will use her report in Bird Song to remind walkers of this. |
| 13. | **Correspondence requiring attention** (and not elsewhere on the Agenda).   * The Clerk reported that she had received information from WALC regarding change to Parish Council Financial Regulations. The Chair asked that it be put on the Agenda for the next Birdingbury Parish Council meeting. |
| 14. | **Financial Issues**.  14.1 The following cheques were approved for signing:   * Recreation Field, refurbishment expenses – 000568: £152.00 * Clerk’s fees and expenses – 000569: £174.86 * BCRMC, Birbury Insurance – 000570: £114.07   14.2 The financial statement was circulated.   * The Clerk pointed out that now The War Memorials Trust had made a grant, the Birdingbury Parish Council’s portion for the restoration of the War Memorial is £162.50 * Cheque 000542 has now been presented but has not yet shown up on the bank statement. * The Clerk was asked to approach Andrew Armbrister to act as internal auditor for the current years accounts. * Councillors acknowledged that, although the overall precept has not increased, the amount per household has gone up slightly because fewer residents are eligible to pay Council Tax. |
| 15. | **Planning Issues**.   * R11/2061- Staddlestones.   In light of the appeal to the decision to refuse planning permission, Councillors reviewed their original response and decided they had no further comments to add. |
| 16. | **Highways**.  The village gateways markings and the condition of Bourton Hill were discussed earlier. |
| 17. | **Newcomers to the village**.  Councillor Healey will continue to attempt to make contact with new resident. |
| 18. | **Business considered urgent by the Chair** (and not elsewhere on the Agenda).  Councillors discussed the agenda for the Annual Village Meeting which will include:   * the Housing Needs Survey – Richard Mugglestone from Midlands Rural Housing to attend; * the Village Plan – a look at the aims, a positive action plan for forward spending or effort – not a wish list; * Firework display; * reports from associations * the Chairs report. |
| 19. | **Date of next meetings** – The next Birdingbury Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 22nd April** and the **Annual Village Meeting** will take place on **Tuesday 29th April.**  There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.00pm  Signed ................................................................ (Chair)  Date .................................................................. |