

Minutes of the meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council
16th June 2015, held at The Birbury, Birdingbury

Present

Councillors: D Turner (Chair), I Tipton, G Davy, J Morton and County Councillor Howard Roberts.

In Attendance

Joanna Bloomfield (Clerk) and one member of the public.

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

Councillor Turner opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Councillor D Preston had sent apologies.

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

The apologies from Councillor Preston were accepted.

3. **Declarations of interest.**

Councillor Turner declared an interest in item 15 – Glebe Rise. Councillor Davy declared an interest in item 15 – Masters' Court.

4. **Representations from the public.**

There was no representation from the public.

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

County Councillors Howard Roberts reported that:

- The WCC Councillors' Grant 2015- 2016 is underway. This year one of the priorities is 'preserving the culture and history of the local area'. Councillors suggested that the Birdingbury History Group, which in the past has been supported by the Parish Council, could apply. Councillors also mentioned that the Dog Fouling Bin, which they had expected to be free of charge, would cost the Parish Council several hundred pounds to erect. Councillor Roberts suggested an application be made under the public health and wellbeing heading. Applications need to be in before September.
- WCC is currently carrying out a consultation on School Transport. It is not a statutory requirement to provide school transport, so there is proposal to get rid of it. The Council has written to all parents asking if they are willing to pay £750 per annum. Councillor Roberts is particularly worried about pupils at the Grammar School, as if school transport to the nearest school remains free, these schools are often out the a child's catchment area. Councillors agreed that it was a worrying development for villages on the edge of the area. The Clerk should receive information on the consultation.
- He had spent the day with Warwickshire Fire Service which needs to lose £1,200,000 from it's budget. All the relatively easy cost cutting has already happened and the day was an 'interesting meeting of non-agreement'. There will be a report on the recommendations in September when Councillor Roberts will be able to report on how Birdingbury will be affected.

- WCC was waiting for the national budget to see what effect this would have on LA grant applications. The Council is worried about affording The Care Act and other legislation already in place.

Councillor Roberts asked about the meeting with the new Locality Officer. Councillors reported that although the meeting had gone well, and the Officer seemed to understand their needs, they had not received the confirmation of the issues covered that had been promised. Councillor Roberts asked that a list of the issues be forward to him so that he knew what to chase, if necessary. On the whole, reports from other Parish Councils have been favourable.

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

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting and the Annual Meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2015 were approved and signed as a true record.

7. **Review of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.**

Councillor Turner proposed that the new NALC model Standing Orders be adopted. This was agreed with the proviso that where a choice was required, this should be made with reference to past Standing Orders adopted by Birdingbury Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to amend the Standing Orders to reflect this, and to circulate. The Council agreed to adopt the model Code of Conduct as provided by Rugby Borough Council.

8. **Dog Fouling Bin.**

The response from Rugby Borough Council to a request for a Dog Fouling Bin had indicated a cost of £225.10 for a bin to be installed. Councillors expressed their annoyance that a utility that would be provided from the Council Tax in an urban area, would not be free of charge in a rural area and that the cost represents a large proportion of the precept which Birdingbury Parish Council receives.

The Council agreed to apply to the WCC Councillors Grant for help with the cost and at the same time to raise the issue with Borough Councillor Crane. The Clerk was asked to put the issue on the agenda for the next Birdingbury Parish Council meeting.

9. **Village Walk with Locality Officer**

Councillor Turner reported on the meeting with the new Locality Officer, Ben Hill, on Monday 1st June when members of the Parish Council walked around the village looking at the areas in need of attention from the Highways Department.

1. **Marion Road footpath:** The condition of the footpath on Marion Road has been a long term concern for villagers and the Parish Council but, despite approaches to previous Locality Officers, there has so far there has been no action. The Locality Officer suggested that it should first be patched and the larger issues looked at later. This would probably require a feasibility study and would have to be included in a long-term major works programme. Councillors suggested that villagers report any trips and falls on the Marion Road footpath which may influence the timing of the work being carried out.
2. **Drains:** Because drains are now cleared a lot less frequently, they require digging-out to make them usable in heavy rain. The roads in the village were swept recently, but this makes the problem worse as all the debris ends up in the drains.
3. **Under the Viaduct:** This is a dangerous double bend and reflective signs which have previously been erected have been knocked off. It was agreed that more substantial reflective posts were required on the outer curve of both bends, which would also

deter cars from parking.

4. **Long Itchington Road:** Vehicles, particularly buses and farm vehicles, degrading the verges at the junction of Long Itchington Road and Marton Road has resulted in constant mud in the road which could be the cause of accidents, particularly in the winter months. Villagers have called for curbing to the verges on both sides of the road from the Old Stone Cottage down to the junction to prevent this from occurring.

The Clerk was asked to email the Locality Officer, reminding him of the issues discussed.

10. **Telephone mast**

The Clerk reported that there was no government intention to provide further coverage in this area. The Mobile Improvement Plan (MIP) which is being rolled out in five phases over the next few years does not cover much of the Midlands. It is up to individual providers to upgrade their own coverage, which is happening but the proposed finish date has been moved back to 2017.

The matter of the telephone mast was originally raised by a villager who wished to have a Smart Meter which required a mobile signal. Councillors considered how to move forward. It was decided that as this was a Health & Safety issue which unfairly impacted on rural residents, they should consult with Borough Councillor Crane and County Councillor Roberts and to find out how other local villages are dealing with the problem. The Clerk was asked to put the issue on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

11. **Neighbourhood Watch**

Councillor Morton reported that the Neighbourhood Watch notices which were originally at the village entrances needed replacing. It was agreed that if possible the NHW and 'No Rogue Trading' notices should be combined. The Parish Council is required to sign the application to upgrade signs.

Councillor Morton also reported that the PCSO is hoping to hold another NHW meeting in the village. It was agreed that this should be after the summer holidays. Councillor Turner expressed the appreciation of the Parish Council for the work that Councillor Morton did with the Neighbourhood Watch.

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

Councillor Davy reported that the oak tree that had been acquired from a royal estate to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 had matured sufficiently to be planted in the Recreation Field. She had located a metal tree guard which would protect the tree for a number of years. It was agreed that the Parish Council would pay for the tree guard. She also reported that Warwickshire Fire Service had agreed to train volunteers in the safe use of fireworks for the cost of £199 plus travelling, to be held at the Recreation Field. This is to comply with the insurance company's request and one or two volunteers will be named as 'firers' but it will also be open to any other volunteers who wish to attend. Councillors suggested that an application could be made to the Village Fund to cover the cost of the training as this would be for the benefit of the village.

Councillor Tipton raised the question of builders parking on Main Street where the path had recently been re-surfaced. The Clerk was asked to write to the occupiers asking that they make sure any damage is made good.

Councillor Preston (by email) reported on fly tipping on the Long Itchington Road.

Councillor Tipton related a recent experience when he was informed that any household could only tip 3 x 25 kilo bags per household per month, although this is different at other

tips. Councillors decided that they would raise this issue with Borough Councillor Crane and County Councillor Roberts as this rule encourages people to fly-tip. The Clerk was asked to put the issue on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. The number for residents to report fly-tipping regularly appears in Birdsong and Councillor Turner will bring attention to it in her report.

Councillor Morton reported that she had received confirmation of the New Councillor Training. The Clerk was asked to contact Councillor Preston to ask if he could attend the same training as, as a small Council, training was offered on a two-for-one basis.

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

Councillor Turner reported that Rugby Borough Council had confirmed that the Youth & Play Grant application for £1,000 towards the safety surface under the climbing frame has been successful. Rugby Borough Council had asked to meet with a member of the Parish Council at the site and it was agreed that Councillor Turner would meet with them. The Clerk was asked to arrange this. The Council agreed Monday 29th June for the work to take place.

14. **Financial Issues**

14.1 **The following cheques were approved for payment:**

- Birbury Room Hire: 000619 - £30.00
- MFM Grass Cutting: 000620 - £278.00
- Clerk's fees and expenses: 000621 - £247.79
- WALC New Councillor Training: 000622 - £45.00
- Jubilee Tree protector: 000623 - £62.00

14.2 **Financial statement.**

- The financial statement was circulated.

14.3 **Insurance**

- The three year fixed contract for insurance with Zurich comes to an end this August. The Council agreed that as the Council is midway negotiating additional cover for the firework event, they were minded to stay with the same providers. The Clerk was asked to contact Zurich regarding the cost of insuring the bonfire event now that training has been found.

15. **Planning Issues.**

- R15/0235 – Honeyvine, Marton Road – no decision reported.
- R15/0903 – Glebe Rise, Main Street – no decision reported.
- R15/0973 – Paddocks Farm, Marton Road – no decision reported.
- R15/0992 – Pioneer Farm, Marton Road.

Councillor Turner and Morton attended at the property and reviewed the plans. They recommended a 'no comments' response, which was agreed.

- R15/1186 – next to Masters' Court.

Councillor Davy declared an interest in this item.

Councillor Turner reported that this planning application to develop the site on the corner of Stockton Road had just been received. Although not in the village envelope, the development was in response to the 2013 Housing Needs Survey and could provide low cost housing and retirement bungalows. She proposed that as it was a larger than usual planning issue, an exception be made to the planning protocol and that all Councillors who could, should view the proposals and discuss them with the landowner so that a response could be made by the 6th July deadline. This was agreed.

- **Masters' Court:** A property in Masters' Court, which are subject to section 108, is on the market. This first has to be advertised in the village and a notice is being put on the bus shelter notice board. The website manager had asked for advice from the Parish Council as to whether it should appear on the website, which was agreed. It was also suggested that if the August edition of Birdsong is too late for the owner's timeline, then a small notice delivered to each house would be appropriate.
- **Potential solar farm.**
There has been no further information on the potential solar farm on Long Itchington Road.

16. **Highways.**

Councillor Morton raised the issue of the footpath between Stockton Road and Leamington Hastings. The farmer had planted up to edge of field making the footpath impassable. The Clerk was asked to contact WCC, who have responsibility for footpaths, and ask them to contact the farmer.

17. **New Clerk**

The Clerk reported that one application had been received so far. The advertisement has appeared in Birdsong, birdingbury.org and on the WALC website. Emails have also been sent to many of the neighbouring parish clerks. It was agreed that interviews would take place at 6.30pm on the day of next Parish Council meeting.

18. **Newcomers to the village**

There have been no newcomers to the village in the last month.

19. **Date of next meetings**

The next Birdingbury Parish Council will take place on **Tuesday 21st July 2015.**

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.12 pm

Signed (Chair)

Date