

Minutes of the meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council
15th October 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 one member 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.**

There were no representations from the public.

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

Borough Councillor Hazelton reported:

- that he attended the Fixed-Term Tenancies Task Group meeting on the 2nd October.
- that there is some controversy over the plan to pedestrianize Rugby town centre.
- that the Rugby Community Forum calendar for coming year is now available. He undertook to email this to the Clerk for distribution. It was intended that these become more open meetings for councillors and clerks to attend.

County Councillor Roberts reported:

- that he attended a site meeting on the 20th September with Councillors Tipton and Healey and Paul Manhood. A lot had been discussed and agreed although gullies had not yet been cleaned. He was meeting Paul Manhood again tomorrow (16th October).
- the next Community Forum meeting is on the 11th November – he urged councillors to go if at all possible as important items such as the 26% reduction in the WCC budget will be an issue.
- on Saturday 19th October the county's Fire Service go on strike from 18.30 hrs.
- the final date for an application to Councillors Grant is 1st November.
- discussion is taking place at WCC about how the cuts will be distributed. He met with the Deputy Leader to ask that rural areas are not forgotten. Drains, gritting, flooding, economic development, emergency vehicles, animal welfare and adult social care are all in the line of fire and of great importance in rural areas.
- there has been no formal planning application to WCC for Underground Coal Gasification. Councillor Turner reported that, as agreed at the September meeting, the BPC had written to the Chair of WCC and the Chair of the Regulatory Committee. A response had been received from the Chair of the Regulatory Committee which seemed to bear no relation to the original letter. Councillor Roberts asked that all correspondence with WCC is copied to him.

6. **Minutes of the last meeting.**
The minutes of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th September 2013 were unanimously approved and signed as a true record.
7. **Casual Vacancy.**
Councillor Turner reported that no response had been received either by her or by the Clerk. Several residents were suggested and Councillors decided to approach these individuals to see if they would be interested in filling the position. Should this not action not procure a candidate, Councillors decided that they would agree a strategy at the next BPC meeting.
8. **Underground Coal Gasification.**
Following the BPC September meeting, the Clerk wrote to the Chairs of WCC and the Regulatory Committee and a response had been received from Chair of the Regulatory Committee. The Clerk was asked to circulate the letter and response to those Councillors who had not received it. As no application for permission to drill and extract had yet been received, Councillors decided to wait until hearing from the WCC before taking the matter further but agree that it should be a recurring agenda item.
Action
Clerk to circulate letter and response.
9. **PCC/Allotment rent.**
Following the PCC meeting on the 18th September, the Clerk received a response to the BPC's request to re-think the allotment rent demand. The rent was reduced to £85 for the years 2013 & 14 and remains at £90 for the years 2015, 16 & 17 with the next review in five years.
Action
Clerk to forward invoice for rent to chair of allotment society.
10. **Drains and drainage in Birdingbury.**
Councillors Tipton and Healey met with County Councillor Howard Roberts and Paul Manhood on 20th September to inspect the drains in Birdingbury. Blocked drains are an issue throughout Warwickshire, clearing drains is no longer a service, teams respond to requests but will pass blocked drains not on their itinerary. Since the meeting there has been no action in clearing the drains and if nothing happened in the next few days, the Clerk was asked to contact Councillor Roberts and enquire whether the meeting of 16th October progressed the matter.
Action
Clerk to write to Councillor Roberts concerning meeting of 16th October.
11. **The War Memorial.**
The Clerk reported that the application to the War Memorial Trust has been sent. The application to the Rugby Area Councillors Grant Fund will be forwarded before the due date of 1st November.
Action
Clerk to apply to County Councillors Grant Fund.

12. **The Recreation Field.**

Councillor Healey reported that he had investigated the costs involved in repairing/replacing rotten timber parts of the recreation field equipment. Councillors discussed the financial consequence of replacing cracked posts rather than attempting to fill and decided that as the cost was roughly equivalent it would be better to replace with new. Councillors also decided that as the recreation field was not supported by RBC (while those in towns are), BPC would apply to the Councillors Grant Fund for a contribution to the cost of the hardware. The work would be carried out by volunteers from the village. Councillor Healey agreed to provide a budget and forward it to the Clerk for the application. The condition of the hedge by the new path was also discussed. Councillor Davy has been in discussion with Birdingbury Estates about trimming the hedge at the same time as the Estate hedges but the narrowness of access is an issue – the hedge may have to be trimmed manually. Previously the hedge was only cut once a year, but with the footpath it now requires to be cut more often. The safety barrier at the bottom of the playing field access, to protect people leaving the field, has been driven into and needs straightening. The Clerk was asked to contact RBC as it is a piece of street furniture. It also looks very untidy with grass and weeds growing through.

Actions

Councillor Healey to provide budget of costs for repairs.

Clerk to apply to Councillors Grant Fund for contribution to cost of recreation field work.

Clerk to contact RBC regarding the safety barrier at recreation field entrance.

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

Councillor Turner: The Housing Needs Survey was delivered with Birdsong, by members of the youth club, and the report was expected in November. The Clerk was asked to invoice Midland Rural Housing for £50 for distribution of the survey and then forward to Birdsong.

Action

Clerk to invoice Midland Rural Housing for £50.

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

The Clerk reported that she had received a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Birbury Committee to the Festival Committee thanking them for the contribution of £200 to the Village Fund - the first contribution to the Fund in three years. The Secretary of the Birbury Committee emphasized the usefulness of the Fund over the years, which will be missed when it is gone and asked whether the BPC should be encouraging other people to add to it. A report from the Village Fund was given at the Annual Village Meeting and could be used to encourage contributions. Councillors also discussed asking villagers to remember the Fund in their legacies. Councillor Turner agreed to mention the Fund in her Birdsong article and suggest that contributions would be gratefully received.

Councillor Davy agreed to obtain an electronic version of the current Birdsong for uploading to Birdingbury.org.

It was agreed that leaflets advertising 'Warwickshire Health Transport' and 'Community Transport' should be scanned and uploaded to Birdingbury.org and the originals put on the village notice board.

15. **Financial Issues.**

15.1 The following cheques were approved for signing:

- Grant Thornton Annual Audit fee – 000552: £240.00
- MFM Grass Cutting September – 000553: £306.00

- Clerk's fees September – 000554: £166.97

15.2 The financial statement was circulated.

15.3 The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Lloyds Bank who will send necessary forms for the signatory change.

16. **Planning Issues.**

There were no planning issues for discussion.

17. **Highways.**

The Clerk reported that Graham Stanley will be meeting with County Highways on 22nd October and will report immediately after then.

18. **Newcomers to the village.**

Councillors discussed the starter homes at Masters' Court which are the subject of a Section 106 Order. In August 2011 Councillors received assurance from the Rugby Borough Council Section 106 Compliance Officer that when any of the homes were sold, RBC would inform BPC and confirm that the order had been complied with. Since then, although at least two homes have been sold, no confirmation has been received from RBC. The Clerk was asked to write to RBC reminding them of their commitment.

Action

Clerk to write to RBC Compliance Officer and ask for confirmation of Section 106 Compliance.

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 19th November 2013

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.56pm

Signed (Chair)

Date