

Minutes of the meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council
21st January 2014, held at The Birbury, Birdingbury

Present

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

In Attendance

Joanna Bloomfield (Clerk).

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

Councillor Turner opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Borough Councillor Hazelton had sent his apologies.

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

There were no apologies for absence to accept.

3. **Declarations of interest.**

Councillor Davy declared an interest in item 15.1.

4. **Representations from the public.**

There were no representations from the public.

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

County Councillor Roberts.

- The Councillors thanked Councillor Roberts for the money received from the WCC Councillor's Grant. £700 towards the cost of renovating the War Memorial and £246 towards to work in the Recreation Field. Councillor Roberts explained that this would be the last year that the Grant would be available.
- There was no further information on the Underground Coal Gasification situation.
- The Jitty: the Locality Officer was monitoring the situation. The re-surfacing has been put on the list of repairs for 2014-2015 but there is no indication where it is on the list of priorities for that year. Councillor Turner queried whether personal testaments from the residents of the Jitty would help. The Councillors discussed the position of the ruling group within the WCC that local Parish Councils should use their Precept for repairs to pavements and that how this was part of a debate about a 'Unitary' Council which would be a larger, more centralised power and whereby Parish Councils would be given bigger budgets to set their own priorities, including repairs to footpaths, etc. This already happens in the area of 'Resilience', which operates across three regions. Birdingbury Parish Council had been quoted £8,000 for the repair of the Jitty which represents one-and-a-half years worth of Precept. Small villages are not encouraged to accrue a budget surplus. The WCC are to holding a 'Unitary' debate on 27th February, looking into the practicalities of a change which may take years. There is naturally some resistance to the reducing of the WCC role. Councillor Turner hoped that the WCC will consult Parish Councils after the meeting.
- The next Community Forum meeting is on 12th March and the WCC Leader Izzie Seccomb is to attend.
- Councillor Roberts asked whether Councillors had noticed any improvement in the

drains. These were not flooding but didn't look any different. Councillor Roberts requested that if any problem does arise, that Councillors or residents take photographs and send them to him by email. Councillor Tipton explained that he would be attending the Rugby Emergency Plans meeting on 23rd January when he would point out that parishes should look at drains as well as ditches and rivers. When considering flood defences, keeping the drains clean is an important first step.

- One issue raised at the Scrutiny Committee was that road cleaners seem to be making things worse by sweeping into drains which have recently been cleared.

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

The minutes of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th November 2013 were unanimously approved and signed as a true record.

7. **The Jitty.**

Councillor Turner suggested that members of the Council attend the Community Forum meeting (on the 12th March) and point out to the WCC Leader that there are some things that the Parish Council cannot take responsibility for - the 'Duty of Care' belongs to the WCC. If the lack of repair stops someone leaving their house, it is a significant issue. Proper re-surfacing now should be good for 20 years. Councillors decided to ask residents affected by the condition of the Jitty to write to the WCC to press their case for re-surfacing.

8. **Underground Coal Gasification.**

Discussed earlier.

9. **The War Memorial.**

The Clerk reported that the Birdingbury Parish Council had been awarded £700 from the WCC Councillor's Fund towards the cost of renovating the War Memorial. The Chair signed the acceptance form. The application to The War Memorials Trust was now ready to be sent and the Council decided to ask for 50% of the remaining amount.

10. **The Recreation Field**

The Clerk reported that the Birdingbury Parish Council had been awarded £264 from the WCC Councillor's Fund towards the cost of work at the Recreation Ground. The Chair signed the acceptance form. Work could begin as soon as confirmation of the acceptance had been received and the money transferred to the Parish Council's bank account. Councillor Healey undertook to research what to put on the information sign.

11. **Housing Need Survey.**

There had been some confusion over the sending/receiving of the completed Housing Need Survey and only the conclusions were available for discussion. It was decided to postpone discussion until the full report was available and to invite Richard Mugglestone to the Birdingbury Parish Council meeting in February.

12. **Reports from Councillors.**

Councillors discussed:

- That the hole on cross-roads had been filled-in.
- The poor reliability of mobile phone signals: 4G will improve everybody's signal.
- The need for a litterpick before the nettles and hedges grow. The matter of dates would be discussed at the Birdingbury Parish Council February meeting.

- The condition of the bus shelter where plaster is disintegrating, bubbles that flake and are then picked. It was decided that in the spring, or when there is a long dry spell, the plaster may have to be replaced and the bricks may have to be sealed, particularly on the side that gets the worse of the weather.
- Complaints from residents about the amount of dog mess, particularly when left in the bus shelter bin which has to be emptied by volunteers. It was decided that another mention of the problem should be made in Birdsong. It is the owner's responsibility to clean up after their pets as children can pick up infections. It was also decided that the personal approach from Councillors to known offenders would be appropriate.

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

The Clerk was asked to pass on correspondence from Rugby Borough Council on Home Composting Workshop dates to the Birdsong editor for consideration.

14. **Financial Issues.**

14.1 The following cheques were approved for signing:

- Birbury Rent – 000562: £30.00
- Birdsong, MRH donation – 000563: £50.00
- Clerk's fees and expenses – 000564: £174.17

14.2 The financial statement was circulated, with the following comments:

- Cheque no. 000542, which was written in June 2013, had not yet been presented. Councillor Tipton undertook to speak to the person concerned.
- The Clerk explained that due to a mistake in entering data in Real Time Information, she was currently a month behind in paying her own fee, but this would be corrected by the next Birdingbury Parish Council meeting.

15. **Planning Issues.**

- R13/2089 – The Old Post Office, Marton Road
- R13/2264 – Brook House, Back Lane

The Clerk reported that both planning applications had been viewed by Councillors, and a 'no comments' response forwarded to Rugby Borough Council. Both applications had subsequently been passed.

16. **Highways.**

- Since the last Birdingbury Parish Council meeting the Dragon Teeth markings have been painted at the village gateways. Unfortunately these began to deteriorate from day one. The Clerk was asked to write to Paul Manhood, County Highways (cc to Councillors Roberts and Hazelton) asking that the markings be inspected and repainted, and also that most of the white lines in village are not in good condition, particularly around the War Memorial.
- The Clerk was also asked to write to County Highways concerning the condition of the gully at the side of Bourton Road. Drivers are forced to use the centre of the road.
- The Clerk reported that neither RBC nor WCC now supply grits bins. These have to be purchased by the Parish Council and then WCC gritting team will fill the bins, if sited in agreed positions. The Clerk was asked to look into the purchase of bins, including whether WCC have a recommended supplier. These should be sited at the Jitty, the cross-roads by the War Memorial, outside the Birdingbury Club and on Main Street. Councillors agreed that the grit bins would only be any good if used or the grit will

go solid and wondered whether it may be necessary to appoint 'gritters' who would take on the responsibility.

17. **Newcomers to the village.**
Councillors were aware of two new households in the village, and Councillors Preston and Davy undertook to make a welcome visit.
18. **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.
19. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 18th February 2014
There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.00pm

Signed (Chair)

Date