

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 10th June 2020

Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7), Councils are unable to meet in person during the COVID emergency. This meeting was therefore held via a Zoom link, with Councillors connecting remotely. The meeting began at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Chairman) Cllr J Roberts (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr Mrs P Godwin
Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan Cllr Mrs S Terry
Cllr G Shelton Cllr P Mackenzie (Until Min Ref *C/120/20)

In Attendance: County Cllr Vernon Smith (Until Min Ref C/121/20)
Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mr T Treacy, Clerk's Assistant (Temp)

C/114/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Phennah and Porter. Cllr Mackenzie had advised that he would be leaving the meeting early.

C/115/20 Public Participation

- i. **Invitation for Members of the Public to Address the Council** – Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the meeting should adjourn to allow for any public participation.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr MacTiernan informed the meeting that at a point prior to the Play Area reopening, it would have to be deep cleaned. It had been observed that some youths had been climbing on the equipment, hence the necessity for the deep clean. Cllr Ward asked that this was included on the next General Purpose Committee agenda.

Cllr Godwin informed the Committee that all the safety signs had been torn down and were scattered around the Park and field. The resulting impression could be that people were unaware that the areas were still closed. The Clerk advised that the gates were still padlocked, thus limiting access.

Cllr Ward asked if it was known when the Play Areas could reopen. Cllr MacTiernan suggested that as social distancing could remain an issue, it was not likely to be before July.

Cllr Godwin reported that she had seen cracks appearing in the pathway alongside the Play Area. Cllr Terry commented that the same was happening to the footpath running from the corner of The Park, to the corner of The Sandfield, probably as a result of the recent spell of dry weather. Cllr MacTiernan asked how long it had been since the path was resurfaced and wondered whether there was any guarantee provided, the Clerk offered to investigate.

Cllr Ward asked if there was a trip hazard and Cllr Godwin thought not, but that it would not be too long before it became one. Cllr Ward suggested that some bitumen liquid could be locally sourced, which could be used to fill the gaps.

- ii. **Reconvening of Meeting** – Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED re-convening of the meeting. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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C/115/20 Declarations of Interest

As required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11th July 2012 (Minute Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2). Cllr MacTiernan declared an interest in Agenda Item 19 relating to Ashchurch/Northway Bridge project as she sat on the Borough Council Members Reference Panel for the Garden Town as well as Executive. Cllr Godwin also declared an interest as she sat on the Borough Council Members Reference Panel for the Garden Town.

C/116/20 Councillor Resignation/Vacancy

Resignation – The Clerk read a letter of resignation received from Cllr Bailey and confirmed that Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) had been informed and a Notice of Vacancy had been received and was posted online.

Long service - There was a discussion about the recognition of the long service Cllr Bailey had given to the Parish and the wider community. It was also noted that there was a Policy for 'Ex-Councillors' (Min Ref C/113/15 refers) and, as Cllr Bailey fit the criteria for this recognition, Cllr Ward suggested that when it was possible to do so a get together should be arranged at the Hub. Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval of this suggestion. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry suggested that the Council should be more proactive about this, as it seemed a long time to wait to recognise over 20 years of service. It was widely agreed that in the interim, a gift of flowers and a thank you card, or letter should be sent. Cllr Ward advised that he had spoken with Diana Bailey, suggesting a get together after it was safe to do so and she understood the position.

Cllr Terry also felt that communications should go out on social media and Robin Jenkins from the Echo could be approached, the Clerk offered to contact him. Cllr Shelton added that there could also be an article in the next edition of Northway Voice, which Cllr Ward fully supported.

Cllr Ward commented that it was always difficult to lose someone who had so much knowledge, and that he would liaise with the Clerk to arrange the flowers and the card, or letter. Cllr Terry agreed with the approach and mentioned that she had not been aware of the conversation that had already taken place, through Cllr Ward.

Notice Board -There was a discussion to address the Notice Board at the Northway Centre, as this was currently looked after by Diana Bailey. Cllr Ward asked if anyone wished to take on the responsibility for it. Cllr Terry asked if she could revert to looking after the Northway Centre Notice Board, as it was easier for her. Cllr Ward asked if anyone wished to take on the Hardwick Bank Road Notice Board, Cllr Shelton offered to take responsibility if no-one else wanted to. The Clerk suggested that the Litter Picker might agree to do it as part of her existing rounds or alternatively the Clerk's Assistant offered to take it on, as it is very close to his home, and it might save someone having to go out of their way.

Current Vacancy - Cllr Ward reported that there had been no applications to date for the position vacated by Colin Woodward, but it would continue to be advertised.

C/117/20 Council Meetings

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting that took place on 13th May 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting that took place on 27th May 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

C/118/20 **Matters Arising from Council Minutes/Clerks Report**

C/100/20 Council Accounts – Water Plus – *The Clerk was able to show the Council a printout of the detailed email that she had sent to Water Plus, as a formal complaint to which Water Plus had responded very quickly.*

The supplier, in response had given an apology and explained that the meter in question had been ‘landscaped’ and buried. This was the reason that no meter readings had been taken since late in 2018.

The site had been photographed, and passed to the wholesaler, Severn Trent, with a request to ‘Locate and Expose’ the meter. The Clerk advised that someone from Severn Trent had visited the Hub on Tuesday 9th June 2020 and conducted a search. In conclusion, Severn Trent were unable to find the meter and would provide this feedback to Water Plus.

C/101/20 Parish Assembly – *A Certificate of Appreciation and a flower arrangement had been sent to Elizabeth Brown for her contribution to Luncheon Club. No acknowledgement had been received.*

C/107/20 Correspondence Received After – Play Rangers – *Cllr Ward informed the meeting that the Play Bags provided by Play Rangers, had been delivered to Northway Infants School and were very well received. An email of thanks had been received from Mrs Hibbert, the Head Teacher of Carrant Brook School. The Play Bags had been taken there, in consideration of the age group and were being saved to give the children on their first day back in school and would make a potentially daunting experience, somewhat easier.*

C/113/20 Correspondence Received after – Lee Walk Hedge – *The Clerk informed the Council that there had been no response to the letter written to residents reminding them not to cut the hedge.*

C/119/20 **Roads & Road Safety**

Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) - Cllr Ward commented that there had been no speed analysis from Craig Freeman, Local Highways Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), so the VAS could not be progressed without this information.

Corex Signs - The Clerk mentioned that she had contacted the Local Highways Officer regarding the promised Corex speed signs but had received no response to her emails. Cllr Ward asked County Cllr Smith if he knew whether he was working at the moment. County Cllr Smith responded that he believed he was still working, but had received news that his son was unwell, so he may be self-isolating. County Cllr Smith asked the Clerk to forward the emails to him and he would follow up, either with Craig Freeman or another member of the team. Cllr Ward asked the Clerk to send Craig Freeman an email extending the Council’s best wishes. AGREED.

Northway Lane Roundabout - Cllr Ward mentioned the roundabout on Northway Lane, outside Moog, that the Parish Council had agreed to take responsibility for but were still awaiting final confirmation from the Local Highways Officer and again emails were not being responded to. County Cllr Smith requested a copy of the email.

Northway Lane Potholes - Cllr Roberts commented that the potholes on Northway Lane between Saxon Park roundabout and Apple Tree Court were steadily getting worse. County Cllr Smith confirmed that works were still due to be done in July and although there was currently a backlog, things were still on schedule. County Cllr Smith offered to follow up all these points, if the Clerk could forward all the details in an email.

General Works - Cllr Ward mentioned that a number of roadworks had taken place recently, where no notification had been issued such as The Park and Bredon Road. County Cllr Smith apologised and explained that policies were being reviewed to ensure the correct communications came out in time. Cllr Ward commented it was helpful that the work was being done whilst the roads were quiet. Cllr Shelton commented that a cardboard sign had been placed at the junction of The Park and Northway Lane, advising of the work. Cllr Godwin confirmed that she had seen some signage too, but it gave very little notice.

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C/120/20 Planning Committee

Members received the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting that took place on 20th May 2020.

C/121/20 General Purposes Committee

Members received the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting that took place on 20th May 2020.

C/122/20 Finance Committee

Members received the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting that took place on 27th May 2020.

C/123/20 Staffing Committee

Minutes from the Staffing Committee Meeting held on 3rd June 2020, were not available at this time.

C/124/20 County Councillor Report

County Cllr Smith thanked the Council for holding an Extraordinary Meeting to consider future road design in the parish (particularly in relation to the new bridge), and for the effort in putting together such a strong response. He said that the Design Managers, including the most senior one, were impressed by the level of detail provided. He enquired whether the Clerk had received feedback, she confirmed she had and he added that GCC would keep the Council informed of progress going forward.

County Cllr Smith reported on the recently introduced social distancing measures in Tewkesbury High Street. District Councils were also being asked to submit schemes. Some local businesses had asked about the possibility of a temporary one-way system, or short term pedestrianisation of the High Street. The County Council were keen to support businesses to start up again and wanted to be flexible. This would be particularly helpful for pubs, cafes and hotels who wanted to set up seating areas outside. Due to the Coronavirus, Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) had been suspended so it was easier to make temporary changes and things could be trialled on a three month basis. County Cllr Smith informed the Council that if they wished to put forward their views on these initiatives; they could do so via the County Council web site.

With regard to cycling, County Cllr Smith referred to the 'Travel by Cycle' document previously tabled. The County Council were looking at two schemes - the Northway cycle track that came through Newtown to Brewers Fayre, which re-joined the existing road and on to Northway Lane motorway bridge was to be extended into the town centre at a cost of £130,000.00. The Government had also provided funding of £2,750,000 for cycleways nationally, so the intention was to create a joining track from Mitton, to the main cycleway. It was expected that these schemes would be underway by the end of the year.

*7.30 p.m. Cllr Mackenzie left the meeting.

Referring back to the cracking tarmac that Cllr Godwin had raised in the public session, County Cllr Smith agreed with Cllr Ward that an application of bitumen sealant could rectify the situation but also, a heavy rainfall could cure the issue, with no further intervention.

7.32 p.m. County Cllr Smith left the meeting.

C/125/20 Borough Councillors' Report

Cllr Godwin reported on the following items:-

- Since resuming the garden waste collection service, 222 tonnes of garden waste had been collected in the first three days, which was a third more than the corresponding period of last year.

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C/125/20 Borough Councillors' Report (Continued)

- The Ashchurch Bridge feedback was now closed.
- The Garden Centre 'Dobbies' had submitted a Reserved Matters Planning application for the area alongside the proposed Outlet Centre on the Ashchurch Road.
- Tewkesbury Borough Plan had been submitted to the Governments Planning Inspectorate for examination.
- Shops would be allowed to re-open from next week,
- Tewkesbury Borough Council wished to team up with local landlords and property owners to help those struggling with accommodation due to the Covid-19 pandemic and were appealing to Landlords to take advantage of Home Seekers Plus and letting scheme, urging them to get in touch.

Cllr Roberts asked if there was any update on the Cascades site, following an observation on-line, that Lidl have expressed an interest in having a store in Tewkesbury. Cllr Godwin was not aware of any news and Cllr MacTiernan confirmed that there was no update.

There being no further questions, Cllr Ward thanked Cllr Godwin for her report.

C/126/20 Council Accounts

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the schedule of bills paid and cheques for payment at 10th June 2020, totalling £20,026.55 should be approved. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

C/127/20 Annual Governance Return and Accounts for the Financial Year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

- Internal Auditor's Report** – Members received the Internal Auditor's Report including confirmation that the Internal Report Section of the AGAR had been signed. It was noted that the Auditors had given 'Not Covered' responses in respect of the Control Objectives K, L, and M and they were required to explain why.

Objective K – The reason for the 'Not Covered' response for this was that it was not applicable to Northway Parish Council, as it did not certify itself as exempt from External Audit.

Objective L – The reasons for the 'Not Covered' response to this was, although they had seen the completed Notice document, there was no formal documentary evidence that the required Notice was posted as required. There was no requirement for this documentary evidence to be maintained and it was therefore impossible for an auditor to independently verify this. It was an issue that had been discussed with the External Auditors and they expect most, if not all, Councils would also have a 'Not Covered' as a response from their Internal Auditors.

Objective M – The reasons for the 'Not Covered' response to this was that it was the Auditors understanding that the Council did not act as a Trustee.

Members viewed (on screen) the Internal Auditor Summary 2019-20 and went through boxes A to M noting the overall rating to be 90.65%. Two observations were noted on I and J ([Copy attached to Minutes](#))

- The Year End bank reconciliations were unsigned. It was observed that this was due to the current Covid-10 situation and that these should be signed as soon as possible after lockdown with a copy being sent to the Auditor (Priority High).

It was AGREED that this should be actioned at soon as possible.

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C/127/20 **Annual Governance Return and Accounts for the Financial Year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020** (Cont/..)

- It was not possible to agree the draft accounting statements to the draft values in the Annual Accounting Statements. This related to a variance in the Year End Trial Balance where Staff Costs were over by £284 and other expenses under by £284. It was also noted that the Council did not produce Annual Return figures from the Omega accounting system. A standalone was used to produce the year end Annual Return figures.

The Clerk explained that she had contacted DCK Accounting regarding this and the response received was as follows: -

‘Regrettably, we seem to have provided incorrect figures for you AGAR. Whilst the discrepancy is not material, I would recommend that the AGAR be re-prepared and re-signed with the corrected figures. In my view it does not invalidate the original approval. Please accept my apologies for this error’

Regarding the second part about not producing the Annual Return figures from the Omega accounting system the response received from the Accountants was as follows:-

‘unfortunately, this does not work for those enlightened councils that wish to show the use of Earmarked Reserves correctly in their Management Accounts reports as it does not allow for multiple codes for transfers to and from reserves. Additionally, the program as currently written does not report the Balance Sheet correctly where RBS EMR procedures are used. For these reasons we will NOT be utilising this feature of the Rialtas programme unless and until it is re-written to conform to our view as to the reporting of EMR movements’.

Members considered the report and the responses received from the Accountants. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council amend the Accounting Statements to show the correct figure under ‘Staffing’ following the finding of the error by the Internal Auditor and that the Council should accept the Accountants explanation as to why they did not produce the Annual Return figures from the Omega account system.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Annual Governance Statement** – Members received a recommendation from Finance Committee (Min Ref FIN/36/20ii refers) that the Accounting Statements were accurate and should be considered and approved by Full Council as follows:-

	Agreed- Yes or No	‘Yes’ means that the council:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	Yes	<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	Yes	<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances	Yes	<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>

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C/127/20 **Annual Governance Return and Accounts for the Financial Year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020** Cont/...

	Agreed- Yes or No	'Yes' means that the council:
4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of elector's rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes	<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	Yes	<i>Considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	Yes	<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	Yes	<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	Yes	<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity, as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	N/A	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

Members considered the recommendation from Finance Committee and agreed with the responses. Cllr Shelton PROPOSED approval. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Accounting Statements** - Members reviewed the Accounting Statements making note of the correction to the Staff Costs. With this in mind Cllr Roberts PROPOSED approval of it. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Financial Statements** – Members reviewed the Financial Statements and received the recommendation from Finance Committee for approval (Min Ref FIN/36/20iv). Cllr MacTiernan had raised one point in that the trade debtors for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 were an identical sum of £415.00. The Clerk was able to show this was not an error, just a coincidence, and provided a

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

C/127/20 **Annual Governance Return and Accounts for the Financial Year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020** Cont/...

breakdown of the figures. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED approval of the Financial Statements. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Exercise of Electors Rights** – Because of recent changes to regulations resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic (The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020) it was not necessary to conform to the set dates for the Exercise of Electors Rights. As long as the Accounts were sent to the External Auditor before the 1st September the Council could set the date. Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that this be left with the Clerk to decide once all the paperwork was signed and ready. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Further Items** – No further consideration was necessary.

C/128/20 **Pollution**

It had been agreed to reconsider the subject of Air Pollution (Min Ref C/45/20 refers) following all Councillors being forwarded a document (sent 13th February 2020) provided by Cllr Shelton.

Although not certain, Cllr Roberts had thought that TBC were to stop monitoring on the High Street as the air quality had improved. Cllr Shelton informed the meeting that the monitoring was actually undertaken by contractors, with TBC as overseers. Cllr Shelton referenced the spreadsheet sent to Members and noted there were about 20 automatic monitors, the nearest being just over the railway bridge in the army camp area. Cllr Ward commented that as there was not a great deal of traffic at the moment, monitoring would not be hugely beneficial at this time. Cllr Shelton commented that he had raised the subject previously as part of an information gathering exercise. Cllr Roberts suggested that this could be raised at the Garden Town joint Councils meeting on 18th June 2020 and Cllr Ward asked if NPC should try to get an update from Tewkesbury Garden Town Project Team on this, which was widely agreed.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that whether or not a response came back, that this item should be deferred to September/October, on the basis that traffic flow at this time was not normal. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

C/129/20 **Corona Virus (Covid-19)**

- i. **Opening Hub** - The Clerk informed the meeting that, with regard to reopening the Hub, she had been gathering information and, as this was a large topic on its own, enquired whether the Council would be happy for the Staffing Committee to review the information and report back to the Council. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this work should be undertaken by the Staffing Committee. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that Cllr Terry would be attending a Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) meeting on the subject of 'Opening Up Community Buildings' on, 22nd June 2020.

In response to the various clubs that had asked about the Hub reopening, the Council agreed that they should be told that it would not be re-opening yet. Cllr Terry advised that the Council needed to see the proposals for safe distancing and hygiene practices from each of the clubs, and to agree and approve that they were satisfactory. It was agreed to ask the various clubs for these details after Cllr Terry had attended the GRCC meeting.

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C/129/20 **Corona Virus (Covid-19)** (Continued)

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this subject be discussed again at the next Council meeting. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Risk Assessment** - The Clerk advised that the copy of the Risk Assessment which had been circulated to Councillors was a little out of date as it related to the initial lock down. However, a copy of a sample Risk Assessment document, compiled by an insurance company (BHIB Council Insurance), had been received via the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). The Clerk advised that this was a very thorough document and that it would be useful for the Staffing Committee to review.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Staffing Committee take responsibility for reviewing the Risk Assessment and bring back to Full Council.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Local Nomination** - The Clerk read an email that had been received independently, from Jamie Beadle, nominating Amanda Prout for an award in recognition of all she had done in co-ordinating the Community Response in Northway during Covid-19. Cllr Ward expressed his full agreement and advised the Council that he had nominated Amanda for the Morrisons Hamper Award, on the same grounds.

Cllr Roberts asked if this special award should be addressed now or wait until later in the year when nominees were considered for a Certificate of Appreciation at the Parish Assembly. Cllr Ward suggested that as these were exceptional circumstances, the award should be made now, and also advised that Amanda was still the point of contact for prescription collections and food parcel distribution. Cllr Ward commented that he thought Amanda was still very active, as well as working full time but the response was now co-ordinated from Priors Park. Cllr Godwin corrected the information stating that Amanda had recently been made redundant.

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that a letter of commendation, along with a bunch of flowers or a cheque, be presented (he was informed that a cheque was not suitable), but that flowers could be sent. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Government Nomination** - There was a brief discussion about the Government Nomination for Covid-19 honours. Cllr Ward commented that he had Amanda in mind for that nomination too. Cllr MacTiernan asked if there was no limit to the number of people that could be nominated, she wished to nominate Freda Smith from Luncheon Club. During the period of lockdown, Cllr MacTiernan told the meeting that Freda had, each week, made phone calls to all of the luncheon club members, as well as the helpers, to check on their wellbeing. As there were no further nominations, Cllr Ward PROPOSED nominating Amanda and Freda.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Further Actions** - There were no further actions raised.

C/130/20 **Crime and Disorder**

Cllr Ward reported that a fire had been started on the overgrown piece of land opposite the Northway Pub which the landlords attempted to put out but were unsuccessful and the fire brigade were called. During the course of the fire brigade's work, a large number of needles were found on the site. Cllr Ward had spoken to one of the firemen attending, who expressed his concern about the number that were there.

Cllr Ward informed the meeting that in discussion with the Fire Service, it transpired that when needles were found, it is generally not reported, but due to the high numbers on this occasion, it had been reported to the

C/130/20 **Crime and Disorder**

Fire Control Room who could then inform their members for any future call outs. The needles found were disposed of at the Ambulance Station.

Cllr Ward advised that there had been initiatives in the past to clear that area or open it up but somehow these had not happened for various reasons. Cllr Ward suggested that it might be time to raise the question with TBC again, to see if they could help.

Cllr MacTiernan asked if the area was TBC land, and it was confirmed that it was. Cllr MacTiernan agreed that the Council should ask TBC but whether they would be able to do anything was uncertain. Cllr Ward asked that if TBC were unable to help, would they allow NPC, or some volunteers to do something to open up the space. The Clerk informed the Council that it could not carry out any work there without a 'License to Cultivate'.

Cllr Ward informed the meeting that a trend appeared to be developing for fire starting. Cllr Godwin added that on Thursday 4th June 2020 at around 10.00pm, a fire was started at a tree stump near the MUGA. Apparently lighter fuel was used to promote the fire, which burned through the night. The Chairman enquired whether that fire had been reported at the time, Cllr Godwin did not know if it had or not. The Clerk said that a fire was burning at the same location at 7.00 p.m. on 4th June which two young men put out. It would appear that the same fire was restarted at 10.00 p.m. The Clerk had reported the 7.00 p.m. fire to the Police.

Cllr Ward was able to show a number of images relating to the fires. It had also been reported that the wooden bridge in the field off Sinderberry Drive had been vandalised around the same time as another fire was started close by in a tree by the waterfall. A further fire was started on Tuesday 9th June 2020 close to the entrance of the Northway Playing Field, at the back of an Oak Drive garden, damaging the resident's fence. There was an aerosol deodorant present which may have been used as an accelerant. Cllr Ward was able to report that local residents had been able to give some names of those believed to be involved, and this information had been passed to the police. It was thought that the group responsible was made up of five boys and one girl.

Cllr Ward asked for everyone to keep a lookout and to report anything suspicious to the police.

C/131/20 **Ashchurch/Northway Bridge Project**

- i. **Feedback Letter** - A letter from the Tewkesbury Garden Town Team (the same that was distributed to residents), was received for information.
- ii. **Monthly Meeting** - Attendance at the joint Parish Councils and Tewkesbury Garden Town Team was discussed. The Chairman was invited to attend, but it had now been confirmed that other councillors could also attend. Cllr Barnes expressed a wish to be included, as did Cllr Roberts, subject to his work commitments. The meeting was set for 18th June 2020 at 4.00pm.

The Clerk read a very in-depth letter that had been sent to TBC by David Garnett (from Ashchurch Rural Parish Council) stating that the garden town principle had not been referenced as promised and there was no list of firms and employers who were used in the garden town project. He believed, to understand the ideology and basis of the principles of the garden town, it was essential that TBC supply all references to the garden towns principle prior to the meeting. The Clerk had also made the Tewkesbury Garden Town Team aware of other comments that had been circulated on social media, supporting the point that the purpose and location of the bridge was unclear, in some part brought about by the cartoon drawing that was on the Garden Town web page.

- iii. **Response from Tewkesbury Garden Town Team** - In summary each of the points raised to the Tewkesbury Garden Town Team, were addressed as follows:

With regard to confusion over the location of the bridge:

"We have removed the map of the main page to avoid confusion, the location is clearly marked on the attached documents named bridge location. We trust this is clearer."

With regard to TBC failing to respond to numerous enquiries from one resident.:

"I am sorry to hear that a resident has not been called back. Do you have her contact details, and I will get in touch with her? We have contacted the customer service team again to ensure this does not happen again."

Regarding the request from residents to hold a zoom meeting (or similar), to make up for the loss of the Share Event:

"We appreciate that residents would have preferred the option to ask questions at an open session, hence our original proposal of parish based share events. However, based upon the restrictions at present, we therefore have selected the on-line share events as the best way for everyone to have a chance to put forward their questions about the bridge and so that we can answer in detail accordingly. Please note that this share event is about the bridge and therefore the many questions that have been raised about the proposed development will be subject to later planning applications/processes. Once this share event closes, we will review the methods for on-going communication with the community and we can discuss this at our meeting on 18 June."

Regarding the question of the consultation period, once the bridge planning application has been validated:

"The consultation period is 21 days."

Regarding road designs and concerns about the massive effect the new road will have on Northway, The Park, Northway Lane and Shannon Way route being unable to cope with additional traffic and where the new developments will access the road network:

"Both questions above: The road design/location is not part of this planning application (this is for the bridge only) and whilst there are some proposals being put forward, no decision has been made on where the roads will go. This will be confirmed during a further project once the necessary funding has been secured and will be part of a separate planning application."

The Council finds the process of considering a bridge alone without the roads disjointed:

"We appreciate your concerns, however the award from the Government (the £8.1 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund) was to facilitate the building of a bridge and the roads and associated development will come forward under separate funding streams. To ensure that this award therefore could be spent by the required timescales, the bridge project has continued with the objective of delivering infrastructure before housing development takes place."

Cllr MacTiernan reported that during a meeting she had attended with other Ward Councillors the previous week she had requested that more questions and answers were put on the web site, which was accepted. She also requested that even if TBC did not know where the roads would go, that should be clearly explained on the web site. The Clerk read out letters that had been received from two residents, one of which was very in depth and detailed, and the Clerk suggested that it would be worthwhile for Councillors to read it.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the letter was forwarded to Councillors via email. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Save Our Settlement** - The Council received a copy of a flyer, relating to Ashchurch Bridge. It was also noted that there was a discussion taking place on the Bredon Noticeboard and the subject was included on Bredon Parish Council's agenda. Cllr Ward commented that the Parish Council were most likely concerned about the amount of traffic that could go out towards Bredon, and since the bridge location had been moved out of Worcestershire and entirely into Gloucestershire, its interest in the

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C/131/20 Ashchurch/Northway Bridge Project (Continued)

project may have declined. Cllr Ward commented further that had part of the bridge structure remained in Worcestershire, it might have been more proactive in its feedback.

Cllr MacTiernan explained that as a neighbouring Council, Worcestershire would have been informed of developments as part of a Memorandum of Understanding.

C/132/20 Correspondence for Action

- i. **Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC)** - The Tewkesbury Borough Plan Submission for Examination, had now been submitted to The Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government. TBC had had requested that the Council place Notices on the Parish Noticeboards. During Covid-19 only public health warning posters had been erected so the Clerk was unsure whether Members wished the poster to be used. The Clerk also pointed out that the heading on the Notice was 'Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and enquired why it included the Compulsory Purchase wording. Cllr MacTiernan did not know why this was but PROPOSED that the posters should not be displayed on local notice boards. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

C/133/20 Correspondence for Information

- i. **National Association of Local Councils (NALC):**
 - a) Newsletters – 28/05/20 and 29/05/20.
 - b) Chief Executive's Bulletins 15/05/20, 22/05/20 an 29/05/20.
- ii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Press Release 'Joint grant scheme launches soon to support local businesses.
- iii. **Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC)** – Newsletter 26/05/20. The Clerk pointed out that the Administration Assistant was going to be attending a course with GAPTC via zoom. The physical course had previously been cancelled. This was entitled Roles and Responsibilities.
- iv. **Gloucestershire County Council** – Briefing Paper 'Encouraging walking and cycling: announcements from DfT May 2020 and TCC Proposals.

C/134/20 Correspondence Available in the Clerk's Office

- i. **Robert Hitchins** – Press Release – Largest Dobbie's Garden Centre in the South West signed up as a Leisure Anchor for Designer outlet Cotswolds.

C/135/20 Correspondence received after 4th June 2020

- i. **National Association of Local Councils (NALC)** – Chief Executive's Bulletin. Dated 5th June 2020.
- ii. **Worcestershire County Council** – Publication of responses to Mineral Site Allocations 'Call for Sites' (January – March 2020). For information.
- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Following the response from community volunteers, local groups etc during the Covid 19 lockdown the Voluntary & Community Sector Alliances was running a consultation

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C/135/20 **Correspondence received after 4th June 2020** (Continued)

to see what groups needed volunteer wise moving forward and there was web site to respond if necessary.

- iv. **Changing Room/Northway Village Hall** - The Clerk explained that she had tried to obtain a key for the area behind the Changing Rooms from Tewkesbury Town Football Club (TTFC) (who lease the facility). She was advised that they had given their spare key to a resident in Oak Drive, for storage of Northway Community Volunteers (NCV) items, who told them that he had been given permission to use some of the space behind the Village Hall. A lean to structure had been built and fixed to the side of the Hall for storage. There was a concern that this placed an additional fire risk to the property as it could be reached through the fencing.

The Clerk had spoken with TTFC and the Trustees of the Youth Club to see if they had given permission for the items to be stored. TTFC said that they had been spoken to by a resident and explained that they had no objection but that it was not up to them to make the decision. The Youth Club Trustees also seemed unaware of any permissions granted but did say that they had offered storage space in the roof of the Village Hall.

Members considered whether this should be a Parish Council or Football Club decision. Cllr Ward stated that whilst he had no objection to items being stored there, but that this should be controlled by the Parish Council, and that the key should be returned. Cllr Ward asked Cllr Godwin if she would ask for the return of the key, which she agreed to do.

Insurance for the temporary structure would be the responsibility of NCV and not the Parish Council. It was also noted that should there be a fire in the main building as a result of these items being store that the Parish Council would be covered, but anything stored would not be. Cllr Godwin said that she believed the Football Club had said items could be stored there, basically chairs, tables and tents. Cllr Roberts suggested that they could ask for retrospective permission.

Cllr Ward pointed out that the key had been obtained under false pretences and should be returned (alternatively the Council could place its own padlock on the gate). Cllr MacTiernan objected to the storage of the items because they had not got permission and if there was a fire risk it should be removed. TTFC did express concern about who would be responsible for damage in the event of fire. Cllr Roberts said that it would not be the Parish Council's risk if the hall burned the Council would have to claim on its insurance, who would try and claim it back from NCV's insurers.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that a request be made for the return of the key.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry suggested that the Council wrote a letter to Jamie Beadle, Chairman of NCV outlining the issues that had been discussed. Whilst there was no major objection to creating additional storage, Cllr Ward suggested that the Council would not be in a position to grant permission for it, until it was known what was going to be stored there. Cllr Roberts said that this should be included in the letter and that the items, as well as the canopy, should be removed until permission was given. Cllr Ward suggested that items could be temporarily stored in the village hall whilst that was not being used.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that a letter was written to NCV, to say that they have no permission to build any structure or to store items in the space they had been using and that these should be removed immediately. NCV could negotiate with the Trustees of the Village Hall to see if they would allow temporary storage of the items. Cllr Terry SECONDED

FOR: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Terry
Cllr Barnes Cllr Shelton
Cllr Roberts Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Godwin

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

C/135/20 Correspondence received after 4th June 2020 (Continued)

- v. **Tewkesbury Town Football Club** - The Clerk advised the Council that she had received a letter from the Football Club, advising that they had recently applied for some grants, which had been successful. One in the sum of £2,500.00 for pitch preparation from the Football Foundation and the other for £1,400.00 from the Unsafe Goalpost Fund for replacement of unsafe goal posts. Before the Football Club accepted the grants, they wanted to be sure that the Parish Council approved.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Club should be informed that the Council had no objection to them accepting the grants. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.40 p.m.