

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 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 7:00 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Chairman) Cllr J Roberts (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr M Barnes Cllr Mrs P Godwin  
Cllr P Mackenzie (Until Min Ref \*C/170/20) Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan  
Cllr E Phennah (From Min Ref C/164/20) Cllr G Shelton  
Cllr Mrs S Terry

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council  
Mr T Treacy, Clerk's Assistant (Temp)  
County Cllr Smith (From Min Ref C/164/20 till \*C/165/20)

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Roberts as the Chairman was on holiday, although he may join the meeting by phone.

### C/158/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Porter. Cllr Mackenzie advised that he would have to leave the meeting early and Cllr Ward advised that he may have to leave the meeting early.

### C/159/20 Public Participation

i. **Invitation for Members of the Public to Address the Council** – Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the meeting should be adjourned to allow for any public participation.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

ii. **Reconvening of Meeting** – Cllr Roberts PROPOSED re-convening of the meeting.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### C/160/20 Declarations of Interest

As required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (Minute Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2). Cllr Terry declared an interest in Agenda Item 19 relating to reopening of the Book Club at the Community Hub. No further declarations of interest were made.

### C/161/20 Councillor Resignation/Vacancy

The Clerk reported that there had been no formal applications for the vacant position but that a local resident who was interested would be telephoning the Clerk to discuss the position on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September.

### C/162/20 Minutes of the Council Meeting the took place on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting that took place on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

### C/163/20 Matters Arising from Council Minutes/Clerks Report

**C/149/20 Council Accounts** – Following a letter of complaint sent to Royal Mail by the Clerk, explaining that Council meeting agendas were not being received in a timely manner, Royal Mail had responded, apologising for the recent poor service. Royal Mail had explained that during the COVID19 crisis, it had come under intense pressure due to increased volumes of mail, additional safety measures and reduced staff numbers. Given the combination of these circumstances, Royal Mail advised that some impact to services was inevitable.

**C/157/20 Town Football Club** – The Clerk was able to inform the Council that, following approval by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) for funds for a drag mat for the Football Club, the mat had been ordered and Section 106 monies were on their way.

**C/156/20 Defibrillator Reports** – A letter of thanks had been sent to the local resident who had been responsible for the Hardwick Bank Road defibrillator, a role now taken over by Cllr Phennah. It was reported that Cllr Mackenzie had cleaned and disinfected the defibrillator and telephone box and had offered to do this on a regular basis. The Chairman extended his thanks to all involved in the hand over and preparation work.

**C/155/20 NALC Model Code of Conduct** – It had been agreed that Members would submit their individual response to this Consultation.

**C/153/20 Northway Village Hall** - The Clerk informed that Council that Northway Community Volunteers (NCV) had been in contact regarding the installation of a metal shed. Once they had further discussions they would have a clearer idea of what was necessary.

### C/164/20 Roads & Road Safety

i Cllr Barnes expressed his wish that the Vehicle Activation Sign (yet to be approved by Gloucestershire County Council) be put in place as soon as possible. Cllr Barnes informed the Council that he had recently lost a cat that had been run over, which unfortunately was a repeat incident. Cllr Roberts was of the understanding that the Council were awaiting the results from the recent speed surveys before this could progress. The Clerk reported that speed tube data had been sent for analysis and that once Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) had received the feedback, they would forward that to the Clerk. Cllr Barnes asked if the action could be chased up and the Clerk confirmed that it had already been followed up on that week.

The Clerk also advised that in discussion with local Police, she had been informed that the Police would be happy to carry out speed checks in the area, but not without the use of Hi Viz jackets, as these were a health and safety requirement. It was widely accepted that once officers were seen, then speeding motorists typically slowed down. The Clerk also reported that the Police would be happy to take statements from people who had information about vehicles that had been speeding but the person submitting such detail should be prepared to attend court.

ii **Road Safety Committee Meeting** – The next Road Safety Committee was scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. Cllr Robert listed the agenda items currently tabled, as below, and asked if Councillors had anything further to add.

- Review any data that had been captured by the current traffic monitoring system in The Park / Northway Lane location, if any were available.
- Speeding and dangerous driving in Northway.
- Risk to children crossing at The Park/Northway Lane junction.
- Progress regarding the footway by-passing the humpback bridge to the A46 (an area was left for this purpose).

Whilst there were no additional items submitted, there was a brief discussion about the possibility of a face to face meeting. The Clerk advised that the number attending was small, but it would be advertised as a public meeting so the Council had to allow for the possibility that members of the public could attend.

C/164/20 **Roads & Road Safety** (Continued)

Cllr Terry supported this, confirming that the Road Safety Committee did not meet the appropriate criteria for face to face meetings.

7.10 p.m. - Cllr Phennah joined the meeting.

7.14 p.m. - County Cllr Smith successfully joined the meeting, after requiring additional assistance

- iii **Gloucestershire County Council** – With regard to M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme Proposal, which the Parish Council had been invited to contribute to, Cllr MacTiernan asked County Cllr Smith if it would be responding to a ‘blank page’ or if there would be options. County Cllr Smith advised that it would be a ‘blank page’ approach, which he believed would present the Council with a very good opportunity to influence the designers, who were already undertaking survey work in the area. The understanding was that there was in the region of 26 potential routes, which were likely to be reduced to possibly four, before being issued for consultation.

County Cllr Smith recommended that the sooner the Council was able to respond, the stronger its influence could be, preferably by the end of September/October. County Cllr Smith reminded the Council how well received the input from NPC had been in relation to ‘the bridge’ location proposals.

Cllr Roberts suggested that it was included on the General Purposes Committee Agenda but it was suggested that the Road Safety Committee meeting may be suitable and the outcome from that be put forward for consideration at the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED the proposal was included on the Road Safety Agenda.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Phennah asked if it would be possible to see the details of the 26 routes under consideration. County Cllr Smith advised that the full list was confidential and was not readily available. The first sight that would be made available would be the final four ‘optimum solutions’ and County Cllr Smith reiterated that the Parish Council was well placed to influence the designs at an early stage.

- iv **Highways England** – The Clerk provided details of planned resurfacing work along the A46 from 7<sup>th</sup> September to 16<sup>th</sup> October. From 7<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October, resurfacing work would be carried out between Grafton and Ashton Under Hill. From 5<sup>th</sup> October to 16<sup>th</sup> October, resurfacing work would be carried out between Hinton Cross and the A418 junction at the A46 roundabout.

C/165/20 **County Councillor’s Report**

County Cllr Smith explained that Gloucestershire County Council had begun surveying along the A46, in support of solutions for the M5 Junction 9 – A46 link and that surveying crews had already been seen in the area. County Cllr Smith also reported that funds were now available for the design solution to change the M5 Junction 10 to a four-way junction. This in turn linked to the £24m Cyber Park development, and preliminary work was underway on the Junction 10 upgrade. County Cllr Smith commented that roadway design work was also underway for a major housing development to the west of Cheltenham.

In relation to COVID 19, County Cllr Smith reported that he was very pleased to say that, despite all the limitations imposed in relation to the pandemic, Highways had caught up with their schedule and had hit all their Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Furthermore, the £150m resurfacing scheme was back up and running, although some supply chain issues had been encountered. County Cllr Smith also confirmed that, as discussed in a meeting with Cllr Ward, the proposed work on Northway Lane and Hardwick Bank Road was still on the programme of work and should begin in the third quarter of this year.

County Cllr Smith reported that the Community Maintenance Gangs were now back to strength, so any work in relation to hedges, roadside and signage maintenance that the Parish Council was aware of, could be sent to him for inclusion in their programme.

## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

### C/165/20 County Councillor's Report (Continued)

In light of the COVID 19 lockdown and the need to conduct meetings via Zoom, County Cllr Smith expressed his wish to touch base with the Council to ensure that he had not missed any actions the Council was expecting him to carry out. Cllr Ward raised the issues of the recent resurfacing work on Ash Road, where the second attempt at surfacing seemed no better than the first. This was supported by Cllrs Terry and Roberts. It was also noted that the same contractor had carried out work at Stonehills, which was reported to be of a poor standard. County Cllr Smith thanked Councillors for their feedback and offered to pass it on to the engineer. County Cllr Smith also hoped to be able to visit Ash Road by the end of the week, to see the road condition for himself.

The Clerk advised that there was a Road Safety Committee Meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> September, to which County Cllr Smith would be invited. It was also suggested that Craig Freeman, the Highways Manager could be invited but it was understood that he did not attend evening meeting, although, as suggested by Cllr Roberts, he may attend a Zoom meeting. The Clerk offered to extend the invitation.

Cllr Roberts informed County Cllr Smith, that he would be raising the issue of the road surface over the motorway bridge, leaving Northway, adjacent to The Park. The surface had deteriorated and whilst not an issue for cars, it may be one for cyclists.

Cllr Roberts asked County Cllr Smith if he wished to comment on the 'Two Council Devolution Deal for Gloucestershire'. There was some discussion about what potential outcomes there might be, but County Cllr Smith said that the view of GCC was that there was nothing to be gained until the Government's White Paper was available. He did add that Cheltenham and the Cotswolds had joined together to investigate the proposals. It was noted that there would be a consultation period on the White Paper. Cllr MacTiernan commented that Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) shared the view that little could be done until the White Paper was issued.

Cllr Roberts thank County Cllr Smith for his report.

\*7.32 p.m. - County Cllr Smith left the meeting.

### C/166/20 Planning Committee

Members received the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting that took place on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

### C/167/20 General Purposes Committee

Members received the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting that took place on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

### C/168/20 Staffing Committee

Members received the Minutes of the Staffing Committee Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

### C/169/20 Finance Committee

Members received the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

### C/170/20 Borough Councillors' Report

Cllr Godwin advised the meeting that as it had been very quiet through August, there was little to report this time. Cllr Godwin did report however that everyone should by now have received the 'Borough News'. Furthermore, Cllr Godwin advised the Committee that there was some funding available for community groups through Section 106 money, which could be used for sport, leisure and playing pitches. The closing date for expressions of interest was 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020.

## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

### C/170/20 Borough Councillors' Report (Continued)

Cllr Godwin advised the Committee that TBC had issued its Recovery Plan, which was aimed at supporting residents and local businesses and was in line with TBC's Corporate Plan. Cllr Godwin reported that the Mop Fair had been suspended for this year.

Cllr Roberts said that the approach road to the Leisure Centre was in a very poor condition and invited Cllr Godwin to feed the comment back to TBC for consideration.

\*7.38 p.m. – Cllr Mackenzie left the meeting.

### C/171/20 Council Accounts

Members had received a copy of the Schedule via email. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the schedule of bills paid and cheques for payment at 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, totalling £39,029.54 should be approved. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

With regard to the reminder invoice from TBC in relation to Business Rates for Northway Village Hall, the Clerk reported that she had asked for an explanation from TBC but they were still unclear as to why the £234.00 invoice had been raised. The conclusion was that the Parish Council was not under any obligation to pay the invoice and that given the charitable status of the Trustees of Northway Youth Club, it was likely that the bill would be waived, once the invoice was in the name of the Trustees.

### C/172/20 Tewkesbury Christmas Lights

A request had been received by Northway Parish Council (forwarded to Members on 24<sup>th</sup> July), for a donation toward the Tewkesbury Christmas lights. The Clerk reported that positive responses to the request had already been received from Cllrs Roberts, Ward, Mackenzie and Barnes. The figure suggested was £250.00 and the Clerk explained that if other events were not taking place during the financial year, as a result of Covid-19 there would be more funds than usual in the Chairman's Allowance that would more than cover the request

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that a donation of £250.00 was made taking the funds from the Chairman's Allowance. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### C/173/20 Budget Setting

In consideration of approval for the Clerk to access budgeting assistance from DCK Accounting, where necessary, Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that such access should be granted.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### C/174/20 Remembrance Sunday

There was general agreement that this event should be marked with the laying of a wreath. Cllr Phennah outlined the protocols being used for the Cheltenham Battle of Britain commemoration on 20<sup>th</sup> November, where an official ceremony was to be held but with restrictions.

Cllr Terry provided an update on services taking place at St. Nicholas Church from the coming weekend. As long as Churches were allowed to hold services with restricted numbers, a wreath laying ceremony would be held there.

## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

### C/174/20 Remembrance Sunday (Continued)

Cllr Shelton outlined the current situation with regard to the British Legion Club in the town. It was understood that whilst the British Legion itself would continue, the club base was to close, meaning that an alternative base would need to be found. Cllr Roberts asked Members if there were any objections to the Council donating money for a wreath this year, and none were raised. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a wreath was ordered with a donation of £50.00.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### C/175/20 Christmas Event

There was a widely held view that it was too difficult to plan ahead for a Christmas event. Cllr Ward suggested that as the Hub was not being hired out for any other parties, it would be disrespectful for the Council to hold an event of its own. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that there should be no plans for a Christmas event, but if circumstances changed early into the new year, then the subject could be reconsidered. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### C/176/20 Corona Virus (Covid-19)

#### i. **Opening Community Hub**

- a) The Clerk reported that the Slimming World group had returned to the Hub and that generally their class had been well managed. There was an instance of one group member not following the one-way system, but this was very quickly addressed. The Veterans' coffee morning had also held a meeting, which appeared to have gone well, with eight members in attendance.
- b) There was a discussion about the Risk Assessments that had been submitted by a number of groups, wishing to return to the Hub. Cllr MacTiernan suggested that with the new 'rule of six' having been introduced, the assessments were now somewhat academic. The Clerk read a response to the Council, that had been received from a parliamentary researcher, which put emphasis on the fact that for buildings with multiple rooms, such as the Hub, those rooms must not be occupied by more than six people. Cllr Roberts commented that the new rules would impact a number of clubs that might want to use the Hub. In terms of the various Risk Assessments received, Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that they should be approved but subject to any new Government restrictions that emerge.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c) There was a brief discussion about the use of the Hub for other groups and private hires i.e. parties. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that no parties should be allowed at the Hub until early in the new year. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED an amendment that Cllr Ward accepted that that the situation should be reviewed at the December Council meeting. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d) In consideration of the check list for the holding of face to face meetings, it was AGREED that the Parish Council did not fit the criteria, and therefore face to face meetings would not be held.
- e) A grant of £1000 had been received via Tewkesbury Borough Council. The Clerk confirmed that this money could be used in support of COVID 19 related expenditure.

#### ii. **Further Actions** – There were no further actions raised in relation to the Corona Virus.

**C/177/20 Garden Town / Parish Meeting**

Northway Parish Council was represented at the Garden Town / Parish Meeting by Cllrs Roberts, Ward and Barnes.

Cllr Roberts reported that the meeting had been of very little interest and although he had agreed to continue to attend, had begun to question its function. Cllr Roberts explained that a presentation had been given at the meeting in relation to the train station, which although he personally enjoyed, added nothing new to the Town Project.

Cllr Roberts informed the Council that Ashchurch Rural Parish Council was trying to get its legal advisors co-opted onto the group, which met with opposition from the Garden Town Team. There was also the view that the Officers representing TBC could have presented themselves with a stronger voice.

Cllr Barnes reported that overall, the meeting, which lasted in excess of one and half hours achieved nothing. The feeling was that nothing would change. Cllr Ward expressed the view that the meeting was very disappointing. He had hoped that following discussions at the previous meeting, that a new map layout would be presented, to show the location of new houses, but it was not. Cllr Ward was in agreement with Cllr Roberts in that Ashchurch Rural Parish Council were very much trying to present their own agenda. Cllr Ward had also agreed to continue to attend the meetings but believed they had a limited lifespan and were just a 'tick box' exercise.

**C/178/20 Changing Room Lease Renewal**

The Clerk explained the background relating to the lease renewal for the changing room and the requirements to advertise the disposal of land on public open space, under LGA Section 123(2A). One Legal had been chosen to provide legal advice based on more favourable costings than the previous provider.

The Clerk explained that the cost for an advertisement was £349 and that this needed to be done twice, equating to a total advertising cost of £698. Cllr Roberts commented that although the costs had not been anticipated, the Council was right to take legal advice and that savings would be made a) by using a more competitively priced legal services provider and b) by structuring a 6 year lease with an opt out clause at three years, removing the need to repeat the legalities and, therefore, saving money.

Cllr MacTiernan commented that by taking the route of advertising, there was a risk that the public could be confused and may draw the wrong conclusions. Cllr MacTiernan expressed the view that she would not support the advertising process and believed that the advice NPC had been given was wrong.

Cllr Roberts confirmed that the question of a necessity to advertise had been raised by the Clerk with One Legal and the conclusion was that NPC did need to do it. Councillors were invited to comment on the issue.

Cllr Terry reminded the Council that this advice had also been received recently by the previous legal service provider, so this was not an isolated instance. Cllr Terry expressed the view that NPC did not seem to have many options in this situation and believed that NPC should follow the advice given.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should follow the advice given, as discussed. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

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

AGAINST:	Cllr Godwin	Cllr MacTiernan
----------	-------------	-----------------

C/179/20 **Crime and Disorder**

The Clerk reported that the youths that had been identified as being involved in the starting of fires, had all been visited in their homes by the police, with parents present. It had been explained to them what the potential dangers of fire lighting were, and each had been warned.

Cllr Ward provided an update to the anti-social behaviour issues that had previously been reported in the Gwen Davies Row area. In summary, following the breach of three Anti-Social Behaviour Orders the Police did a 'Full Closure' on the property and the tenant had been removed for a period of three months, which could be extended to six months. The property in question had been boarded up and the tenant only allowed to return to remove personal belongings and then, only if accompanied by the Police.

Cllr Ward informed the Council that the tenant of another property in the same area was now subject to a six month 'Acceptable Behaviour Contract' (ABC) Order which could not be breached between the hours of 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m..

Cllr Ward reported that it had been a challenging time but that all agencies had worked together to bring about a successful conclusion. Cllr Ward expressed praise for the work of the police throughout this time, in particular, the help received from PCSO Simpson. Cllr Ward stated that he was aware that there had been rumours and suggestions about what had been happening at the house in question and wished to confirm, for the benefit of anyone on the Council who may be asked; it was not a brothel.

C/180/20 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils (GAPTC)** - The Clerk informed the meeting that there were not many suitable courses being run at this time, but Cllr Mackenzie would be attending 'Being a Better Councillors' on 17<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> October. Furthermore, there was a Chairmanship Skills Course, which Cllr Roberts had expressed an interest in attending at the last meeting but the Clerk confirmed he had already received this training. If anyone else wished to be considered for this course to let the Clerk know.
- ii. **Gloucestershire County Council (GCC)** – There was a discussion around the first ever "Gloucestershire Day", due to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Cllr Roberts commented that whatever NPC may consider doing to mark the event, it would probably need to be low-key, due to the COVID 19 situation. The Clerk provided an outline of all the activities proposed by the organisers. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that NPC post a mention on its Facebook page on the day and name our recently nominated COVID 19 heroes.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

C/181/20 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**
  - a) Newsletter with details for Health and Wellbeing in October.
  - b) Chief Executive's Bulletin 03.07.20, 07.08.20, 31.07.20 and 14.08.20.
  - c) Newsletter announcing, "help communities go green".
- ii. **Atkins** – GCC had applied to the Department for Transport (DfT) for funding for the proposed M5 junction 9 and A46 Transport Scheme, with a consultation due to take place in 2021.
- iii. **Worcestershire County Council** – Minerals and Waste Authority Monitoring Report 2016 and 2017.



## NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

### C/181/20 Correspondence for Information (Continued)

- iv. **Tewkesbury Borough Council**
  - a) Notes from the Town and Parish Council Seminar that took place in November 2019.
  - b) Press release – ‘Councils put customers first with new digital platform’.
- v. **Clerks and Councils Direct** – July 2020, Issue 130.
- vi. **Save Our Lanes** – Details of proposed solar farm.

### C/182/20 Correspondence Available in the Clerk’s Office:

- i. **Age UK** – information poster to encourage those over 50 years old to return to shops.
- ii. **Gloucestershire County Council** – A range of regular COVID 19 updates and details of Mobile Testing Unit Locations.
- iii. **Maternity Leave** – A card of thanks had been received from Laura. The Clerk read the card to Members, which confirmed that Laura had been able to use their photo shoot vouchers and that she was very pleased with the pictures.
- iv. **Know Your Patch (Tewkesbury Network)** – Minutes from the meeting that took place on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020, including invitation to a listening and learning event taking place on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

### C/183/20 Correspondence received after 3<sup>rd</sup> September

- i. **Tewkesbury Borough Council:**
  - a) Press release regarding cancellation of this year’s Mop Fair.
  - b) Press release relating to the Recovery Plan.
- ii. **Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils (GAPTC)** - Newsletter
- iii. **Clerks & Councils Direct** – Magazine September 2020, Issue 131
- iv. **The Clerk Magazine** – September 2020 Vol 51 No 5

Cllr Phennah asked if the MOP Fair was going ahead this year and it was confirmed that it was not. Cllr Roberts reported that there will be a single stall, representing the Mop Fair, in order to prevent any challenges to the Charter. Cllr Terry agreed that was going to be the case.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.10 p.m.