

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr M Barnes (Committee Chairman) Cllr J Beadle (Committee Vice-Chair)
Cllr G Fancourt Cllr P Mackenzie (until/from: GP/65/24)
Cllr K Poole

In attendance: Local Resident (until: GP/58/24)
Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

GP/54/24 **Election of Committee Chairman for the Municipal Year**

Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that Cllr Barnes was elected as Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the Municipal year. Cllr Barnes accepted the nomination. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

No further nominations were proposed.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/55/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Roberts, Terry, Shelton, Godwin and MacTiernan.

GP/56/24 **Election of Committee Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year**

Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that Cllr Beadle was elected as Vice-Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the Municipal year. Cllr Beadle accepted the nomination. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

No further nominations were proposed.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/57/24 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 12th April 2023 (Min Ref C/85/23).

GP/58/24 **Ball Games**

A local resident had attended the meeting to address the Council regarding item 12 on the agenda, Cllr Poole PROPOSED that this item was brought forward for discussion. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Members had been circulated correspondence from a resident of Hawthorn Way who had previously requested that the Council install a 'No Ball Games' sign on the small green space

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GP/58/24 **Ball Games** (continued)

there. This resident complained that balls were frequently kicked into her front garden and sometimes into her house by children playing football on the green. She had also received verbal abuse from parents and there was a lot of bad feeling amongst some of the neighbours towards them.

Members had been made aware that the local PCSO, had visited the resident and also spoken to some of the neighbours so was aware of the situation. After speaking to the PCSO about 'No Ball Games' signs, which were not enforceable by the police, the resident had asked that the Council considered installing fencing on one side of the green to prevent balls from entering their property.

Cllr Barnes invited the resident who had attended the meeting to speak. She explained that she was there on behalf of the parents of children who played on the green, who were only small (aged between 3 – 8). The residents who wanted them to stop playing ball games on the green had been rude to the children and parents, making inappropriate remarks, they had also taken photos of children playing, kept balls that had gone into their properties and damaged balls.

It was noted that the land in question belonged to Northway Parish Council, so if goal posts were situated on it there was an issue of liability and they would need to be regularly inspected. PCSO Owen had also advised that the goal posts should be removed. Cllr Barnes asked the resident if the goal posts could be taken off the green and she confirmed that they would be.

Members considered the request for fencing, but felt that, aside from being a costly option, it would require planning permission.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that the Council should respond to the resident requesting a fence, informing that the goal posts would be removed but the Council would not actively stop children from playing on the green and did not want to dissuade them from being outside.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The resident was provided with antisocial behaviour log sheets to record any incidents for police to be made aware of.

7.20pm – Local resident left the meeting.

GP/59/24 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 17th April 2024 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Mackenzie Cllr Poole
Cllr Barnes Cllr Beadle

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Fancourt

GP/60/24 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/36/24 Joan's Field > Fencing – Repairs had been made to the wooden fencing at Joan's Field.

GP/38/24 Parish Maintenance Contract – The rusted dog bin along the Spine had been removed.

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GP/60/24 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

GP/47/24 Joan's Field > Other Issues – Smart Cut had been asked to plant hedgerow whips later in the year.

GP/49/24 Policies – The Joan's Field policy was amended, as agreed.

GP/61/24 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the play park were received. It was noted that the concrete walls were very chipped. Cllr Mackenzie offered to smooth the concrete out so that the walls could be repainted, where necessary. Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the walls should be repaired and painted. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

RoSPA's annual report relating to the Play Park had also been received and Members reviewed the issues raised:

1. Gates – Paintwork is in poor condition. Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the gate should be repainted. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

2. Pathway – The surface is cracking. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.
3. Wheelchair Swing – Rigid suspension mechanisms (total length) are not permitted. Body trap present, failed test for heavy or rigid suspension parts. Notes on the report suggested that there were no reasonably practicable actions identified.
4. Cableway – It was highlighted that cableways were known to fail due to wear and corrosion, therefore, inspections were required. It was confirmed that the cableway (aerial runway) was inspected annually. It was also noted that there was a finger trap present – Cllr Mackenzie offered to have a look at this.
5. Roundabout – It was noted that there was a bolt missing. The Clerk advised that the roundabout had been serviced since the annual inspection was completed, the contractor had noted that there was a bolt missing, however, it could not be replaced as the thread 'had gone', he had confirmed that the missing bolt would not cause any issues.

Corrosion on the roundabout had been highlighted, Members were reminded of an agreement to paint the roundabout once the bearing had been replaced.

A gap exceeding 8mm had been highlighted, the inspector felt that this was due to the worn bearing (which had since been replaced). Cllr Mackenzie offered to check whether the gap had corrected itself.

6. Carousel (Giant Disc) – Edges worn. It was AGREED that this item should continue to be monitored.
7. Play train – Bolt missing. Cllr Mackenzie offered to replace the missing bolt. AGREED.
8. See Saw – Depression of at least 25mm over 600mm. No reasonably practicable action was identified. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.

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GP/61/24 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

9. Merga Swing – Paintwork in poor condition. Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the corroded areas should be addressed and repainted. Cllr Fancourt SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that the tiger mulch surfacing was wearing by this item. It was recommended that this was monitored and rectified when necessary. AGREED.

10. Swing (Junior) – Shackles had been overtightened causing them to jam. Cllr Mackenzie offered to look and loosen, if necessary.
11. Swing (Toddler) – It was noted that there was some chain wear which should be monitored. Shackles had been overtightened causing them to jam. Cllr Mackenzie offered to look at these also.
12. Trampoline – Surface has poor drainage. It was noted that the previous agreement to purchase a stick pump (Min Ref: GP/104/23 refers) had not been progressed due to the fact that the Play Inspector had found it too difficult to remove the trampoline cover by herself. It was felt that nothing much could be done about water collecting in the trampoline after heavy rainfall.

ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** - Weekly inspection reports relating to the skatepark were received, a trip hazard had been highlighted on The Quad. Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that this should be rectified, if necessary, and offered to take a look. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

RoSPA's annual report relating to the Skatepark had also been received and Members reviewed the issues raised:

1. Overall site – The surface is cracking. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.
2. Kicker Ramp / Fun box (Quad) / Grind Box / Grind Rail / Driveway with Rail / Wave Ramp – Paintwork in poor condition. It was felt that, considering plans for a new new skatepark were progressing, the equipment should not be repainted.
3. Fun Box (Quad) / Driveway with Rail – Transition between ground and unit exceeds 5mm – Cllr Mackenzie had already offered to look at the Quad and offered to look at the Driveway with Rail at the same time.
4. Grind Box – Bolts missing. Cllr Mackenzie offered to take a look at this.
5. Half pipe – Riding surface would benefit from repainting to make less slippery. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.

b. **Skatepark Project**

1. It was confirmed that The National Lottery's Community Fund had approved a grant of £143,300 towards provision of a new skatepark in Northway. Cllr Beadle PROPOSED acceptance of this grant. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

2. The Clerk's Assistant had submitted another application to Enover Community Trust for £50,000 towards the skatepark project. A panel would make a decision on this at the start of July.

Members were reminded that the total cost of the project was £223,000, £120,000 of the Lottery grant was towards provision of the skatepark with £22,300 set aside as a contingency (10%) and £1,000 towards legal costs. A grant of £2,000 had been approved by Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association and a donation of £100 had been received towards the project, in addition to this, the Council had committed £50,000, which left a shortfall of £50,900.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that the General Purposes Committee should recommend to Full Council that a further £50,000 was earmarked towards the project to cover any shortfall so that Maverick could be booked in.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Poole PROPOSED that the Council should look into local fundraising within the community to help towards the cost of the skatepark. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

3. It was AGREED that a General Purposes Projects Working Party Meeting should be arranged to further discuss progression of the skatepark project and potential fundraising ideas.

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the MUGA/Outdoor Gym were received. It was noted that the MUGA fencing, posts and basketball backboard were still dirty. Paint was also peeling on one of the posts. It was AGREED that this should be re-painted.

RoSPA's annual inspection report raised the following issues:

1. Benches – Worn ground areas creating trip hazard. Members considered what could be done to rectify this hazard, however, it was AGREED that no action should be taken.
 2. MUGA Sign – It was noted that the sign at the entrance to the MUGA had been sprayed with paint. It was felt that this could be removed with a graffiti wipe. AGREED.
 3. Basketball Hoop (Car Park) – Backboard cracked and no net. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.
 4. MUGA – Panel damaged. Cllr Mackenzie offered to take a look and repair, if possible. AGREED.
 5. MUGA Surface – Surface crumbling. It was AGREED that the surface should be monitored.
 6. Table Tennis Table – Concrete edges are in poor condition. Cllr Mackenzie offered to take a look and sand the edges, if necessary. AGREED.
- iv. **BMX Humps** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the BMX Humps had been received, no issues were raised.

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GP/61/24 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

RoSPA's annual inspection report raised the following:

1. Surface – Surface is uneven. Members AGREED that no action should be taken.
 2. Sign – No clear start or finish. It was AGREED that no action should be taken.
- v. **Gate Opening** – Members considered if/how the main playing field gate should be opened and closed following the death of Brian Trenfield, who had been employed to do this twice a day, seven days a week.

It was noted that Cllr Mackenzie had been opening and locking the gate and could continue to do this for another couple of weeks.

Members considered whether the times during which the gates were open required changing. It was AGREED that they should remain as they were.

With regard to the role, going forwards, it was AGREED that this should be considered by the Staffing Committee.

Cllr Poole PROPOSED that Full Council should be asked to consider ways it could honour the memory of Brian at its next meeting. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Other Issues** – No other issues relating to the Playing Field were raised.

GP/62/24 **Joan's Field**

- i. **Giant Hogweed Inspection** – It was noted that the next Giant Hogweed was due to take place at the end of May. Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the Council should ask Cllr Roberts whether he was willing to do this. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Fancourt suggested that the Council considered holding worker days at Joan's Field and invited residents to assist with pruning, if this was something that was progressed the newsletter could be used to spread the word.

GP/63/24 **Platinum Park**

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – The weekly and annual inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No issues were raised.
- ii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Mackenzie mentioned that there used to be a pond at the top end of Platinum Park, and it had started to reappear. The area around the 'pond' was very boggy and, as mentioned at the previous meeting, he felt it would be beneficial to plant some trees nearby to help soak away some of the water. He had spoken to a tree surgeon who advised that oak trees should not be planted within 100m of any houses. The idea of planting blossom trees along the eastern side of the Park had been raised at a previous meeting (Min Ref: GP/48/24 refers), however, it was noted that a land drain ran along the this boundary so it was felt that the ground would be unsuitable.

It was noted that a grant was available towards planting of a Coronation orchard, this was due for consideration later in the meeting.

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GP/63/24 **Platinum Park** (continued)

Cllr Mackenzie reported that the two Jubilee oak trees were becoming very overgrown and he PROPOSED that the local schools were contacted and reminded of their guardianship of these. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/64/24 **Northway Community Hub**

Members looked at some bench options for the Community Hub (Min Ref: C/128/24 refers). Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that this should be put back to Full Council and the bench considered as a memorial bench in honour of Brian Trenfield.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/65/24 **Newsletter**

Members considered articles for inclusion in the next issue of Northway Voice. Suggestions included:

- Proposed trees for Platinum Park.
- Orchard/pruning day information.
- A46 consultation update.
- Update on the skatepark and details of fundraising plans (Cllr Poole offered to write).
- Request for people to be considerate playing ball games near houses (Cllr Beadle offered to write).
- Death of Brian.
- Election of new Chairman and thanks to old Chairman.
- Update on repairs to pavements (following report-it to County Council).

8.37pm – Cllr Mackenzie left the meeting.

It was AGREED that the Staffing Committee should consider how the next issue of the newsletter would be delivered.

8.40pm – Cllr Mackenzie rejoined the meeting.

GP/66/24 **Tree Maintenance Schedule**

It was noted that visual tree inspections were due to take place in order to ensure that they were safe.

Cllr Fancourt offered to check the trees in Joan's Field, Cllr Barnes offered to check the trees in Platinum Park and Cllr Poole offered to check the trees in Northway Playing Field, Kingston Road, Ash Road and Sycamore Road.

The only other trees for which the Parish Council was responsible were in Hawthorn Way and these had been visually inspected by the Clerk and Clerk's Assistant during a site visit earlier that day.

GP/67/24 **Coronation Community Orchard Funding**

Members were given details of the Coronation Community Orchard Grant Scheme through

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GP/67/24 **Coronation Community Orchard Funding** (continued)

which grants of up to £5,000 could be obtained towards creation (or expansion) of a community orchard to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III.

It was noted that the grant would cover the cost of trees, guards, signage and fencing, so ongoing maintenance was not something that was included.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that the Council should apply to this grant towards the cost of six trees with tree guards for planting at the north end of Platinum Park. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Fancourt offered assistance with the application process.

GP/68/24 **NCV Flower Barrels**

Members considered the flower barrels that NCV had installed around the parish, of which there were about six or seven. Due to the fact that NCV had very few members left and had previously indicated that they would no longer be maintaining the barrels, the Council wondered what would happen as/when they started to fall apart.

Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED that the Parish Council had a conversation with NCV about this and brought their response back to the next General Purposes Committee meeting. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was suggested that another article could be included in the newsletter, if considered beneficial.

GP/69/24 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

i. **Litter Picking** – It was reported that the Litter Picker's trolley was in need of replacement. Cllr Poole PROPOSED purchase of a new trolley. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

ii. **Emergency Contractor** – It was noted that one of the Council's emergency contractors, Dave Hartell, had passed away. Members were reminded that the Council's emergency contractors were reviewed annually so it was AGREED that any additions should be considered then.

iii. **Other Issues** – It was noted that Gloucestershire County Council had advised that they were no longer able to support funding for any further weed spraying programmes that used Glyphosate, only ones that used ICADE. Smart Cut had confirmed that they currently used Glyphosate to treat weeds.

It was AGREED that SmartCut should be asked whether ICADE would be an effective weedkiller for them to use in the parish going forward.

GP/70/24 **Drainage and Flooding**

i. **Reports** – Members received the offer of a presentation from a man involved in the SafeAvon pollution monitoring project which measured the amount of untreated sewage in

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GP/70/24 **Drainage and Flooding** (continued)

the River Avon. Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that he should be invited to address the General Purposes Committee at the next meeting on 19th June 2024.

It was noted that he was also considering doing a couple of walks a year in Northway going through the history of the local area.

- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie confirmed that there were no flooding issues to report.

GP/71/24 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities over the past month:

Flooding over footpath opposite Apple Tree Court
Debris in culvert at side of Apple Tree Court (believed to be resolved).
Dead trees on island at Northway Lane, by Kingston Road.
Lifted metal cover on verge outside Davey Walk.
Overgrowth along old Northway Lane leading to Playing Field.

It was noted that the police had closed the case regarding the fires on Northway Playing Field.

GP/72/24 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Ashchurch Cemetery** – It was noted that several queries had been received regarding the lack of grass cutting taking place at Ashchurch Cemetery. Members considered how these should be responded to.

Although Members were aware that the Parish Council had no duty to maintain the cemetery, and this was made clear when the boundary change took place, they felt that there was the option of consulting with residents as to whether they wanted the precept to be increased to allow the possibility of this.

Emails from two members of the public were read to Members.

GP/73/24 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **ParishOnline** – It was confirmed that the Council's subscription to ParishOnline's mapping software had been renewed.

GP/74/24 **Correspondence Received After 9th May 2024**

- i. **Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association** – Details of Playground Inspection Training Seminar on 19th June 2024.
- ii. **High Sheriff of Gloucestershire** – Invitation to National Volunteer Week Service at Gloucester Cathedral on 8th June 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 9.15 pm.