

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 15th September 2021 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:17 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Committee Chairman) Cllr S Terry (Committee Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr C Blackmore
Cllr P Godwin Cllr E MacTiernan
Cllr G Shelton

In attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

GP/123/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Roberts, Treacy and Mackenzie.

GP/124/21 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11th July 2012 (Min Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2).

GP/125/21 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 21st July 2021 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Terry
Cllr Blackmore Cllr Godwin

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes Cllr Shelton
Cllr Ward

GP/126/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/109/21 Dog Control and Welfare Working Party – Signs at the Playing Field were in the process of being amended to request dogs be kept 'under control'.

GP/96/21 & GP/107/21 Litter Picking Event Litter picking equipment had been delivered to the Hub following volunteer litter picker training induction.

GP/117/21 Parish Maintenance Contract – Weeds along Hardwick Bank Road (and in drains along Thistle Downs) had been reported to Gloucestershire County Council for inclusion on the maintenance list.

GP/76/21 Northway Playing Field > Skate Park – Welds on ramps and half pipe had been repaired.

GP/80/21 Parish Maintenance – Gloucestershire County Council had paid its contribution towards the cost of weed killing in Northway.

GP/28/21 Parish Maintenance – The annual grass cutting report had been submitted to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

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GP/126/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

GP/78/21 The Park – Wire mesh had been installed on the remaining bollards around the perimeter of The Park.

GP/127/21 **GP Projects Working Party**

- i. **Previous Meeting** – Notes of the GP Projects Working Party meeting that took place on 1st September 2021 had been circulated to Members.
- ii. **Outdoor Gym Area/Fit Zone** – Installation of the outdoor gym area was due to commence on 11th October 2021, provided there were no delays.
- iii. **Joan’s Field Access** – A start date was still being awaited for commencement of work to create a new access into Joan’s Field.
- iv. **Wheelchair Swing**
 - a. **Quotation** – An updated price had been received for supply and installation of the wheelchair swing; the GP Projects Working Party had recommended acceptance of this quotation (Min GPP/37/21 refers).

Cllr MacTiernan explained that she was against installation of a wheelchair swing as it would only be used by a minority of the community. Cllr Ward reminded her that the Council had already agreed to progress this project.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED acceptance of the new quotation. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Terry	Cllr Barnes
	Cllr Godwin	Cllr Shelton
	Cllr Ward	

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Blackmore

- b. **DFG** – It was announced that Cllr Terry had completed an application for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) towards the cost of the wheelchair swing. The GP Projects Working Party had recommended that the General Purposes Committee agreed to cover the cost of the swing itself if the grant application was unsuccessful.

Cllr MacTiernan said she would be against the Council funding this project with precept money when only a few people would use it. Cllr Ward pointed out that the Council had announced in the newsletter that a wheelchair swing was being progressed.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should wait to see the result of the grant application, if unsuccessful the Council could look at trying to seek funding elsewhere, including asking County Cllr Smith for help. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Terry	Cllr Blackmore
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Godwin
	Cllr MacTiernan	Cllr Shelton

AGAINST: Cllr Ward

The Clerk’s Assistant added that the community survey had also shown that there was a lot of support for the project.

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GP/127/21 **GP Projects Working Party** (continued)

- v. **Skate Park** – Members of the GP Projects Working Party had visited skateparks in Churchdown and Longford, they had been particularly impressed with Churchdown park.

The Clerk and Clerk's Assistant had met with the Director of Maverick Skateparks who had advised that the Council obtained three indicative tenders/designs based on the site and estimated budget. Once a firm had been agreed upon, they could work alongside the Council on consultation, funding, design, etc.

It was noted that, due to drainage, it would not be possible to install a bowl.

The GP Projects Working Party had made the following recommendations relating to the Skatepark project:

- a. The Council should aim to replace or remove the existing facility by 2024/25.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED agreement to this.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. The Council should install a banner or signage at the existing facility. It was AGREED that this should be deferred until after indicative tenders had been sought.

- c. Spoil from the work should be used to improve the BMX humps. It was noted that this would not be possible as subsoil and granite chippings were recommended for BMX humps.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should seek indicative tenders for a replacement Skatepark. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Other Projects** – No updates.

- vii. **Online Sessions** – The Clerk's Assistant had attended an online session on funding provided by Gloucestershire Community Foundation and a report on this was provided.

Cllr Barnes and the Clerk's Assistant had also attended an online session hosted by Inform Gloucestershire who provided data and analysis statistics for the county. Cllr Barnes provided a short report relating to this.

- viii. **Next Meeting** – The next Working Party meeting had yet to be scheduled.

GP/128/21 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports relating to the Play Park had been received. Members were disappointed to learn that the seesaw had been vandalised (police had been informed).

- b. **Seesaw** – A quotation of £364 had been received from the manufacturers of the seesaw for supply of replacement parts (plus £25 for replacement bolts, if required). The suppliers had advised that the parts would be easy to fit and instructions would be provided. Cllr Ward PROPOSED purchase of replacement parts.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/128/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- ii. **Northway Skatepark** – Inspection reports relating to the Skatepark had been received. No new issues were raised.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Inspection reports relating to the MUGA and Outdoor Gym had been received, no new issues were raised.

- iv. **BMX Track** – Inspection reports relating to the BMX Track had been received and no issues were raised.

- v. **Fete** –

- a. **Update/Feedback** – Members that had attended the Fete all agreed that it had been an enjoyable day. It was also noted that the Parish Council stall had been particularly popular due to the free competitions which had resulted in good interaction with members of the public. Cllr Ward felt that the Council should ensure that the stall competitions remained free at future fetes.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should write a letter of thanks to Ms Fowler, who organised the Fete.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Gazebo** – It was noted that Cllr Ward had permitted the Council use of his gazebo at the Fete for a number of years but it had become damaged. The Clerk mentioned that Cllr Phennah had offered to provide details of the gazebo that SSAFA used as this seemed like a particularly good one.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should await information from Cllr Phennah. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Security** – Councillors at the Fete had noticed a 4x4 vehicle gain access to the field through the gap between the inner gate and the first bollard. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that another bollard should be installed in the gap to make the field secure, up to a maximum budget of £300. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vii. **Palisade Fencing** – It was reported that an emergency repair had been undertaken to a section of palisade fencing at the field. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this expenditure (totalling £35) was ratified. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- viii. **Other Issues** – Young Gloucestershire had provided a report following sessions that had taken place at the Playing Field over the summer holidays and this was read to Members.

It was reported that a resident in Oak Drive had, after cutting down part of a tree in their garden, noticed a bird's nest inside it. As such, the branches had been left overhanging the fence between the Playing Field car park and the resident's garden. The resident said that they would continue to check on the nest and, once the birds had vacated, they would remove the branches.

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GP/129/21 **Joan's Field**

No issues were raised relating to Joan's Field.

GP/130/21 **The Park Amenity Land**

- i. **Inspection Report** – No issues were raised following inspections of the Teenage Shelter.
- ii. **Other Issues** – None.

GP/131/21 **Trees**

- i. **Saplings** – Members received advice from an arborist relating to the saplings at the entrance to Northway Playing Field. Although healthy, the saplings were planted too close together.

Cllr MacTiernan felt that the saplings would be better located on The Park, behind the Teenage Shelter (where she had previously suggested introducing a wooded area (Min Ref: GP113/21 refers).

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should ask the arborist how much it would cost transport some of the trees onto The Park and when the best time to do this would be. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Pruning** – The arborist had suggested that the Council might want to consider pruning of its cherry and plum trees (she had quoted approximately £80 for them all). Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the trees were pruned.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Virginia Close** – The Clerk and Clerk's Assistant had met with a Tewkesbury Borough Council Officer regarding the tree outside Virginia Close. Residents had planted a bush next to the tree and this, along with the ivy growing up the trunk, had been blocking drivers' views of oncoming cars at the chicanes (Min Ref: GP/98/21 refers). As a result of this meeting, some of the lower ivy had been removed from the trunk of the tree and the bush taken out.

Members noted that residents had now put up a wooden field gate to stop walkers cutting through the gap where the bush had been. As visibility at the chicanes had improved and it was not Parish Council land no further action was considered necessary.

- iv. **The Queen's Green Canopy** – Cllr MacTiernan had looked into the tree planting scheme which was providing free saplings. She felt that it would be good to plant a copse/wooded area on The Park as part of this, however, she would prefer to see more established trees planted.

The Clerk's Assistant advised that The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire was offering Town and Parish Council's two English Oak Trees each for planting in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that Northway Parish Council gratefully accepted this offer.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/131/21 **Trees** (continued)

Cllr MacTiernan suggested that further investigations were made regarding the other trees.

Cllr Blackmore felt it might be useful to ask the arborist for advice on where the two free oak trees should be planted.

v. **Other Action** – None.

GP/132/21 **Bins**

Emergency action had been required after the liner of a bin on The Park had been removed, emptied and thrown in the brambles. In the past, Cllr Ward had kindly bolted liners into the bins which had stopped this happening while still allowing Ubico to remove the liners. This bin and at least two others had not had the liners bolted in.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the emergency action was ratified and liners bolted in. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/133/21 **Newsletter**

Members considered items for inclusion in the next issue of Northway Voice. Articles suggested included: - The fete, Christmas events, link to fraud booklet and issue of fraud, bulb planting, CAB (article already provided), pollution monitor in Northway, cars parking on the verge (blocking mowers), 'bridge to nowhere'/Judicial Review update, recent vandalism.

Members were reminded to let the Office know if they were willing to write any of these articles or had any further suggestions.

GP/134/21 **Memorial Bench**

An amended draft policy on Memorials had been circulated. Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/135/21 **Circus**

Members had been circulated correspondence from James Richards Circus who wanted to bring their small Circus show to 'the park off Northway Lane' for half a week (4th September until 7th September 2022).

Cllr Terry raised concerns about heavy equipment/vehicles damaging the grass. Cllr MacTiernan felt that the letter showed that they were well aware of such issues and, therefore, PROPOSED that the Council should approve use of the field for James Richards Circus on the dates requested. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Barnes
Cllr Blackmore Cllr Godwin
Cllr Shelton Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Terry

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GP/136/21 **Bus Shelter**

Emergency action had been taken to repair a broken drainpipe on one of the bus shelters (and a blockage at Northway Village Hall had also been cleared at the same time). Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this was ratified. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/137/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Grass Cutting** – Cllr Terry felt that the grass looked different lengths along Northway Lane verges, as though some bits had been missed.

Cllr MacTiernan commented on how nice the Playing Field and The Park had been cut.

- ii. **Area Opposite the Northway Centre** – Tewkesbury Borough Council had been contacted about the area opposite the Northway Centre which was not being maintained following the clearance work that had taken place at the start of the year (Min Ref: GP/117/21 refers). Andy Noble, Assett Manager, had confirmed that Ubico would be asked to cut back overgrowth as a general tidy up. During the winter they would also be undertaking more extensive work on the site which would include planting of a hornbeam hedge and trees to replace the ones removed.
- iii. **Weedkilling** – Members considered whether the Council wanted to arrange for weedkilling to take place earlier in the year (Min Ref: GP/117/21 refers). Cllr Ward PROPOSED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Members also considered whether any other areas should be included in the weed killing (i.e at the Skatepark or around the bus shelters). Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the weed kill should also include around the bus shelters in the parish.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Review of Ongoing Contracts** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED deferral of this item. No vote was taken.
- v. **Alleyways** – Members reviewed the alleyways that were currently being maintained. It was noted that the alleyways between Fairway and Northway Lane was getting overgrown. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that Bromford Housing should be informed of the problem as the alleyway was their responsibility. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Ward suggested that the Council should also mention Lee Walk when contacting Bromford Housing.

- vi. **Other Issues** – Overgrowth at the entrance to the Playing Field had been reported to Gloucestershire County Council, unfortunately, they could not get this addressed until after Christmas. The Clerk had spoken to PCSO Simpson about the overgrown area (which youths used for antisocial behaviour) and he was going to see if he could push for it to be cut back sooner.

Complaints had been received about overgrowth coming from a property in Ash Road. Bromford Housing were working to try and help the resident get grants to purchase

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GP/137/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (continued)

tools with which to maintain the property. It was AGREED that the Council should continue to monitor this situation.

GP/138/21 **Winter Maintenance**

Members considered whether any action was necessary regarding winter maintenance.

It was suggested that more grit be ordered, if necessary.

GP/139/21 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – Cllr Ward reported that the bottom of Oak Drive and Howard Road had flooded during heavy rainfall recently, however, the water dispersed quickly.

Cllr Godwin mentioned that she had spoken to Gloucestershire Highways men when they had been in Northway, they had told her that the drains required blasting. Cllr Godwin agreed to report this to Gloucestershire County Council.

- ii. **Flood Warden** – It was noted that Cllr Treacy had offered to stand in as flood warden whilst Cllr Mackenzie was away (Min Ref: GP/118/21 refers). GRCC had advised of a flood warden training session on 13th September, however, Cllr Treacy had been unable to attend. The next session would not be until December.

GP/140/21 **'Report It'**

It was noted that the following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities.

- Dead trees in coppice in Northway Lane.
- Drain opposite 27 Thistle Downs was full of weeds.
- Broken Tug Wilson Close signage.
- Overhanging branches on The Spine (4th time reported).
- Overgrowth along old Northway Lane by entrance to Playing Field (as mentioned above (Min Ref: GP/137/21 refers).

GP/141/21 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Tesco Community Grants** – Information.

GP/142/21 **Correspondence received after 9th September 2021**

None received.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.45pm.