

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 15th November 2023 in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr M Barnes (Chairman) Cllr C Blackmore (Vice-Chair)
Cllr J Beadle Cllr G Fancourt
Cllr P Godwin Cllr P Mackenzie
Cllr E MacTiernan Cllr E Phennah
Cllr J Roberts Cllr G Shelton
Cllr S Terry

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

GP/153/23 **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence had been received.

GP/154/23 **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/155/23 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 18th October 2023 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Terry Cllr MacTiernan
Cllr Barnes Cllr Beadle
Cllr Blackmore Cllr Godwin
Cllr Roberts

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Fancourt Cllr Mackenzie
Cllr Phennah Cllr Shelton

GP/156/23 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/104/23 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – Pigeon spikes had been attached to the swing frames.

GP/118/23 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – One of the replacement cradle swing seats had been installed, a bolt had snapped on the other and so the manufacturers had been contacted.

GP/121/23 Dogs > PSPO dog signs had been installed at both entrances into the Play Park.

GP/142/23 Newsletter – The latest issue of Northway Voice had been delivered.

GP/146/23 Ashchurch Grass Cutting – A response was sent to Ashchurch Rural Parish Council regarding grass cutting at St Nicholas Church.

GP/157/23 **Northway Playing Field**

i. **Northway Play Park**

a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the play park had been received. It was noted that:

1. The footpath had become cracked and uneven just inside the gate to the Play Park.
2. Sign in front of the Play Park had been turned to face the opposite direction.
3. Tiger mulch higher in some areas than other around the roundabout (this had been previously reported).
4. Paint was peeling and rust present on the roundabout. It was noted that there was already an agreement in place to repaint the roundabout once the bearing had been replaced.
5. Matting loose and lumpy by the play house.
6. Rust and dents on frame of tripod swing.
7. Graffiti on walls (this had since been removed).
8. Rope started to twist on cone climber.
9. Rubber chipped out on run around (as previously reported) and wood starting to show due to wearing and weather.
10. Fence panels still require cementing in around wheelchair swing.
11. Bolt caps missing on wheelchair swing.
12. Weeds encroaching into the wheelchair swing area.
13. Trampoline pit full of water and litter.
14. Some of plastic bird spikes have been damaged.

Members considered all of these issues to be low risk.

b. **Play Train** – A quotation of £881 had been received for supply and installation of replacement panels on the play train from the original suppliers (Min Ref: GP/118/23 refers). Alternatively, a local contractor had quoted £660 for materials and labour.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should accept the lower price from a local contractor. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

c. **Trampoline Tool** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the cost of purchase of a replacement trampoline tool (£32.18) should be ratified. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

d. **Roundabout** – A local contractor had, since the last meeting, serviced the

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GP/157/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

roundabout and confirmed that the bearing did need replacing. Blueberry had quoted £950.00 for the part but this did not include delivery and the contractor could install it for approximately £350.00.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the bearing should be ordered and installed. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e. **Fencing** – The Clerk’s Assistant had contacted Blueberry again about the fencing around the wheelchair swing. They had suggested that, if they were required to supply a new bearing for the roundabout, they would resolve the issue with the fencing posts when delivering it.
- ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the skatepark had been received, no new issues were raised.
- b. **Skatepark Project** – Members were informed that the Council’s application for funding from Enovert had been unsuccessful. The trustees had felt that the project had merit, however, with such a large amount of the required funding pending they did not feel able to commit funds at this stage. The trustees would consider looking at the application again in the future when things were further progressed.
- c. **Graffiti Workshop** – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that consideration of a graffiti display/workshop event should be deferred until Spring 2024. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Charity Carwash** – Members were reminded that a young resident had contacted the Council about organising a charity car wash (Min Ref: GP/137/23 refers). Zurich had confirmed that, if the Council took active control of the risk management of the car wash, then the individuals could be considered as volunteers, this would then be covered under the Council’s Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance.

The Youth Club Trustees had said that they would not allow use of the Village Hall for water due to it being impractical, however, the Football Club said that the Changing Rooms could be used, provided there was adequate adult supervision. They had also suggested that it might be worth the Council installing an outside tap going forwards (it was AGREED that this should be considered further at a future Finance meeting).

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the resident should be informed that, so long as there was a suitable risk assessment, adult supervision, and they were providing their own washing supplies, they could go ahead with the charity car wash. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Roberts	Cllr Terry
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Beadle
	Cllr Fancourt	Cllr Godwin
	Cllr Mackenzie	Cllr MacTiernan
	Cllr Phennah	Cllr Shelton

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Blackmore

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GP/157/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the MUGA/Outdoor Gym had been received. It was noted that the fencing and posts were very dirty and required cleaning, ideally with a pressure washer. It was AGREED that the Council should consider this in spring 2024.

Members were informed that Caloo would be undertaking the annual maintenance at the end of November.

- iv. **BMX Humps** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the BMX Humps had been received. No new issues were raised.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Other Issues** – Photographs were shown of black bags left in the bin at the south-east corner of Northway Playing Field. The litter picker had found it hard to carry all the rubbish to the main entrance for collection. A post had been shared on social media asking residents not to dispose of household waste in the litter bins.

GP/158/23 **Joan's Field**

It was reported that the crab apple for Joan's Field would be available for collection in January.

GP/159/23 **Platinum Park**

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – Inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No new issues were raised.
- ii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Fancourt wondered whether it would be worth undertaking a survey asking how Platinum Park is used which could be used as part of the Council's biodiversity policy. Cllr MacTiernan suggested that this was deferred until item 9 on the agenda which was on 'Biodiversity'.

GP/160/23 **Northway Community Hub Grounds**

Cllr Fancourt had been asked for advice on what plants would be best to plant at the Community Hub to discourage cats. Cllr Fancourt had researched the best species' which included citrus (lemon balm), lavender, rosemary and rue.

Members also considered a sensor activated cat deterrent. Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED purchase of one of these. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council allocated a budget of £150.00 towards purchase of pots and plants (ideally rosemary and lavender). Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/161/23 **Biodiversity**

Members had been circulated information regarding the Council's statutory duty to consider ways it was/could conserve and enhance biodiversity.

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GP/161/23 **Biodiversity** (continued)

Cllr Roberts explained some of the history of Joan's Field, where NCV had previously done a lot of work with trees, bulbs and wildflower planting. The Council also had plans to look at what more could be done in Joan's Field following completion of the skatepark project.

NCV had also installed numerous birds and bat boxes around the parish.

Cllr Mackenzie referred to the 'wild area' on Platinum Park which the Council had agreed to leave uncut and he had since seen animals there.

Cllr Blackmore suggested that, considering there was a lot already being done in Northway to enhance biodiversity, the model policy that had been circulated could be tweaked and adopted, along with an action plan.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should take the model policy as read, adopt and amend as necessary. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was added that the office should make amendments to the policy and bring back to the General Purposes Committee after Christmas, it should then be reviewed regularly following this.

It was noted that the Council needed to consider biodiversity with future plans for Joan's Field.

GP/162/23 **No Ball Games**

Cllr Blackmore had spoken to one of the residents in Hawthorn Way about the playing of ball games on the grass there. She had felt that the issue was perhaps bigger than first anticipated and so it was AGREED that it should be directed to the local PCSO (this had already been done).

GP/163/23 **Trees**

Tewkesbury Borough Council had confirmed that two of the Parish Council's the small oak trees could be planted on the green by Oak Drive/Kingston Road (Min Ref: GP/143/23 refers). The Parish Council would need a licence to plant the trees, but Ubico could plant at no charge if the Parish provided the guards.

Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that this offer should be accepted and a budget of £200 should be allocated towards tree guards. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/164/23 **Bench**

Quotations had been received for repair of the NHS rainbow bench by a local contractor (£495 maximum) versus replacement of panels with plastic slats (approx. £460 inc. installation). Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that the quotation from the local contractor should be accepted. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/165/23 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **TBC Grass Cutting** – A response was still being awaited from Peter Tonge at Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) regarding the ongoing arrangements for grass cutting (Min Ref: GP/146/23 refers).

A contract for the current year's grass cutting had been received. Cllr Roberts signed the contract.

- ii. **Parish Council Grass Cutting/Maintenance** – Members were informed that three tenders had been received for grass cutting and maintenance in the parish for 2024/25. It was AGREED that the two companies that had quoted cheapest should be asked whether they had a policy on biodiversity prior to a decision being made.
- iii. **The Northway Centre** – Members received a response from Creed Catering, landlords of the Northway Centre, regarding the uneven slabs there. After visiting with their surveyor, they did not feel that the slabs presented any safety concerns.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should send a solicitor's letter to Creed stating that Councillors had surveyed the slabs and there was a trip hazard. No second vote was received.

Cllr Roberts offered to draft a response to Creed. Cllr Terry PROPOSED. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Other Items** – Cllr MacTiernan had not yet managed to find out what the £15,000 grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) went towards with regard to clean up of and around the iron bridge (Min Ref: GP/147/23 refers).

It was noted that there was a gap in the fence between the Community Hub and Lee Walk which someone had been seen using as a cut-through.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED this should be repaired or replaced with something sturdy, possibly trellis or fencing. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/166/23 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No issues were raised.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) advised that there were no flooding or drainage issues in the parish.
- iii. **Annual Report** – No report was available.

GP/167/23 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authority:

Vehicles parking on grass in Kingston Road and Davey Road
Uneven surfacing on bus stop by the Northway Centre.
Uneven slabs on corner of Elm Road junction.

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GP/168/23 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC)** – Information and guidance on litter and waste legislation.
- ii. **Gloucestershire Rural Community Councils (GRCC)** – Flood Wardens update – November 2023.
- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Details of tree preservation order relating to oak on open space at Hardwick Bank Road.
- iv. **Severn Seating** – Information leaflet.

GP/169/23 **Correspondence Received After 9th November 2023**

- i. **War Memorials Trust** - Bulletin
- ii. **Keep Britain Tidy** – ‘Cigarette Butts are Rubbish’ campaign.
- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Advice on nitrous oxide canisters.

There being no further business, the meeting 8.35pm