

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 16th December 2020.

Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7), Councils were 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 approximately 7:25p.m.

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

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

GP/134/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Porter, Mackenzie and Phennah.

GP/135/20 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/136/20 Previous Minutes

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 18th November 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Godwin Cllr Shelton
 Cllr Blackmore Cllr MacTiernan
 Cllr Roberts Cllr Terry
 Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes Cllr Treacy

GP/137/20 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

GP/129/20 Parish Maintenance Contract > Overgrown Bushes, Northway Lane – It was confirmed that overgrowth had been cut back on the green opposite The Northway Centre. Members commented on how much better it looked and how there had been positive feedback from residents.

GP/98/20 CCTV – It was noted that installation of CCTV at Northway Playing Field had now been completed. Cllr Blackmore was assisting the Clerk in arranging necessary documentation and signage (Min Ref: C/243/20 refers).

GP/74/20 Working Party – Members were reminded of an agreement to form a Working Party to discuss progression of a Wheelchair Swing, Skate Park upgrade, Activity Trail or similar. Cllrs Ward, Treacy, Roberts, Godwin and Barnes wished to stand on this Working and it was AGREED that a meeting should be scheduled for January/February 2021.

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GP/137/20 **Northway Playing Field**

i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – No new issues had been raised in the inspection report relating to the Play Park.
- b. **Runway Matting** – Cllr Ward confirmed that he had inspected the matting beneath the Aerial Runway and three panels were missing (photographs were shown). He felt that it only posed a very low risk, although RoSPA may disagree.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should replace the matting, using heavy-duty, hard to remove pegs, if possible.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Cone Climber** – The Clerk’s Assistant had enquired with manufacturers as to their recommendations regarding fraying rope on the 3M Cone Climber. They advised that replacement of the upper/lower nets would be costly (approximately £1,400) but, as the damage was minimal, the affected areas could probably be shrink wrapped.

Cllr Ward had taped the frayed parts of the rope already and photographs were shown to Members. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that that the tape was acceptable for the time being. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Roundabout** – Members further considered options regarding the roundabout (which did not run smoothly due to the low water table where it was sited). The initial price of the roundabout was compared to the cost of repairing it (replacement of bearing (Min Ref: GP/126/20 refers)).

Members asked whether there had been any complaints about the state of the roundabout, there had not.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should investigate the possibility of replacing the roundabout at the upcoming Working Party meeting (Min Ref: GP/137/20 refers). Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Northway Skate Park** – No new issues had been raised in the inspection report relating to the Skate Park
- iv. **MUGA / Outdoor Gym** – No new issues had been raised in the inspection report relating to the MUGA / Outdoor Gym area.
- v. **BMX Humps** – No new issues had been raised in the inspection report relating to the BMX Humps.
- vi. **Other Issues** – There were no other issues raised.

GP/138/20 **Trees**

- i. **Joan’s Field** – Members were reminded of proposals that Ms Teele (arborist) had made in relation to Joan’s Field (Min Ref: GP/127/20 refers) and The Park. In addition

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GP/138/20 **Trees** (continued)

to the work that the Council had already agreed to, Ms Teele had asked whether the Council would object to paying someone to assist her in moving of brush at a cost of £50 per day (she anticipated he would be needed for two days if she was contracted to do work on The Park as well as Joan's Field (see below, item ii.)).

With regards to grease bands, which Ms Teele had recommended the Council put around trees to stop bugs from crawling up them, she advised it was now too late in the year for these to be of benefit but could be considered next year earlier in the season.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council allow for someone to assist Ms Teele with moving brush up to a cost of £100. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Ward	Cllr Roberts
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Blackmore
	Cllr Godwin	Cllr Shelton
	Cllr Terry	Cllr Treacy

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan

- ii. **The Park** – As requested at the last General Purposes Committee, Ms Teele had been asked to provide recommendations relating to the trees on The Park and her report had been circulated to Members with their agenda's.

With regard to a 'medium' group of trees on The Park, she suggested a clear out of branches and a reshape with possibly some height reduction (as a secondary priority).

The larger, taller trees (of which there were 3 or 4) could either be shortened in height if being utilised for fruit, or shaped lower down to provide more shade.

Ms Teele commented that the trees appeared to have been previously cut without attention being given to their fruiting potential, only shape - although the damage was not extreme. There were also some signs of canker which could be removed (and burned) to likely halt any future spread.

Ms Teele referred to a cherry tree near the edge of the field which was suffering from sap leaking (gummosis) and could be cleared out a bit. There appeared to be three main trunks to this tree and so she suggested the Council considered removing of one of the trunks and cutting out the cankers to try and get some new and healthy wood in - however this would need to be done in the summer after flower/fruited.

Members discussed Ms Teele using a fire pit to burn the wood and had no objections to this provided that she was considerate of local residents and roads/the motorway.

Ms Teele had estimated that, if the Council went along with her suggestions, it would take her approximately 2-3 days to complete the work at a cost of £150 per day.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council contracted Ms Teele to undertake the work up to a maximum of £450 (three days) but requested an official quotation.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Saplings** – Cllr Shelton had put forward a suggestion that the Council participated in Plant Britain; a project being run by Countryfile (alongside the Woodland Trust) aiming to get the nation planting more trees.

Members discussed possible locations, such as The Park and Joan's Field which might have space for more trees, however, Cllr Ward pointed out that the trees that Woodland

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GP/138/20 **Trees** (continued)

Trust had supplied the Council with previously were so small that they did not stand much chance of thriving. He suggested that they would be better left in pots for a year to give them a better chance. Cllr Terry felt that this was a valid point, she had four trees from the last Woodland Trust delivery that St Nicholas Church had not been able to make use of in pots in her garden and they had grown to approx. 4 ft.

Cllr Blackmore mentioned a local orchard which was being used to plant trees in memory of loved ones. Members liked the idea of letting residents pay for a tree to plant, they could then enjoy fruit from it once established.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that further consideration of these matters should be put to the Carbon Neutral Working Party. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Ash Dieback** – Correspondence regarding Ash Dieback had been circulated to Members. It was noted that there were Ash trees in the parish, some suffering from this disease, but all were believed to be on Tewkesbury Borough Council land. It was AGREED that the Parish Council should continue to monitor.
- v. **Woodland Trust** – Woodland Trust had sent advice relating to care of the young trees that were planted in 2019 (Min Ref: GP/179/19 refers).

GP/139/20 **Joan's Field**

- i. **Strimming** – SmartCut had been asked for advice on when the best time would be to trim in Joan's Field. A response was still being awaited.
- ii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Ward mentioned comments that had been made relating to maintenance of Joan's Field. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that consideration of a Joan's Field Policy Statement should be put on a future General Purposes Agenda.

GP/140/20 **The Park**

- i. **Inspection Report** – No issues were raised following inspection of the Teenage Shelter.
- ii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised relating to The Park.

GP/141/20 **Bird Boxes for Hub Grounds**

Members were reminded of the agreement to purchase two bird boxes for the Hub Grounds (Min Ref: GP/05/20 refers), unfortunately these had still not become available.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should purchase the bird boxes elsewhere.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry mentioned that her brother made bird boxes and she agreed to ask if he had any available.

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GP/142/20 Parish Maintenance Contract

- i. **Grass Cutting** – Notes of a meeting between Cllr Ward, Cllr Terry, the Clerk and Pete Tonge (Head of Community Services (TBC)) had been circulated (Min Ref: GP/129/20 refers). Cllr Terry highlighted the fact that, although Tewkesbury Borough Council was agreeable to the grass cutting arrangement continuing for another year it would not be able to consider paying any more for the time being. Mr Tonge had also agreed to reduce the number of reports that were required to one, perhaps to be submitted mid-season.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Parish Council renewed this contract with the Borough on the proviso that it would investigate getting more money from them in the future. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Bins** – Members were shown photographs of bins recently installed by the Borough Council (Min Ref: GP/129/20 refers). Cllr Ward commented that he would be happy for the Council to use this style of bins in the future.

Cllr Blackmore felt that it would be interesting to see what the bins were like in the summer as they smelt bad enough in the winter when walking past.

It was noted that Tewkesbury Borough Council believed they may have enough Section 106 funds to replace, at most, one or two more bins if the Parish had an urgent need. Cllrs Ward and Roberts offered to have a walkabout and look out for damaged bins over the next few weeks, It was AGREED that this should be put to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting for further consideration.

- iii. **Bus Shelter Cleaning** – It was noted that Golden Valley Window Cleaning (who were contracted to clean the brick bus shelters) had expressed their interest in taking on the Perspex shelters as well. It was AGREED that updated quotations should be put to a future meeting.
- iv. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/143/20 Drainage and Flooding

- i. **Reports** – The Clerk's Assistant reported that she had no updates on gully cleaning at this time (Min Ref: GP/130/20 refers).
- ii. **Flood Warden** – No reports had been received from the Flood Warden.

GP/144/20 'Report It'

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authority since the last General Purposes Committee Meeting:-

- Branch on tree along The Spine in need of cutting.
- Low tree branch along Hardwick Bank Road (reported by Cllr Treacy).
- Vehicle lost load close to A46/Northway Lane junction.
- Drug activity in the Community Hub car park.
- A case of someone living in a caravan at a property in Northway.

Cllr Roberts reported that the grass had been badly churned near Virginia Close. Cllr Ward believed it was a lorry making deliveries to the school. It was AGREED that this should be reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

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GP/145/20 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Litter** – Copy of a letter from a resident regarding litter on the Northway Lane motorway bridge.
- ii. **Open Spaces Society** – November news.
- iii. **Sovereign Play** – Offer of free quote and 3D design.
- iv. **NALC** – ‘What will the future of play look like beyond COVID-19?’

GP/146/20 **Correspondence received after 10th December 2020**

- i. **Open Spaces Society** – December news.
- ii. **Parish Online** – Newsletter.
- iii. **Keep Britain Tidy** – Details of Great British Spring Clean taking place between 28 May – 13 June 2021. It was AGREED that this should be put on the next General Purposes Committee Agenda for consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.25pm