

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 17th July 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 P Godwin
 Cllr R Godwin Cllr E MacTiernan
 Cllr G Shelton Cllr S Terry

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

GP/91/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Roberts, Fancourt, Poole, Mackenzie and Beadle.

GP/92/24 **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/93/24 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 19th June 2024 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

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

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr R Godwin

GP/94/24 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/86/24 Parish Maintenance Contract > Other Issues – *Following complaint received regarding the whips and trees on the land opposite the Northway Centre, office staff and contractors had not been able to see any damage (other than small chip in bark at base of one of the young trees). Tewkesbury Borough Council had been advised of this and were looking into the matter further.*

GP/85/24 Flower Barrels – *Cllr Barnes advised that he had planted some rosemary and lavender in the barrels on Platinum Park. He had noted that they were not owned by the Parish Council and so had done this at his own risk and expense.*

Cllr Fancourt had emailed to say that he would be willing to weed, feed and fill barrels. He had also wondered whether a local firm might be agreeable to provision of hardy plants for the barrels or even providing new barrels for installation at the Community Hub.

It was felt that, since the barrels still belonged to Northway Community Volunteers, the Council should wait to see what feedback was received from the newsletter before considering making any commitment to take on the barrels.

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GP/95/24 **Safe Avon**

It was noted that, following purchase of a water testing kit, the Council needed to allocate volunteers who would be able to test the water in the Carrant brook.

Cllr Shelton had already offered to test the water and had received training from Geoff Sallis. It was believed that Cllr Mackenzie had also offered to test if or when required, however, it was felt that a third volunteer might be necessary to cover times when Cllrs Shelton and Mackenzie were away. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that an email was sent to all council members asking whether they anyone else would like to volunteer. Cllr P Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/96/24 **Whistleblowing Policy**

A draft Whistleblowing Policy was tabled. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this policy was adopted by the Council. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/97/24 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park** – It was reported that Cllr Mackenzie had checked the cable on the Aerial Runway and the loose bolt on the Tripod Basket Swing but had been unable to tighten either. A contractor had since been asked to tighten the cable and the bolt.

Inspection reports for the Play Park highlighted several issues which had already been reported at previous meetings, it was also noted that more rubber had worn off of the surface of the Runaround.

- ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – It was noted that Cllr Mackenzie had not managed to find the loose panel on the half pipe. Also, he had looked at the surface of the Serpent Runway but there was nothing he could do to fix this.

The weekly inspection reports indicated that there was a damaged bin liner inside the bin by the skatepark. There was a spare liner in storage at the Community Hub, therefore, Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that it was used to replace the damaged one.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Half Pipe** – Members were informed of an incident that took place at the Skatepark where children removed dog poo bags from nearby bins and used an office chair to squash the contents of them across the Half Pipe (Min Ref: C/177/24 refers). Although the Litter Picker had removed some of the bags and faeces, the Clerk had been required to instruct professional cleaning and sanitisation of the Half Pipe. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the cost of cleaning the Half Pipe was ratified. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Skatepark Project**

- i. It was confirmed that Enover Community Trust had approved a grant of £50,000 towards the Parish Council's Skatepark project.

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GP/97/24 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

Cllr MacTiernan thanked the Clerk's Assistant for submitting the application for these funds.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED acceptance of this grant. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Signage** – Members received an image of proposed Skatepark signage from Maverick. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED approval. Cllr P Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Skanska** – Skanska had offered to help with the Parish Council's Skatepark project during their Volunteer Week. They could potentially assist with creation of environmental policies, management system, waste management, carbon footprint support, identifying key risks, setting up an action plan and provision of training.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should thank Skanska for this offer, but explain that the project was already too progressed for the offer to be of any benefit. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Fundraising Events** – Members considered whether a fundraising event should be organised (Min Ref: GP/80/24 refers). Cllr Terry PROPOSED that, following the success of the Council's application to Enover, a fundraising event should not be progressed. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the MUGA/Outdoor Gym were received. No new issues were reported.

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

- v. **Bin** – Following removal of the dog bin at the top of Northway Playing Field, a resident had complained that the bin behind their property (which was now being used for disposal of dog poo bags) had become very full and smelly. They had also had dog poo bags thrown into their property.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the bin was moved further into the field. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/98/24 **Joan's Field**

- i. **Giant Hogweed Inspection** – Cllr Roberts had confirmed that, during his inspection of Joan's Field, he had not found any signs of Giant Hogweed.

- ii. **Footpath** – Members reconsidered the condition of Joan's Field footpath and whether or not it required compacting. It was AGREED that estimated costs should be obtained and brought to the next meeting, along with photographs of the path.

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GP/98/24 **Joan's Field** (continued)

- iii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Shelton had oiled the padlock on the kissing gate and offered to do annually/as necessary going forward. AGREED.

GP/99/24 **Platinum Park**

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – The weekly inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No issues were raised.

- ii. **Trees**

- a. Members were reminded that an application had been submitted to the Community Orchard Grant Scheme towards purchase and planting of six fruit trees (Min Ref: GP/67/24 refers). Further information (quotes) had been requested, the Council had also been asked whether it wanted to increase its bid for trees, however, a response was required before 12th July, which meant that it was potentially too late to respond. It was AGREED that the Council should not increase its bid for trees.
- b. Following previous reports that seven of the ten new trees on Platinum Park had died, Gloucestershire County Council had been contacted about possible replacement trees (Min Ref: GP/82/24 refers). A response had not been received.

SmartCut had advised that the reason so many trees had died was almost certainly due to ground conditions. The area in which they were planted lay wet for quiet long periods of time over the winter which would not help when trying to establish young trees. It was, therefore, felt that any replacements should be planted outside of the boggy area on Platinum Park.

Cllr Shelton had forwarded photographs of the young Jubilee Oak Trees on Platinum Park, one of which did not yet have leaves and might possibly be dead/dying. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the tree was replaced, if/when necessary, with one of the donated Oak's that were being looked after by various councillors. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Bollards** – Following his inspection (Min Ref: GP/82/24 refers), Cllr Barnes had reported several loose bollards at Platinum Park. A contractor had since replaced one and secured six of the bollards. It had been suggested that, going forward, the wooden bollards were replaced with metal ones. A contractor had recently installed steel tubes filled with concrete elsewhere, installation of four (unpainted) would cost £845 (photographs were shown). Cllr R Godwin felt that the tubes needed to be galvanised to last and would look messy unless painted.

Cllr MacTiernan suggested that consideration of replacement bollards should be deferred until September General Purposes Meeting. It was AGREED that prices for galvanised options should also be brought to the meeting.

- iv. **Other Issues** – No further issues were raised.

GP/100/24 **Newsletter**

Members received a draft issue of Northway Voice newsletter, issue 34. Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/101/24 **Oak Drive Trees**

Members reconsidered planting two oak trees in Oak Drive (Min Ref: GP/25/24 refers). Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that Ubico should be asked to plant these, as previously planned. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/102/24 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Grit Bin** – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the cost of reinstating the grit bin on Northway Lane motorway bridge should be ratified. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Other Issues** – Members received an email from a local resident who was interested in tidying up the roundabout by Ashchurch Station. The Clerk confirmed that she had advised the resident to contact the Local Highways Manager.

It was noted that the bus shelters had not yet been cleaned since taking on new contractors in April. The Litter Picker had advised that she would be willing to take on cleaning of the shelters and phone box if the Council wanted to invest in a portable pressure washer. Cllr MacTiernan was conscious that she did not want the Council to add to the Litter Picker's workload so requested that quotations previously sought should be brought to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting for consideration. AGREED.

GP/103/24 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No reports were received.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie was not available to provide a report.

GP/104/24 **'Report It'**

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

Dog poo smeared over half pipe using office chair.
Pothole at entrance to Northway Lane.
Pothole along Old Northway Lane
Overgrowth on both sides of the M5 overbridge (Northway Lane) south side.
Overgrowth on hump back bridge, Northway Lane.
Overgrowth at entrance to Northway Playing Field.

It was noted that a Facebook post had mentioned someone needed to be talked down from the bridge.

GP/105/24 **Correspondence Received After 11th July 2024**

None received.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.