

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 17th June 2020.

Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7), Councils are 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 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr Mrs S Terry (Committee Chair) Cllr S Ward (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr Mrs P Godwin
Cllr J Roberts Cllr G Shelton
Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan

In attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mr T Treacy, Clerk's Assistant

GP/70/20 Apologies for Absence

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

GP/71/20 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), were made.

GP/72/20 Previous Minutes

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 20th May 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/73/20 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

GP/05/20 Community Hub Grounds – *The bird boxes remained on order, but there was no update on when they would be delivered.*

GP/44/20 (i) – Cross Trainer Removal – *Contractor Hartell NB Construction had been assigned the job of removing the seized Cross Trainer, based on their original quote. No date had yet been set for the work to be done. The Clerk's Assistant would progress this with the contractor.*

GP/44/20 (iv) Wheelchair Swing – *With regard to the costs for the provision and installation of a Wheelchair Swing, the Clerk's Assistant had compiled a summary cost sheet, which had been distributed to the GP Committee.*

GP/48/20 Bins – *The Clerk's Assistant advised the Committee that the remaining three bins were on record with TBC and would be replaced when new stock became available.*

GP/49/20 Slabs to Defibrillator – *The work to relay the slabs to the defibrillator at the Hub was assigned to J Williams Contracting, and was carried out on 13th June 2020, as expected, and to a good standard. Cllr MacTiernan enquired as to number of slabs that were used, and was informed that it was 10 or 12. It was also clarified that this quotation was the most competitive. Cllr Roberts asked the Clerk if she had been injured when she had her accident, and she advised that she had not.*

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GP/73/20 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

GP/50/20 Dog Signs – *The Clerk’s Assistant advised the Committee that all the available dog signs had now been fitted. The Clerk had also been made aware of the locations where the Clerk’s Assistant had fitted them. Cllr Terry and other Committee members extended their thanks to the Clerk’s Assistant for doing the work.*

GP/52/20 Graffiti Wipes – *Following earlier cost investigations, Cllr Ward had now ordered and received a batch of graffiti Wipes.*

GP/61/20 Replacement Matting for the Cableway – *The Clerk’s Assistant reported that he had been in contact with the original equipment suppliers of the Cableway, and had provided them with pictures of the ground at the site. Prices to replace the matting had not yet been received, but were expected in the coming few days.*

Cllr Ward updated the Committee, explaining that he had cut away a portion of raised matting at the mound of the Cableway run, which had been identified as a trip hazard in the most recent RoSPA Report. Cllr Terry thanked Cllr Ward for making that area safe.

Cllr Roberts asked about the brake system for the Cableway, and Cllr Ward advised that he had inspected the mechanism, and that there was no brake fitted. The equipment had always been free running, from the time it had been fitted.

The Clerk suggested that it could be useful to ask the RoSPA Inspector to provide some further clarification about the brake mechanism. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this should be followed up.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/74/20 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park** – The Clerk’s Assistant informed the Committee that no formal inspection reports had been received.

Cllr Ward drew the Committee’s attention to the earlier RoSPA Reports, where it had been noticed that a retaining nut was loose on a swing seat. Cllr Ward explained that the nuts were of a design (Nyloc) that prevented them from completely undoing on their own. Having retightened the nut, Cllr Ward suggested that they may not need tightening again until next year.

The Clerk’s Assistant reported that although a full inspection was not currently being done, ongoing visual inspections were taking place.

- ii. **Northway Skate Park** – To consider and agree any further actions in relation to the proposed Skate Park upgrade and optional Activity Trail. These discussions had been deferred from June 2019. There was a brief discussion about both of these proposed developments, and it was widely agreed that under the present circumstances, they could not be progressed at this time. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the discussion be deferred for a further six months.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **MUGA** – The Clerk’s Assistant reported that although a full inspection was not currently being done, ongoing visual inspections were taking place.

- iv. **BMX Humps** – The Clerk’s Assistant reported that although a full inspection was not currently being done, ongoing visual inspections were taking place.

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GP/74/20 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- v. **RoSPA Play Area Inspection Reports** – Members received an update following the recent RoSPA Play Area Inspection report and Cllr Ward updated the Committee on the condition of the Basketball board. The board in its current condition was not thought to be a risk and was unlikely to fall. Cllr Ward offered to fit some clear tape to the board to reinforce it. Cllr Terry expressed her thanks to Cllr Ward for looking into this.
- vi **Wheelchair Swing** – Members had been forwarded summary costings for a wheelchair swing.

Cllr MacTiernan commented that the options given were very expensive and asked how many people had requested the facility, and what age group was this aimed at. It was believed that it was two people (families) that had made the request and that it would be hard to justify such expenditure, for two people.

Cllr MacTiernan recalled that Northway Parish Council (NPC) were to seek funding for this project, which the Clerk agreed, was the plan. Cllr MacTiernan commented that this could progress if funding became available, but did not want to see Parish Council money used.

There was further discussion on the size of the facility, and where it could be located. Cllr Ward suggested that this was a project that probably could not be progressed this year and both he and Cllr Roberts suggested that a Working Party be set up to investigate the various options, similar in approach to the Activity Trail. Cllr Roberts agreed that the concept was very good, but that there was a lot of work to do before deciding which option to take and that overall, this was a big decision to make.

Cllr Roberts suggested that the Working Party could do some initial investigation into what it would like, where it could be located and how the project could be funded. Cllr Roberts recalled that County Cllr Smith had offered to provide funding, perhaps on a 50/50 basis. The Clerk clarified that the offer was not a 50/50 split. The Clerk's Assistant informed the Committee that he had been in contact with County Cllr Smith's office and had been advised that the team that would have helped with this, had been disbanded as a result of the lockdown and deployed to other work. Cllr Terry supported this, and advised the Committee that a number of those dealing with grants, were not doing that job at the moment.

Cllr Ward suggest that in the interim, the Committee should decide what its preferred option was for the facility, so that information would be to hand when the question of funding arose later. Cllr MacTiernan supported this and suggested that the Working Party should be in a position to answer such queries, as any grant awarding body would want to know.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Clerk arrange a suitable date for the Working Party to meet to discuss this. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vii **Crime and Disorder** – The Clerk updated the Committee with regard to the fires. There were now crime and incident numbers for all the fires that had been seen. The Clerk advised that three names had been identified, and put forward. A witness that believed they had seen the fires being started, was now proving to be less dependable. Cllr Roberts hoped that the Police would be able to shock those involved.

Cllr Ward reported that a number of these fires had not been reported to the Police, and that if they were not, the situation would continue. Cllr Terry suggested that the community should be reminded (via social media) that residents should report things of

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GP/74/20 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

this nature to the Police, or that they could inform NPC, which in turn could report to the Police. Submitting reports helps to build the crime statistics.

There was a discussion about fitting dummy or real security cameras. A local electrician had advised that he could get some realistic looking dummy cameras. There was a suggestion that a camera could be located facing the entrance to the site, which would have the added benefit of detecting traveller activity, when there was no-one else around.

Cllr Ward informed the Committee that a local resident, who was involved in CCTV, had offered to help. Cllr MacTiernan raised a concern about who, how and where the cameras would be monitored. If they were not recording on a 24x7 basis, they may be of little benefit.

Cllr MacTeirnan asked if the Committee was sure if the Mosquito sounder was working, as she was aware of youths being in the area late at night. The Clerk advised that an arrangement had been made to have the facility checked later that evening.

Returning to the camera discussion, Cllr Ward advised that a camera set up would be like that at the Hub, where recording was done 24x7, and reviewed when there had been an incident. Recordings would be to a hard drive, which could be stored in the loft space.

Cllr Roberts asked if the Clerk's Assistant could obtain some cost indications. Cllr Shelton reminded the Committee that there had been discussions about this some years ago, which the Clerk confirmed. The Clerk also advised that there was some information still on file at the Hub, relating to previous investigations.

Cllr Roberts raised the question of what could and could not be recorded. Cllr Terry suggested that legislation may have changed, since the previous investigations.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Clerk's Assistant obtain some costings and bring back to the Committee. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

viii **Other Issues**

- a) Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA) had forwarded a selection of the latest graphics produced by the UK Government. The graphics related to the safe use of parks and outdoor spaces and may be of use in the Council's own posters and leaflets. Cllr Ward was able to display a number of posters to the Committee, and they were discussed. Some were considered to be confusing, and in one case, giving the wrong message. Cllr MacTiernan suggested that the two-metre rule was likely to change so the posters promoting that as guidance could soon be out of date.

Cllr Ward suggested using two of the posters that did not refer to a specific distance (references 002 and 017). Cllr Shelton asked the Clerk's Assistant if he would send those two posters out to Members. The Clerk's Assistant was able to show a poster that had been sent in by email, and was believed to be from a park in New Zealand. This example was aimed at people who left litter, and Committee members generally approved of it. Cllr Terry PROPOSED using the poster.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b) Members considered how to reopen Play Parks when government allows, and Cllr Roberts suggested that carrying out a deep clean would build confidence in the area and quotes should be obtained in readiness for re-opening. The Clerk's Assistant

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GP/74/20 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

informed the Committee that requests for quotations had been sent out, and one had come in at £375, to include all chemicals and labour.

Cllr Shelton asked if it would also be necessary to deep-clean the Hub, but the Clerk advised that it was being cleaned as a matter of routine, so a deep-clean would not be necessary. Cllr MacTiernan asked about deep cleaning of the Football Club facilities and who would be responsible. Cllr Ward believed that this would be the responsibility of the lease holders. The Clerk informed the Committee that she had been in contact with the club and had been informed that the Football Association had issued guidance to clubs about what they need to do before re-opening. A copy of that guidance had been forwarded.

Cllr Roberts asked about cleaning of the Teenage Shelter and the MUGA, but it was agreed that those had not been officially closed down and had remained in regular use.

Cllr Ward asked how the Committee should manage the cleaning issue between meetings, as there was potential for a delay if the Committee had to meet again to make decisions. Cllr Roberts recommended delegating authority to spend to the Clerk and the Clerk's Assistant. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED a budget of £450.00 to enable a quick reaction, should it be needed. Cllr Shelton SECONDED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts commented that if a chosen contractor could not react quickly enough and an alternative had to be selected, there could still be a delay if there was insufficient funding. Cllr MacTiernan agreed and put forward an amendment to her PROPOSAL for a budget of £500.00. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c) Cllr Ward showed the Committee some pictures of the cracked pathway adjacent to the Play Park. It was agreed that any action should be delayed until an assessment could be made on whether the rain had helped to close the gaps. Cllr Ward asked that in the meantime, the Clerk's Assistant could obtain prices for a Bitumen Emulsion filler. The Clerk's Assistant was also investigating whether or not there was any guarantee in place from when the work was originally carried out. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that prices be obtained for the Bitumen.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/75/20 **Joan's Field**

Cllr MacTiernan informed the Committee that she had recently been in discussion with Richard Dunn, who had offered to carry out an inspection of the Giant Hogweed in Joan's Field. It was noted the Cllr Roberts had also offered to inspect the area, but that there were limitations on his time. Mr. Dunn had agreed to report his findings in approximately one week.

Cllr Terry reported that she had also received feedback from a number of people who had used the space during the lockdown, and who had commented how much they enjoyed the space.

GP/76/20 **The Park**

- i. There were no actions raised and no formal inspection reports had been received.

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GP/76/20 **The Park** (continued)

- ii. Teenage Shelter – Requests had been made of three contractors to provide a price to carry out a visual inspection, to undertake any minor repairs and to report any findings at the Shelter. The Clerk’s Assistant informed the Committee that so far, one contractor had replied to advise no bid.

Cllr Ward showed the Committee a picture of the repair he had carried out on the shelter. Where an end stop had been removed from one of the pipes of the frame, a suitable plug had been sourced and fitted, to block the open pipe. It was agreed that the Clerk’s Assistant need no longer try to source a replacement stopper from the manufacturer.

GP/77/20 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

i. **Grass Cutting**

- a) **Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) Contract** – Cllr Ward and the Clerk were able to confirm that a hard copy of the Contract for the grass cutting had been signed off by NPC and sent to TBC.

Cllr MacTiernan informed the Committee that a resident had asked her who was responsible for the maintenance of the piece of land opposite the Northway Pub. It was confirmed that the land was owned by TBC. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that NPC write a strong letter to TBC regarding the overgrown condition of the area, and to highlight that it was a place where children hide, that fires have been started in that space and that needles have been found there. Cllr Shelton SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b) **Grass Cutting Contractors** – The Clerk’s Assistant informed the Committee that the Council had been in receipt of more positive feedback about the grass cutting in the Parish and how neat and tidy the contractors leave the area. Some examples of the comments received were read out.

Cllr MacTiernan suggested that a letter be written to the Contractors to let them know about the comments NPC had received and how good the standard of work was. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a letter was sent to TBC, to thank them for allowing NPC to take on the work, and how much it had benefitted the area. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Terry commented on the good job that the Caretaker had done in painting one of the bus shelters. Cllr Roberts commented that he had also noticed this, and that NPC should thank her for it. It was noted that the job of litter picking was also being done to a very high standard.

iii.

GP/78/20 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – Cllr Terry reported that she had been made aware that there had been some flash flooding in parts of the town, due to the recent heavy rain. Cllr Shelton reported that earlier today he had received a flood warning relating to the rivers in North Gloucestershire.

- ii. **Flood Warden** – There was no report presented for this meeting.

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GP/79/20 **'Report It'**

The following issue had been reported to the relevant authorities:

6th June 2020

A brown waste bin had been dumped in the laneway opposite Joan's Field, near to Carrant Brook.

10th June

Four fires

15th June

Damaged pipes at Northway Village Hall

GP/80/20 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. The Rural Bulletin Newsletter dated 1st June 2020.
- ii. Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA) – Newsletter for Spring 2020.

GP/81/20 **Correspondence received after 11th June 2020**

Information leaflet from Littlethorpe Bus Shelters.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 8.20 p.m.