

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 18th December 2019 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Cllr Mrs S Terry (Committee Chair) Cllr M Barnes
Cllr Mrs P Godwin Cllr E Phennah (from GP/176/19)
Cllr C Porter Cllr J Roberts

In attendance: Cllr G Shelton (until GP/179/19)
Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

GP/174/19 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mackenzie, Sollis, Woodward, MacTiernan, Ward and Bailey.

GP/175/19 **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/176/19 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 20th November 2019 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

7.07pm – Cllr Phennah joined the meeting

GP/177/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/164/19, GP/165/19, GP/166/19 Tree Issues – A tree surgeon is scheduled to look at tree related issues in the new year.

GP/164/19 Silver Birch Tree – A letter was sent to a concerned resident regarding an overhanging Silver Birch tree.

GP/164/19 Dog Issues – Reports of a man allowing his dog to foul on the Playing Field and not picking up after it were forwarded to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

GP/165/19 Damage to Trees – A concerned resident was informed that a tree surgeon would inspect damaged trees in Joan's Field in the new year, if time allowed.

GP/170/19 Drainage and Flooding – A letter was sent to the resident concerned about flooding of the Carrant Brook.

GP/146/19 Northway Community Hub Grounds – A litter/cigarette bin had been installed in the Hub Grounds.

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GP/177/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

GP/120/19 Northway Community Hub Grounds – Signs had been put in place warning people to keep off the bark.

GP/178/19 **Community Hub Grounds**

- i. **Encouraging Wildlife** – Prices of bird nesting boxes had been sourced by Cllr Shelton (from £10.00) and photographs of these were shown to Members. Cllr Godwin pointed out that these were the same as the bird boxes that had been for sale at the Northway Community Volunteers (NCV) Christmas Fayre – they were made from pallets and had a rough finish so might need to be treated for weather.

It was noted that costings had not been sought for butterfly/bug houses and hedgehog houses. Cllr Terry suggested that councillors should do some research and find prices for these before the next General Purposes Committee meeting.

- ii. **Volunteer Gardener** – Following an article in the newsletter, a resident had expressed interest in undertaking some voluntary gardening at the Community Hub. Cllr Terry had arranged to meet with the resident and go through the Health and Safety guidelines, risk assessment and 'To-Do' list.

GP/179/19 **Woodland Trust Trees**

Members heard that Cllr Shelton had planted a significant number of trees on The Park. Gratitude was expressed to Cllr Shelton for his hard work.

It was noted that there were still a number of trees left to plant. Members considered where these could be sited. Cllr Ward had submitted a suggestion that some could be planted on the grass next to Northway Village Hall at the Playing Field and/or inside the BMX track – perhaps in two groups.

Cllr Barnes pointed out that the grass area outside the Village Hall was used by NCV at their Christmas Fayre. It was felt that the trees might be better placed closer to the main gate into the Field.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that trees should be placed, as suggested, inside the BMX Humps and just inside the main entrance to the Playing Field (on the right hand side), if councillors were available and willing to plant them.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

7.22pm – Cllr Shelton left the meeting.

GP/180/19 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Play Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports received from GAB Waste highlighted:
 - When pressure put on roundabout, centre spindle moves a lot and out rubs on the base –should be looked at, when possible.
 - Trampoline pit full of water.
 - Graffiti removed from MUGA sign.
 - BMX Humps very wet but same to use.

It was noted that GAB Waste planned to try Nitromors for removal of graffiti.

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GP/180/19 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- ii. **Height Sign** – Following agreement to install a sign warning of height restriction barrier (Min Ref: GP/79/19 refers), Craig Freeman (GCC) had visited the site and felt that a sign was not necessary. Cllr Ward had advised that he would not object to a retraction of his original proposal for a sign.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should not proceed with its original proposal based on the new advice that had been received. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Dog Issues** – It was noted that the professional dog walker mentioned at the previous meeting (Min Ref: GP/164/19 refers) had been observed picking up after the dogs for which she was responsible.
- iv. **Other Issues** – Members were informed of scratches that had been made in wet concrete outside of the Changing Room Facility. It was felt that it would be best to see if this wore away on its own.

GP/181/19 **Joan's Field**

No issues were raised.

GP/182/19 **The Park**

Members received the two inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter. It was noted that graffiti on the Teenage Shelter had been covered over with blue paint.

GP/183/19 **Mosquito**

Members considered whether the Council should agree a donation to the Football Club to cover the cost of electricity following installation of the Mosquito (Min Ref: GP/164/19 refers).

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should inform the Football Club of its intention to install a Mosquito and, depending on their reaction, allow an annual payment of £10 to cover the cost of electricity until the lease is renewed. Following this, an agreement should be included as part of the contract. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/184/19 **Dog Bin**

It was noted that Tewkesbury Borough Council operatives had removed a damaged and unsafe dog waste bin near the railway line. It was assumed that this was the dog bin in Aston Fields Lane, for which Ashchurch Rural Parish Council were responsible.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that Ashchurch Rural Parish Council should be informed of this. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/185/19 **Newsletter**

It was noted that two residents had expressed interest in attending courses at Northway Community Hub (cooking, ICT, photography, etc.), if held.

A total of eight youth survey responses had been received (five parent/carer responses and three youth responses) and feedback was given to Members. It was observed that two parents had asked for information on what happened to money from the sale of the old Youth Club building. Although no contact details were available, it was suggested that this should be fed back to the Youth Club Trustees.

Members felt disheartened that there had not been more responses submitted, however, Cllr Barnes felt that the feedback did indicate that what was being provided by the current Youth Club was not in line with what local parents and young people wanted.

Cllr Roberts felt that the Council could share the results if it felt the need to, but it would be hard to make an informed decision due to the lack of feedback.

The Clerk mentioned that a claim of business being run from the Village Hall had been made publicly. This possibly meant that business rates might need to be paid – although this was not yet clear. Funds that had previously been received from Tewkesbury Borough Council towards the building had all been based on the facility being used solely as a youth club.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should write to the Chairman of the Youth Club Committee about what had been raised.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts suggested that the Council should put the survey results on a future agenda so that Members could further consider the future of youth provision in Northway.

Cllr Terry felt that the Council should mention its disappointment over the lack of responses in the next issue of Northway Voice.

Members were informed that no responses had been received in relation to progression of a Neighbourhood Plan. It was AGREED that the Council should consider non-progression of this at the next Full Council Meeting.

GP/186/19 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Contractors** – GAB Waste had advised of price increases from April 2020 – an increase of 0.55p per hour for litter picking and an increase of £35.00 per week for unlocking and locking the Playing Field gate. It was noted that the price for locking and unlocking of the gate would be more than double what was currently being charged. GAB Waste had explained that the increase would accommodate the fluctuation in times due to the dance and youth club (Min Ref: GP/112/19 refers).

Cllr Roberts asked whether it might be worth allowing the youth club/dance class to have a gate key but concerns were raised that they might not be able to stop travellers and there was also sometimes a need to get people to remove their cars from the car park before locking.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that, based on the previous agreement that the Youth Club should be charged if the dance classes affected the price of locking and unlocking the gate (Min Ref: GP/112/19 refers), GAB Waste should be asked to

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GP/186/19 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (continued)

break down their costings. In addition, due to the increase in charge being so high the Council should go to tender on daily locking and unlocking of the gate (and GAB Waste should be advised that this would be happening out of courtesy). Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Emergency Contractors** – Review of current emergency contractors. Prices had been received from NB Hartell, and these were tabled.
- iii. **Christmas Hours** – GAB Waste had requested 25th December 2019 until 3rd January 2020 off over the Christmas period.

Members wanted to accommodate this request but could not recall, in previous years, GAB Waste's break exceeding a week. Although Members did not think it would be a problem to leave the main gate locked over Christmas (people could park outside the gate and walk into the field), there was a worry that the litter and the bins might become an issue if left too long. The play equipment also needed to be checked regularly to ensure everything was safe.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should request that GAB Waste committed one day during the break to do a litter pick of the Field and check the bins and play equipment – ideally on 30th December 2019.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was also suggested that the Clerk should check whether any football matches were scheduled over Christmas and, if so, arrange for the Club(s) to have a gate to the key.

- iv. **Additional Grass Cutting** – Following acceptance of the offer from Tewkesbury Borough Council (Min Ref: GP/168/19 refers), Peter Tonge (Head of Community Services at TBC) had confirmed that he would pass the matter on to the legal team in the new year. He explained that the £2,000 contribution would likely be classed as a grant which would then be subject to a grant agreement that would outline all of the relevant conditions.

The Saxon Park resident whose letter was received at the previous General Purposes Committee Meeting (Min Ref: GP/168/19 refers) had been informed that the Parish Council would be taking on all of the grass cutting in the parish and had responded that he believed this arrangement would benefit all the residents in Northway.

- v. **Countrywide Grounds Maintenance** – Members considered the standard of work that was being received from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance. It was noted that some jobs had needed chasing but the firm had explained that recent difficulties and delays had been due to the very wet weather. The only outstanding work was reinstating the Ash path on The Park which had not been maintained, they hoped to get this done in the coming weeks.
- vi. **Other Issues** – It was confirmed that paint had been ordered for the brick bus shelters in Steward Road (Min Ref: GP/167/19 refers). Members AGREED that a date for painting should be organised at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee Meeting.

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GP/187/19 Drainage and Flooding

- i. **Reports** – A resident had been providing updates of his correspondence with Severn Trent and Tewkesbury Borough Council regarding his waterlogged garden.

Tewkesbury Borough Council had provided flooding updates on 16th and 17th November following heavy rainfall.

- ii. **Flood Warden** – No reports had been received.

The Clerk mentioned that she had been given details of flood warden training due to take place in January, unfortunately Cllr Mackenzie was unable to attend this training and so the information had, instead, been forwarded to Cllr Sollis (assistant flood warden).

GP/188/19 'Report It'

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities:

- Vehicles driving over verge to property Elm Road.
- Vehicles driving over verge to property Fairway.

Cllr Terry mentioned a car in Hawthorn Way with a broken bumper. She also reported that a vehicle had been parking along the spine which was messing up the grass.

Cllr Roberts mentioned that a car had started parking on the grass in Saxon Park where the Borough Council had installed a 'No Parking' sign. In addition, he reported a van that kept parking on the junction in Saxon Park which was quite dangerous.

GP/189/19 Correspondence for Information

- i. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** – Gloucestershire Views (Autumn 2019).
- ii. **Glasdon** – Product Information.
- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Treecycle poster.

GP/190/19 Correspondence received after 12th December 2019

- i. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Press Release – Recycling and waste collections over Christmas.
- ii. **Woodland Trust** – Stuck for a gift? Dedicate a tree.

Cllr Terry wished everyone a happy Christmas and New Year.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 8.14pm.