

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:09 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Committee Vice-Chair) Cllr Mrs P Godwin  
Cllr P Mackenzie Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan  
Cllr E Phennah Cllr C Porter  
Cllr J Roberts Cllr K Sollis

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

GP/107/19 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Terry, Barnes, Woodward and Bailey.

GP/108/19 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (Min Ref C/159/12), including paragraph 12(2), were made.

GP/109/19 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Porter SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Godwin Cllr Porter  
Cllr Mackenzie Cllr MacTiernan  
Cllr Phennah Cllr Roberts  
Cllr Sollis

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Ward

GP/110/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

***GP/86/19 Parish Maintenance > Area Outside Lee Road Shops*** – Following a letter being sent to shop owner regarding litter outside the Lee Road shops, advice was given as to what bins were available.

***GP/97/19 Northway Playing Field > Security Barrier*** – A bollard had been installed between the palisade fencing and the security barrier.

***GP/97/19 Northway Playing Field > Other Issues*** – A letter of thanks was sent to the resident who picked the up grit bin and grit after it had been pushed over.

***Hornet Nest*** – Following report of hornet nest in Hawthorn Way, a firm was instructed to remove this as an emergency action. Upon inspection, however, the firm confirmed that it was a wasp nest and had already been destroyed but they removed what was left of the nest.

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/111/19 **Northway Guardians**

It was reported that Mr Yardy had emailed to update the Council on progress of this community group. He was frustrated that he was unable to offer much time to the project due to work and with the evenings getting darker he felt it would be harder to get people involved.

Tewkesbury Borough Council were hoping to send out an officer to induct any of the members interested in getting involved in the litter picking side of things. They had also suggested that the Borough would be happy to work with volunteers on a clear up day when the winter works schedule was due to begin.

Barbara Pond from GRCC had offered to meet with Mr Yardy and the other volunteers to offer advice and assistance, but Mr Yardy was arranging this directly.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the group should be asked to send a list of the jobs they hoped to address for approval as/when they got to that stage. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/112/19 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Play Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports received from GAB Waste highlighted
- Bent fence slats
  - Graffiti on the yellow block seat
  - Rubber matting by yellow seat had been burnt but was fading in the weather
  - Sit on spinner graffiti had been removed
  - Roundabout sounding gritty and full of water. It was noted that the roundabout had since been serviced
  - Bolt missing and graffiti scratched in red house (to be fixed later in week)
  - Trampoline pit had been drained of water
  - Weeds had been cleared along serpent in Skate Park
  - Old graffiti on half pipe still could not be removed – suggested it be left until it faded
  - Cross trainer pedals repaired but base still loose (but safe)
  - Track worn on BMX humps but grass had been cut on sides

ii. **Gym Equipment**

Members received a quotation of £560 for removal of the four pieces of gym equipment, including repair of surfacing following removal.

It was noted that a firm called Sunshine Gym were advertising packages from £4,023 for four pieces of equipment, however they could not replace the one damaged item as it would not allow enough space either side.

Cllr Roberts asked whether the Council could purchase replacement gym equipment with 106 funds. The Clerk said that she could investigate this possibility. Cllr MacTiernan said that she would rather see 106 funds used to remove the existing equipment and repair the tarmac than spend £4000 on new items.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this item should be deferred for three months. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/112/19 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

iii. **Access**

It was noted that, following installation of the new security barrier at the Playing Field, residents wanting to access the field with any vehicle exceeding 2.1m would need to climb up and unlock the top section.

Cllr MacTiernan said that, although some people would struggle, she felt it would be unreasonable if the Council did not allow access. Hopefully, if someone was unable to manage they could call on a neighbour to help them.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that residents should continue to be permitted use of the key upon request but the form that they were required to sign should include a disclaimer warning that the Council would not accept liability for any injury. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iv. **Bin Emptying**

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should continue to contract GAB Waste to empty bins on the Playing Field following installation of the security barrier (Min Ref: GP/63/19 refers). Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

v. **Gate Opening**

The Youth Club Trustees had advised that the Village Hall would be in use until past 8pm some evenings (for dance classes) and so the gate would need to be kept open longer. GAB Waste had advised that they did not anticipate this being a problem.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the gate should be allowed to stay open later on these nights but should there be any additional charges incurred these should be passed on to the Youth Club Trustees. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

vi. **Perimeter of the Field**

It was noted that some of the trees and bushes around the perimeter of the Playing Field were in need of cutting back or removing.

Cllrs MacTiernan and Godwin declared an interest in this discussion.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should seek quotations for maintenance (leaving trees planted by residents, if possible).

FOR: UNANIMOUS

vii. **Water Tap**

Cllr Ward reported that he had counted sixty four empty bottles on the Playing Field recently and felt the Council should try and encourage single use bottles by installing a water bottle tap on the Changing Rooms or Village Hall.

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/112/19 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

Cllr Sollis raised concern that this could be used by travellers wanting to stay in the area. Cllr Ward pointed out that the Council would be able to turn the tap off inside the building if/when necessary.

Two examples of water bottle taps were shown to Members, costing between £289 - £420. Cllr Roberts wondered whether 106 funds could be used towards this.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this should be brought back to the Council once more information had been obtained (i.e. installation costs, how vandal proof the product was, whether there were any installed nearby that Members could look at). Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

viii. **Other Issues**

No other issues were raised.

GP/113/19 **Joan's Field**

Members considered the work that was being done at Joan's Field in comparison with what needed doing. Currently, Countrywide were contracted to flail the embankment up to 2m behind the apple orchard two or three times a year, NCV were maintaining the flower circles and planters.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should obtain quotations for pruning the fruit trees and cutting back brambles behind Sallis Close. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/114/19 **The Park**

It was reported that one of the bollards from around the perimeter of The Park had disappeared and so a replacement one had been installed as an emergency action, to keep the area secure. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED ratification of this expenditure of £85.00. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/115/19 **Trees**

An updated map had been sent to members showing where, in Northway, there were trees believed to be the responsibility of the Parish Council. Cllrs Ward and Mackenzie had inspected Joan's Field and The Park. Cllr Mackenzie had noted the apple trees on The Park were in need of pruning. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that quotes should be brought back to a future meeting. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Members considered how often the trees needed to be checked. It was AGREED that this should be done annually with advice sought as to when would be the best time of year.

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/116/19 **Dog Fouling**

Tewkesbury Borough Council had confirmed that the purchase cost of the dog fouling stickers was £0.97 (Min Ref: GP/99/19 refers).

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Clerk should be authorised to order dog fouling stickers, at a cost of £1 each, as or when needed. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that there were approximately 200 dog signs in Northway which needed to be taken down or updated.

GP/117/19 **Bus Shelters**

i. **Painting**

Cllr Mackenzie offered to paint the remaining two brick shelters (in Steward Road) as he had done in The Park shelter. Members gratefully accepted this offer. AGREED.

ii. **Cleaning**

Members received quotations for bus shelter cleaning. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that this item was deferred until after agenda item 21 (consideration of employing a handyman). Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Repair to Solar Lighting**

It was noted that the solar light next to the Saxon Park bus shelter had been damaged and a mechanism was left dangling down from it. Cllr Roberts suggested that the light was so dim it would not be beneficial to repair it.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should not pay to get this repaired. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

An amendment was made suggesting it was cheaper to remove the mechanism that was dangling. Cllr Roberts accepted this amendment to his proposal.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/118/19 **Benches/Chairs**

Cllr Ward declared an interest in this item.

Photographs were shown of two benches that Cllr Ward had upcycled, with wood donated by a local resident, and was willing to donate to the Council. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should gratefully accept the offer of two benches and place them in the Hub grounds. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Mackenzie  
Cllr Godwin Cllr Phennah  
Cllr Porter Cllr Roberts  
Cllr Sollis

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Ward

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/118/19 **Benches/Chairs**

Photographs were tabled of some outdoor chairs that were also being offered to the Council. Members considered whether these would be suitable for the Hub grounds.

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Council did not accept the offer of these chairs as they were not in keeping with the rest of the building. Cllr Phennah SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/119/19 **Litter Picking Bags and Gloves**

Tewkesbury Borough Council had advised that they would provide Parish Council's with bags and gloves to keep at their offices for volunteer litter pickers to collect if they found it difficult to get to the Borough Council Offices. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that this should be arranged if it would be of benefit to any of the litter pickers in Northway.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/120/19 **Hub Grounds**

i. **Maintenance**

It was reported that the volunteer gardeners had said that they would no longer be able to do work in the Hub grounds. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a letter of thanks was sent to them. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr MacTiernan commented that the Hub grounds were looking very nice. Cllr Ward pointed out that Cllr Shelton had been keeping on top of the weeding recently.

It was AGREED that an article should be included in the next newsletter thanking the volunteers who had stepped down and asking for new volunteers to come forward.

ii. **Smoking**

Members considered purchasing a wall mounted ash tray for users of the Hub to dispose of their cigarettes in. Several councillors expressed concern that these were hard to empty and known to break easily.

Cllr MacTiernan mentioned that full sized litter bins with a metal tray on top were used at the Borough Council Offices.

Cllr Sollis suggested that upside down plant pots worked well at The Northway Pub.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that further options should be investigated and prices sought prior to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Cat Fouling Signs**

Members reconsidered whether there was a need for signage warning about cat fouling in the bark at the front of the Community Hub. Cllr Roberts pointed out that cat fouling

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/120/19 **Hub Grounds** (continued)

was linked to some dangerous infections and, therefore, PROPOSED that a sign should be installed. Cllr Phennah SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Roberts	Cllr Phennah
	Cllr Godwin	Cllr Mackenzie
	Cllr Porter	Cllr Sollis
	Cllr Ward	

AGAINST: Cllr MacTiernan

iv. **Improvements**

It was noted that Cllr Shelton had suggested improvements (including possible creation of a wildlife area) in the Hub grounds, however, no further information had been received.

GP/121/19 **Newsletter**

i. **Items**

Members considered items for inclusion in the next issue of Northway Voice. Cllr Terry had forwarded several suggestions which she was happy to take responsibility for (Neighbourhood Plan, Sing-A-Long anniversary, report on the Macmillan Coffee morning and St Nicholas Church events).

In addition, members suggested articles on –

- Luncheon Club and the need for volunteers.
- Upcoming Christmas Event at the Community Hub
- Mothers In Mind (new group recently started at the Community Hub)
- Installation of the new defibrillator at the Northway Centre
- Reporting crimes to the Police online
- Greensquare
- Increase in graffiti and reappearance of Budz tags
- Update on Northway Guardians
- Results of speed assessments in Northway

ii. **Youth Survey**

Members received a draft youth survey that the Clerk had put together and considered whether any amendments needed to be made.

It was AGREED that the survey should be circulated with the newsletter and boxes could be placed at various locations around the parish (i.e. shops or the pub) for people to post their responses. Residents could also be given the option to return their surveys at the Christmas Event at the Hub on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED acceptance of the draft survey.

Members were advised to let the Clerk know as soon as possible if they thought of any amendments or additions outside of the meeting.

iii. **Advertisements**

a. It was noted that payment had not been received following placement of an advertisement in the last issue of Northway Voice. The gentleman who had placed

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/121/19 **Newsletter** (continued)

the advertisement claimed that he had not wanted it to be included as he had closed his business. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that no further action was taken. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. A local business had expressed interest in advertising in the newsletter, however, they had since been in touch to say that they were going to wait until the new year.

GP/122/19 **Graffiti**

i. **Update**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Ward had painted over graffiti on the Changing Room doors. PCSO Simpson had commended the Council on acting so fast and had referred to what they call the 'Broken Window Theory' which showed that leaving visible signs of crime and antisocial behaviour encouraged further vandalism.

ii. **Removal**

Photographs were shown of Skate Park equipment that had been subjected to graffiti, GAB Waste had used a light sander to remove some of the graffiti but this left nasty scratch marks. Members considered whether this was something the Council wanted GAB Waste to continue doing.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that, if the graffiti was not offensive and not able to be painted over or removed with graffiti wipes, it should be left.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/123/19 **Grass Cutting**

i. **Tewkesbury BC/Ubico**

Following submission of a FOI request by Cllr Ward, it was reported that the overall budget for Grounds Maintenance (including grass cutting and winter works) paid to Ubico for work throughout the Borough was £377,469 for the year 2019/20. Based on this, and the assumption that Northway accounted for approximately 2% of the Borough, it was estimated that TBC and GCC maintenance costs in the parish might cost around £6,700.00, although no specific figures had been received.

The Parish Council had gone out to tender on its grass cutting contract and obtained prices for including the Borough Council and County Council verges in this maintenance. Two quotations had been received and these were received by members.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Parish Council should approach Tewkesbury Borough Council and ask if it would be possible to take on the extra grass cutting based on the lower quotation received, plus 15% administrative costs. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS



**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/123/19 **Grass Cutting** (continued)

ii. **Reports/Issues**

Concerns were raised regarding maintenance being undertaken in the parish by both Ubico and Countrywide and inappropriate comments made by contractors.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that a letter was sent to the firm undertaking grounds maintenance for Northway Parish Council advising that Members had become very disappointed with the standard of work and, when questioned on why some areas had not been maintained, the response received had not been appropriate. It should also be mentioned that, despite raising issues with staff on several occasions, improvements were yet to be seen. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Requests for Tender**

Following requests for tender, quotations for grass cutting had been received from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance and Smart Cut Ltd. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that a reference should be sought relating to Smart Cut Ltd and their standard of work (Wheatpieces Parish Council had already recommended this firm so Members felt that this would count as a reference in itself however another reference would be beneficial). Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/124/19 **Grounds Maintenance**

Following requests for tender, quotations for grounds maintenance had been received from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance and Smart Cut Ltd. It was AGREED that a reference should be awaited in relation to Smart Cut Ltd before a decision could be made on this.

GP/125/19 **Weed Killing**

Members received a quotation of £960 for weedkilling throughout the parish. Cllr Ward PROPOSED acceptance of this price.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/126/19 **Notice Boards**

It was noted that members responsible for notice boards in the parish should try their best to ensure that the posters were displayed tidily and disposed of once out of date. Review of responsibilities for notice boards is considered annually at the AGM.

GP/127/19 **Handyman**

Members considered whether it would be beneficial to investigate employment of a handyman to do various jobs around the parish. It was AGREED that more research should be done into this possibility and the associated costs before bringing it back to the Committee for further consideration.

## **NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

### GP/128/19 **Strimmer**

It was suggested that it might be useful for the Council to have its own strimmer, this could then be used for such jobs as strimming between trees in Joan's Field.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should purchase a strimmer, and associated safety equipment. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### GP/129/19 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

No issues were raised.

### GP/130/19 **Winter Maintenance**

Members considered any action that needed to be taken in relation to winter maintenance and in preparation for adverse weather. It was AGREED that more grit should be ordered, if necessary.

### GP/131/19 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – None received.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie confirmed that he had not come across any flood related issues in the parish.

### GP/132/19 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities:

- Overhanging bush and bramble on the M5 motorway bridge (Northway Lane)
- Bowler Road overhanging hedges
- Northway Lane overhanging hedges
- Light out on lamp post at junction with The Park and Northway Lane
- Car using tactile pavement to get car into garden along Northway Lane
- Overflowing dog bin along The Spine (by Wheatstone Close)
- Overflowing drain in Howard Road
- Lamp post along The Park intermittent
- Flytipping down lane opposite Joan's Field
- Dog bins being left open
- Northway Lane embankment cut badly and mess left
- BUDZ graffiti on Changing Room doors
- Further graffiti on Changing Room store room doors
- BUDZ on half pipe
- Overhanging trees down alleyway between Willis Walk and Thistle Downs
- Overgrowth on corner before Hardwick Bank Road motorway bridge

### GP/133/19 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Woodland Trust** – Reminder that free trees from the Woodland Trust were due to arrive in November.

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

GP/133/19 **Correspondence for Information** (continued)

- ii. **Overgrown Trees** – Correspondence relating to overgrown trees blocking residents' signal (confirmed not Parish Council responsibility).
- iii. **Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA)** – Opportunity to win match funding for next playground project.
- iv. **Correspondence** – Letters were sent to residents regarding overgrowth from their properties.

GP/134/19 **Correspondence received after 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

- i. **Severn Trent Water** – Flooding and the Responsibilities of Authorities.
- ii. **GRCC** – Information relating to 'Creating Greener Communities' event – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
- iii. **Macmillan Coffee Morning** – Invitation to support this coffee morning on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Northway Community Hub.
- iv. **Letter** – Letter from resident regarding business posters that had been left up on lamp posts locally.
- v. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Request for content suggestions for next issue of Tewkesbury Borough News. It was AGREED that articles relating to the urgent need for Luncheon Club volunteers and the upcoming Christmas event at the Hub be submitted.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 9.10pm.