

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 15th February 2023 in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Committee Chairman) Cllr S Terry (Committee Vice Chairman)
Cllr C Blackmore Cllr P Godwin
Cllr MacTiernan (from GP/22/23)

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

GP/15/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mackenzie, Roberts and Shelton. Cllr MacTiernan had advised that she would be late. No further apologies for absence had been received.

GP/16/23 **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/17/23 **Previous Minutes**

Due to low numbers, this item was deferred until after Cllr MacTiernan joined (Min Ref: C/34/23 refers).

GP/18/23 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/07/23 Platinum Park – New trees had been planted on Platinum Park and tree guards installed.

GP/08/23 Parish Maintenance Contract > Grass Cutting – Mr Tonge had been informed that the Parish Council accepted Tewkesbury Borough Council's grass cutting terms for the upcoming year.

GP/11/23 Drainage and Flooding – Cllr Mackenzie, as Flood Warden, contacted the Environment Agency about the silt bank along the Carrant Brook (down Mill Lane).

GP/166/22 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – Cllrs Mackenzie and Ward attached loose drainpipe to the top of swing frames in the Play Park in a bid to discourage birds from landing on them.

GP/19/23 **Northway Playing Field**

i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the play park had been received. A medium sized split had appeared in one of the swing seats, Cllr Ward PROPOSED that a replacement should be ordered.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The concrete seats had been highlighted but it was pointed out that these were due to be repainted soon.

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GP/19/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

The radar padlock on the gate to the wheelchair swing area had gone missing. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that a new radar padlock be purchased along with three spares. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Wheelchair Swing** – It was confirmed that the replacement cabinet had now been received. Blueberry had provided some stickers but none that showed how to operate the swing, therefore, a sign had been ordered of the instructions. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the cost of the sign (£49.10) be approved.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Blackmore agreed to help make a video on how to use the swing once the new cabinet had been installed (Min Ref: GP/05/23 refers).

ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the skatepark had been received, no new issues were raised.
- b. **Skatepark Project** – It was confirmed that planning permission had been granted for installation of a new skatepark (Min Ref: GP/05/23 refers).

The Clerk and Clerk's Assistant had attended a virtual meeting with Maverick Skateparks to discuss the next steps (notes had been circulated to Members). They had suggested a few funding sources that the Council could apply for and had also emailed some documents that would be useful when putting together applications.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should start applying for grants towards the skatepark project.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the MUGA and Outdoor Gym had been received. No new issues were raised.
- iv. **BMX Humps** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the BMX Humps had been received. No new issues were raised.
- v. **Lighting** – An electrician had given an informal quotation of £80 to wire the external light that faces the play park into the Changing Room rather than the village hall.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council undertook this work up to a cost of £100. No vote was received.

It was AGREED that this should be deferred until the next General Purposes Committee Meeting when more information might be available.

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

GP/20/23 **The Public Sector Equality Duty and Open Spaces (Make Space for Girls)**

Cllr Blackmore reported that she had met with Cllrs Mackenzie and MacTiernan at Northway Playing Field to consider ways in which the area could be made safer for girls (Min Ref:

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GP/20/23

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Open Spaces (Make Space for Girls) (continued)

GP/05/23 refers). She said that, although they could not view the area as a young girl would, they all felt that happy with the inclusivity of the Playing Field. They had also noted that:

- Girls should not be out in the dark and so no additional lighting was necessary.
- Although most of the space at the Playing Field was taken up by two football pitches, a girls team used them quite regularly and this was positive.
- All the equipment in the outdoor gym was gender neutral.
- Girls had been involved in the proposed design of the new skatepark facility for the Playing Field.

Cllr Blackmore added that they had felt Platinum Park and the teenage shelter provided a separate space for girls who might find it preferable to Northway Playing Field.

An article was being included in the newsletter asking for girls to give feedback or suggestions on how to make the public areas in Northway feel safer and more inclusive.

GP/21/23

Joan's Field

- i. **Signage** – Members had asked for design of a new sign for Joan's Field to be tabled, however, this was not available. It was AGREED that this item should be deferred.
- ii. **Planting** – The Clerk's Assistant had contacted Bromford Housing about the possibility of planting bulbs or placing planters/barrels on the verge next to the new entrance for Joan's Field (Min Ref: GP/06/23 refers). A response was still being awaited.

It was noted that there was no budget allocated towards purchase of bulbs, planters or barrels. Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that, if Bromford was agreeable to the verge being used for planting/barrels, the Council should defer further action until October 2023 if it wanted to progress.

- iii. **Giant Hogweed** – It was noted that Giant Hogweed inspections were due at the start of March and end of May.

Cllr Blackmore mentioned that someone had told her that they had seen Giant Hogweed on Northway Playing Field. It was felt that Cllr Roberts was the best qualified to identify Giant Hogweed and so he should be asked to look into this and also inspect Joan's Field for any signs of it.

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

GP/22/23

Platinum Park

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – Inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No new issues were raised.
- ii. **Trees** –
 - a. Following approval under Min Ref: GP/95/22 that one of the new Oak trees planted on Platinum Park should be in memory of ex-Cllr Diana Bailey, Cllr Terry PROPOSED a budget of £80 to purchase and install a plaque. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/22/23 **Platinum Park** (continued)

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the plaque should read “In memory of Diana Bailey who served this community well for many years.” Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the budget for this should be raised to £100. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. Members were reminded of the proposal that a further eight trees be planted on Platinum Park (Min Ref: GP/95/22 refers).

7.43pm – Cllr MacTiernan joined the meeting.

It was noted that arranging for supply of the additional eight trees had so far been unsuccessful, however, there was still £1,534 of Build Back Better grant funding available towards planting of trees. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that due to the difficulties being experienced relating to the eight trees that, instead, the Council should purchase and plant just the Crab Apple tree for a local resident, Hope, with a wooden tree garden installed for protection.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was AGREED that Hope should be asked where she would like the Crab Apple planted. Cllr Blackmore offered to do this.

Members were also reminded that a local business had offered to contribute towards purchase of Oak trees (Min Ref: GP/24/22 refers), these trees had since been provided by Gloucestershire County Council and so this offer had been retracted.

- c. Smart Cut had quoted £100 per visit to water the young trees on Platinum Park. The contractor used by Tewkesbury In Bloom would only be able to do watering from June and a price was still being awaited. It was AGREED that this should be deferred until the next meeting.
- d. The Clerk’s Assistant had contacted Tewkesbury Borough Council about the possibility of applying for a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) for the Jubilee Oak trees on Platinum Park. The Tree Officer there had said that she would be hesitant to place a TPO on trees that were only planted last year and were young and susceptible to damage/disease.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that consideration of applying for a TPO on these trees should be deferred one year. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e. Members received an application for a memorial tree to be planted on Platinum Park. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED approval and suggested that the location should be either by the new trees on the south-east corner or by the fruit trees in the south-west corner but, ideally, within a 5m radius of other trees. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Path** – Members reviewed the condition of the ‘ash path’ on Platinum Park following maintenance of the brash (Min Ref: GP/168/22 refers), it was noted that it had almost been taken over by grass. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that quotations should be sought for

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GP/22/23 **Platinum Park** (continued)

re-instating this path.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iv. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/23/23 **General Purposes Projects Working Party**

It was noted that a meeting of the General Purposes Projects (GPP) Working Party had been scheduled for 22nd March 2023.

GP/24/23 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

Members were reminded of previous discussions with Tewkesbury Borough Council regarding planting of whips on the land opposite the Northway Centre (Min Ref: GP/156/22 refers), these were to replace the whips that the Parish Council's contractors (Smart Cut) had mown over the previous year.

It was recalled that the whips had been so small that Smart Cut had not noticed them, they had also not been informed that the Borough had planted them so it was partly the Parish Council's fault, however Smart Cut had been quick to offer to help with replanting if/when necessary.

Tewkesbury Borough Council had indicated that Ubico would undertake all the work required, including installation of a knee rail, but they were asking the Parish Council to cover the cost of whips which would amount to approximately £200.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should accept the Borough Council's offer to plant and ask Smart Cut to cover the cost of new whips. No second vote was received.

Cllr Ward felt that the Council should not expect Smart Cut to cover the full cost when it was partly the Parish Council's fault for not informing them the whips had been planted.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should ask Smart Cut how much they might be willing to contribute towards the whips and bring it back to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/25/23 **Newsletter**

A draft copy of the newsletter had been circulated to Members. The articles were reviewed and some alterations made. It was AGREED that, subject to the proposed amendments, the newsletter should be sent for printing.

It was noted that Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council's (GAPTC) was hosting a training session on compiling and putting together parish and town newsletters at a cost of £35.00. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Clerk's Assistant should be permitted to attend. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/26/23 **Iron Bridge**

Cllr MacTiernan confirmed that Mr Tonge, Tewkesbury Borough Council, had been successful in obtaining a grant of approximately £15,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioners Fund towards clearing up the area around the Iron Bridge. He was also due to meet with Skanska regarding getting the MOD involved and possibly painting military insignia on the bridge itself, although this meeting would not be for another month.

Following this update, it was AGREED that Community Payback should be advised that their services would no longer be required (Min Ref: GP/09/23 refers).

GP/27/23 **Tree Maintenance Schedule**

It was noted that there were still some trees in the parish that had not been inspected as part of the Tree Maintenance Schedule (Min Ref: GP/10/23 refers).

Cllrs Godwin and MacTiernan mentioned that they had checked the trees on Northway Playing Field and confirmed that they appeared to be safe and healthy. Cllr Blackmore had checked the trees in Hawthorn Way and had no concerns, she also offered to check the remaining trees and asked that the locations of these be emailed to her.

Correspondence relating to the importance of tree checks had been received from GAPTC and this was tabled. Cllr Blackmore wondered whether it would be worth having a professional check the trees that the Parish Council was responsible for once in a while. Cllr Ward felt that it was easy enough to tell if a tree was dangerous.

GP/28/23 **Litter Picking Event**

Members considered whether to host a litter picking event that year and people could be encouraged to sign up at the Coronation Cream Tea event. It was AGREED that this item should be deferred to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting.

GP/29/23 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No issues were raised.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) was not present to provide a report.

GP/30/23 **'Report It'**

The Clerk's Assistant listed issues that had been reported to local authorities over the past month, this included: traffic lights out on the hump back bridge, a pot hole in Lee Road, a willow tree in Carrant Brook causing concerns (reported by Flood Warden) and an overgrown tree along The Park that had still not been cut back.

GP/31/23 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Make Space for Girls** – Newsletter.
- ii. **Durn and Woodward** – Introduction to local Northway based Building/Groundwork contractor.

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GP/32/23 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Community Payback** – Details of tree planting scheme. Members AGREED no action.
- ii. **Walking Group** – A request had been received from Age UK for permission to use the atrium at Northway Community Hub by the new walking group on a Friday morning once a week. Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/33/23 **Correspondence Received After 9th February 2023**

- i. **Proludic** – Product magazine.
- ii. **Sports and Play Consulting Ltd** – Helping councils deliver new playgrounds and sports facilities.
- iii. **James Richards Circus** – Posters for visit in August/September.
- iv. **Millbrook PC** – Query regarding skatepark tender process.

GP/34/23 **Previous Minutes**

This item was deferred from earlier in the meeting due to it not being quorate. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 18th January 2023 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Terry Cllr MacTiernan
Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Godwin

There being no further business, the meeting 8.56pm