

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 18th October 2023 in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr M Barnes
Cllr J Beadle
Cllr E MacTiernan
Cllr S Terry
Cllr C Blackmore (Vice-Chair)
Cllr P Godwin
Cllr J Roberts

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

GP/133/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Shelton, Mackenzie and Fancourt.

GP/134/23 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Terry declared an interest in item 14 which related to St Nicholas Church. 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/135/23 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 20th September 2023 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Blackmore Cllr Terry
Cllr Beadle Cllr Godwin
Cllr MacTiernan

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes Cllr Roberts

GP/136/23 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/104/23 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – Replacement cradle swings had been ordered.

GP/176/23 GP Projects Working Party – A thermometer funding sign had been put up by the skatepark. It was noted that the decal stickers indicating how much funding had been raised had already been pulled off.

GP/119/23 Joan's Field > Overgrowth – SmartCut had maintained overgrowth and weeds along the path and bridge in Joan's Field.

GP/120/23 Platinum Park > Wild Area – The wild area on Platinum Park had been cut.

GP/121/23 Dogs – A list of 'problem areas' had been sent to Mr Low, Head of Environmental Health Service at Tewkesbury Borough Council following his offer to arrange patrols around Northway. Additionally, two signs had been ordered for installation at the Play Park.

GP/123/23 Flower Barrels – Details of people interested in taking on the flower barrels had been forwarded to Northway Community Volunteers (NCV).

GP/137/23 **Northway Playing Field**

i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the play park had been received. No new issues had been raised.
- b. **Boundary Walls** – It was reported that offensive graffiti, chips and scratches were present on the boundary walls.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the play inspector/litter picker be asked to paint over the offensive graffiti and an article be included in the newsletter informing residents of the costs involved in dealing with cases of vandalism like this. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Play Train** – A formal quotation was still being awaited for replacement Play Train panels from the supplier (Min Ref: GP/118/23 refers). Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that the Council should also seek a quotation from a local contractor for restoring or replacing the panels. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Roundabout** – Members had been circulated a copy of the roundabout manufacturer's (Blueberry) assessment of the roundabout (Min Ref: GP/118/23 refers). They had felt that the carousel was rotating well but suspected a number of bolts attaching the chassis to the bearing had failed resulting in the tipping action under load. With no load there was no finger trap. To remedy this, Blueberry would charge £530, they would be unable to say for certain whether a new bearing was required without taking the unit apart.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should instruct a contractor to undertake the regular servicing of the roundabout and replace the missing bolts, following this he would be able to confirm whether or not a new bearing was required and this would allow the Council to make an informed decision at the next meeting of the Committee. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was suggested that, if a new bearing was required, the Council should put signs on the roundabout advising that it was out of action.

- e. **Fencing** – It was reported that fencing around the wheelchair swing had been pulled out of the ground. A contractor had been to look at the fencing but found that the post did not go very deep into the ground and there was no anchor/t-bar at the base of it. Blueberry, who installed the fencing, had offered to create a bracket to attach the fencing to the Play Park fence, however, the Council's contractor felt that youths would still be able to pull it out again.

It was AGREED that the Council should go back to Blueberry and ask them to suggest another solution as the fencing was obviously not up to the job.

ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the skatepark had been received, no new issues were raised.

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GP/137/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- b. **Skatepark Project** – There had been no update following the Council’s application to Enovert and further information was in the process of being collated for the National Lottery (Min Ref: GP/118/23 refers).

A local resident had been in touch to ask whether he and his friends would be permitted to undertake a charity car wash at Northway Playing Fields car park to raise funds towards the new skatepark.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that enquiries should be made as to whether this would be covered by the Council’s insurance policy and, if so, permission should be sought for use of water from the Changing Rooms or Village Hall. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Terry
 Cllr Barnes Cllr Beadle
 Cllr Roberts

AGAINST: Cllr Blackmore

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Godwin

Skate Rubicon had provided prices and information on skate events that they ran. Members considered applying for funding towards workshops to take place once the new skatepark had been installed. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should commit to try and provide at least four coaching sessions throughout the first year of the new skatepark being in place and should investigate potential funding towards the cost of these. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Roberts Cllr Blackmore
 Cllr Barnes Cllr Beadle
 Cllr Godwin Cllr Terry

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr MacTiernan

- c. **Safeguarding Policy** – Members received a draft Safeguarding Policy put together by Cllr Blackmore (Min Ref: GP/118/23 refers). Cllr Blackmore explained that, since the Parish Council did not have a Safeguarding Officer, any allegations would go to the Borough Council’s Safeguarding lead.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council approved and adopted the policy and that copies of it were sent to hirers (but not personal/party hirers). Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the MUGA/Outdoor Gym had been received, no new issues were raised. Cllr MacTiernan reported that the rowing machine was in need of oiling. It was confirmed that Caloo were due to service all of the equipment in the next couple of months.

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

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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

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GP/138/23 **Joan's Field**

No other issues were raised in relation to Joan's Field.

GP/139/23 **Platinum Park**

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – Inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No new issues were raised.
- ii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/140/23 **Northway Community Hub Grounds**

- i. **Bushes** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED purchase of new bushes to replace dead ones in the Community Hub grounds. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was suggested that Cllr Fancourt should be asked for advice on what species would be best - if possible, something that would deter cats.

- ii. **Cats** – It was noted that cats were regularly defecating in the slate at the Community Hub grounds, this was a health and safety concern, especially due to the amount of children's parties that took place there.

Members wondered whether potted lavender might be a deterrent. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that Cllr Fancourt be asked to advise on this. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/141/23 **No Ball Games Sign**

A resident had emailed to request installation of a 'No Ball Games' sign on the grassed area in Hawthorn Way. Balls had caused damage to cars, been kicked into properties and nearly hit people in the head. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this issue was passed on to the local PCSO/police providing details included in the letter. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Terry Cllr MacTiernan
Cllr Barnes Cllr Beadle
Cllr Godwin Cllr Roberts

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Blackmore

Cllr Blackmore offered to talk to the resident in person about these concerns.

GP/142/23 **Newsletter**

Members received a draft copy of the newsletter. Several amendments were made.

GP/143/23 **Trees**

Enquiries had been made into planting of oak trees on the green area by Kingston Road, Warren Road and Oak Drive. A response was still being awaited.

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GP/144/23 **Bench**

Further quotations were being awaited for replacement panels – wood or composite – for the rainbow bench by the Northway Centre.

GP/145/23 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Bus Shelter/Phone Box Cleaning** – Enquiries had been made into the type of cleaning being undertaken at the bus shelters and it seemed that they were brush cleaned with a water fed pole.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should go out to tender on this contract for the 2024/25 financial year and request prices for steam or pressure cleaning, if possible. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **TBC Grass Cutting** – Cllr MacTiernan had spoken to Peter Tonge at Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) regarding the ongoing arrangements for grass cutting (Min Ref: GP/126/23 refers). He had stated that the Borough Council may still be willing to contribute towards the cost of the Parish Council cutting TBC and GCC (Gloucestershire County Council) grass in Northway. It was AGREED that the Council should request confirmation of this in writing by December 2023.
- iii. **Parish Council Grass Cutting/Maintenance** – Tender responses were still being awaited.
- iv. **The Northway Centre** – An email had been sent to Mr Creed regarding uneven paving at the Northway Centre (Min Ref: GP/126/23 refers), a response was still being awaited. It was suggested that a further email should be sent re-iterating that there was a trip hazard.
- v. **Emergency Contractors** – Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that M. Hale (electrician) and J. Williams (contractor) should be added to the Council's emergency contractors. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Other Items** – No other items were raised.

GP/146/23 **Ashchurch Grass Cutting**

Members received a request from Ashchurch Rural Parish Council (ARPC) for a contribution towards the cost of maintenance and grass cutting at St Nicholas Church. The total cost of this for 2022/23 was £6,475 and ARPC was hoping that Northway Parish Council would consider contributing a third of the cost going forward.

Cllr Terry, who had declared an interest in the discussion due to her affiliation with St Nicholas Church, expressed that she believed the costs should be covered by ARPC, however, if it was asking Northway for contributions, it should also ask Newtown and other areas included within the parochial boundary.

Members received an email from Cllr Fancourt, who was unable to be present, declaring his interest as he was on the PCC and a church member. He explained the different areas being referred to in the request from ARPC and said that he felt that there was an argument for Northway Parish Council to contribute to the costs of grass cutting the 'new' part of the graveyard.

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GP/146/23 **Ashchurch Grass Cutting** (continued)

He felt that if a breakdown had been provided by ARPC that looked reasonable he would be in favour of agreeing to pay half of the cost of maintaining the area.

It was noted that a breakdown had been received and this was shared with Members.

Cllr Roberts explained the background of the boundary review which split Ashchurch Parish Council in 2008 (forming the separate parishes of Northway and Ashchurch Rural), this was forced on the Council following a petition by Ashchurch residents. It was also noted that, following the split, it was made very clear that each Council would be responsible for the areas within its separate parish boundaries.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should thank ARPC for its email but highlight that, at the time of the split in 2008, it was made clear that each Parish Council was responsible for the land within its own boundaries and, as such, Northway was not responsible for land within Ashchurch. Additionally, ARPC had declined to contribute towards maintaining the iron bridge which was half within its parish. Unfortunately, for these reasons, Northway Parish Council would not be able to help in this instance and suggested that ARPC went to the diocese. No second vote was received.

Cllr Blackmore suggested that the Council should, instead, respond that it was made clear when the new boundaries were drawn up that St Nicholas Church fell within Ashchurch Rural's parish. Ashchurch residents were able to use Northway facilities without contribution and, as the Church was not in Northway's Parish, the Council did not feel that it should make a contribution towards the ongoing maintenance and grass cutting there. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED. Cllr Beadle SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Roberts	Cllr Beadle
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Blackmore
	Cllr Godwin	Cllr MacTiernan

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Terry

GP/147/23 **Iron Bridge**

Cllr MacTiernan explained that, when she spoke to Peter Tonge at the Borough Council (Min Ref: GP/145 refers), she had also enquired about the Iron Bridge and plans to get it repainted (Min Ref: GP/125/23 refers). Mr Tonge had explained that, due to the fact that the bridge had previously been painted with lead-based paint, Network Rail would be required to close the line so that it could be removed. As such, plans to re-paint the bridge had been cancelled.

Cllr MacTiernan was asked to clarify with Mr Tonge what the £15,000 grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) went towards with regard to clean up of and around the iron bridge (Min Ref: GP/26/23 refers).

GP/148/23 **Budget for the Financial Year**

2101 GP - SALARIES – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £10,100.00.

2136 GP - GRASS CUTTING TBC & GCC – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £7,455.00.

2137 GP - GRASS CUTTING – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £5,985.00.

2138 GP - LITTER BINS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,000.00.

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GP/148/23 **Budget for the Financial Year** (continued)

2139 GP - DOG BINS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £50.00.

2140 GP - BUS SHELTERS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,500.00.

2141 GP - PLAYING FIELD MAIN – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £8,000.00.

2142 GP - THE PARK AMENITY AREA – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £2,500.00.

2143 GP - JOAN'S FIELD – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,500.00.

2144 GP - OTHER AREAS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £4,800.00.

2145 GP - HUB GROUNDS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set to £550.00.

2150 GP - NOTICEBOARDS/NEWSLETTER – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,400.00.

2152 GP - EMERGENCY PLAN/FLOODING/WINTER – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £250.00.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED acceptance of these figures ([copy of breakdown attached](#)). Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should start to budget in Earmarked Reserves for the replacement of the Play Park which was already eight years old. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Members considered budgeting towards additional maintenance of the BMX humps. It was noted that these were not well used. Also, requests had been received for a pump track. No action was agreed.

GP/149/23 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No issues were raised.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) was not present to give a report.
- iii. **Annual Report** – Cllr Mackenzie was not present to give an annual report.

GP/150/23 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authority:

Damage to grass between Northway Lane and Old Northway Lane.
Removal of sign on grass between Northway Lane and Old Northway Lane.

GP/151/23 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **RoSPA** – Confirmation that the Play Inspector was booked to attend a training course on 20th October 2023.

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GP/151/23 **Correspondence for Information** (continued)

- ii. **Acorn Thorn** – Details of drinking fountains, water bottle fillers and wash basins available.
- iii. **Make Space for Girls** – Newsletter (Parkwatch).
- iv. **NBB Outdoors** – Catalogue.

GP/152/23 **Correspondence Received After 12th October 2023**

- i. **Gloucestershire County Council** – Correspondence relating to Ash Dieback replanting.
- ii. **Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA)** – Details of AGM.

There being no further business, the meeting 8.54pm