

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 19th July 2023 in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr C Barnes (Chairman) Cllr Blackmore (Vice-Chair)
Cllr P Godwin (until GP/103/23 & from GP/104/23) Cllr E MacTiernan
Cllr E Phennah Cllr J Roberts
Cllr G Shelton (from Min Ref: GP/108/23) Cllr S Terry

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

GP/100/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mackenzie and Beadle. Cllr Shelton would be late.

GP/101/23 **Declarations of Interest**

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/102/23 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 21st June 2023 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Godwin Cllr Blackmore
Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Terry

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Barnes Cllr Phennah
Cllr Roberts

GP/103/23 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/58/23 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – A pendulum seat for the aerial runway and replacement bearing for the basket/merga swing had been installed.

GP/75/23 Northway Playing Field > BMX Humps – Large holes in the field had been filled.

GP/90/23 Northway Playing Field > MUGA/Outdoor Gym – Caloo had confirmed that an engineer would visit the outdoor gym to assess the rust/paint issues.

GP/93/23 Platinum Park > Bollards – One bollard had been replaced and another secured on Platinum Park.

GP/93/23 Circus – The circus confirmed that they would put cones along the road again, give free tickets to the immediate houses overlooking the site and provide correx signs directing people to parking. Cllr Barnes offered to assist the circus with filling of their bowsers, if required, as he had done the previous year.

GP/95/23 Parish Maintenance Contract – The two residents who wished to make a claim regarding 'damage' to their front lawns were written to, as agreed.

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GP/103/23 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/95/23 Parish Maintenance Contract – A member of the public was advised that the embankment in Sinderberry Drive was not previously cut by the Borough Council due to steepness.

7.10pm – Cllr Godwin left the meeting.

GP/104/23 **Northway Playing Field**

i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the play park had been received. It was again noted that the tiger mulch was coming loose around the roundabout and some of the rubber on the surface of the ‘runaround’ had been pulled away. Additionally the surface was uneven by the red play house.

7.15pm – Cllr Godwin rejoined the meeting.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED no action should be taken but the issues monitored.
Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Barnes Cllr Roberts	Cllr Terry Cllr Phennah
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ABSTENTIONS:	Cllr Blackmore	Cllr Godwin
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When the contractor had fitted the new bearing on the basket/merga swing, he had noted that the shackles were worn. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that new shackles should be purchased and installed on the swing. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Roundabout** – Following a contractors’ suggestion that a new bearing was required on the roundabout, Blueberry (the manufacturer) had offered to come and assess whether they felt this was the case (a new bearing would cost £900 plus the cost of installation). It was noted that there were also eight missing bolts on the roundabout. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that, following Blueberry’s assessment, any necessary action, as per their recommendations, should be taken. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Swing Seats (Seagulls)** – Following the unsuccessful installation of downpipe on the swing frames to deter seagulls (Min Ref: GP/166/22 and GP/58/23 refers), Members were informed that other Council’s had found plastic bird deterrent spikes from Amazon to be effective.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the spikes should be purchased and installed.
Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Trampoline** – It was noted that the sunken trampoline in the Play Park was very rarely emptied due to the fact that the Council’s submersible pump needed to be plugged in and the closest electric supply was inside the Changing Rooms. The water in it was very old and dirty and, after a lot of rain, children using the trampoline became soaked in it.

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GP/104/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

Members considered investing in a wireless pump costing £189.99 which would make emptying the trampoline pit easier. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED purchase of the pump so that the pit could be emptied more regularly. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

Cllr MacTiernan questioned whether the caretaker/play inspector would be able to easily use this equipment. Cllr Roberts amended his initial proposal to PROPOSE that the Council established whether there was someone who would be able/willing to use the pump prior to purchasing it.

FOR:	Cllr Roberts Cllr Barnes	Cllr Blackmore Cllr Phennah
AGAINST:	Cllr Godwin Cllr Terry	Cllr MacTiernan

ii. **Northway Skatepark**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Weekly inspection reports relating to the skatepark had been received, no new issues were raised.
- b. **Skatepark Project** – The Council’s responses to further questions raised by the National Lottery (Min Ref: GP/75/23 refers) had been forwarded to the Borough Council’s Funding Officer and Maverick for comment/suggestions.
- c. **Graffiti** – Members reconsidered arranging for a graffiti display/workshop at the new skatepark (Min Ref: GP/111/22 refers). Cllr Terry PROPOSED that consideration of this should be deferred until autumn. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

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.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Fundraising Event** – The gentleman wishing to hold a fundraising event at Northway Playing Field (Min Ref: C/182/23 refers) had been asked to provide more information regarding what would be taking place at the event. Unfortunately, a response had not yet been received and so Members were unable to properly consider the request. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that, due to lack of information, the Council could not give approval. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Circuit Sessions** – It was confirmed that the personal training holding circuit sessions at Northway Playing Field had been written to, as agreed (Min Ref: GP/90/23 refers). A response had not been received and so the Council was still not aware of whether or not he had public liability insurance (PLI).

The local PCSO had offered to talk to the personal trainer and ask him to provide the Council with details of PLI and a risk assessment, however, Members were reluctant to get the police involved at this stage. It was AGREED that a councillor should try and have a friendly talk with the personal trainer to explain that there was no problem with him using the field, however, if he wished to continue, the Council needed to see this information.

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GP/104/23 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- vii. **Benches** – Following filling of holes on the Playing Field (Min Ref: GP/75/23 refers), concerns had since been raised regarding trip hazards where the ground had dipped in front of benches on the field. Quotations had been sought for installation of slabs in front of the benches, however, Members worried that these would also become a trip hazard. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that no action was taken. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- viii. **Other Issues** – It was noted that SmartCut had cut back overgrowth around a tree in one corner of the Playing Field after an Oak Drive resident had complained that people were urinating in the long grass there.

GP/105/23 **Joan's Field**

No matters were raised relating to Joan's Field.

GP/106/23 **Platinum Park**

- i. **Teenage Shelter** – Inspection reports relating to the Teenage Shelter had been received. No new issues were raised.
- ii. **Trees** – Concerns had been raised at the previous General Purposes Committee Meeting that some of the new trees on Platinum Park might be dead. SmartCut contractors had been asked to check the trees and had confirmed that they were all still alive, despite the dry weather (Min Ref: GP/93/23 refers).

Members were reminded of the previous agreement for SmartCut to water the young trees on Platinum Park from April to May and a contractor recommended by Tewkesbury in Bloom would then water during June, July and August (Min Ref: GP/41/23 refers). Unfortunately, the contractor recommended by Tewkesbury in Bloom had become uncontactable, therefore, another company were approached and had quoted £75 a week to water the trees (£25 less per visit than SmartCut).

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the cheaper company should be contracted to undertake tree watering until, at least, the end of August. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Other Issues** – No further issues were raised.

GP/107/23 **Rats**

It had been suggested that the issue of rats/mice was included on the agenda after a number of residents had confirmed that they had rodent problems on Northway Noticeboard (Facebook Page). Cllr Terry mentioned that some roads in the parish had been written to by the Borough Council asking that the residents stopped feeding the birds due to the problem of rats in the area.

Cllr Godwin mentioned that she had spoken to Environmental Health at the Borough Council - they hoped to contract a firm to undertake clearance work in Alexandra Way and planned to ask Severn Trent to do a sewer 'flush' to try and alleviate the problem.

Cllr Blackmore wondered whether it was worth the Parish Council posting something on social media, however, as it was residential properties the Council had no powers to deal with the issue.

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GP/107/23 **Rats** (continued)

Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that no action was taken. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/108/23 **Newsletter**

It was confirmed that Issue 31 of Northway Voice had been delivered. Two residents had contacted the Council regarding the article about flower barrels. It suggested that the Council should put out a further appeal for people to adopt the barrels on social media.

It was AGREED that further discussion relating to the barrels should be included on the next General Purposes Committee Meeting agenda.

Cllr Blackmore added that she had been contacted by residents about the Food Party article which had been very positive.

8.00pm – Cllr Shelton joined the meeting.

GP/109/23 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

Approval had previously been given for a resident to repaint the rainbow bench by the Northway Centre (Min Ref: GP/80/23 refers). It had since been noted that the wooden slats were splitting and damaged (one more so than the others), therefore, the resident had said he would not paint it until repairs had been undertaken. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a quotation should be sought for replacement slats to be installed. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The Clerk had contacted Creed (landowners) about cutting their section of grass at the Northway Centre. Mr Creed had visited the site and agreed that the grass looked very untidy. He did not believe that the Parish Council's contractors were cutting up to the boundary, however, if they were instructed to, he would arrange for his section of grass to be cut regularly. SmartCut had met with the Clerk to re-assess where the boundary lay and they agreed to cut more of the grass.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that SmartCut were asked to quote for cutting the extra section of grass so that the Council could offer to get it included in the parish maintenance and be reimbursed by Creed (if they were agreeable to this arrangement). Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/110/23 **Drainage and Flooding**

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

GP/111/23 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authority:

Wire sticking out of cycle/foot path on west side of M5 overbridge.
Sinkhole on Northway Lane opposite Steward Road junction (now repaired).

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GP/111/23 **Report It** (continued)

Uneven path in Bevan Gardens and behind Magnolia House
Fallen branch opposite Cherry Orchard.

GP/112/23 **Correspondence for Information**

i. **Make Space for Girls** – Newsletter 24.

GP/113/23 **Correspondence Received After 13th July 2023**

None.

There being no further business, the meeting 8.05 pm