

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 20th January 2021.

Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7), Councils were unable to meet in person during the COVID emergency. This meeting was therefore held via a Zoom link, with Councillors connecting remotely. The meeting began at approximately 7:10p.m.

Present: Cllr S Terry (Committee Chairman) Cllr S Ward (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr C Blackmore
Cllr P Godwin Cllr P Mackenzie
Cllr E MacTiernan Cllr E Phennah
Cllr J Roberts Cllr G Shelton
Cllr T Treacy

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

GP/01/20 **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence had been received.

GP/02/21 **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/03/21 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 16th December 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Shelton Cllr Godwin
Cllr Barnes Cllr Blackmore
Cllr MacTiernan Cllr Roberts
Cllr Terry Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Mackenzie Cllr Phennah

GP/04/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/141/20 Bird Boxes for Hub Grounds – Photographs were shown of the bird boxes that Cllr Terry had managed to source. It was noted that they were very heavy and would need substantial mounting. Cllr Ward had offered to take on installation of the boxes and Cllr Shelton offered to assist him with this.

GP/143/20 Parish Maintenance Contract > Grass Cutting – Tewkesbury Borough Council had been notified that the Parish was agreeable to renewal of the contract relating to Northway grass cutting.

GP/137/20 GP Projects Working Party – A meeting of this Working Party had been scheduled to take place on 3rd February 2021 at 7.00 pm, prior to a meeting of the Carbon Neutral Working Party. Cllrs Ward, Treacy, Roberts, Godwin and Barnes had expressed their interest in standing on this Working Party, Cllrs Terry, Mackenzie and Shelton added that they would also like to.

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GP/05/21 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park** – Inspection reports relating to the Play Park had been received. It was noted that the boundary walls were badly chipped and in need of repainting. Members felt that summer would be the best time to undertake repair and/or painting of the walls and so it was AGREED that this should be put on the General Purposes Committee agenda in March. No further, new issues had been raised in the reports.

Replacement grass matting had been ordered for beneath the aerial runway (Min Ref: GP/137/20 refers).

- ii. **Northway Skate Park** – Inspection reports relating to the Skate Park had been received, however, no new issues were raised.

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – No issues, relating to the M.U.G.A / outdoor gym, had been raised in the inspection reports.

- b. **COVID-19 Restrictions** – Correspondence had been received from Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA) advising that sports facilities were required to close during the latest lockdown. This applied to outdoor sports courts (i.e. the M.U.G.A.) and outdoor gyms. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should display laminated signs advising that the M.U.G.A. and gym area were closed as per government guidance. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was also AGREED that residents should be notified via social media.

- v. **BMX Humps** – No issues, relating to the BMX Humps, had been raised in the inspection reports.
- vi. **Other Issues** – There were no other issues raised.

GP/06/21 **Trees**

- i. **Joan's Field** – Ms Teele, arborist, was due to start tree work in Joan's Field on 21st January 2021 (Min Ref: GP/138/20 refers).

- ii. **The Park** – It was confirmed that Ms. Teele had forwarded a written quotation, as requested (Min Ref: GP/138/20 refers). Concerns were raised again that burning of the brash might cause too much smoke, especially if the wood was wet. It was felt that the wood might have to be left on site if it could not be burned, however, there was the worry that spores might spread.

It was AGREED that the Clerk's Assistant reiterate to Ms. Teele the need to be considerate of nearby roads – especially the motorway – and houses if lighting any fires, but ultimately it should be left to her professional judgement.

- iii. **Ash Dieback** – Gloucestershire County Council had forwarded details of the Ash Dieback replanting scheme. It was asking Council's to consider suitable locations for tree replanting or, alternatively, be provided with trees to replant themselves. Members noted that there were two trees with Ash Dieback in Northway but sited on Tewkesbury Borough Council land.

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GP/06/21 **Trees** (continued)

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Parish Council should thank the County Council for this offer but request that the replacements were planted where Ash trees had been removed. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Orchards** – Cllr Shelton had suggested that the Council consider planting more fruit trees in Joan’s Field and on The Park, establishing them as orchard areas that residents could use for fruit picking.

Cllr MacTiernan felt that there were already more than enough fruit trees on Joan’s Field and The Park and she reminded Members of the ongoing maintenance and costs that would be required. Cllrs Terry and Treacy had both picked apples from the trees in Joan’s Field and found there to be a lot of wasted, rotting fruit on the ground.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council did not plant more trees at the present time.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/07/21 **Joan’s Field**

- i. **Strimming** – SmartCut had advised that early February was the best time to trim in Joan’s Field. Members were worried that strimming so early would affect the bulbs. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should arrange for the field to be strimmed after April and the contractors asked to be aware of the daffodils, if possible. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Policy** – It was noted that a local resident had enquired about the Council’s policy relating to Joan’s Field (GP/139/20 refers). Members had been circulated a copy of the policy and mission statement, which had not been updated for several years, and considered whether any changes should be made. It was noted that a lot of the policy referred to jobs that Northway Community Volunteers (NCV) used to undertake but they had since stepped back from most of these.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the policy and mission statement should remain as it was. Cllr Phennah SECONDED.

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| FOR: | Cllr MacTiernan | Cllr Phennah |
| | Cllr Barnes | Cllr Godwin |
| | Cllr Mackenzie | Cllr Roberts |
| | Cllr Terry | Cllr Treacy |

AGAINST: Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Blackmore

Following on from this, some Members felt it would be better to change the policy to reflect what NCV was or was not doing in the field. It was, therefore AGREED, that this should be re-considered by the Committee in six months.

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

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GP/08/21 **The Park**

- i. **Inspection Report** – It was reported that the teenage shelter had been recently graffitied (see item ii. below).
- ii. **Teenage Shelter** – Photographs were shown of the obscene graffiti on the Teenage Shelter and the empty paint can that had been left behind. Police had collected the can for analysis but were unable to match it to anything. The play inspector/litter picker had sprayed over most of the graffiti and more paint had been purchased to allow her to cover over the rest. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Clerk passed on Members' thanks to the play inspector/litter picker for doing this work.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Mackenzie PROPOSED no further action was taken. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised relating to The Park.

GP/09/21 **Dog Fouling**

Following an increase in dog fouling, Members considered placement of the 'We're Watching You' signs that had been ordered the year before (Min Ref: GP/43/20 refers). It was recalled that the Parish Council had planned to work alongside Tewkesbury Borough Officers enforcing penalties (Min Ref: GP/34/19 & GP/48/19 refer), but this had likely been put on the backburner because of the pandemic.

It was noted that all alleyways, especially the Spine, were dog fouling hot spots. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that she and another councillor discussed between them where the signs would be best placed. Cllr Mackenzie offered to liaise with Cllr Terry on this. It was also suggested that posters could be put up in the local notice boards.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

7.50pm – Cllr MacTiernan left the meeting.

The Clerk mentioned that the litter picker would be willing to spray any dog mess she came across on her rounds, this had been done in the past to raise awareness. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that non-permanent line marker was purchased to allow for this. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/10/21 **Newsletter**

Members considered whether it was the right time to publish the next issue of Northway Voice and, if so, what articles should be included. It was felt that it would be useful to circulate information regarding the upcoming Parish Assembly and PCCM and County Elections. In addition to this, the following articles were suggested:

Dog fouling, Graffiti on the Teenage Shelter, positive feedback on the new dog bins, bridge update, COVID (thanks to residents), Santa letters, new CCTV, speeding/parking on pavements (possibly including Gloucestershire County Council's speed results), update on Garden Centre proposals and Councillor vacancies.

7.57 – Cllr MacTiernan rejoined the meeting.

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GP/10/21 **Newsletter** (continued)

Cllr Roberts wondered whether relevant contact information should be circulated again (TBC, CAB).

It was AGREED that the Clerk's Assistant should circulate this list to Members so that the articles could be written up.

Members considered whether someone should represent the Parish at Tewkesbury Borough Council's Planning Committee Meeting on 16th February 2021 and say a few words regarding the Ashchurch bridge application. It was AGREED that an Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting should be called the following week to consider this further.

GP/11/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

i. **Bins** – Cllrs Ward and Roberts had not yet had chance to have a walkabout and assess bins (GP/142/20 refers), it was AGREED that this should be put to the next meeting.

ii. **Bus Shelter Cleaning** – Members received a quotation from Golden Valley for taking on cleaning of the Perspex shelters (in addition to the brick shelters that they already cleaned). Members noted that the price was more than what they were currently paying.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should try to negotiate a better price with Golden Valley. No vote was taken.

Cllr MacTiernan felt that the Council had nothing to lose by going out for more quotes to allow a better comparison. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should seek further quotations and inform Golden Valley that they would be welcome to submit a more competitive price if they would like.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Land Opposite The Northway Centre** – The Chairman of the Council had received a letter from a resident enquiring as to whether the Council intended to instruct SmartCut to mow the area opposite the Northway Centre that had been recently cut back (Min Ref: GP/137/20 refers).

It was noted that, although one resident had been very against the maintenance that took place, a lot of positive comments had been received also. With this in mind, Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Parish Council should instruct SmartCut maintain the areas to its current standard and advise the resident of this decision. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iv. **Emergency Contractors** – Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council used the same Emergency Contractors for the upcoming year (NB Construction, D Hartell and N South). Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

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| FOR: | Cllr Ward | Cllr Mackenzie |
| | Cllr Barnes | Cllr Blackmore |
| | Cllr Godwin | Cllr Phennah |
| | Cllr Roberts | Cllr Shelton |
| | Cllr Terry | Cllr Treacy |

ABSTENSIONS: Cllr MacTiernan

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GP/11/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (Continued)

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

GP/12/21 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) reported that gullies along Northway Lane, The Park and Hardwick Bank Road were no longer blocked (Min Ref: GP/130/20 refers). He also mentioned that a house in Tug Wilson Close had recently had to use sandbags due to surface water running down to it.

The Clerk confirmed that blocked drains on Northway Lane motorway bridge had been reported to the County Council (Min Ref: C/07/21 refers).

- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) had no further issues to report.

GP/13/21 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authority since the previous General Purposes Committee Meeting:-

- Planning breach (caravan being lived in on a driveway).
- Bags of soiled waste behind Magnolia House on the path.
- Graffiti on the Teenage Shelter (Min Ref: GP/08/21).
- Churned up verge, Virginia Close (Min Ref: GP/144/20).
- Branches of tree along the Spine hitting walkers/cyclists.
- Potholes along Grange Road (Min Ref: C/06/21)
- Blocked drains/gullies on Northway Lane motorway bridge (Min Ref: C/07/21).
- Overgrown footpath between Train Station and A46 bridge (Min Ref: C/07/21).
- Overgrown footpath between J9 roundabout and Alexandra Way. (Min Ref: C/07/21).
- Bins not being emptied.

GP/14/21 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Keep Britain Tidy** – Members considered whether the Council should get involved in the Great British Spring Clean taking place between 28th May – 13th June 2021. It was felt that it was too early to commit to this with COVID-19 still causing problems. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that consideration of this was deferred a couple more months. Cllr Barned SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA)** – COVID-19 National Lockdown from 5th January 2021 – Implications for outdoor sport and play and web link to details of latest information and restrictions (as discussed under Min Ref: GP/05/21). No further action.

GP/15/21 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Rural Services Network** – The Rural Bulletin – 5th January 2021.
- ii. **Rubbish** – Correspondence relating to smelling bags of rubbish.
- iii. **Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA)** – Annual Report 2019/20.

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GP/15/21 **Correspondence for Information** (Continued)

- iv. **HAGS** – The NRG from HAGS.
- v. **Street Snooker** – Leaflet advertising street size ‘Street Snooker’ boards.
- vi. **Westotec** – Flyer advertising vehicle activated signs.
- vii. **KOMPAN** – Play equipment flyer.

GP/16/21 **Correspondence received after 14th January 2021**

- i. **Gloucestershire County Council** – Details of Northway Lane road closure.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.28pm