

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

**Following the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7), Councils are 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 7:10 p.m.**

Present: Cllr Mrs S Terry (Committee Chair) Cllr S Ward (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr M Barnes Cllr Mrs P Godwin  
Cllr J Roberts Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan  
Cllr P Mackenzie

In attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council  
Mr T Treacy, Clerk's Assistant

GP/57/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Bailey, Porter Phennah and Shelton.

GP/58/20 **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/59/20 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/60/20 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

**GP/05/20 Community Hub Grounds** – *The hedgehog/insect house built by Cllr Terry's brother had now been installed in the Hub grounds. Cllr Ward informed the Committee that the bird box built by Cllr Shelton had now been painted and installed. With regard to the bird boxes that are on order, there was still no date for their delivery.*

**GP/44/20 Gate Opening** – *With regard to the letter recently sent to the Trustees of the Northway Youth Club, Cllr Godwin asked if the nominal charge for late closing applied to the summer months only. It was confirmed that the charge applied for the whole year.*

**GP/48/20 Bins** – *The Clerk's Assistant was able to provide an update on the progress of the dog bin replacements. The update confirmed that the seven bins on the original list had all been replaced by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC). Since the original list was drawn up, a further three bins had been identified as needing replacement. The Clerk's Assistant advised the Committee that the additional bins were on record with TBC and would be replaced when new stock became available. There would be no charge to Northway Parish Council for the equipment or labour.*

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GP/60/20 **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes** (continued)

**GP/52/20 Weed Spraying** – The Clerk’s Assistant reported that the weed spraying had now been completed, including the car park area at the Youth Club. During the spraying, a call was received at the Parish Office, from a concerned resident. It had been noted that someone dressed in black was seen spraying near their property, with no obvious sign of who they were. There was also no hi viz clothing in view. The Clerk’s Assistant had taken this up with Smart Cut, who advised that their field workers were instructed to wear hi viz clothing, and this would be investigated further. Smart Cut also advised that all the clothing they issued carried the Smart Cut logo, for identification, but it was possible that from a distance, it could have been missed.

GP/61/20 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Play Inspection Reports** – The Clerk’s Assistant reported that although a full inspection was not currently being done, ongoing visual inspections were taking place.
- ii. **RoSPA Play Area Inspection Reports** – The three Inspection Reports provided by RoSPA Play Safety Ltd had previously been circulated to GP Committee members, by email.

Cllr Roberts commented that the reports were more well balanced than in previous years, providing a breakdown of all reasonable actions.

For convenience in the current circumstances, The Clerk’s Assistant had created a summary of the three reports and that is included below, showing only the pieces of Play Equipment, where remedial tasks have been identified:

In April 2020, RoSPA Play Safety Ltd submitted three inspection reports for the equipment in the Northway play areas.

**Report 1  
Northway Play Area**

<b><u>Equipment ID</u></b>	<b><u>Task or tasks</u></b>
<b>Cableway</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dismantle and repair. Spring brake not engaging on traveller.</li><li>• Ground surface needs repair.</li></ul>	<b>Two tasks</b>
<b>Carousel – Flush</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Service the bearings.</li></ul>	<b>One task</b>
<b>Swing – Junior – 2 Bay 4 Seat</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tighten connecting nuts on swing seat eye bolts.</li></ul>	<b>One task</b>
<b>Trampoline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the drainage.</li></ul>	<b>One task</b>

**Report 2  
Skate Park**

<b><u>Equipment ID</u></b>	<b><u>Task or tasks</u></b>
<b>Skate – Fun Box</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The transition between ground and unit exceeds 5mm. Modify.</li></ul>	<b>One task</b>

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GP/61/20 **Northway Playing Field** - (continued)

**Skate – Grind Rail**

**One task**

- *The distance between the lower edge of a rail and the rolling surface should be at least 200mm. No reasonably practicable action identified.*

**Skate – Half Pipe**

**Three tasks**

- *Surfacing is not compliant with the requirements of the relevant standards. Riding surface would benefit from repainting to make it less slippery. Repair.*
- *Barriers of a minimum height 1200mm should be fitted. No reasonably practicable action is identified.*
- *The distance between the top of the platform and the lower edge of the barrier should not exceed 60mm. No practicable action identified.*

**Skate – Table Top**

**Two tasks**

- *The distance between the lower edge of a rail and the rolling surface should be at least 200mm. No remedial practicable action is identified.*
- *Transition between ground and unit exceeds 5mm. Modify.*

**Skate – Wave Ramp**

**One task**

- *The concrete is not in good condition. Repair.*

**Report 3  
MUGA**

**Equipment ID**

**Task or tasks**

**Youth Shelter**

**One task**

- *Cap missing on framework. Replace.*

**Basketball Post**

**One task**

- *Item is cracked. No reasonably practicable action is identified.*

**Cycle – BMX Track**

**Two tasks**

- *Surface is uneven. Repair.*
- *No clear start / finish or indication of direction of travel.*

**Fitness – Exercise Equipment X4**

**Two tasks**

- *Moving parts require greasing. May require new bearings.*
- *Loose operating mechanism. Monitor.*

**MUGA**

**One task**

- *Fixtures loose or missing. Tighten/replace. Top half of far left post on high fencing at skate park end.*

With regard to the Cableway, Cllr Ward offered to look at the mechanism and oil it as necessary, and also suggested that quotes should be sought to replace the ground matting. Cllr Terry PROPOSED accepting Cllr Ward's offer to check the cableway, and for the Clerk's Assistant to investigate quotes for matting for the next GP meeting.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Regarding the loose bolt on the Junior Swing, Cllr Ward offered to check and tighten the bolts if possible.

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GP/61/20

**Northway Playing Field** - (continued)

Regarding the missing end cap on the pipe at the Teenage Shelter, Cllr. Ward offered to investigate and try to fix the problem. Cllr Ward also PROPOSED that efforts should be made to source a replacement cap from the manufacturer. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

With regard to the BMX Track, Cllr Ward suggested that putting mud down may also be a problem, so suggested that the humps remained as they were. Cllr Terry PROPOSED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Regarding the MUGA report, Cllr Ward PROPOSED, inspecting and trying to make good. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

There was a discussion relating to the ground level clearances in the RoSPA Report for the various skating equipment. Cllr Roberts suggested that standards may have changed over time, whilst Cllr Ward observed that this was a recurring report item.

Generally it was agreed to leave the skate equipment as it. Cllr Ward PROPOSED. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- i. **Wheelchair Swing** – The Clerk’s Assistant had carried out price investigations into the provision and installation of a Wheelchair Swing in the Play Area.

A summary of costs was presented to the Committee, with prices ranging from £8,400 to £42,000 (rounding applied).

It was pointed out that the quotes were not easy to compare, as some included all aspects of the work required, whilst others excluded activities such as preliminary inspections and groundworks.

The Clerk’s Assistant also informed the meeting that County Cllr Smith had been contacted again, now that some quotes had been received. Unfortunately, it transpired that due to the current situation, the officers working on the Community Funding Team have been redeployed. County Cllr Smith has also said that he was hopeful that this project could be revisited, once the lockdown was lifted.

Cllr Ward asked the Clerk’s Assistant to circulate the summary spreadsheet he had produced, to include hyperlinks to the respective websites.

- ii. **Other Issues** – There was a discussion about the regular gathering of youths sat on top of the Half Pipe, and the new Picnic bench by the table tennis equipment, particularly at night. There was concern about the retention of the virus on the metal equipment, but it was noted that, whilst the areas could be disinfected, they could not be monitored all the time.

It had also been observed that similar gatherings were taking place behind the BMX facility, where, on more than one occasion, between 20 and 30 assorted bottles and cans had been found discarded.

Cllr Roberts suggested that a sign could be put in place, emphasising that the play areas were closed. Cllr MacTiernan was not in support of this, commenting that those that

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### GP/61/20 **Northway Playing Field** – (continued)

gather at these locations already knew the rules for social distancing. Cllr Mackenzie made the point that if these people were moved on, they would only gather somewhere else, and that may not be in such a safe area.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that if such gatherings were seen that they should be reported to the police.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

A request has been received at the Parish Office from a local resident to have vehicle access to Northway Playing Field, to remove garden debris. The Clerk asked if the policy that was in place under normal circumstances, where a resident was allowed to borrow the key, was still in place during the lockdown. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Gatekeeper was asked to open and close the gate and the resident should be charged for their time. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED. No vote took place at that time.

The discussion continued, and after exploring a number of possible options to control this, Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that where access was required for a vehicle with a height in excess of 2.1 metres, this would be managed by the current Gatekeeper. For the internal gate, the gatekeeper should open it in the morning and close it in the evening. Cllr Roberts withdrew his original proposal. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### GP/62/20 **Joan's Field**

Cllr Mackenzie reported that he had recently visited Joan's Filed and found it to be a beautiful spot, and also commented that the grass cutting had been done to high standard.

### GP/63/20 **The Park**

It was agreed that as with the Play Area Equipment, a contractor needed to be selected to carry out visual inspections of the Teenage Shelter. Investigations for costs and to nominate a suitable contractor were to be carried out in readiness for the next GP meeting.

### GP/64/20 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

#### i. **Grass Cutting**

- a) **Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) Contract** - Copies of the draft contract had previously been approved by Northway Parish Council and there was an expectation that TBC would be providing a signed off copy.

The Clerk's Assistant updated the Committee, that following an email strand on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020, TBC had agreed to finalise the document. It appeared that there has been some misunderstanding as to which Council was to act first, so The Clerk's Assistant would follow this up and try to resolve the issue.

Notwithstanding the above point, confirmation had been received from Tewkesbury Borough Council that they were happy for work to proceed, under an implied contract for the time being.

- b) **Grass Cutting Contractors** – The Clerk's Assistant informed the Committee that a number of positive comments had been received by local residents,

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GP/64/20 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (continued)

saying how good the grass cutting was looking in the area. This feedback had been passed back to Smart Cut for them to share with their field workers. There had also been one complaint from a local resident about the continuation of the grass cutting during the current lockdown. The Clerk was able to reassure the resident that the work being done adheres to social distance guidelines, and also that the funding was already committed. The resident was also informed that it was more uplifting at this time to see the area well-tended, rather than it being neglected.

- c) **Grass Cutting Health and Safety** – A request was received from TBC for copies of Smart Cut’s Risks Assessment and Safe Ways of Working Policies. These documents had been received from Smart Cut and been passed on to the Grounds Maintenance Project Officer, who made the original request.
- ii. **Graffiti Wipes** – The Clerk’s Assistant provided some pricing examples for different type of graffiti cleaning products. Cllr Ward PROPOSED purchasing the 150 wipes at £8.85. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Bus Shelter Cleaning** – The Clerk’s Assistant provided an update on the recent bus shelter cleaning. Of the Perspex covered shelters, it was reported that two of the shelters appeared to have been missed in the first round of cleaning. The contractor had been made aware of this and agreed to return to clean them. It was reported that the brick bus shelters had also been cleaned as requested, but this was through a different contractor to the Perspex shelters.
- iv. **Other Issues** – An update was received regarding litter picking and the gate opening contracts. There had been no problems reported for either of these contracts. Cllr Ward was able to show the Committee a colour coded map of the area, which the litter picker had produced. The map showed the cycle of picking that was being done, providing a regular visit for each part of the parish. Cllr Terry commented that she had received very positive comments about the quality of the work being done.

Cllr Mackenzie enquired whether the damaged bollard that he had taped up to make safe, at the Saxon Park bus shelter had been repaired. He was informed that it had been reported, but so far there is no update as to when it will be repaired.

GP/65/20 **Newsletter**

Cllr Terry asked when would be a suitable time to issue a new Newsletter, normally it is March, July and November. Cllr Roberts suggested that delaying to August perhaps, might enable the Council to put out more positive news. Cllr Terry PROPOSED an October or November issue and that this should be an agenda item for September’s meeting.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/66/20 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – There was no report presented for this meeting.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie, Flood Warden, reported that everywhere was very dry so no report was necessary.

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GP/67/20 **'Report It'**

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities:

26 March 2020

A washing machine was dumped in Carrant Brook opposite Joan's Field.

Update – TBC have removed the machine.

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Broken bollard by Saxon Park bus stop.

Update – Reported to GCC. Cllr Mackenzie made temporarily safe with tape.

15<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Plastic corrugated sheets by entrance to Northway Mill of Hardwick Bank Road

Update – TBC have removed the sheeting.

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Building debris by the bridge/culvert close to the entrance to Northway Mill off Hardwick Bank Road

Update – Reported to TBC but no update as yet.

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Fencing and green debris, along the spine by 80 Sandfield.

Update – Reported to TBC. Resident had removed the debris after receiving a letter.

GP/68/20 **Correspondence for Information**

None received at time of preparing the agenda.

GP/69/20 **Correspondence received after 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

None received.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 8.10 p.m.