

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 20th October 2021 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:17 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Ward (Committee Chairman) Cllr S Terry (Committee Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr C Blackmore
Cllr J Roberts Cllr T Treacy

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

GP/143/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Godwin, MacTiernan, Mackenzie and Shelton

GP/144/21 **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/145/21 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 15th September 2021 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Terry Cllr Barnes
Cllr Blackmore Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Roberts Cllr Treacy

GP/146/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

GP/128/21 Northway Playing Field > Fete – A letter of thanks had been sent to the fete organiser.

GP/128/21 Northway Playing Field > Northway Play Park – Replacement parts had been ordered for the see saw. Cllr Ward had attempted to replace the mechanism but without success as the bolts were too tight to undo. The manufacturers were sending a new tool to try.

GP/131/21 Trees > Pruning – Pruning of plum and cherry trees on Joan's Field and The Park had been completed.

GP/132/21 Bins – Liners had been bolted into the bins.

GP/137/21 Parish Maintenance > Alleyways – Overgrowth along the Fairway/Northway Lane alleyway had been reported to Bromford Housing who had cut back. They had also been asked to monitor growth along Lee Walk in the future.

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GP/147/21 GP Projects Working Party

- i. **Outdoor Gym Area/Fit Zone** – Installation of the outdoor gym area had been delayed; a new, estimated start date was being awaited.
- ii. **Joan's Field Access** – The Office had been having difficulty contacting the contractor who had been instructed to undertake this work (Min Ref: GP/127/21 refers).

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a letter should be sent to the contractor asking him to inform the Council what was happening and allowing 28 days in which to respond, otherwise it would be forced to look elsewhere. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was also suggested that the Clerk could make enquiries with Gloucestershire County Council who had recommended the contractor.

- iii. **Wheelchair Swing** – It was announced that the Council's application to the Disabled Facilities Grant had been successful and a total of £11,051.25 had been awarded towards the project. Members were reminded that the quotation had increased since the application was submitted and so there was a shortfall of £1,298.75 after the grant and Northway Community Volunteers contribution of £500.00 (Min Ref: GPP/37/21 refers).

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Parish Council's EMR Rolling Capital Fund should be used to cover the remaining amount to allow the wheelchair project to be finalised. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Skate Park** – There were no updates available on this project, although it was noted that GRCC had enquired as to whether the Parish Council anticipated using their consultancy services in the near future. It was suggested that this should be considered at the next GP Projects Working Party Meeting.
- v. **Other Projects** – No updates.
- vi. **Online Sessions** – Cllr Terry had attended the Severn Trent Community Fund online session, which she gave a report on. It was suggested that this might be a good fund to consider when the Council started thinking about progressing plans for Joan's Field (Min Ref: GPP/40/21 refers). It was AGREED that the GP Projects Working Party should consider putting out a survey relating to Joan's Field improvements before its SurveyMonkey subscription expired (May 2022).
- vii. **Next Meeting** – It was AGREED that a GP Projects Working Party meeting should be scheduled for January 2022.

GP/148/21 Northway Playing Field

- i. **Northway Play Park** – Inspection reports relating to the Play Park had been received. It was noted that offensive graffiti had appeared inside the Red House. Cllr Blackmore offered to try and remove these with graffiti wipes.

The inspection report also highlighted the issue of water pooling either side of the Train but Members felt there was little that could be done to resolve this.

- ii. **Northway Skatepark** – Inspection reports relating to the Skatepark had been received. Graffiti and weeds were highlighted.

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GP/148/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Inspection reports relating to the MUGA and Outdoor Gym had been received. It was noted that the basketball hoop looked dirty. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED no action was taken. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **BMX Track** – Inspection reports relating to the BMX Track had been received. It was noted that signage had been graffitied.

- v. **Fete** – It was confirmed that Cllr Phennah had forwarded details of the firm that supplied SSAFA with their gazebo (Min Ref: GP/128/21 refers). Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should purchase a gazebo for the Parish Council to use at future community events. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a budget of £400 should be allocated towards this. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- vi. **Other Issues** – No further issues relating to the Playing Field were raised.

GP/149/21 **Joan's Field**

No issues were raised relating to Joan's Field.

GP/150/21 **The Park Amenity Land**

- i. **Inspection Report** – No issues were raised following inspections of the Teenage Shelter.
- ii. **Other Issues** – No issues were raised relating to The Park.

GP/151/21 **Trees**

- i. **GCC – Open Call for Land** – Gloucestershire County Council was calling for landowners to come forward and offer land to plant, however, it was noted that the land must be right for tree planting and over half an acre in size. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that no action was taken.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Saplings at Entrance to the Playing Field** – Following initial advice received from the arborist (Min Ref: GP/131/21 refers), enquiries had been made as to how much it would cost to move some/all of the saplings to The Park. The arborist explained that digging up the trees would be difficult for her ahead of what would be a long and arduous fruit tree season, however, she could possibly instruct councillors should they wish to volunteer to do the digging. Alternatively, she had a colleague who charged £300 a day (for two workers) and she could provide contact details if the Council wished. The arborist had also highlighted that, if there was a cold spell transplanting the saplings might need to wait until Spring.

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GP/151/21 **Trees** (continued)

Members felt that it would be best to re-consider moving the saplings again closer to spring.

The arborist had noted that the apple trees in Joan's Field had an immense amount of growth so would require work in the coming winter and the cherry tree that she had cut back on The Park would require the same again the following year. Cllr Roberts felt it would be good to continue ensuring the parish trees were healthy and so PROPOSED quotations be sought.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **English Oak Trees** – The offer of two English Oak trees had been accepted from the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire (Min Ref: GP/131/21 refers). A letter of acknowledgement had been received which advised on planting of the trees (which would be delivered after December). Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the trees should be planted on The Park.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that £650 should be allocated towards purchase of suitable tree guards and, additionally, mulch, bone meal, compost, plaques and any other necessary items should be purchased ahead of planting. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was further suggested that appointing a custodian for the trees would be a good idea and Tewkesbury Borough Council might be able to offer advice on where to obtain reasonable tree guards.

- iv. **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee** – It was noted that Cllr MacTiernan had submitted an application for funding towards trees for planting on The Park.

The Clerk suggested that it might be beneficial for Members to hold a site visit before making a decision on where exactly the trees should be planted as there were a lot of brambles behind the Teenage Shelter.

It was AGREED that the Committee should await feedback following submission of the funding application before deciding anything.

GP/152/21 **Bins**

Members were advised that a litter bin in Steward Road had required a replacement liner which had then been bolted in. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that this action/expenditure was ratified. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/153/21 **Newsletter**

Members received a draft copy of the newsletter. Some minor amendments were suggested, following these, Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/153/21 **Newsletter** (continued)

Cllr Terry thanked Cllr Ward for his hard work in putting the newsletter together.

GP/154/21 **Circus**

A meeting was being arranged with the organisers to establish whether it would be possible to have the Circus hold events on The Park in 2022 (Min Ref: GP/135/21 refers).

It was felt that issues such as parking and traffic control would need to be addressed. Additionally, there would soon be two young Oak trees planted on The Park which needed to be taken into account.

GP/155/21 **Bus Shelter Sign**

It was noted that there was an outdated 'Ashchurch Parish Council' sign attached to the bus shelter on The Park. Cllr Ward offered to have a look and see whether he could amend/remove letters, as necessary. Cllr Terry PROPOSED acceptance of this offer. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/156/21 **Budget for the Financial Year 2022/23**

2101 GP - SALARIES – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £9,350.00.

2135 GP – COVID 19 – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £0.00.

2136 GP - GRASS CUTTING TBC & GCC – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £6,890.00.

2137 GP - GRASS CUTTING – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £5,515.00.

2138 GP - LITTER BINS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,200.00.

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 £1,200.00.

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 £1,000.00.

2143 GP - JOAN'S FIELD – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,000.00.

2144 GP - OTHER AREAS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £4,000.00.

2145 GP - HUB GROUNDS – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £400.00.

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.

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GP/156/21 **Budget for the Financial Year 2022/23** (continued)

Members noted that, following these agreements, the recommendation for the total General Purposes Committee Budget for 2022/23 would be set at £40,255.00 (copy of breakdown attached). Cllr Terry PROPOSED acceptance of these figures. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/157/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Grass Cutting** – Members considered whether the Council should continue with the current grass cutting arrangements.

Members were pleased with the standard of grass cutting and wished to continue to take on maintenance of the areas previously undertaken by the Borough Council, however, it was suggested that TBC could be asked to consider increasing its contribution due to inflation. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Review of Ongoing Contracts** – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council made no changes to its ongoing contracts for the upcoming financial year. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Emergency Contractors** – Members reviewed the current emergency contractors used by the Parish Council. Cllr Ward PROPOSED no changes were made for the upcoming financial year.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Other Issues** – No further issues were raised relating to parish maintenance.

GP/158/21 **Winter Maintenance**

It was noted that there was sufficient grit in the parish store area outside the Community Hub. No further action was considered necessary.

GP/159/21 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No drainage/flooding reports were received.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Members were reminded that Cllr Treacy had offered to stand in as flood warden whilst Cllr Mackenzie was away (Min Ref: GP/139/21 refers). Although Cllr Treacy had been unable to attend GRCC's Flood Warden Training in September he advised that he would be interested in attending in December (date dependant) if it would be beneficial. The Clerk enquired whether Cllr Treacy might be willing to act as stand in Flood Warden on a more permanent basis once he had received necessary training and he confirmed that he would be happy to do this.

GP/160/21 **'Report It'**

It was noted that the following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities:

- Vandalism to seesaw in the Play Park.

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GP/160/21 **'Report It'** (continued)

- Lee Road pot hole.
- Roadworks sign left on Northway Lane motorway bridge.
- Weeds clogging drain in Thistle Downs.

The Clerk advised that following constant complaints to Tewkesbury Borough Council, overhanging branches along The Spine had, at last, been cut back.

GP/161/21 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Woodland Trust** – Newsletter.

GP/162/21 **Correspondence received after 14th October 2021**

- i. **SmartCut**
 - a. Photos of lorry parked on verge restricting access for grass cutting.
 - b. Photo of Joan's Field padlock which had broken. A spare lock and chain had been used as replacement.
- ii. **The Playing Field** – Newsletter.
- iii. **Gloucestershire County Council** – Ash Dieback scheme update.
- iv. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Details of available funding.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.25pm.