

## **NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Cllr S Terry (Committee Vice Chairman) Cllr C Blackmore  
Cllr P Godwin Cllr E MacTiernan  
Cllr T Treacy

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

### GP/104/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Roberts, Ward, Mackenzie and Shelton. Cllr Barnes did attend but following Covid-19 checks (i.e. temperature) he was advised to go home.

### GP/105/21 **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).

### GP/106/21 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Terry highlighted an inaccuracy on page 7 of the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting that took place on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (Cllr Treacy rather than Cllr Terry had offered to assist with the Tree Maintenance check). Following this amendments, Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### GP/107/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

***GP/63/21 Parish Maintenance*** – *Weed spraying had taken place.*

***GP/76/21 Northway Playing Field*** – *Goal post covers had been ordered and the cost of these would be covered by S106 funds.*

***GP/76/21 & GP/91/21 Northway Playing Field*** – *Concrete barriers had been repaired with coloured resin and no longer required painting. The corroded sign post next to the Play Park had been removed. Holes in BMX track filled with soil and the serpent runway repaired.*

***GP/91/21 Northway Playing Field*** – *An order had been placed for a more secure gate into the Playing Field.*

***GP/91/21 Northway Playing Field*** – *SmartCut had been contracted to clear access from Alexandra Way to the Playing Field. They had also been asked to cut back overgrowth at the Oak Drive access.*

***GP/91/21 Northway Playing Field*** – *Young Gloucestershire had been given permission to use the Playing Field for youth sessions during the summer holidays. Investigations were being made as to whether toilets would be available for use.*

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GP/107/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

**GP/95/21 Newsletter** – The latest newsletter had been distributed. Several responses had been received in relation to the Luncheon Club appeal and Speedwatch campaign.

**GP/98/21 Parish Maintenance** – Tree checks had been undertaken; no issues raised.

**GP/96/21 Litter Picking Event** – Volunteer litter picker training was provided by Tewkesbury Borough Council and five Councillors attended this. Equipment would be provided once induction forms had been returned.

**GP/94/21 Dogs** – A letter was sent to the resident believed to have allowed their dog to foul on The Park. No response was received.

**GP/95/21 Newsletter** – A get well soon card was sent to the lady in charge of Northway/Ashchurch Luncheon Club.

GP/108/21 **GP Projects Working Party**

- i. **Crowdfunding Workshop** – Cllrs Treacy, Terry and Barnes had attended a Crowdfunding workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Cllr Treacy had put together some notes following the workshop, these were circulated. Members discussed the idea of having a Crowdfunding campaign, perhaps towards the Skate Park project. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this should be put to the GP Projects Working Party for further consideration.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Outdoor Gym Area/Fit Zone** – It was confirmed that the Committee Chairman and office staff had met Caloo on site to discuss progression of the outdoor gym project. It had been established that the old equipment could not be reused as it would need to be cut off at the base.

In addition, the warranty on the equipment was dependant on the Council contracting Caloo to undertake annual inspections at a cost of £395 (this would include minor repairs), however, the first inspection was being provided at no cost.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should commit to Caloo undertaking annual inspections of the outdoor gym equipment. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Section 106 Funds** – Cllr Terry PROPOSED that an additional £2,833.03 awarded from Section 106 funds (Min Ref: C/195/21 refers) should be put in Earmarked Reserves to go towards one of the ongoing projects.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Joan's Field Access** – Members were provided with details of a kissing gate which was designed to allow access for wheelchairs but not motorbikes. It was felt that something like this was needed for the new Joan's Field access.

Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that a suitable gate, of this style and approved by Gloucestershire County Council, up to the cost of £800 should be purchased. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/108/21 **GP Projects Working Party** (continued)

The Office was currently waiting on confirmation of a start date for this work.

- v. **Wheelchair Swing** – Details of the Disabled Facilities Grant had been forwarded to the Council Office. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should apply to this fund in the hope of progressing the Wheelchair Swing project. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry offered to have a look through the application form and so it was AGREED that this should be forwarded to her via email.

- vii. **Other Projects** – No updates.
- viii. **Next Meeting** – It was noted that the next Grant Working Party Meeting was scheduled to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (Note: the date of this was later rescheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021).

GP/109/21 **Dog Control and Welfare Working Party**

- i. **Notes** – Notes of the Dog Control and Welfare Working Party Meeting that took place on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 had been circulated to Members.

It was noted that the following recommendations had been made to the General Purposes Committee:

1. Amending signs at the Playing Field requesting owners to keep their dogs 'under control' instead of on a lead.
2. Having a dog theme at the Council's stall at the fete.
3. Replacing the Covid-19 signs at the Playing Field with dog signs once no longer needed.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council accepted these recommendations.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr MacTiernan asked whether there were any outdated 'Ashchurch' signs within the parish still, it was believed that these had all been replaced.

- ii. **Terms of Reference** – Members received the Terms of Reference for this Committee. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED approval. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/110/21 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park**
  - a. **Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports relating to the Play Park had been received, scratches in paintwork on one of the swings had been reported.
  - b. **Swings** – Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED reinstallation of swings which had been removed to allow social distancing. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

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GP/110/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Northway Skatepark** – Inspection reports relating to the Skatepark had been received, it was noted that a lot of weeds were coming up alongside the serpent runway. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that SmartCut should be contracted to strim or spray these.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **M.U.G.A / Outdoor Gym** – Inspection reports relating to the MUGA and Outdoor Gym had been received, no new issues were raised.
- iv. **BMX Track** – Inspection reports relating to the BMX Track had been received and no issues were raised.
- v. **Fete** –
- a. **PLI/Risk Assessment** – It was noted that PLI information and a risk assessment in relation to the upcoming fete was still being awaited (Min Ref: GP/91/21 refers).

It was felt that, even if the information was received within the next week it still left very little time for approval before the fete on 7<sup>th</sup> August. Members considered giving authority to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Blackmore to grant approval upon receipt of the documents, instead, it was AGREED that an Extraordinary Council Meeting should be scheduled for the following week.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should write to Ms Fowler, who was organising the fete, expressing the Council's concerns that, with just over two weeks until the event, Members had yet to see any insurance documentation or a final draft of the risk assessment. She should be advised that a meeting had been scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> July to allow Members to review this information and so it needed to have been received before then. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was further suggested that Ms Fowler should be invited to attend the Extraordinary Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

- b. **Stall** – Although not present at the meeting, Cllr Roberts had provided a report following the Dog Control and Welfare Working Party Meeting and the recommendation that the Council's stall at the fete should be focussed on dog issues in the parish. The following points were highlighted for consideration in planning of the stall:
- Opportunity to say thankyou to responsible dog owners of Northway
  - Highlight actions the Council has already taken - signs, pink spray, Northway Voice articles.
  - Promote that dog bags can now be left in any bins
  - Illustrate how dog fouling can be reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council by the "report it facility".
  - Ask the public for ideas how the problems with dog fouling could be mitigated?
  - To help with public engagement offer a free raffle for a "cuddly soft" dog toy and see if Tewkesbury Borough Council have any items that could be given away or promotional literature that can be used.

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GP/110/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

Cllr Roberts had also highlighted the fact that there needed to be an understanding that this would create some extra work for the office staff and a number of councillors would need to help run the stall on the day of the fete.

The Clerk passed on an offer from Cllr Ward to fill a vehicle with balloons and provide a cash prize for whoever guessed the correct amount, as had been done in the past.

Cllr Blackmore also offered to purchase and donate a cuddly dog toy as a prize - to keep with the dog theme of the stall – it was suggested that the toy could be stored in a plastic bag to avoid handling it before passing it over, reducing the Covid-19 risk.

Cllr MacTiernan suggested that the Council gratefully accepted both of these offers.

Members AGREED that stall should be organised as per Cllr Roberts' list. Cllr Terry suggested that there should also be information available on how to handle dogs and responsibility/knowing how to keep them under control.

It was AGREED that the Council should approach the Borough Council to try and obtain information, leaflets and possibly some freebies to have available on the stall.

Cllr Ward had previously provided display boards at the fete, and it was AGREED that the Council should enquire as to the availability of these again. Pictures along with facts and figures (e.g how much waste dogs produce/how long would it take to fill the Playing Field), posters, questionnaire results, dog signs and a limited number of leaflets should be displayed.

Cllr Blackmore suggested that the Council could also discuss with residents the idea of a campaign which had been raised at the Dog Control and Welfare Working Party Meeting.

Cllrs Blackmore, Treacy and MacTiernan volunteered to help run the stall. Cllr Godwin, although helping elsewhere on the day of the fete, was willing to help set up the gazebo in the morning, as was Cllr Treacy. It was noted that other Members, who were not present at the meeting, might also be willing to help.

Cllr Blackmore suggested encouraging the idea of making the Playing Field a clean, green, welcoming space – encouraging the community to keep it nice for everyone to use. The phrase 'Pink s\*\*t in the park' was also favoured by Members as a headline for the theme.

vi. **Other Issues** – None.

GP/111/21 **Joan's Field**

i. **Access from Back of Kestrel Way** – Members received advice from the Council's insurers relating to this access (Min Ref: GP/92/21 refers) which, if the Council decided to start maintaining, could have liability implications.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the previous agreement to maintain this was retracted, due to the new information received. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/111/21 **Joan's Field** (continued)

- ii. **Policy** – Members received an amended copy of the Joan's Field policy which had been updated to reflect what the work that Northway Community Volunteers still undertook in the Field. Cllr Terry PROPOSED approval of the amended policy.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Other Issues** – None.

GP/112/21 **The Park Amenity Land**

- i. **Inspection Report** – No issues were raised following inspections of the Teenage Shelter.

- ii. **Other Issues** – None.

GP/113/21 **Trees**

- i. **Grease Bands** – Members considered purchasing grease bands to protect fruit trees from bugs over winter. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council did not purchase these. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Virginia Close** – It was confirmed that the Clerk and Clerk's Assistant had a meeting with a Tewkesbury Borough Council Officer scheduled for the following day to discuss overgrowth on and around this tree (Min Ref: GP/98/21 refers).

- iii. **The Queen's Green Canopy** – Information relating to this scheme had been circulated with Members' agenda. It was felt that, if the Council was going to plant more trees, they needed to be more established and not saplings like had been planted previously.

Cllr MacTiernan explained that she would like to see a wooded area at the back of The Park (behind the teenage shelter) but wanted to look into the matter a little further before a proposal was made. It was, therefore, AGREED that this should be deferred to the next meeting.

- iv. **Saplings** – A photograph was shown of saplings at the entrance to Northway Playing Field which had become overgrown and looked messy.

Cllr MacTiernan suggested moving the trees somewhere else, perhaps onto The Park where she had hoped to see a wooded area established.

Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that the Council should contact an arborist to give advice on whether to leave, weed or relocate the trees. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/114/21 **Memorial Bench**

A request had been received for placement of a memorial bench at the Playing Field in memory of a young man who had died earlier in the year. Further information had been requested and was still awaited.

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GP/114/21 **Memorial Bench** (continued)

A draft policy relating to requests for memorials had been established and this was circulated to Members. Cllr Blackmore felt that the policy needed more work and so it was AGREED that amendments or suggestion should be forwarded directly to the Office.

GP/115/21 **Litter Picking Event**

Due to the situation with Covid-19 and circumstances still being somewhat restrictive, Members felt it was safer to delay arranging a litter picking event until the following year.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that this should be put on the General Purposes Agenda again in February 2022 along with the proposed dates of the Great British Spring Clean, if available. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/116/21 **Bulb Planting**

Members considered whether the Council should contribute towards the cost of bulbs for the local schools' project of planting these at the entrances into Northway (Min Ref: C/140/21 & C/161/21 refer). It was AGREED that consideration of this was deferred until the schools approached the community for contributions (as they had expressed this would be happening nearer to the time).

GP/117/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

i. **Grass Cutting**

- a. **Review** – Members reviewed grass cutting in the parish. It was noted that the section of The Park which SmartCut had been instructed not to cut kept getting mowed. Members acknowledged that it was difficult as the area was not sectioned off in any way and only obvious in wet weather when it was boggy. Cllr Terry, therefore, PROPOSED that the Council did nothing further regarding this.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was also noted that, following recent concerns regarding the standard of cutting, things had improved and the latest cut was a lot better.

A verge in The Sandfield had been reported to the Office as it was not being mown. After some investigations, it was confirmed that the verge belonged to Gloucestershire County Council and so would be added to the maintenance schedule.

Complaints had also been received about the amount of overgrowth on the green opposite The Northway Centre (which had been cleared by Tewkesbury Borough Council at the start of the year. Cllr MacTiernan believed that Ubico were supposed to maintain the overgrowth until it stopped growing back.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should email Tewkesbury Borough Council Officers about the overgrowth and mention complaints that had been received. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

## **NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

### GP/117/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (continued)

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

b. **Parking on Verges** – SmartCut had forwarded photographs of vehicles parked on the verges which restricted access when mowing. Cllr MacTiernan suggested an article should be included in the next newsletter asking residents to be considerate of the grass cutting contractors (perhaps including photographs in the article with blacked out number plates).

ii. **Letter from Resident** – Members had been circulated a copy of correspondence from a local resident highlighting several complaints. The Clerk's response had also been included for Members to read and it was felt that the questions had been answered fully. It was AGREED that no further action was necessary.

iii. **Other Issues** – Cllr Terry mentioned that, although weedkilled, weeds along Hardwick Bank Road had been so tall that they were still in place.

The Clerk suggested that the Council consider putting an agreement in place to undertake weedkilling at a more appropriate time of year, with or without the County Council's contribution.

It was AGREED that the weeds along Hardwick Bank Road should be included on the list for the lengthsman/community maintenance gang (Min Ref: C/163/21 refers).

### GP/118/21 **Drainage and Flooding**

i. **Reports** – No reports were made in relation to drainage and flooding.

ii. **Flood Warden** – It was noted that Cllr Mackenzie was be unable to undertake Flood Warden duties between then and December. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that information on this role should be circulated to all Members in the hope that someone would be able to take it on.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### GP/119/21 **'Report It'**

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

- Blocked water gutter drain in Thistledowns.
- Car obstructing grass at front of Davey Walk.
- Brambles on Northway Lane motorway bridge.
- Overgrowth on hump back bridge.
- Path and flytipping up to iron bridge.
- Suspected drug dealing at Northway Playing Field.
- No dropped kerbs Elmvil and Cherry Orchard
- Bath and back board flytipping.
- Tyre next to Hardwick Bank Rd/Northway Lane junction.
- Overhanging trees on The Spine.
- Attempted break in at the Village Hall.

Cllr Ward had reported youths on the railway to British Transport Police who advised that very few people phone them regarding this. It was felt that an article should be included in the next newsletter with the relevant contact details.



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GP/120/21 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **The Gloucestershire and Oxford Playing Fields Association** – Details of Playground Inspection Seminar. No action.
- ii. **Railway Line Drainage Ditch** – Correspondence relating to the ‘railway line drainage ditch’. Members were unable to respond to this due to there being no return address on the letter.
- iii. **CPRE** – Membership details. No action.
- iv. **Keep Britain Tidy** – Details of Love Parks Week. No action.

GP/121/21 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Overgrowth** – Copy of letters sent to residents.
- ii. **Caloo** – Product catalogue.
- iii. **Open Spaces Society** – Newsletter.
- iv. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Details of garden waste and bulky waste collections.

GP/122/21 **Correspondence received after 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

- i. **Guideposts** – Request for help with fundraising.
- ii. **Gloucestershire Constabulary** – Neighbourhood Alerts (ASB Awareness Weed & Dog DNA).

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 9.00pm.