

**NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 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 8:00 p.m.**

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

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

GP/108/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Porter.

GP/109/20 **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).

GP/110/20 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Godwin	Cllr Roberts
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Phennah
	Cllr Terry	Cllr Ward

ABSENTIONS:	Cllr Blackmore	Cllr Mackenzie
	Cllr Shelton	

GP/111/20 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

**GP/98/20 (v) Northway Playing Field, Crime and Disorder** – The Clerk's Assistant reported that, in relation to the sharing of data captured by CCTV, no further information had become available, beyond the Home Office Surveillance Code of Practice dated June 2013. A copy of that Code of Practice had been circulated to CCTV Working Party Members.

**GP/101/20 (i, a) Parish Maintenance Contract, Grass Cutting** – The Clerk's Assistant reported that there had been no feedback so far, from Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) on the first quarterly report that had been submitted by Northway Parish Council (NPC) in July 2020. Cllr MacTiernan had previously offered to progress the feedback from TBC, but as she had been unable to join this meeting, no further reporting was available.

The Clerk's Assistant also reported that the next grass cutting quarterly report would soon be due. Cllr Roberts commented that as there was no feedback, TBC must be happy with how

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### GP/111/20 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** – (Continued)

*well the contract was working. Cllr Terry suggested that if NPC continued as it had been doing, it would be seen to be doing its job.*

**GP/101/20 (i, a) Parish Maintenance Contract, Grass Cutting** – Cllr Terry asked if the monies due from TBC to NPC in relation to the Grass Cutting Contract had come through (a total of £2,000), and the Clerk's Assistant was able to confirm that they had.

**GP/101/20 (ii, e) Parish Maintenance Contract, Dog Bins** – The Clerk's Assistant reported that a quote had been received at the Parish Office, to re-site an existing bin to the location of a damaged one that had previously been removed, on the Spine. Cllr Terry had provided a photograph to confirm that the old fixings were still in place.

Cllr Roberts reported that there had been a number of comments on social media recently, to TBC noting that the bins were being emptied, and it was good to hear positive feedback. It was also noted however that people had been using some bins to deposit carrier bags full of domestic waste, which was making the bins too full between collections. With specific reference to a bin on the Spine, Cllr Blackmore commented that she had been made aware of a resident that had been depositing large amounts of waste there. Cllrs Blackmore and Terry agreed to discuss the matter further and if necessary, arrange for NPC to write a letter to that resident to remind them to use their domestic waste bins.

Cllr Ward reported that the issue of overflowing bins had been ongoing for a number of weeks, as a result of TBC changing from a twice weekly collection to once a week. Following numerous communications from the Clerk, TBC had reverted to twice weekly collections but in an inconsistent manner. Cllr Ward advised that the situation should continue to be reported, as TBC's contractor was being paid to carry out two collections per week.

### GP/112/20 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park** – Inspection Reports had been received and the Clerk's Assistant suggested that he read them through, with Councillors invited to ask questions at any point. This approach was accepted.
  - a) Boundary walls - Chipped paint.
  - b) Merak Quad Swings – Two swings had been removed. This was a known COVID 19 related social distancing issue.
  - c) Aerial Runway – Ground mats were lifting again in places.
  - d) In Ground Trampoline – The fixture was full of water and rubbish.
  - e) Mira Toddler Swing – One swing was missing. This was a COVID 19 related social distancing issue.
  - f) Natter Tube – Out of service. This was a COVID 19 related social distancing issue.

The Clerk's Assistant stated that there were no issues that required further attention at this time.

Cllr Terry commented that the only immediate concern was the matting, which was lifting again on the Aerial Runway. The Clerk's Assistant advised that there were no pictures of the faulty matting to show, but Cllr Ward offered to visit the site to assess the issue further.

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GP/112/20 **Northway Playing Field** (Continued)

There was further discussion about the reported water and rubbish in the ground trampoline. The option to empty the space of water and rubbish was explored but it was widely agreed that as the winter months approach, the situation would return again before very long. Cllr Ward expressed the view that it could be left, without any further harm coming from it. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that no further action be taken for the time being, but to keep the situation under review.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

With regard to repair costs for the roundabout, the Clerk's Assistant reported that costs for the repair had not yet been received but were being progressed.

- ii. **Northway Skate Park** – An Inspection Report had been received and it revealed that all the equipment at the Skate Park had damaged paintwork or finishing, although nothing required immediate attention.
- iii **MUGA** – Inspection Reports had been received and no new concerns raised.
- iv **BMX Humps** – Inspection Reports had been received and no new concerns raised.
- v. **Other Issues** – The Clerk's Assistant reported that incidents of graffiti to the Olivia Play Train, the Table Tennis Table and the motorbike inhibitor at Oak Drive had all been reported the Police.

The Clerk's Assistant reported that regarding the instance of graffiti on the Olivia Play Train, a local resident had complained to NPC about the resulting damage to her child's clothing. The Clerk had reminded the resident, that the Park was used at 'own risk', so it was unlikely that NPC would be able to help. The resident was invited to write to NPC if she wished to pursue the matter further

GP/113/20 **Joan's Field**

- i. Cllr Terry reminded Members about the condition of some of the apple trees in Joan's field and that some of them might be diseased. It was also reported that a local company had contacted NPC to introduce their tree pruning and consultation service, the cost being between £25 and £50 depending on the time spent.

The Clerk's Assistant reported that during previous discussion, the view was expressed that the trees could be left until they come back into blossom. Cllr Mackenzie reported that during a recent visit to Joan's field, he had noticed some branches had torn away from the trees and although still attached, were dragging on the ground. On that basis, Cllr Mackenzie suggested earlier pruning may be beneficial. Cllr Terry expressed the view that this may be of benefit all round. Cllr Shelton PROPOSED that the contractor be invited to inspect the trees. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Mackenzie asked if it was bat boxes that had been attached to some trees in Joan's field, and it was confirmed that they were. Cllr Mackenzie reported that he had seen some that had come away from the trees and were broken on the ground. Cllr Godwin offered to ask the person who had installed them to look into this. Cllr Roberts suggested that it could be bad weather that had caused them to come away, but Cllr Mackenzie advised that one he had seen was still attached to a branch and was positioned on the ground near to some empty drink containers.

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GP/114/20 **The Park**

- i. Cllr Mackenzie reported that he had noticed an ornamental flowerpot on The Park, which looked to have had the centre display carefully removed and placed to one side.

Cllr Godwin confirmed that this was not related to any replanting work the Northway Community Volunteers had been doing, but that she would ask one of their group to investigate this further. It was concluded that this was likely to be another act of vandalism.

- ii. Teenage Shelter – The Clerk’s Assistant informed the Committee that an inspection report had been received for the Teenage Shelter and that there were no concerns raised.

GP/115/20 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Grass Cutting**

- a) **Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) Contract** – The Clerk’s Assistant updated the Committee with regard to the three-monthly progress report that NPC were required to submit as part of the Grass Cutting Contract. The approach being considered was to adopt the same format as for the first report, as no negative feedback had come from that. Cllr Terry suggested that was a good approach. Cllr Roberts asked if NPC should wait until TBC prompted for the report, but it was noted that it was a contractual obligation for NPC to submit it.

- b) **Grass Cutting Contractors** – Cllr Terry asked the Committee its considered view on the retention of the current grass cutting contractors. Cllr Shelton commented that they do an excellent job and Cllr Ward stated that he would not wish to consider changing contractors.

In light of the positive approach to retaining the contractor, the Clerk advised that a meeting or some formal communications be undertaken with TBC to confirm that they were willing to continue under the same terms and continue to, or be prepared to increase their financial contributions to NPC. It was noted that it had not been easy to recover the monies agreed under the current terms but that the question should be asked, nonetheless.

Cllr Terry commented that as a result of the efficiencies gained by the use of the new contractors, many man hours had been freed up for NPC office staff by not having to manage complaints from residents about poor service.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that NPC continues with the existing contractor and begins negotiation with TBC on a contract renewal, for the new financial year. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Other Issues**

- a) **Overgrowth of Bushes on Northway Lane** - The Clerk’s Assistant reported that TBC had agreed to cut back the overgrown bushes on the land opposite the Northway Centre and on Grange Road, by the end of September. The Clerk’s Assistant read a letter that the Clerk had written to TBC requesting an update on the agreed work and reported that there had been no reply as yet. The letter was sent on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

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GP/115/20 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (Continued)

Cllr Ward asked if Cllr Godwin could help to progress this on behalf of NPC, which she agreed to do. The Clerk provided the name of the person she had written to.

- b) **Dog Bins** – Some images were shown of dog bins in the area that had black bags put over them to prevent their use, due to the poor condition they were in. Cllr Ward reported that there were an increasing number of bins in the area that were rusting and in poor condition. Cllr Roberts asked if it was still the case that TBC were to replace damaged or rusted bins for NPC. The Clerk’s Assistant

had been made to contact TBC about this issue but there had been some difficulty in reaching the point of contact who had dealt with this previously. There was a discussion about S106 monies to fund replacing the bins but although NPC had asked about this, there was still no update.

The Clerk reminded the Committee that it was ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the bins and that if there was no S106 money available, an alternative plan should be in place. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that NPC obtain prices for replacement bins, based on the type that TBC had been installing. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Mackenzie reported that the issue with bins that have had black bags placed over them was that people had removed the bags and left the dog waste in the remnants of the bin, and therefore exposed.

GP/116/20 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – There were no reports received.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Although there was no formal report presented, Cllr Mackenzie asked if the gullies at The Park, Northway Lane and Hardwick Bank at Carrant Brook could be checked and if necessary, cleared, before the winter season arrived. Cllr Mackenzie also expressed concern about the Garden Town impact on the ditch that comes away from Ashchurch Camp and the potential for future flooding there.

GP/117/20 **Newsletter**

Members confirmed that they had received their copies of the Newsletter and Cllr Terry extended her thanks to Cllr Ward for all the work he had put into producing it. Cllr Phennah also extended his thanks to Cllr Ward for inclusion of the advertisement he had requested.

GP/118/20 **‘Report It’**

The list of reported issues, was read out by the Clerk’s Assistant, with a request for Members to ask questions at any point.

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 17.09.20 | The Spine - Separate logs for trees hanging over the walkway   |
| 17.09.20 | Grange Road (behind monument) - bushes overhanging pavement, forcing people to walk in the road. Although this may be sorted when they cut back that area. |
| 28.09.20 | Graffiti to table tennis table and train (offensive)   |
| 29.09.20 | Graffiti to Defib box  |
| 30.09.20 | Tree with roots causing prob 40 Fairway  |

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GP/118/20 **'Report It'** (Continued)

12.10.20	Fallen Tree along the Park (behind Kestrel Way)
12.10.20	Graffiti on train and motorbike inhibitor
19.10.20	Damage to play Area Saxon Park

The Clerk reported that the police had visited the Parish Office and confirmed that as a result of their press release, they had two names in relation to the graffiti at Saxon Park, and that they would be paying visits to their respective homes. Cllr Roberts informed Members that he had contacted TBC with regard to a 'report it' item that he had not had a response to, and how disappointed he was with the feedback.

Cllr Roberts also asked for an addition to the 'Report It' list, of a break in at the railway station garden over the previous weekend, where a gate was damaged and some wires under the platform had been cut. Cllr Roberts advised that British Transport Police had been informed but also thought that children were breaking in and were hiding under the platform. British Transport Police had asked to be informed immediately if anyone had seen anything suspicious at the station. The Clerk's Assistant asked if the security cameras at the station operated on a 24\*7 basis, which Cllr Roberts thought was the case, but it was not clear if those accessing the garden would be recorded.

GP/119/20 **Budget for the Financial Year 2021/2022**

- i. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that in view of the nature of business about to be discussed i.e. staff salaries, the meeting should go into exclusion.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

**2101 GP - SALARIES** – Exclusion Item.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that as the exclusion item had concluded, the meeting should come out of exclusion.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

**2135 GP - COVID 19** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £200.

**2136 GP - GRASS CUTTING TBC & GCC** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £6,500.

**2137 GP – GRASS CUTTING** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £5,200.

**2138 GP - LITTER BINS** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £2,000.

**2139 GP - DOG BINS** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £350.

**2140 GP - BUS SHELTERS** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £1,500.

**2141 GP - PLAYING FIELD MAIN** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £8,000.

**2142 GP - THE PARK AMENITY AREA** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £800.

**2143 GP - JOAN'S FIELD** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £800.

**2144 GP - OTHER AREAS** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £3,600.

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GP/119/20 **Budget for the Financial Year 2021/2022** – (Continued)

**2145 GP - HUB GROUNDS** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £650.

**2148 GP - DOG WARDEN CONTRIBUTION** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £0 as it was a scheme that was not progressing at this time.

**2150 GP - NOTICEBOARDS / NEWSLETTER** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £2,960.

**2152 GP - EM PLAN/FLOODING/WINTER** – It was AGREED that this heading should be set at £500.

**2154 GP – PLAY DAYS** – It was AGREED to set this at £0.00 as the Finance Committee set a Youth heading.

Members noted that, following these agreements, the recommendation for the total General Purposes Committee Budget for 2021/22 should be £41,210.00.

- ii. In consideration of any General Purposes Committee capital projects, the Clerk made reference to the previously discussed Activity Trail and Wheelchair Swing, both of which were 'on hold'. The Clerk asked Members if they had any other projects in mind, perhaps for The Park, Joan's Field or the Playing Field, which they would want the Finance Committee to consider in the savings plan.

Cllr Mackenzie asked if money could be made available to reinstate trees in Joan's Field, where others had previously died. The Clerk advised that such a project would not come under a Capital project, but other funding could possibly be sought. Cllr Ward commented that of the 600 trees that he and Cllr Shelton had planted, none had grown.

Whilst noting that COVID 19 could be the reason, Cllr Roberts questioned the absence of a Play Days budget for the coming year. Following discussion and general agreement about the possibility of setting up play day activities after COVID 19, Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that budget item 2154, be changed from zero funding to £3,000. Cllr Ward SECONDED. *(Post meeting the Clerk did not amend this budget as it is normally in the Committee 1 Finance Budgets)*

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Terry and the Clerk agreed that all budget discussions had been concluded.

GP/120/20 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. Glasdon UK Ltd – Product for a clean and safe environment.
- ii. Woodland Trust – Fund Raising / Legacy Gifts.
- iii. Fat Leaf and Beer Garden Co. – Introductory email, introducing a range of outdoor furniture.

GP/121/20 **Correspondence received after 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

There was no further correspondence received.

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