

## **NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**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 7:10p.m.**

Present: Cllr S Terry  
Cllr M Barnes  
Cllr P Godwin  
Cllr E MacTiernan  
Cllr J Roberts (from GP/42/21)

Cllr S Ward (Committee Vice Chairman)  
Cllr C Blackmore  
Cllr P Mackenzie  
Cllr E Phennah  
Cllr T Treacy

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

### GP/33/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs Shelton and Roberts had advised that they might be late. No further apologies for absence had been received.

### GP/34/21 **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/35/21 **Previous Minutes**

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR:

Cllr MacTiernan	Cllr Godwin
Cllr Barnes	Cllr Blackmore
Cllr Mackenzie	Cllr Terry
Cllr Treacy	Cllr Ward

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Phennah

### GP/36/21 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

***GP/28/21 Parish Maintenance > Bus Shelter Cleaning*** – Golden Valley Window Cleaning had been contracted to undertake cleaning of all the bus shelters from April 2021

***GP/28/21 Parish Maintenance > Grass Cutting*** – Tewkesbury Borough Council had been informed that the Parish Council was agreeable to the grass cutting contract for 2021/22.

### GP/37/21 **GP Projects Working Party (Part 1)**

- i. **Trim Trail / Activity Trail** – Following a site visit with Playdale, Members were asked to consider whether they wanted quotations for installation of a trim trail (for over 14's) or an activity trail (for under 14's).

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### GP/37/21 **GP Projects Working Party (Part 1)** (continued)

Cllr Terry thought that the Council's intention had been for the trail to be used by families. Cllr Ward also pointed out that there would be no way of stopping children from using an adult trail or vice versa.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should try to progress an activity/trim trail aimed at both children and adults.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Funding Advice** – The Funding Officer at Tewkesbury Borough Council had provided some information on seeking funding towards projects. The Clerk's Assistant offered to forward this information to Members of the GP Projects Working Party. The Funding Officer had also offered to attend the next Working Party Meeting (via Zoom) on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020, Members felt it would be worth having her attend and offer advice. Cllr Terry PROPOSED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

The Clerk added that there might be some Section 106 funds available towards sport related projects following development in Ashchurch. It was AGREED that this should be included for discussion on the next GP Projects Working Party Agenda and the Clerk's Assistant offered to forward information on outdoor gym equipment in preparation.

- iii. **Joan's Field Access** – Cllr Shelton had taken photographs of the verge along Hardwick Bank Road which led to Joan's Field following concerns raised at the previous meeting (GP/24/21 refers), these were shown to Members. Cllr Shelton had also suggested cutting back overgrowth from the field that was encroaching onto the verge to allow safer access.

The Clerk had re-approached Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) about access to Joan's Field, however, the Highways Manager had felt this would factor quite low on the priority list for funding from the Highways budget. He had suggested the Council consider applying to the 50/50 Community Match Scheme, if successful GCC would match any funds raised towards a project such as this.

Members felt that it would not be worth progressing this before knowing what road works were due to take place in relation to the bridge and Garden Town developments.

Cllr Barnes wondered whether an entrance could be established in the corner of the field where the footpath at the other side of the hedge ended.

Cllr MacTiernan reiterated that it would be a waste of funds to progress anything in relation to this as there was a chance that the Council could get a path provided as part of upcoming works, she said that she would approach this at Borough level first and start highlighting the need for safe access.

- iv. **Webinars** – Cllr Roberts, who attended the webinars, had been delayed and so this item was deferred (see Min Ref: GP/42/21).

### GP/38/21 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Northway Play Park**

- a. **Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports relating to the Play Park had been received. No new issues had been raised.

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GP/38/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- b. **Concrete Walls** – Members were reminded of an agreement to consider repair and painting of the concrete walls (Min Ref: GP/05/21 refers).

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should obtain a price for getting the walls rendered. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANMIOUS

It was further AGREED that, after the walls had been rendered, a date should be organised for councillors to repaint them.

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

It was noted that Young Gloucestershire had been using the MUGA with children even though it had been closed due to the current lockdown restrictions.

The Clerk added that Young Gloucestershire had contacted the Parish Council to try and arrange use of a building from which to work with local children, she had put them in touch with the Youth Club Trustees.

- iv **BMX Humps** – No issues, relating to the BMX Humps, had been raised in the inspection reports.
- v **Security**

- a. **Policy** – Members considered whether or not to specify in the Traveller Policy how many days the gate to the Playing Field should be shut following an attempt to access by travellers (Min Ref: C/74/21 refers).

Cllr MacTiernan felt that it would be difficult to specify a number of days as each incident was different.

Cllr Ward pointed out that, although the travellers had left the Tewkesbury area very soon after attempting access, the gate had remained shut ever since. The problem was, the gate being locked was interfering with residents, if there was a policy in place it would allow the Clerk to deal with things more effectively.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED specifying in the policy that, following an attempt to access, the gate could be re-opened after a minimum of three days depending on information received and/or at the discretion of the Clerk.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- b. **Inner Access/Gate** – Cllr Ward recalled that the Council had talked before about increasing the security of the inner access to the field, this would then act as a secondary defence should travellers gain access to the car park. It was felt that the gate could be lifted off its hinges but there was little point in improving the gate if the bollards were not secure.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should arrange for the bollards to be checked and obtain a quote for a height barrier on the inner gate. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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GP/38/21 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- vi. **Other Issues** – Members received a request for lighting to be installed at the Playing Field to allow users to feel safer in the evenings/night time. It was noted that a recent national news story had made a lot of women feel more vulnerable being out on their own. Cllr Ward felt that that the Council should investigate the possibility of lighting and obtain quotations, however, Cllr MacTiernan pointed out that the Council did not have to take any action or seek quotations based on just one request.

Cllr Blackmore PROPOSED that the Council should respond to the request and explain that it did not wish to progress installation of lighting due to the impact on residents backing onto the Playing Field. In addition to this, the Council did not want to encourage gathering of youths. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

GP/39/21 **Trees**

- i. **Joan's Field** – Ms. Teele, arborist, had completed tree works in Joan's Field.
- ii. **The Park** – Ms. Teele had not yet commenced tree work on The Park, however, following Cllr Mackenzie's offer to help with moving of brush, his contact details had been passed on.

GP/40/21 **Joan's Field**

- i. **Giant Hogweed** – Members were reminded of Cllr Roberts' offer to undertake the annual Giant Hogweed inspection. Cllr Roberts was not present to give an update and so this item was deferred.
- ii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/41/21 **The Park Amenity Land**

- i. **Inspection Report** – No new issues had been raised in the inspection report.
- ii. **Bollards** – Cllr Terry pointed out that, following installation of the height restricting barrier at the Playing Field, The Park was now the site most vulnerable to travellers.

Cllr Mackenzie confirmed that he still continued to oil the locks on the two telescopic bollards and asked when they had last been serviced. The Clerk confirmed that the bollards had never been serviced as there had been no mention that servicing was required when they were installed.

It was noted that the wooden bollards had not been inspected for over a year. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should ask a contractor (preferably the one used to replace bollards in the past) to assess the sturdiness of the bollards. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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

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### GP/42/21 **Community Litter Pick**

Members considered whether the Council should take part in the Great British Spring Clean which was due to take place between 28<sup>th</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Cllr Terry recalled that Members of the Council had previously planned on registering as volunteer litter pickers with Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) who would then have provided training and equipment (Min Ref: GP/16/20 and GP/32/20 refer). Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should ask TBC if they would still provide the Parish Councillors with training and equipment.

7.54pm – Cllr Roberts joined the meeting.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council did not hold a litter pick as part of the Great British Spring Clean as the dates were too soon, instead the Council should arrange a date for later in the year – possibly July or August.

It was AGREED that this should be deferred until June General Purposes Committee Meeting to allow for consideration of finer details and advertising in the newsletter.

Cllr Mackenzie reported that one of the flower barrels by the telescopic bollards on The Park required repair to the metal banding. Cllr Godwin confirmed that she would arrange for its repair with Northway Community Volunteers (NCV).

### GP/43/21 **Newsletter**

The Clerk's Assistant read a number of emails and Facebook messages that had been received in response to articles in the latest newsletter:

- i. Email of support for Skate Park project and offer of help.
- ii. Email in support of wheelchair swing.
- iii. Message of support for Joan's Field project but concerns raised regarding access.
- iv. Email listing suggestions for improving Joan's Field.
- v. Email supporting upgrade of outdoor gym equipment.
- vi. Email of concern regarding dog fouling issues.
- vi. Email enquiring about Joan's Field project.
- vii. Message from residents new to Northway and wanting more community involvement.

Cllr Roberts suggested this feedback was logged for future discussions.

The discussion was directed back to agenda item 5 iv. **Webinars** now that Cllr Roberts was present to give a report.

### GP/44/21 **GP Projects Working Party Meeting (Part 2)**

- i. **Webinars** – Cllr Roberts explained that he had recently attended two webinars, one on the Severn Trent Community Fund which had been very interesting and full of content. There were some restrictions relating to the Fund but, overall, it seemed like it would be well worth the Parish Council submitting an application, specifically towards the trim trail and wheelchair swing.

The second webinar had been all about Inclusive Play which had also been very interesting. It was mainly about what communities could do to make their areas of play more inclusive for people, some of the suggestions were simple things that could be done at the Parish Council's level. Overall, there had been a lot of good information and some useful contacts.

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GP/44/21 **GP Projects Working Party Meeting (Part 2)** (continued)

Cllr Ward felt that extending the footpath up to the MUGA might be something the Council could investigate in the future to help make the area more accessible to people in wheelchairs.

GP/45/21 **Dog Issues**

i. **Northway Playing Field**

- a. **Feedback from Councillors following visits to the Playing Field** – Cllr MacTiernan commented that the pink spray paint highlighting dog fouling was very noticeable.

Cllr Treacy asked whether any more thought had gone towards looking at the CCTV to try and address dog related issues. Cllr Terry had concerns that the CCTV policy would not allow the data to be used for something like this, Cllr Blackmore suggested it could be as it fell under antisocial behaviour. The Clerk pointed out that it would be hard to narrow down when an incident had happened, and no one would have enough time to scroll through the video trying to catch someone not picking up after their dog. It would also be impossible to establish which cars were coming from outside of Northway to use the field, as had been suggested at the previous meeting. As such, she did not know if it would be viable to check the CCTV.

Cllr Blackmore said that she had spoken to a fellow dog walker who admitted her dog had been responsible for digging a lot of holes in the Playing Field. She had said she was very sorry and would stop her dog from doing this in the future.

It was noted that Cllr Godwin had been filling some of the holes in, where possible, and she confirmed that there were not as many as there had been a month ago. Cllr Terry thanked Cllr Godwin for doing this and suggested that the Council continued to monitor the situation.

It was noted that a resident had asked the Litter Picker why she was spraying the poo and not picking it up instead, she had informed him that it was not her responsibility but the dog owners'. Another, similar comment had been seen on Facebook.

Cllrs Roberts and Mackenzie offered to assist with spraying of dog poo whilst out and about.

- b. **Complaint from Resident** – A complaint had been received about the amount of dog poo and holes on the Playing Field, additionally, this resident complained that there was a large mud pit created by dogs running around. He referred to seven adults who regularly gathered at the Field and let fifteen dogs roam, none of them on a lead.

Cllr MacTiernan confirmed that she saw the same group every day – in the morning and again late afternoon – she did not know how this could be addressed.

The Clerk asked whether Members wanted to approach Bredon Parish Council with the question of how it policed a 'no dogs allowed' rule on its playing field, it was felt this might be helpful.

- c. **Signage** – It had been suggested at the previous meeting that signage at the Playing Field should be reviewed (Min Ref: GP/22/21 refers). Cllr Terry felt that there were enough signs, the issue was with people not taking notice of them.

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### GP/45/21 **Dog Issues** (continued)

Cllr Ward recalled seeing a huge banner at one playing field advising that CCTV was in operation and asking people to pick up after their dogs. He felt that something like this might work well.

Cllr Blackmore recalled that the signage she had referred to at the previous meeting had related to dogs being on a lead. If Northway Parish Council believed it was unable to police dogs being kept on a lead, she felt there was no point in reviewing the signage. She mentioned that she had talked to people at the Playing Field and although they knew that dogs should be on a lead they did not care.

Cllr Phennah suggested that advertising the fact CCTV was in operation might deter people from letting their dogs off the lead. Cllr Ward wondered whether it should be mentioned in the next newsletter and on social media. Cllr Blackmore advised that the Council needed to be careful with wording and offered to investigate.

- ii. **We're Watching You Signs** – Members felt that these signs would be more effective if installed just before winter. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that a contractor was asked to do this closer to the time.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Dog Bite** – A resident had phoned the office to ask whether a reminder could be published in the next newsletter requesting residents keep their dogs on a lead. He had been bitten by a dog down an alleyway near Long Eights and the dog had not been on a lead. Members AGREED residents should be reminded of the legal obligation to keep dogs on a lead in the next newsletter.
- iv. **Other Issues** – It was suggested that, perhaps, something could be put on the website reinforcing the point that people needed to pick up after their dog.

### GP/46/21 **ParishOnline**

Members considered renewal of the Council's subscription to ParishOnline at £300 per year. The Clerk's Assistant pointed out this was especially useful for marking locations of bins, signs, trees, assets, etc on maps. Maps could also be created to send out to contractors/maintenance firms or to show someone the exact location of something.

Cllr Godwin PROPOSED renewal. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

### GP/47/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract**

- i. **Bins**
  - a. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – A response was still being awaited following the Council's request for a replacement bin from Tewkesbury Borough Council (Min Ref: GP/28/21 refers).
  - b. **Bin Post** – Following removal of a bin from its post in Grange Road (Min ref: GP/28/21 refers), concerns had been raised that the post could be an obstacle for someone to hurt themselves on. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that a contractor should be instructed to remove the post. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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### GP/47/21 **Parish Maintenance Contract** (continued)

- c. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.
- ii. **Grass Cutting** – The Clerk explained that a piece of land next to a house in The Park, previously belonging to Tewkesbury Borough Council, was now privately owned. Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that SmartCut should be asked to cease maintenance of this section of land. Cllr Treacy SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Strimming** – Members were reminded of a previous agreement to undertake strimming in Joan's Field and how several councillors had volunteered to take on this task (Min Ref: GP/125/20 and GP/24/21 refer). The Council's insurance providers had confirmed that the Council would be suitably covered, however, potential risks needed to be identified. A risk assessment had been put together, with the help of Cllr Blackmore, and circulated to Members.

Cllr Terry felt that, looking at what needed to be in place, it was not feasible for Councillors to volunteer to do this work. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that a contractor/firm should be asked to strim around trees in Joan's Field. Cllr Blackmore SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Members considered whether strimming needed to take place around the young trees on The Park and the Playing Field also. Cllrs Ward, Roberts and Mackenzie offered to have a walkabout and establish if this was the case.

- iv. **Overgrowth** – It was reported that there was some overgrowth growing down the wall behind the grit box next to the Saxon Park bus shelter – not a lot but enough to stop the lid from staying open. Cllr Roberts offered to cut this back.
- v. **Other Issues** – Cllr Mackenzie and Cllr Terry reported overhanging trees along the Spine. The Clerk confirmed that both trees had been reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council, however, action might be more forthcoming if Members reported them as well. Cllr Ward also offered to report the trees on FixMyStreet if photographs could be forwarded to him.

### GP/48/21 **Drainage and Flooding**

- i. **Reports** – No reports were made in relation to drainage and flooding.
- ii. **Flood Warden** – Cllr Mackenzie (Flood Warden) had no issues to report.

### GP/49/21 **'Report It'**

No issues had been reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council, Gloucestershire County Council or the Police over the past month.

Members felt it was important to be vigilant in reporting any and all issues arising in the Parish over the next few months and years - especially with work due to commence in development of a bridge.

### GP/50/21 **Correspondence for Action**

- i. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** – Details of Tree Planting Fund and



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### GP/50/21 **Correspondence for Action** (continued)

invitation to March Lecture with Adam Henson on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021. It was believed that this Tree Planting Fund was the same that Gloucestershire County Council had offered to help address the effects of Ash Dieback. No action agreed.

- ii. **Gloucestershire County Council** – Details relating to Public Rights of Way – The Definitive Map and details of the 2026 Cut-Off had been circulated to Members. Cllr Ward PROPOSED no response. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that the Borough Council would try and get the PROW by Sinderberry Drive changed or moved as part of the bridge development process. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council would normally be notified of this and have opportunity to object. Members hoped this would be the case.

### GP/51/21 **Correspondence for Information**

- i. **Countrywide Grounds Maintenance** – Correspondence.
- ii. **HAGS** – Information on Rosenlund Collection.
- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Fly tipping and burning case successfully prosecuted.
- iv. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** – 2021 calendar.

### GP/52/21 **Correspondence received after 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

- i. **RoSPA** – Notice that annual play inspections due to take place April 2021.
- ii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Information on polling station election day roles.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.43pm