

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 20th November 2019 at Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, commencing at 7:05 p.m.

Present:	Cllr Mrs S Terry (Committee Chair)	Cllr S Ward (Committee Vice-Chair)
	Cllr M Barnes	Cllr Mrs P Godwin
	Cllr P Mackenzie	Cllr Mrs E MacTiernan
	Cllr E Phennah (from GP/162/19)	Cllr C Porter
	Cllr J Roberts	Cllr K Sollis

In attendance: Cllr G Shelton (until GP/163/19)
Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

GP/159/19 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Woodward and Bailey. Cllr Phennah had advised that he would be arriving late.

GP/160/19 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), were made.

GP/161/19 Previous Minutes

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 16th October 2019 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Roberts SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr Ward	Cllr Roberts
	Cllr Godwin	Cllr MacTiernan
	Cllr Porter	Cllr Sollis
	Cllr Terry	

ABSTENTIONS:	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Mackenzie
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GP/162/19 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

GP/99/19 Dog Fouling > Waste Bin – The damaged dog bin from along Northway Lane (opposite Sycamore Road entrance) had been replaced with the dog bin from Hardwick Bank Road/Northway Lane junction. Cllr Terry mentioned that a couple of residents had asked her why the dog bin was moved so she had explained.

GP/150/19 Notice Board in Saxon Park – The final agreement for installation of the notice board had been received and the notice board had been installed in Saxon Park.

GP/145/19 Dog Waste Bin – The damaged dog bin from along The Spine had been removed. Several residents had contacted the office to ask whether the Council intended to replace the bin as it had been well used. Cllr Ward felt that a bin from further along The Spine should have been moved to replace the dog bin. Members AGREED to leave this for now but to wait and see whether more complaints were received.

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

GP/162/19 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes** (continued)

GP/147/29 Newsletter – The latest issue of Northway Voice was in the process of being delivered. This issue had included a survey relating to youth provision for residents to complete and a response box placed at the local fish and chip shop.

GP/149/19 Weed Killing – Weed killing had now taken place throughout the parish.

GP/151/19 Parish Maintenance Contract > Other Issues – A letter was sent to the resident who cut back the hedge between Lee Walk and the Community Hub. No response had been received.

7.25 – Cllr Phennah joined the meeting.

GP/140/19 Joan's Field > Other Issues – It was confirmed that free trees (along with tree guards and sticks) had arrived from Woodland Trust. These were to be planted in Joan's Field (and some on The Park). Cllrs Phennah, Mackenzie, Shelton, Roberts, Ward, Terry and Barnes offered to assist with planting of the trees, if they were available. Cllr Ward also suggested that the Council should ask NCV if they would like to plant any of the trees.

GP/140/19 Joan's Field > Bat Boxes – NCV had been advised that the Council had no objections to minor tree pruning in Joan's Field (when moving bat boxes).

GP/144/19 Bus Shelters – Quotations from GAB Waste and Blue Moon Window Cleaning had been accepted (for cleaning of bus shelters). Blue Moon Window Cleaning had offered to do a free clean before contract commencing in April 2020, which Members appreciated.

GP/163/19 **Community Hub Grounds**

Cllr Shelton showed photos of old palettes and railway sleepers being used to encourage wildlife, he was suggesting that something like this could be introduced at the Hub. He also suggested hedgehog houses, bird and/or bug boxes as well as log piles which could be used.

Cllr Terry worried about attracting vandalism with palettes or any large pieces of wood but felt that bug boxes would work well. Cllr Roberts also pointed out that pallets would not be aesthetically pleasing.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that Cllr Shelton should be permitted to seek costings for butterfly/bug houses, bird boxes, and hedgehog houses but consideration needed taking as to the right locations. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

7.35pm – Cllr Shelton left the meeting.

GP/164/19 **Northway Playing Field**

- i. **Play Inspection Reports** – Inspection reports received from GAB Waste highlighted:
- Roundabout spins around but stops when pressure put on floor (probably full of water).
 - Trampoline pit was drained of water on 17th and 30th October 2019.
 - Photographs of broken glass and bottles at the Play Park were tabled.
 - Youths had managed to access the area behind the Changing Room Facility due to lock not being wrapped around the gate.

GP/164/19 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

- A bike had been thrown behind fencing near the Changing Room Facility (photo shown)
- A smashed-up plastic flag post had been found by the swings in the Play Park.
- More graffiti was present on the half pipe (photos shown).
- Graffiti was present on the concrete barrier (photos shown).
- The pedal was not going around on the cross trainer due to bearing being worn.

It was noted that Nitromors was good for removal of graffiti.

ii. **Maintenance**

- a. **Perimeter of Playing Field** - A tree surgeon was scheduled to meet with the Clerk's Assistant to discuss various jobs (Min Ref: GP/112/19, GP/113/19, & GP/115/19 refer).
- b. **Silver Birch Tree** – A tree surgeon had been to inspect the Silver Birch tree that was causing concern to a resident (Min Ref: GP/139/19 refers). He had felt that there was no danger of branches breaking and causing damage to the resident's property. Members also looked at an aerial satellite photo of the tree using Google Maps.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the resident was written to and advised that a tree specialist had been to look at the tree and advised that no action was necessary at this time. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Conifer Tree** – Members were informed that a resident had recently cut back a tree at the entrance of the Playing Field from their side of the perimeter, however, this had left the remainder of the tree looking messy and with all the weight only on one side (destabilised).

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the tree surgeon should be asked to assess the safety of this tree during his site visit.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Mosquito** – Members considered purchase of a 'mosquito' youth dispersal device at a cost of £495 (or more if purchased as part of a set with cage, timer, etc.). It was noted that the mosquito was 'highly directional' and the sound emitted in a 60 degree angle of spread from the front of the unit so it was like a beam of light from a torch and there were four volume settings. The sound would not be heard outside the 60 degree cone of coverage, nor would it penetrate walls or windows.

Cllr Ward asked whether antisocial behaviour was still an issue at the Playing Field. Cllr MacTiernan confirmed that it still was, youths had recently been throwing apples there.

Advice had been sought from the Council's insurance providers, Zurich, who said that it was not an issue they came across often (if ever) but asked whether the device would be left on 24/7 or between certain times? Alternatively, would it be turned on in response to a specific disturbance? Who would be operating the device? Would they have experience or training? Would it be controlled by remote or manually?

GP/164/19 **Northway Playing Field** (continued)

Zurich had also mentioned that there were apparently some discussions with the European Parliament regarding the potential ban of such devices. Due to this, they may be hard to insure.

A quotation of approximately £100 had been received for installation of the device which would need to be connected to a power supply at the Changing Room Facility.

Cllr Phennah asked whether the mosquito would affect pets. It was noted that the device was advertised as causing 'no harm' to animals, bats, babies and families (although this did not necessarily mean it would not affect them).

Cllr Roberts felt that it would be a practical and long-term solution to the antisocial behaviour problems at the Playing Field.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should purchase and install a mosquito device with cage and timer (Kit 3 at a cost of £559.00 as this was the one that was considered best value). Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iv. **Dog Issues** – Members heard complaints from a resident relating to dog walking on the Playing Field. A dog regularly being walked at a specific time of day was being permitted to run free and the owner was not picking up after it. A professional dog walker was allowing several dogs to roam off of leads at quite a distance. Also, someone had also groomed a huskie on one of the pitches and left a mess that would not decompose.

Cllr Roberts said that he had observed the professional dog walker with seven dogs before, but they had all appeared to be well behaved.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should pass information relating to the person who did not pick up after their dog on to Tewkesbury Borough Council. Cllr Phennah SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- v. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/165/19 **Joan's Field**

- i. **Maintenance** – Quotations for maintenance to the fruit trees and brambles would, hopefully, be available following site meeting with the tree surgeon (Min Ref: GP/164/19 refers).
- ii. **Damage to Trees** – A local resident had raised complaints that, following strimming undertaken in Joan's Field, damage to trees in the apple orchard had become apparent. The resident believed this would have reduced the life of the trees and was very angry – partly because he had been involved in planting some of the trees and watering them until they became established. He had also offered to meet with Members on site if helpful.

It was noted that the damage was not recent and would have occurred over a length of time, it was also impossible to prove that the Council's contractors were responsible.

GP/165/19 Joan's Field (continued)

Cllr Ward pointed out that Northway Community Volunteers did not have a problem with the damage to the trees. It was also felt that if Members met the resident on site the Council would be committing to take action.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should invite the tree surgeon to look at the trees and give his opinion during his site visit (Min Ref: GP/164/19 refers) and the resident informed of this decision.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/166/19 The Park

i. **Maintenance** – Quotations for maintenance to the fruit trees would, hopefully, be available following site meeting with the tree surgeon (Min Ref: GP/164/19 refers).

ii. **Teenage Shelter** – Photographs were shown of graffiti that had been sprayed on the teenage shelter. Due to the offensive nature of the graffiti, GAB Waste had painted over it. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council should add £5 on to GAB Waste's invoice to cover the cost of the paint. Cllr Mackenzie SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

iii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/167/19 Bus Shelters

Following painting of the bus shelter along The Park and agreement to paint the other two brick shelters along Steward Road (Min Ref: GP/117/10 refers), Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED purchase of necessary paint. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Cllr Roberts commended Cllr Mackenzie on his hard work in painting the bus shelter on The Park, which had not been vandalised again since.

Cllr Terry asked Cllr Mackenzie to let other Members know when he intended on starting to paint the other two shelters so that they could offer to help, if available.

Cllr Ward suggested that the Clerk's Assistant should find out when GAB Waste would be cleaning the shelters next so that painting could be started soon after.

GP/168/19 Grass Cutting

Correspondence had been received from a resident in relation to grass cutting in the parish, it read:

'I have today had a meeting with two members of Tewkesbury Borough Council about the lack of grass cutting around Saxon Park area and find their attitude on the subject somewhat lacking.

'I have lived in Saxon Park for 14 years and the grass cutting gets worse each year. I

GP/168/19 Grass Cutting (continued)

understand the Parish Council are trying to get the whole of Northway under their wing which would make sense to a great number of the community. I would like to suggest that we ask the Northway community to vote on this as we did on the park and Northway Hub and would a resounding yes in favour.'

Cllr Terry informed Members that she, along with the Clerk, Clerk's Assistant and Chairman of the Council, had met with Peter Tonge (Tewkesbury Borough Council) about the possibility of allowing Northway Parish Council to instruct its own contractors to cut grass currently being maintained by Ubico in Northway (Min Ref: GP/148/19 refers). The Parish Council had calculated that reimbursement of £7,394 from the Borough would cover the extra maintenance costs incurred in taking on this work (although this figure also included weed killing costs).

Mr Tonge had explained that it would not reduce overheads enough to be of benefit to the Borough Council, however they would agree to this arrangement if the Parish was happy to accept reimbursement of £2,000 for the year to take the extra maintenance on.

Cllr Terry felt that, although the Council would lose money in taking this on, it was unfair that not all residents were receiving the same standard of service.

Cllr Terry PROPOSED that the Council should write to Peter Tonge and confirm acceptance of this offer, on a trial basis of one year commencing April 2020. Success, or lack of, would be evaluated in the Autumn of 2020 at which time the Council would consider renegotiating as necessary. It would also need sight of an agreement before formally proceeding.

FOR:

Cllr Terry
Cllr Godwin
Cllr Phennah
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Ward

Cllr Barnes
Cllr Mackenzie
Cllr Porter
Cllr Sollis

ABSTENTIONS:

Cllr MacTiernan

GP/169/19 Parish Maintenance Contract

- i. **Contractors** – Review of current contractors (GAB Waste). No prices had been received.
- ii. **Emergency Contractors** – Review of current emergency contractors. Prices had been received from D Hartell, and these were tabled. Further prices were still being awaited.
- iii. **Other Issues** – No other issues were raised.

GP/170/19 Drainage and Flooding

- i. **Reports** – Cllr Ward mentioned that a resident had contacted him with worries that the Carrant Brook would overflow during recent heavy rainfall and the resident had wanted the Council to activate its emergency plan. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Mackenzie, the Council's Flood Warden, had inspected the Carrant Brook, he had confirmed that the water was running freely and had not yet reached the depth level marker, so all was fine.

GP/170/19 Drainage and Flooding (continued)

Cllr Mackenzie mentioned that Howard Road had flooded a bit but the rest of the parish had been alright (photograph of water pooling in Howard Close was shown to Members).

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that a letter should be sent to the concerned resident assuring him that the Council had a flood warden who monitored the watercourses and followed an approved procedure in the event of an emergency. Also, Members would not want this resident to put himself in any sort of danger. Cllr MacTiernan SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was noted that residents replacing hedges with fencing caused water to pool more around the parish. Also, with roads being resurfaced reduced the grading that helped water run to the drains.

Another resident had contacted the Parish Council, as well as the Borough and County councillors for Northway, about the fact that his garden became waterlogged in heavy rainfall. Cllr Ward had visited the resident and it was confirmed that the issue was being dealt with by the relevant authorities.

- ii. **Flood Warden** – No further reports received.

GP/171/19 'Report It'

The following issues had been reported to the relevant authorities:

- Street lights out between Cherry Orchard and Brannigan Court (this had since been resolved).
- Graffiti on the Skate Park reported to Police.
- Graffiti on The Park BT telephone box reported to BT and the Police. BT had since been out and removed.
- Graffiti on Teenage Shelter reported to Police.
- Vandalism to lighted bollard at Northway Community Hub reported to Police.
- Condition of Ash Road resurfacing reported to GCC – County Cllr Smith was in the process of arranging a meeting to discuss further.
- Lamp out on The Sandfield.
- Cycle path on Northway Lane M5 overbridge debris in need of cleaning.
- Pothole along Fairway – Since been marked.
- Vehicles driving over verge to front lawn Northway Lane
- Vehicles driving over verge to front lawn Lee Road.

GP/172/19 Correspondence for Information

- i. **War Memorials Trust** – Bulletin. Cllr Phennah asked to take this to read.

Members considered whether the Council should consider a war memorial for Northway. It was AGREED that this should be put on a future Full Council agenda.

- ii. **Tree/Hedge Matters** – Copy of letter to resident regarding overgrowth.

- iii. **Tewkesbury Borough Council** – Street cleansing review – Request for input.

GP/173/19 Correspondence received after 14th November 2019

- i. **Northway Village Hall** – Members considered what should be done about lights that were not working at the Village Hall, it was not clear whether the bulbs simply needed replacing, in which case it would be the tenants responsibility to do this. It was noted that replacing the bulbs was not an easy task.

Cllr MacTiernan PROPOSED that the Council should arrange for the bulbs to be replaced / lights repaired as a matter of urgency and the bill forwarded to Northway Youth Club (tenants). Cllr Terry suggested an amendment that if the bulbs simply needed replacing the bill should be forwarded to the Youth Club, if it was something else the Parish Council should pay for the repair. Cllr MacTiernan accepted this amendment. Cllr Phennah SECONDED.

FOR:	Cllr MacTiernan	Cllr Phennah
	Cllr Barnes	Cllr Mackenzie
	Cllr Porter	Cllr Roberts
	Cllr Sollis	Cllr Terry
	Cllr Ward	

ABSTENTIONS: Cllr Godwin

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 8.40pm.