

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
 Minutes of a meeting held on 1 March 2016

Present	Cllr SM Reed (Chair) Cllr EF Bonner Cllr JL Dennis Cllr SK Millett Cllr DL Powell
Apologies	Cllr MP Robinson

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SIGNS – VARIOUS

Cllr Millett reported that she had asked two potential suppliers to quote for various signs and had received quotations and designs from one of them (previously circulated). After discussion, it was **agreed** to accept the quotation from Stroud Signs for the following, at a total cost of £58 +VAT:

- One dibon aluminium public footpath sign for Norton Wood Orchard, white lettering on green
- One dibon aluminium 'disabled parking only' sign for Forest Green cemetery, white lettering on green
- One self-adhesive 'green waste only' sticker for Shortwood cemetery, white lettering on green.

QUOTATIONS FROM TCV (THE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS) FOR NORTON WOOD AND OTHER WORKS

The Clerk had circulated estimates and details of various options from TCV for several items of work in Norton Wood and Forest Green green, including a new gate, notice board, steps and handrail in Norton Wood and a raised bee bank at Forest Green green. After detailed discussion, **it was agreed to proceed with items 1-4 and 7-8** at a total cost of approximately £2,500 + VAT, to be taken from the Norton Wood and Environmental Enhancement budgets. Members decided not to proceed with items 5 and 6 (posts to control parking on Forest Green green) at the present time, but to monitor the situation.

Members felt that the path at the back of the former Jovial Foresters' car park leading to the entrance to the Norton Wood orchard was somewhat narrow and should be widened if possible to around 1 metre. The Clerk agreed to visit the site with the new Town Groundsman in due course to investigate the possibility.

Cllr Powell had noted that cars were frequently parked on the wide grass verge in Nortonwood near the upper entrance to the wood. It was agreed that this should be discouraged and the Clerk was asked to contact Stroud Signs for a quote for a sign, white on green, stating 'Welcome to Norton Wood. No Parking – keep this space green'.

BEECH TREE NEAR 'GETHSEMANE', HIGHER NEWMARKET

The Clerk had circulated a letter from the Council's contractors, Tree Maintenance, stating that its 2-year safety/condition report on the beech tree on Council land bordering 'Gethsemane' would expire on 4 March 2016 and recommending a professional re-inspection. This was **approved** and the Clerk was asked to respond accordingly.

The Clerk reported that the resident of Gethsemane had recently contacted her expressing concern about trees on his boundary, following which she had visited the site with a representative of Tree Maintenance and had noted some diseased ash trees which might

require attention. The Clerk agreed to arrange a further site meeting with the contractor to inspect the trees in question.

PROPOSAL TO CARRY OUT A PROGRAMME OF CONDITION SURVEYS FOR ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASSETS

The Clerk advised that it would be prudent for the Committee to survey all Council assets for which it was responsible to allow for the development of a programme of planned work over a 5-10 year period. It was suggested that consideration of existing and possible new benches be included. It was **agreed** that the Clerk and Cllr Reed would liaise to produce a draft plan for the Committee to consider at its next meeting in May.

PROPOSED FUTURE DEVELOPMENT NEW CIVIC CENTRE BUILDING

Cllr Reed reported that members of the Civic Centre Working Party were proposing to meet with the TIC manager and volunteers to discuss future involvement of the TIC in the proposed development of a new Civic Centre building in the Library complex.

REQUEST FOR THE PROVISION OF EXTRA BUS SHELTERS IN NAILSWORTH BUS STATION

Cllr Millett reported that some residents, whilst appreciating the new larger bus shelter, had expressed concern at the removal by SDC of its two bus shelters adjacent to the toilets and K&G Convenience Store. They felt that the new shelter was, on occasion, too small to accommodate bus queues. It was **agreed to recommend** that NTC write to SDC requesting the provision of extra bus shelters, possibly on each side of the new one.

PROPOSED RESTORATION OF MURAL AND COPING STONES ON WALL ADJACENT TO PUBLIC TOILETS IN BUS STATION

It was noted that the mural painted by students of Ruskin Mill had become degraded since the removal of the bus shelter from this location. The Clerk was asked to obtain a quotation from Mr P Merrett for cementing coping stones on the mural wall and repairing the plasterwork to enable the mural to be restored. Cllr Reed confirmed that Ruskin Mill would be willing to undertake this restoration.

SYCAMORES ON BANK AT SHORTWOOD ROAD

Cllr Reed reported that she had met with a local resident who had suggested that several sycamore trees on the bank opposite his house be coppiced, as he felt they blocked his light and were fouling overhead electricity cables. It was noted that some clearance work to this bank had recently been undertaken by persons unknown and Cllr Reed undertook to re-visit the site and report back to the Clerk.

UPDATE ON SDC'S INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNITY R4C

Cllr Millett reported that she understood that SDC had expressed interest in becoming involved with the proposed Community R4C waste management project and would be looking at the results of the organisation's feasibility study. She had asked the Community R4C to forward to NTC details of any feedback it obtained from SDC.

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A COMMEMORATIVE POLICY FOR NTC

The Clerk had circulated details of examples of commemorative policies from other authorities and explained that such policies could provide effective ways of managing requests from the public to provide memorial/celebratory artefacts, such as benches and plaques, in public spaces. This could be achieved by the provision of lists of suggested sites and features from which potential benefactors could choose. The Clerk felt that this strategy could help to widen the scope for 'green gifts' to include, for example, the adoption of a tree or a pollinator area, or the provision of noticeboards, cycle racks or gates.

Members were interested in pursuing this idea and the Cllr Reed agreed to liaise with the Clerk to draft a proposed policy to be discussed at the next Environment Committee meeting.

FIELD AT NORTHFIELD ROAD – POSSIBLE COMMUNITY USES

The Environment Committee had been asked by Council to consider possible community uses for the large field opposite Northfield Road, following a presentation to Council by Mr Chris Marney on behalf of local residents who were interested in seeking to purchase the land and to gift it to the Council.

Despite careful consideration, members were unable to suggest any feasible community uses for the space, and therefore agreed to **recommend to Council** that it would not be appropriate to seek to register the field with SDC as a community asset at the present time.

After further discussion it was agreed to **recommend to Council** that in the absence of any feasible suggestions for community use, NTC would have strong reservations about taking on ownership of the land, whilst remaining willing to have further discussions with Mr Marney and residents concerning any suggestions they might have for appropriate community use.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS FOR SECTION 106 FUNDING

The Clerk explained that Committee members had been asked to draw up a 'wish-list' of possible local capital projects which might qualify for S.106 funding from developers. She suggested that such projects could include environmental as well as recreational ones, for example work to improve access, footpaths etc.

Members agreed to create their own individual lists of possible projects and circulate them for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee in May.

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Chair

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Date

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

RECOMMENDED that NTC write to SDC requesting the provision of extra bus shelters in Nailsworth Bus Station, possibly on each side of the new one.

RECOMMENDED that NTC does not seek to register the field opposite Northfields Road with SDC as a community asset at the present time, and that in the absence of any feasible suggestions for community use, NTC would have strong reservations about taking on ownership of the land, whilst remaining willing to have further discussions with Mr Marney and residents concerning any suggestions they might have for appropriate community use.