

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
held at the Town Hall, Nailsworth
on Tuesday 21 July 2015

Present	* Cllr MP Robinson (Town Mayor) * Cllr JL Dennis Cllr JL Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr NI Kay Cllr SK Millett Cllr DL Powell Cllr SM Reed Cllr S Robinson * Cllr SE Thorpe
Present for part of the meeting	1 member of the public (Item 3) Mrs Jane Maitland of Save Nailsworth Valley group (Item 4)
Apologies	Cllr EF Bonner District Cllr E Sims
	* denotes absence from part of the meeting

2015/67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

2015/68 CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

a	S.15/1524/HHOLD Little Hollow, Shortwood Road Erection of an extension. No observations
b	S.15/1564/HHOLD Lyndhon, Park Road Attic conversion/first floor extension. Ground floor extension. Demolition of garage and erection of carport. No observations
c	S.15/1475/P31A The Jovial Foresters, Northfields Road Change of use from shop (A1) to residential (C3) Comment We regret this loss of a community asset
d	S.15/1545/TCA Locks Mill, Brewery Lane Walnut tree by lake (tag 3928) – fell by sections to near ground level. This tree is very close to adjacent properties and is damaging the adjacent walls. The Clerk was asked to write to the three Ward District Cllrs expressing the Council's concern at the potential loss of this tree.
e	S.15/1598/TCA Gigg Mill, Old Bristol Road Crown lift and cut back a group of trees containing ash, birch, sycamore and apple to the rear of Unit 2 to give a minimum of 2m clearance Noted
f	S.15/1448/TCA Axpill House, Cossack Square Recommended work to mature ash Noted
g	S.15/1553/TCA 2 Spring Hill Fell sycamore, reduce 2x ash stems to fence height Noted

* Cllr Thorpe joined the meeting during discussion of the above item

2015/69 UPDATE ON PIKE LANE PLANNING APPEAL

Cllr Kay circulated notes from a meeting he had attended on 18 June with Mr Dave Corker SDC and Mr Mark Baker, SDC's Transport Consultant, together with Cllr Millett and two members of the Save Nailsworth Valley (SNV) group. Since the meeting it had been confirmed that the start date for the appeal process was 17 July, with comments and representations due by 17 August. SNV would be running a stall at the July Farmers' Market to gather public support for its campaign for the appeal to be rejected.

SDC had expressed the view at the meeting that it would be helpful for Mr Mike Muston to present evidence on NTC's behalf at the hearing. Cllr Kay indicated that he shared this view and read out an email from Mr Muston indicating that his total fee for production of a further report, site visit and attendance at a 2-day hearing would be in the region of £4,200-4,500. Cllr Kay therefore proposed that NTC engage Mr Muston for a sum not to exceed £4,500. He indicated that SNV would be fund-raising and hoped to be able to contribute up to £500 towards this cost.

Discussion ensued, during which it was confirmed that NTC had already spent £2,612 of its allocated budget of £3,000 to oppose the Pike Lane application. The Clerk confirmed that the additional sum being requested would either have to be taken from reserves or transferred from a different budget heading. Whilst keen that the Pike Lane appeal should not succeed, some councillors felt that it was unfortunate that, despite the Mayor's suggestion made some time ago to SNV, the group appeared not to have raised any funds themselves to fight the appeal. They felt that it would be appropriate for SNV to commit to funding half the cost of hiring Mr Muston.

** Cllr Dennis joined the meeting at this point.*

It was agreed to suspend Standing Orders at this point to allow Mrs Jane Maitland of SVV to address the meeting. Mrs Maitland explained that the group had amassed pledges totalling £500 towards the costs of hiring Mr Muston and could not commit to any more than this at the present time. However, she felt that given the high level of public support for SNV's campaign it was likely that the group would be able to raise considerably more, despite the tight timescale.

Standing orders were resumed.

After further discussion, the following was **RESOLVED**, proposed by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Powell and to majority agreement:

'Council resolves to engage the services of Mike Muston, planning consultant, to represent the views of the Town Council and its people to the Newland Homes planning appeal for a sum not to exceed £4,500 provided that SNV and the people of Nailsworth contribute at least £2,250 towards the cost. Mr Muston is asked:

1. To provide a report by August 17th to the Planning Inspectorate:
2. To attend the Hearing in order to present this report:
3. Not to duplicate the arguments in any other report and so to liaise with SDC officers and others in order to avoid this:
4. Among any other issues to include in the report issues relating to housing need.'

Cllr Kay reported that he had been informed that Cotswold Conservation Board was willing in principle to take the unusual step of making available its own Planning Officer to attend the hearing to put its case against the appeal. Cllr Kay felt that this was an indication of the strength of the Board's opposition to the application. The officer's attendance was dependent on NTC meeting the officer's estimated expenses of around £100.

After further discussion, the following was RESOLVED, proposed by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr S Robinson and to majority support:

'Council agrees to meet the reasonable expenses of the Cotswold Conservation Board's planning officer to attend the hearing in order to support the case against the appeal, at a cost not to exceed £100'.

2015/70 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

2015/71 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 16 June and 7 July were approved and signed.

2015/72 Councillors' surgery (minute 2015/47)

Cllr S Robinson reported that the County, District and Town Councillors' Surgery held in the Mortimer Room on 18 July had only attracted a few members of the public but had nevertheless provided a useful opportunity for councillors from all three tiers to network, particularly as the main issues raised by residents were to do with traffic and parking in the town. Cllr Duckworth would be organising the next surgery in approximately 6 months' time at the Arkell Community Centre.

2015/73 Application for biodigester at the Old Dairy, Chavenage (minute 2015/47)

Cllr Duckworth reported that he had received a copy of the minister's response to Neil Carmichael MP regarding the biodigester which he would circulate to all NTC councillors.

2015/74 Removal of redundant dog kennel behind the TIC (minute 2015/48)

The Clerk confirmed that work to remove the kennel had commenced.

2015/75 Report from Groundsman Replacement Working Party (minute 2015/52)

The Clerk reported that the post had been offered to the successful candidate subject to satisfactory references, of which one had been received and the second was awaited. The Clerk was asked to chase this up. It was proposed that the new incumbent would start work on 24 August to allow a one-week overlap with the current Groundsman for training and continuity purposes. Cllrs Thorpe and M Robinson agreed to meet to progress the matter.

2015/76 Planning application S.14/0464/DISCON Barristers Cottage (minute 2015/63)

Cllr S Robinson reported that he was awaiting a response from SDC planning on this matter.

2015/77 Implications of determination of Forest Green Rovers FC Planning Appeal (minute 2015/64)

The Mayor confirmed that he and Cllr Duckworth still planned to approach FGRFC to discuss possible provision for local youth despite the club's recent announcement of its aspiration to move to an alternative site elsewhere in the district. It was agreed that consideration of NTC's response to the club's potential move would be placed on the agenda of a future Council meeting when appropriate.

2015/78 Town Clerk Replacement Working Party (minute 2015/66)

Cllr Reed expressed a wish to join the Working Party and this was agreed. The first meeting had been arranged for Monday 27 July, 10 am in the Council Chamber.

2015/79 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

District Cllr S Robinson reported that SDC had received an interim report from the inspector on its draft Local Plan stating that the Inspectorate was broadly happy with the proposed housing allocation figures for the next 5 years, which could perhaps help SDC's case at the Pike Lane

planning appeal. Cllr S Robinson confirmed that he expected the Local Plan to be finalised in the autumn.

The Mayor stated that he was concerned to note that the draft plan specified considerable development at Hardwicke as he felt that the infrastructure was inadequate and the new residents would be forced to travel to access shops and other facilities.

Cllr S Robinson reported that SDC councillors had recently voted to support the existing Human Rights Act and to oppose the government's proposed amendments to the law.

2015/80 REPORT FROM TOWN MAYOR

There was nothing to report at the present time.

2015/81 REPORT FROM DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr Duckworth reported that he understood that the Tipputs Inn, Horsley had been sold and the new owners planned to re-open the building as a public house in less than 2 months' time.

Cllr Duckworth reported that he had contacted SDC Building Control regarding the potentially dangerous state of the wall of a property in Market Street and had received a response stating that SDC was attempting to contact the owner of the property. It was noted that there were two separate walls causing concern and it was understood that they both belonged to the same property. Councillors were concerned at the apparent lack of prompt action by SDC on this matter and Cllr S Robinson undertook to discuss the matter with the relevant SDC officer.

2015/82 REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK

There was nothing to report.

2015/83 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Reed reported that a resident of Forest Green had crafted a plaque containing words from the famous poem 'Leisure' by WH Davies which could be displayed in an appropriate place in the town. Cllr Reed planned to bring the plaque to a future meeting of the Environment Committee to discuss potential locations.

Cllr S Robinson reported on behalf of the A46 Road Safety group that County Cllr Binns had agreed to fund the purchase of latest design Speedar traffic speed monitoring equipment from her Highways allocation. The cost would be approximately £1,100 and she had requested that NTC purchase the equipment and submit the receipt to GCC for reimbursement. This was **approved**.

Cllr S Robinson confirmed that the equipment would remain NTC property for use in the town by the Speedar group (Mr R Kirby co-ordinator) which had recently undergone re-training on handling it. All locations would be approved by the police following a risk assessment.

2015/84 COUNCIL RISK ASSESSEMENTS

There was nothing to report.

2015/85 REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on 7 July 2015, presented by the Mayor in the absence of Cllr Thorpe, were approved.

Cllr S Robinson expressed the hope that as many NTC councillors as possible would attend the meeting with residents on 16 September regarding **traffic and road safety in the Star Hill/Windsoredge area** as he understood there were a wide range of opinions on the issue. Written comments received by Cllr S Robinson from residents were available in the Town Clerk's office for councillors to consult.

Cllr Duckworth reported that Mr Levett, who had previously been in communication with NTC regarding his **request for the removal of the road barrier between Lawnside and Bunting Hill**, had attended a recent meeting of Nailsworth CLT and was now fully apprised of the various issues surrounding the matter.

Cllr S Robinson reported that he had drawn the matter of the **damage to the new kerbing around Nailsworth Bus Station** to the attention of Mr Brian McGough SDC.

In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that it was planned to re-instate the **barrier to the side entrance to Norton Wood** adjacent to the old churchyard in the autumn.

Cllr Reed distributed a draft timetable for **tours of NTC property holdings within the responsibility of the Environment Committee**. Members were asked to indicate their availability on this document and return it to the Clerk.

The Clerk confirmed that the Save Nailsworth Valley group had not formally requested to **use the TIC window** to display campaign materials relating to the Pike Lane planning appeal. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the function of the TIC window was principally to publicise local events and was not an appropriate place to display campaigning literature of this nature. Cllr Millett reported that she had suggested to the group that it might seek permission to use the window of an empty shop for this purpose.

Cllr Reed reported that she had received information relating to the Transition Towns sustainability project which she planned to bring to a future meeting of the Environment Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED That 2,500 LED pea lights in crystal white be purchased at a cost of £6,200 to illuminate the tree in Mortimer Gardens for the Christmas period 2016. This figure to be included in next year's budget.

2015/86 PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TOWN COUNCILLORS FROM 11 TO 14

Cllr S Robinson presented his paper, previously circulated, outlining the background to his proposal to increase the number of NTC councillors from 11 to 14 from the May 2016 elections onwards. Cllr S Robinson noted that both the size of the Nailsworth population and the extent of town council responsibilities had increased over the past few decades, and that there was a distinct possibility of further devolution of duties to parish level in the future. He pointed out that other comparable market towns in Gloucestershire tended to have a higher number of councillors than did Nailsworth and explained that the Principal Elections Officer at SDC had indicated that she would support an application from NTC to increase the number of councillors to 14.

Discussion ensued, with some councillors expressing support for the proposal, feeling that an increase in the councillor numbers could help spread the increasing workload and increase the representativeness of the Council. Other councillors were unconvinced of the benefits of an expansion, fearing that an insufficient number of candidates might stand for election, leading to an increase in co-options, and suggesting that an increase in the number of councillors would not in itself guarantee that the workload would be more evenly distributed. Some newly elected councillors felt they needed more time to familiarise themselves with Council procedures and responsibilities to enable them to make an informed decision on the matter. It was mentioned that one option for reducing the workload could be the employment of additional staff.

After further discussion, Cllr S Robinson agreed to withdraw his proposal for the time being. He undertook to ascertain from SDC the deadline for application to increase the number of NTC councillors from the May 2016 election onwards and to report the outcome to a subsequent meeting.

2015/87 TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

Cllr Reed explained that she had requested that externally provided training for new and established councillors be placed on the Council agenda as she felt that all could potentially benefit from appropriate training. The Clerk read out details of one-day 'Induction' and 'Being a Better Councillor' courses run by GAPTC at various dates and venues in the autumn and several councillors indicated that they would be interested in attending one or other of these courses.

After discussion, it was agreed that NTC would fund the course fees for all councillors to attend the 'Being a Better Councillor' course and the Clerk was asked to circulate details for councillors to choose their preferred date.

2015/88 REPORT ON GAPTC AGM 18 JULY 2015

The Clerk reported that Cllr Kay had been unable to attend the AGM of GAPTC owing to a prior commitment.

2015/89 REQUEST FROM ARKELL COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR RELEASE OF SUPPORT FUNDING

The Clerk read out a letter from the Arkell Community Centre Trustees requesting support funding of £1,800 for adjustment and re-fitting 10 fire doors and rewiring of the master override switch with replacement of sensors and emergency lighting and £500 to cover the expenses of a part time voluntary community development worker for the Centre. The request was **approved**, with the money to be taken from the ACC Designated Fund budget.

2015/90 ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED that the list of accounts for 21 July 2015 amounting to £26,822.43 be approved for payment.

2015/91 GAPTC – invitation to meet Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl on 9 September 2015 at Police HQ Gloucester

Cllr Elliott reported that she and Cllr Bonner would be attending the meeting and Cllr Millett indicated that she also planned to attend and would inform GAPTC direct.

2015/92 SDC – recommendations of Local Government Boundary Commission on electoral arrangements for Stroud

The recommendations, previously circulated to all councillors, were noted.

2015/93 Kim Francis – approval of details of proposed memorial to Jinny-Mae Cook and her brother in Cossack Square

The design of the proposed memorial, in the form of two bronze dove wings standing on a stone plinth had been previously circulated to all councillors. The Clerk confirmed that the proposed memorial would be a gift to the town and produced and erected at no cost to NTC in Cossack Square between the two existing benches, after which NTC would assume responsibility for the structure. This would necessitate the relocation of the existing litter bin. The Clerk advised that NTC would need assurance that the structure would be secure on the plinth and in the ground and that the contractor would need to provide a risk assessment. GCC approval would need to be obtained to site the sculpture on its land and to relocate the litter bin. She explained that Ms Francis's aim was to install the memorial in November 2015 to coincide with the first anniversary of the unfortunate demise of Ms Cook and her brother.

Cllrs Thorpe and Reed agreed to visit the sculptor and the family if appropriate to discuss risk assessment and the Clerk was asked to confirm any insurance considerations.

After a short discussion the design and location of the memorial was **agreed in principle** subject to the necessary permissions from GCC and a satisfactory report from Cllrs Thorpe and Reed.

2015/ 94 AUGUST COUNCIL MEETING

It was agreed that the general full council meeting scheduled for 18 August would not be held. Authority to deal with any urgent issues was delegated to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chair of the relevant committee.

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Town Mayor

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Date