

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES of the MEETING of Nailsworth Town Council
held at the Town Hall, Nailsworth
on Tuesday 19 March 2013

Present	Cllr S Robinson (Town Mayor) Cllr P Carter Cllr N Dart Cllr JL Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr NI Kay Cllr MM Rahman Cllr MP Robinson Cllr SM Reed Cllr SE Thorpe
Apologies	Cllr MJ Kelly District Cllr RTH Blackwell District Cllr E Sims
In attendance	Mr Derek Pitt

2012/224 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A local resident, Mr Derek Pitt, asked why NTC had decided to raise its precept for 2013/14 by 14.1%, and whether increases on this scale were likely to continue in subsequent years. The Mayor explained that NTC had in fact raised its precept by just 4.1% but this, coupled with the government's decision to reduce its local tax funding support with consequent technical changes to council tax benefit calculations, had resulted in the 14.1% increase in council tax for Band D properties, i.e. an additional £14.20 p.a. Cllr Robinson explained that the precept increase was to cover a range of NTC projects such as the resurfacing of KGV skateboard area and improvements to the ladies' toilets in the Town Hall. Recent public meetings had indicated that there was a consensus on the need to retain effective library and youth services in the town but if the government decided to implement its proposed policy of capping the budgets of town and parish councils in 2014/15 it could result in cuts to such services. In response to a further question from Mr Pitt, the Mayor confirmed that the accounts for the Arkell Community Centre were completely separate from those of NTC as the former was a charitable trust, so expenditure on the ACC had not impacted on the rise in the NTC precept.

2012/225 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 19 FEBRUARY 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February were approved and signed, subject to the following amendments:

Minute 2012/205 - replace Barton Close Minchinhampton with Barton Close **Nailsworth**.

Minute 2012/212 – substitute '**Surrey**' for 'Derby'

Minute 2012/217 – after the sentence 'Cllr Kay stated that he too had concerns about the lawfulness of some of the proposals in the light of Paragraph 22 of a GAPTC Advice Note which had been circulated by the Clerk', add the following: **He expressed the view that training evenings, which were being used frequently, were secretive and could potentially lead to arrangements which were not legal.**

Minute 2012/217 – after the sentence 'he gave notice that he would circulate details of his concerns to all councillors via email', add the following: **Cllr Elliott raised a query on the Clerk's statement that she had been excluded from recent discussions on committee restructuring.**

2012/226 – Traders’ advertising boards (minute 2012/200)

The Clerk reported that Yakub Mulla GCC had agreed to investigate the problem Cllr Thorpe had raised regarding a town centre business which was routinely displaying several large objects on the pavement outside the shop.

2012/227 - Footpath at Newmarket (minute 2012/193)

A response from GCC was awaited.

2012/228 – GCC grants for road improvements (minute 2012/205)

The Mayor reported that he had asked County Councillor Stan Waddington for an update on his plans regarding the £10,000 grant for local road improvements but had not yet received a reply.

2012/229 – New laptop (minute 2012/211)

Cllr Thorpe asked whether it would be feasible for approved users to use the Council’s new laptop to access the internet at the Arkell Centre during the day. This was agreed in principle, with the proviso that the laptop be available in the Council Chamber for all planning meetings. Cllr Duckworth offered to set up individual user accounts, as appropriate.

2012/230 – Town Clock (minute 2012/212)

The Mayor reported that he had attempted to contact Mr David Duvall of Bussage, who had been carrying out maintenance work on the clock at Minchinhampton Parish Church, to see if he would consider carrying out a similar role for Nailsworth Town Clock. Unfortunately Mr Duvall was currently indisposed, but his wife had stated that she would ask him to respond when he had recovered from his illness.

2012/231 – Proposed lease of KGV Pavilion (minute 2012/213)

Cllr Thorpe reported that she had met with the applicant regarding the proposed lease and that the matter was being progressed.

2012/232 – Screening of film ‘Trashed’ at Arkell Centre (minute 2012/213)

Cllr Thorpe reported that around 50 people had attended the screening and she thanked her fellow councillors for supporting the showing of the film in Climate Change Week.

2012/233 – Problems with local energy supply (minute 2012/216)

The Clerk reported that a letter to Western Power Distribution had been drafted and was ready to send.

2012/234 – Restructuring Council committees (minute 2012/217)

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Kim Bedford GAPTC to arrange a suitable date for a follow up meeting to the Special Council meeting held on 18 March, hopefully on 9 or 15 May.

2012/235 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

District Cllr Carter reported that he had proposed a motion to SDC advocating the introduction of all-out elections every four years for that body, replacing the existing system where a third of the council stood down each year. He felt that this would reduce election costs and would be an easier system for voters to understand. Cllr Carter explained that he had proposed this as an individual and that it was not party political. The motion had been unsuccessful, however, so the existing ‘thirds’ system would continue.

Cllr Carter reported that SDC planning officers had proposed to take enforcement action at Tinkley Farm, requesting that retrospective planning permission for two unlawful buildings be sought, or the buildings removed. The Mayor commented that he was pleased that action was proposed as he felt that the additional buildings would increase the traffic on Tinkley Lane.

2012/236 REPORT FROM TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor reported on a recent town and parish councils forum, organised by SDC, which he had attended. Parish precepts were discussed and he had learned that SDC was holding £67,000 on behalf of the 19 town and parish councils in the District which, like NTC, had opted not to receive their portion of the central government grant which had been made available to make up the shortfall in council tax revenue resulting from the localisation of council tax support. Sandra Cowley, SDC Head of Finance had suggested that neighbouring parishes could band together and spend their allocations on joint projects but the Mayor could not see any merit in this idea. A further suggestion had been that parish allocations could be added to existing S106 sums that SDC might currently be holding. After discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk should be asked to write to SDC requesting the latter preference on behalf on NTC.

The Mayor reported that a draft protocol governing the relationship between SDC and town and parish councils had been approved. This document had previously been circulated to all NTC councillors and the Clerk agreed to forward another copy to Cllr Thorpe. The Mayor thanked Cllr Kay for his efforts in progressing the protocol.

2012/237 REPORT FROM DEPUTY MAYOR

There was nothing to report.

2012/238 REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK

The Clerk had received details from Stroudwater Textile Trust of an open exhibition of fulling machines to be held at Dunkirk Mill Centre on 23 March between 11 am and 1 pm.

2012/239 REPORT FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Carter reported that he had recently attended a meeting on neighbourhood planning in Stroud organised by Neil Carmichael MP where the speaker, a government minister, had explained that if a town or parish was to complete its own Neighbourhood Plan prior to the completion of the District Local Plan, the former must be taken account of by the latter. Cllr Carter understood that the reverse would also apply. Cllr Carter was unsure of the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan for Nailsworth and stated that he proposed to discuss the matter with Mr Ian Crawley, who had previously suggested that such a plan might be helpful in relation to the provision of affordable housing in the town.

Cllr Carter also reported on a recent GAPTC Training Evening on the Localism Act which he had attended. This had covered the legal aspects of the Act as it related to town and parish councils in general, but Cllr Carter felt that he had gained only a limited understanding of how the Act would affect NTC in particular.

Cllr Duckworth reported on the progress of the A46 road improvements group. A meeting had been scheduled for 15 April at 6pm in the Council Chamber to agree on future action and hopefully to form a smaller sub-group to progress this. Details of the group and its activities were on the A46 webpage on the NTC website, together with a link to the A46 petition. A good selection of comments had already been received. The Mayor reported

that the petition would be available to sign outside Morrisons and at the Farmers' Market on Saturday 23 March, staffed by a rota of volunteers from the group. He had been in discussion with a public relations officer from Renishaw regarding possible support for a pedestrian crossing at Inchbrook.

Cllr Duckworth reported that the AGM of Nailsworth Chamber of Trade and Commerce would be held on 13 May. This would set the structure for the future organisation of the Chamber.

2012/240 REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of 12 March were approved and signed.

Cllr Reed reported that an article about the ongoing revision of the Nailsworth Action Plan would appear in the April edition of Nailsworth News, together with details of how local residents could submit their views and comments. It was agreed that Cllr Reed would ask GRCC if it would be prepared to download recent census data to support the Action Plan free of charge.

Cllr Reed reported that two local organisations had expressed a wish to borrow the environmental documentary film 'Trashed' and it was agreed that NTC would use the donations collected at the recent screening of this film to purchase a copy which could be loaned out on request.

In response to a question from Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Reed confirmed that the Action Plan group had considered a suggestion from a local resident regarding the provision of a dog exercise area in the town, but had been unable to think of a suitable location for this.

The Mayor reported that the problems which had occurred with the street lights in Old Market had proved to be complex. GCC was working to rectify the matter.

2012/241 REPORT FROM FINANCE, ECONOMIC AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of 26 February were approved and signed, subject to the transfer of Cllr Duckworth's name from the list of those attending to the list of apologies for absence.

The Clerk reported that Nailsworth Youth and Community Enterprise (NYCE) had submitted a grant application which had arrived late in the Town Hall postbox so had unfortunately not been available for consideration by the Committee. NYCE was seeking assistance for a phased programme of repairs to the Nailsworth Subscription Room, specifically the repair of the front wall and electrical work to the upstairs coffee bar area. After a brief discussion, Cllr M Robinson, seconded by Cllr Carter, proposed that NTC award a grant of £750.00 to NYCE to fund approximately 50% of the estimated cost of the external work. On being put to the vote, the proposal was **carried** with 7 votes in favour and 3 abstentions.

Cllr Kay reported that as the government's proposals for the privatisation of some NHS services had not been adopted the matter was open for further debate.

In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that it was not essential for the Council to dispense all the money in its annual grants budget if there was a dearth of qualifying applications.

2012/242 REPORT FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the comments of the Planning Committee made at its meeting of 27 February be approved.

2012/243 DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF TENDERS FOR RENOVATION OF NEW TIC BUILDING

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 1 (subsection 2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following proceedings because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr M Robinson reported that two tenders had been received and were duly opened on Monday 18 March. Both tenders complied with NTC's stated requirements regarding insurance and apprenticeship policy.

Discussion ensued. Cllr M Robinson observed that the lower tender was significantly closer to his original expectations. Some councillors were concerned about the wide financial gap between the two tenders. The lower tender did not include the itemised breakdown of costs contained in the Council's specification. In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that no further tenders had been received after the closing date and advised that if councillors wished to seek additional tenders from other contractors the whole tendering process would have to start again. She confirmed that the costs of work to the gas and electricity supplies were not included in the quotes and she hoped to shortly be receiving estimates for this work.

After further discussion it was agreed that the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Chair of Environment Committee and the Clerk would be delegated to meet with the architect and to decide whether to accept the lower tender, subject to the tenderer providing of the requested breakdown of costs as specified in the tender specification document, and providing a quote for option B roof insulation.

2012/244 ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED that the list of accounts for 19 March 2013 amounting to £15,662.49 be approved for payment.

2012/245 GAPTC – call for resolutions by 24 May for AGM in July

The Clerk suggested that councillors should bring any proposals to the April Council meeting for consideration.

2012/246 Nailsworth Youth Club – Junior Warden Project

The Clerk had received an invitation for NTC councillors to drop in to observe this project, involving 16 selected local young people, in action in the youth club on one or more of the following dates: 11,18 and 25 April and 9,16 and 23 May. Cllrs Elliott, M Robinson, Thorpe and Reed indicated that they would individually contact Tracy Young at the Youth Club to inform her of when they wished to visit.

2012/247 GCC - A46 Road Closures for road repairs

The Clerk had received notice of proposed A46 road closures between Bath Road and the Nailsworth southern boundary on every Sunday in April and on 5 and 12 May. However, the Mayor had been given to understand that the road would remain open on Sunday 5 May as the Badminton Horse Trials would take place that weekend and traffic would therefore be particularly heavy on that day.

2012/248 Curry and Film Night at the Arkell Centre

Cllr Thorpe reminded councillors that this event would take place on 19 April starting at 6pm. She hoped as many councillors as possible would attend.

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Chair

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Date