

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
 Minutes of a meeting held on 7 June 2016

Present		Cllr MP Robinson (chairman) Cllr JL Duckworth (Mayor) Cllr A Elliott Cllr PP Francis Cllr R Kerby * Cllr AC Norman Cllr MP Robinson Cllr S Robinson
	*	Denotes absence from part of the meeting

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Cllr S Robinson suggested a more experienced cllr should be chairman, at least for the first year and proposed Cllr M Robinson, who was seconded by Cllr Elliott and unanimously elected.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ROLE OF THE RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The Clerk and Chairman listed the committee's main responsibilities:

Miles Marling field

King George V field, recreational facilities and buildings

Shortwood Green

Town gardening, Mortimer Gardens, town centre spaces and planters

Youth worker, managing contributions to youth services

Managing contributions to Dunkirk Mill Museum

Support for Play Rangers

Maintenance of Hazelwood Bungalow, gifted to the town to house the groundsman

Lettings at the Town Hall (1st floor offices, main hall and lower ground floor room)

Lettings at the Mortimer Room.

Clocktower, war memorial, banner posts and use thereof

Current projects: KGV Fields In Trust grant.

Future projects: replacement of groundsman's vehicle, new storeroom for groundsman on KGV field.

The Town Hall carpark nearest the building belongs to NTC and is administered by SDC on NTC's behalf.

Parking on Old Market opposite Passage to India was gifted to the town by Mr Pavey Smith although there continues to be debate with SDC about ownership.

The Chairman added that SDC would be pleased to transfer other assets to NTC, such as the public toilets, the Fountain and the bottom part of Miles Marling Field.

TO DISCUSS PRIORITISATION AND TIMESCALE OF PROJECTS IN THE TOWN COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

The Chairman suggested the committee build up a four-year programme of projects. A page from the Town Action Plan had been circulated for information. The items which applied in particular to this committee were:

The MUGA at Forest Green.

Miles Marling Field (Cllr S Robinson advised, for the benefit of new members, that NTC owned the top half of the field and leased the bottom half from SDC, but was currently negotiating the acquisition of the bottom half from SDC).

Lettings at the Town Hall and Mortimer Room.

Other items in the Action Plan were of general interest to full council:

Centre for the Arts in the Town Hall building

Civic Centre: With the current Town Hall being away from the town centre, a new Civic Centre in Old Market was being considered. NTC own the Mortimer Room and Town Information Centre, with GCC owning the middle Library section of the building. It was unlikely GCC would want to sell this part of the building to NTC, but might look favourably at a long term lease with NTC assuming responsibility for the building.

The Chairman asked members of the new committee to send him agenda ideas for the next meeting.

DISABILITY ACCESS

Cllr Kerby asked whether access for people with disabilities users around the town had been assessed. The Chairman advised that a review had been undertaken by former cllr, Mike Kelly, which had established that Market Street was particularly hard to negotiate. Cllr S Robinson added that the proliferation of 'A' boards had also been looked at, but if NTC asked GCC to ban these, it would mean banning of all street use, such as flowers outside the florist and café tables.

The Chairman suggested he join the Market Street Working Party, which was considering the general access problems, initially in Market Street, to be followed by Cossack Square and Old Market. He added that creating shared space just in Market Street alone would cost about £200k.

The Clerk suggested, under the remit of the Recreation & Amenities Committee, that a disability audit could be commissioned for NTC's public open spaces.

* Cllr Norman left the meeting during the above discussion.

UPDATE ON KING GEORGE V FIT GRANT WORK

The Chairman pointed out that the former National Playing Fields Association had changed its name to Fields In Trust. In December 2015 NTC had been awarded £45k to refurbish the tennis courts and make other improvements to KGV facilities.

The Clerk advised that most of the work had been done: the tennis courts were nearing completion, the car parking surface had been repaired, there was a new piece of gym equipment, a table tennis table, benches, a picnic table and some kick-about goal posts. Still to do was the refurbishment of the changing rooms, with the installation of a stainless steel kitchen unit acquired from the Arkell Centre.

Cllr Kerby queried whether the contractors were supposed to replace the tennis court surface as they had in fact laid a new surface on top of the old. The Clerk would check this out but had full confidence in the experienced contractors. Members were advised that the surface would be black and white until it had cured, before being painted with a colour.

Both the Chairman and Cllr Kerby felt the kick-about football posts were too flimsy. The posts had been vandalised as soon as they went up and the net wasn't installed, so that footballs were now bouncing into the table tennis table behind. The Clerk would check the spec and take up the matter with the contractor. The Clerk advised that some future landscaping may be needed to accommodate the new equipment.

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS FOR KGV EXTENSION FIELD

The extension field is leased from the owner on a 125 year lease. A major problem with developing the field as a community facility is poor drainage, meaning that between Nov and April parts of it were very boggy. Drainage would cost about £12k and the owner had not responded to a request to do this.

Working with these boggy conditions, the Clerk proposed to develop an enhanced meadow, picnic and play area using natural materials, willow, fallen logs and plants which absorbed water. She advised that there remained about £12k of S106 monies, which had to be used for play space. She was currently negotiating with SDC to accept that this project qualified. Members were delighted to hear of this project and the Clerk had their full support.

INSURANCE VALUES OF COUNCIL PROPERTY

Cllr S Robinson was surprised to see that the Clock Tower was only insured for £36k, which would in no way cover the cost of rebuilding this listed monument. The Clerk was aware that all the Council’s insurance levels needed review, that an Asset Register was needed, to include fixtures and fittings, tools etc. This would be a major task.

It was agreed to **recommend** to Council that a full review of Council assets and values be commissioned urgently, which would have to be carried out by an external professional.

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Chairman

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Date