

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
 Minutes of a meeting held on 8 April 2015

Present	Cllr SE Thorpe (chair) Cllr MP Robinson Cllr S Robinson
In attendance	Cllr NI Kay
Present for part of the meeting	Mr James Aburrow, Minchinhampton Tennis Club
Non attendance	Cllr N Dart Cllr MM Rahman

It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Cllr Kay onto the Committee for the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2015

The Clerk confirmed that the closing date for the receipt of **tenders for the refurbishment of the ground floor gents' toilets** was 20 May.

A response was still awaited to the Clerk's letter to Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, regarding the determination of Forest Green Rovers FC's application to **remove its S106 obligation**.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet received a quote from the electrician for work to adjust the **Town Hall heating system** to allow the heating for the lower ground floor to operate independently of the other two floors and she agreed to follow this up.

The Clerk reported that she had learned from the local postman that Royal Mail no longer used its **designated cupboard in the Town Hall kitchen** for the temporary storage of mail prior to distribution. She had therefore reclaimed the padlock and key and would offer the cupboard to the Play Circle as they required additional storage space. In response to questions, the Clerk explained that it appeared that the cupboard had not been used for some considerable time though Royal Mail still used the kitchen as a drop-off point. It was noted that the security of the mail whilst on the premises remained the responsibility of Royal Mail.

The Clerk reported that she had received a quotation of £1,190 from Mr Peter Merrett to replace the **crumbling hip tiles on the roof at the back of the Town Hall**. This excluded the costs of the required scaffolding which were yet to be obtained. Mr Merrett had advised a dry system which would avoid the problems of loose mortar. The quotation was accepted, subject to confirmation of the additional cost of scaffolding. The work would need to be carried out during school holidays and could hopefully be completed during the summer half-term week.

The Clerk reported that the hirer wishing to use the Town Hall for infant massage classes and the Play Circle leaders had confirmed that they were appropriately insured. The Clerk's investigations had revealed that DBS checks were not necessary for either hirer as she had been assured that the children attending the sessions would be with their parents or carers at all times.

The Clerk confirmed that **repairs to the coping stones on the Mortimer Room/Library roof** had been completed. GCC had yet to respond to NTC's request to

repair the fascia boards outside the library and she agreed to follow this up. After discussion, it was **agreed** that Cllr M Robinson would seek to obtain a price from a local decorator for the repair of the boards.

The **inspection of Hazelwood Bungalow** was ongoing and would be organised after the May elections.

Cllr M Robinson reported that he had obtained prices for the proposed **directional signs to the KGV field**. The cost per double-sided sign was approximately £180 including posts and fixing. It was agreed in principle to obtain one sign to be placed on the Butcher's Hill triangle and Cllr M Robinson undertook to obtain details of the design, which would require GCC approval.

Cllr S Robinson reported that the planned **Youth Forum consultation** on the Miles Marling field had not taken place as SDC had put all Youth Forum activities on hold for the time being.

Members were disappointed to note that the **redundant BMX ramps** had yet to be removed from the Miles Marling field, as their removal had been stipulated in the arrangement with the contractor. The Clerk reported that she had asked another contractor to investigate. She confirmed that NTC's section of the lease agreement for the lower half of the field had been completed and was awaiting SDC action.

REQUEST FOR BLOCK BOOKING OF TENNIS COURTS

The Chair welcomed Mr James Aburrow, Head Coach at Minchinhampton Tennis Club, to the meeting. Mr Aburrow explained that he was seeking additional facilities for his tennis coaching sessions as Minchinhampton was at capacity. He was therefore requesting to block-book the KGV courts between 4-8pm every Tuesday during term-time for the summer term on a trial basis, with a view to continuing in the autumn term if there was sufficient ongoing demand. He was proposing to hold an open session one weekend to launch the initiative. Mr Aburrow indicated he would be running the sessions on either an independent commercial basis or possibly as a satellite arrangement with Minchinhampton Tennis Club; in the latter case he understood there was a possibility of obtaining some maintenance funding for the courts from Active Gloucestershire. He was also considering running cardio-tennis fitness sessions which were suitable for all ages and abilities.

In response to questions, Mr Aburrow confirmed that he was fully licensed by the Lawn Tennis Association, held appropriate First Aid qualifications and held enhanced DBS certification and that he was happy to provide evidence on request. He stated that he would expect most of his clients to be Nailsworth residents and he felt that his initiative would help to increase the usage of the courts. He indicated that access to the changing room toilets would be necessary throughout the session. The Clerk explained that though Town Groundsman usually locked the toilets at 6pm it might be possible to negotiate a later closure on the relevant evenings.

Mr Aburrow was thanked for his attendance and he left the meeting.

After discussion, it was **agreed** that Mr Aburrow be offered exclusive use of the KGV tennis courts for coaching sessions on Tuesday evenings from 4-8pm during the school summer term on a trial basis at a cost of £30 per session.

REVIEW OF HIRE CHARGES FOR TOWN HALL AND MORTIMER ROOM

The Clerk reminded members that the hire charges for the Town Hall and Mortimer Room had been raised by 3% from the beginning of the current financial year. In response to a question, she confirmed that the Mortimer Room generally covered its costs and that the Town Hall did likewise apart from the business rates and major repair costs.

After a short discussion, it was **agreed to recommend that hire charges for the Town Hall and Mortimer Room be left unchanged for the financial year 2015/16.**

RENEWAL OF LEASES FOR OFFICES ON FIRST FLOOR OF TOWN HALL

The Clerk reported that NTC's solicitor was currently working on the renewal of the two leases for the first floor offices for the next 3 years and was taking advice from Mr Andrew Watton on whether to recommend an increase in the charge per square metre.

The Committee agreed in principle to **recommend the renewal of the two leases for a 3 year period.**

TOWN GARDENING CONTRACT AND INTERVIEWS

A draft contract produced by Cllr Thorpe and the Clerk and based on suggestions from Cllr S Robinson had been previously circulated. The contract was approved subject to the alteration of the sentence 'Remove weeds from pavements as appropriate' to read 'Remove weeds from pavements as **requested**'. It was noted that the contract did not refer to the area of ground behind the TIC as the issue of ownership of the piece of land had not yet been resolved.

The Clerk reported that there had been two applicants for the post by the closing date. It was agreed that the Mayor and Clerk would liaise with Cllr Reed to organise a date for interviewing the two applicants.

RETIREMENT OF TOWN GROUNDSMAN/CARETAKER

The Clerk reported that Mr Norman Mansell, the town groundsman/caretaker, had given notice that he would be retiring from his post on 31 August 2015. Members wished to record their sincere thanks to Mr Mansell for his many years of loyal service to the Council and extended their very best wishes to him and his family for the future.

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Mansell's contract specified that he would lose the use of Hazelwood Bungalow on the day of his retirement and she would write a letter to him to that effect to assist with any application he might make to SDC for council accommodation.

In discussion, it was agreed that it would be necessary to review the role of the town groundsman/caretaker as soon as practicable and to consider whether it would be necessary for Mr Mansell's successor to occupy the bungalow. The Clerk pointed out that there were considerable practical and security advantages in the groundsman residing there.

After further discussion, it was **agreed** to recommend that a Working Party consisting of Cllrs Thorpe, Kay, M Robinson, S Robinson and the Clerk be set up to begin the process of planning for the replacement of the town groundsman/caretaker, and that Cllr Thorpe would liaise with the Clerk to produce draft terms of reference for the Working Party.

PROPOSED LEASE OF KGV PAVILION

The Clerk reported that together with Cllrs M Robinson, S Robinson and Kay she had met with two representatives of the Scouts to discuss the Scouts' request to lease the KGV pavilion for one year, with a possible extension. At the meeting a proposed rent of £2,000 for a one-year lease was suggested, with the Scouts paying NTC's legal fees for preparation if the lease, with the proviso that the pavilion would still be available by negotiation for occasional community event. She had since confirmed this to the Scouts in an email. The representatives had raised no objections to these suggestions at the meeting but had responded to her email querying whether the rent was negotiable and objecting to paying the legal fees.

In discussion, the Clerk advised that a legal contract would be necessary and that it was usual practice for the leaseholder to meet the legal costs.

After further discussion, the Clerk was asked to respond to the Scouts stating that the Council saw no reason to alter their proposed terms and to ask whether the Scouts were prepared to proceed on this basis.

The Clerk advised that any lease agreement should have clear time limits and that the Council should consider carefully whether the granting of a long-term lease would be desirable, given that the Council had previously set down a marker that consideration should be given to disposing of the building in the long term. She reported that the Taverners' football club had expressed an interest in using the pavilion as its clubhouse on Saturdays in the football season as they had lost the use of their existing terrapin building at the school. She had advised them to negotiate this with the Scouts. Councillors questioned the suitability of the pavilion for this purpose.

KGV PLAYING FIELD

The Clerk reported that the Taverners' reserve team was currently not operating but hoped to resume next season. This would mean that use of the pitch would be at its capacity of 3 teams from September. In response to a question, she confirmed that the town groundsman's duties included monitoring the fixture list and advising on the suitability of the pitch for play.

The Clerk had received a request from a commercial organisation to erect an 'inflatable theme park' consisting of several large bouncy castles on the KGV field over one weekend in June, with a charge for entry on. A similar event had been held in the past at Chalford on parish council land and the Clerk had learned from the parish clerk that it had been held on land which did not contain football pitches. She had also learned that considerable administration and monitoring had been required.

In discussion, councillors felt that the KGV field would not be suitable for such an event as it would not be feasible to avoid encroaching the football pitches and the Clerk was asked to respond to the applicant suggesting they contact Nailsworth Primary School.

MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA)

A draft management agreement for the proposed MUGA had previously been circulated and a progress update report and an email from GCC relating the project management agreement were circulated at the meeting. Owing to the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to defer the consideration of the draft agreement and the contents of GCC's email to a continuation meeting of the Committee on Thursday 9 April at 9.30 am.

Noting that this was the last meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee in the current civic year, Cllr Thorpe closed the meeting by thanking Committee members for their work and support and was in turn thanked for her effective chairing.

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Chair

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Date

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

RESOLVED

that Mr James Aburrows be offered exclusive use of the KGV tennis courts for coaching sessions on Tuesday evenings from 4-8pm

during the school summer term on a trial basis at a cost of £30 per session

- RECOMMENDED** that hire charges for the Town Hall and Mortimer Room be left unchanged for the financial year 2015/16.
- RECOMMENDED** that the two leases for the Town Hall first floor offices be renewed.
- RECOMMENDED** that a Working Party consisting of Cllrs Thorpe, Kay, M Robinson, S Robinson and the Clerk be set up to begin the process of planning for the replacement of the town groundsman/caretaker, and that Cllr Thorpe would liaise with the Clerk to produce draft terms of reference for the Working Party.