

**NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting held on 1 November 2010**

Present	Cllr Mrs J M Way (Chairman) Cllr J A Byrne Cllr J R Nicholson Cllr S Robinson Cllr Mrs S E Thorpe
Apologies	Cllr I D Crawley

MATTERS ARISING

Norton Wood - Aerials in trees

The draft licence was currently with senior solicitor Nigel Sherwood who was dealing with the NTC account until a new solicitor was appointed.

Ruskin Mill pedestrian crossing

Following GCC's desk top study which had concluded a road narrowing could be achieved at this location leading to the preparation of a plan, a subsequent onsite study had deduced that this was in fact not possible for the reasons already listed, and the project had been abandoned.

Bus Station – smelly Smith lorries parking in bus station

Cossack Square - parking on pavements

The Clerk had reported these matters to the Neighbourhood Warden who would be pursuing the problems with SDC. The Mayor had also mentioned them to the police.

NORTON WOOD - Orchard management

Cllrs Crawley and Mrs Way with the Clerk had met representatives of the volunteer group onsite to consider action for fallen branches and old fruit trees. Mr Will Wilkinson of Charlton Abbots had suggested **pollarding some of the overgrown old fruit trees**, and the **removal of some self seeded trees on the lower boundary**. Some of the recommended clearance work could be undertaken by the volunteers but Charlton Abbots would need to assist with some of the tree felling. Members were pleased with the results of the work so far and the increased light coming into the orchard.

TREE WORKS AT LOCATION IN NEWMARKET

Cllrs Crawley and Mrs Way had met with Mr Geoff March of Tree Maintenance and the owner of Fairview to look at the large self seeded ash and sycamore trees overhanging the property and at risk from squirrel damage and windy weather. Mr Wilkinson had put forward three options: leave the trees for now as they were currently low risk; undertake removal to a specified budget over the next couple of years; clear a 5m band in one go. It was not possible to estimate accurately the cost of the work due to the difficult terrain and access restrictions; cut wood would have to be left on site.

Mr March recommended initially a **one-day four-man attack at a cost of £1000** to see how much could be achieved in one hit, and members approved this course of action. The householder had indicated she would be happy to keep the scrub down, once the trees had been removed.

MAINTENANCE OF CLOSED CHURCHYARD

Following the PCC's agreement to cover the cost up to £11280 for diversion of the stream, the Clerk had received confirmation from Cristom Construction that the estimate remained valid. The PCC's agreement was pending written confirmation from NTC that no further claims would be made on it under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding. The Clerk pointed out that ownership of the lower boundary wall had not been resolved, but members were satisfied that the requested exoneration could be given to the PCC offering it the option of commissioning the stream diversion

work itself, or leaving it to NTC (who could then reclaim the VAT) and refunding the council after the event.

BUNTING HILL REGENERATION PROJECT

The training evening with Karen Colebourne had been very worthwhile and she had put a lot of preparatory work into the project, culminating in a **draft management brief**, which was circulated to Cllrs. A small gift had been presented to Ms Colebourne to thank her for her help. The 1992 survey (which coincidentally Ms Colebourne had been involved in) had led to the designation of the area as a key wildlife site, in particular because of a small resident snail and because it was ideal habitat for other endangered species, such as slow worms and dormice.

It was proposed that Cllr Mrs Way with Ms Jinny Marshall and Ms Ros John work on the document and clarify some points before reverting to the committee with a final draft. It was agreed to **book two further days with BTCV agents** at a cost of approx. £400.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

NTC had been consulted on the inclusion of Highwood Rise in the **night light reduction scheme**, which the Mayor had forwarded to a representative of the residents for comment. Members had no objection to the proposal but asked the Clerk to ensure that the lamp over the Arkell Centre building site would not be switched off.

The Clerk had today received an email from Chris Riley GCC Highways on a new **Snow Code**, confirming that there was no liability on house/shop owners clearing the path in front of their premises. GCC advised it would not provide new **grit bins**, but P&TCs could install more as long as the location was agreed in writing; these would then be added to GCC's refilling programme. GCC expressed concern that incorrect amounts of grit were being used and some residents helped themselves from the communal bins. Cllr Nicholson would ask if Bottle Green still had bins to donate.

GCC was also offering the opportunity for P&TCs to hold their own stock of salt and maintain their own bins, in which case all GCC bins would be removed, but NTC did not have the manpower nor storage facilities to do this. A **portable salt dispenser** could be purchased, holding one bag of salt, for the gritting of town centre pavements, which could be operated by either the town groundsman or snow warden, and the Mayor would ask Mr James Chamberlain if he had a space where this equipment could be stored.

Cllr Mrs Way, the Mayor and Clerk would **meet with Mr Peter Starkiss**, Nailsworth snow warden, to consider the list of additional bins which had been requested, and the best way of managing the scheme.

SIGN BOARDS IN TOWN CENTRE

The frames had been delivered by Malcolm Lane and were now stored in the main hall. The maps obtained from SDC could not be used by Imagemakers and Cllr Nicholson had unsuccessfully tried to download an aerial view from Google Earth. Cllr Byrne said he would try and get a map from Google Maps. Mrs de Lacroix was asked to take some general street photos as background for the illustrator. It was agreed that once the map illustration had been drafted, members would have a clearer idea of what else to include.

TOWN INFORMATION CENTRE (AND TOURISM ISSUES)

Cllr Nicholson queried whether a rate rebate could be applied for following a change in the law, to which the Clerk advised that for this purpose all council properties were taken together as a whole and exceeded the rebate ceiling so NTC was excluded from the scheme.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The current set of motifs had been built up over several years and used incandescent bulbs which had to be replaced every year and would soon be no longer available. The latest technology was garlands and ropes of LED lights which were also much cheaper to run. Companies now offered a hire purchase arrangement over several years, eg. £10k to purchase outright, or £12k at £4k annually

over 3 years. Proper storage would be essential to ensure the motifs were not damaged. It was agreed to seek three quotations to buy outright or on HP for 9 each of two motifs.

REGISTRATION OF COUNCIL LAND

The Clerk would be visiting the land registry offices on Wednesday to do more research.

BUDGET ITEMS

	Revenue	Designated
Christmas lights	10000	
upkeep of council land, incl. Bunting Hill	8000	
Norton Wood, incl. Orchard	4000	no increase
environmental enhancement	1000	
upkeep of closed church yard	5000	no increase
TIC (rent, rates, utilities)	12000	
tourism promotion	2000	
town improvements		+ 1000
energy efficiency initiatives	move over this year's heading to property management budget	

MEETING WITH NATIONAL TRUST

Cllr Mrs Way and the Mayor had met with the area wardens to look at how views from the W could be enhanced and all were agreed on the sections needing particular attention. A number of measures were suggested; flailing scrub; obtaining funding from English Nature to improve grassland. Proposals would be put in writing for execution on a rolling long term basis. Volunteers to help could be sought through an article in Nailsworth News.

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Date

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Chairman

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