

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting of the Town Council at the Town Hall, Nailsworth
on Tuesday 16 December 2008
MINUTES

Present	Cllr S Robinson (Deputy Mayor) * Cllr Mrs DLM Binns Cllr J D Bratby Cllr J A Byrne Cllr P Carter * Cllr J R Nicholson Cllr Mrs S E Thorpe Cllr Mrs J M Way Cllr A G Wheeler	* denotes not present for whole meeting
Apologies	Cllr B Jayes Cllr N I Kay	County Cllr J S Waddington District Cllr RTH Blackwell District Cllr J T Jeffreys District Cllr Miss F Macmillan

2008/149 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In response to a query from a resident, the Clerk confirmed that the town's Christmas lights were owned by the council, the scheme having been built up over a number of years and was intended to last some time. When eventually the design needed changing, attention would no doubt be given to displays elsewhere taking into account the range of products available.

2008/150 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 November were approved and signed. Minutes of the Special Council meeting on 8 December were approved and signed.

2008/151 THE BEQUEST (minute 2008/138)

The Clerk confirmed that a formal list of outline projects had been sent forward to the trustees.

*Cllr Nicholson joined the meeting

2008/152 REPORT OF COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Waddington's written report had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. Cllrs were impressed with the programme of renovations to street furniture being undertaken in the town and wished to record their thanks to Cllr Waddington for his efforts.

County Cllr Blackwell had mentioned to the Clerk his regret that repairs to the public toilets were taking a long time. The Clerk had been advised that the coin operated door had been vandalised again, and it cost £600 to replace; this would be done one more time. There was also a problem with the automatic locking doors, which might also have to be replaced. Cllrs were disappointed that the new state of the art facility seemed so prone to vandalism, and wondered how similar toilet blocks were faring elsewhere in the District.

2008/153 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr Robinson advised that that the Mayor was continuing his negotiations to set up a Patients Participation Group with Prices Mill Surgery. Dr A Boddam-Whetham and Mr W Affleck would prepare an article for Nailsworth News seeking comments on the idea from residents.

The Mayor had met with Ruskin Mill representatives to discuss the creation of a piece of sculpture for the A46. Tutors at the college were inspired by the idea, and talks would continue in the new year.

Cllrs were advised that Ruskin Mill would be writing to NTC for support in its campaign for the installation of a pedestrian crossing across the Old Bristol Road at Millbottom.

2008/154 REPORT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr Robinson was pleased to advise that the agreement for a permanent Nailsworth Youth Worker had been signed and returned by GCC.

2008/155 REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

The Clerk reported that Tinkley Lane would be closing during the first week of February for drainage works.

2008/156 NAILSWORTH MUSIC FESTIVAL

Cllrs Byrne, Carter and Nicholson had been discussing the matter and an email had been received from the organisers today, partially responding to queries that had been made at the October council meeting.

It was noted that the questionnaire to Park Road residents had only been circulated on 10 December with a very short timescale for response; there had been four responses. Cllrs felt today's report from the organisers did not fully answer the questions, and were disappointed it had taken so long to get any more information from them, which the organisers claimed was because they needed to see the October council minutes before they could set about seeking appropriate explanations.

It was made clear again, that charging for entrance to the field was against council policy. It was pointed out that numbers of people could be monitored and controlled at the gates without the necessity for money to change hands. The organisers advised that this year's event had cost £18k. They wished to employ a professional events organiser to work with them and the police, which would increase the cost for next year to £25k. Donation buckets this year raised £4k, mostly from families in the afternoon. The organisers had hoped to charge a nominal entrance fee of £2.50, which with a maximum attendance of 3000 people would have brought in £12k. Income was otherwise provided by traders and sponsors.

RESOLVED Cllr Byrne proposed, seconded by Cllr Mrs Thorpe that Nailsworth Music Festival be allowed in principle to use the KGV field for a two-day event in 2009, as long as all requirements stipulated by the police and SDC licensing officers were met. The motion was carried with four votes in favour and three against.

RESOLVED Cllr Nicholson proposed, seconded by Cllr Wheeler to unanimous approval that NTC retain its policy in refusing an entrance charge to be levied for access to KGV field.

2008/157 REPORT OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Robinson presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 25 November and the minutes were approved.

Cllr Carter confirmed that final plans for the Stone Fountain renovation had been submitted to SDC planning officers, and no problems were anticipated.

2008/158 REPORT OF RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr Byrne presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 11 December and the minutes were approved.

The Clerk had met with Tree Maintenance today to look at the pruning work undertaken around the tennis courts; perhaps there had been a degree of misunderstanding with the original brief, and it was anticipated a further cost of £400 would be required to finish the job. A quote would be provided for the removal of the sycamore, and the yew would be cut back behind the pavilion.

Tree Maintenance had also looked at the Shortwood corner site where a clump of ash trees had developed. It was thought advisable to remove the one nearest the power cable which might become a problem, but the others were fine, and it would be unreasonable and a substantial cost to remove them when their only offence was to be displeasing to one resident. The power would need to be turned off whilst the one tree was being removed. Cllrs were asked to go and have a look in case they felt otherwise.

2008/159 REPORT OF FINANCE, ECONOMICS & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Only two cllrs were present at the meeting on 8 December to consider the committees' budget requests and the minutes had been circulated previously. The recommendation to retain the precept at £180k had resulted in projects totalling £5000 being removed from the budget. In addition the proposal to extend the mayor's chain had also been excised although it was agreed a solution was still needed to perpetuate the tradition of adding the mayors' names to the chain. A suggestion that this practice should be discontinued was rejected. Alternatives were to engrave the domed links, or to engrave the reverse of the flat links.

PROPOSED Cllr Nicholson proposed, seconded by Cllr Wheeler that the domed links on the mayor's chain be used to continue inscribing the names of the mayors. The motion was carried.

2008/160 REPORT OF FOREST GREEN COMMUNITY HALL WORKING PARTY

Cllr Mrs Thorpe reported that a November meeting with the architect of the new building Mr Bruce Buchannan, Mr Steve Long CMD Coordinator and Mr Mark Walsh engineer had concluded that working drawings and detailed specification were now required in order to move forward. The architect's fees for this had been approved at the November council meeting, but Cllr Mrs Thorpe requested permission to tap further into this year's allocated funds of £25k to cover the cost of the engineer: £4240 and CDM Coordinator: £2750. The Clerk reckoned there should be just enough left in the budget, which had been used for the set up costs for the ex Redrow suite. Cllrs requested regular breakdowns of expenditure.

Some Cllrs questioned whether it was appropriate to get detailed plans and specifications at this point, before knowing where the funds would come from and before taking a formal decision to go ahead with the new building at all, but Cllr Mrs Thorpe explained that these documents were needed before funding could be applied for.

The draft business plan had been submitted to the Bequest trustees as part of NTC's bid for £300k to build the new FGCH; Cllr Mrs Thorpe regretted that due to pressure of time the draft had not been approved first by NTC.

SW Energy Agency would be asked to advise on heating systems and the kind of grants different types of installation would attract, as it was intended that this be a highly ecological building. It was noted that a project manager would need to be appointed, since the architect was not keen to undertake this role himself and had recommended that an independent professional should act on NTC's behalf.

Cllr Mrs Thorpe was keen to have a session with cllrs in order to bring them up to speed with progress on the project and would circulate the draft business plan in the meantime. It was agreed to have a training session early in the new year, and cllrs were asked to let Cllr Mrs Thorpe have questions in advance so that she could be prepared. Cllr Mrs Thorpe reminded the meeting that the project was part of regeneration aims for Forest Green where the larger proportion of Nailsworth residents live.

PROPOSED Cllr Mrs Thorpe proposed, seconded by Cllr Wheeler that an engineer (£4240) and CDM Coordinator (£2750) be instructed with the architect, in order to

produce detailed plans and specifications for the new FGCH building. The motion was carried with 6 in favour and one abstention.

2008/161 REPORT OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Wheeler presented the report of the meetings held on 20 November and 2 December.

RESOLVED that the comments made by the Planning Committee at its meetings held on 20 November 2008 and 2 December be approved.

Glendower - Cllr Bratby had spoken to Mr Howard Beard and confirmed his photographs were with the Archive Office so could be copied to SDC.

Town centre project - It was suggested the training evening with Mr David Free could be held after a planning meeting, say at 8pm, since it was currently a quiet period for planning applications. The chairman would circulate the date to members.

(free) Cascade housing needs survey – Cllr Nicholson thought a survey had been done recently (?18 months ago), but this was an opportunity to update it at no cost.

2008/162 REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

Cllr Mrs Way drew attention to the suggestion from the Exploring for the Environment Committee in Uley to run an energy event for the area, and asked if Nailsworth would be interested in participating. The event would involve discussions on energy efficiency and saving, sustainable energy technologies, information and advice, with talks, stalls, practical demonstrations etc. Cllr Mrs Way felt this was particularly topical with reference to the FGCH project and recommended a similar event be held here in Nailsworth. She would attend the Dursley event and report back.

Cllr Mrs Way had attended a meeting called by Mr David Drew MP on climate change legislation with reference to the Stroud constituency; how to achieve a 20% reduction in carbon footprint by 2020. The meeting had endorsed a first initiative for 2009 to install loft insulation throughout the district. Discussions continued on how to realise the plan.

2008/163 ADOPTION OF PUBLICATION SCHEME

The Clerk explained that in 2003/4 the government had brought in a publication scheme which all councils were required to sign up to, decreeing what and information was to be published and what kept private. A new replacement model scheme had been received at the end of November, which needed to be adopted by the end of this month, to come into force on 1 January 2009. There was no choice but to adopt the new scheme. The Mayor in discussion with the Clerk had offered to review the scheme and come up with proposals on the detail, such as how and when information should be made available, what charge (if any) would be made for it, and/or to put such information on the website. Currently hard copies of documents available to the public could be viewed in the Clerk's office on request.

PROPOSED Cllr Nicholson proposed, seconded by Cllr Mrs Way to unanimous agreement that the new model Publication Scheme be adopted, whilst retaining the council's current methods of dissemination until such time as it was decided otherwise.

2008/164 ACCOUNTS

The Clerk advised that British Gas was pressing for renewal of the fixed price contract for electricity by 18 January, although the current contract did not expire until April. The new contract inexplicably proposed to increase the standing charge from 18p a day to 56.4p and the unit charge from 9p to 17.890p. A decision had to be given before the January date or the contract would automatically be renewed at the new rates. Cllrs agreed unanimously not to agree to the new contract now, which decision could always be reversed nearer the time if no better alternative presented itself. The Clerk would speak with Mr Jim Eddyshaw who had negotiated the current contract.

RESOLVED that the list of accounts at 16 December 2008 amounting to £18580.71 be approved for payment.

2008/165 Communities & Local Government – consultation on codes of conduct for local authority members and employees (minute 2008/146)

Cllr Nicholson pointed out that contracts of employment for council employees covered conduct procedures and questioned the need for an additional code of conduct over which employment law would in any case take precedence. However in the case of cllrs, the new document tried to make terms of reference clearer for members, when on council business and in private. Given the shortness of time for comment by 24 December, Cllrs were happy for Cllr Nicholson to make a suitable response on their behalf.

2008/166 GCC – leaflet referring to rights & responsibilities of riparian owners

The document was available in the office for anyone concerned to consult.

2008/167 SDC – adoption of Industrial Heritage Conservation area management proposals

SDC had taken account of the consultation and had adopted the proposals which would in due course be available to the public in the office and the library.

2008/168 Credit Union – grant application

An application had been submitted by Stroud Valleys Credit Union, which was using FGCH very successfully. Under normal circumstances, the hirer would pay rent which would be given back in the form of a grant, but in this case the Credit Union had no money to pay in the first place. The sum applied for covered one session per week at the FGCH to the end of March = £216.

PROPOSED Cllr Robinson proposed, seconded by Cllr Nicholson to unanimous agreement that an exception to the normal hiring arrangements be made in the case of Stroud Valleys Credit Union, and the sum of £216 rental to March 2009 be waived in lieu of receiving payment and making a matching grant.

2008/169 GRCC – event 29 January on “Rural Services, the Heart of Rural Communities”

The event at Churchdown commencing at 6.15pm would consider Ways Forward for Gloucestershire Rural Communities. Cllrs were asked to notify the Clerk if they wished to attend.

2008/170 Heritage Guides – proposed new Nailsworth Town Guide

Mr Tim Pearce proprietor had produced the current booklet, which was a popular handout at the TIC. An update was proposed at no cost to NTC, which was approved.

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Date

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Chairman