

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting held on 4 November 2014

Present	Cllr MP Robinson (Town Mayor) Cllr N Dart Cllr NI Kay Cllr MJ Kelly Cllr SM Thorpe
Apologies	Cllr SM Reed

In the absence of the Cllr Reed, the meeting was chaired by the Mayor.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2014

Cllr Kelly reported on an event held in the town on 25 October organised by the Guide Dogs Association as part of its '**Streets Ahead**' campaign. The Association had provided an information stall in the Town Square which had generated considerable interest. The local MP and the Town Mayor, among others, had undertaken blindfolded guided dog walks designed to give insight into some of the problems which sight-impaired people might routinely experience when walking around the town, such as uneven surfaces and cars parked on pavements. The Mayor reported that he had found his experience extremely instructive. Cllr Kelly added that the event had received good coverage in the local media and reported that the Association was keen to repeat the event in spring/summer 2015 and hoped to bring a mobile 'sensory tunnel' which could be erected in the Town Centre for people to experience.

Cllr Thorpe reported on her attendance at a recent conference on **community energy schemes**. She suggested that, in the light of a recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, the Council might consider investigating the feasibility of a localised energy scheme in due course.

In response to a question, the Clerk reported that GCC Rights of Way had been unable to confirm whether any byelaw existed prohibiting **equestrian access to Shortwood Green**.

Concern was expressed that GCC funded work to improve the **uneven footway in front of the Co-op in Old Market** had yet to be carried out and the Clerk agreed to contact Cllr Binns again to enquire as to the proposed start date. Cllr Thorpe wondered if it might be useful to attempt to establish the cost of repair to the whole pavement fronting the shops in Old Market in the hope that Cllr Binns could earmark funding for this in her highways improvement budget allocation for the coming financial year.

NORTON WOOD

The Clerk reported that Cllr Reed had visited Norton Wood with Mr Will Wilkinson of Charlton Abbots Forestry on 11 October, following which Mr Wilkinson had sent a brief report which had been circulated to all councillors.

The report was discussed, in conjunction with the Five Year Management Plan report previously provided by Charlton Abbots, and the following was approved:

- A walnut tree near the bottom of the orchard to be coppiced to allow the surrounding fruit trees to flourish.
- The lower 3 hazel trees of the 6 on the northern boundary of the wood to be re-coppiced to ground level, with the remaining 3 to be sided back from the orchard with the height being maintained in order to retain screening to the adjacent house, with a further review of the hazel trees to be made in about 3 years.
- The Clerk to seek costings from Charlton Abbots for work to trees identified in Mr Wilkinson's main report as high and medium risk in Norton Wood and on Council land adjacent to Avening Road.
- That 2 additional squirrel traps be purchased at a cost of £48+VAT each plus a small charge for camouflaging and that the contractor's quote of £600 +VAT for a second tranche of squirrel control to take place for 3 weeks in May/June 2014 be accepted.

The Clerk reported that the Council's insurers had confirmed that volunteers from the Orchard Group were covered under NTC's policy and advised that it was good practice for the Council to be kept informed of the numbers of volunteers and the dates and times they worked.

The Clerk reported that a resident of Newmarket Road had expressed concern about a tree on Council land adjacent to her property which she felt was potentially hazardous and it was agreed that the Council's contractors be asked to carry out a safety inspection.

TOWN INFORMATION CENTRE

The Clerk reported that the TIC manager, Mrs Carole de Lacroix, had informed her that a slight crack had appeared around the internal walls of the TIC building and that an area to the side of the entrance door which had sustained damage possibly caused by damp needed repainting. The Mayor agreed to investigate the matter and refer back to the architect if appropriate.

Mrs de Lacroix was considering the possibility of organising a meeting/social event for TIC volunteers in February 2015, to which councillors would be invited.

REVIEW OF BUDGET ITEMS

After discussion, it was agreed that no alterations or additions to the budget items would be made to the budget items for 2015/16 already put forward to Council.

WAR MEMORIAL

In response to a question from Cllr Kay, the Clerk confirmed that the Town Groundsman had, as usual, been asked to clear the vegetation surrounding the War Memorial prior to the Remembrance Service but that in fact she had discovered that this had already been done by Mr Tony Evans.

CHANGES TO LOCAL BUS SERVICES

Cllr Thorpe reported that she understood that local residents had sent a petition containing some 150 signatures to Stagecoach objecting to the removal of bus services to Nortonwood. She recalled that some years ago NTC had set up a Transport Working Party which had later been discontinued. In the light of the local impact of recent changes in the Stagecoach bus timetables, she wondered if consideration should be given to reviving such a Working Party.

NAILSWORTH FIRE STATION

The Mayor reported that, having been informed that Nailsworth Fire Station might be picketed as part of recent industrial action, he had visited the Station to check on what

emergency measures were in place in the event of a fire in the town but had found no pickets present.

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Chair

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Date

RESOLUTIONS FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

RESOLVED That Charlton Abbots Forestry be asked to undertake the following work to Norton Wood:

1. a walnut tree near the bottom of the orchard to be coppiced to allow the surrounding fruit trees to flourish
2. the lower 3 hazel trees of the 6 hazels on the northern boundary of the wood to be re-coppiced to ground level, with the remaining 3 to be sided back from the orchard with the height being maintained in order to retain screening to the adjacent house, with a further review of the hazel trees to be made in about 3 years
3. the Clerk to seek costings from Charlton Abbots for work to trees identified in Mr Wilkinson's main report as high and medium risk in Norton Wood and on Council land adjacent to Avening Road
4. That 2 additional squirrel traps be purchased at a cost of £48+VAT each plus a small charge for camouflaging and that the contractor's quote of £600 +VAT for a second tranche of squirrel control to take place for 3 weeks in May/June 2014 be accepted.