

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
 Minutes of a meeting held on 1 December 2015

Present	Cllr SE Thorpe (chair) Cllr JL Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr NI Kay Cllr MP Robinson Cllr S Robinson
In attendance for part of the meeting	Cllr DL Powell Cllr SK Millett Cllr SM Reed Mr Ian Crawley

DECLARATIONS of INTEREST AND CLLRS' DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

PLANNING FOR APPOINTMENT OF NEW TOWN GROUNDSPERSON

Cllr Thorpe summarised the contingency plans which the Clerk had put in place to cover the Town Groundsman's duties until a new post holder could be appointed. The Town Gardener had agreed to undertake some additional hours to carry out weed clearance in the town centre and former groundsman, Mr Norman Mansell, was willing to ensure that the KGV football pitches were lined and the nets put up and taken down for an hourly rate plus expenses. Mr Peter Merrett had volunteered to open and close the KGV toilets on a daily basis and a cleaner for the toilets and changing rooms had been found. The Clerk reported that she would issue changing room keys to both football teams and explained that she was willing remove and replace the external padlock and to check the building after matches. A local resident would continue to lock and unlock the KGV gates. The Mayor had volunteered to assist the Clerk with collecting and checking the tennis money.

The Clerk reported that a local resident with suitable experience had offered to quote to cut and trim the KGV play area using NTC's equipment.

Members were happy to confirm the interim arrangements above but were mindful that there was currently no cover for checking play equipment or clearing litter and dog mess in the KGV field. The Clerk suggested that suppliers of play equipment might be willing to quote for checking it. After discussion the Clerk was asked to pursue this option and also to investigate SDC's arrangements for checking its own play equipment in the town.

Discussion ensued on the way forward regarding the process of recruiting a new Town Groundsperson and on the future of Hazelwood Bungalow. It was agreed that the role required an individual who was capable of working unsupervised and had previous experience in this type of work at a senior level.

After further discussion, it was **agreed to recommend** to Council that the post be re-advertised as a senior role, on the same salary scale point as previously, with the occupation of the bungalow to remain a requirement of the post. It was further agreed to recommend that the Groundsman Replacement Working Party be disbanded and the recruitment process overseen by the Personnel Committee. The Clerk undertook to circulate the relevant papers to members of this Committee.

**Mr Ian Crawley joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.*

POSSIBLE GRANT APPLICATION TO SPORT ENGLAND TO FINANCE THE REDEVELOPMENT OF NAILSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL CHANGING ROOMS.

Cllr Thorpe welcomed Mr Ian Crawley, a governor of Nailsworth Primary School, to the meeting. Mr Crawley explained that he was leading an effort to seek grant funding from Sport England for the upgrading of the school changing rooms and he presented a paper which had previously been circulated to all councillors.

Mr Crawley outlined the current condition of the changing rooms, which he understood had had no work done on them since 1966, and explained that the school was keen to see them upgraded to current standards. This would involve reconfiguration of the space and a new entrance, at an estimated cost of £75,000, which would benefit users of Nailsworth Recreation Centre and the new MUGA. Mr Crawley explained that if the school itself applied for the grant it would be required to match fund, but this would not be the case if NTC were to make the application. Under these circumstances, he was asking NTC to make the application and to seek a parallel lease for the changing rooms from the diocese for this purpose to run alongside the agreed lease for the MUGA. Mr Crawley stated that it was his understanding that such a lease would be required to guarantee the availability of the changing rooms for public use and he recommended that any lease should be for a minimum of 10 years.

Considerable discussion ensued, during which Mr Crawley confirmed that the diocese had not previously been willing to enter into a lease for the changing rooms. However, he understood that the diocese had indicated a willingness to reconsider this if planning permission was obtained for the MUGA.

The Clerk confirmed that the diocese's initial estimates of its legal costs for drawing up the MUGA lease, which were to be borne by NTC, had been £1,900 and suggested that it was unlikely that the diocese would be prepared to bear the costs of a parallel lease for the changing rooms. However, Mr Crawley indicated that he would not anticipate that NTC would be required to contribute any funding to the project.

After further discussion it was **agreed to recommend** that, subject to a councillors' site inspection and there being no financial cost to NTC, the Council apply to Sport England for a grant of £75,000 to refurbish the school changing rooms, the project to be led by Mr Crawley, who would provide the relevant documentation.

Cllr Kay agreed to liaise with Mr Crawley to draft terms for a potential lease with the diocese for the project and the Clerk was asked to liaise with the school to arrange a site visit for interested councillors.

** Mr Crawley and Cllr Reed left the meeting at this point.*

HAZELWOOD BUNGALOW

Cllr Thorpe reported that the internal refurbishment of the bungalow had been completed and a final clean was in hand. The Clerk was asked to check whether there was a frost-stat on the heating system.

REPORT ON SECOND MEETING OF FRIENDS OF MILES MARLING FIELD

Cllr Thorpe reported on the outcome of the above meeting, explaining that a core group of local volunteers were keen to become involved with the future development of the field as a community park. A recent community bulb-planting day in the field had been well supported. The next step would be to obtain a design brief for the field and to consider how to take the project forward. Cllr Thorpe understood that it was still possible to apply for match funding from the landfill tax credits scheme.

MUGA UPDATE INCLUDING HOURS OF OPERATION

Cllr Kay reported that the MUGA Working Party at its meeting of 13 November with Mr Mike Davies GCC, project manager for the MUGA, had agreed that the revised planning application, previously circulated to all councillors, was now suitable for submission to SDC. In response to a question, Cllr S Robinson indicated that the SDC case officer had expressed satisfaction with the sound and lighting reports and explained that SDC Environmental Services would not comment on the application before it was lodged with SDC. Some councillors had visited the Minchinhampton MUGA to gain insight into strategies for noise minimisation.

Cllr Kay reported that the Working Party was recommending that the closing time for the MUGA be changed from 10pm to 9pm Monday-Saturday and 7pm on Sundays. Cllr S Robinson reported that he had previously delivered an information letter on the application to households in Forest Green and planned to distribute a second letter when the application appeared in the local press which would refer to the change in the hours of operation. SDC had agreed to deliver extra notification posters and Cllr S Robinson undertook to ensure that these were continuously displayed in appropriate places.

In discussion it was acknowledged that the Nailsworth Recreation Centre closed at 10pm and Cllr Thorpe stated that she had been advised by an officer of Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association that a 10pm closing time would give greater flexibility for MUGA bookings and would help maximise use.

Cllr Kay agreed to circulate the draft application again together with a report for consideration at the December Council meeting.

**Cllrs Kay, Powell and Millett left the meeting at this point.*

KING GEORGE V FIELD

Cllr Thorpe was pleased to report that NTC had been shortlisted for a grant of £45,000 from Fields in Trust (FIT) and that she and the Mayor would be attending a presentation ceremony in London the following evening at which the successful candidates would be announced. If the grant was achieved it would cover the full refurbishment of the tennis courts.

Revised quotations for the refurbishment of the tennis courts, previously circulated, were discussed and it was **agreed to recommend** acceptance of the quotation of £13,807 from Grimshaw Group to renew all posts and chain link and gates in the current financial year, to be funded from FIT grant money or designated funds, as appropriate, and that funding for the resurfacing and colour coating of the courts be included in the 2016/17 budget.

TOWN GARDENING

The Clerk reported that the Town Gardener had suggested that, as an alternative to grassing over the lower section of the Market Street garden, it would be preferable for him to gradually dig out the existing unsuitable planting and replant with something more appropriate. He had been asked to suggest suitable plants with a view to maintaining areas of colour throughout the year. Members were pleased to note that the Clock Tower and Mortimer Gardens were looking much better thanks to the gardener's efforts.

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

Following an insurer's report on the Shortwood Green play area and a site meeting with the contractors a quotation for remedial work had been received and circulated. After a brief discussion it was **agreed** to accept Greenfields quotation totalling £828.00 to remove 2

overhanging branches from an ash tree, replace the 2 cradle and 2 flat swing seats and remove, dispose of and replace 2 rotten balance beams.

Clr Thorpe circulated details of a 'tango' parent/child swing seat and suggested that this could be considered for NTC play areas in due course.

REFURBISHMENT OF TOWN HALL GENTS TOILETS

The Clerk reported that the refurbishment of the ground floor gents' toilets was due to commence on 11 January 2016 with an expected completion date of 26 February.

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Chair

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Date

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOLUTIONS FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

RECOMMENDED that the post of Town Groundsman be re-advertised as a senior role on the same salary scale point as previously with the occupation of the bungalow to remain a requirement of the post, and that the Groundsman Replacement Working Party be disbanded and the recruitment process overseen by the Personnel Committee.

RECOMMENDED that subject to a councillors' site inspection and there being no financial cost to NTC, the Council apply to Sport England for a grant of £75,000 to refurbish the school changing rooms, the project to be led by Mr Ian Crawley, who would provide the relevant documentation.

RECOMMENDED to accept the quotation of £13,807 from Grimshaw Group to renew all posts and chain link and gates in the KGV tennis courts in the current financial year, to be funded from FIT grant money or designated funds, as appropriate, and that funding for the resurfacing and colour coating of the courts be included in the 2016/17 budget.

RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Greenfields totalling £828.00 to remove 2 overhanging branches from an ash tree, at the Shortwood Green play area, replace the 2 cradle and 2 flat swing seats and remove, dispose of and replace 2 rotten balance beams.