

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting held on 3 March 2015

Present	Cllr SM Reed (Chair) Cllr NI Kay Cllr MJ Kelly Cllr MP Robinson Cllr SM Thorpe
In attendance	Mr Ian Morris (item 6)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 JANUARY 2014

Cllr Thorpe reported that Cllr S Robinson had been informed that Stagecoach, having carried out a monitoring exercise on the changed **bus service to Forest Green**, proposed to make no decision on the results until the summer. Councillors felt that this delay was unacceptable, as the removal of the service to Nortonwood and the loss of a direct service to Cheltenham was creating real difficulties for many local residents. Cllr Thorpe reported that, together with the Mayor and Cllr S Robinson, she had organised a petition at the recent Farmers' Market which had gained many signatures. A public meeting had been arranged for 11 February, 4.30-5.30 at the Arkell Community Centre, to be chaired by the Mayor, and details of this had been circulated to all councillors plus District Cllr Sims and County Cllr Binns by email. A representative of GCC had agreed to attend and Stagecoach had been invited to send a representative but had indicated that this would not be possible as the meeting fell in Cheltenham Race Week. Cllr Thorpe felt that this response was highly regrettable and that maximum pressure should be put on the company to listen to its Nailsworth customers. Leaflets had been produced to publicise the meeting and Cllr Thorpe invited councillors to assist with delivery. She hoped as many councillors as possible would be present at the meeting.

Cllr Thorpe recalled that in the past the NTC Transport Working Party had examined local bus timetables and made recommendations. She proposed that the Environment Committee monitor local bus timetables on a regular basis and this was **agreed**.

Cllr Kelly reported that he had discussed **repairs to the footway in front of the Co-op in Old Market** with John Kay GCC during a walkabout on 30 January. The Clerk reported that County Cllr Binns had confirmed that the repairs were due to be completed during the current financial year.

Cllr Reed reported that she had met on site with a resident of Walkley Wood, Ms Steffi Stern, to discuss Ms Stern's interest in negotiating a licence to use a piece of NTC land adjoining her garden. Cllr Reed reported that the land in question consisted of a section of bank covered with brambles and small trees plus a flat clay area. Ms Stern had expressed a willingness to clear the brambles from the area and wished to use the area as garden land. It was **agreed** to recommend that NTC proceed to negotiate an appropriate licence with Ms Stern for her to use the section of land in question and that the Council should fence the boundary of its land in order to demarcate it clearly.

The Clerk reported that she had been informed by SDC that a new bus shelter had been ordered for Nailsworth Bus Station. She had received no details of its design. It was understood that any surplus funds in the budget for the shelter would be used to replace sections of the Bus Station wall with railings.

Following a safety inspection, the Clerk had received a quotation for £180 from Tree Maintenance for the recommended work to fell two dead trees and to clear ivy from trees on the bank opposite 'Rosedene', Shortwood. This was **accepted**. The Clerk reported that she had received letters from various nearby residents requesting that some of the trees be removed/reduced. She was asked to respond to the letters informing the residents of the Council's decision.

The Clerk reported that the external gas cover box outside the TIC had been damaged beyond repair, probably by a reversing vehicle. In the interests of safety, she had arranged for a replacement box to be installed at a cost of approximately £50.

NORTON WOOD UPDATE

Cllr Reed reported that the contractors had made an excellent job of widening paths and clearing undergrowth in Norton Wood, making the area lighter and more inviting. She planned to visit the wood again in the spring with Mr Will Wilkinson of Charlton Abbots.

ALLOTMENTS IN HAYES ROAD – POSSIBLE COMMUNITY ASSET

Cllr M Robinson reported that Cllr S Robinson had discussed with the owners of the allotments in Hayes Road the possibility of the Council applying for them to be registered as a community asset. However the owners felt that this would not be appropriate as they intended to continue to provide the allotments as their contribution to the town's amenities and Cllr S Robinson had suggested that no action be taken on this at the present time. This was agreed.

Cllr Reed reported that she was in ongoing discussions with Ruskin Mill College regarding the possibility of the provision of allotment land in the Horsley Valley. Cllr Thorpe added that the bottom half of the Miles Marling field might also be considered for allotment use if NTC was successful in purchasing it from SDC.

TOWN CAR PARKING – MEETING WITH MP

Cllr M Robinson reported that he had met with the MP and representatives of SDC and GCC to explain the reasoning behind NTC's policy that free, time restricted car parking be retained in the town centre. He was pleased to report that SDC and GCC had expressed support for this policy. Cllr M Robinson had subsequently received a letter from the MP supporting NTC's position and the Council's additional policy of attempting to obtain some secure long-term parking for town centre workers at a suitable location. The MP had suggested that both policies could usefully be incorporated in a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Cllr M Robinson suggested that Station Road, if adopted by GCC, as was the Council's stated preference, could be suitable for long-term parking. He felt that this was one reason why adopted roads were generally preferable to private ones.

REQUEST TO SITE STREET FOOD VAN IN TIC CAR PARK

Details of a request by Mr Ian Morris to site a street food van in the TIC car park had been previously circulated to all councillors and Cllr Reed invited Mr Morris to outline his proposals.

Mr Morris explained that he was starting a business supplying hand-made pizzas from a wood-fired clay oven in a small van to festivals and street pitches. He was currently looking for suitable street pitches in town and village centres and was interested in renting one space in the TIC car park on a trial basis on which to site his van one evening per week, from 5-8.30 pm, to catch the after school/work teatime trade. His preference was for Wednesdays as he felt that this would minimise any duplication with other local outlets serving take-away pizza. Mr Morris explained that the wood-fired oven operated without significant noise and that the only sound likely to be created by his operation would come from a small generator (around 58 decibels) to provide lighting in the winter months.

In response to questions, Mr Morris confirmed that he would need to be granted a street trading licence from SDC, which he understood would be site-specific and last for one year, and would involve a 28-day public consultation period. He understood that NTC could impose a shorter period for renting the space. He acknowledged that NTC would not be able to guarantee that space would necessarily be available in the TIC car park as no formal parking controls existed in that location. Mr Morris was aware that Forest Green was the main centre of population for the town but explained that he felt his business required a greater degree of passing traffic than that afforded in Forest Green. He assured councillors that his staff (probably a team of 2 people) would ensure that any litter generated from his business would be cleared.

Mr Morris was thanked for his attendance and explanation of his proposals and he left the meeting at this point.

After discussion it was **agreed to recommend** that, subject to SDC licence, Mr Morris be offered the use of one car parking space in the TIC car park for one evening per week between 5 – 8.30 pm to site his pizza vending van, at a rent of £10 per week, for a 6 month trial period, to be reviewed after 3 months of operation, with the proviso that no A boards advertising the business be displayed at any time

CLARIFICATION OF NTC PROPERTY HOLDINGS

Cllr Kay had previously circulated an email to all councillors outlining his thoughts regarding procedures for reviewing and registering all land held or controlled by NTC. He expressed concern about the Council's ability to defend against claims of adverse possession or misuse of NTC land in the absence of a full list of its holdings. Cllr Kay noted that in the past the Clerk had undertaken considerable preparatory work on mapping out Council land with a view to registering it, and appreciated that other pressing matters such as the building and development of the Arkell Community Centre had taken precedence and prevented the completion of this exercise. However he felt it was important to have a clear written record of all Council land holdings as soon as practicable and suggested that, if necessary, this work could be done by the Council's solicitors.

In discussion, the Clerk confirmed that NTC did not own the half-circle of grassland opposite Nailsworth Primary School but did have stewardship obligations. She suggested that councillors might find it helpful to visit NTC's land holdings and take photographs. This exercise could perhaps be repeated periodically. She added that as researching and attempting to register all the land holdings at once was a major undertaking it might be preferable for it to be done on a piecemeal basis.

After further discussion, it was **agreed** that the aim would be to have all Council land registered in due course. Cllr Reed thanked Cllr Kay for his suggestions and agreed to liaise with the Clerk to map out a route taking in parcels of land held by NTC plus lord of the manor land with a view to organising a walkabout for interested councillors.

TREES AT BUNTING HILL

The Clerk reported that the previous organiser of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers' workdays in Bunting Hill had moved on. However she understood that Mrs Ros John would be co-ordinating further workdays.

The Clerk confirmed that she was in the process of arranging for the Council's contractors to carry out a safety inspection of trees on NTC land at Bunting Hill. Cllr Reed asked to be notified of the date of the visit.

LIME TREE AT FOREST GREEN GREEN

The Clerk reported that she had been contacted direct by a contractor who had been asked by a local resident to remove a lime tree on Forest Green Green. She had informed the contractor that NTC had not given permission for the resident to carry out the work and explained to him that the Council required full details from the resident of the proposed work before the request could be considered. Cllr M Robinson confirmed that he had clearly told the resident that any work to the tree would need to be authorised by the Council.

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Chair

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Date

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL

RECOMMENDED that, subject to SDC licence, Mr Morris be offered the use of one car parking space in the TIC car park for one evening per week between 5 – 8.30 pm to site his pizza vending van, at a rent of £10 per week, for a 6 month trial period, to be reviewed after 3 months of operation, with the proviso that no A boards advertising the business be displayed at any time.