

**NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES**

Meeting of the Town Council at the Town Hall, Nailsworth
on Tuesday 20 November 2007

Present Cllr N I Kay (Town Mayor)
 Cllr W S Affleck
 * Cllr J D Bratby
 Cllr J Eddyshaw
 * Cllr J R Nicholson
 Cllr S Robinson
 Cllr Mrs J M Way
 Cllr A G Wheeler

Also present for County Cllr J S Waddington
part of the meeting District Cllr Mrs DLM Binns
 District Cllr J T Jefferies

Apologies accepted Cllr J A Byrne
 Cllr B Jayes
 Cllr Mrs S E Thorpe

* Denotes absence from part of the meeting

2007/161 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16 October 2007 were confirmed and signed with the following correction:

Minute 2007/141

The Mayor's charity abseil was in aid of Shortwood United FC, not the Scout Group.

2007/162 DRINK CARTON RECYCLING (minute 2007/143)

Cllr Mrs Way reported that a second bank had been provided to cope with the large amount of deposited cartons.

2007/163 YOUTH FORUM (minute 2007/148)

Cllr Robinson updated Cllrs on the first meeting held with young people; a second was planned before Christmas, with a further meeting to include adults in early 2008. In answer to a query from Cllr Bratby, Cllr Robinson assured Cllrs that young residents who did not belong to formal groups, would be included in the process, and NW youth worker Ms Young was planning to speak with those who congregate in the bus station after school.

* Cllr Nicholson joined the meeting during the above discussions.

2007/164 REPORT OF COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Waddington reported that GCC was considering its medium-term financial strategy and next year's budget. Finances would be tight, and worse for the police service. GCC had just had a CPA inspection (comprehensive performance assessment) and the police service had been inspected by Health & Safety. Results of both inspections looked likely to be good.

Work on repairing the A46 at Salmon Springs had commenced but was going to take a long time.

The Flooding Scrutiny Report published this week included a lot of recommendations. The County's drainage system was not as good as it should be and further damaged by the July floods. Six road gangs had been deployed to the end of this financial year to work in partnership with other agencies to maximise drainage efficiency. Longer term anti-flooding measures were under consideration.

* Cllr Bratby left the meeting

The County had achieved 40% recycling, with the help of green waste composting, and hoped to increase this to 60% in due course. At a recent conference, a presentation from Flanders (which achieves an impressive 71% recycling) identified pay-as-you-throw as being a crucial component; five pilot schemes were currently being trialled in the UK. The beginning of the tendering process for the residual waste contract would go before cabinet next week.

Work had started on the new pedestrian crossing at Rooksmoor, which would be dedicated to the little boy who had died there. The project was running a week late as a lot of unexpected shallow underground services had been discovered. It was hoped to finish the job in December.

Following representations from FG-RA, money had been set aside to close Bunting Hill to through traffic, but Cllr Waddington reported that local residents were objecting to the scheme, claiming it was mopeds rather than cars misusing the road, which would not be stopped by bollards. It was suggested Cllr Waddington clarify the position with Mrs Margaret Marshall or Mrs Sally Millett.

In response to Cllr Bratby's concern over police funding, Cllr Waddington explained that the average increase was 2.5% and Gloucestershire was likely to get about 2%. Increasing salaries were the biggest expense and funds had been subsidised from reserves over the last three years. This year's floods had caused an unexpected surge in expenditure and reserves were exhausted. Pensions for the police force had now been taken over by government, other than the local authority pension scheme. Capping would affect the budget rather than the precept.

The mayor asked about the youth service being removed from GCC control to an outside organisation and Cllr Waddington promised to bring details to the next meeting. He confirmed that this was a change of contractor which would largely employ the same people and should not affect Nailsworth youth worker. Cllr Robinson added that the career service Connexions had been replaced by Prospect. The youth service had recently had a JAR inspection and early indications were that it would be classified as very good or excellent.

In response to a query from Cllr Robinson, Cllr Waddington confirmed that the request for anti-speeding measures on Nympsfield Road had been noted and was being looked into. A survey was currently being undertaken prior to making proposals and Mr David Drew MP had added his support.

District Cllr Mrs Binns advised that SDC had been given a £60k flood relief grant by government, which would be divided up into flood prevention schemes. A survey was being undertaken of the Slad Brook and culverts being checked. Slad Brook Action Group (SBAG) would receive some money for a residents' self-help project.

Cllr Eddyshaw repeated the long-held objection to NTC having to part-fund Nailsworth youth worker, which should be a GCC establishment post in line with other parishes. The mayor and Cllr Robinson would provide Cllr Eddyshaw with information on NTC's previous actions regarding this anomaly.

District Cllr Jefferies advised that SDC's budget setting process was also underway, following a consultation meeting with businesses held on 9 November, with a public consultation to follow. There was great concern over government funding, with Stroud District having the lowest grant per head of population in the county.

SDC had set up a Climate Change Panel (CCP) consisting of 9 experts from local and national perspectives to help towards problems of climate change. The panel had reported at the end of October and Stroud District was in a good position to move towards the desired standard of carbon neutrality. Cllr Jefferies wanted to bring to council's attention that one of the areas not doing so well was schools, both as institutions and in educating their charges.

Cllr Jefferies drew attention to the serious lack of volunteer car drivers, with 30 more needed and wished to put before Cllrs a request to raise the profile of this scheme. He also asked that the message be spread about the Warm & Well fuel allowance for the vulnerable.

2007/165 ACCOUNTS

Owing to the fluctuating power supply, it was agreed to bring this item forward in case the meeting had to be adjourned through lack of electricity.

Item 219

The employment of Ms Bojaniwska by the former council to work on the design statement was explained to new Cllrs. Ms Bojaniwska charged £100 a day and submitted monthly interim invoices. However it was felt that the project brief needed to be redefined and an estimate of final costs agreed, not least so that adequate budget provision could be made. The Clerk added that this payment in fact covered two month's work and that Ms Bojaniwska's fee had increased from £15 to £20 per hour from 1st October.

Cllr Affleck explained that the 07/08 budget of £3000 for this project had increased to £6000. The original completion was planned for February 08 but this was likely to overrun because of a lack of volunteers to help with the task. It was agreed to speak with Ms Bojaniwska in order to establish how NTC wished to proceed or wind up the project, which had led on from the Healthcheck and Action Plan. Cllr Affleck explained that the Design Statement was part of a package of documents. When completed and accepted by SDC the Design Statement would have status as supplementary planning advice to provide protection against unwelcome development in the town.

Cllr Affleck would invite Ms Bojaniwska to attend the next FE&GP meeting.

Item 223

The contribution to GCC for Nailsworth youth worker had been deferred from last month, since when a letter had been located confirming that NTC had agreed to pay up to £12k of the £30k provision.

RESOLVED that the list of accounts at 20 November 2007 amounting to £23,697.99 be approved for payment. (Items 229, 230, 231 were approved following the report of the FE&GP committee, minute 2007/171 below.)

2007/166 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The mayor invited Cllrs to put forward nominations by the end of January for the awards to be made at the mayor's reception next May. These were: Young Person's Award, Chamberlain Sporting Trophy and Nailsworth Festival Art Award.

The mayor had passed on condolences to Bangladeshi staff at the Passage to India over the recent disasters in their country, and would do the same for staff at Nailsworth Balti.

The Remembrance Ceremonies had been touching as always and better attended this year. Contributions to the poppy appeal exceeded last year's by over 10%. The mayor was in favour of the changes proposed by the Legion and Churches Together to aim the ceremonies at younger citizens. Several Cllrs expressed concern at the insufficient police presence to stop the traffic at both ends for this year's parade, and the Royal British Legion would be urged to make sure this did not happen again.

The mayor had attended the Police INA meeting at Stonehouse, with members of Forest Green Residents Association (FG-RA). He had expressed appreciation for extended opening of Nailsworth police station but requested better publicity for this.

2007/167 REPORT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

17 October	Attended a meeting with Cllr Waddington and Mr John Roberts GCC Highways
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* Cllr Bratby left the meeting

	<p>regarding town centre traffic issues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pressure for a pedestrian crossing in George Street led to the suggestion this could be a 'shared space' zone. • Improved access from the cycle track to the parking racks by Waters Meet was discussed. • Improvement to traffic flow around the mini roundabout was considered with the suggestion of a larger hump in the middle and perhaps filter lanes. • GCC Highway's representative was asked to consider the layout created by Mr David Free for traffic flow through the town centre to indicate whether the scheme was worth further consideration; he did not raise any fundamental objection. • It was noted that the beacons at the pedestrian crossing on Fountain Street needed repair.
27 October	Assisted in manning the stall at the farmers' market to consult on the design statement and ask residents to complete questionnaires.
28 October	Attended the Passage to India award to the Nailsworth Silver Band.
29 October	Visited Southampton with Cllr Waddington to see a model thermal treatment centre, part of a major Hampshire waste management scheme covering collection, sorting, composting etc. The steam-raising incinerator operated under very close supervision and produced a very thin plume of steam from the chimney, no smell, with a by product of alkaline fly ash which could be sold. Cllr Affleck was very impressed with the system which generated 17mgw, most of which was sold to the grid.
31 October	Attended the Nailsworth Rotary Club charter celebrations.
7 November	Discussed the Roger Evans report which Cllr Affleck hoped to receive tomorrow.
10/11 Nov	Hosted one of the couples visiting from Lèves for the Remembrance ceremonies.
14 November	Met with Ms Bojaniwska to look at the results of the questionnaires collected at the farmers' market. Cllr Affleck noted that protocol called for consultation to be demonstrated at every stage.

2007/168 REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

Cllr Mrs Way indicated that she would attend the Nuts & Bolts course (NTC would cover the £60 cost). The Clerk would inform Cllrs when dates were fixed for the next How to Chair a Committee course.

2007/169 REPORT OF Town Newsletter COMMITTEE

Cllr Nicholson presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 5 November and the minutes were approved. He drew attention to the annual revision of the Shops/Services Directory which would be circulated in the December Fountain and explained its history to new cllrs. Cllrs not on the committee were invited to provide articles to add to the Fountain reserve stock.

2007/170 REPORT OF Environment COMMITTEE

The mayor presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 5 November and the minutes were approved with the following amendment:

Energy Neighbourhood Scheme, 3rd line to read

" . . . volunteer households per energy neighbourhood area to reduce energy use over six months . . . "

Pruning willow tree at Gig Mill, Delete final sentence

The mayor added that he had spoken to the manager at Tesco Express about planting a tree in the vicinity of the post boxes, and the manager was consulting his superiors. Cllr Nicholson reminded the meeting that part of the original planning approval for the building of the store had included planting a tree, which Tesco had never done.

2007/171 REPORT OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Cllr Affleck presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 12 November but there were insufficient members present to approve the minutes. An alteration was made to the minutes as follows

* Cllr Bratby left the meeting

Staffing matters, end of first paragraph to read

" consequent small increase in hourly rate to £10 per hour for day work and £12 per hour for evenings."

PROPOSED Cllr Affleck recommended, seconded by Cllr Nicholson that the grant recommendations made by the FE&GP Committee at its meeting on 12 November 2007 be approved.

The meeting was informed that FG-RA had today submitted an application for funding from Second Homes Money to install a climbing frame.

2007/172 REPORT OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Affleck presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 18 October. He confirmed that application requirements for a 'granny flat' were indeed slightly different to other types of extension.

Cllr Nicholson updated the meeting regarding the cross referencing of planning objections to the Local Plan. 80% of planning applications were handled under delegated powers and objections without specific Local Plan reference were ignored. Only brief synopses of the clauses were published on the website, and Cllr Nicholson felt this process was intended to make it quicker to push planning applications through by making it very difficult to make objections.

Cllr Wheeler added that a ward Cllr could ask to have an application removed from delegated powers and put before the Development Control Committee, but only if that Cllr is willing to attend the planning meeting and personally follow through the objection.

Mr David Hagg, SDC chief executive had advised that there would be a question & answer session on planning matters in early December and Cllrs were keen that someone should go along and raise these issues. The matter would be discussed at Thursday's meeting of the planning committee.

Cllr Affleck presented the report of the meeting of the committee held on 6 November.

He confirmed that there were no legal requirements on owners of listed properties to keep them maintained.

Work appeared to have started inside the (listed) Railway Hotel, but Cllrs were not aware that any planning application had been presented and Cllr Eddyshaw had informed SDC enforcement officers.

The developer of 14/16 Fountain Street had some time ago wished to make a back entrance from the property into Mortimer Gardens, which had of course been refused. The clerk had spoken with him recently following the discovery that he had removed part of the MG boundary fence posts adjoining this property. It was agreed, given the history with this developer, to send a solicitor's letter asking for an explanation and seeking compensation.

It was noted that despite many promises the Roger Evans report, originally due end September, had still not been produced. Cllr Affleck explained the history behind the commissioning of this report, recommended by SDC as essential to gaining access to regeneration funding, which was in any case no longer available. The report was also intended to mesh with Ms Bojaniwska's design statement, but there had been no contact made with her.

Cllr Robinson drew attention to the dilapidated flats at the far end of Bridge Street, but ownership of the building was unclear.

RESOLVED that the comments made by the planning committee at its meetings held on 18 October and 6 November 2007 be approved.

* Cllr Bratby left the meeting

2007/173 FOREST GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The mayor felt that the training session had been valuable and productive and had circulated his notes on the event. He suggested that the next step would be to organise a working party including non-council representatives to develop ideas and prepare recommendations for council. Cllr Affleck added that he felt the training evening had brought out three important principles

- The FG-CC project had evolved from being a community centre in Forest Green to being a council controlled facility for the whole town, so its name should reflect this by being changed to Community Centre at Forest Green, rather than Forest Green Community Centre.
- The question of who would pay for building it had been brought into sharper focus and with a change of ownership would come financial liability. The grants situation was not looking promising and so a Public Works Loan might be required, which NTC would have to take out and service, thus incurring a heavy financial burden.
- There were restraints on the possible paying back of loaned money through subsequent grants obtained by NTC or FG-RA, but it was in any case not appropriate for FG-RA to seek grants for what would be a town facility. There were also constraints for obtaining grants on a project which had already started.

NTC had to give every element of the project very careful thought and be quite sure how to proceed and move forward.

Cllr Nicholson felt the training evening had been the correct forum to throw up ideas which then needed to be properly formalised. A working party was the logical next step. A professional and thorough business plan would be required and it was not clear at this stage what costs would be realistically involved in raising the money, paying for the centre and managing its ongoing existence. The working party would need to be given a clear brief and discussion ensued on what form this might take.

A response from Redrow was awaited as to the possibility of hiring the existing site office for the time being, and the cost of a Portacabin had been established at £15-£25k a year.

RESOLVED the meeting agreed unanimously to

- Form a working party reporting to full council and which would elect a chairman at its first meeting.
- The terms of reference for the working party would be to consider and make recommendations to Council on any matter relating to the proposed Forest Green Community Centre.
- Opening Membership would consist of the mayor, Cllrs Bratby, Nicholson, Mrs Thorpe, Mrs Way, Mrs Margaret Marshall, Mrs Sally Millett (and/or their FG-RA nominees). With advisors, Ms Alison Brown Buchanan Partnership and Ms Barbara Pond GCC.
- FE&GP committee would be asked to consider setting aside a contingency fund.

2007/174 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NTC and NCP

Given the lateness of the hour, this item was deferred until the December council meeting.

2007/175 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to vary Standing Orders as follows:

- 1) Paragraph 32 – delete and replace by
 “At the Annual Meeting the Council will decide on the composition of Committees which will then elect a chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of Council, and approve the programme of meetings for Council and Committees for the year.” Adopted unanimously.
- 2) Paragraph 14(L) – delete the reference in brackets. Adopted unanimously.
3. Paragraphs 32 and 33 – amend references to “chairman” to read “chair”. Adopted by 4 voting in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention.

* Cllr Bratby left the meeting

2007/176 SDC –
1) temporary road closure Market Street on 8 December for Craft Market
2) temporary road closure Nailsworth Bus Station on 13 and 14
September 2008 for Food Festival

The road closures were noted.

2007/177 Stroud & District Motor Club – trial up The Ladder

The next Trial for classic cars would take place on 3 February 2008.

2007/178 SDC – Member Code of Conduct training

Cllrs Nicholson and Wheeler would attend the training session on 4 December from 7-9pm.

2007/179 Public Catalogue Foundation – national oil painting inventory

The clerk had asked Nailsworth Archive Office for information on paintings held by NTC for submission to the countrywide inventory. The paintings would be photographed and catalogued.

2007/180 SDC – Cotswold Canals Brimscombe Area Action Plan

Comments were invited by 12 December on issues and options for the Canals, and the mayor would review the document and report to the planning committee.

2007/181 WRVS – thank you

Ms Mattie Ross area organiser had written to thank the mayor for helping publicise the meals on wheels service.

2007/182 SDC – meeting with P&TCs and Festive Supper, 11 December 7pm

The evening event conflicted with the meeting of Recreation & Amenities committee, but Cllr Eddyshaw expressed interested in attending the afternoon discussion forum and planning update, which would commence at 4.30pm.

2007/183 GCC – advance copy of “Flood Guide”

The booklet would be circulated to all households and contained useful hints for protecting the home.

2007/184 SDC – closure Horsley Road for gas mains work, 26/11/07 to 1/2/08

Formal notice was given of this lengthy road closure, although the road would be reopened between 24 December and 6 January. Cllr Nicholson advised that Horsley PC had requested temporary signage to warn traffic at the difficult junctions into Old Bristol/Horsley Road which would have to absorb the diverting traffic.

2007/185 SDC – night bus

Chairman of the Night Bus, Mr Terry Parker, advised that SDC planned to restart the service in December to cover the Christmas period. If the scheme was to continue for 08/09, contributions were sought from parishes according to size of population. On the basis of SDC's calculations, Nailsworth would be required to contribute £1147, and a response was requested by 19 December. It was agreed to delegate this to FE&GP committee and try to obtain some statistics on usage, and in particular, how many Nailsworth residents made use of the service. It was suggested an amount from the grants budget could be committed as a one-off payment.

2007/186 FE&GP committee meeting – 28 November 7.30pm

The meeting would consider figures proposed for the 08/09 budget. Cllr Robinson passed on Cllr Byrne's request to include £3000 for the Nailsworth Games.

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Date

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Chairman

* Cllr Bratby left the meeting