

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2010

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Present | Cllr I D Crawley (chairman) Cllr M P Robinson Cllr S Robinson Mrs S Wells (Editor) Mrs C de Lacroix (Secretary) |
| Non attendance | Cllr J A Byrne |

Issue 49– distribution w/c 26 July 2010 (production: 3100 copies)

Cllr Crawley suggested the main topics of the edition should be flagged up on the front page, in this case: a) what the Town Council is doing for you, b) reports from the town's organisations. It was also agreed that the most important news being the securing of grants for the FGCC (only confirmed today) should be on the front page, and Mrs Wells would swop the 10:10 Pledge article (which Mrs de Lacroix would reduce to fit – with apologies to Cllr Mrs Way) with the FGCC working party report on page 5 of the draft.

New members of the committee were keen to review the budget and costs for producing the paper and questioned whether advert income was worth having or not. It had been proposed in the committee's meeting with the NN team last year that advertising might be diverted to the Fountain for the two editions produced to fill the NN gaps, but nothing had come of this.

Cllr Crawley referred to the committee's policy document dated February 2006 and it was felt some modifications were needed to better reflect the purposes of the publication, which it was agreed were essentially

- a) Imparting Town Council information,
- b) Sharing information on public services which was not available elsewhere, e.g. Children's Centre,
- c) A vehicle for town organisations to publicise and report on their activities.
- d) An opportunity to provide historical and other interest articles in more depth (Ann Makemson, followed by John Cross had been our contact within the Archives Office, and someone else now needed to be identified who would be able to provide regular and quality articles)

Cllr Crawley asked what other publications were produced by the council; the town guide was published every couple of years by an outside agency. The shops/services directory was circulated in the Fountain now once a year (and the next update would be in the January 2011 edition). The latest town guide had been circulated by Royal Mail earlier in the year, and members decided to distribute some of the spare boxes to estate agents and the library (Cllr M Robinson) and the town's cafés (Cllr S Robinson). They were otherwise available to members of the public at the TIC.

Cllr Crawley felt that it was logical for this committee to take on management of the town website, which has no formal oversight within the Town Council's committees, yet is critical to our communication with residents. Perhaps the committee name should be changed to 'Town Communications Committee'. Cllr Crawley would provide a discussion note to members outlining his thoughts on how the committee should rearrange its activities.

It was agreed to continue with the two editions of the Fountain for 2011, and because of the long gap between these, it was felt that the meeting schedule should be rethought, say to meet three weeks ahead of the copy date to firm up on copy to be sought, then four to five weeks later to review the draft for final approval. Mrs de Lacroix would book the January delivery with Royal Mail and work out the dates back from that.

It was agreed that another meeting with the new NN team would be useful to firm up on how the publications could best work together.

Distribution methods were discussed. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made in the past to find an alternative to Royal Mail's door to door service at a minimum cost of £500 per contract, but this still remained the most effective system of ensuring the publication reached most of the town's residents. (distribution had to be in complete post code sectors, which currently was GL6 0 covering Nailsworth and Horsley)

The draft copy was approved with the outside colour to be dark blue. Mrs de Lacroix gave Mrs Wells a master PO label, and delivery to the Swindon depot would take place between 8 and 19 July. NB. 50 Copies to Crystal Fountain Village.

| Production Costs. budget for 2009/2010 = £6200 | Issue 47 June 2009 16 pages | Issue 48 January 2010 20 pages + directory + energy questionnaire | | 2010-1011 Issue 49 July 2010 20 pages |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Editor £25 per page | £400 | £500 | | £500 |
| Printing 3100 Delivery to Swindon PO + 3600 x directory | £950 | £1726 | | |
| Distribution | £250.17 | £499.66 | | |
| Sub total | £1600.17 | £2725.66 | | |
| Less advertising | £230 | £150 | | |
| Net cost | £1370.17 | £2575.66 | total for 2009-2010 £3945.83 | |

The Fountain – Production Schedule for 2010/11 – GL6 0 = 2936 premises

| Issue no | Copy date | copy approval meeting | Delivery to Royal Mail Swindon | Distribution week commencing | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 49 | Wed 26 May | Mon 28 June | 8-19 July | w/c Mon 26 July 2010 | |
| | mtg to plan copy | copy date | copy approval mtg | delivery to Royal Mail | |
| 50 | Mon 11 Oct 2010 | Wed 3 Nov 2010 | Mon 6 Dec 2010 | Thur 16 – Fri 24 Dec 2010 | Distribution booked 29 June 2010 w/c (Mon 3)Tue 4 Jan 2011 . contract S002695 |
| 51 | | | | | w/c 25 July 2011 |

Since meeting, Mrs de Lacroix has booked the January distribution for w/c 3 January (bank holiday, so will actually commence on Tuesday 4th)

Date

..... Chairman

**PROPOSED NEW POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE TOWN NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE,
RENAMED AS THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Recommendations. That the Town Council :

- 1) **rename the Town Newsletter Committee the Communications Committee.**
- 2) **adopt the policy statement below as its remit.**

Introduction. The Town Newsletter Committee operates on the basis of an allocated budget of £6500 to produce and distribute The Fountain – the Town Council's newsletter. It is provided with a policy statement to guide its role covering the following.

- producing four issues a year (reduced to two in agreement with the Nailsworth News)
- the publication being a broad based community newsletter and reflecting local diversity
- encouraging commercial advertising (There is a separate Advertising Statement)
- being printed on Sustainable Forest paper

The policy statement provides no guidance as to the role of The Fountain, and themes or priorities the Committee should follow in its work, determining the content. The reduction to two issues is based on an informal agreement with the Nailsworth News, thereby removing direct competition, as the NN is only produced for ten months in any year. This agreement was also to involve sharing of advertising. This aspect has not, however, been pursued. The total advertising income for the last edition was £150.

The Town Council also communicates with its citizens and visitors through the website, which has no specific budget, and carries no advertising. Its maintenance and development is not guided by any policy statement. Its cost comprises payments to a contracted web editor, as and when changes are required (cost in 2009/2010 - £xx) Additionally, the Town Council commissions a contractor to produce, distribute and wholly fund from advertising a bi-annual Nailsworth Town Guide. This is a key document of reference for new and existing residents. There is no policy on content or distribution.

A Way Forward. The current Town Newsletter Committee considers that its role could sensibly be expanded to cover the responsibility for all Town Council communications, including their costs, as a budget. This would involve the identification of actual costs, the renaming of the TNC to the Communications Committee, and the approval of a new Policy Statement.

The proposed new Policy Statement is as follows :

- To be responsible for all Town Council communications and publications (other than press releases), and the associated budget.
- To use all the channels available to explain and promote the role, services and activities of the Town Council, seeking feedback and comment; local voluntary organisations and clubs; public services available to Nailsworth residents and visitors; and local businesses.
- To promote an understanding of Nailsworth and its surrounds in history.
- To promote environmental sustainability
- To minimise the direct costs to the Town Council, by maximising advertising income.

Ian Crawley
Chairman, Town Newsletter Committee
28th June 2010.