

**NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
Minutes of a meeting held on 11 December 2012**

Present	Cllr S E Thorpe (Chair) Cllr J L Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr S M Reed Cllr M P Robinson Cllr S Robinson <u>KGV extension field item (Go-Grow)</u> Ms Katherine Kearns Ms Liz Childs <u>KGV Pavilion item (early years facility)</u> Mrs Nicola Ellis Mr Rob Ellis Ms Steffi Stern
Apologies	Cllr N I Kay

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Meeting held on 9 October

Cllr S Robinson reported that he and Cllr Kay had met with Mr Ray Figg of SDC to discuss planning issues relating to the **proposed MUGA at Forest Green**. Mr Figg had agreed to facilitate a meeting between SDC planning officers and NTC representatives to discuss conditions relating to FGRFC's request to relinquish the Section 106 agreement relating to the MUGA.

The Clerk reported that the **two new planters for the bottom of Spring Hill** were currently being sourced. One of the existing planters had been damaged and had been demolished.

The Clerk confirmed that a grant to the Nailsworth Chamber of Trade and Commerce to support the **Nailsworth Noel** event on 22 December had been approved by Council.

Special meeting held on 14 November

The Clerk reported that Greenfields Garden Services would commence the necessary **repair work to the play equipment at the KGV and Shortwood** after the Christmas holiday period.

Proposed use of KGV extension field for allotments.

The Chair welcomed two members of GoGrow to the meeting. She expressed her appreciation for the work they had done in preparing the detailed report on their proposals, which had been circulated to Committee members. The Chair explained that, in order for the project to be progressed, the following agreements would need to be obtained:

1. from SDC planning – confirmation that S106 agreement on this land, designated for 'sport and recreational purposes', would allow for allotment use
2. from the National Playing Fields Association (the KGV Trustees) – permission for the site to be accessed from the KGV field and agreement of usage for allotments
3. from the owner of the site – consent for the proposed usage and related works and sub-leasing agreement.

The Clerk advised that it would be prudent to seek these agreements in the above order, rather than in tandem. She confirmed that no rights of way existed across the extension field. The owner had installed gates in the boundary between the KGV and the extension

field, against the wishes of NTC, which had been used informally for access. Cllr S Robinson proposed that this gate be padlocked periodically, for one day a year, to avoid the possibility of a right of way being established by default, and this was agreed.

Discussion ensued, with councillors acknowledging that many problems were likely to be experienced in developing the extension field for allotment use. They were also uncertain as to whether the land could be made suitable for this purpose. However, they also recognised that the nature of the site appeared to render it unsuitable for most sporting purposes.

It was agreed to **recommend that the Go-Grow proposals be accepted in principle** and that the Clerk be asked to commence the negotiation process, as set out above, on Go-Grow's behalf. The representatives of Go-Grow thanked the Committee for its support in principle and explained that, if the preliminary negotiations were fruitful, they planned to undertake a survey of local residents to establish the level of interest in and demand for allotments. They were aware of local concern regarding the nature of materials which had been imported onto the site and felt that it would be advisable for a surface water test to be conducted at an early stage to alleviate concerns. The Clerk explained that some tests had been carried out in the past by the Environment Agency and advised that the results of these were likely to be available from NTC or SDC files. Local residents in Park Road would be able to supply historical information.

Proposed long term use of the KGV Pavilion for early years facility

Mrs Nicola Ellis presented her proposals, which had previously been circulated to Committee members. She explained that, in her view, there was considerable local demand for a Rudolph Steiner based early years facility in the town. The Clerk advised that NTC had received two letters of support, one of which had already been circulated to committee members. The Chair outlined the previous and current usage of the Pavilion and explained that this proposal would allow other hirers to use the Pavilion in the evenings, at weekends and in school holidays. The applicant had proposed to decorate the premises and build in the necessary safety features at her own expense. The Clerk explained that the building currently had limited heating and insulation and wondered if OFSTED would approve the premises for early years use. Mrs Ellis was confident that this approval would be forthcoming once the necessary safety improvements had been made. In response to a question, Mrs Ellis explained that, although the proposed facility would have some links with the Acorn School and would be based on the Steiner curriculum, it would not in any sense be an exclusive facility and would be open to all parents who wished to apply. The Clerk confirmed that the proposals would need to be approved by the National Playing Fields Association, but she felt that this organisation was unlikely to have any objections. Councillors felt that the proposed improvements to the building would enhance the building and potentially benefit other users.

Cllr S Robinson explained there was no money available in the current year's budget to support the setting up of the proposed facility and none proposed for the next financial year. Legal costs would be incurred in drawing up an agreement between NTC and the applicant and it was likely that there would also be costs relating to planning applications and building control. Cllr M Robinson advised that it would be prudent for the applicant to negotiate an agreement with NTC to secure the use of the building for at least 3 years, given the capital investment costs which she would incur in improving the building. He suggested an initial rent free period in acknowledgement of the improvements to the fabric of the building. Cllr S Robinson held the view that a market rent should be charged from the start of the agreement. No decision was taken and Mrs Ellis was invited to submit her views on what would be an equitable basis for a financial agreement with NTC. The Clerk

advised that the details relating to such an agreement could be negotiated once the Council had made its decision on whether to support the application in principle.

After some discussion, it was agreed to **recommend that the proposal be supported in principle on the condition that the applicant bear the cost of any legal fees incurred in drawing up an appropriate agreement between herself and NTC.**

Section 106 project – improvement to KGV children’s play areas

The Clerk reported that Krista Harris of SDC had indicated that SDC was likely to support the use of the S106 monies for updating/improving play equipment in the KGV play area. SDC officers would be contacting the Clerk to discuss the plans in more detail. A project proposal form would have to be completed in due course to secure the funds. An informal survey of potential users of the play areas might be necessary to provide supporting evidence of consultation for the proposal. Cllr M Robinson agreed to undertake this. It was agreed that the age group to target with any new equipment should be up to 8 years. The Clerk agreed to liaise with the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association which offered free advice on equipment and also had a small grant scheme which could potentially be accessed. She advised that various play equipment catalogues were held in the Clerk’s office for councillors to inspect on request. Cllr Reed agreed to investigate the possibility of 2012 Olympic legacy funding for play area improvements.

Mortimer Gardens and town gardening

Cllr S Robinson reported that the branches of a large tree which overhung the wall between the Mortimer Gardens and Fountain Street may be compromising a nearby street light. He invited councillors to inspect the tree and give him their views. The Clerk reported that repair work to the uneven surface in the main thoroughfare through the gardens was in hand. Cllr S Robinson offered to spray the area with marker paint pending the commencement of the work.

Cllr S Robinson reported that local residents had complimented the Council on the lights which had been installed in the Market Street Garden. It was agreed that these lights should continue to be lit from 16.00hrs to 23.00hrs from the end of the Christmas holiday period until the commencement of British Summer Time in March. Councillors felt that the garden provided an attractive enhancement to the Market Street environment. Cllr S Robinson reported that the inauguration of the chess board in the Market Street Garden would take place on Tuesday 18 December at 2.30 pm. Cllr M Robinson agreed to attend at this event in his role as Deputy Mayor.

Requests for memorial benches

Two requests had been received. The Clerk circulated details of a request to place a custom built bench in Cossack Square with a plaque dedicated to the memory of Mrs Dorothy Blair, who had previously lived in this part of the town. This would replace an existing dilapidated bench. Councillors were pleased to accede to this request. The Clerk had received an email with a request to place a bench next to the Fountain monument in Fountain Street. She confirmed that the land in question belonged to SDC. Councillors felt that this was an inappropriate site as there was insufficient space and would therefore be likely to cause an obstruction. They also felt that the proposed inscription was inappropriate. They felt that there were other areas of the town which would be more suitable for a bench, for example in children’s play areas. The Clerk was asked to respond to the applicant stating the Committee’s views, and to copy the request and NTC’s response to SDC.

Miles Marling field

The Chair stated that she hoped that some funding linked to the MUGA project could be made available to improve the sporting and recreation facilities in the Miles Marling field.

Grass Cutting

The Clerk had received a quotation from Sports Ground Maintenance and Supplies for grass cutting at KGV and Miles Marling fields. This covered the cutting of both fields on a 7-10 day cycle from 1 April to the end of September 2013 at a total cost of £1,757.18 plus VAT and monthly flail mowing on the KGV extension field during this period at £80.00 plus VAT per cut. This was accepted.

Youth Provision

Tracy Young, Nailsworth Youth and Community Officer, had sent her apologies as she had been required to stand in for a sick colleague. She had sent a written report, which Cllr S Robinson presented. Councillors were pleased to note that several successful initiatives had been developed during the nine months Ms Young had been in post. These included a summer scheme involving outdoor activities and early intervention work with local youths focussing on risk taking behaviour, which involved liaison with a range of other agencies. Both had proved highly beneficial for the personal development of the participants, many of whom came from disadvantaged backgrounds. A junior warden scheme targeting 10-11 year olds was planned for March 2013 in partnership with SDC Community Development Worker, and there were also plans for a Youth Forum. Ms Young also reported on the outreach work she had been doing linked to the Arkell Centre in Forest Green. The Chair congratulated Ms Young on the positive and effective work she had been doing in this respect, and also for her efforts in meeting the needs of some challenging young people.

Dog Fouling

The Chair thanked Cllr Elliott and Cllr Duckworth on the work they had been doing in relation to SDC's district-wide dog fouling policy. Further research was needed on how this could be applied to open spaces in the town, and NTC councillors' views on this would be welcomed. Cllr Elliott had responded to the SDC consultation earlier in the year, and the Chair agreed to liaise with Mr Robert Weaver of SDC to develop a way forward. Cllr Reed reported that Woodchester Park was planning to implement a dogs-on-leads policy, and she understood that this policy was already in place on the Nailsworth to Stonehouse pedestrian/cycle trail. She felt that such a policy could also be beneficial for Norton Wood.

Cllr S Robinson reported that there appeared to be a continuing problem with dog fouling and dog control issues in the KGV field. He felt that this could be partly alleviated by restricting vehicular access to the KGV. After a brief discussion it was agreed to recommend that the gates to the KGV field car park be kept locked for the period between 17 December and 6 January except when football matches were in progress, and that A4 laminated signs be displayed in strategic positions to reinforce the existing sign relating to dog control and fouling. The effectiveness of this action would be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee.

Play Policy

The Chair reported that she had read an article in the Local Council Review advising councils to consider developing play policies for their areas. She agreed to draft one for NTC.

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Date

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Chair