

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES of the Meeting of Nailsworth Town Council
held at the Town Hall, Nailsworth
on Tuesday 15 March 2011

Present	Cllr S Robinson (Town Mayor) Cllr P Carter Cllr N I Kay Cllr J R Nicholson * Cllr M P Robinson * Cllr Mrs G E Smith Cllr Mrs J M Way
Present for part of the meeting	County Cllr J S Waddington District Cllr Blackwell Inspector Kirk Harrison, Gloucestershire Constabulary
Apologies	Cllr J A Byrne District Cllr J T Jefferies Cllr I D Crawley District Cllr Miss F Macmillan Cllr Mrs S E Thorpe
non attendance	Cllr Mrs DLM Binns
	* denotes absence from part of the meeting

2011/240 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the floor.

2011/241 MINUTES of COUNCIL MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2011 were approved and signed.

2011/242 PRESENTATION by INSPECTOR KIRK HARRISON

Inspector Harrison reported that comparison figures on the previous April-April showed that overall crime in Nailsworth was down 12.3%, where in any case levels of crime were low. Drug related crime was down by 50% on last year. The biggest rise was in burglaries/car crime, but there had only been 13 dwelling burglaries in the period, with burglary from sheds/garages/rural buildings showing the biggest increase. There had been a 19.8% fall in ASBs. Preventative work was a priority for the force, working with the youth service and neighbourhood wardens.

The restructuring of the force would improve efficiency, and from 1st April the three current INAs would be combined into the Stroud Local Police Area, with the hub in Stroud and no change to the officers responsible for Nailsworth, the changes being mostly within the management structure. The future of Nailsworth station was under consultation until the end of the month and Inspector Harrison invited email comments from Cllrs for inclusion in the discussions. He stressed that no decision had been made, and until such time, officers would continue working from Nailsworth station.

Cllr Kay was pleased to see Inspector Harrison at the meeting and commented that the council had been trying to get him to attend a meeting for some considerable time. Cllr Kay thought the decision had already been made to close Nailsworth station which had been under threat over the last two years, and felt the police should be more straightforward in their approach to the council. Inspector Harrison responded that any restructuring was up to the Police Authority and he could only report what he was told. Many changes would have to be made over the next four years.

Inspector Harrison advised that the NailStock organisers were working through the events management system and consulting over policing the weekend. They were trying to address the cost

implications and the Licence people were satisfied. Inspector Harrison was generally pleased with progress and confident that this would be a successful community event.

Cllr Nicholson asked if the strategic partner for the library service had been declared, and was told not.

District Cllr Blackwell applauded the reduction in crime over the last two years, especially at the top of the town, and felt this was entirely down to the three duty officers. He was pleased to hear that these would remain in post, but not that they had to go to Stroud first. Cllr Blackwell did not feel that the consultation evening was well attended and added his support to keeping Nailsworth station open.

The Mayor added that he felt Cllr Lesley Williams had chaired the consultation meeting well, and had taken back the message that savings from closing the small compact Nailsworth station would be of little real value. Inspector Harrison assured Cllrs that the Police Authorities were listening and their understanding of public feeling was much improved.

Inspector Harrison was thanked for attending and promised that he would improve on attendance of council meetings in the future.

2011/243 REDEPLOYMENT of SDC STAFF for ROAD GRITTING (minute 2011/217)

Cllr Waddington was asked if he had had any success in asking SDC litter collection teams to be redeployed for road gritting in winter conditions, to which he responded that this had been an ongoing debate over the last two years with district councils, and the discussion continued.

2011/244 CHURCH STREET PARKING (minute 2011/222)

The draft letters had been sent to resident Mr Burfitt for him to comment prior to sending them onto GCC and SDC. Cllr Kay was concerned that the letters gave the impression that NTC was inclined to favour one of the options for residents parking contrary to its current policy, and felt further discussion was needed before the letters were sent, an opinion shared by Cllr M Robinson. The Clerk thought that the point of the letters was to obtain more information on regulations and costs in order that NTC could properly understand the implications and one of the options put forward was not to change the current arrangement. Cllr Mrs Way had understood that the letters had already been approved by council.

The majority of Cllrs felt the letters should be looked at again before they were sent.

2011/245 CLOSURE of SOUTH CERNEY & WILDERNESS CENTRE (minute 2011/223)

The Mayor had written to Mark Hawthorn GCC on 17 February but had had no reply.

2011/246 WAR MEMORIAL PLAQUE (minute 2011/229)

The Clerk had informed Mr Godden of NTC's decision and awaited his return from Australia to proceed with deciding on the design and form of the new plaque before applying to the Diocese for a Faculty. Cllr Nicholson suggested the PCC be asked to apply for the Faculty as most of the questions on the application form related to the church.

2011/247 BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY (minute 2011/235)

Cllr Nicholson was very flattered that it had been suggested his name go forward for the ballot, but declined.

2011/248 REPORT of COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Waddington referred to the Mayor's unanswered letter to Mark Hawthorn and promised to chase up a written response. He added that the intention was not to close the **outdoor centres** but to remove them from council management. 60% of the county's schools did not use these two venues and already visited privately run facilities which operated very satisfactorily. It was noted

that a large amount of council money had been spent on improving these facilities which were now to be handed over to private owners.

Cllr Waddington advised that the **Police** faced a 20% cut in budget and had to consider options to reduce the cost of operating estate or reducing the number of officers. The more they could release estate, the more they could maintain manpower but there would be inevitable reductions. The Police were seeking ways to minimise the impact on communities with shared facilities where possible. The Mayor added that on the eve of the consultation, a form had been handed out for return to Cheltenham and he questioned the size of the operation there.

Cllr Waddington advised that a legal case had been taken up against GCC with regards to **closing libraries**, with the only certainty being that the taxpayer would end up paying court costs for both sides.

The **Bridge Street flood prevention** works should be completed by now and the **A46/Bath Road** going uphill was back on the maintenance list for the coming year, so at least some work would be done. Cllr Waddington was still trying to get **Old Market** back into the programme. Regarding the **waste project** to deal with residual waste and move away from landfill, GCC had lost its PFI credits, and a strategic review of options was under discussion, for a decision to be taken tomorrow.

In response to a question from Cllr Mrs Smith, Cllr Waddington would enquire as to whether **George Street** needed to be closed for gas works scheduled in May. He added that the **road to Minchinhampton** was currently closed because of badger tunnelling and an ecological survey had concluded that they were still active. An application to Natural England was required for a licence to move the badgers during remedial work, which might have to wait until July because of the breeding season, which would have a knock on effect on the **Avening Road underpinning** works to be done at the same time. The plan was to do a temporary job on the Minchinhampton Road so the Avening works could still be done in May.

The Mayor added that he had met with the gas company when the George Street work originally scheduled for before Christmas was put back, and the foreman had advised that only the narrow part of the road just before the cattle grid would need to be closed.

District Cllr Blackwell followed up on questions from last month: there was a policy to **redeploy Ebley Mill staff** as needed to balance out reductions through natural wastage. Cllr Blackwell had spoken with Ms Karen Toole regarding the **£50k youth grant**, and she had advised that the method of allocation would be decided at a meeting on 1 April and NTCl would get an email inviting a bid. He added that a grant of £50k could be available for three years, but any award could not be spent on staffing.

Cllr Mrs Smith mentioned that the **flashing SLOW DOWN sign by Inchbrook** bends was not working and was asked to report this to GCC Highways at Stroudwater Interchange.

2011/249 TOWN MAYORs COMMUNICATIONS

17 February	met with Mr David Drew, Community Director FGR-FC, to discuss the MUGA
19 February	attended the excellent and well attended Youth Variety Show at the Town Hall
24 February	attended the Neighbourhood Police Meeting, the next priorities to be speeding on the A46 and crime prevention
25 February	attended the Nailsworth Twinning Association AGM and quiz evening
26 February	held a surgery at the Farmers' Market
	met with Neil Carmichael MP to discuss cuts to services in Nailsworth, in particular relating to youth services. Mr Carmichael promised to take the comments back to Parliament's education subcommittee and explain how the proposed cuts would affect Gloucestershire.
28 February	attended a meeting with NailStock organisers

1 March	met at Ebley Mill with multi agencies involved in the NailStock licence. The organisers were shocked to learn that the additional policing bill would be a minimum of £10k. Inspector Harrison would find out if new policy would also increase the cost of policing the Christkindl Evening.
	attended a poorly supported first meeting of the Christkindl Committee
8 March	attended the police consultation meeting to discuss possible closure of Nailsworth police station. It was noted that running costs at Nailsworth were minimal.
9 March	attended the last INLA police meeting for Stonehouse/Nailsworth before services were relocated to the new centre in Stroud.
10 March	with Cllr Crawley, met with Mr Colin Peake who seemed to see no problem with the freehold land swap suggested for the MUGA.
	only two members of the public attended the drop-in session for potential Cllrs.

2011/250 REPORT of DEPUTY MAYOR

There was nothing to report in the absence of Cllr Mrs Thorpe.

2011/251 REPORT of TOWN CLERK

The Clerk had received the Alzheimers Society newsletter.

She advised that the **annual council photograph** would be taken before the April meeting, and that Cllrs should come at 6.30pm

A useful meeting had taken place with the **TIC volunteers on 9 March**, with refreshments courtesy of Nailsworth Festival, members of whose committee came to talk through the ticket selling procedure for Festival events. Mrs de Lacroix was thanked for organising the evening.

Application forms to stand for council were now available. The Mayor had contacted the officers having read the information on the form which appeared to be asking for 10 supporters to endorse each application, but had been advised that in the case of a town council, only a proposer and seconder were required. It was unfortunate that this was not made clear on the form and hopefully would not deter potential candidates.

2011/252 REPORTS from REPRESENTATIVES on OUTSIDE BODIES

Minchinhampton & Rodborough Commons - Cllr Mrs Way reported that clearance work to open up views on the W had not been done in February, might be done in March, but more likely would be a priority job in September.

Cllr Kay reported that the **Nailsworth Health Partnership** was becoming a promising group especially in the light of changes to the National Health Service, and asked permission to suggest a representative from NTC join the board. The Clerk was asked to write to Marilyn Miles NHP chairman to ask the question, and if applicable a representative could be appointed at the council's annual meeting in May.

2011/253 REPORT of ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Mrs Way presented the report of the meeting held on 7 March and the minutes were approved with one amendment:

Norton Wood, second sentence to read "Cllr Mrs Way wished to record thanks to Cllr Crawley for *being instrumental in* preparing the guidelines to formalise the volunteers' activities."

Garden waste at Bunting Hill - Cllr M Robinson questioned whether NTC had the authority to charge a resident for removal of private waste, which it was thought GCC had, as it was threatening a public footpath. On reflection it was decided that Cllr Mrs Way and the Mayor would visit the resident personally, rather than write a second letter at this stage.

In response to a question from Cllr Kay, Cllr Nicholson confirmed that NTC would own the copyright for the **signboard maps**. Cllr Kay suggested under current circumstances, spending a further £3k for three maps was perhaps too expensive, and after all this time the project should be cancelled or rethought. Cllr Nicholson clarified that the project had indeed started six years ago, when SDC and other bodies provided funding for this kind of initiative and a grant of £2.5k had been awarded by SDC, but NTC had made the decision to proceed in full knowledge of the cost. Having spent so much to date and progressed this far, it was perhaps not appropriate to cancel or change the project now. The Mayor added that he felt the project should be completed and in the absence of comment from other Cllrs to support Cllr Kay's view, Cllr Nicholson was asked to obtain an invoice from Imagemakers for the 50% upfront fee so that the map could enter the design process.

2011/254 REPORT of FINANCE, ECONOMIC & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Mayor presented the report of the meeting held on 9 March and the minutes were approved. Cllr Kay expanded that now was a good opportunity to consider acquiring local assets which had led to Cllr Crawley's report suggesting the setting up a working party to look at options. After discussion it was agreed to set up a working party and that its title be expanded to "Public Buildings & Assets Working Party" occasioning two consequent amendments in paragraph 1 of Cllr Crawley's paper and the addition in paragraph 1a of "Stroud District Council". The recommendations in Cllr Crawley's paper were adopted.

2011/255 REPORT of PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Carter presented the reports of the meetings held on 17 February and 1 March 2011.

Cllr Carter talked the meeting through SDC's plans to **redesign the bus station** and the regrettable lack of consultation with NTC. The Clerk pointed out that the suggested use of the road opposite Tesco/Raffles was invalid as this land had been given under covenant by a former resident for free parking only, as Ms Fisk was well aware as it had been much discussed at the time of moving the stone fountain. Cllr Nicholson added that there had in fact not been any accidents in the bus station. If the current bus station was retained as a turning circle, it would affect any future plans for Old Market and Cllrs felt strongly this would be the opportunity to start working towards a long term integral plan for the street, rather than a quick-fix job for one bit of it. It would be important to ensure Cllrs remained active in the discussions if SDC was now moving towards taking action.

RESOLVED	that the comments made by the Planning Committee at its meetings held on 17 February and 1 March 2011 be approved.
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2011/256 REPORT of RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr Kay presented the report of the meeting held on 22 February and the minutes were approved.

He was pleased to confirm that NTC had now received the grant money from the Arkell Bequest for the **skate ramp** so that this project could now proceed as outlined in the minutes.

Cllr Crawley had produced a draft business plan for the **Recreation Centre**, mindful that SDC was pulling out at the end of this month. A security system to close off the school costing £10300 was planned, but Cllr Kay was sceptical that this could be completed by the end of March and did not want to have a gap in the operation of the Recreation Centre. He added that the Taverners used the football pitch and were allowed a key to the school for changing facilities; Cllr Crawley was negotiating with the head and chairman of governors about access. Cllr Kay added that this initiative, though not under NTC's jurisdiction, tied in with plans for the MUGA, with SDC finally seeming prepared to release the Redrow Section 106 funds.

A letter from Martin Portus regarding **Market Street Garden** and been circulated and it was agreed discussion be deferred to the next meeting of the committee.

Cllr Kay commented that **NailStock** would need £45k to pay all the costs of the event + £10k for additional policing, but plans seemed to be moving ahead. Notices of the Licence had been posted up and a consultation meeting for Park Road residents was planned. Cllr Kay's understanding was that Park Road would be closed to traffic, other than for residents with passes. He would chase this up.

A letter from Sean Davis, chairman of school governors, had been circulated confirming that both the School and Diocese approved site C only for the **MUGA**. Cllr Nicholson pointed out that the letter did not actually confirm that the freehold for site C would be granted to NTC, and only vaguely alluded to access and parking. He did not feel that the letter constituted a real agreement and merely stated that if the project went ahead, it could only be on the site the School wanted. As the land on which site C stood actually belonged to the Diocese (the grass areas unaffected belonging to the School) it was the Diocese which needed to make the undertaking regarding the freehold land swap with site A which FGR-FC had indicated it was prepared to agree. The Clerk was asked to request written clarification specifically on the points of land freehold, parking and access.

RESOLVED Cllr Kay proposed, seconded by Cllr Nicholson that NTC agree to site C in principle for the MUGA at Forest Green, pending satisfactory undertakings being received on freehold, parking and access. The motion was carried.

The Clerk reported that the newly restored **KGV gate by the vicarage** had already been vandalised which must have been quite a big job requiring tools; the post was in place but part of the new fencing was missing and the gate had been thrown down the bank, but since rescued by Norman Mansell. It appeared the vicarage had replaced some **fencing** encroaching onto the path, but neatly avoiding the tree which Charlton Abbots had identified as needing attention.

2011/257 GAPTC – REPORT on PROGRESS of MOTION to AGM 2010

Cllr Kay had circulated to Cllrs a proposed email to neighbouring parishes to follow up on the original motion asking GAPTC to push SDC to set up a proper consultation policy. GAPTC had passed on the proposal to Mr David Hagg who had responded that SDC's annual open meetings for parish & town councils were considered to be adequate consultation (for which SDC set the agenda). Cllr Nicholson added that NTC paid a substantial membership fee to GAPTC (renewal of £1131.36 was in today's list of accounts), which invited motions from member parishes, for discussion and voting on at the annual meeting. Then nothing effectively happened. The Clerk was authorised to send the email on to GAPTC for circulation to its members and Cllrs fully supported the action being taken to pressure GAPTC to take action in pressing SDC to honour its obligations. Cllr Kay added that although a small parish, NTC was constituted by government and was entitled to be heard.

2011/258 ACCOUNTS

PROPOSED	that the list of accounts for 15 March 2011 amounting to £19,325.33 be approved for payment.
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2011/259 Glos Wildlife Trust – Walk 4 Wildlife 15 May 2011

The Clerk would be happy to pass on the information if anyone wanted to enter or buy a tee shirt.

2011/260 Iain Selkirk – appointment as internal Auditor for 2011/12

Cllrs agreed unanimously to renew the appointment of Mr Iain Selkirk as the council's internal auditor.

2011/261 GCC - Emergency closure Jubilee Road

Notice had been given that the road would be closed for 21 days to complete sewer repairs, but the Mayor advised that the work appeared to have been finished today.

2011/262 SDC – Action for Market Towns membership

SDC took out a blanket membership of this organisation for Stroud District, which was due for renewal at a fee of £550. SDC asked if councils made use of this membership and if it should continue. The Clerk did not feel that NTC used its services much, and was asked to respond that Cllrs had no view either way.

..... Chairman

..... Date