



# CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

THE GUILDHALL, CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE OX7 5NJ

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Office Hours: Mon – Fri 9am – 1pm

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Committee** held in Chipping Norton Town Hall on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 at 7.15 pm.**

The following members were present:

Cllr Coleman (Chair)

Cllr Poole (Vice Chair)

Cllr Graves

Also in attendance

Cllr Butterworth

Luci Ashbourne, Town clerk

Two members of the public

## 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mazower, Tuckwell, and Carter.

## 2. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations.

## 3. Minutes

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the last meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 4. Public Participation

John Taylor presented to committee. Mr Taylor talked about mental health awareness week, and noted the fact that the suicide risk for men between the ages of 20 and 50 is high. Mr Taylor shared his personal experience, understanding that there is not the robust support available that is needed to help people through mental health crisis. Mr Taylor wants to launch 'Project Oxygen' which will provide an opportunity for men to get fit, but also talk, which is a huge societal barrier. Activities including, but not limited to, walk and talk sessions and 'dudes and dogs'. Mr Taylor is committed to provide this for free in order to make it as accessible as possible for anyone who could benefit from it. Mr Taylor explained that in order to do this, he would need some support in finding a space, and identifying other people who have the skills to help get this endeavour off the ground.

Cllr Graves asked Mr Taylor about his understanding of the local need. Mr Taylor reassured Committee he understood, and added that this endeavour would not be a referral-type set-up, but more of a social endeavour that people can drop into.

The Clerk asked what kind of space is needed. Mr Taylor confirmed the Town Hall would be ideal. The Committee asked Mr Taylor to put a proposal in writing for the Council to consider As grants are made available every year to local voluntary groups.

Cllr Poole shared other ideas and promised to put Mr Taylor in touch with the right people.

The Clerk asked what kind of people-skills were needed. Mr Taylor replied that he is hoping to find someone to help with marketing and social media. Cllr Graves suggested that Chippy News could assist with publicity.

The Town Clerk offered to share some contact of similar local groups in West Oxfordshire to help.

The Committee thanked Mr Taylor for taking the time to approach the Council about such an important issue.

## 5. Cemetery

The Chair updated members on the site visit and the Committee considered the Clerk's report.

### a. Cemetery gate

The Committee discussed the cemetery gate and debated whether or not the gates should be restored and left open, or whether new lockable gates should be installed. Members queried that if the Council did purchase new gates, whether there would be someone to open and close them at the right time. Members then debated the pros and cons of locking the gates and proposed that restoring the current gates and leaving them in the open position would be the best course of action at present.

**RESOLVED:** That the Maintenance Operative sand, varnish and weatherproof the gates as a temporary measure.

### b. Noticeboard

Members discussed the worn and damaged regulations board and considered the next steps.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Coleman and the Finance Officer will review the regulations. The Clerk will look for inspirations from other Town and Parish Councils to gather some creative ideas about how to make the noticeboard welcoming. This will be brought back to Committee to consider.

The Clerk updated members that the Royal British Legion have been contacted about the rusty pins in the larger noticeboard.

### c. Gatepost

The pedestrian gatepost has rotted. The Maintenance Operative is looking into having it fixed, but has asked whether or not the kissing gate needs to be there at all. Members agreed it should remain as it helps define this sensitive space.

**RESOLVED:** Update, and consideration of cost of replacing the gatepost, will come back to Committee.

### d. Commonwealth War Graves

The Chair explained to members that a question had come in about the Commonwealth War Graves noticeboard and signage. Cllr Coleman reassured members that there is signage up in the Cemetery at present, but that she has been in touch with Commonwealth War Graves to enquire about the need for additional signage and will update Committee at the next meeting.

## 6. Committee work programme

### a. Play Areas:

#### (i) New Street

Members considered the Maintenance Operative's report on repairs needed.

**RESOLVED:** Quotes are obtained for the repairs needed at New Street Play Park including repairs to the slide mound and rubber matting.

#### (ii) Cotswold Crescent

Members considered the Maintenance Operative's report that the bin had been destroyed.

**RESOLVED:** That a budget of £300 is set for replacement litter bin for Cotswold Crescent Play Area.

#### (iii) Cornish Road

Members considered the Maintenance Operative's report that the sign to the play area is a design that makes it easy for people to hang from, which thus bends and damages the sign.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk explores regulations surrounding signage and comes back to Committee with new designs and an idea of budget.

#### (iv) Cotswold Gate

Members discussed the issues that need fixing on the Cotswold Gate play area and noted that Proludic are coming back to fix issues as they come up. The ground the trampoline sits in does not have adequate drainage and therefore it is likely that it will need to be replaced with an alternative piece of play equipment. This is being explored and an update will come back to Committee at a later date.

Members considered the Maintenance Operative's report that the park does not have a seating area.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk to bring back quotes for four colourful benches to the next Committee - two with backs and two without.

### b. The Town Hall:

The Clerk informed members that a provisional date for the Quinquennial review had been set for 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Waiting for final confirmation from the surveyor.

Members enquired if the Town Hall was being used more as restrictions were lifting and the Clerk said that fitness groups were starting to book in.

### c. Litter and Dog Bins:

The Clerk had been asked to contact WODC regarding the state of some of the litter bins in town. WODC are now in the process of replacing them.

### d. Bus Shelters:

The Chair updated members on initial results from the Bus Shelter consultation. There were 64 responses in total. 51 people want the Council to replace the bus shelter, 8 people said they didn't know, and 5 people said they do not want the bus shelter to be replaced. Members concluded from those results that it is incumbent on the Council to replace the bus shelter.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk to source previously obtained quotes and designs for a new bus shelter and bring back to Committee.

**e. Pool Meadow:**

Members considered two communications received from members of the public regarding the management of Pool Meadow. Members discussed the value of Pool Meadow as a natural space for biodiversity. They noted the need for a safe pathway through, and that laying woodchips has helped with accessibility.

The Clerk suggested that the Wychwood Project may be able to help advise on how to manage the space with a focus on maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council replies to the members of the public who had raised concerns, reassuring them that keeping and enhancing the biodiversity and wild space is a priority, and that it will be protected; that the Clerk contacts the Wychwood Project to see if they can give us advice on managing the space.

**f. Community Noticeboard:**

Committee received a verbal update from the Chair regarding the new noticeboard.

An open, aluminium framed one had been decided on, but there were a range of colours to choose from. Members discussed which colours would work best, and decided that something in keeping with the palette of the Town Council logo would work well.

**RESOLVED:** The Council to order the noticeboard in green colour and arrange installation.

**7. Request to use New Street play area to hold weekly outdoor yoga sessions**

The Committee considered the request from Fluid Fox Yoga requesting permission to use the New Street play area for outdoor yoga sessions. Members largely supported this as long as it was held at a time when the park is at its quietest, and in a space away from the park and the dog walking area.

**RESOLVED:** That permission is granted for Fluid Fox Yoga to use the green space between the playpark and the dog walking area on the Penhurst Gardens side. Not to be held between 10am and 4pm, unless sessions are held during a school day, in which case they should only take place between 9am and 3pm. This will be for a period of six months as we come out of lockdown. Noted thanks for the request. Request that Fluid Fox Yoga confirm times and dates in writing.

**8. Keep Britain Tidy – Great British Spring Clean 2021**

The Chair noted that the cemetery clean up was well engaged with and proposed that Chipping Norton Town Council should promote the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign and offer use of litter pickers to residents.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council promote this campaign on social media and that people will be able to borrow the Council's litter pickers.

**9. Covid-19 Heroes Awards**

The Chair announced that there have been more than 70 Covid Heroes Nominations. The Committee were delighted with that response, and agreed nomination should be recognised, instead of choosing a winner. Committee noted thanks to Marks and Spencers, who have offered to

help sponsor by providing gifts. Members discussed and agreed that certificates should be made, and an awards ceremony will be held after 21<sup>st</sup> June.

**RESOLVED:** Provisional date set for a drinks reception to be held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, with the proviso that the Mayor is free to attend, and the Town Hall is not booked up. Delegated moving that date, if needed, to the Clerk, in consultation with the Committee. Certificates will be given to each nominee, along with an invitation to the event in which the Mayor will publicly thank everyone. Council will provide drinks and nibbles, and music. That the Council provide high quality certificates for all nominees; budget of £50 for stationery; that a maximum budget of £750 is set for the drinks reception.

*At this point the meeting it was noted that two hours had elapsed and the meeting agreed to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow the meeting to continue for a further 30 minutes.*

The Committee agreed that the details of the event need a dedicated meeting to finalise.

**RESOLVED:** That a task and finish group, made up of Cllrs Coleman, Poole and Mazower, along with the Clerk, meet within two weeks to finalise the details.

#### **10. Open air Cinema**

The Committee considered the idea that Chipping Norton Theatre use the Cotswold Crescent play area to pilot an open air cinema in September 2021, and the Clerk's recommendation that a joint letter is issued to Cotswold Crescent residents addressing concerns, and inviting them to the free pilot event.

**RESOLVED:** Use of the Cotswold Crescent play area for an open air cinema is welcome, and that the joint letter to residents is drawn up between the Council and the Theatre.

#### **11. Christmas Lights**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Clerk, and the recommendation that this be deferred to the Finance and Resource Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 in order that the relevant financial information can be presented to Council.

**RESOLVED:** That a report is sent to the Finance and Resource Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The Chair stressed that community volunteers are valued and need to be involved in the Christmas events process.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Graves will contact lead volunteers regarding Christmas Lights 2021.

#### **g. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021, 7:15pm.

The chair closed the meeting at 9:40pm.