

# NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk:  
Mrs R Rice

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Minutes of the North Tawton Town Council **Estates Committee** held at the Council Offices on **Wednesday 11 October 2017** at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr I MacLeod Cllr K Hodge  
Cllr S Whiteley Cllr Mrs C Burrow

In attendance: Cllr Miss B Rice

1 member of the public was present.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ms J Trehitt (personal reasons).

Cllr Mr M Kennedy was not present.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – None were made at this stage.

3. **Planting at Council owned land fronting Strawberry Fields, North Tawton**  
The Committee received a report from Cllr Mr S Whiteley and Cllr Mr I MacLeod following their inspection of the above area of land. It was reported that the planting has been completed in accordance with the original quotation, the holly hedge has been trimmed, and general weeding and tidying been undertaken. Further to discussion Cllr Mr S Whiteley proposed that the contractor be requested to undertake regular maintenance of the area, with a suggestion of every 2 months through the summer and once in the winter. This was seconded by Cllr Mr K Hodge and agreed by 4 votes, therefore the proposal was carried. The Clerk will liaise with the Council's contractor accordingly.

4. **Boundary hedge between North Tawton Primary School and North Tawton Cemetery.**

Cllr Mr S Whiteley and Cllr Mr I MacLeod have inspected the boundary and they advised as follows:

- There is a gap in the hedge where the beech tree was cut down last winter, and there are other gaps where children have obviously climbed through
- However, the hedge is on the top of a stone wall, so it is not that easy to climb up and through the hedge.

Further to some discussion, Cllr K Hodge proposed that the Council's contractor be requested to erect a piece of willow hurdle to close the gap temporarily, and to plant hawthorn in the area with a view that this will replace the hurdle when it is grown enough. Cllr Mr S Whiteley seconded this proposal, which was agreed by 4 votes, therefore the proposal was carried. The Clerk will contact the Council's contractor accordingly.

6. **Cemetery Inspection**

Cllr Mr I MacLeod and Cllr Mr S Whiteley reported on their inspection of the cemetery. It was reported that the area around the War Memorial looks very good now that surrounding trees have been cut back. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's handyman contractor will be cleaning the war memorial in the near future.

Cllr Mr S Whiteley proposed that the Council's tree surgeon be requested to quote a price with a view to having the remaining trees on the right hand side pruned back. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs C Burrow and agreed by 4 votes, therefore the proposal was carried. The Clerk will liaise with the contractor accordingly.

### **Cemetery Regulations**

Mrs C Burrow advised that a revision of the regulations in 2008 had led to the production of 3 separate documents – the full set of regulations and shorter sets for specific purposes. Mrs C Burrow will review the documents and propose revisions. There was some discussion as to how to ensure that funeral directors supply families with copies of the regulations, it was confirmed that they do have supplies of copies for this purpose. It was agreed to ensure that copies appear on the Council's website. Cllr Mr S Whiteley proposed that after Cllr Mrs C Burrow has checked and revised the copies prepared in 2008, the Estates Committee members then review the conditions and put them back to the full Council for final approval. This was seconded by Cllr Mr K Hodge, and agreed by 4 votes, the proposal was therefore carried.

### **7. Fire Risk Assessment Inspection**

The report has not yet been received from the inspector, therefore this item is deferred. With regard to Fire Safety in the Chapel of Rest, it was proposed by Cllr I MacLeod that the wiring should be checked and replaced if found to be defective or not meeting current standards. This was seconded by Cllr Mr S Whiteley and agreed by 4 votes, therefore the proposal was carried. The Clerk will arrange an inspection and ask for a quotation for necessary works.

### **8. Play Equipment – rotted timber identified on piece of equipment in the Memorial Park**

Further to the identification of rotted timber on one of the pieces of play equipment, Cllr S Whiteley and Cllr I MacLeod inspected this item. Cllr Mr S Whiteley proposed obtaining a quote for replacement of the timber pieces, this is a specialist job due to the number and type of bolts used. This was seconded by Cllr Mr I MacLeod and agreed by 4 votes, therefore the proposal was carried. The clerk will obtain a quotation and authorise the works providing the quote falls within the relevant parameters able to be authorised by the clerk as an emergency issue.

### **9. Possible future use for Chapel of Rest**

The Committee considered a suggestion from a member of the public for using the Chapel of Rest to house a permanent exhibition chronicling the town's history. After some discussion it was agreed that the building is not in a very suitable place for this purpose, and also there would be costs involved in opening and locking the building on a daily basis. It was agreed to add this item to the Action Log and alternative uses would continue to be considered by the Council.

### **10. Questions/Comments from members of the public**

#### **The meeting was closed at this point to allow questions/comments from members of the public.**

- 1 In relation to item 4, the boundary hedge between the school and cemetery, Mrs C Hughes commented that most of the boundary is not in fact fenced. Mrs Hughes further commented that there are numbers of badgers in locations around North Tawton, and it is very possible that badgers are going through the hedge in question at various points.
- 2 In relation to item 8, the Chapel of Rest, Mrs C Hughes suggested that if the Council were to consider opening the building for a display of some kind, this

could be just in the summer months, when the building will not suffer from cold and damp so much.

- 3 In relation to item 6, Cemetery Inspection and Regulations, Mrs C Hughes suggested that a short version of the regulations could be posted on the cemetery gates.

**The meeting was reopened at this point.**

**11. Any other business**

- 11.1** Cllr Mr K Hodge advised that the local resident who has been cutting the grass area to the right of Taw Bridge, adjacent to the 'Diana Memorial Garden' is no longer able to do this. It was suggested that the Environmental Trust be asked if they wish to continue with the grass cutting, as they maintain the garden itself. There was discussion about checking the grass cutting contract to see what it says about cutting around areas where benches are sited. The Clerk advised that further to Cllr Hodge mentioning this issue after the Council's last Ordinary Meeting, DCC Highways had been contacted. Highways advised they no longer cut grass verges unless on visibility splays. The Clerk will contact the Environmental Trust in the first instance, add this issue to the Action Log, and report back to the Council in due course.
- 11.2** There was some discussion as to whether Tap Funding could be used to improve the footpath from the mini roundabout to De Bathe Cross. Cllr Aplin had provided some information as to another local PC having similar works undertaken with help from the Community Enhancement Fund. The Clerk advised that DCC Highways had indicated this could be an option for the grass area as discussed in 11.1. Funding may be available to assist community self-help groups, by purchase of equipment and training.
- 11.3** Cllr Mr S Whiteley advised he is meeting with Mr Alex Whish, WDBC Tree Officer, to discuss the TPO trees below the mini roundabout.
- 11.4** The clerk confirmed that the members of the public on the Section 106 monitoring group had been invited to the planning training to be provided by Mr P Whymer of WDBC, although no reply had been received from Mr Whymer as to his agreement with this. A final email had been sent stating that the council would consider consent was implied if nothing was heard back from Mr Whymer.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.