



NAILSEA TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on
Wednesday January 4th 2023 at 7.30pm at the Tithe Barn, Church Lane, Nailsea.

PRESENT: Cllr Argles (in the Chair), Cllr Barber, Cllr Bird, Cllr J Blatchford, Cllr Ellis, Cllr D Houlbrook, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Kushner, Cllr Miller, Cllr Middleton, Cllr Watts, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, and a member of the public.

EL01/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Frappell, Cllr Lees, Cllr Packham and Cllr Smith.

EL02/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Hunt declared an interest in The Grove as she lives next to it.

EL03/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public asked a question regarding the proposed closure of Backwell Recycling Centre, and they would like to raise awareness of the significant carbon impact that would be associated with this, and asked what the plan from NTC is? Nailsea and Backwell would add an additional 3,500 miles per year in accessing the alternative recycling centre locations, resulting in £60,000 more fuel consumption which is the equivalent of planting 19,000 trees, which would require 10 hectares of space (17 x the area of Backwell tip). The saving which have been proposed resulting from the closure will be around ⅔ cost of a single green bin per household.

The committee agreed to move agenda item 7 forward to be able to immediately discuss the questions from the member of the public.

EL04/23 To discuss North Somerset Councils Proposal to close Backwell Recycling Centre as part of a cost cutting exercise and give a formal response to both North Somerset Council and ALCA

A request was made that the figures the member of the public quoted could be sent to the Town Clerk, and also that these points were also made to the District Councillors as, other than providing a formal response against the closure, this decision is out of the Town Council's hands.

The meeting noted that the environmental impact from closing this centre is hugely important and that closing a recycling centre is a retrograde step when the public are being encouraged to recycle more.

It was advised that a Councillor had written to District Councillor Steven Bridger and that he had replied advising that it was only 3 minutes further to get to either Portishead or Weston-super-Mare recycling centres. A Councillor advised that for them to go to Portishead would equate in ½ kg more CO₂ per journey, and although you can get there quickly, it would only be if you are driving fast along country lanes.

The meeting discussed that North Somerset Council are struggling to balance their books, and that they still have a budget gap. They are unable to go above a 5% increase in Council Tax and Social Care costs are a requirement, with a very large cost to tax payers. Without these savings there is the risk of bankruptcy. The Council

are between a rock and a hard place and they do not think that the savings can be found anywhere else. There is a lack of money coming to Local Government from Central Government.

The meeting felt that North Somerset Council have not shown all of their workings to get to this point. They estimate £300,000 would be the saving, however it does not look like it will be anywhere near that amount. One additional case of fly tipping per week will cost an additional £50,000, more requirements for green bins will also mean more collections, and more rubbish which could have been recycled will most likely be put into black bins.

It was advised that representations on this should be sent to District Councillor Mike Solomon, who is the Executive member in charge of waste.

The decision that North Somerset Council have to make is based on all of North Somerset, and if a poll of residents within the County were taken it would be likely that Nailsea and Backwell's votes are minor and that the money would be wanted to be spent elsewhere, such as on Social Care.

The Clerk advised that North Somerset Council need to hold a formal consultation when they are looking to close any services, and this has not been undertaken, but the decision on what will happen will need to be made by 27 March – before the start of Purdah.

Cllr Argles proposed and Cllr Miller seconded

RESOLUTION that Nailsea Town Council write to North Somerset Council, ALCA and the Local MP with some of the information that has been provided tonight and urge them to rethink the closure of Backwell Recycling Centre.

The vote was unanimous.

EL05/23 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2022

It was required that the apology from Cllr M Blatchford be removed as she is not a member of the committee.

With the above change, the minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

EL06/23 PLAYING FIELDS AND PLAY/RECREATION AREAS

a) Report by a representative of Nailsea Playing Fields Association and Grove Sports and Social Club

It was advised that there had not been a report received.

The Clerk advised that the first due diligence letter from the solicitors arrived in the post today and will be progressed as soon as possible.

b) To confirm acceptance of a quote for the cost of bow top fencing for Toby Riley play equipment at The Grove

Two written quotes have been received, however four companies were originally contacted.

Quote 1

£10,547 incl installation

Quote 2

£8,736.48 incl installation

The Clerk advised that she is happy to recommend Quote 2, as it is from a local company that has been worked with previously. The Finance & Policy Committee were tasked with confirming where the funding will come from, as there is currently no budget for this fence.

Cllr Argles proposed and Cllr Barber seconded

RECOMMENDATION

that the quote of £8,736.48 for the installation of bow top fencing is accepted.

The vote was unanimous.

EL07/23 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 22 December 2022

The meeting noted the statement.

b) Specified Reserves 2022-23 linked to Environment and Leisure Committee

A Councillor asked for an update on when the £30,000 fund allocated for Spilsbury Wood is anticipated to be spent.

The Assistant Clerk advised that this is a project that she has been working on for a while, however it is not straightforward and has required a lot of research. There is a requirement for a felling licence to be obtained before any diseased ash trees can be cut, but before being able to do this a Woodland Manager will need to create a 5-year plan for the space and how it will be maintained, before an application is submitted for the licence. At present the woodland is unmanaged and therefore no plan is available, and as it is such a small area there is not a large desire from anyone to take it on. The meeting was advised that 1100 stems per hectare will need to be replanted to replace the trees that were removed as a condition of the felling licence, and although the land is not this large, a lot of planting will still be needed.

There are other complications such as a public footpath running through the wood which would need to be closed, possible dormice on site, and the land being inaccessible for larger vehicles.

It was suggested that to progress this, a professional be found to take a look and produce a report that the Town Council can use to decide on how to progress.

Feedback was shared on the skatepark floodlighting with a number of people saying how excellent a facility it is and that it has made users feel safe.

The Clerk provided an update on the Trendlewood Park Town Green Application, and advised that over 150 evidence forms have been received. She is completing the application for North Somerset Council, and once this is complete a solicitor will be sought to have it witnessed before submission. It was confirmed that after some research it has been established that a development company has bought the land.

EL08/23 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

The Clerk requested some Councillors be present for photos of the new outdoor gym equipment in Millennium Park which can then be used for a press release.

The meeting was advised that two projects from the Ask Nailsea consultation will be going to Town Council for discussion next week; the tender for the purchase of community buses will be completed on Friday, and a proposal for a MUGA which it is hoped will go forward.

The meeting closed at 8:12pm.

Chair's signature: _____ Date: _____