

TOWN OF NAILSEA



THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING was held on **Wednesday 20th April 2016** at 7.30pm at the Tithe Barn, Church Lane, Nailsea. The Chairman, Cllr D Packham, welcomed the audience and introduced the staff and Councillors. He reported that Cllr's Mary Blatchford, Mary Ponsonby, Ann Tonkin and James Tonkin were unable to attend.

NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING

The Clerk informed the audience that the Notice convening the meeting had been displayed throughout the Town. He read the Notice to the audience and it was agreed that this Notice had been displayed as required by legislation.

MINUTES

The Chairman then asked the Clerk to read the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 22nd April 2015.

It was proposed that as these had been provided prior to the meeting they be taken as read. This was agreed.

It was proposed that these minutes were a correct record of that meeting and this was agreed.

The Chairman signed the minutes as a correct record of that meeting and gave his annual report.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman reported that in 1999 he moved to Nailsea from Taunton to be closer to Bristol where he was working at the time. He soon found a town with friendly people and has found over time a lot going on.

For the active there are three sports centres offering a wide range of activities, thriving rugby, cricket and football clubs, a nationally recognised table tennis club, bowls club, a croquet club – which hosted the world championship a few years ago - and there are walking groups for those who enjoy a social walk. Then we have a fantastic network of paths running throughout the town for exercise, for getting from A to B without using cars and connecting our many areas of open parkland where children enjoy the play equipment and adults can just relax.

In Millennium Park, after many years of hard use, the existing skatepark equipment has been removed and is now being replaced with a new concrete structure in time for the 14th annual skatepark festival to be held in July. This new skatepark design will cater for boards, bikes, scooters, skates and

wheelchairs. It will have areas for those just starting out through intermediary up to the very skilled. The delivery of this new skatepark has been a fine example of how people within our town come together to achieve their vision of improving facilities for the use of all.

The Town is not short of indoor entertainment in Nailsea with the Nailsea Theatre Club producing three plays each year, Nailsea Musicals performing at the Scotch Horn Centre, the annual Festival of Music, Bedford Performers and choirs all providing an outlet for the many talented people we have in our town.

Our young people are fortunate to have excellent schools in Nailsea and there are activities for them outside school. There are two scout groups, air cadets and guides, gym, dance and martial arts as well as clubs using the sports fields and the all-weather pitch at Nailsea School.

There are amazing volunteers within our town who dedicate so much time to organisations that help others. The Leg Club, Nailsea Disability Initiative, Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Transport, Phoenix Friendship Club, Vision North Somerset, Parkinsons North West Somerset, Wellspring Counselling, Community Alcohol and Drug Forum, MS Therapy Centre, Nailsea and District Prostate Support Group, WRVS Nailsea Daycare, Methodist Lunch Club, Mencap Cool Summer Club, Crossroads, Nailsea Summer Playscheme, Cruse Bereavement, Golden Oldies Charity, Nailsea Social Sheddars and many more, and I would like to thank all of them for working tirelessly to make life better for so many.

There are also volunteer groups who work hard to make the town look good. Nailsea in Bloom plant out the beds and planters you see around the town and have plans to extend their efforts. The Friends of Trendlewood Park look after Nowhere Wood and the adjacent park area. Recently there was an initiative to collect litter within the town under the banner of 'Better Nailsea'. Then there are larger events for all - the annual May Fair and Carnival organised by the Scouts, Nailsea Flower Show, the Trendlewood Festival and Skate Festival.

Nailsea has so much to offer and the Chairman acknowledged there will be more which he had not included above and apologised for the omissions. He said we have a really active and creative town with enthusiastic, dedicated and fun people. And there is more to come. As well as the above events the Christmas Street Fair is to be restored this year. Again, a group of enthusiastic volunteers have decided this is an event that has been missing from the calendar for too long. Put it in your diaries – Friday 2nd December.

The Town Council does its best to facilitate what happens in the town. It leads where it can and supports the organisations and events mentioned above. Over the past year the Council completed the restoration of the Glassworks site. There is now a pleasant park area for use by all rather than the wasteland it was. Over the past few years, along with other parishes and councils in Somerset it challenged National Grid on their plan to erect pylons rather than putting new cables underground. Many thanks must go to Fiona Erleigh who worked tirelessly in the battle with National Grid. Sadly, despite some success our major cause was lost: however, importantly it showed how communities can work together for a cause and make large bodies justify themselves. Much has been learnt for the future.

Nailsea is a town that in 2001 had a population of 16,546 and by 2011 this had fallen to 15,630 - from a high in 1991 of 17,230 – according to the census figures. He said he would like to see Nailsea grow again. With a national shortage of properties, the town has the space to provide new homes to welcome new people: we certainly have the active community to make them feel welcome and to engage with them.

The Town Council is currently responding to a proposal from Barratt Homes to develop 18 acres of land along Engine Lane of which the Town Council owns 14 acres. This is an opportunity to provide much needed new homes that will comply with the Town Council's housing mix policy and will generate a capital receipt, which will then be reinvested in the town.

There are other sites that North Somerset have allocated for around a further 700 homes. New developments will always impact on some residents given that they will be constructed adjacent to existing housing. New homes will bring a benefit to the town though, with greater use of the high street and town centre which in turn will attract new shops, provide more pupils for our schools, be a source of even more volunteers and contributors to the organisations mentioned above and bring new ideas into our community – even new Councillors!

This Town Council does not stand still and it looks to the future of Nailsea. A five year Strategy and Action Plan for Nailsea has been drawn up and this plan will be presented to the people of Nailsea in the coming year for their feedback. It revolves around three core issues – Recreation, the Town Centre and a Nailsea Network. Some of this plan is within the Town Council's control whilst some is dependent on North Somerset Council agreeing to and supporting our plans. There is much work still to be done and the outcome will be to improve Nailsea for everyone.

He said he was pleased that he found Nailsea and moved here. It is so encouraging to see so much community activity and to see our town thriving.

Finally, Cllr Packham made wanted to make some thank yous:-

First, he mentioned the Farmer's, Craft and Community Market held in the town centre once a month. Gina Provis took on the role as manager of the market seven years ago. The market has been a resounding success, and that is coming from the traders who say it is the best market in the area. Gina has decided to hand the baton over to someone new and he thanked her, on behalf of the town, for making our market such a success.

Secondly, he thanked the Clerk, Ian Morrell, and all of the Town Council staff for their unstinting support to the town over the last year. Liz Fey left during the year and we wish her well. Pennee Paige has stepped up to take over the finance role and is doing a great job. He also welcomed Emma Herriot to the administrative staff and Steve Willmott as caretaker.

Finally, he gave a big thank you to all of the town councillors for their contribution to the Town Council throughout the year. The time they give freely is appreciated and their views and contribution to the debates on a wide range of matters help to make our town a better place to live in.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Chairman then called upon the Town Clerk to present the Statement of Accounts.

Mr Morrell, the Clerk reported that the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2015 were audited and certified correct on 24th September 2015 by the auditors, Grant Thornton, in accordance with Audit Commission Act of 1998 sections 15 and 16 and, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 187).

He said a balance sheet, income and expenditure and trial balance were available for residents. The Council has also produced a provisional trial balance for the financial year ending 31st March 2016. This has yet to be ratified by the Council before being audited and is therefore only in draft form.

The Council has produced an Annual Report which has been included in the Nailsea Paper for distribution to all houses in the town in May. It was also on the Council web-site.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The Chairman reported that the Town Council had received an email from a resident of Engine Lane which he then read out as follows:-

“To the Chairman and Members of Nailsea Town Council I write to formally object to your attempt to remove the Restrictive Covenant on Land under Title AV234681 (TC Minutes 2nd March 24/61).

When your predecessors purchased this land from Avon Council they did so with the full knowledge and agreement that the Covenant would be upheld so that the land would be used for the people of Nailsea for recreational use.

You are now spending up to £20,000 of rate payers money to defeat the very purpose of why this land was purchased.

If you wish to address the matter of affordable decent housing for the people of Nailsea then why have you not explored the opportunity of working with a Not For Profit Housing Association instead of dealing with DWBH who publicly acknowledged in their recent year end results that they have achieved greater profits from Land acquired from Local Authorities than anywhere else. DWB are only interested in profit and will squeeze onto this land as many units as they possibly can.

Why have you not examined other areas of housing that are not public open space. As a Council you have failed the promises to the public made by you and your predecessors.

Why have you not conducted a survey as to how the land under Title AV234681 is used? All comments made so far by the Council regarding the use of the land as grazing, only apply to Gaulacre. If you conducted a survey on this land AV234681 you would see how well used this land is by the public. When this land is removed from public ownership, how will you resolve the issue of the lack of provision of public open space?”

A. The Chairman confirmed that in 1993 the Town Council did purchase the piece of land AV234681 from Avon County Council which has now been dissolved. The purchase of the land was at that time for recreational use. It was originally offered to Nailsea Cricket Club but they were unable to get funding they required and have subsequently improved their facilities at the Grove Playing Fields. Over time priorities change and the Council needs to consider the best way forward for all the town. There is a covenant on this piece of land but the proposed development would not result in the loss of public facilities. The Rugby Club would benefit as their facilities would be reorganised and they are behind this scheme as they would receive money towards new changing rooms. The Public Right of Way will be maintained and the rest of the land does not have any access rights. The £20,000 is the sum set aside for all the legal costs for the sale of the land not just to remove the restrictive covenant.

Q. Ms F Erleigh asked how the Town Council is going to get the covenant overturned.

A. Cllr D Packham confirmed the Council has spoken to North Somerset Council, as the landowners, about lifting this covenant and they were not against it in principle.

Q. Mr P Wheatley asked how the Council envisaged the money gained being used.

A. Cllr D Packham said the Council recognises the need for more sporting facilities within the town such as an all weather pitch. Grove Sports Centre is deteriorating and improvements are required on the Station Road car park and the town centre along with heritage issues and signage.

Q. Mr S Harrison said he had moved to Nailsea recently and one of the first things he tried to do was get an allotment only to be informed that there is a two year waiting list. He asked if the Council had any plans for more allotments as he would like to start work on a plot as soon as possible.

A. The Chairman said there have been discussions with Wraxall and Failand Parish Council to develop the land to the rear of Budgens for allotments which would be a shared site for residents of both parishes. North Somerset Council have agreed in principle to this proposal but all these proposals take time to move forward.

PRESENTATION OF GRANT CHEQUES TO LOCAL GROUPS AND TALKS

The Chairman explained that the Council was pleased to support the work of local groups in the Town and invited the groups in attendance to collect their cheques. A list of all the organisations that receive a grant is listed below:-

Grant Recipients	Amount £	Funds to be used for
North Somerset CAB	8,876.00	Provision of face to face sessions
Community Transport	11,000.00	Insurance, servicing and maintenance of vehicles
Phoenix Friendship Club	350.00	Help to continue sessions for older people
Vision North Somerset	349.00	Provide IT training for visually impaired people
Parkinson's UK North West Somerset	1,000.00	Transport to activities
Wellspring Counselling	1,500.00	Provide counselling for people in Nailsea
Nailsea Disability Initiative	8,000.00	Towards general running costs of Charity
Community Alcohol and Drugs Forum	500.00	Continuing support for Forum
West of England MS Therapy Centre	350.00	Fund physiotherapy treatments
NEAT	80.00	Third party and employer's insurance premium
Friends of Stockway Nature Reserve	275.00	Public Liability Insurance, Membership of British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
Nailsea & District Prostate Support Group	150.00	Printing, posters, stationery and admin
Nailsea Festival of Music	1,000.00	Promote a competitive Festival of Music
WRVS Nailsea Daycare	1,000.00	Rent of hall and contribution towards outings
Nailsea Methodist Lunch Club	750.00	Provide a weekly lunch session for the elderly
Friends of Trendlewood Park	2,000.00	Purchase of a brushcutter, equipment and maintenance
Nailsea Concert Orchestra	150.00	Enable orchestra to perform three concerts

Mencap – Cool Summer Club	250.00	Cool Summer Club sessions
2 nd Nailsea Scouts – May Fair	550.00	Setting up costs for May Fair
2 nd Nailsea Scouts	450.00	Replacement of event shelter and Scout Hut porch
Nailsea Skateboarding Contest	1,000.00	Funding towards Skateboard Contest
Crossroads	200.00	Monthly support/friendship group for Carers
Nailsea Theatre Club	750.00	Towards cost of new boiler
1 st Nailsea Scouts	750.00	Support of Nailsea Carnival
St Peter's Hospice	600.00	Furniture for Sanctuary at St Peter's Hospice
Nailsea Summer Playscheme	3,500.00	Running of summer playscheme
Transition Town Nailsea	250.00	Design/print leaflet to promote Transition Town
2467 (Nailsea) Squadron ATC	900.00	Purchase of climbing/caving equipment
Nailsea Bowls Club	500.00	Replacement of green material and timber
Golden-Oldies Charity	482.00	Fund leader/venue hire for singing sessions
Cruse Bereavement	780.00	Help in providing support services
Somerset Storyfest	950.00	Dunkirk Miracle Intergenerational Project
Nailsea Socialshedders	1,380.00	Providing support
Patronage Recipients		
Nailsea Theatre Club	100.00	
Nailsea & District Horticultural Society	100.00	
Nailsea Choral Society	100.00	
Nailsea Musicals	100.00	
Nailsea Concert Orchestra	100.00	

The Chairman introduced Mr Pritchard from the Bowls Club.

Mr John Pritchard said that he is the Captain of the Nailsea Bowls Club and the grant from the Town Council will make a significant contribution to the requirements for disability access. The club was launched in 1969 and at present they have 25 ladies and 60 men and they are always looking for new members. They can play all year round and during winter months provide coaching for new players using indoor facilities in preparation for playing outside. Training is provided by their own coaches on Wednesday afternoons from 4.00pm to 6.00pm from October onwards. They play in County and National competitions and are very proud to represent Nailsea. He then thanked the Council for the grant.

The Chairman thanked Mr Pritchard. He then introduced Emma Shearman from the Golden Oldies Charity. Emma Shearman said that she is the Fundraising and Grants Support Officer for the charity and was very pleased to be asked to come along to speak. The charity is quite small and was set up in 2008 to provide an opportunity for those living in isolation to get together and sing songs. They started with just four singing session in Bath and North East Somerset and they now have 140 activity sessions. It has grown very fast and they sing songs from the 1950's onwards and they do additional 'big sings' bringing lots of groups together. One of these was held at Nailsea Methodist Church recently and 80 people attended. It gave the opportunity for two people in the town who live on their own to link up and have Christmas lunch together. The monthly sessions are held at Nailsea Methodist Church at 10.30am on the last Tuesday of every month. She asked everyone present to pass this message on

to anyone who would be interested in attending. She thanked the Town Council for supporting the group and said that the grant would provide 12 months of activity sessions in Nailsea for the group.

The Chairman thanked Emma and introduced Mr M Loader from Storyfest. Mr Loader explained Storyfest had started in 2012 and have been involved in Somerset, North Somerset, Bath, BANES and Wiltshire creating story telling. They try to make the story telling intergenerational and the workshop is usually over a 2 day project in schools throughout the area with primary school children, secondary school children and elders from the local community. They have a project with Golden Valley Primary School and Nailsea School and the story will be based on World War II. The group are given a story which is unfinished and all age groups work together to create an ending to the story.

The Chairman thanked Mr Loader.

Presentation of Community Awards

The Chairman introduced Alison Morgan who has campaigned tirelessly for many years on behalf of those with mobility difficulties. She has been regularly consulted and gives her time to assessing pavement width for mobility scooters, in particular at the station when the pavement under the bridge was widened. She was very involved with the Backwell Access Group who drove forward the project to provide an accessible path around Backwell Lake. She has been working tirelessly on the campaign for ramps to be installed at the Station and works hard to ensure kerb-ramps provided around the town are not blocked by parked cars.

Alison thanked the Council for the award.

He then introduced Ian Mottram who has been a member of the organising committees of both the Horticultural Society and Nailsea in Bloom since 2004 and has been actively involved throughout that time. He gives his time and energy very willingly and is always ready to volunteer when practical work has to be done. During 2004/05 the Nailsea in Bloom group embarked on a project to create a garden at Ravenswood School for the use of the children. This was a major project to carry out ground clearance, landscaping and planting going on to create allotment plots on the school site and help them with using a greenhouse. Once the basic work had been done most of those involved turned their attention to other projects but Ian has retained his involvement with Ravenswood School ever since. He is also involved as an active member of both Nailsea Neighbourhood Watch and Clevedon Royal British Legion. He has also worked as a volunteer at Southmead Hospital, visiting patients and helping them with any problems which they might have with the use of hearing aids. He gives his time and energy willingly and is always ready to volunteer when practical work has to be done.

Ian Mottram said he was very pleased to receive the award but was always pleased to help with the groups he was involved with.

The Chairman introduced Fiona Earleigh who has given exceptional service to the town in her capacity as a member of the 'Action Against Pylons' team. The level of knowledge she acquired, the methods of communication used to spread her views and the way she always kept on top of new events and decisions were second to none. The number of meetings, hearings and conversations she had about the proposed Hinkley C route must add up to a great deal of time and work. All this was done in the spirit of attempting to protect our community from the intrusion that these massive structures would bring. She has shown that one person can take on a challenge to prevent harm to a location and all who live in the area.

She thanked the Council for the award.

The Chairman reported that a Community Award had been given to Frank Rogers in recognition of his dedication to music. He was the organist and choirmaster at Christ Church for 57 years. Because he was very ill his award was given to him earlier and unfortunately he died a few days later.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Chairman reported the Police and Crime Commission elections will be taking place on Thursday 5th May 2016 and North Somerset Partnership are holding an event at 7.00pm on Tuesday 26th April which the candidates will be attending.
2. Mr P Williams expressed his thanks to everyone who had supported the new skate park project. 18 months ago the park was dying and now the new concrete skatepark is nearly completed. He confirmed that the official opening will be on Saturday 9th July 2016.

The meeting closed at 8.26pm.