

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Salt
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley
Ms Brown – Events Director

54.16 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from

The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Wood

55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.
- b Other Interests: Councillor Hall knew the landowner adjoining Overton Road; Councillor McGuinness is a churchwarden at St Lawrence's Church. Minute 62, Councillors Court and Hall know the fruit and vegetable trader. Minute 57, Councillor Rogers is a personal friend of the owner of Saxon Tyres.

It was agreed to move discussion on **Minute 57** to the end of the meeting as a confidential item.

56 MINUTES

To sign the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 2016.
To receive the Notes of the Christmas Lights Debrief meeting held on 7 December 2016. Meetings would be held earlier this year to plan the event.

58. AGREEMENT OF HERITAGE PROJECTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE MOORLANDS PARTNERSHIP BOARD

- **RESTORATION OF TROUGH AT OVERTON ROAD**

Replace the missing trough and position bollards on stone plinths to alert traffic. One quote had been received for £1700; this was specialist work and the stone could only be sourced at one quarry. Highways would have to do the work for the bollards.

- **DRAINAGE AT TRENT HEAD WELL**

Two companies were looking at this and costs were awaited. The Conservation Officer had confirmed that this could be included in the bid.

Councillor Jones believed that SMDC owned the land immediately around the well.

- **BOLLARDS AT VINEGAR TROUGHS - GILLOW HEATH**

The trough needed to be protected, and bollards would be positioned on either side.

- **RESTORATION OF WELL AT TOWER HILL ROAD**

The well is cracked and there may be a missing part. Councillor Sheldon suggested that old photos are sought and suggested contacting Mow Cop Parochial Council.

The inclusion of four projects was proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Jones. It was agreed to put these forward to the Moorlands Partnership Board.

Councillor Hawley mentioned the tunnel on public footpath 29. The Chief Officer would seek the views of the Conservation Officer.

59. FLAGS OUTSIDE TOWN HALL

Councillor Salt noted that the flags outside the Town Hall were in an appalling state and wondered if, when the work is complete at the Town Hall, SMDC could be asked to replace them.

All agreed that this was necessary.

60. UPDATE ON BUILDING WORK AT THE TOWN HALL

Councillor Salt requested that questions are asked about the type of temporary toilets which will be available at the Civic Ball.

Councillor Rogers had been assured that work would start on 27 February 2017. The Chief Officer confirmed that this is the case.

Councillor Hall confirmed that work on the frontage would be Phase 1, then Councils Connect would move, followed by work to create a new Police Post.

Councillor Jones proposed that a project plan and task chart is requested from SMDC.

Councillor Hall expressed concern that the front of the building, including the steps, would remain inaccessible when the first part of the work had finished and

Councils Connect had moved. He asked if the fencing would be removed. The Chief Officer would ask for this information.

Councillor Salt expressed the concerns of residents of John Street that parking would increase in that area as staff would not be able to use the car park for 22 weeks; she wondered if staff could be issued with parking permits for the Wharf Road site. The Chief Officer would make this request.

61. CONSIDERATION OF ADVERTISING SPACE IN THE TOWN

Councillor Davies suggested that this is delayed until the building work has been completed, then is considered at same time as the lighting.

62. ANNUAL REVIEW OF ARTISAN MARKET

A confidential report was circulated to members of the Committee. Councillor Davies highlighted the main points.

Councillor Davies reported that in spite of small loss, the market was a worthwhile contribution to the town; the loss had reduced this year and was hopefully acceptable.

A Risk Assessment had been carried out and recommendations were included. The market had been erected on an ad hoc basis, mostly by volunteers and casual employees. Some aspects now needed to be formalised, and improvements should be considered.

Feedback had been received from Biddulph Business Chamber (BBC) that the market had stimulated trade, but it would prefer the market to be held on Saturdays. Concern was expressed that Officers did not work on Saturdays.

BBC reported that Congleton Town Council was amenable to the move, but this would need ratification from Cheshire East Council

Councillor Salt noted that she could not visit the market as she worked.

Councillor Hall cautioned that even if the Councils agreed, the Charter might prohibit the move.

Councillor Hawley thought that stallholders might not be available.

Councillor Lawton thought the market in Congleton was disappearing quite quickly.

Councillor Rogers thought that Saturdays are not the busiest days of week for footfall; Friday was the busiest day in town. The market was desperately short of volunteers.

Councillor Sheldon agreed that Saturday afternoon is dire, but the market could start and finish early.

Councillor Jones queried why the Town Council would consider making changes; it currently works both for stallholders and for footfall. It is well attended and stall holders keep coming back, we should expand on what we have.

Councillor Hart did not think it should move to Saturday; the Friday stallholders were happy as they were not going anywhere else, we should expand and attract new stallholders. The market had made a very small loss compared to SMDC; it ran efficiently and should continue and expand.

Councillor Davies reported problems with the garage, the roof leaked and it was difficult to access; this situation needed urgent review. It was proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Rushton, that the Chief Officer is granted dispensation to talk to the owner about providing a facility on the Hollinsheads garage site for market storage. It was agreed that there were very few locations in the centre of the town that could provide appropriate storage. The dispensation was approved.

Councillor Rogers thought the redundant toilet block could be considered, although it would need considerable re-modelling. Councillor Davies said it would not be feasible as it is not large enough.

Councillor Baddeley thought the market could be opened up for general goods.

Councillor Davies felt that we could broaden the scope of the market and allow goods of reasonable quality, seconded by Councillor Rogers, to incorporate a 'street' market.

Ms Brown thought there could be a problem if it was still called it an Artisan market. She expressed concern that the requirement for public liability insurance was putting people off.

Councillor Sheldon suggested using the Town Hall too as an indoor market; Councillor Davies thought the costs would be prohibitive.

Councillor Salt noted that a significant amount of people who work would never be able to attend.

Councillor Rushton said that the fruit and vegetable trader would like to come every Friday.

Councillor Davies thought this company could join the fish man who comes every week, they could use the pavement or forecourt of the Town Hall.

Councillor Hart thought that the spare land by the wheel at the front of the Town Hall, if paved properly, could be used every week by 4-5 stalls regularly.

Councillor Rogers wanted to cease the opportunity of getting the fruit and vegetable trader into the town, or he would go somewhere else. The Chief Officer would seek approval from SMDC.

Councillor Davies proposed that the decaying wooden table tops are replaced on the stall, this was agreed.

Councillor Lawson noted that there was a small amount of traders at the December 2016 market. Ms Brown stated that many of them attend Christmas markets which last the whole weekend in preference to ours.

63. CONSIDERATION OF THE INSTALLATION OF BOLLARDS OUTSIDE MOORLANDS HEALTH SOLUTIONS (2 HIGH STREET) TO IMPROVE ACCESS

It was reported that lots of people use the raised space as a car park which makes it inconvenient for users of the ramp to the shop. The manager at the shop sought approval from this Council to approach Highways for permission.

Councillor Rogers noted that the plastic bollards at South View are effective.

Councillor Harper suggested the appropriate positioning of flower towers, this would not require highways permission.

64. STATION ROAD UPDATE

There is Section 106 money available to spend on that area, but it is time-limited. There have been difficulties contacting Sainsbury's about the road spur.

Councillor Hall proposed, seconded by Councillor Hart, that Beverly Poole Architect on the High Street is instructed to produce a plan, with and without the road spur. This would aide further discussions.

Councillor Davies asked Councillors for their views on the ownership of the land at Station Road; he wondered if SMDC would transfer it to Biddulph Town Council, thus avoiding further maintenance costs. It was proposed by Councillor Hart, seconded by Councillor Hall, that SMDC is approached to consider this option.

Councillor Salt asked that she and Councillor Harper be contacted for input by Beverley Pool prior to drawing up the plans.

65. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

No further updates.

The meeting closed at 8.52 pm

Signed Date