

## **MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2017**

### **PRESENT**

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

Also in attendance  
Councillor Hawley

### **66.16 APOLOGIES**

None

### **67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.
- b Other Interests: Councillor McGuinness is a churchwarden at St Lawrence's Church. Minute 71- Councillor Jones' wife is employed by Sainsbury's.

### **68. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 February 2017 were signed as a true record.

### **69. FINGERPOSTS**

Maps were circulated showing the three proposed locations of fingerposts in the town: adjacent to Rijos showing 'Library' and 'Medical Centre'; in the car park showing 'Library', 'High Street' and 'Toilets'; outside the Town Hall. It was proposed that the Town Hall fingerpost should be postponed due to the building work.

Councillors Hawley and Jones would give feedback from Biddulph Moor about location and wording of the finger posts.

Councillor Rogers asked about efforts to locate the fruit and veg business on Fridays. The Chief Officer had completed the paperwork requesting use of the frontage of the Town Hall and was awaiting a response from the District Council.

Councillor Salt proposed an additional arm from the car park sign and the centre of town with 'Methodist Church and Victoria Centre'; this was seconded by Councillor Whilding. This was agreed.

Councillor McGuinness suggested that posts could incorporate the clematis design.

The Chief Officer replied that the Biddulph Town Council logo would be used. Councillor Davies felt the clematis design would be over-complicating the signage.

Councillor Davies hoped that the existing post in the car park could be used.

Councillor Davies noted that an 'arm' can contain more than one item word.

Councillor Hall proposed that the Rijo sign should also indicate the car park; this was seconded by Councillor Hart. This was agreed.

## **70. LIGHTS OUTSIDE THE TOWN HALL**

Councillor Davies summed up the three proposals:

- 1) two floodlights; one set back under the wall, near to the Christmas tree site, one at the other end of the wall the cover the remaining half of the building
- 2) uplighters for the Lime trees
- 3) two external sockets adjacent to the floodlights with switch gear inside, these could be used for projecting images at events and for power at Christmas lights switch-on

These were seconded by Councillor Hart and agreed.

Councillor Rogers noted that there was power in the metal box adjacent to the Christmas tree site with a timer.

The Chief Officer would submit these proposals to SMDC for consideration as part of the upgrade of the Town Hall.

## **71. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)**

Councillor Davies explained the consultation document that had been circulated for consideration. There had been a lot of anti-social behaviour in this area; the wall had been damaged and the monument seriously vandalised in the Millennium Garden. There had been many other incidents of anti-social behaviour in the town centre. The PSPO encompassed quite a large area of the town.

It was proposed by Councillor Hart and seconded by Councillor Rogers that the PSPO should cover a much larger area, up to Well Street and the whole of the Wharf Road car park.

Councillor Salt noted that everyone knew the problems with funding. However, the Youth and Community Zone now offered an additional session on Fridays for teenagers; 30 young people had attended the previous week, including the main offenders. It was reported by Sgt Slinn that in the centre of town that evening there had been no youth related incidents. Councillor Salt felt that the problem could be solved in other ways.

Councillor Jones supported Councillor Salt, noting that most of the activities listed were illegal anyway and he did not agree with the demonising of young people. Councillor Jones agreed with covering the small dark areas like the Millennium Gardens but felt that the large area was not necessary.

Councillor Hall noted that the order only affected those who did not comply with the law. Councillor Jones responded that the Police needed to enforce illegal activity.

Councillor McGuinness was with three other Councillors, following a meeting, and witnessed two young people riding bikes up and down the travellator in Sainsbury's. There was no security cover.

Councillor Sheldon reported on ongoing problems in the Millennium Garden, where people were afraid to use the footpath through to the car park, due to the large number of young people crowded in the garden area. Councillor Sheldon noted that the majority were well behaved. However, there had been three attacks on the Millennium stone. The stone had been donated to the town by a local family and Councillor Sheldon felt that everyone had a duty to protect items given to the town. Councillor Sheldon felt that 40 to 50 young people crowded in the confined space posed a safety risk.

Councillor Jones felt that the area was too large and would have to be enforced; the lack of police presence would be a problem.

Councillor Court concurred with Councillor Jones that it was a rather draconian measure. Sainsbury's had a responsibility for security on their site.

Councillor Hart noted that this would be a tool for the police to use. He felt that the Police would not have asked for the order if they didn't need it.

Councillor Jackson had discussed the PSPO at a District Council meeting. It had been noted that the majority of the incidents were within 30 yards of a Police Post and 20 yards from a CCTV camera; he noted that the Millennium Garden was not currently covered by CCTV camera. He had questioned the number of arrests made, there were not many. Councillor Jackson noted that 99% of young people were pretty decent and a few were spoiling it for the rest. Councillor Jackson could see how people felt intimidated, but it was mostly their own perception. He felt that something had to be done and would wait for the results of the PSPO to be fed back to see if it was working; Councillors' reservations should be noted as part of the response.

Councillor Salt proposed writing to the people involved with young people in the town: BYCZ, the Green Tree House, Sainsbury's, etc. The group would meet with Police and young people to pool ideas.

Councillor Hall repeated that the ban was only enforced for those who misbehaved, and he supported the order as a tool for the Police.

Councillor Lawson noted that Sainsbury's was private property and as such should have its own security, manned 24 hours a day.

Councillor Jones noted that Sainsbury's had the right to expect the Police to sort out anti-social behaviour wherever it was, including inside their store. There should be more Police on the streets.

Councillor Rushton felt the one thing missing in this consultation was the kids. She always engaged with them, especially when encountering them in groups; the young people needed to know about places they could go.

Councillor Swift stated that when he was younger there were many places to go; he added that the Bowling Club would welcome some of them to attend.

Councillor Salt stated that there was plenty to do in Biddulph: BYCZ, the Leisure Centre, ATC, Scouts, Guides, scooter park. Our young people were not bad; it was two dozen out of 1,000.

Councillor Davies summed up the many thoughts.

Councillor Jones said that this Council should not oppose the proposal but it must be properly enforced

It was proposed by Councillor Hart and seconded by Councillor Rushton to support the proposal as it stood.

Councillor Salt had proposed writing to groups, this was seconded by Councillor Hart and members supported the initiative.

## **72. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Councillor Davies noted that work on the trough at Overton Road had been approved by the Moorlands Partnership Board. The Chief Officer responded that there had been delays getting estimates for the restoration of other projects, and establishing ownership of land. The additional projects would form part of a later bid.

Councillor Davies reported that there would be a meeting of the Christmas Lights group in April 2017.

This committee supplied curtains and lights in the Hall, and a set of specialist ladders. The ladders had been damaged. Replacement ladders would be needed for the Festival. It was agreed to purchase the ladders at a cost of £123 from the Civic Expenditure budget.

Councillor Sheldon reported that Biddulph in Bloom was taking a break from entering the Heart of England Britain in Bloom competition for 2017. It took a

lot of energy and the group needed time to re-jig the displays in town and to consider re-designing some areas.

Councillor Davies noted that the achievements had been fantastic and a break from competing was the right thing to do.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Signed ..... Date .....