

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Wood
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Whilding

47.16 APOLOGIES

The Mayor – Councillor Salt
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor McGuinness

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.
- b Other Interests: None were declared

49 MINUTES

- a It was **RESOLVED** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Committee held on 8 November 2016.
- b It was **RESOLVED** to receive the Minutes of the Tourism/Communications Sub-Committee meeting held on Tuesday 8 November 2016.

50 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS FEEDBACK

Councillor Wood reported that the event had been well attended, he had received excellent feedback and was really pleased; it had been a 'cracking night'.

Councillor Rushton offered congratulations to all involved; she had visited the shops on the night and a few days after and received good reports. The Dame had been booked for 2017 and would like to bring more characters along and put on a 20 minute performance. He may even stage a full pantomime in the Town Hall. It had been a fantastic night, Councillor Rushton could not believe the amount of people who had attended; she

wondered if it would be possible to alternate the ends of the town where the stalls were positioned- north this year, south next.

Councillor Jones had been unable to attend, but had received feedback that the evening had been fantastic. Biddulph Moor switch-on was even better!

Councillor Rogers felt the day went extremely well behind the scenes; he thanked Councillor Davies for the refreshments, but was concerned that there were very few volunteers. It had been a long hard day.

Councillor Hawley thanked Councillors Davies and Rogers for getting the barriers and signs up to Biddulph Moor.

Councillor Jones agreed that we were desperately short of volunteers.

Councillor Davies reported that the arrangements for Santa had been 'turned upside down'- starting at the library; it had worked well and the Police had been very helpful. The event on the steps- Ukulele group, lantern children, Churches Together and the Dame was very effective. Councillor Davies felt that the market worked well; being enclosed at the north end of the High Street helped to give it a nice feel. Paul Warwick had pulled out all the stops to fill the south of the town with rides, but it was the busiest night of the year for lights switch-ons.

Councillor Davies explained that it had been decided to proactively support traders through the donation of rope lights for the windows, to help the festive atmosphere within the town. It had not been possible to arrange for Christmas trees on the front of shops as many of the owners do not own the premises. These had been appreciated.

Councillor Rogers thanked The Chief Officer, Officer and Events Director and to the Chief Officer who had stayed to the 'bitter end'.

Councillor Davies thanked Councillor Rogers for lighting the stalls, which would have been in darkness without him; Councillor Rushton for bringing in the Dame; Rotary for getting safely through the crowds; the police for monitoring the crowd and keeping it safe; Matt McDonald, the new dynamic chair of the Biddulph Business Chamber; Paul Warwick for the tree outside and his support with the fair; John Robinson for fronting the event; the Mayor and the children; and Moorlands Radio who had provided the entertainment free of charge. The people of Biddulph had turned out in the biggest numbers and deserved our thanks.

Councillor Davies also thanked the parade participants.

Councillor Hall noted that this would be the last time that Rotary would use the Councils Connect grotto and suggested that a review is carried out in May to see progress of the work and plan for the future.

51 VERBAL UPDATE ON STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Chair, Councillor Hart, reported on an extremely constructive meeting. The mini-masterplan had been considered. The group would work 'hand in glove' with the Neighbourhood Plan.

There was a discussion about how this group should report into the Council. It was proposed by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Whilding, that this group should report to the General Purposes Committee. It was agreed that this was appropriate as the remit of the group was the whole town.

52 UPDATE ON MEETING IN RELATION TO LIGHTING AT THE FRONT OF THE TOWN HALL

Councillor Davies had spoken to Ian Smith of Protech Electrical when he was installing the Christmas lights. Mr Smith had suggested a scheme to include uplights for the lime trees, up and down lights in the middle of the Town Hall and spots near the wall to floodlight the whole building. This would give a number of possibilities. Further consultation would be necessary.

Councillor Jones wondered how this would fit in with ideas for redeveloping the whole frontage area; it should work in tandem.

Councillor Davies stated that it was the intention to work with the SMDC contractors to ensure there was appropriate wiring for additional lighting as the work on the Town Hall was being completed.

Councillor Jackson wondered the feasibility of projected images onto the building at the lights switch-on, or other events. Councillor Jones added that they could be put out for the season and taken in again.

All agreed that the new Christmas lighting was effective, and this could be added to.

Councillor Hart encouraged members to visit other towns, look at their lighting and report back preferably with photographs.

53 HERITAGE PROJECTS

Councillor Davies had visited Iron Age Designs in Leek with Mr Booth; the manufacture of the kissing gates is well under way.

Councillor Jones felt that Trent Head Well refurbishment would need the involvement of a contractor to liaise with the Chief Officer before presenting the project to the Conservation Officer for approval.

Councillor Wood was working with the Brown Lees Residents Association towards obtaining a red phone box for the village green; he wondered if this came under the remit of heritage project. Councillor Davies confirmed that this could be investigated.

Councillor Sheldon was working to remove the grey phone box adjacent to the Crown and Cushion in the High Street.

Councillor Davies reported that the Grange Road double trough project was moving forward and would be developed further.

Councillor Lawson reported that the Woodhouse Lane watering place was in need of some attention.

Councillors were encouraged to give ideas for heritage projects to the Chief Officer to be worked up into a bid for funding.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Signed Date