

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 AUGUST 2016

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor Salt
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Wood
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Hall
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance:
Councillor Redfern

28.15 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from
Councillor Davies
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Swift

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Hart declared an interest in any matters concerning the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan to do with site specifics. Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.
- b Other Disclosable Interests. Reference minute 33.2 Councillor Jones was related to a resident of Cowlshaw Close

30. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 19 July 2016.
- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Burial Grounds Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 August 2016.

31. HIGHWAYS UPDATE

A meeting had been arranged between Councillors Jackson and Lawson, County Council Highways Officer David Greatbatch and the Chief Officer. Councillor Lawson had been taken ill and was unable to attend. A walkabout followed the meeting. Councillor Jackson updated the meeting on progress with the work. It was noted that the bricks for the crossing had been ordered; the bus stop on the High Street as no longer classed as temporary; the issue of South View being one-way was being

revisited; the highways team could install the finger posts as part of their timed visits to the town; the 'stopping up' order on the Craigside spur needed clarification. David Greatbatch had also provided clarification in relation to moving street signs and the Lengthsman scheme.

Councillor Hall thanked Councillor Jackson for taking this forward.

Councillor Jones expressed concern that an unsuitable diversion had been implemented during the recent closure of Woodhouse Lane. On informing Councillor Jackson, he had taken action and the route had been changed that day. Councillor Jones felt that clarity on diversion routes should be given on road closure notices. Councillor Jones also noted the disgusting state of the surface of the roundabout at the north end of the Inner Relief Road.

Councillor Rogers noted confusion with the road closure signs for Woodhouse Lane, adding that there was no sign at the Smithy Lane junction.

Councillor Wood thought that this Council should charge utility companies for digging up the road and asked that this be included on the agenda of the next meeting of the General Purposes committee.

Councillor Hall called for better communication adding that this Council knew our area better than the County Council.

Councillor Salt felt that the County Council had a legal obligation to repair the footpath at Park Lane as it was a well-used route to and from several schools; noting that litigation would cost far more than repair.

Councillor Jackson reported that David Greatbatch had clarified the procedure for road closures. The utility company would email the information to the County Council with the proposed diversion route, they then give the permission.

Councillor Baddeley noted that signs around the current closure of Akesmore Road petered out before the end of the diversion.

32. UPDATE ON MEETING ABOUT BIDDULPH GRANGE COUNTRY PARK

The Chief Officer had met with officers from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council about applying for a Heritage Lottery Grant for projects within Biddulph Grange Country Park.

Several ideas for possible projects that could be funded had been discussed: creating a post to coordinate volunteers, work with young people and undertake some maintenance/ mapping exercises; create new signage; hold events; restoration of walls/ pathways; or a larger project in partnership with the National Trust and other local organisations.

A meeting would be held for all interested stakeholders on 28 September to discuss options and gauge levels of interest. Further information would be sent to Councillors when this had been finalised.

The Chief Officer noted that there was some uncertainty about the role of the Countryside Officer. The Town Council would lead on this project and look to get something up-and-running by April 2017.

33. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Reminder about 2017 calendar

The Tourism Sub-Committee has agreed to put together a 2017 Biddulph calendar. We are looking for contributions of pictures or photos of recent events or projects in the town.

They should be emailed to biddulph@staffordshire.gov.uk

The closing date for submissions is **Friday 19 August 2016**.

We are not able to pay for items that we print, but we will add names to the calendar and give contributors a free copy.

2 Proposed 'No Waiting At Any Time' restriction on Brown Lees Road, Cowlshaw Close, Gardeners Close and Lyneside Road

Following a request from residents and County Councillors to address parking issues on the above roads, Staffordshire County Council is proposing to implement a "No Waiting At Any Time" parking restriction.

Staffordshire County Council are currently undertaking an informal consultation to establish if this is something you would wish to happen. If you have any comments in relation to the proposals, please send these to the Chief Officer who will forward them to the relevant Officer.

Councillor Jones reported that residents had expressed concern that this measure would lead to cars being parked in their resident car park.

3 Information session for those thinking about being County Councillors

Staffordshire County Council is hosting an information session for anyone thinking about standing to be a County Councillor.

The purpose is to give a flavour of what the County Council is all about.

There will be two sessions:

When: Wednesday 23 November 2016 **or** Wednesday 30 November 2016

Time: 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm

Venue: County Buildings, Martin Street Stafford ST16 2LH

Parking: Nearest car park is the Waterfront Multi Storey Car Park, ST16 2HQ

Please select your preferred date contact Julie Roberts, Member Development Officer, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford

ST16 2LH or e-mail your preference to julie.roberts@staffordshire.gov.uk by Monday 3 October.

4 New 105 phone number

On 6th September a new national phone number "105" will be launched by electricity network operators for customers to call should they need to report or get information about a power cut in their area.

Key points to note about this service are:

- Dialling 105 will put customers through to their local electricity network operator – the company that manages the cables, power lines and substations that deliver electricity into homes and businesses in their area.
- 105 is just one of the ways that customers can contact their electricity network operator. Customers can also contact them by phone or via their website, and most network operators are on social media too.
- 105 is a free service for people in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Customers can call 105 no matter who they choose to buy electricity from.

- Customers can also call 105 if they spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put anyone in danger. If there's a serious immediate risk, they should call the emergency services too.

5 Press releases from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

- A reminder that the People Power Fund closes on 14 September for grants for locally-driven community safety activities from £100 to £3000.
- Communities can join the Safer Neighbourhood Panels to hold the Local Policing Team Commander to account. Individuals can register an interest at: www.staffordshire-pcc.gov.uk/safer-neighbourhood-panels/

6 Reminder about the meeting with West Midlands Ambulance Service

Nick Henry and Dean Jenkins from West Midlands Ambulance Service are coming to Biddulph Town Hall to meet with Councillors on **Friday 26 August 2016, 11-12pm.**

Nick and Dean are coming to the Town Hall in response to the letter that was sent on behalf of the General Purposes Committee, 19 July 2016. The Committee requested clarification about the cut to Rapid Response Vehicles in Leek, and any implications this may have for Biddulph.

The meeting on 26 August will be an opportunity to ask any questions you may have. I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance and whether you have any specific questions. I will send out a brief agenda nearer the time.

7 Local Councillor Training Course- Staffordshire Parish Councils Association

A local councillor training course has been arranged for Monday 19 September 2016, the topics being discussed are:

- Profile of an Active Council
- Profile of a Local Councillor
- A Good Chairman
- The Role of the Clerk
- The Council as Employer
- The Law and Local Councils
- Administrative Duties
- Section 137
- Council Budgets and Precepts
- What's on the Agenda
- The Localism Act 2011
- Planning
- The Nolan Principles

Date: Monday 19 September 2016

Time: 7.00pm – 9.00pm

Venue: Trentham / Rudyard Suite, Staffordshire Place One, Tipping Street, Stafford ST16 2LP

Cost: £20.00 for the first delegate, £15.00 for the second and £10.00 for subsequent delegates from the same affiliated council. The prices are doubled for unaffiliated councils.

8 Welcome service- Rev Nick Witham

Councillors are invited to the welcome service for Rev Nick Witham, his wife Elaine and family as they come to lead Biddulph, Harseahead and Mow Cop Methodist Church. The service will begin at 7.30pm on Thursday 1 September 2016.

Councillor Lovatt asked for an update on the hearing loop. The Chief Officer said that the delay was due to the work being put out to tender. A request had been made for an Officer to attend a future meeting to give an update or for a briefing note, no response had been received.

Councillor Hart encouraged fellow District Councillors to ask questions at the District Council scrutiny committee and to make enquiries of Property Service Officers.

It was **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Signed Date

