

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 16 AUGUST 2016

The Town Crier introduced the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Officer. The Town Crier led members in a time of prayer. The Town Mayor opened the meeting

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Salt
The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Wood
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Hall
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hart
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding

18.16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests had been made.

19. 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: none were declared.

20. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:
Councillor Davies
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Swift

21. MINUTES

- a) It was Resolved to approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 19 July 2016. Reference Minute 12a; replace 'members of the Sports Council' with 'on Biddulph Valley Park Committee'

- b The Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 19 July 2016 were received.
- c The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 9 August 2016 were received.
- d The Minutes of the Civic Committee Meeting held on 9 August 2016 were received.

22. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- a The Mayor reported that Councillor Lawson had recently suffered a heart attack, but was recovering well at home. It was moved to send flowers to Councillor and Mrs Lawson with the best wishes of the Council for a speedy recovery.
- b The Mayor read an update from PCSO Sherratt – On Springfield Road, a warrant was executed and three people have been interviewed in connection with cannabis production. The police are continuing with further enquiries following the warrant. PCSO Sherratt also wished to remind Councillors about the Police and Crime Commissioner's People Power Fund.
- c John Robison had hosted the British Town Criers Championship; the Mayor presented gifts that had been received from some of the contestants.
- d Biddulph Youth and Community Zone (BYCZ) were in need of more board members. The Mayor also made Councillors aware that there was an apprenticeship in Youth Work being offered by BYCZ.
- e The Mayor thanked those who had contributed to a marvellous Biddulph Festival.
- f BYCZ planned to hold a Scarecrow Festival around the town during the first week in October. Schools, Businesses and Private Homes could enter. The Mayor requested the inclusion of 'supported by Biddulph Town Council' on advertising literature. This was agreed. It was noted that there would be no cost to the Council.

25. STATEMENT CONDEMNING RACIST LITERATURE

Councillor Wood talked about Albion First literature which had been delivered around the town. This had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting, for information and consideration. The leaflet contained inflammatory language. Councillor Wood noted that Biddulph was a tolerant, welcoming town. He requested a strong statement from the Town Council condemning the literature.

The Chief Officer read a draft statement:

At the Town Council meeting on 19 July 2016, Biddulph Town Council resolved the following,

We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. We Biddulph Town condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable. We reassure all people living in Biddulph Town that they are valued members of our community.

Biddulph Town Council is aware of a document that is being circulated through letterboxes in the town, entitled 'It's time to stop the Invasion!' from a group called Albion First.

Biddulph Town Councillors are united in being appalled by the language in this literature and the attempt to segregate the peaceful society in which we live. Biddulph Town Council believes everyone has a right to live free of hate crime and

that such literature is a blight on Biddulph, threatening its reputation as a welcoming and tolerant town.

Sadly, we know only too well that when political and economic uncertainty strikes, discord and hatred are often not far behind. It is essential we stand guard against any rise in hate crimes or abuse. We condemn anyone who discriminates against people because of an individual's race, religion or belief, disability, age, sexuality or gender.

Biddulph Town Council urges anyone with knowledge about this literature to contact the Police.

Councillor Jackson thanked the Chief Officer and Councillor Wood and asked about the leaflet: Was it legal? Was it inciting racial hatred? Councillor Jackson suggested that the document was given to Staffordshire Police for clarity on its legality.

Councillor Harper had been in Hong Kong recently, a multicultural city. His Granddaughter's school sang a multicultural song every day. Councillor Harper wondered if this Council could organise something similar in Biddulph. This would be included as an item on the September agenda of the General Purposes Committee.

Councillor Jones thought the leaflet was abhorrent and asked if it had been distributed anywhere else.

The Mayor suggested that the Police should be invited to the next Town Council meeting to provide an update.

Councillor Hart noted that women in public office had received nasty attacks on social media and there had been a rise in anti-Semitic attacks.

Councillor Lovatt reminded Councillors to give notice in writing of agenda items so all could be prepared

All agreed the statement would be released.

26. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

The following accounts were received for payment:

V Brown - Events Director	787.92
V Brown - Market Day Organiser	50.00
Market float – cash for stall construction	160.00
Gala Tent – 4 tables for market	277.93
B Carter	40.00
Petty cash	35.40
Npower – Christmas Lights standing charge	29.18
Viking – office supplies inc stamps	403.98
Kent County Council – copier charges	13.91
Parish Online – annual subscription	336.00
CJ Skelhorne Jewellers – check and engrave	60.00
RW Mitchell – Springfield Road drainage and slope assessment	600.00

D Allcock - Lengthsman work – 700.00	725.00
- Woodhouse Burial Ground – 25.00	
Staffs Pension Fund	1333.29
Salaries	3546.77
HMR&C direct debit to be paid 1 September 2016	1426.99

Signed Date.....

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm