

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2017

The Chief Officer introduced the Deputy Mayor; the Deputy Mayor invited Rev'd Steve Dyson to lead a time of prayer. The Deputy Mayor opened the meeting.

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor – Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Salt
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding

46.17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The meeting to adjourn for up to 20 minutes (Standing Order 1d-f) to allow for public participation. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Town Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Mayor.

Members of the public wishing to raise issues which are not on the Agenda should notify the Chief Officer five working days before the meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Council meeting itself.

- Charlie Smith - The Troll Run
Not able to attend
- Wendy Knapper - Concerns about new Staffordshire County Council home care contracts

Ms Knapper works for an organisation called AR1 Homecare. Ms Knapper was invited to address the meeting and spoke about her company which was locally based, with local carers, 'local girls looking after local people'. Staffordshire County Council had awarded the contract to another company.

Councillor Salt thanked Ms Knapper for attending the meeting and for fighting the corner for the relatives of those being cared for. One of those attending spoke about their parent who was terminally ill and had formed a bond with the carers.

Councillor Jones queried if the care was council funded with an additional contribution from the families. This was confirmed to be the case, but the contract was with the company not those cared for.

Ms Knapper explained that the County Council had asked AR1 to take on the care, but there was no contract and had been no consultation.

Councillor Lawson reported that he had recently attended a full Council meeting of Staffordshire County Council where it had been stated that tendering was in process for the contract to take on all home care provision. On that same day, letters went out from a company to say that it had the contract.

Clients could use direct payments to find their own care and make up any differences themselves.

Councillor Jackson stated that the County Council had not handled the procedure very well; it had been 'very, very harsh and very, very quick' and he felt it had been a cost cutting exercise. Councillor Jackson proposed that this Council write to the County Council to explain that we object to the way the process has been handled; this was seconded by Councillor Lovatt.

Councillor Lawson noted that the letter should be sent to Councillor Alan White and copy to Chief Executive

Philip Owens of Home Stay Care was invited to address the meeting. He had 28 Biddulph people on his books; all were to be transferred to a national company. He had a contract and believed it was not cost effective to move people. Mr Owens asked for support from the Town Council. He and Mrs Knapper ran local companies and their workers were Biddulph people. Mr Owens ran Home Stay Care with a principle of choice and independence for people who received the care. He felt that he had not been given a fair chance.

Councillor Jones suggested that we first find out what the County Council was proposing, before writing.

Councillor Lovatt felt that if there had been a three-month lead-in period this would have been appropriate, but only two weeks was given. This must be stopped before it starts, the process could be dealt with later. Councillor Lovatt thought there was a lack of clarity; she strongly objected and would like the process stopped with nothing changed until clarity was received.

A vote was taken the majority being in favour.

Councillor Lawson abstained from the vote.

- Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) representatives, Sue Ashman

This was a campaign group for women born in the 1950's who had been given revised pension ages imposed with little or no notice, the roll out had later been accelerated. This had not left them with enough time to plan for their retirement. Adequate notice had not been given, and the impact of the changes was not fair.

In some cases incorrect information had been given and many were suffering financial difficulties.

Councillor Jones supported the campaign as his wife is a 'WASPI'; it was gross unfairness and he felt that the process was not handled fairly. Councillor Jones proposed that a letter is sent to that effect from this Council. Councillor Jackson seconded this proposal; the process had been unfair and did not take into account the different responsibilities that men and women had during their lifetimes.

There was an online petition at www.waspi.co.uk. It was noted that the decision had also affected young people who had thought that parents could provide childcare.

47. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

The Mayor Councillor Wood
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hart

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations. Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.
- b) Other Disclosable Interests

49. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 19 September 2017 were approved and signed.
- b) The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 26 September 2017 were approved and signed.
- c) The Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 19 September 2017 were received.
- d) The Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 19 September 2017 were received.
- e) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10 October 2017 were received. Councillor Jones was not a member of this committee and had not been present in the room.
- f) The Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 10 October 2017 were received. Councillor Hawley, though not on the committee, had attended the meeting. Councillor Rogers noted that permission had been obtained from the owners of the Clockworks building, to power the system for Remembrance Day.

50. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor was visiting Fusignano.

The Deputy Mayor reported that he had attended the Biddulph in Bloom awards evening; it had been absolutely fantastic, he thanked Councillor Rogers who had stood in as MC at the last moment. Councillor Sheldon thanked Councillor McGuinness for his kind words.

Councillor Jones noted that the Mayor hoped to host a fundraiser in the Town Hall on 9 December 2017, tickets and posters were on the way.

51. YOUTH ADVISORS MEETING UPDATE

The Chief Officer reported that the meeting had been attended by representatives of the Biddulph Youth and Community Zone (BYCZ), James Bateman Junior High School and Woodhouse Academy. The meeting had begun with a 'behind the scenes' tour of the building. Discussion followed about their role; with emphasis given that we would seek their views and take up issues that they bring to the meetings.

52. FESTIVAL COMMITTEE UPDATE- ITEM REQUESTED BY CLLR ROGERS

Councillor Rogers reported that the a new committee had been formed; Jackie Nevill – Chair, Antony Capostagno – Deputy Chair, Emma Edwards – Secretary, and Wayne Rogers – Treasurer.

The Chief Officer and Events and Partnerships Officer would continue to support the Festival.

53. CONCLUSION OF GRANT THORNTON AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

The Chief Officer had received confirmation that the audit had been completed, there were no matters requiring attention, the papers had been posted on the website and noticeboard. There had been some confusion about when the Financial Regulations had been reviewed, but the Chief Officer had confirmed that this occurred annually.

Councillor Hall thanked Mrs Haydon and the two Officers who did the job very, very well. He congratulated the team.

54. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a) The following accounts were received for payment:

Expenditure in excess of £500

Protech Electrical

Inspection test and repair Christmas lights

320 replacement light bulbs

Lights for Biddulph Moor tree

Bracket testing

Replacement festoon

9465.60

N and J Tree Services Limited

tree survey at burial grounds

1740.00

ADB Garden Care

2nd half of grass cutting contract for burial grounds

9900.00

Expenditure below £500

Market imprest

180.00

Brian Carter – lock and unlock Woodhouse Burial ground gates

40.00

SLCC national Conference – 1 day	138.00
Biddulph Youth and Community Zone Ltd - Contribution to Inter School disco	100.00
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd - Empty waste skip at Woodhouse	19.80
Heads (Congleton) Ltd - Advertising in Biddulph Chronicle for Fresh Food Friday	70.00
SMDC - lease of land for Moorland Road allotment site	90.00

Credit card payments

Bill and Ben - skip at Park Lane Allotment site	195.00
ILCC - PLG06 Seasonal decorations handbook	70.00
Land registry search	3.00
Land registry search	6.00
Land registry search	3.00

b) Supplementary accounts (to be tabled)

Expenditure in excess of £500

e.on energy solutions

Highway lighting maintenance and energy 2017/19	2982.12
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Salaries

HMR&C direct debit to be paid 1 October	4760.73
Staffs Pension Fund	1818.65
	1818.65

Expenditure below £500

Moorside Memorials – adding lettering to War Memorial	176.00
Viking – office supplies including stamps	246.81
His n Hers photography – 3 Mayoral photographs	70.00
S Haydon – travel to Stafford for training	23.94
J Hancock – travel for Artisan market	16.20
petty cash	25.60

Councillor Jackson wanted to thank those who had been the backbone of the Festival since its beginnings twenty years ago. He proposed that a letter of thanks is sent to Eric Cox and to Frank Harris for their hard work, this was seconded by Councillor Hall and all were in agreement.

Councillor Jackson praised Councillor McGuinness; he had handled the meeting extremely well, it had not been an easy meeting. This was followed by a spontaneous round of applause.

The meeting closed at 8.07 pm

Signed Date