

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2014**

### **PRESENT**

The Mayor - Councillor Swift  
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Adams  
Councillor Deane  
Councillor Hall  
Councillor Harper  
Councillor Hart - Chair  
Councillor Hawley  
Councillor Jackson  
Councillor Jones  
Councillor Rogers  
Councillor Sheldon MBE  
Councillor Tolley  
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance:  
Councillor Redfern  
Councillor Walley

### **11.14 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:  
Councillor Baddeley  
Councillor Davies  
Councillor Deaville  
Councillor Ellsum  
Councillor Lovatt  
Councillor Wood

### **12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Minute 20.3 Councillor Hart as a landowner
- b Other Interests: Minutes 14 and 16, Councillor Rogers - a regular user.

### **13. MINUTES**

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 20 May 2014.
- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Burial Grounds Committee meeting held on 9 June 2014. It was suggested that the gate be locked overnight.

### **14. PCSO REPORT**

Biddulph Neighbourhood Team Sergeant Peter Slinn was invited to address the meeting. Sgt Slinn praised his excellent team. The team was currently concentrating on policing around the World Cup, mainly issues associated with alcohol and drug consumption, domestic violence and drink driving. Ongoing support had been promoted recently with information available at local events. Sgt Slinn explained how licensed premises would be policed at games involving the England team.

Information was distributed about the Force Open Day at Police HQ in Stafford, to be held on 29 June 2014, from 11-3. A free bus would run between Leek Police Station and the Open Day.

Sgt Slinn reported on a site visit that afternoon where the feasibility of adapting rooms at Biddulph Town Hall was discussed.

Councillor Jackson - in the absence of Councillor Wood - raised the issue of parking in King Street (see Minute 16). Councillor Jackson asked if vehicles blocking access/egress to properties in John Street and High Street, could be booked for obstruction. Sgt Slinn would ensure that all officers were made aware of the situation. Advisory notes would be used as a first response to perpetrators. Councillor Rogers noted that there were problems at all times of the day. Councillor Hart would take the issue to the Joint Area Parking Committee of which he was vice chair; he would also alert County Councillor Lawson.

Councillor Jackson asked for further information about the recent discovery of a cannabis factory on the High Street. No further updates were available at that time.

Councillor Tolley asked for information on numbers of staff. Sgt Slinn responded – 1 Sergeant, two Neighbourhood Police Officers and 5 PCSOs, with usually two Officers per shift, who paraded in Leek before travelling to Biddulph. Councillor Tolley asked if the PCSOs would be given parking enforcement powers. Sgt Slinn promised to send more detailed information to Councillor Tolley following the meeting.

Councillor Sheldon queried the issuing of incident numbers. Sgt Slinn advised everyone to request an incident number if one was not forthcoming, but assured members that, given an address, an incident could be located on the log without much difficulty.

## **15. BEMERSLEY TIP**

A written response from the County Council had been received to questions asked about the service at Bemersley Tip. Councillor Jackson noted that the Bemersley Liaison Committee, of which he is the Chair, would meet on 16 July 2014. Councillor Jackson felt that the tip was still under threat, but added that he did not think the issue would be raised again this side of the General Election. Councillor Tolley thought the response was poor and that this council should press for more detailed answers to question 1, 3 and 4.

Councillor Jones had visited the tip on Wednesday morning and counted at least 20 vehicles, not all from Biddulph - some were from north Stoke on Trent too. He was outraged at the suggestion to close such a well used facility which had been in the town for 35 years. Councillor Hall ridiculed the report and the response and expressed concern at the lack of basic knowledge.

Councillor Deane wondered if a vehicle sensor could be used to count vehicles entering the site, adding that there was a people sensor in the library. Councillor Hart noted that County Highways made extensive use of vehicle counters. Councillor Sheldon expressed concern that few residents of Bemersley were invited to attend the Committee meeting and questioned who had been consulted. Councillor Redfern had been a member of the Tip committee on and off for twenty years, he understood that the Liaison Committee had originally just put a notice in the local press. Only those who attended that initial meeting, mostly those with an axe to grind, had been invited since.

It was agreed to write to Mr Loran expressing disappointment at the poor quality of the response. The Chief Officer would locate the pertinent point in the report in response to question 4.

**16. PARKING IN KING STREET**

This item had been dealt with in Minute 14.

**17. LIBRARY SERVICES**

A letter had been received from Councillor Michael Lawrence of Staffordshire County Council regarding proposals to reshape library provision at Biddulph Library. Biddulph had been designated as a Library Core. Councillor Jackson felt that this was good news. Concern was expressed about the mobile library which served Biddulph Moor and also smaller communities where libraries would be staffed by volunteers. It was suggested that Ms Edwards be invited to give a more detailed briefing at a future meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

**18. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- a Confirmation of the Stopping up Order for a highway at Colliers Way, comprising highway verge, received from the Department for Transport. The Order was available for public inspection until 24 July. A copy is available for public inspection in Councils Connect
- b Invitation from St Lawrence's Church for the Mayor and Town Councillors to attend the Biddulph Festival 'Songs of Praise' evening at the newly refurbished church at 6.30 pm on Sunday 29 June. In addition councillors were asked to choose a hymn, as a poll is being carried out to discover Biddulph's favourite hymn! Any suggestions to the Chief Officer.

**19. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH**

Councillors Rogers and Redfern had attended an Arts Forum awards evening in Leek. Local artists who performed at the ceremony included the Biddulph and District Youth Orchestra and the Biddulph Ukulele group. Councillor Rogers felt that Biddulph's performers shone, he said that he had been very proud.

Councillor Sheldon had attended a meeting of the Brown Lees Residents Association and the Mayor's Civic Service.

**20. LENGSTHMAN WORK**

Councillor Deane had given a detailed map regarding Footpath 23 to the Chief Officer.

**21. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

**1 The Dove Service's 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

The Dove Service (an adult counselling service) is having a fundraising dinner and dance at the Moat House on Saturday 28 June, tickets £38.25 pp and has sent an invitation to Town Council members. The counselling service takes place at the town hall every Tuesday, by appointment. Leaflets available.

**2 Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum**

The visit to the National Memorial Arboretum to commemorate the start of World War 1, and organised by the Biddulph British Legion, is to take place on 16th July

2014. Biddulph will be the only town sending pupils from every school in the area to the NMA to mark the occasion.

*Councillor Hart left the room before discussion on the following item and returned afterwards. Councillor Jones took the chair.*

**3 Town & Parish Council Consultation on Site Options and Development Boundaries**

Information Pack received from the Principal Planning Officer relating to the new Local Plan and site options. Responses must be returned by 31 July. ***It was agreed to hold a special planning meeting to discuss this item at 6.00pm on Tuesday 22 July 2014 in the Council Chamber. Copies of the report to be circulated to members.***

**4 Paved ramps in High Street**

I reported back to the County Council from the last meeting and have received a reply that Highways have a directive against using coloured tarmac, as any future re-instatement by utilities will only be in black tarmac. *Disappointment was expressed. It was agreed to insist on an aesthetic reinstatement to match the other ramps. If the tarmac cannot be coloured red, then the ramp must be repaired as it was.*

**5. Biddulph Town Crier**

Mr Robinson had recently visited Biddulph's twin town Fusignano, where he had been presented with a medallion. This was one of only 500 struck to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composer Corelli – a native of Fusignano. The medallion was circulated for members to admire.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

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