

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 15 JULY 2014

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor Swift
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Adams
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Deane
Councillor Hall
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hart - Chair
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon MBE
Councillor Tolley
Councillor Whilding
Councillor Wood

Also in attendance:
Councillor Gibson
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Walley

22.14 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:
Councillor Davies
Councillor Deaville
Councillor Ellsum
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations. Councillor Gibson declared a Disclosable and Pecuniary Interest and requested a Dispensation for discussion regarding the Artisan Market until May 2015. This was Moved.
- b Other Disclosable Interests – Councillor Sheldon, anything to do with Biddulph in Bloom. Councillor Hart, anything to do with the Local Development Framework, site specifics.

24. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2014.
- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Allotments Committee meeting held on 26 June 2014.

25. FIRE SAFETY

Rachel Spruce, Area Fire Safety Officer (Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service) was invited to make a presentation to the committee. Ms Spruce was the Community Safety Officer for the Fire Service for Biddulph. The Fire Service now did a lot of work on prevention and worked closely with the Police. School visits were made

where 'Flames aren't Games' and 'Operation Good Guy' initiatives were explained. Home Fire Risk checks are available free of charge to all residents of Staffordshire. This includes home checks and installation of free fire/smoke alarms. A pilot scheme is running in the Staffordshire Moorlands to encourage local communities to be responsible for their own safety, information packs are to be developed, and people urged to look out for vulnerable people near to them and inform the Fire Service via Ms Spruce.

Councillor Jones noted that every area of Biddulph had a Residents Association and wondered if it would be possible for Ms Spruce to go to talk to them. Ms Spruce expressed her willingness. Councillor Harper noted that Biddulph Town Council had its own website and wondered if a link to the information could be posted there. Ms Spruce noted that there were campaigns throughout the year which could be publicised.

Councillor Baddeley commented that some years ago she had a Home Fire Risk check and had also received some interesting tips. Councillor Wood reported that he had worked in the Fire Service for 28 years and it was really great to hear what was going on with inter-agency working which would be beneficial to all in the community. Councillor Wood asked who would intervene in the cases of domestic abuse. Ms Spruce replied that it was not something in which she was trained, and she would alert the Police.

Councillor Rogers expressed thanks to the Fire Service for its help in erecting the Festival bunting. Ms Spruce said that she was concerned about a Biddulph property with hoarding issues and would share this information with the other agencies. Councillor Hart noted that this could also cause distress to neighbours.

Ms Spruce mentioned the Olive Branch initiative and circulated information to members. This scheme offered training in how to refer vulnerable members of the community to the relevant agency.

Councillor Tolley had noticed young people having a bonfire near to his home; but on calling 101 the contact centre was at a loss how to deal with the issue, feeling that the situation did not warrant a fire engine. Ms Spruce responded noting that anyone having a garden fire, however small, should always inform the Fire Service. This information would also be publicised on the Town Council website.

Councillor Harper proposed that this Council engaged with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue and add the relevant information to the Town Council website, this was seconded by Councillor Whilding and Moved.

26. PCSO REPORT

PCSO Sherratt reported on action during the previous month

- a a property had been referred to Fire and Rescue Service following a house visit
- b Biddulph had been quiet during the World Cup, with no problems
- c Staffordshire Police Force Open Day - 3,000 visitors had been expected, but 7,500 had attended. It had been a brilliant day – wonderful engagement with the public
- d Nothing further to report on the Police Post.
- e No complaints had been received about the parking in King Street and no tickets had been issued. Councillor Rogers noted that there was still an ongoing problem, however people were not reporting it. Councillor Wood felt that there was a massive problem in King Street. PCSO Sherratt encouraged everyone to call 101 if they were blocked in.

- f One person had been charged for the cultivation of cannabis following the discovery of a factory in the High Street.
- g The number of Anti social behaviour incidents had decreased
- h The main concern at the moment was theft from vehicles, especially power tools left overnight in cars/vans
- i PCSO Sherratt would soon be competing in the 180 mile sponsored bike ride, for The Dogs Trust
- j Brigdes were being built between The Roaches School and the residents of Wedgwood Lane/Washington Close. A community barbeque would be held in September
- k PCSO Sherratt was also continuing to work with Biddulph High School students.
- l With reference to a recent act of flowerbed vandalism, the action taken would be reported to Councillor Sheldon privately.

Councillor Deane reported that he was the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator for Washington Close and had been experiencing problems with the telephone warning system. Councillor Jones expressed concern about school crossings, especially near to the Spar shop on Biddulph Moor, delivery van drivers were the worst culprits in his opinion. PCSO Sherratt thought that targeted leafleting of the Park Smart initiative might help. There had also been problems reported at Knypersley First School.

Councillor Harper felt that this town was fortunate to have such hard working people. He would like to see a knife and firearms amnesty in the near future.

Councillor Hart thanked PCSO Sherratt for attending the meeting. Councillor Hart asked if an eye could be kept on the 8-9 tonne tractors which were travelling in the Gillow Heath area at present. PCSO Sherratt said that he would pass this on.

27. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a Notification received of a vacancy for a Local Authority Governor at Kingsfield First School
- b Notification received from Highway Lighting that the unit at Robin Hill is not working and is unrepairable. A replacement pole bracket and lantern will cost £725 +VAT. It was proposed by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Hall to replace the unit. It was Resolved to replace the light.

28. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor Baddeley reported that her activities had been curtailed recently, but that she had Chaired a meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel the previous week. The Chair praised Councillor Baddeley for her work with Health Scrutiny.
- b Councillor Baddeley, Councillor Hart, Councillor Redfern and Councillor Sheldon had attended the Chairman's Civic Sunday.
- c Councillor Wood had attended a meeting of the District Council scrutiny committee, where a presentation had been given by Gail Edwards on the restructuring of Staffordshire Libraries. Councillor Wood felt that the whole structure was under threat.
- d Biddulph in Bloom judging day would be the following Thursday 24 July 2014

29. LENGSTHMAN WORK

Details had been received from Biddulph Moor Community Association and passed to the Lengthsman.

30. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 6 and 4a High Street – application for a premises licence

Notification received of an application for a premises licence for the supply of alcohol at 6 and 4a High Street between the hours of 1000 to 2200 hours Monday to Sunday. Any representations to be made to Licensing by 4 August.

The exact address of the property and the times to be checked

2 Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Posters received from Matthew Ellis for public display

3 SLCC Regional Conference – 17 September

Notification received of this year's SLCC Regional Conference at Telford. Items for discussion include: information on the new Local Audit and Accountancy Act, community engagement and empowerment, localism, recent changes to the law for local councils, and a session on employment rights and performance management. The cost is £69 for the first delegate and £59 for each delegate thereafter.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer and Officer to the Council could attend.

4 Pensions Employer Training

I will be attending a training session tomorrow in Stafford, where recent changes to the scheme will be explained.

5 Library Consultation

Gail Edwards, the County Council's District Commissioning Lead for the Staffordshire Moorlands, will be attending the August meeting of this committee to discuss the current Library consultation and proposals for Biddulph Library. People are able to have their say through the following different ways until the end of the consultation on the 7 October, and the Town Council has been asked to promote this:

- at one of 35 drop-in sessions. There is at least one drop in session at every library that is proposed to be a 'Library Local'. The details of these sessions are available now at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/connectedlibraries
- in their library or mobile/travelling library in person or through filling in a questionnaire;
- through one of eight formal question and answer sessions across the county;
- online at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/connectedlibraries
- by email at connectedlibraries@staffordshire.gov.uk
- or through social media

These materials and the consultation documents are also available to download at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/connectedlibraries

Councillor Baddeley suggested that the press could make members of the public aware of the process

The meeting closed at 8.28pm

SignedDate