

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 19 AUGUST 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 Lovatt
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon MBE
Councillor Tolley
Councillor Wood

Also in attendance:
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Walley

31.14 APOLOGIES

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

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Hart, anything in connection with the Local Development Framework, site specifics.
- b Other Disclosable Interests: Minute 33b - Councillor Hall as a member of Biddulph Rotary.

33. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 15 July 2014.
- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Burial Grounds Committee meeting held on 12 August 2014. Councillor Jackson had sent apologies

34. LIBRARY SERVICES

Gail Edwards, County Council District Commissioning Lead, was invited to address the meeting regarding proposals to reshape library provision in Staffordshire. The 12 week consultation (which would end on 17 October 2014) was being carried out to ensure that the Library Service was 'fit for the future'; an efficient service which would be accessible to as many people as possible. The Service was under financial pressures, there had been a 12% decrease in users in the county, 8.2% in the Staffordshire Moorlands, with an increase in on-line requests. Ms Edwards noted

that all the documents were available via the website. Ms Edwards responded to questions from members. It was emphasised that Biddulph Library would not be closed; however, the proposal was for a three hour reduction in opening hours. It was noted that the mobile library service had not been included in the consultation. Ms Edwards emphasised that suggestions given in the consultation would be taken into account and encouraged as many as possible to complete a questionnaire, either on line or on paper – copies could be obtained from the local libraries. It was agreed to put a poster in Councils Connect encouraging people to participate. The Chief Officer would re e-mail the consultation to members.

Councillor Hart thanked Ms Edwards for attending

35. PCSO REPORT

PCSO Sherratt was invited to address the meeting, he reported on action taken during the previous month.

- a Car crime was currently high, 90% of cases involved insecure cars, or those with items on display. Members were encouraged to pass this information to constituents
- b Biddulph now had all its officers working from the Town Hall and was covered 24/7.
- c The new Inspector – Ian Hancock - would be invited to attend the next meeting
- d Jane Sawyers was the acting Chief Constable
- e It was hoped that there would be a new intake of PCSOs in September
- f PCSO Sherratt had raised £504.50 for Dogs Trust following his Hadrian's Wall bike ride. He hoped to cycle through Switzerland in 2015. He thanked those who had supported him.
- g PCSO Sherratt had been working with Brown Lees Residents Association and Vicky Ellis of the District Council to produce a leaflet to go to all schools about parking and speeding around schools.

Councillor Hart thanked PCSO Sherratt for his input.

36. SMOKING ON TOWN HALL FRONTAGE

Councillor Harper reported on his concerns. The area under the canopy at the front of the Town Hall had become an unofficial smoking area. This was a result of the stubbing out box being located there giving smokers the illusion that this was a smoking shelter. Smoke wafted up and into the Town Council Office causing discomfort for the staff. Councillor Harper pointed out that as employees this Council had a duty of care to its staff. He encouraged members to lead by example and not to smoke in that area. Councillor Harper noted that it was also unpleasant for those entering and exiting the building during an evening function. The Chief Officer noted that Police Officers also had to use this doorway during the course of their work and had also expressed discomfort, and that the smokers amongst them would prefer a designated area which was not in public view.

Concern was expressed that such measures could deter people from holding events in the building. Councillor Harper proposed that the bin be relocated away from the canopy, with signage advising that the area around the doorway was a no smoking zone. He had contacted Officers at Property Services and had not received a response. Councillor Hall proposed, seconded by Councillor Adams, that a letter from the Council be sent to the Head of Property Services at the District Council asking for action to be taken to resolve this problem, and requesting a prompt reply. All were in favour and this was Moved.

37. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a SPCA Gazette - the summer 2014 edition was received.
- b County Council Supporting People Review - a letter was received from Councillor Alan White, Cabinet Member for Care.
- c Biddulph in Bloom accounts for year ended 31 January 2014 were received. Councillor Sheldon noted that these were not the audited accounts; a copy of those would be available very soon.

38. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor Rogers expressed concern about the pelican crossing adjacent to Wrights Pies. He had met with the workmen who were pouring sand into the gaps. He proposed that this be discussed more fully at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee; this was seconded by Councillor Lovatt.
- b Councillor Harper had met with fire service representatives and the Chief Officer to discuss adding information to the Biddulph website. It was noted that the special RTA demonstration car had been booked for the Christmas switch on events in Biddulph and Biddulph Moor. Cllr Harper had visited Washington Close with the fire officers, where discussion about the Roaches School Community Safety Scheme had taken place. He proposed that a senior student from the Roaches be invited to address the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee. This was agreed.
- c Councillor Harper had received complaints about parking and speeding traffic along Park Lane. It was moved to add this to the agenda for the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee. Councillor Jackson noted that he would be meeting on site with David Greatbatch (Senior Area Highways Officer) and Margaret Worthington, Chair of Knypersley Residents Association.
- d Councillor Lovatt reported that she and Councillor Walley had attended a meeting where it had been confirmed that the mobile breast screening clinic would be sited at Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre on 12/3 September 2014 and would begin screening by appointment from 19 September 2014 until January 2015, continuing on a regular cycle for 9 years. Councillor Lovatt asked that members publicise this.
- e Councillor Harper would be attending a meeting the following evening of the Poolfold Residents Association to listen to a presentation by representatives of the developers wishing to build homes at Hurst Quarry.

39. LENGSTHMAN WORK

The Chief Officer reported that the Lengthsman was dealing with work identified by a local resident.

40. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Staffordshire County Council working with Amey infrastructure+

Letter received from County Councillor Mark Winnington regarding a new partnership with Amey called "Infrastructure+" to work with local communities to deliver highways other infrastructure. A workshop has been arranged for 25 September at County Buildings to give parish/town councils an opportunity to see how the partnership will work. One delegate per council may attend.

It was Agreed that Councillor Hart attend the meeting and that this be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

2 Lease for Moorland Road allotment site

Copy of new lease received via email for signature at the next meeting of the Town Council. The lease is for seven years at £360 per annum, paid quarterly. (The previous lease had expired and we have been paying £310 per annum in recent years.) *It was proposed to write and ask for justification of the increase. The lease would be presented to the September 2014 meeting of the Town Council to be signed.*

3 Honours for Staffordshire

Leaflets received from HM Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire on how to nominate deserving individuals.

4 Heating & diesel oil theft

A warning leaflet from Staffordshire Police has been received on the increase of this type of crime and ways to make it more difficult for thieves.

5 Fly tipping

I have reported an incidence of fly tipping on land adjacent to the Park Lane allotment site to the District Council and am awaiting a response. *It was requested by Councillor Jackson that an update to the Springfield Road allotment site be added to the agenda as a regular item*

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

SignedDate