

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2014

PRESENT

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

Also in attendance:
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Walley

41.14 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Deaville
Councillor Ellsum
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Wood
Mr J Robinson – Town Crier

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations:
- b Other Disclosable Interests: Cllr Sheldon in any matters relating to Biddulph in Bloom, as Chairman

43. MINUTES

It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 19 August 2014.

44. SPEEDING ON PARK LANE

Item requested by Councillor Harper, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Councillor Redfern was invited to speak on this. He said that he understood a meeting had taken place between Highways officers and the residents' association and that they were awaiting an update from the County Council on appropriate actions. Regarding the area where the accident happened, he understood there were reasons for the crash and certain actions may alleviate this. There was a problem

along the whole road with speeding traffic. The Community Action team had been out to check vehicles and warn those speeding.

Councillor Jones said that the problem from Knypersley corner to Top Road was that there were no 30 mph signs, as the speed limit doesn't change. The County Council will say that nothing can be done, as there is no policy for repeater signs. He felt that the County Council should engage with this problem, but that nothing had been done as no one had died. This was a serious indictment on our system.

PCSO Sherratt said that he had held a recent meeting with County Councillor Jackson, members of the Residents Association and highways officers and that a matrix board was to be sited.

Councillor Sheldon commented that some villages, eg Stockton Brook, had signs on the verges to remind motorists of speed limits. Councillor Jones felt that most people were aware of the speed limit and were cynical about Community Speedwatch. He said that enforcement was needed and that word would soon get around.

Councillor Tolley reported that Knypersley Community Association had asked for matrix signs last year, which had been ruled out by the County Council. He suggested that the alternative was speed humps, which was also discussed by the Association. The County Council evaluated highways on a points system.

The Chair recommended that members await the firm report from County Councillor Jackson at the next meeting and this was Agreed.

45. LAND AT SPRINGFIELD ROAD

It was Moved that Minute 45 would be discussed at the end of the meeting, as a Confidential Item, as estimates for work were to be discussed.

46. PCSO REPORT

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

- a there had been a fatality some years ago in New Street and the police have requested the speed camera vehicle for this area.
- b vehicle crime was a serious problem last month, but he was happy to report that an arrest had now been made.
- c The new Inspector, Ian Hancock, was to attend the October meeting.
- d A 'Park Smart' leaflet had been distributed to every schoolchild
- e They were now launching the Junior Cadet scheme in schools; for 9-10 year olds – covering ASB and police procedures. All junior cadets would receive certificates
- f Over 8th/9th/10th October Tom Jackson, the PCSO trainer, was coming to our area and work alongside the PCSOs. There was to be another intake of PCSOs next year and future training will be based on what he earns in the Moorlands, which was exciting.
- g PCSO Sherratt introduced a pupil from the Roaches School who explained how she lived at the school and how she had worked with the community police, following on from being arrested and how this had changed her perceptions. The pupil said that she had a police contact if she ever had a problem and that there was always someone to go to with problems. In Manchester, where she had lived, she would never have been seen associating with the police and had frequently been in trouble. She was now really enjoying what she was doing, although she felt she was still sometimes the 'mouthy kid in the corner', but knows she can find support from the officers and school staff. She spoke of

recent activities organised by the PCSOs – a football match with pupils, staff and police officers, a visit to Port Val, and a barbeque with residents of Washington Close. (PCSO Sherratt said that this had been excellent – vulnerable adults meeting vulnerable children - and a future visit to the Dogs Trust.)

Councillor Rogers said that it was really encouraging how this pupil had changed her attitude. He added that if she ever needed any help from Councillors please ask. Councillor Sheldon felt that this was a wonderful relationship – congratulations; she was really proud of them. Councillor Deane echoed this – he been to the school as a past Mayor – it was an amazing place and they showed great working together – congratulations.

The Mayor commented on the wonderful time he had when last at the school, praising the Head. The Mayor had presented over 40 awards to pupils.

The pupil responded by saying that this was a different method of teaching that suited children who don't fit in with mainstream school. She was hoping to get good GCSE grades and join the Army.

Councillor Jones asked PCSO Sherratt about parking outside schools – what was being done about this as people were blatantly parking on zig-zags. PCSO Sherratt said that this was an enforceable penalty but the PCSOs were not allowed to give penalty noticed for this at present. He said that he would take this back to his Sergeant.

Councillor Tolley praised the Staffordshire Police, saying that it was great that officers were out and about and getting to know people. Councillor Baddeley also passed congratulations on to the pupil, saying that she should stand for Council when older.

The Chair thanked PCSO Sherratt and the pupil for attending the meeting and said that he was very pleased that she was living in Biddulph and showing such a lot of confidence and common sense. He asked her to attend in the future and thanked her very much for her refreshing presentation.

47. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a Biddulph & Moorlands Music Festival have asked if they may borrow the Town Council's display cabinet for the weekend of the Festival. Approved - proposed Councillor Deane, seconded Councillor Jones.
- b Invitation received to the Staffordshire Playing Fields Association's AGM on 8th October 2014 at Burton on Trent.
- c Changes to cyclic maintenance regimes of footway lighting columns from Eon. It was felt that more information should be requested.
- d Community Council of Staffordshire – invitation to AGM on 9 October & Annual Report 2013-14 received

48. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor Jones had attended the Three Nook Liaison Committee. There was not as much gas as the drilling company had thought. Planning Permission was now being sought for a smaller generator. Councillor Redfern added that the previous company had hit the same problem before it had gone out of business.
- b Councillor Rogers had been to a meeting of the SPCA. They had said that they were losing members and were concerned that few members were from the Moorlands. Cllr Rogers had suggested they should bring their roadshow to the

area. Another item on the agenda had been the fact that S106 money is being phased out and a new fund brought in.

- c Councillor Sheldon had attended the Brown Lees Residents Association AGM – a positive meeting – the Association work really hard.
- d Councillor Hart had been invited onto Moorlands Radio once a month to share what's going on in Biddulph. He had been talking about Biddulph in Bloom and the Gold Award, plus filming at Biddulph Grange and in the town. The town had recently had a decent airing on the BBC and on German TV! A lot of media attention, which was doing us a lot of good. The Chair then added the congratulations of this Committee to those of the Town Council to Biddulph in Bloom in Bloom for the Gold Award success and Councillor Sheldon reported that Greenway Moor had also won the Chairman of The Heart of England's Award for their work.

49. LENGSTHMAN WORK

No specific items reported.

50. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Bowling green at St Lawrence's Recreation Ground

Letter received from Projects Officer of the District Council giving an update on the scheduled start date and details of the contractors and confirming that the gate to Woodhouse Burial Ground will be locked for the duration of the works, for security reasons.

2 Biddulph Methodist Church - War & Peace event 21st September

An invitation for all councillors has been received from Biddulph Methodist Church to attend a tribute in words and music to those who died in time of war at 6 pm this Sunday 21st September. There will also be an opportunity to view the WWI exhibition over refreshments.

3 Newsletter from NACO (National Association of Civic Officers)

The current newsletter includes extensive information on protocol on the death of a senior national figure, plus details of training events.

4 Nominations for SPCA Executive and AGM arrangements

Nominations are now being accepted for election of representatives to the SPCA Executive at the Association's AGM on 2nd December. Nominations to reach the SPCA office by no later than Monday 3rd November. A copy of the nomination form has also been received.

Member Councils are also now invited to put forward motions for debate at the AGM which, this year, is being held on the evening of **Monday, 1st December** at County Buildings in Stafford, commencing at 6.45pm. The related proposal form has been received. The calling papers for the 75th AGM, together with copies of the Association's Annual Report, will be made available in due course.

5 Council Tax capping

Recent enquiries made of the local government minister responsible have confirmed that no decision has yet been taken on whether council tax referendum principles will be applied to larger town and parish councils in England for 2015/16. The Government has previously made clear that it is prepared to apply the referendum thresholds to larger town and parish councils from 2015/16 onwards, if deemed necessary.

SignedDate.....

It was Resolved that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, ie estimate prices, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

45. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – LAND AT SPRINGFIELD ROAD

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

SignedDate