

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2014

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor Swift
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Adams
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Davies
Councillor Ellsum
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart - Chair
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon MBE
Councillor Tolley

Also in attendance:
Councillor Walley

51.14 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Deane
Councillor Deaville
Councillor Gibson
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Whilding
Councillor Wood

52. 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. Councillors Hall and Harper in Minute 53b as members of the Rotary Club of Biddulph. Minute 54: Councillors Hawley and Jones, as residents and councillors of Biddulph Moor; Councillor Hart, as a landowner, should the LDF be mentioned in Ms Costello's report

53. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 16 September 2014. Cllr Lovatt wished to ask questions on the Minutes and it was agreed that this be done as a confidential item at the end of the meeting, as estimates were involved.
- b It was Resolved to receive the Minutes of the Burial Grounds Committee held on 14 October 2014.

54. AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY AT BIDDULPH MOOR

Michelle Costello (Housing Strategy Officer, SMDC) was invited to address the meeting.

A housing needs survey was to be carried out, the area of focus being Biddulph Moor. Areas to be surveyed include the sizes of homes and residents' needs. A letter drop with a pre-paid envelope for the reply will be carried out between 4th and 18th of November 2014. The survey would also identify those who had recently left the area. Ms Costello asked for this Council's help to support the promotion. Ms Costello explained that a survey of the whole district would be preferable, but too costly. The focus would be on areas where landowners had come forwards.

The Chair felt uncomfortable about the discussion as he had declared an interest, members wished him to retain the Chair.

Ms Costello explained that affordable housing could include Housing Association rental properties, noting that Housing Associations had ways to deal with anti-social behaviour of tenants.

Councillor Hawley expressed his concerns: Affordable housing must be for locals; Moor First School was almost full; roads and transport links to and from the village were poor; infrastructure was in need of upgrading. Councillor Hawley felt that a whole area survey was needed to gain the whole picture or it could lead to major problems. Ms Costello noted that there was a local area connection agreement in place.

Councillor Jones felt that developers were behind this and he expressed concern that people may be brought in from outside the area should housing associations become involved, although he also said that there was a need for affordable housing for locals. Councillor Rogers said that the residents of the new estate at the Uplands Mill site were having problems with housing association residents from out of the area.

Councillor Hall cautioned that this was the first stage of the consultation, trying to find out if there was a need. Councillor Jackson advised that we proceed with caution.

Councillor Hart added that the evidence base was needed and possibly the result would be that there was no need/only a small need for additional housing. He thanked Ms Costello for attending the meeting.

55. LOCAL BUS SERVICES

Representatives of First Group were unable to attend the meeting.

56. SCC WORKING WITH AMEY INFRASTRUCTURE+

Councillor Hart reported on the meeting he had attended on behalf of the Council, explaining the nature of Amey's contract with the District Council. When available the information from the meeting would be downloaded and brought to a future meeting.

57. LOCAL BUS SERVICES

Representatives of Bakers Coaches were delayed on the M5 in the aftermath of Hurricane Gonzalo and were unable to attend the meeting

58. PCSO's REPORT

Inspector Ian Hancock and PCSO Sherratt were welcomed to the meeting. PCSO Sherratt updated members on recent events:

- Church Road vandalism, the enquiry was ongoing
- Tom Jackson the PCSO and Special trainer had visited last week
- Junior Cadets - 6 would pass out from the Roaches Lower School the following day
- Work with residents of Washington Close and students from The Roaches School was ongoing. A visit to The Dogs Trust had recently taken place.
- Enquiries were ongoing to apprehend a flasher
- A traffic operation had recently been carried out by Sgt Slinn in Newpool Road Towerhill Road, Park Lane. Figures were listed, and summons and traffic advisory warnings had been issued.

Inspector Hancock – LPU Commander for Staffordshire Moorlands – then gave a brief history of his career to date.

Councillor Jackson asked if detailed information of the traffic figures could be forwarded to members via the Chief Officer. This was agreed.

Councillor Jones expressed concern that the problem was worse than the figures would suggest. He did not think that warning should be given, just tickets, fines and points deductions. He did not agree with the Community Speedwatch scheme. Councillor Jones suggested that a covert operation be carried out near to the High School, where inconsiderate and illegal parking was causing concern.

59. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a Staffordshire Youth Service – letter received from County Councillor Mark Sutton. It was proposed to invite Youth Workers to a future meeting
- b Footway lighting changes – information from Eon received
- c Information received from the District Council on the play area at Church Road
- d Invitation for council members to attend the Knypersley Cricket Club's Halloween Bonfire and fireworks display on Friday 31st October as guests of the club. Numbers are required in advance in order that tickets can be arranged. Members appreciated the invitation.

60. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor Jackson reported on a meeting at Staffordshire County Council, where he had asked Ian Parry, the Portfolio Holder, directly if the Bemersley Recycling Centre was safe from closure, he could not get a response. Councillor Jackson urged all members to be vigilant.
- b Councillor Rogers asked if a meeting could be arranged between the contractor – David Greatbatch, the chair of Civic and the Chair of General Purposes. Councillor Rogers felt that the problem had been caused by poor workmanship by Enterprise.
- c Councillor Baddeley had attended a meeting at Leek Haregate; where she had raised concerns about failings at the North Staffs day surgery unit. Councillor Baddeley had recently been a patient at the unit and felt that the standards were unacceptable. Councillor Hart commended Councillor Baddeley for her strength in attending meetings and carrying on her duties throughout her recent health issues.

- d Councillor Harper mentioned the Olive Branch scheme which offers training to help vulnerable people. Councillor Harper felt that it was reasonable for Council staff to attend a training session which would be held in Biddulph. He also encouraged fellow members to take part. This would be an item for the November or December meetings.

61. LENGSTHMAN WORK

Two areas of concern were identified. The Chief Officer would notify the Lengthsman.

62. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 St Lawrence's Church refurbishment

Letter received from Reverend Cannam regarding the recent programme of improvements to the church building and thanking the Town Council for the grant of £500 towards this work. Photographs were also received.

2 Biddulph in Bloom

A copy of the unaudited accounts from February 2014 to the end of September 2014 for Biddulph in Bloom has been received.

3 Planting Licence for Biddulph Moor

The Town Council has been asked to obtain a licence for Biddulph Moor Community Association to place planters in the village centre. County Highways are in agreement and have prepared some drawings of the locations, but will only deal with parish and town councils in granting these licences. *It was agreed to accept in principle, proposed by Councillor Hall, seconded by Councillor Adams.*

4 Partnership between the SLCC and NALC

At the Society of Local Council Clerks' 40th National Conference in Bristol last week, the Chairmen and Chief Executives of the Society and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) signed a new protocol, in which both organisations agreed to work together to promote the best interests of the local councils sector and its employees and their contribution to the wellbeing of communities. These aims will be achieved through regular communication at all levels, mutual promotion and collaboration in representations to Government and other bodies when there is common interest.

5 Sainsbury's Charity Partner – the David William Moss Memorial Fund

Sainsbury's are holding a Grand Raffle for its charity partner in the store on 5 December and has asked if the Town Council would wish to donate a prize for this event. It was agreed that it would be up to an individual Councillor to decide whether or not to donate a prize.

SignedDate.....

The meeting closed at 9.00pm