

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2015

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor Baddeley
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Salt
Councillor Court
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Swift
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding
Councillor Wood

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers

11.15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:
Councillor Jones
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Sheldon MBE

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared
- b Other Disclosable Interests: Re Minute 18c Councillor Harper: ex-Fire and Rescue Services employee. Re Minute 20.1: Councillor Redfern as an attendee of Knypersley Residents Association.

13. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 19 May 2015.
- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Burial Grounds Committee meeting held on 8 June 2015.

14. CROSSING, BIDDULPH HIGH STREET

Councillor Lawson noted that works to repair the crossing would take place in the near future. He read out an email from A-M Raftery which said that the crossing would have tarmac ramps and a block paved top section. Councillor Rogers was very pleased and thanked those involved who had actually resolved an issue; it was a step in the right direction to put it right for the town. Councillor Hart agreed.

15. SOUTH VIEW TRAFFIC FLOW

Councillor Jackson had requested this item following the recent site visit to the ramp crossing and walkabout in the town. Councillor Jackson thought that the possibility of making South View one-way in a westerly direction should be considered; this could create additional parking and perhaps an alternative bus stop to the one in the centre of town would alleviate many of the traffic flow problems. It was noted, especially for new Councillors, that this matter had been raised a number of years previously when it had been agreed to defer any decision until the completion of the Sainsbury's Supermarket and the Health Centre.

Both properties had now been up and running for a few years and Councillor Hart agreed that the time was right to raise the matter. Councillor Court noted that some years ago he had given a presentation on traffic flow and this had been one of the suggestions; he was very pleased to see it raised again.

Councillor Rogers said that there were currently safety issues when large vehicles were turning left into South View from the High Street and couldn't see traffic coming from the Wharf Road direction. One of the business owners had also raised concerns about dangerous driving at the western end (the other end of South View) at the junction with Wharf Road, where cars cut across the roundabout in a dangerous manner.

Councillor Jackson agreed that the whole length of the road couldn't be one-way; access to the business at the western end would be needed. He made a guesstimate that there could be 5-6 new parking places created.

Councillor Hart noted that some of the longer buses experienced difficulty turning left into South View from the High Street and said that County Highways would like to remove some of the corner bollards for safety reasons. In addition, consideration should be given to the retention, with the addition of a shelter, or the removal of the long-term temporary bus stop in the High Street

Councillor Rogers thought it was a case of swings and roundabouts, between a bus stop and car parking in South View, but that consideration should be given to the views of the residents.

Councillor Lawson pointed out that times were hard and money was very tight at County Highways, therefore careful consideration must be taken. He added that it was a fantastic idea which had been looked at four years ago.

Councillor Jackson proposed the formation of a sub-committee to look at South View again with Highways if possible and see if anything had changed since the last time. This should include a site visit with County Highways Officers. This was seconded by Councillor Hall noting that the County Council could be encouraged to progress the legal part so that it was in place when funding was available for the practical part, to avoid further delay. All were in favour. The following volunteered to be part of the working group: Councillors Court, Davies, Hart, Jackson, Lawson, Rogers and Rushton, it was suggested that County Councillor Deaville be invited to join the group.

16. WHARF ROAD CAR PARK

Councillor Jackson reported that there was an issue with the lack of directional arrows for cars on the Wharf Road car park. He suggested that the District Council is asked to look at ways to improve traffic flow and to delineate where people should

be guided to walk. It was also noted that the surface had become much worn in certain areas.

Councillor McGuinness pointed out that there were out-of-date signs on the car park directing people to a toilet block which was closed, but no signage directing people to the High Street. Councillor Lawson noted that this could be dealt with simply by letter to the District Council.

Councillor Lovatt noted that there used to be arrows. She added that the Grit box was blocking the pavement, and people had to walk on the road to access the pay and display machine.

The Chair proposed that a letter be sent to District Councillor Edwin Wain, with a copy to District Council Officers Dai Lerner and Paul Hare to request a meeting. This was proposed again by Councillor Jackson and seconded by Councillor Hall; all were in favour.

Councillor Rogers added that the kerb by the Health Centre stuck out and burst car tyres – 20 to his knowledge. Councillor Jackson noted that this slowed traffic down, but that he had requested white lines there to highlight the kerb, which was light grey and difficult to distinguish. Councillor Jackson believed that the District Council was waiting to do the work when doing other jobs in the town. Councillor Redfern asked if a drop off point could be added at the same time – a simple paint job in his opinion, parking tickets were still being issued to drivers.

17. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a A letter was received from the County Council regarding the mobile and travelling library review, to say that it is proposed that Biddulph Moor will continue to have a service from April 2016, but that Biddulph Park will not. Proposals at: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/mobilelibraries
- b The SPCA Executive has forwarded a request from NALC for help to form a Parish Councils Reform Bill. A table of proposals has been received and a response requested by 20 July.

18. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor Wood had attended an meeting of the District Council where it was announced that the Local Plan Site Allocation options would be out for public consultation in the very near future; delivered to every address in Biddulph, informing residents of the proposals in their areas. The period of consultation would be 10 weeks. Councillors should encourage their constituents to participate in the consultation.
Councillor Hawley expressed concern with the District Council Local Plan proposals. There would be no detailed consultation or workshops in each area of town and the District Council plan would be foisted on us. He asked if we were wasting our time working on a Neighbourhood Plan. The Chief Officer would contact the District Council to ask if we are wasting our time starting an NP. Councillor Wood noted that there was detail in the consultation. Councillor Hall noted that Local Plan was very important and, being cognisant of the District Council planning strategy, still viable. This Council should go ahead with the Neighbourhood Plan and it would be adopted by the District Council in due course.
- b Councillor Redfern reported that he and Councillor Sheldon had attempted to attend a presentation on County Estates, including Greenway Bank, at Stafford. However they had failed to reach Stafford due to several incidents in the

- surrounding area. Given the enthusiasm of the two Councillors and the problems encountered the organisers had offered to give the presentation in Biddulph. Councillor Redfern asked the General Purposes Committee to send a formal invitation; as Councillor Redfern was not a member of the committee; this was proposed by Councillor Salt and seconded by Councillor Lovatt. It was agreed to send the invitation forthwith.
- c Councillor Harper had visited Biddulph fire station, he reported that they had not been asked their opinion on the FARS consultation. Their main concern was the safety of the public, not their roles. The officers expressed willingness to attend Council meetings if required, to give regular briefings. Councillor Lawson noted that he was now on the County Council Fire Service Committee and that he would go to the Fire Station at intervals and report back at a later date.
 - d In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Lovatt reported on a meeting of the Allotments committee held that afternoon. SMDC Planning officers had looked at the Springfield Road proposed plan and declared it acceptable and worthy of submission. The next step would be public consultation, it was hoped to hold this at the Youth and Community Centre on Church Road during the second week in July. Invitations to attend would be via a leaflet drop to residents in immediate area of site.
 - e Councillor Rogers had attended a meeting of the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) adding that he felt it was well worth this Council being a member for when we needed advice, eg legal or financial. Councillor Rogers would be attending a training event later in the week and would report back.
 - f Councillor Rogers had attended the Arts Forum in Leek the previous Friday, where Biddulph shone again (he added that the buffet was very good). Councillor Ralphs – the Leader of SMDC – had given £3,500 to each of the three towns in the Moorlands.
 - g Councillor Rogers reported that, after several months of meetings, the Biddulph Festival would launch on 27 June 2015, brochures had been widely distributed and were also tabled. Councillor Hart noted that he had been asked by Moorlands Radio to encourage a member of the Festival Committee to contact them.
 - h Councillor Lawson had attended a Charity Committee where large grants were available.
 - i Councillor Lawson had attended a Health Scrutiny committee meeting and noted that everyone should have a health check; he would be distributing leaflets about this soon.
 - j Councillor Lawson had attended a meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA). Chief Fire Officer Peter Dartford had attended Westminster to speak to MPs to explain the consultation. No decisions had been made; the options were still being considered. The next step would be a further meeting of the FRA.

19. LENGSTHMAN WORK

The Chief Officer reported that the Lengthsman was currently very busy cutting grass and trimming around road signs along the main routes.

20. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Contribution towards Lengthsman work

Knypersley Community Association has sent a contribution of £250 towards the work carried out by the Lengthsman on the Orme Road footpath in April.

2 Microphone

The current town hall microphone (owned by the Town Council) has been declared dangerous by H&S, as it was dropped and repaired recently and is connected to the mains electricity. Since then, one of the caretaking staff has kindly loaned his own microphone, but we need to consider a replacement, which would be in the region of £40-80

Councillor Rogers proposed that this Council purchases a new microphone, seconded by Councillor Davies. It was moved to proceed forthwith.

3 Postcard from Fusignano

We have received a postcard from Italy from members of the Twinning Association currently in Fusignano saying how fortunate we are to have such a wonderful twin town. They are accompanying Woodhouse Academy pupils and staff, who are enjoying the experience.

The Chief Officer announced that the Mayor would be greeting a group of students from Fusignano in the Council chamber on Tuesday 7 July from 1.30 pm. Any Councillors also interested in attending to notify the Chief Officer

4 Training Course: Seminar on Safety & Risk Assessment - 8 July

Information received on a seminar arranged by Zurich Insurance at Winsford on 8 July to discuss accident & claims review, risk assessment, business continuity planning and defect identification and prioritisation. The cost is £30 +VAT per delegate. Cllrs Court, Harper and Rogers were interested in attending.

Councillor Rushton also expressed interest in attending the seminar.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

SignedDate.....