

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2015

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor Baddeley
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Salt
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance
Councillor Rogers

42.15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Court
Councillor Wood

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Disclosable Interests: Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom.

44. MINUTES

It was **Resolved** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 18 August 2015.

45. BUS TIMETABLE CHANGES

A letter had been received from the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport regarding timetable changes to come into effect from 7 September 2015.

Councillor Jones asked where the consultation had taken place, who had been consulted and where the cuts had been made. Councillor Rogers noted that the cuts would leave vulnerable people housebound; he suggested that the companies be encouraged to reinstate the small buses. Councillor Lawson proposed that this Council write letters against the combining of the services; when he had queried the cuts he had been told it was a case of use it or lose it. Councillor Salt thought that 'use it or lose it' was an appalling comment to make as those in most need of the

service were fewer in number and bus services should be provided for those who needed them.

Councillor Jones expressed concern and opposed any cuts to the services from Biddulph Moor. Councillor Jackson admitted that it was easy for those who did not use buses to miss the cuts. He added that it was the subsidised services which were needed the most.

Councillor Jackson noted that this Council was in need of a transport coordinator to keep the Council updated. Councillor Hart nominated Councillor McGuinness, seconded by Councillor Jackson, there were no other nominations and Councillor McGuinness was appointed.

Councillor Baddeley noted that she had been responsible for getting Bakers to run the bus to Washington Close but this had now been stopped when the route had been taken over by D and G buses; a safety issue had been identified – the vehicle had to reverse at the end of Washington Close and could not do this legally with only one member of staff.

Councillor Jones proposed that a letter be sent to the Portfolio Holder to express concern, objecting to the reduction in service and requesting that this Council is consulted before any other cuts were made. This was Agreed.

46. ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

A request for help in choosing a new Vicar had been received. The Survey could be found at www.biddulphchurch.org.uk/survey. Councillor McGuinness (a churchwarden at St Lawrence's Church) explained the procedure, The Church wanted to give all the people of St Lawrence's Parish the opportunity to say what they would like to see in a new Vicar, which would be included in the Parish Profile. The Parish Profile would be sent to the Patrons the following weekend.

47. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a An invitation to attend the AGM of the Community Council of Staffordshire on 8 October was received.
- b Information was received from the County Council on the Staffordshire Local Crisis Support Scheme, which assists people with exceptional hardship where other types of support are inaccessible. The telephone number is 0300 111 8008.
- c The Casserole Club is a community-led food sharing project where volunteers share portions of home-cooked food with local neighbours who would benefit from a nutritious meal and social contact. The website is www.casseroleclub.com. Councillor Lawson had brought this up a few months ago, and now a small group had started in Biddulph.

48. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Hart had been looking at traffic flow in South View and the bus stop in the High Street. He wanted to form a Task and Finish group to meet in October. The following volunteered to form this group: Councillors Court, Davies, Hart, Jackson, Jones, Lawson, Rogers, Salt and Swift.

Councillor Jackson wondered if Councillor Lawson could ask the County Council Officer to consult the residents of South View to seek their opinion prior to the meeting. Councillor Lawson responded that a consultation had already been

undertaken but had stalled under opposition from one of the businesses. He would reinvestigate this.

The Chief Officer would check with the District Council legal department to find out the ownership of the pavement outside B & M Bargains and the Well+ pharmacy before any discussion about the bus stop took place.

Councillor Rogers noted that for the last market, the southern direction bus stop had been relocated to Tunstall Road adjacent to Rijo coffee shop, and that in his opinion the town had been much improved. Councillor Jackson noted that he received complaints when the road was closed from those having to carry shopping the length of the High Street and that this Council should consider the implications before committing to anything.

49. MEETINGS ATTENDED DURING THE MONTH

- a Councillor McGuinness had attended a meeting of Biddulph Probus, the constitution had been amended to admit women members, it was hoped that this would increase membership.
- b Councillor Salt had opened the Biddulph and Community Zone (on behalf of the Mayor who had been at another engagement. Councillor Salt thanked Councillors who had turned up and supported 'this lovely event'.
- c Councillor Rogers had attended a meeting of the Tourism sub-committee the previous week where the production of a new town guide had been discussed. To be included on the next Civic Committee agenda.
- d Councillor Lawson had attended a meeting with the NHS Technical Section which offered assistance for anyone incapacitated in any way. Contact Councillor Lawson for more information.
- e Councillor Sheldon had attended a meeting at the District Council on mental health issues.
- f Councillor Baddeley had attended meetings of the Gillow Heath Residents Association and the Brown Lees Community Association, also a Code of Conduct training event led by Mark Trillo.

50. LENGSTHMAN WORK

Councillor Sheldon gave notification of some sites to the Chief Officer.

51. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Moorlands Radio

We have been contacted by June from Moorlands Radio who would like a regular spot on the breakfast show with members of the Town Council.

2 Town Deal

I attended a meeting earlier today to discuss the Town Deal with District Council officers. They are aware that this has not been progressed as originally anticipated and would now like to work with the Town Council on the agreed priorities; the town hall, updating the Area Action Plan, the Mill Triangle, the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan, promotion of the local economy (the market & visitor development) and environmental maintenance and enhancements.

Councillor Jackson was disappointed that the County Council officers had not been involved in this meeting. The Chief Officer would contact those officers and report back to the next meeting.

3 Scams Awareness

Cheadle CAB, in partnership with Your Housing, is organising three scams awareness sessions. The Biddulph session will be held on Wednesday 11 November from 10 am – 12 pm in the Training Suite at the Children’s Centre. Any councillor wishing to attend should email admin@cheadlecab.cabnet.org.uk or phone 01538 751816.

4 Biddulph Old Hall

We received a thank you for allowing the use of the Biddulph Old Hall postcard image in a re-printed book about the English Civil War and the Hall, called 'A Greate Service' and first published eighteen years ago. The proceeds from the book were donated to charity and raised £476.40 for Cancer Research UK.

5 Tree Cutting

Information received from County Highways that the trees overhanging the pavements on Meadows Way have now been trimmed back and the trees/hedge at the junction of Halls Road/Mow Lane/A527 were cut yesterday.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Signed Date