

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Wood

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper

43.15. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Salt
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Rushton
The Town Crier

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Interests: Councillor Sheldon in any item relating to Biddulph in Bloom, as Chair.

45. MINUTES

- a It was **RESOLVED** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Committee held on 10 November 2015.
- b It was **RESOLVED** to receive the Minutes of the Tourism sub-committee meeting held on 10 November 2015.

46. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Town Deal:

The Chair reported on a meeting that had taken place earlier that day to progress the Town Deal through a joint partnership with the County Council, District Council and Town Council. It had been suggested that the following projects be pursued:-

- i Wharf Road land
- ii Mill Triangle – Cross Street/Walley Street
- iii Victoria Business Park extension and further employment land, using this as a lever to improve the land between Biddulph and Stoke.

Development would bring funding

Councillor Wood pointed out that he had proposed alternative sites at the Southern boundary to planning officers. This was an important gateway from Stoke on Trent and there may be funding through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP). Councillor Sheldon felt that we should write to the LEP to show these intentions. The quarry at Brindley Ford had now passed to the Crown.

Councillor Jackson said that there was also the issue of HS2 and connectivity within North Staffordshire which may give us additional lever for funding.

Councillor Davies reported that a small steering group had been set up to monitor the Town Deal work at present (which would be carried out largely by District Council and County Council officers). This would comprise: the two County Councillors, the Chairs of our larger committees (Finance, Civic, GP, Planning), plus Councillors Jones and Wood. This group will report back to Council from the meetings at regular intervals. It was proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Jackson that these actions and the three priorities be approved by Council. All were in favour.

Projects:

- a Fingerposts – the Chair said that a firm proposal for location and detail of signs should now be agreed. A discussion took place and the following fingerposts were agreed and will now be costed:
 - i) Biddulph Moor Village Green – Village Hall, Trent Head Well, Biddulph Grange Gardens
 - ii) Post by Rijos – Library, Health Centre
 - iii) Wharf Road Car Park – (plus turn it round if possible) Library, WCs, Shops
 - iv) Town Hall – Library, Victoria Centre, WC, Car Park, Health Centre, Post Office

- b Station Road project
The Chair said that whatever is decided here will need the length of the dead-end spur road reducing. The Chair suggested to get rid of this by applying for a stopping up order via County Highways. This was proposed by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Hall. All were in favour.

- c Uplighters at Town Hall frontage, flagpole, Town Hall garden changes
The Chair said that the improvement work at the Town Hall would go to the District Council planning committee next week. We couldn't progress the above items until the work was approved and starting to take place.

47. BUDGET FOR 2016/17

The Chair pointed out that nothing had been added to the Regeneration budget in the last budget but that prior to this, £15,000 per year had been put in. He proposed that this be done this time and added that this Council needed to be able to back what it wanted to do with the finances in place.

Councillor Hart agreed, saying that there was a need to top up the regeneration fund for the future of the town, and that he would second putting £15,000 in each year.

Councillor Jackson commented that having this pot of money had oiled the wheels in the past. The District Council and County Council have said that they have no budgets, but they did have expertise. The LEP did have money and we may be able to encourage more investment into the town from this source. He proposed moving £25,000 into the regeneration pot from the unallocated balances.

Councillor Hall said that he wouldn't comment on the actual figure until the Finance Committee met in early January. Other committees may also request some regeneration funding.

Councillor Hawley warned that this Council must be careful to allocate funds and not to just amass funds. This was agreed by the Chair of Finance.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed Date