

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2018

PRESENT

The Mayor - Councillor McGuinness
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Salt
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Whilding
Councillor Wood

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper
Councillor Nicosia

16. APOLOGIES

Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Court
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Redfern

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations: None
- ii. Other Interests: Councillors Harper, Jones and Salt were members of the Royal British Legion. Councillor Sheldon was Chair and Councillor Hart was a member of the Moorlands Partnership Board.

18. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10 July 2018 were signed as an accurate record.
- b) The Minutes of the Tourism sub Committee meeting held on 10 July were received.
- c) The Minutes of the Cenotaph and Centenary Working Group meetings held on 23 July and 13 August 2018 were received.
- d) The Minutes of the Christmas Lights working Group meeting held on 22 August 2018 were received.

19. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM MATT MACDONALD- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHOP PREMISES, ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR COURT

Neither Councillor Court or Mr MacDonald were in attendance.

20. TO CONSIDER DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Deferred until the next meeting.

21. CENOTAPH AND CENTENARY WORKING GROUP UPDATE

a) To approve the restoration of the Cenotaph and associated cost

The Chief Officer reported that it had taken a while to find a suitably qualified company that was able to complete the work that had been identified. 'Albert' would require a new nose and investigation was required for suitable strengthening of cracks that had appeared. The Monument would then be cleaned.

The Working Group had examined the costs and found them reasonable. Listed Building Consent was being sought and the order would be pushed through as soon as possible. Approval for the work was sought from the Civic Committee. Councillor Hall proposed that the work is carried out forthwith; this was seconded by Councillor Jones and agreed.

b) To approve the costs for the production and distribution of leaflets advertising the 11-days of remembrance for the commemorations of the end of the First World War.

The costs had been tabled. The Chief Officer reported that there would be a programme of events between 1 and 11 November 2018 and it was proposed to produce a leaflet that would be delivered around Biddulph in *Biddulph Times*, to let people know what had been planned. There were many varied activities and it should be an interesting time. Production of the leaflet was within budget and additional funds had been received from the District Council to support the activities.

It was proposed by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Hart to produce the leaflet forthwith.

22. ARTISAN MARKET UPDATE

a) To consider the use of alternative storage space and/or ongoing use of garage space.

The Chief Officer reported that the current premises were unsuitable. One of the people who helped to erect the market stalls had offered the use of his shed at Biddulph Park. It was dry and secure and boasted CCTV. He also offered the use of his tractor to bring the equipment to Biddulph and return it after the market. The current rental agreement ended at the beginning of October and the Chief Officer would like to trial the new premises for 6 months.

Councillor Jones noted that the shed would be dry and secure and the proposed cost was cheaper, Councillor Hart concurred.

Councillor Rogers would like to head a working party to sort through the accumulation of stuff in the current garage, Councillors Hart and Jones also volunteered their help.

Councillor Salt felt it a false economy to continue with the rental of the garage even though it was in a perfect location. She asked if the stalls would be brought down at Christmas too and was assured that they would.

Councillor Harper asked about the insurance; the Chief Officer would amend the location with Zurich Insurance.

Councillor Sheldon noted that she knew the person and fully approved.

Councillor Davies proposed that the Chief Officer be given the mandate to negotiate a reasonable price with the person, seconded by Councillors Hart and Jones and the authority to dispose of what was not worth keeping.

Councillor Davies offered an additional trailer to move equipment, if required.

All agreed to progress forthwith.

b) To receive an update on Staffordshire Moorlands District Council involvement regarding road signage

Councillor Hall would negotiate with the Leader Councillor Ralphs about the costs involved.

Councillor Wood had attended a meeting of the District Council Services Scrutiny Committee where there was a presentation by Mr Crawford about markets, Biddulph was not mentioned. Councillor Wood would move a resolution at the District Council that market funds be divided pro rata to the population of the three towns.

Councillor Sheldon was also angry that Biddulph had not been mentioned at this meeting.

Councillor Rogers thought that the signage was dangerous; traffic was now diverted up King Street near to Kingsfield School and caused chaos.

Councillor Davies noted that we had to follow the recommendations.

23. MOORLANDS PARTNERSHIP BOARD (MPB) REQUEST - RESTORATION OF GINDERS MEMORIAL

The Board had been working on various listed structures and had identified one in our Parish. The Board had recommended that work should be carried out on this monument which would cost in the region of £1000.

Councillor Hart noted that this was an opportunity to receive a contribution to keep this monument in a state of reasonable repair. He queried if MPB would help out. Councillor Davies replied that it would offer up to 50% of the total cost.

Councillor Sheldon noted that it was fortunate that the MPB had chosen one in Biddulph for historical value and condition; it was historically and socially valuable.

Councillor Wood asked if anyone had tried to contact the family, it was not a safety hazard at the moment. He was wary of creating a precedent.

Councillor Sheldon responded that MPB had attempted to locate living relatives; she suggested contacting the Historical and Genealogical Society for information.

Councillor McGuinness noted that the Historical Society had compiled a book of all the monuments in the churchyard a number of years ago.

The Officer noted that there should be a copy of this book in the Church Office.

Councillor Harper suggested approaching the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for contribution as the monument was in the churchyard.

Councillor Jones suggested checking the registers for relatives. The Officer noted that St Lawrence's Church registers up to 1950 were stored in the Staffordshire Archive.

Councillor Hart proposed making a £500 contribution towards this work, whilst seeking potential additional funding from the Church and possible living relative. Seconded by Councillor Davies, this was agreed.

24. GENERAL UPDATES

a) To receive updated architect fees for development of Station Road

Councillor Davies proposed that this item be discussed later as a confidential item. This was agreed.

b) To note that the Christmas Lights contract will need to be put out to tender in Autumn 2018.

This should be secured prior to the switch-on so that the location for the storage of the equipment after Christmas would be agreed.

c) Update on Wi-Fi in the Town Hall and the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) response

Councillor Hall reported that the Leader of SMDC Councillor Ralphs was considering providing a contribution towards the installation.

Councillor Rogers noted that the figures seemed high; the shop where he worked paid a fraction of that price.

Councillor Salt added that this was a SMDC owned building and SMDC should pay for something which was essential; she agreed that this Council could be responsible for the monthly rental charge. Councillor Salt noted that the Officer was working with a laptop with a new accounts package, which could not be installed onto the County Council network. For online support, the Officer had to take the laptop and appropriate papers and find suitable secure wifi either at her home or a local trustworthy company. Councillor Salt noted that members sit at meetings with piles of papers which could all be accessed from a laptop with a wifi connection. Councillor Salt noted that Biddulph Youth and Community Zone had a provider which charged much less than the quotes given, and suggested contacting a representative for details.

d) To receive an update in relation to the installation of external lighting and the television bracket in the Town Hall.

The Chief Officer reported that a licence was required and a thorough specification worked up. She had met with the contractor who felt confident, that subject to approval this could be done before Christmas. Colour changing led bulbs would add a slight additional charge, which seemed reasonable.

Councillor Rogers had forgotten to come back with a price for the provision of a bracket and television. However, his employer Mr Wain had been reluctant to

supply equipment under the given criteria, a quality bracket would cost less than £100.

Councillor Jones could not believe how hard it was to put up a bracket.

e) To receive an update on finger posts within the town centre

The Chief Officer proposed that fingers could be added to existing posts on two of the signs within the town; these would be painted black. These were located on the Wharf Road car park and adjacent to the Space Interiors Ltd shop. She had received approval to do this from the County and District and hoped Councillors would be happy to proceed. All agreed.

f) To consider signage outside the Town Hall and the noticeboard

The Chief Officer reported that a number of complaints had been received about the opacity of the noticeboard at the front of the Town Hall. Councillor Rogers proposed that the Perspex is replaced from the Tourism budget. This was agreed. The Chief Officer noted that the other signage and boards at the front and side of the Town Hall did not belong to this Council but were in a poor state of repair, and did not fit with the recent restyling of the front of the building. She had sought an update from District Council colleagues.

25. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was nothing additional to report.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair to move:-

"That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 10 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated."

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Signed Date