

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2025, 6PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

- **Mayor**
Councillor N R Yates
- **Deputy Mayor**
Councillor A C Lawton
- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor N Eardley
- Councillor S Fletcher
- Councillor J I M Garvey
- Councillor Hawley
- Councillor M A Hopkins
- Councillor K J Jackson
- Councillor C Kisicki
- Councillor A Parkes
- Councillor D Proudlove
- Councillor W Rogers
- Councillor C Wood

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnership Officer
- Mrs Margaret Warman - Compliance and Governance Officer
- Mrs Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Reverend Darren Fraser – St Johns and Christ Church
- 1 member of the public

Councillor Rogers introduced the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chief Officer.

Reverend Darren Fraser led the Town Council in Prayer.

Councillor Yates recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.

The Mayor confirmed attendees will be named in the minutes, unless otherwise instructed.

67. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Regular attendees:

Staffordshire Police (five minutes)

The police were not in attendance.

68. APOLOGIES

Apologies and reasons for absence were approved:

- Councillor K Harper
- Councillor A H Hart
- Councillor J Jones
- Councillor J Salt
- Councillor C Smith
- Councillor J Redfern (Absent)
- Councillor S Rushton (Absent)

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations
Councillor Rogers declared an interest in item 82.

b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests
None.

70. MINUTES

a) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Town Council meeting on Tuesday 14 January 2025

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **agreed.**

b) To **receive** the Minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14 January 2025

Councillor Yates requested an amendment to state that potholes were repaired by the County Council not District Council.

Proposed by Councillor Parkes; seconded by Councillor Wood. All **agreed.**

c) To **receive** the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 January 2025

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed.**

d) To **receive** the Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 January 2025

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Rogers. All **agreed.**

e) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 28 January 2025

Councillor Jackson requested an edit in confidential item 100; change to 'supported'

Proposed by Councillor Rogers; seconded by Councillor Proudlove. All **agreed.**

71. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he had attended the Chinese New Year event, which was well received by the community.

The Mayor reported that he attended the Public speaking competition, hosted by Biddulph Rotary and would like to applaud the young people for their talent.

The Mayor stated that a new café was opened recently- Beccis Kitchen, this is located on St Johns Road.

The Mayor reported that he had been in attendance at the Festival of Brilliant launch, which was a fantastic event at Biddulph Old Hall. He also attended the Allotment Annual Meeting which was very positive.

The Mayor reminded Councillors that there are 2 upcoming Mayoral events: Dan Budd, a Robbie Williams tribute and Biddulph's Got Soul.

The Mayor reported that today marked the press launch for 'Pathways to the Future' which is the cycle ride, from Biddulph to London, that will take place 9-12 April.

72. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

Councillors to note that these are existing standing agenda items and can be amended by resolution, if required.

a) To receive an update on the management of Town Council Assets

The Chief Officer reported that there is an ongoing discussion in relation to the Visitor Centre lease; she reminded the attendees that searches were being completed by the solicitor.

The Chief Officer reported that the Bus Hub roof has now been fixed by the District Council.

Councillor Wood noted that during a meeting held last week at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, discussions took place regarding opportunities to manage car parks. Councillor Proudlove suggested this was added to the agenda for the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

b) To receive an update on health and safety activities (inc. risk management)

The Chief Officer updated that the ongoing repairs and maintenance schedule is continuing and there are no concerns to share.

c) To receive an update on 'Biddulph Works Together' project.

The Chief Officer reported that during the last meeting there was some positive feedback in relation to increased attendance from the individual groups.

73. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OUTSIDE BODY MEETINGS ATTENDED SINCE THE JANUARY 2025 MEETING (Updates only from the following meetings: Biddulph in Bloom, Moorlands Assembly, Staffordshire Parish Councils Association, Moorlands Partnership Board, Twinning Association and Fairtrade)

Councillor Garvey reported that he attended the Biddulph Festival meeting, which was very well attended; he noted that the theme was discussed, and a poll was published on Facebook. There was also a discussion about an additional autumn arts festival.

Councillor Garvey reported that he attended the Fairtrade group meeting where it was confirmed that the 'fairtrade fortnight' had to be moved to 22nd September - 5th October. In the meantime, the schools' competition will take place; schools would be asked to create a promotional poster for a fairtrade cake.

Councillor Rogers reported that he attended Staffordshire Parish Council Association meeting where an election of officers took place. Councillor Rogers noted that there is a rural themed seminar upcoming on Wednesday 5th March 9.30 until 12.30pm. Attendance is free.

74. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN HALL FRONTAGE DEVELOPMENT

The Chief Officer reported that 24th February is the start date for the Town Hall frontage development. There are some ongoing discussions regarding the availability of bricks.

The Chief Officer reported that the scheduled meeting with the contractor will be held on the 25th March.

75. TO CONFIRM THE OUTCOME OF THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR A TOWN COUNCILLOR IN THE WEST WARD, AND TO AGREE NEXT STEPS

The Chief Officer reported that a vacancy was advertised, which closed last week. The elections team advised that no one had called for an election for the position.

The Chief Officer noted that co-option can be advertised at any point.

76. TO CONFIRM THAT A VACANCY HAS ARISEN IN THE EAST WARD; TO AGREE THAT STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL SHOULD BE CONTACTED IN ORDER TO ADVERTISE THE POSITION

The Chief Officer reported that Councillor Rushton is no longer able to continue as a Councillor. The Chief Officer reported that this creates a vacancy in the East ward.

It was discussed that if there is no request for an election, both vacancies can be considered for co-option at the same time together.

It was proposed to delay the co-option in the West ward until the outcome of the East ward advertisement was known; this should commence immediately. Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **agreed**.

Councillor Rogers suggested sending flowers to Councillor Rushton. The Mayor took the opportunity to give thanks on behalf of the Town Council to Councillor Rushton for the many years she has given to the Town. All **Agreed**.

77.TO AGREE THE TRANSFER OF £100,000 FROM THE CCLA ACCOUNT INTO THE UNITY ACCOUNT

The Chief Officer explained that due to stipulations within the grant funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund, funds are required to be spent before making a claim. These will be reimbursed.

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **agreed**.

78.TO CONFIRM THAT COUNCILLOR HARPER WILL BECOME THE HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING COUNCILLOR FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF THE PREVIOUS MONITORING COUNCILLOR

It was discussed that Councillor Harper become the Health and Safety Monitoring Councillor (he is currently the deputy); proposed by Councillor Rogers, seconded by Councillor Jackson. All **agreed**.

It was discussed to defer the decision regarding a new deputy to a future Finance Strategy and Management Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

79.TO AGREE AN INSURANCE PROVIDER FROM 28 FEBRUARY 2025 FOR THE FOLLOWING 12-MONTHS, BASED ON THE ATTACHED ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Chief Officer tabled the quotes from insurance providers, based on the assessment of risk.

There were no comments on the risk management policy or risk assessment.

Councillor Wood questioned whether it is possible for local authorities to join together to take out an insurance policy.

The Chief Officer noted that although the quotes are similar in price, the Gallagher quote includes free online health and safety training for all staff. This would potentially be a saving in the training budget.

All agreed that there was some concern moving from Zurich, who had been the provider for a long time. The Chief Officer agreed, but also wondered whether there were some benefits to working with a broker (Gallaghers). It was agreed that a three-year deal would not be considered.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer would make some further investigations about the training, and that she should proceed based on these considerations. A log should be kept of the training undertaken throughout the year.

Proposed (with amendment) by Councillor Brady; seconded by Councillor Jackso and **agreed**.

80.ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR PROUDLOVE:

To mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is developing a veterans' project which will include an event which the council would like to see hosted in Biddulph. I call upon Biddulph Town Council to support the proposed event and work with the portfolio holder for Communities at the District Council in order to shape the programme and secure an appropriate venue.

Councillor Proudlove proposed to make contact with Councillor Cawley and progress with an event; seconded by Councillor Brady. All **agreed**.

81.PRECEPT

To confirm the recommendations from the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting:

- a) Committee budgets for 2025-26 (spreadsheet attached)**
- b) Fees and charges for 2025-26 (attached)**
- c) Precept requirement for 2025-26 of £481,920.00, based on tax base of 6401.**

The Chief Officer tabled the document that is to be used as a press release to explain where the funding is being spent within the town. This document was for information only.

The recommendations were proposed on-block by Councillor Rogers; seconded by Councillor Parkes. All **agreed**.

Councillor Rogers thanked the staff for their work on these documents; these decisions were good for the town.

82.ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a) To approve accounts to be paid in February 2025:

Expenditure over £500			
Sandyford Properties Investments Ltd	Rent & Service Charges – Brownlees Storage Unit	February	648.00
Lifestyle Windows	Visitor Centre	Windows	2575.00
English Martyrs Church	BWT – Warm Spaces	08/01/25 – 12/03/25	700.00
Ignite Facilities	Town Hall	Boiler Service – strip down and replace seals, ignition & probes	1389.42
Starboard Systems Ltd (Scribe)	Annual Accounts Renewal		1490.40
Moorlec Electrical Services	Emergency lighting remedial work	Town Hall	1554.00
Moorlec Electrical Services	Emergency lighting remedial work	Bus Hub	546.00
D&G Buses	Timetable Leaflet printing	50% agreed contribution	668.00
Octopus Energy	Electricity – Visitor Centre	January	508.78
Moorland Contract Cleaning Ltd	Visitor Centre – Cleaning	January	1024.21
Moorland Contract Cleaning Ltd	Bus Hub– Cleaning	January	1560.37

Expenditure less than £500			
Standard Life	Pension Voluntary Contribution	February	200.00
Unity Trust	Services Charges		22.05
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying w/c 20/01/25	Inv 150055	92.58
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying w/c 13/01/25	Inv 149813	205.14
EDF Energy	Gas – Town Hall		
Electrical Installation Supplies	Town Hall	Lightbulbs	93.97
Octopus Energy	Electricity – Bus Hub (DD)	January	111.21
NatWest	Bank Charges DD	November Charges	8.75
Myers & Co	HR Assist	12 th Jan – 11 th Feb	150.00
Waterplus	TBG – Water Supply		
Waterplus	Brown Lees Storage Unit – Water Supply	12 Dec – 12 Jan	20.88

K. Wood	Window Cleaning – TH	January	114.00
Prism	Phone Charges	December	285.83
Fifteen Group Limited	Phone Charges (DD)	December	94.80
Reliance High Tech Ltd	Lone Worker Devices	January	77.52
Euro Digital Systems	Printing	26 Dec 24 – 25 Jan 25	74.47
Moorland Contract Janitorial	Cleaning Supplies – Town Hall	Inv 4006	180.48
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying w/c 27/01/25	INV 150341	148.86
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies – Bus Hub		
Toni's Treats	BLPG Group	Refreshments 5/11/24	50.00
Toni's Treats	Inv 61	Refreshments 21/1/25	75.00
Gary Smith's Electrical Limited	Routine Lighting Tests	Town Hall	320.00
Toni's Treats	Inv 66	Refreshments	30.00
Toni's Treats	Inv 65	Refreshments	70.00
Toni's Treats	Inv 64	Refreshments	30.00
Margaret Warman	Staff Benefits	Eye Test and Glasses contribution	79.95
Unity Trust	Service Charges	December	19.50
Trade Sparky	Fluorescent Tubes Lights	Town Hall	101.86
The Green Tree House	BWT – Warm Places	Jan to March	310.20
Wayne Rogers	Travel Expenses	SPCA meeting – Feb	25.20
Tonis Treats	BLPG Refreshments 04/02	Inv 69	75.00
Sarah Haydon	Travel Expenses	Parish Charter Meeting	11.56
Evolve IT Support	Annual domain renewal	2025	27.56
Biddulph Chinese	Chinese New Year Event	Refreshments (Paid by CASH against cheque withdrawal)	100.00
CASH	Volunteer Expenses (£180.00), Petty Cash (£47.44)	December (omitted from January approvals)	227.44

Credit Card			
GiffGaff	Mobile Phones		
GiffGaff	Mobile Phones		
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Sainsburys	Chinese New Year Event	Refreshments	5.15
eBay	Plug-In Circuit Breaker		64.95
SurveyMonkey	Annual membership		408.00

Majestic Metals	Memorial Bench Plaques x2		113.14
Sainsburys	Kettle & meeting Refreshments		64.35
Biddulph Fish bar	Xmas Lights switch on event	Volunteer refreshments	117.30
Argos	Laminator		29.99
Facebook	Advertising	12 days	26.34
Amazon	Coffee & Tea Bags		16.85
Amazon	Blu-Rays	Community Cinema	24.98
Amazon	Blu-Ray	Community Cinema	14.99
Amazon	Disposable Cutlery	Events	6.98

To **approve** supplementary accounts

Expenditure over £500			
Salaries	February		16909.33
HMRC	PAYE	February	4478.78
Staff Pensions	Pensions	February	6160.26
D&G Buses	93 Bus Service	January 2025	3764.00
SMDC	Business Rates - TH	February	2389.00
R.G.S	Lengthsman Work	1st Jan – 7th Feb	1380.00
R.G.S	Lengthsman Work	Biddulph Valley Way (SCC funded)	2980.00
Expenditure less than £500			
CASH	Volunteer Expenses (£160.00), Petty Cash (£21.10)	February	181.10
Fifteen Group Limited	Phone Charges (DD)	February	94.80
Prism	Phone Charges	December	
Filmbankmedia	Biddulph Scratch	Film Screening: Trap	164.40
Waterplus	Moorland Road Allotments	1 Sep 24 - 1 Jan 25	158.66
Waterplus	Moorland Road Allotments	1 Jan 25 - 1 Feb 25	9.92
Waterplus	Visitor Centre	01 Jan – 04 Feb	41.16
Moorland Contract Janitorial	Cleaning Supplies – Bus Hub	Inv 4024	64.74
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying w/c 03/02/25	Inv 150619	92.58
Jodie Hancock	Reimbursement	Scratch + MHFA Training refreshments	23.85

Sarah Haydon	Staff benefit	Eye Test and contribution towards glasses	80.00
E-on Next	Christmas lights Supply	1st Dec 2024– 31st Jan 2025	111.71
SMDC	Business Rates – Storage Unit	February	182.00
SPCA	Training	Councillor	42.00
R.G.S	Lengthsman Work	BIB hedges and verges	480.00
Biddulph 2151 Squadron Air Cadets	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Jackson	100.00
BASC	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Rogers	75.00
Biddulph Moor Playgroup	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Hawley	100.00
Kingsfield Singers	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Eardley	75.00
Biddulph Tri's	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Redfern and Rogers	225.00
Biddulph Yarnbarms	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Redfern and Rogers	175.00
BYCZ	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Kisicki	125.00
BYCZ	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Hopkins	250.00
Moor First PTFA	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Hawley	100.00
New Road Chapel	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Hawley	50.00
Squirrel Hayes First School	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Kisicki	125.00
The Green Tree House	Town Councillor Grant Scheme 24-25	Via Cllr Jackson	100.00
Starboard Systems (Scribe)	Year End Health-check		118.80

Credit Card			
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 8/1	Refreshments	17.35
GiffGaff	Mobile Phones	February	8.00
GiffGaff	Mobile Phones	February	8.00
GiffGaff	Mobile Phones	February	8.00
Sainsburys	BWT	Emergency Food – Resident	8.14

Sainsburys	BWT	Emergency Food – Resident	27.24

To be moved on block, Proposed by Councillor Parkes; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed.**

The meeting ended at 7.12pm

Signed..... Date.....

DRAFT