

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 MAY 2017

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor – Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jones
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance:
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Redfern

1.17 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

The Deputy Mayor called for nominations for Chair and Deputy Chair. Councillor Hart was nominated by Councillor Harper and seconded by Councillor Harper, there were no other nominations and Councillor Hart was elected as Chair, Councillor Jones as Vice Chair. All were in favour.

Councillor Hart took the Chair and thanked fellow Councillors for their support.

2 APOLOGIES

The Mayor – Councillor Wood
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Salt
Councillor Swift

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon in any matters concerning Biddulph in Bloom. Councillor Hart in the Local Plan site specifics
- b Other Disclosable Interests. Councillor McGuinness as Churchwarden at St Lawrence's Church.

4 MINUTES

- a It was moved to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 18 April 2017.
- b It was moved to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Lengthsman Working Group held on 25 April 2017. Councillor Jones was happy to answer any questions.

5. VERBAL UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF SPRINGFIELD ROAD

The Chief Officer gave a verbal update on the Springfield Road site. Two invoices had been paid to the contractor and one for the agent; a number of issues had been discussed previously and were raised again in a letter which had accompanied the invoice from the contractor. The letter and photos of the site were circulated.

Councillor Hart noted that this had been discussed previously and proposed that some sort of site visit is organised. The Chief Officer would canvas members for a suitable date and time.

Councillor Jones thought it was 'soul destroying' and asked who was parking there; he thought it was a shame. Councillor Jones noted that this Council had not wanted a bund or posts; he felt that sadly this Council would have to do something physical and wondered if large boulders would act as a deterrent and suggested contacting Hurst Sand Quarry. The Chief Officer would look at the options.

Councillor Jackson did not believe it was residents parking there, but stated that they do park on the road, which narrows it. He felt it may be passing vehicles which were encroaching. The site had no kerb due to the road being resurfaced, making the edge quite low; it would be easy to drop onto the grass. Councillor Jackson thought that stone boulders would look better and more natural and would not spoil the openness of the site, and agreed that this should be explored. Councillor Jackson thought that small plastic posts would only last 3-4 years; he wondered how many rocks would be needed. Councillor Jackson thought the situation was disappointing and 'heart-breaking'.

Councillor Jackson noted that a letter was being drafted to be hand-delivered to residents asking them to help to gather evidence. He noted that East Ward Councillors had been working on the area for many years. He had some concerns about the recent hydro-seeding; and was keeping an eye on it and hoped it would improve after a rain shower.

Councillor Lovatt was really disappointed; she had wanted to see how it went on. Councillors Lovatt and Walley had taken photographs of the site; these were circulated and showed the deep ruts and the place where a vehicle had been driven round. Councillor Lovatt agreed that a letter and site visit was a good idea and added that people were making a mess of the site; it was spoiled by anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Hart thought the tracks on the photograph were possibly quad tracks or a 4x4, adding that it needed sorting out; he didn't want to be discussing the issue every two months.

Councillor Whilding had contact information for a stones supplier and would forward this to the Chief Officer.

Councillor Rogers thought that stones would look fine, but must not be further apart than the width of a car.

Councillor Hall felt that the suggestions were quite acceptable; but costs must be taken into consideration during the investigation.

Councillor Harper shared members' frustration and disappointment that discussion was taking place a third time; he shared the concerns of the East Ward Councillors who had worked hard. He felt that Councillor Jones' suggestion was first rate, but access must be left for the grass-cutter and pedestrians.

Councillor Davies thought that boulders would be a better suggestion and unlike a fence they would not require maintenance; he supported the suggestion.

Councillor Jackson noted that he had contacted Staffordshire Police to enquire if it was a criminal offence to drive on the site; if not, what was the deterrent.

Councillor Davies proposed investigating using boulders to prevent access to the site; this was seconded by Councillor Whilding. All were in favour, members not on the committee abstained from the vote.

6. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1. New Good Councillor's Guide

The new [Good Councillors Guide](#) was launched at the NALC Spring Conference. There is an electronic version, which will be circulated shortly. Please let the Chief Officer know if you require a paper copy.

Councillor Hart noted that Councillors had been well-behaved in comparison to others in the District.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Signed Date