

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2014

The Town Crier introduced The Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor; and the Chief Officer. He invited Rev'd Pam Butler to lead members in a time of prayer. The Mayor then opened the meeting.

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Swift
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Adams
Councillor Davies
Councillor Deaville
Councillor Ellsum
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jones
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Sheldon MBE
Councillor Tolley
Councillor Walley
Councillor Whilding
Councillor Wood

53.14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a Green Tree House Project:

Amanda Beech and Charlie Rothwell addressed the meeting. The Charity was formed two years ago; its aim was to support families/children of all abilities and to start a soft play centre/community hub in the town. The main barrier to the scheme was a lack of land. The group had worked with the Foodbank and Homestart to collect items for children for Christmas. They were aware of the loss of services in the town ie the youth centre and toy library and wished to start a self-funding project, which would not be subject to budget cuts. The group was seeking the support of Biddulph Town Council. Jill Salt distributed supporting papers to members.

Councillor Jackson felt that the biggest hurdle was suitable premises and wished them all the best, adding that the Town Council could offer little other than moral support. Councillor Wood repeated that land was the big issue. He felt it refreshing that members of the public wished to do something and felt that councillors could help them to facilitate, adding that at this meeting were District and County Councillors. Councillor Jones noted that the Council could support financially via the annual grants awards which would be given in June 2015. Councillor Hall felt that it was important that the group had been to speak to the meeting as now all Councillors were aware of the project and he wished the group the best of luck. Councillor Sheldon added that the aims and aspirations were wonderful, but that land would be a stumbling block, and then wished them luck.

The Mayor added his support and thanked the speakers for attending.

b PCSO Report:

PCSO Sherratt was accompanied by Sergeant Slinn. PCSO Sherratt gave the following report:

- Someone had recently been charged with one of the recent spate of burglaries

- A Crime Prevention Stall at the recent Artisan Street Market had been well received
- An auction night would be held at Knypersley Club on 13 June 2015 in aid of Dogs Trust; prizes gratefully received
- PCSO Sherratt thanked members for their support over the last 12 months; adding that all at the Biddulph Police Post gave 100%.

Sergeant Slinn offered reassurance over the recent spate of burglaries. He gave a list of figures: both burglaries and crime were down 10% in the year from April 2014; there had been a slight increase in Anti-Social Behaviour; neighbour dispute statistics were showing a big rise, but this was due to one individual.

Councillor Jones asked about rumours of dog theft – no information from the public had been received by the Police to date. Councillor Hawley asked if an increase in police presence would help to alleviate public concern about the burglaries. PCSO Sherratt confirmed that this had happened. Sgt Slinn noted that policing was information-led and appealed for people with information to come forwards.

Councillor Jackson was encouraged by the reduction in figures; but noted that there had been issues with the 101 number recently and wondered if this had affected the figures. Sgt Slinn replied that personal contact details for officers were readily available and widely used by the public to report incidents; also officers had a good presence in and around the town, and so concerns could be reported in person.

Councillor Sheldon thanked the Biddulph Police for their help over the recent arson attack against Biddulph in Bloom. She reported that staff had been supportive, interested and concerned. Councillor Sheldon had noticed that many traders around the town had overflowing skips/waste bins and was concerned that this could be an opportunity for an arsonist; suggesting a leaflet drop warning of the problem. Sgt Slinn thanked Councillor Sheldon for her kind words. He could not comment on the recent arson attack as the investigation was ongoing; he would ask his team to pop in and offer appropriate advice to traders. Councillor Hart said that he had never experienced a problem with the 101 number, noting that perhaps some times of day were easier than others.

The Mayor thanked the officers for attending. PCSO Sherratt presented a gift to the Chronicle's Reporter in recognition of the professional way she had reported policing matters, as Kirsty would be leaving the paper soon.

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: Councillor Rogers in Minute 59 - his travel expenses.
- b Other Disclosable Interests: none were declared.

55. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:
 Councillor Baddeley
 Councillor Deane
 Councillor Gibson
 Councillor Harper
 Councillor Lovatt

56. MINUTES

- a It was **Resolved** to approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18 November 2014.

- b It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the General Purposes meeting held on 18 November 2014. Councillor Jones said that he had been briefly present at the start of the meeting. Re Minute 66, he asked if a response had been received from the Fire Service. The Chief Officer responded that it had been confirmed that Lee Washington would be at the January meeting.
- c It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9 December 2014.
- d It was **Resolved** to receive the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 9 December 2014.

57. MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor’s Engagements – the Mayor read out details of his recent engagements over the last month and gave a total of his charity fund to date. A presentation was made the reporter from the Biddulph Chronicle.

58. YOUTH ADVISOR REPORT

The Chief Officer reported on a lively meeting where good relationships were beginning to develop. Councillor Sheldon, the Town Crier and PCSO Sherratt had been present. Topics discussed included the closure of services in the town and the street art project. A quiz with both serious and not so serious questions concluded the afternoon’s events. Councillor Sheldon had donated a pack of red tulips to each of the schools represented.

59. ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE

The following accounts were received for payment:

Heads (Congleton) Ltd - Artisan Market advert x 2	67.68
V Brown - Market Day Organiser	50.00
W Linaker - Stall Construction (2 markets)	150.00
Market cash float	75.00
V Brown - Events Director	743.33
HM Revenue & Customs (<i>to be paid by direct debit 5/1/15</i>)	1,647.52
Salaries	4,086.91
Staffordshire Pension Fund	1,542.40
Petty Cash	56.35
Biddulph in Bloom – S137 grant payment, 3 rd segment	5,000.00
Protech Electrical Ltd – 2/3 costs, Christmas lighting	12,448.69
G Gant – roadshow/equipment for Switch-on event	120.00
Councillor J Davies – volunteers’ refreshments, Switch-on event	65.14
Councillor W Rogers – travel expenses, SPCA	28.28
RGS (R Standell) - construction of 2 new sections for cremated remains	1,961.00
make safe steep grave area in Section L	350.00
Heads (Congleton) Ltd– adverts for 19 December market	67.68
Kent County Council – photocopier 6 month charges	1004.39
D Allcock – Lengthsman work for Nov-Dec	150.00

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Signed Date.....