

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT

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

Also in attendance

Councillor Hawley
Councillor Redfern

39.18 APOLOGIES

Councillor Court
Councillor Harper
Councillor Rushton

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon in anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom.
- ii) Other Interests: none declared.

41. MINUTES

- a) It was moved to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 16 October 2018.
- b) It was moved to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Annual General Meeting held on Monday 15 October 2018.
- c) It was moved to receive the Notes from the meeting of the Bus Working Group held on Tuesday 23 October 2018.

42. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS AT THE BIDDULPH GRANGE COUNTRY PARK

Councillor Jones noted that this was a standing agenda item, but there was nothing to report at present. The lease on the Visitor Centre was still under negotiation. There was no progress on the transfer of the Biddulph Grange Country Park to the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, which was slowing down decision-making for the Friends.

Councillor Salt noted that the Troll Run may not be viable in the future and may be cancelled. Councillor Salt asked if anyone knew of any suitable land, would they contact Charlotte Smith.

Councillor Jones noted that real problem was the potential spread of knotweed and balsam via the stream; so, the Troll Run participants would not be able to use the stream. This had not been acceptable to them, but the main concern was the overall welfare of the Park.

43. TREE CHARTER ANNIVERSARY- 24 NOVEMBER

The Chief Officer reminded members that this Town Council maintains several areas of woodland and has committed to undertake action to maintain trees in the five wards of Biddulph.

In November 2017, Biddulph Town Council had signed the Tree Charter and committed to working towards the Tree Charter principles:

1. Sustain landscapes rich in wildlife
2. Plant for the future
3. Celebrate the power of trees to inspire
4. Grow forests of opportunity and innovation
5. Protect irreplaceable trees and woods
6. Plan greener local landscapes
7. Recover health, hope and wellbeing with the help of trees
8. Make trees accessible to all
9. Combat the threats to our habitats
10. Strengthen our landscapes with trees

In November 2018, to celebrate the anniversary of signing the Tree Charter, the Chief Officer proposed that Biddulph Town Council commits to the following actions for 2019:

- Map and identify ancient woodland
- Identify mature and veteran trees
- Increase the number of Tree Preservation Orders
- Develop a tree planting scheme

Councillor Salt thought this was a very good idea. Councillor Jones added that this would enhance the green spaces and was good. All agreed to work towards these actions.

44. LEEK MOORLANDS HOSPITAL- REQUEST FROM LEEK TOWN COUNCIL:

Leek Town Council and the local community is extremely concerned about the closure of the 37 beds and reduced service provision at Leek Moorlands Hospital. The town council has established a working group to fight to retain locally based, high quality health facilities and invites your council to join us to achieve these objectives. A letter of support would be very welcome, and we would also like to invite a councillor to attend one, or all of the working group meetings, on the following dates:

Tuesday 30th October at 5.00pm

Tuesday 13th November at 5.00pm

Tuesday 27th November at 5.00pm

(meetings to be held in the office at 15 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DH)

We would also be grateful if you could collect evidence from your local residents, regarding any problems they have encountered, as a result of the bed closures and reduced service provision.

Further communication:

The Health Working Group, set up by Leek Town Council to save the services provided at Leek Moorlands Hospital and reinstate the 37 beds, held a very productive meeting last week. We will be writing to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) - which reviews proposals for changes to NHS services - regarding North Staffordshire's Clinical Commissioning Group's, lack of transparency over its engagement with the public and acting beyond its legal mandate in closing the beds and relocating services to Royal Stoke Hospital.

TO AGREE A RESPONSE FROM BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL

Councillor Jackson proposed that Councillor Salt represent this Town Council on the working group, seconded by Councillor Wood and agreed.

It was agreed that a letter of support would be sent noting that this is an issue that affects people across North Staffordshire and that services must be protected.

45. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1. Arts Forum attendance

Esther Jones (Support Staffordshire) will be addressing the meeting on 26 November 2018 to talk about the findings of the SMDC Arts Review which took place last Spring/Summer. The Chief Officer will be in attendance.

2. Burial Grounds tree management nearing completion

Councillors to note that the major works across the Burial Grounds will be complete this week. Trees have been sensitively removed and pruned in order to manage risk effectively.

Councillor Hart had passed by the burial ground, the pollarding was well under way

3. Reminder about snow and ice

The County Council pages in relation to snow and ice are located at:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/staffshighways/winterdriving/wintertravel.aspx>

4. Two events to note:

- **Wednesday 5 December at 4pm** in the Council Chamber- 'Biddulph Network' where we can share ideas about services in the town and find out what is available for Biddulph people.
- **Friday 7 December, 10-3pm and Saturday 19 January 2019, 10-2pm** we are holding consultations in the Town Hall to find out what people think about our proposals in relation to the Neighbourhood Development Order and the proposed Local Green Space Designations.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Signed Date