

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2018

PRESENT

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

Also in attendance

Councillor Court
Councillor Hawley

32.18 APOLOGIES

Councillor Harper
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Wood

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

34. MINUTES

- a) It was moved to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 18 September 2018.
- b) It was moved to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Burial Grounds Sub-Committee held on Monday 9 October 2018. Councillor Hart noted that the Woodhouse Burial Ground sign had been installed. It was absolutely fantastic and in the perfect spot.
- c) It was moved to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Sub-Committee held on Wednesday 12 September 2018.
- d) It was moved to receive the Notes from the meeting of the Bus Working Group held on Tuesday 25 September 2018.

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

The Park would be handed over to the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) on 1 January 2019 with the caveat that the Friends and Biddulph Town Council would be involved with the ongoing management of the park and have sight of the formal agreement.

Concern was expressed about the ongoing negotiations regarding the Visitor Centre. Councillors Hall, Hart and Jones had met with the Portfolio Holder Councillor Brown and Councillor Ralphs and agreed that the lease for the centre would be between Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) and Biddulph Town Council, not involving SWT. Negotiations were continuing; one condition was that Biddulph Town Council would have to return the centre to a useable condition.

36. TO RECEIVE A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE BUS WORKING GROUP IN RELATION TO FUTURE SERVICE PROVISION

The recommendation was that Biddulph Town Council would fund the continuation of the 93 service until at least the end of March 2019, noting that the current deal would end in January 2019. Councillor Lovatt proposed the motion but if discussion was to take place, would prefer to it to be as a confidential item.

Councillor Rogers did not want to lose the bus, but did not think it was viable; he had not seen many passengers on the bus at Gillow Heath. Councillor Salt was pleased with the week-by-week figures showing how many people were using the bus. Councillor McGuinness noted that the figures were consistent from August; the service was well used. There had been an increase in passengers from the previous year. Councillor Jones confirmed that the service was very well used by the people who needed it. The motion was agreed; further discussion would take place in a confidential session at the end of this meeting.

37. TO NOTE THE ONGOING WORK IN RELATION TO A 'BIDDULPH HUB' FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Chief Officer talked of the role of this Town Council in the prevention of homelessness. At the meeting in June 2018, members had agreed to put together a hub where knowledge and experience could be shared. The first hub would take place on Wednesday 5 December 2018 from 4.00 pm in the Town Hall. There would be an overview from the Town Council and the CAB would give a presentation. A wide range of providers of the services in the town would be given the opportunity to network over tea and cake. It was hoped to hold the hub quarterly. The model from Frome was tabled.

Councillor Salt noted that there was a lack of joined-up thinking; there was a problem and she was pleased that the Town Council had taken up this matter. Councillor Salt fully supported the initiative, adding that there was at least one rough sleeper in Biddulph.

Councillor Hart noted that there were two semi-detached houses in Leek which would be used as accommodation for homeless people.

38. CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1. Lex Ward photography- empowering women, normalising breastfeeding

Please see completed posters at the front of the Council Chamber.

Posters will be displayed in the Town Hall.

2. Parking charges- next steps?

Received for the District Council:

Thank you very much for your email of 19th June, which Cllr Wain has asked me to respond to on his behalf, regarding the parking fees on Wharf Road car park in Biddulph.

The Council is extremely grateful for your suggestion which Cllr Wain has discussed with colleagues.

On 1st April this year the Council's new (2018/19) fees and charges came into effect which included the parking fees and parking time bands in the district. These details were formally set in the relevant Parking Order and, as such, will remain consistent for the remainder of this period.

Please be assured that the charge for the first hour of parking in Biddulph remains the lowest in the district and one of the lowest in the region. Additionally, customers using the off-street provision already benefit from free parking before 9.30am and after 3.30pm Monday to Saturday, all day on Sundays and bank holidays.

Unfortunately, the Council is unable to support your request on this occasion.

Do Councillors wish to discuss this again at the next General Purposes Committee?

Councillor Salt would like to know the rationale. Councillor Jones proposed requesting further explanation in more detail and adding this as an item to a future agenda.

Councillor Hart would like to know the projected cost to resurface the car park.

3. Envirogrant Scheme

Veolia work in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and have recently launched this year's EnviroGrant scheme. This is a grant scheme for local groups to apply for small amounts of money up to £1000 to use to make a difference to the environment and their local community.

The application form and information leaflet is available at:

<https://www.veolia.co.uk/staffordshire/>

The closing date for applications is Monday 29 October at 5 pm.

Councillor Salt suggested Biddulph Grange Country Park.

4. Grit bins

The Town Council has received a request for a grit bin within the town. The District Council website says:

There are "self help" grit bins, or salt heaps, at various points around the district. These are for communal use in clearing public footpaths and roads not for use on your driveway.

You should buy your own supply of grit to treat your own property.

Staffordshire County Council also provides useful winter travel advice.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council do not provide new grit bins - Town and Parish councils own and maintain many bins, and they may consider providing a new bin where it would provide specific benefits for their local residents. [Please contact your local Town or Parish council.](#)

Having sought advice from SMDC about a possible procedure for this, the advice was to refer all enquiries to the County Council.

Would Councillors like to discuss this further at the new General Purposes Committee?

Councillor Nicosia had requested a grit bin at bottom of Park Lane about six weeks ago; she had offered to spread the grit herself.

Councillor Jones proposed that all requests should be channelled through this Committee and the Town Council would lobby for the bins and grit. Clarification would be sought from the County Council about the provision of bins and grit.

5. Biddulph Calendars available next week!

£4 each in Biddulph Town Hall, Brammer's, Birthday Greetings and Wains

6. Introduction to the re-vamped logo!

This compliments the emerging website, Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order and is easily reproduced on tourism merchandise. It is similar to the current logo, but owned by the Town Council.

Copies of the revamped version of the logo were circulated. The wording was shown in a range of colours, to be used for different projects. Councillor Hawley questioned the colour of the flower; he felt that the colours made it a more useable logo.

Councillor Sheldon pointed out that the Miss Bateman clematis had eight petals; the logo appeared to only have seven. It was agreed to ask the designer to better define the eight petals.

7. Lengthsman

The lengthsman has been undertaking a number of jobs this week including the lay-by at Whitemoor and management of gulleys in the town, as well as mowing work.

Are there any additional areas to consider in the coming weeks?

Councillor Nicosia asked if anything could be done at the southern entrance to the town, the border with Brindley Ford. It looked a mess especially on the right hand side travelling north. Councillor Nicosia added that this Council should take a pride in the entrance to the town.

Councillor Sheldon noted that the owner of the quarry adjacent to the southern entrance had been declared bankrupt; ownership of the site was now unclear.

Councillor Hall added that Stoke on Trent City Council could do something about the abandoned car just to the south of the border. He proposed that a request is sent to the City Council, this was seconded by Councillor Hall; to be sent forthwith.

Councillor Salt noted that one of the rocks in the wall adjacent to the highway had fallen out and hit a passing car; nothing had been done since. Officers would check ownership with the land registry and would investigate liability and ownership of the land.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

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.”

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Signed Date