

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 14 MAY 2019

The Officer introduced the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Officer. The Mayor opened the meeting and invited members and guests to join him in a minute's silence following the recent death of former Town Councillor and Mayor of Biddulph 2002-2003 - Terence 'Terry' Gibson.

PRESENT

The Mayor – Mr McGuinness
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Davies
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Barlow
Councillor Brady
Councillor Garvey
Councillor Hall
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hart
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jackson
Councillor McLoughlin-Goldstraw
Councillor Perkin
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Salt
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Smith
Councillor Swift

Also, in attendance: family and friends of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, members of the public and press, the Chief Officer, Officer to the Council, Events and Partnerships Officer.

1.19 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR & MAYOR MAKING CEREMONY

a) Nomination, election and signature of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Mayor called for nominations for Mayor of Biddulph 2019-20.

Councillor Hall nominated Councillor Davies (Deputy Mayor). Councillor Davies is a committed Councillor and has the highest standards. He is a family-man with experienced in business and education. Councillor Davies is an active part of the

community and has experience or working within the District Council, which will be important. With support of Sue, Councillor Davies will be a good ambassador for the town.

Councillor Jackson seconded the nomination. Councillor Jackson echoed the words of Councillor Hall, he had known Councillor Jackson for many years and noted that Councillor Davies worked hard outside the Council Chamber.

There were no other nominations. A vote was taken and Councillor Davies was elected unanimously. Councillor Davies signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

b) Presentation of Chains of Office to Mayor and Mayoress

Mr McGuinness and Councillor Davies withdrew, and the Chain of Office was exchanged. The Chief Officer introduced the new Mayor of Biddulph, Councillor Davies.

c) Speech of Acceptance by Mayor

Councillor Davies thanked his fellow Councillors for their kind words, adding that he had only had to stand in for the outgoing Mayor on one occasion. Councillor Davies believed that Mr McGuinness had an unrivalled knowledge of the transport system of North Staffordshire and had done a fantastic job as Transport Coordinator. He had been a very dedicated Mayor and had done the town proud.

Councillor Davies had moved to Biddulph 45 years ago and thought of himself as local, but was still an 'incomer' from Stoke. Councillor Davies welcomed newly elected Councillors to the meeting.

Councillor Davies stated that he is the 45th Mayor of Biddulph Town Council. However, we have had a Council in Biddulph since 1894, meaning that Councillor Davies is the 125th Mayor. There were originally 3 wards and 9 Councillors and there was a lot of work to be done then. There was not much in the way of sewer provisions, a decent water system, or education, there was a significant child mortality rate. The Council got on and did a lot of work to shape the town that we have today. So, my theme is that I hope we can all continue to work together for the betterment of Biddulph.'

The Mayor's chosen charities will be the local branch of Citizen's Advice, Biddulph in Bloom, Biddulph Youth and Community Zone and the local foodbank, other suggestions for local charities would be taken into consideration. The Mayor felt it was very important to ensure that money raised is spent in the town.

Councillor Davies presented the Chain of Office of Mayoress to his wife Mrs Sue Davies.

d) Speech by outgoing Mayor

Mr McGuinness noted that he had been extremely proud of Biddulph during his mayoral year:

The past year serving as your Mayor has been an incredibly memorable and important experience for me, and I was truly honoured to be elected Mayor of this fabulous town. It has been a busy and varied year. I've helped to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, turned on lights and marked new beginnings.

I've learnt about our heritage – aspects that I never fully understood or appreciated. There was a packed programme of events to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. In Biddulph, we painted rocks, we sang, we laughed, and we cried as we marked this very important milestone. This helped to demonstrate what a busy and dedicated voluntary sector we have in the town, who work tirelessly to improve the lives of those that live here.

I've learnt about our twin town and better understood our twinning relationships. It was an honour to welcome young people and their teachers from Fusignano in the Summer. Visiting schools and youth groups across Biddulph has been a particular highlight this year and it has shown that our young people are bright, they're full of energy and they're certainly inquisitive. I hope through those visits young people are aware of our democratic institutions and, failing that – they at least know that I am not the King, I do not live in a Castle, and I am certainly not a millionaire!

We are closer to completing a Neighbourhood Plan, which will help to influence development within the town for the coming years.

Let's continue to spread that positive message and work to make Biddulph greater than it already is.

e) Vote of thanks

Councillor Hall thanked Mr McGuinness, adding that it only seemed like a couple of months since the last Mayor Making. The Mayor had worked very hard, very overtly with transport, but relatively quietly in the background with other items. He had been a good ambassador for the town.

Councillor Jackson thanked Mr McGuinness for dedicating a year of his life to this wonderful town, adding that he had done a lot of work behind the scenes on the 93 bus. Councillor Jackson hoped that Mr McGuinness would make a comeback, adding that he was now part of the family of past Mayor's and urged him not to forget colleagues at the Town Council.

f) Presentations to outgoing Mayor

The Mayor presented Mr McGuinness with his outgoing Mayor's badge.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from

Councillor Adams
Councillor Jones
Councillor Yates

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations; Councillor Sheldon anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom.
- b Other Disclosable Interests; none were declared.

4. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ~ 8 MAY 2018

The Minutes of the Meeting of 8 May 2018 (signed at the Ordinary Town Council meeting on 15 May 2018); were confirmed. It was noted that Councillor Salt was present at the meeting.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Nomination, election and signature of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Hall nominated Councillor Jones, who was absent from the meeting to attend Her Majesty's garden party. Councillor Hall spoke of Councillor Jones 'we all know John's qualities and his experience with the District will be invaluable in the coming times, when we hope to take control of the Town Hall and the Visitor Centre. With Anne beside him, he would be a great support to the Mayor; this was seconded by Councillor Hart.

Councillor Jackson nominated Councillor Rushton saying that 'It is with great sadness that I have to stand up tonight as this is not something I've ever done in the 20 odd years I have been on this Council. We have had an unwritten convention among ourselves that the Mayorship is shared out evenly; the Labour Group has had the position on Mayor once in eight years if you include this year.

I have always believed every member of this Council should support the Mayor, but because this convention has been broken, I would like to nominate Councillor Sylvia Rushton. Sylvia has never been Mayor before, unlike Councillor Jones who was ten years ago. This was seconded by Councillor Salt.

Councillor Rogers added that this Council could consider Councillor Rushton in this four-year cycle.

A vote was taken, the majority being in favour of Councillor Jones, Councillor Sheldon abstained from the vote.

b) Presentation of Chains of Office to Deputy Mayor and Mayoress

The Chains of Office would be presented to Councillor and Mrs Jones on another occasion.

6. CONSTITUTION

i. APPROVAL OF STANDING ORDERS

It was moved to approve Standing Orders containing updated advice from NALC.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Hart. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

ii. APPROVAL OF MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

~ New Committee structure approved February 2019, to be implemented from May 2019. Meeting dates for 2019/20 approved at Town Council meeting in March 2019.

~ Committee membership to be tabled; to **approve** membership for 2019/20:

- a) **Finance Strategy and Management** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- b) **Town and Community** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- c) **Recreation and Amenities** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- d) **Planning**– Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.

Councillor Jackson noted that Councillor Yates would stand down from the Biddulph in Bloom group for Councillor Redfern, a long-term member.

Councillor Hall proposed to move the membership as listed below; this was seconded by Councillor Jackson:

Member	Town and Community	Recreation and Amenities	Finance Strategy and Management	Planning
Adams				
Baddeley				
Barlow				
Brady				
Davies				
Garvey				
Hall				
Harper				
Hart				
Hawley				
Jackson				
Jones				
McLoughlin-Goldstraw				
Perkin				
Redfern				
Rogers				
Rushton				
Salt				
Sheldon				
Smith				
Swift				
Yates				

iii. APPROVAL OF MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

~ To **note** that there are no established Sub-Committees in May 2019. Working Groups exist to cover the following business:

- Neighbourhood Plan (Planning Committee)
- Young People (Town and Community Committee)
- Christmas Lights (Town and Community Committee)
- 93 Bus Service (Finance Strategy and Management Committee)

All Councillors are welcome to attend Working Groups, as voting members.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Jackson. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

iv. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Town Council's Financial Regulations, which were approved at the Town Council meeting on 15 January 2019 were received; no changes had been made since this approval.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Salt. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

v. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct had been amended. It was proposed to accept this by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Rogers. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

vi. DISPENSATION FOR ALL COUNCILLORS

To **approve** that the Town Council grants a dispensation to Town Councillors that are resident within the town with regard to the annual approval of precept requirements.

Moved by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Rushton. A vote was taken, and this was approved.

vii. APPROVAL OF GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

That the Town Council **resolves** from 14 May 2019, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council (i.e. May 2023), that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

A briefing note was attached.

Moved by Councillor Salt and seconded by Councillor Harper. A vote was taken, and this was approved.

7. FINANCIAL MANDATE

i. The Mayor read each section of the Financial Mandate:

a) Signatories: Current signatories for the current account being: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance Committee plus the Chief Officer and Officer. **(Two members plus one officer to sign)**

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Hart. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

b) Mayor's Charity Account & Civic Ball Account: To close the 'Civic Ball Account' enabling all funds to be managed within one account. To give authority to the Chief Officer and Officer of the Council to be the two signatories for the Mayor's Charity Account.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Salt. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

c) Bank Mandate:

To **Resolve** that a banking relationship will be maintained with National Westminster Bank Plc (the Bank), in accordance with the Mandate and that:

- ✓ The individuals identified as Authorised Signatories may, in accordance with the Signing Rules, sign cheques and give instructions for Standing Orders, Direct Debits, electronic payments, banker's drafts and other payments on the Accounts even if it causes an Account to be overdrawn or exceed any limit;
- ✓ Any authorised Signatory may give other instructions or requests for information to the Bank in relation to the Accounts; opening accounts with the same Signing Rules and Authorised Signatories; closing accounts; or other banking services or products;
- ✓ The Bank may accept instructions that do not have an original written signature provided the Bank is satisfied that the instruction is genuine and subject to any other agreement the Bank may require for those instructions;
- ✓ The Customer will provide to the Bank a copy of its constitution and any amendment to the constitution, certified as correct by the Secretary.

This Mandate will continue until the Organisation gives the Bank a replacement mandate or the Organisation passes a resolution changing the Signing Rules and/or adding or removing an Authorised Signatory by completing and returning the Change of Signing Authority form in which case this Mandate will continue as amended.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Harper. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

ii. INTERNAL AUDITOR & MONITORING COUNCILLOR

Appointment of independent Internal Auditor (currently Elizabeth Thompson) plus one councillor (currently Councillor D Hawley), to fulfil audit requirements.

Proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Harper. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

8. TO APPROVE THAT THE DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT ORDER WILL BE SUBMITTED TO STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR SCREENING, BEFORE STARTING A PERIOD OF CONSULTATION

Please note, Hannah Barter (Urban Vision) will be in attendance at this meeting and will be permitted to answer relevant queries as part of this agenda item.

Councillor Hawley presented the attached documents.

Councillor Hawley noted that the Neighbourhood Plan contained six themes and had been developed following a number of successful consultations. Councillor

Hawley emphasised that these were not the final documents; there are likely to be further amendments following further consultation events. These documents are now at the start of this process; a flow chart was tabled demonstrating the next steps. Councillor Hawley thanked the Chief Officer and Hannah Barter for their work on this, to date. In addition, Councillors and members of the Working Group had been incredibly supportive.

Councillor Jackson felt that the Town Council owes a debt of gratitude to those that have been involved in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. This has been 'hard going'. The benefits of this will be in 10, 15, 20 years' time.

There were no further questions. Councillor Hall proposed that the documents are submitted for screening; seconded by Councillor Salt. A vote was taken, and this was Agreed.

9. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a) Accounts received for payment in May 2019

Staffordshire County Council Contribution to bus service 93 from January to end March 2019	7716.67
OS Homfray TA Hammer Design 3 interpretation boards at Biddulph Grange Country Park to be reimbursed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council	2400.68
Ash Waste Services Empty 4 skips weekly at Biddulph Town Burial Ground	423.30
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd Empty 1 bin fortnightly at Woodhouse Burial Ground	23.10
B Carter Un/lock gates at Woodhouse Burial Ground	40.00
Market imprest For market stall construction and dismantling at Artisan Market	180.00
P and V Newton & Sons 4 x name plates for Mayoral photographs	14.00
Credit Card Open Spaces Annual Membership	45.00
Facebook Boosts for Fresh Food Friday, International Women's Day 2 x Election Briefing, Local Green Spaces	15.40

Giff Gaff Wifi connection	20.00
Giff Gaff Wifi connection	25.00
Shutterstock Electronic images	19.00

b) Supplementary accounts

Expenditure above £500

Salaries	5171.75
HMRC to be paid 31 May 2019	1857.03
Staffs Pension Fund	2121.97

Expenditure below £500

Grenke Leasing Ltd

Quarterly fee for photocopier 439.67	
Fee 27-31 March 2019 for photocopier	19.54
Documentation fee for new copier 120.00	

Kent County Council	194.80
Copy charges for old machine	

Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	58.60
Springfield Road site May 2019	

CJ Skelhorne Jewellers	171.26
Engraving 3 links of Mayoral Chain	
Tidying the whole chain and medallion	
Valuation for insurance	

Mrs J Webber	35.00
Cakes for dementia friendly cinema event	

Petty cash	56.88
Apr - May 2019	

The meeting closed at 6.40pm, with the Mayor inviting all present to remain for light refreshments.

Signed Date