

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020.

The Town Crier introduced the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Officer. The Mayor invited Rev'd Steve Dyson to lead a time of prayer.

The Mayor opened the meeting

PRESENT

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

Also, in attendance County Councillors Flunder and Lawson

82.19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The meeting to adjourn for up to 20 minutes (Standing Order 1d-f) to allow for public participation. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Town Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Mayor.

Members of the public wishing to raise issues which are not on the Agenda should notify the Chief Officer five working days before the meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Council meeting itself.

The Mayor presented retired Fire Officer Brian Ostler with a gift to mark his 30 years of service in Biddulph.

a) Standing item (for discussion as necessary)- Policing in Biddulph

Councillor Rogers reported that there were several illegal taxis touting around the town, he suggested asking the Police to look at this. Councillor Hart noted that he had taken this up with licensing and they would take necessary steps.

Councillor Garvey reported that residents in Well Street had expressed concern to him about vehicles racing up and down the road.

Councillor Jackson noted that there were a significant number of reports about antisocial behaviour in and around Sainsbury's. He was concerned that it did not give an accurate impression of what the town was really like when this was splashed in the press and on social media.

b) Standing item- County Council issues

County Councillor Flunder reported that the County Council had passed the budget for 2020-2021. The lease for the Biddulph Youth and Community Zone had been signed. Councillor Flunder thanked all those who had attended a recent working group looking at social isolation in young people. Councillor Flunder would forward County Councillor grant funding (DHP) information to the Chief Officer.

Councillor Flunder thanked all those who had attended his Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Chairman's fundraising event – a Moorlands Quiz. A team from Biddulph won the trophy.

Councillor Jackson thanked Councillor Flunder for his work on the lease for the Zone. He added that the Zone had also been awarded Lottery funding for the next three years.

Councillor Jackson had heard that the County Council had received £3,000,000 from Aldi for previous Meadows School site he hoped that Biddulph would receive a fair slice.

Councillor Salt noted that residents at St John's Road would welcome double yellow lines to deter parking at the junction with Tunstall Road. Councillor Salt hoped that Aldi would instigate a parking scheme for staff at the adjacent Roaches School. Councillor Salt reported potholes in Knowle Road and grass on the footways on Park Lane. Councillor Flunder noted that these were already on the Highways improvement list.

Councillor Jones added that we should not have to rely on DHP. He thanked Councillor Flunder for saving the crossing warden on Biddulph Moor. Councillor Jones asked why the requested weight limit had not been introduced on Woodhouse Lane. Councillor Lawson responded that there had been a delay in temporary repairs due to poor weather. Councillor Lawson had met with planners who advised that if a weight limit was introduced larger vehicles in would have no access to Biddulph Moor. Councillor Jones responded that buildouts could be introduced in such a way that would not impede traffic, he offered to meet with the planners to show them how it could be done.

Councillor Rogers gave an update on the Smithy Lane 'puddle'; the outlet for the gully becomes blocked when it rains, when the stream level lowers the overflow would lower.

Councillor Sheldon reported that water from the quarry at Brindley Ford was a constant problem and was coming up through the road surface in the middle of the road.

83. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Adams
Councillor Smith

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom. Minute 88 Councillor Jones was employed by West Midlands Ambulance Service. Minute 92 Councillor Hawley travel expenses in the supplementary accounts. Minute 87 Councillor Hart in the Local Plan residential site specifics
- b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests: none were declared. Minute 90 Councillor Salt's son was a pupil at James Bateman Middle School.

85. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 11 February 2020 were **approved and signed**. Councillor Salt had sent apologies.
- b) The Minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on 11 February 2020 were **received**. Councillor Salt had sent apologies.
- c) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18 February 2020 were **received**.
- d) The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on 18 February 2020 were **received**.
- e) The Minutes of the meeting of the Special Town Council held on 18 February 2020 were **approved and signed**.

86. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Councillor Davies reported that he and Councillors Hawley and Yates had won the Chairman's Quiz the previous week and raised £700 for the charity (collectively). The trophy was on display in the Council Chamber.

Councillor Davies advised that his Charity Dinner and Concert would take place on Friday 24 April 2020 at Biddulph Town Hall. Tickets would be £25 per person.

Councillor Hart left the room before discussion began on the following item

87. TO RECEIVE A LETTER CONTAINING FEEDBACK FROM THE LOCAL PLAN INSPECTOR IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT ACROSS AREAS OF BIDDULPH (LETTER ATTACHED)

The main points from this letter, in relation to Biddulph are:

- MM12 needs to be further modified so that land at Gillow Heath is no longer safeguarded but remains as Green Belt.
- MM73 should be amended so that 13 and 14 (Dorset Drive) remain as LGS designations

Councillor Davies felt that this was good news all round. He reported that he and Councillor Hawley, Angie Turner and the Chief Officer had put the case to the Inspector. As a result, safeguarded lands had been returned to Green Belt and the two sites at either side of Dorset Drive had been restored. The Inspector did not recommend that any other site be taken for housing.

Councillor Salt offered congratulations to the Chief Officer, Councillor Hawley and others involved in protecting the areas.

Councillor Redfern expressed disappointed that housing near to Victoria Road was going ahead.

Councillor Davies added that the point was raised that the first consultation only gave an indicative target. When the Victoria Row site came before the Planning Committee, the proposed location of the 'sheds' could be contested.

Councillor Jackson felt that the Inspector could have saved a lot of stress; we must remember this victory.

Councillor Hart returned to the meeting and Councillor Jones left before discussion took place on the following item

88. ITEM REQUESTED BY CLLR HAWLEY

In light of West Midlands Ambulance Services' decision that First Responders in Staffordshire are to be stripped of their blue lights and will no longer be able to carry certain drugs as part of a revamp of the service from April 1st, this Town Council wishes to express its dismay at this decision. Coupled with the removal of the Rapid Response Vehicle this even more compromises the service that the people will receive from the Ambulance Service and will potentially increase response times and endanger life.

Councillor Hawley reported that West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) felt this would be an improvement to service, but he felt it would affect rural areas most. Councillor Hawley proposed writing to WMAS and copy in the local MP to express concerns and dismay at these changes Councillor seconded proposal.

Councillor Yates asked if this was a National Policy, he would accept a green light as used by medics in the interim and felt that the two areas should be treated separately.

Councillor Harper wanted to know the rationale behind the decision. A vote was taken on the proposal and was agreed unanimously. Councillor Davies asked that the letters are sent forthwith. Agreed.

Councillor Jones re-joined the meeting

89. TO NOTE THAT A STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION HAS COMMENCED IN RELATION TO GRASS CUTTING AND WEED CONTROL (EMAIL ATTACHED, LINK BELOW):

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/Weeds-Grass-Trees-Hedges/Grass.aspx>

The Chief Officer felt that this was the time to reiterate our interest in having more control over grass cutting. It was felt that the County Council scheme was more for road safety not aesthetics.

90. TO RECEIVE INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROPOSED NEW ALDI STORE

The Chief Officer reported that the Public consultation had been cancelled due to concern over the Coronavirus COVID 19 outbreak. Some Councillors had been able to attend a short presentation by Aldi representatives.

Councillor Yates proposed that standing orders be suspended for full discussion on this item.

Councillor Davies proposed that the item be referred to the Planning Committee for discussion.

Councillor Jackson felt this was bigger than a planning matter.

Councillor Salt felt that James Bateman Middle School had not been properly consulted; she added that our County Councillor needed to work with the school.

Councillor Hawley proposed that an Aldi representative is invited to attend a meeting, members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group could also be invited to attend, bringing their proposals; this was seconded by Councillor Jones.

Councillor Rogers felt that it was a shame Aldi had not contacted this Council earlier; he knew of an alternative site.

Councillor Harper concurred with Councillor Hawley; invite Aldi representatives to come here and put questions to them.

Councillor Davies felt that discussion was not appropriate at this meeting as we did not have sufficient information to have a full and proper discussion.

Councillor Jones concurred, adding that the store would not be built until the following year, he was sure that Aldo would attend if invited.

Councillor Jackson had attended the consultation.

Councillor McLoughlin requested to have the meeting next month as a confidential item, to allow frank discussion.

Councillor Sheldon had also attended the Aldi briefing and felt it had been a good experience, the experts were very good, had listened and made notes.

Councillor Yates proposed that the invitation is extended to the wider public.

Councillor Salt proposed that Headteacher Tracy Price is also invited; she added that the meeting should not be confidential.

Councillor Harper would prefer a special meeting with just Aldi on the agenda.

Councillor Jones noted that Town Council meetings were open to the public anyway, the meeting could be moved into confidential at the end if needed.

91. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON MANAGEMENT OF BIDDULPH TOWN HALL AND COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE

The Chief Officer reported that the Asset Working Group would meet the following week and there would be a further special meeting of the Town Council to agree the terms before 1 April 2020

It was noted that the District Council would pay for installation of WIFI in the Town Hall.

The lease for the Biddulph Grange Country Park Visitor Centre had not been received, although the draft Heads of Terms had been agreed.

Councillor Jones asked if we knew what was causing the delay.

Councillor Salt wondered whether delays were a result of recent personnel issues at SMDC.

Councillor Davies thought this was unlikely.

92. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a) Accounts received for payment in March 2020

Expenditure over £500

Zurich Municipal	1807.92
Annual insurance premium	
Biddulph in Bloom	6250.00
4 th of 4 grant payment	
Down to Earth Designs Ltd	5697.02
Out of contract work at Station Rd site	
RPS	
Highway Consultation Work to 14 February 2020	2948.64
Ironage Designs	2286.38
Repair gates at Town Burial Ground	

Expenditure below £500

Ash Waste Services	318.04
Weekly skip collection Town Burial Ground	
Brian Carter	40.00
Un/lock gates at WBG	
Waterplus	20.47
Water at Woodhouse Burial Ground	
Business Products	
Copies for February 2020	81.05
Stationery supplies	109.62
SMDC	384.00
Health and Safety Training Course – 2 staff	
J Hancock	6.60
Travel to station dementia workshop Manchester	
So Marketing	420.00
NP design work amendments	
Staffordshire Parish Councils Association	
Local Councillor Training 12 February 2020	45.00

b) Supplementary accounts

Expenditure above £500

D and G Bus Ltd	3076.00
Service 93 for February 2020	
Salaries	5544.45
HMRC	2119.90
Staffs Pension Fund	2302.15

Expenditure below £500

Ash Waste Services	77.18
Weekly skip collection Town Burial Ground Amendment to original invoice	
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	58.50
Monthly work on land at Springfield Road	
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd	23.10
Bin at Woodhouse Burial Ground	
WaterPlus	68.03
Water at Town Burial Ground	
Cllr Hawley	36.75
Travel to Leek and Stafford	
S Haydon	66.56
Travel to various meetings	
J Gaunt	31.15
Travel to and from burial grounds	
Joel Gardner Music	100.00
Entertainment at Ethical Fair	
Petty cash for March	49.26

Credit Card Payments

City B Group	2400.00
Gazebos for events	
Amazon Marketplace	42.54
Move Over Darling First Aid kit	
Giff gaff	25.00
Wifi charges	
Shutterstock	19.00
Media graphics monthly fee	
Notonthehighstreet	39.95
Civic gift	
Amazon Marketplace	-169.00
Reimburse for snow machine	

Payments to be made 1 April 2020

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association	1188.00
Annual subscription	

Communicorp
Annual subscription
Clerk and Councils publication

75.00

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Signed Date