

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2020.**

The Town Crier introduced the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Officer. The Mayor invited Rev'd Anne Coates 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 McLoughlin  
Councillor Rogers  
Councillor Rushton  
Councillor Sheldon  
Councillor Smith  
Councillor Swift  
Councillor Yates

Also, in attendance County Councillors Flunder and Lawson, PC Leake

### **66.19 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.*

#### **a) Biddulph Town Crier- Mr John Robinson**

Mr Robinson thanked the Mayor for allowing him to speak. He wanted to inform Councillors that the 2020 British Championship for Town Criers would be held in Biddulph, 24-26 July 2020. 25 Criers had confirmed attendance. A celebratory dinner would be held at Astbury Golf Club.

Councillor Rogers thanked the Town Crier and hoped that Biddulph Town Council could help with the event, this was seconded by Councillor Rushton. Councillor Jones concurred with Councillor Rogers, adding that it was a prestigious event for the town; the event would fill the town, this Council should consider what it could do financially to help John.

Mr Robinson responded, thanking everyone for their kind words. He added that, he and his wife intended to put on the event at their expense, to put something back into the town which had supported them for the past 25 years.

Councillor Jones asked for this to be an agenda item for a Committee meeting. Councillor Harper concurred with Councillor Jones.

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

PC Leake gave apologies from Sergeant Baddeley and Inspector Thorley.

PC Leake reported that reported crime had reduced overall and anti-social behaviour had increased slightly in the town; this had been recognised and was being dealt with. A few young people were currently being helped with acceptable behaviour contracts. Sainsbury's staff wore body cameras to help with security issues; the Police were encouraging them to look at their security.

Recent stop and search for drugs had negative results; a warrant had been executed.

PC Leake reported that PCSO Peake had left Biddulph to join the regular police force and had been replaced by PCSO Clark; PC Hepburn had also joined the team.

Further information could be found by following on Twitter @Moorlands Police and signing up to the Staffordshire smart alert system.

Councillor Jones had received complaints about cars that clog Well Street and Heath Street right up to junction; he added that obstruction was a police matter. PC Leake noted the information.

Councillor Sheldon reported that Sainsburys was to close the café after 6.00 pm and wondered if this would have an adverse effect on youth behaviour. PC Leake said it would not, young people gathered near to the entrance on the lower level to use the store's WIFI and heat from the fans; he added that most were not causing any problems.

Councillor Rogers noted cars parked on the zig-zag markings on South High Street especially at mealtimes. PC Leake noted the information.

Councillor Harper added that 'local cops' were welcome to call at his house for a cuppa when passing.

PC Leake noted that Biddulph Police were very busy but needed to make time to speak to Councillors and reassure the public.

**c) Standing item- County Council issues**

County Councillor Flunder invited members to report incidents to himself and Councillor Lawson.

Councillor Rogers noted that flooding was very bad at the end of Smithy Lane.

Councillor Lawson responded that he had 15-16 drains on his list of watercourses which were full and so backing up, he had written a strong letter to Cllr Helen Fisher as he had received complaints. Councillor Lawson would pledge £16,000 to get them repaired.

Councillor Yates noted that grids on Mow Lane were blocked, he knew of several others. Councillor Davies invited Councillor Yates to send the list to Councillor Lawson or bring to a future meeting.

Councillor Lawson had received a request for a bridleway between Wedgwood Lane and Acorn Lodge, he had no objection and would put forward for approval.

Councillor Harper noted that the public could telephone for grids to be emptied and added that Fold Lane was constantly being repaired, it was not good enough.

Councillor Flunder had attended a meeting of the County Council to support the application to extend the short lease to long-term for the Biddulph Youth and Community Zone; it had been successful.

Councillor Flunder had nothing further to report on the Aldi/Meadows site.

Councillors Flunder and Lawson hoped to arrange a drop-in meeting on 10 March 2020 where people could bring their concerns and suggestions.

Councillor Yates noted that grids on the main road were blocked. Councillor Flunder asked for a list of the grids, so they could be put onto high frequency emptying. He was critical of work done on potholes over the past year.

Councillor Lawson noted that the County Council had previously had 34,000 employees; there are now only 4000, which means they often rely on sub-contractors.

Councillor Jones expressed concern that an application for a bridleway was being approved without coming before this Council. The Chief Officer responded that the pack had arrived too late for this agenda and would be on an agenda for a Planning Committee meeting the following week. Councillor Garvey noted that this was the first he had heard of it. Councillor Hawley proposed that this is added to the agenda of the next planning meeting.

Councillor Swift noted that residents had told him that after reporting an incident they did not receive feedback.

Councillor Flunder did not think there was a backlog, but would investigate.

## **67. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Adams  
Councillor Jackson  
Councillor Perkin  
Councillor Redfern

## **68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations: Councillor Sheldon anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom.
- b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests:  
Councillor Jones was Chair of the Biddulph Grange Country Park Friends

## 69. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 14 January 2020 were **approved and signed.**
- b) The Minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on 14 January 2020 were **received.**
- c) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020 were **received.**
- d) The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020 were **received.**
- e) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 28 January 2020 were **approved and signed.**
- f) The Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Working Group held on 3 February 2020 were **approved and signed.**

Members were reminded to sign the attendance register for each meeting.

## 70. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- a) The Mayor had attended a Birthday celebration for a lady who was 106 years old.
- b) Councillor Flunder, as Chairman of Staffordshire Moorlands, was hosting a quiz between the three main towns, to be held on 21 Feb 2020. All questions would be based on the Moorlands area. The Mayor asked for volunteers to join his team.
- c) The Mayor reported that the annual Biddulph Running Club Knypersley Pool run would be held on Sunday 16 February 2020, with profits to the Mayors Charity fund
- d) The Mayor reported that Mr John Robinson, had held the position of Biddulph Town Crier for 25 years. The Mayor then gave the following cry:

### *OUR TOWN CRIER*

*With a character that's colourful as his attire  
we take pride in our Town Crier  
A cheerful face,  
an encouraging word,  
and a voice like a megaphone is always heard*

*His heart of gold is like his bell,  
big and bold with a story to tell  
Our John stands tall,  
a good head higher  
than any other council's crier*

*With a proclamation in his hand  
with an oyez, his words command  
and everyone listens  
to our champion of the land*

*He is helpful, he is generous,  
he's always there to give  
a rhyming word of wisdom  
telling folks 'Biddulph's the place to live'*

*A proclamation for the Queen he wrote  
which all town criers gave from the throat*

*We honour you for service given  
25 years you have striven  
To give renown  
to our Garden Town*

*And so, with grateful pride  
let's lift our voices higher  
to say John 'we thank you  
for being our town crier'  
God save the Queen*

Following a round of applause, the Mayor presented Mr Robinson with a card and gift.

Mr Robinson thanked everyone for their support over the past 25 years.

**71. TO AGREE A PRECEPT REQUIREMENT FOR 2020-21 OF £362,215**

Councillor Hall proposed to accept the figure of £362,215, seconded by Councillor Hart.

Councillor Davies thanked everyone for their moderation.

The Precept requirement was agreed.

**72. TO AGREE A DISPENSATION FOR COUNCILLOR ADAMS WHO WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS AND COMMITTEES ON TUESDAY EVENINGS DUE TO A 16-WEEK COURSE OF TREATMENT**

It was proposed by Councillor Harper and seconded by Councillor Hart to grant the dispensation to Councillor Adams. This was agreed.

Councillor Hart added that a message of good will should be sent to Councillor Adams.

**73. TO APPROVE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S INSURANCE PROVISION FROM 28 FEBRUARY 2020 FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR (TO BE TABLED)**

***Please note** that the Town Council's Risk Assessment Overview supports this decision-making process and has been sent to Councillors by email.*

The Chief Officer noted that this Council would need wider cover; she had requested a very short-term cover, postponing the final decision until the asset transfer was in place. This would not be possible, but amendments could be made to existing provision.

Councillor Hawley noted that the first two quotations were from brokers. The Chief Officer noted that she had sought quotes from those that provided insurance to town and parish councils, and the current provider- a direct insurance provider.

Councillor Hall proposed accepting the third quote, seconded by Councillor Hart. Councillor Harper noted that this Council had received reasonably good service from the company. It was agreed to accept the third figure, which was Zurich.

**74. TO APPROVE THE REVISED HEADS OF TERMS FOR THE COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE (ATTACHED)**

Councillor Jones noted that there were no significant changes; clarification had been sought on a number of additions since the Town Council had previously approved this document. Councillor Jones wanted to propose that the Heads of Terms is approved with the proviso that the following points would be adjusted: The Town Council should be able to sub-let the building; there may be ancillary café use; and, that clarification was provided about the insurance liability.

Councillor Jones added that the building had been closed for several years, he would like it to be opened again by Easter. If this Council had to wait until 1 April 2020 to take over the building, and Easter opening would not be possible.

Councillor Sheldon asked if the turbines were included; the Chief Officer noted that they were.

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hart and agreed to approve the Heads of Terms, with the clarifications above.

**75. TO APPROVE A CONTRACTOR TO COMPLETE AN ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORT AT THE COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE (TO BE TABLED)**

The Chief Officer had held further discussion with a contractor who knew the site well and would report back to update members shortly.

Councillor Hall proposed, seconded by Councillor Hart that the Chief Officer should handle this part of the process and bring back three quotes for the remedial work to a future meeting, as necessary.

**76. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON MANAGEMENT OF BIDDULPH TOWN HALL**

The Chief Officer reported that Biddulph Town Council had started to process bookings for the building and had implemented a more transparent cost structure. The Council had received a lot of enquiries.

Councillor Davies hoped that all information should have been received by the end of this financial year.

He proposed that an additional meeting of the Town Council should be held to discuss this one item, as necessary. Councillor Yates suggested holding the meeting the following Tuesday at 5.00 pm. This was agreed.

**77. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE**

**a) Accounts received for payment in February 2020**

**Expenditure over £500**

**D and G Bus Ltd**  
Service 93 for December 2019

3076.00

<b>Laser Hire</b>	1158.00
Display at Town Christmas lights switch on event	
<b>R Standell</b>	662.00
Road closure for switch on	
Cut up and remove tree – Apostle	
Erect and remove Christmas Tree	
Gritting	
<b><u>Expenditure below £500</u></b>	00.00
Bin at woodhouse Burial Ground	
<b>Brian Carter</b>	40.00
Un/lock gates at WBG	
<b>Business Products</b>	110.38
Copies for January 2020	
<b>b) Supplementary accounts</b>	
<b><u>Expenditure above £500</u></b>	
<b>SMDC</b>	4216.32
Election recharge 1 <sup>st</sup> of four annual instalments	
<b>RPS Consulting Services Ltd</b>	3000.00
Highway Consultancy and draft report preparation	
Salaries	5544.45
HMRC	2119.90
Staffs Pension Fund	2302.15
<b><u>Expenditure below £500</u></b>	
<b>Npower</b>	58.61
Metred Christmas Lights	
<b>Ash Waste Services</b>	317.44
Weekly skip collection Town Burial Ground	
<b>N and J Tree Services Ltd</b>	240.00
Walkover Tree survey at burial grounds	
<b>Countrywide Grounds Maintenance</b>	58.50
Monthly work on land at Springfield Road	
<b>R Standell</b>	198.00
Lengthsman work	
Petty cash for February	8.45
<b>c) <u>Community Grant Payments</u></b>	
James Bateman Middle School	200.00
Biddulph Retired Persons Association	100.00
Our Community Club	75.00
Friends of BRIC	100.00
Biddulph Male Voice Choir	75.00

Biddulph and District Youth Orchestra	50.00
Friends of Biddulph Valley Way	250.00
Biddulph Boxing Gym	200.00
Biddulph Senior Citizens Snooker Club	50.00
Brown Lees and District Community Association	250.00
Biddulph Moor Evergreens	125.00
Moor First Parents' Association	125.00
BYCZ Ltd	150.00
Suzanne Williams	250.00

Councillor Hall asked if the above list was all of the applications. The Chief Officer responded that there were just a couple left to finalise.

Councillor Rogers asked for more detail re the Lengthsman invoice.

**d) Credit Card Payments**

<b>Facebook</b>	11.91
Advertising	
<b>Giff gaff</b>	25.00
WIFI charges	
<b>Argos</b>	25.00
Replacement Council Chamber clock	
<b>Shutterstock</b>	19.00
Media graphics monthly fee	
<b>Amazon</b>	11.54
Table printer ink	
<b>Land Registry</b>	6.00
Environment Biddulph Brook area	
<b>Trainline</b>	11.65
Travel for Dementia conference	

The meeting closed at 7.03 pm

Signed ..... Date .....