

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 16 JULY 2019**

### **PRESENT**

- The Mayor - Councillor Davies
- Councillor Baddeley
- Councillor Barlow
- Councillor Brady
- Councillor McLoughlin
- Councillor Perkin
- Councillor Redfern
- Councillor Rogers
- Councillor Sheldon
- Councillor Swift

Also in attendance

- Councillor Harper
- Councillor Hart

### **27. APOLOGIES**

- The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Jones
- Councillor Rushton
- Councillor Smith
- Councillor Yates

### **28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations:

Councillors Sheldon Redfern and Baddeley in anything related to Biddulph in Bloom.

Councillor Hart site specifics Local Plan.

Other Interests: None.

### **29. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18 June 2019 were signed as an accurate record.

### **30. STATION ROAD UPDATE (STANDING AGENDA ITEM)**

The Chief Officer reported that she had chased the District Council to release the Section 106 monies as this Council was now incurring expenses on the project. United Utilities was progressing at the site and Western Power would be on site from 31 July 2019. The fountains would be on their way here next week.

Councillor Harper suggested installing a drinks fountain for the public to refresh themselves.

Councillor Perkin cautioned over the heavy regulations.

Councillor Hart thought this a good idea, it would be environmentally sensitive.

Councillor McLoughlin suggested looking for a suitable location.

Councillor Rogers was happy in principle to go ahead, but this would depend on the rules and regulations.

Councillor Davies thought it better for everyone if retailers offered bottle refills in stores.

Councillor Harper asked if Councillors would be responsible for the safety of the water in the shops.

Councillor Sheldon noted that her shop had mains water and served the people in the property and in the shop.

Councillor Sheldon had always wanted to renovate the public fountain at Fountain Court. The water came from a supply in the garden, but she was aware that anyone would be able to foul the water, it was a lovely idea but with issues.

### **31. TO CHOOSE A PHOTO FOR PROMOTIONAL MAGNETS**

The Chief Officer circulated printouts of a 'mash' of Biddulph images (a suggestion for the photo) and noted that at the final meeting of the Tourism Committee there had been much discussion about a Biddulph magnet; the cost had been approved but not the design.

Councillor Rogers suggested shrinking the image first to see if he could see it.

Councillor Davies felt the images would lose their impact when shrunk to size.

The Chief Officer noted that there was no one iconic image of Biddulph.

Councillor Sheldon suggested Biddulph Old Hall or Biddulph Grange Gardens.

Councillor Perkin suggested a Biddulph in Bloom theme.

The Chief Officer would choose four iconic images to include the Biddulph logo at one corner. This was agreed.

### **32. UPDATE ON THE BIDDULPH MAP AND PRINTING OPTIONS**

The Chief Officer reported that the map had been paid for from last year's budget. It would encompass the whole town with key places depicted as 3D icons. The map would be available in several formats including an A3 'tear off' sheet at reception, and was future proofed. It would work well on the Town Council website. There would be a leaflet version with grid references. Work was being carried out in conjunction with Biddulph Ramblers to create walks which would incorporate historic points. The map could also be displayed on the noticeboard at the front of the Town Hall.

Councillor Rogers asked if all the names of roads would be listed or just a chosen few. The Chief Officer responded that the version with grid references would direct people to all the roads on the map.

Councillor Davies felt that 'disused station' should be renamed.

Councillor Sheldon asked if historic names would be used – e.g. Fairhaven, now Saracen House. The Chief Officer noted that this could be expanded in the literature which would accompany the grid reference version.

Councillor Harper asked if the National Cycle route would be indicated. This was agreed.

Councillor Perkin noted that a few National Walks went through the area, e.g. the Staffordshire Way began/ended here.

Councillor Rogers suggested that we go ahead with a small run which would show up any teething problems.

Councillor Harper asked if the defibrillator locations would be listed. The Chief Officer responded that this could also be included within the map.

**33. TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THEATRE EQUIPMENT FROM BYTE. THIS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND NOT SOLD. THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR INSURANCE AND MAINTENANCE**

The Chief Officer had been approached by an individual who had been involved with Biddulph Youth Theatre Experience (BYTE). BYTE had successfully applied for grant funding to purchase a large amount of equipment, but the group had disbanded a number of years previously. The founders were concerned that the equipment should be used and would like the Town Council to take on the use and maintenance of the equipment; making it available to other groups as appropriate.

Councillor Rushton and a PCSO based in Biddulph were in agreement, but the Chief Officer noted that the equipment had not been PAT tested. Some initial maintenance would be necessary.

Councillor Rogers was very excited adding that the Town Council needed this equipment; it was in the Town Hall kept in a locked cabinet backstage and would be an asset to the town, he thanked BYTE.

Councillor Perkin asked if it would be used by the Town Council or in conjunction with the Youth and Community Zone (BYCZ). Was it in the right location? The Chief Officer responded that BYCZ wanted to put theatre on here; this Council had just awarded a grant for such a venture.

Councillor Davies thought this was a very good resource, but may need updating.

Councillor Hart thought this a useful windfall and thanked BYTE, it would be extremely useful and fitted in with what we were trying to do in the Town Hall.

Councillor Sheldon was glad that this had been approved by Councillor Rushton; it would be a valuable addition, she hoped it would pass modern day testing and would like it keeping up-to-date.

Councillor Harper was concerned about the maintenance and asked if we were duty bound to replace any failed equipment.

The Chief Officer responded that this was a gift given in its current condition.

The Chief Officer noted that the equipment would be PAT tested, added to the Asset Register and insured.

Councillor Harper asked how it would stand on our insurance if it was not tested first.

The Chief Officer added that it would not be lent to any one until it had been tested appropriately.

Councillor Perkin proposed to accept the gift of the BYTE equipment, this was seconded by Councillor Rogers and agreed.

#### **34. ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR HART- TO CONSIDER A NOTICEBOARD AT HALLS ROAD**

Councillor Hart had been approached by both Biddulph North and Biddulph West residents who told him that people used Halls Road Playing Fields for lots of reasons. The car park can be full at times. The two residents both told him that there needed to be a way of providing information for both residents and non-residents, and users of Route 55. The residents suggested trialling a new noticeboard at this site and then siting more at other places in the town.

Councillor Rogers noted that this had been brought up before and given the go ahead; the Chief Officer added that this was discussed in October 2018.

Councillor Rogers cautioned that the board must be kept up-to-date.

The Chief Officer read from the minutes of the meeting held in October 2018.

Councillor Swift agreed with Councillors Hart and Rogers. He noted that Halls Rod Playing Fields was part of the Sports Village; communication was worth the effort, there should be information for everyone.

Councillor Davies noted that lots of good points had been made. Councillor Barlow noted that the board would need to be vandal proof.

Councillor Baddeley thought it a good idea, then explained the problems which Gillow Heath Community Association had been having finding a venue to hold its meetings.

Councillor Perkin asked if a funding stream and style had been identified at the previous meeting. The Chief Officer responded that this Council had a fairly standard sign style, as the board at the front of the Town Hall – gold writing on a black frame.

Councillor Brady asked what was the next step. Councillor Brady suggested asking the District council to fund the project.

Councillor Hart wondered if the board might be a candidate for help from the Moorlands Partnership Board (MPB). Councillor Sheldon noted that MPB was out of funds at present. Councillor Hart had approached Ms Brooks at SMDC, there may be match funding available.

The Chief Officer noted that the playing fields were not Town Council land; she would approach the District Council and ask for permission and possibly contribute towards the cost.

Councillor Redfern suggested inviting the District Council to suggest ways a board might be funded.

It was agreed to receive information at a later meeting.

### **35. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MAYOR IN RELATION TO THE HERITAGE WEEKEND (14-15 SEPTEMBER) AND A REQUEST FOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT TOURISM ACTIVITIES**

Councillor Davies wanted this event to bring the centre of the town to life. He noted that Classic vehicles were extremely popular now; there were several owners in the town. Councillor Davies said that his aim was to fill the whole of

the High Street with cars, larger vehicles, and military machines. He had spoken to people at local events held at St Lawrence's Church, Biddulph Moor and Swettenham; many would like to join in. Biddulph High Street would be closed for this event, it would be an excuse for people to come to Biddulph. There would be food outlets and a range of classes with prizes for the contributors. The whole event would cost no more than £500.

Councillor Rogers felt this could become an annual event and would like to offer his support; he and Councillor Davies would work as a team with the Officers.

Councillor Hart had attended a number of similar events; it had the potential to attract a lot of people.

Councillor Baddeley suggested revamping 'the siege of Biddulph'. The Chief Officer noted that a local re-enactments team wanted to be involved in town events.

Councillor Davies added that this event would end with an evening beer festival, organised by Biddulph Up In Arms.

Councillor Rogers noted that a recent event in Middlewich had been sponsored by its Town Council; it had been well attended with cars and motor bikes.

Councillor Davies noted that the whole High Street would be closed to through traffic, there had been interest from local traders and would be an opportunity for spilling out onto the High Street.

It was agreed that £500 would be allocated from the Tourism budget to support this event.

**36. TO APPROVE A REQUEST FROM THE ROTARY CLUB OF BIDDULPH IN RELATION TO 'PURPLE FOR POLIO' AND LIGHTING UP THE TOWN HALL (NOTE ATTACHED)**

The Chief Officer summarised an email received from Biddulph Rotary. Thursday 24 October 2019 was International Polio Day; important buildings worldwide would be illuminated in purple. Biddulph Rotary would fund the venture and would put together a full plan with costs at a later date. The Chief Officer asked if, in principle, Councillors were willing to take part.

Councillor Sheldon thought this was a very good idea. Biddulph in Bloom had supported the initiative and planted 7000 purple crocus bulbs. This was an excellent idea and should be pursued.

Councillor Sheldon proposed to support the event, this was seconded by Councillor Baddeley and agreed.

**37. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON WORKING GROUP MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THIS COMMITTEE:**

**a) Environment Working Group**

The Chief Officer reported that lots of good ideas had been raised at the Working Group and it had been agreed hold a public meeting on 26 September 2019 in the Town Hall from 6.00 pm. It was hoped that this meeting would provide valuable feedback and lead to the production of a list of actions to work on.

Councillor Harper noted that the environmental problems would not be eradicated in 10, 15 or 20 years and felt that this Council was not putting enough focus on the issues.

The Chief Officer responded that this Council would have a much better idea of how to proceed after the public meeting. The Working Group had already decided that what was put into the action plan must be achievable.

Councillor Harper continued that if the Working Group was only a small group with limited time it would be wasting its time; it must become a long-standing Committee.

The Chief Officer responded that the work would be led by the people in the town, they would help to determine which work would be a priority in the coming years.

Councillor Sheldon added that the Working Group would be led by the people who attended the meeting and by considering what the community thinks should be addressed. Councillor Sheldon envisaged that the Group would meet twice a year and report to this Committee.

Councillor Perkin thought that this was commendable and would give the group longevity and status. This Council did not know which way it wanted to go yet; ideas would be brought to this committee for the Council to ratify and take forwards and would not disappear.

Councillor Redfern added that this would be a task and finish group, with different tasks to finish. There would be many tasks and many challenges, what the group was called did not matter.

### **b) Christmas Lights Working Group**

The Chief Officer reported that the group had met earlier that evening. The lights would be switched on in the town on Saturday 30 November 2019 and at Biddulph Moor on Saturday 7 December 2019. The group had discussed both events and now had an understanding of the logistics for both.

### **c) TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MEETING WITH 'YOUR HOUSING'**

The Chief Officer reported that local housing allocations had been centralised to Warrington; there was no officer role in the town. Work was being done to make sure that all the CCTV cameras were up and running. It had been a useful meeting and it had been requested that this should happen again.

Councillor Rogers asked about the state of CCTV in Biddulph. The Chief Officer responded that the system was out to tender with updated technology; it was the responsibility of the District Council.

Councillor Sheldon thought the housing allocation had been on a points system, but she was not sure how it worked now.

The Chief Officer replied that it was now a mixture of both points and direct lets; customers had to bid for properties bidding. Help was available for those unable to navigate it themselves.

Councillor Rogers was dealing with a helpful person for a lady needing assistance, he rang SMDC and was transferred to Your Housing.

The Chief Officer noted that Your Housing appeared to be working well with Staffordshire Police.

**d) TO CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE 'WELCOME TO BIDDULPH' SIGNAGE**

Councillor Rogers reported that he had removed graffiti from the Welcome to Biddulph sign at the junction of Fold Lane with Congleton Road. Councillor Rogers felt that the signs at both ends of town should be repainted in black and gold, to smarten them and make them presentable.

The Chief Officer reported that the signs needed to be updated to include all Biddulph in Bloom's accolades; the Fairtrade Town status, Twinning with Fusignano; Dementia Friendly Town and the Garden Town of Staffordshire.

It was proposed by Councillor Sheldon to obtain quotes, this was seconded by Councillor Perkin and agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.52 pm.

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