

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020

PRESENT

- The Mayor – Councillor Jones
- The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Rushton
- Councillor Baddeley
- Councillor Barlow
- Councillor Brady
- Councillor Davies
- Councillor McLoughlin
- Councillor Perkin
- Councillor Rogers
- Councillor Sheldon
- Councillor Yates

Also, in attendance

- Councillor Harper
- Councillor Jackson
- Councillor Salt

16. APOLOGIES

- Councillor Smith

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations: None
- b) Other Interests: Councillor Sheldon in anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom.

18. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 20 October 2020 were approved.
- b) The Notes of the Christmas Lights Working Group meeting held on Wednesday 4 November 2020 were received.

19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON CHRISTMAS PLANS

The Chief Officer updated members that the Christmas lights would be going up the following day; scaffolding issues had been resolved. The Christmas tree would arrive this week; kindly donated by Warwick's and put in place by Bibby's.

Churches Together wanted to ensure that the Christmas period was marked appropriately. The Big Community Christmas Collage would be an arts project in collaboration with the Post Offices and local schools. The pictures would be displayed and there would be a prize for all entrants.

The Biddulph Local People's Project had a scrapbook and activity project; the Town Council would be providing some funding for this. These were intergenerational projects.

Sainsbury's would be partnering with the Town Council with the Toy Appeal. Children's Social Services would help to identify suitable families to receive toys.

Councillor Jones queried whether the bus hub would be used for a Christmas/Winter display scene, as had been considered previously. The Chief Officer confirmed that this was the plan. Councillor Jones confirmed that the Biddulph Moor tree would arrive that weekend.

Councillor Salt queried whether the artwork would be quarantined. The Chief Officer confirmed that this would happen.

Councillor Rogers noted that the Biddulph Calendar was available; the Chief Officer noted that the Town Council was operating a 'click and collect' or delivery option.

Councillor Rushton updated members that the Christmas lights would be ready to be distributed; the packs were nearly ready. There were 300 sets of lights; this was Operation Christmas.

The Chief Officer noted that the High School would be assisting the Town Council on the development of a Christmas video, in lieu of a switch-on event.

20. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MINING LAMPS AT ST JOHNS ROAD

The Chief Officer noted that this was really part of the Town and Community Committee rather than another Committee; this Committee needs an update on this project.

Councillor Salt read from an email that had been received from the Chief Executive Officer at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC). There had been no maintenance arrangements and the lamps had been de-commissioned. They would remain in position unlit. Councillor Salt had requested that some maintenance takes place.

Councillor Yates noted that there were a number of organisations that could provide solar installations; there needs to be a maintenance plan. SMDC Councillors should continue to take this forward via a Committee.

The Committee would receive an update at another occasion.

21. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DISTRICT COUNCIL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Chief Officer had been invited to attend a meeting with the town clerks from Leek and Cheadle, alongside the team that are delivering the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Biddulph is in a strong position with having a draft Neighbourhood Plan. There was discussion about having projects ready, should grant funding be available. The team were interested in enhancements to the Biddulph Valley Way, particularly in relation to linkages with the town, such as improvements to cycle facilities. In addition, there was discussion about the Town Council's heritage map. The development of trails and urban walks could be considered as a 'next step'. There was consideration of the Town Council's tourism aspirations.

The next step would be to develop project plans; a Board would consider these ideas. Mapping had been shared with District Council Officers, which would be useful for the delivery of this Strategy.

Councillor Yates was concerned that there was a lack of joined up thinking with the Climate Change sub-group. Towns and parishes should be linked more effectively. Councillor Yates wanted to release green spaces to the Town Council to deliver improvements.

The Chief Officer noted that the Board would meet in early December. The Chief Officer would put forward proposals to support this.

Councillor Salt felt there should be a six towns trail to showcase the history of the town.

Councillor Yates wanted to develop a safer route into town from the Biddulph Valley Way, 'a green lane'.

Councillor Rogers felt that the Ramblers would be able to help with these plans.

Councillor Jackson reiterated that the Biddulph Valley Way should be in the minds of planners with regard to the development of Aldi.

The Chief Officer went on to add that Keele students were hoping to work with the Town Council in relation to climate change opportunities for the town; more feedback would be provided when received.

22. TO CONSIDER THE BUDGET AND PROJECTS FOR 2021-22 (current income/ expenditure information attached)

The Chief Officer had provided current income and expenditure information and queried whether there were any priorities for the coming year. Some events and projects had stalled in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. Station Road, phase 2, could be an option.

Councillor Rogers felt it was important to concentrate on projects that have already started. No new projects should be started at this point.

Councillor Yates felt it would be good to have a list of outstanding projects. The Pocket Parks was close to his heart; one could be developed each year.

Councillor Jones agreed that there were some big pieces of work to focus on. The mining memorial should be considered.

Councillor Mcloughlin wondered whether the development of the bus hub should be a priority. The Chief Officer confirmed that this could be debated in the New Year.

Councillor Jackson felt that the Town Council could use reserves for the regeneration of the mining lamps, if the District Council won't progress with this. There was consensus that it would be positive to take this forward. Councillor Sheldon wished to consider additional planting in this area.

Councillor Salt wondered whether there could be additional provision for youth services, particularly around holiday hunger. In addition, further work could be completed in the town centre for older teenagers. There was discussion about a possible location for this support and previous contributions to youth services.

Councillor Barlow queried the installation of the noticeboard at Halls Road; this would be taken forward in early 2021. It had been received, but approval was needed from the District Council.

The meeting closed at 7.44pm.

Signed Date