

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2019

PRESENT

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

15. APOLOGIES

- The Mayor - Councillor Davies
- Councillor Redfern
- Councillor Swift

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations:

Councillor Sheldon and Councillor Harper in anything related to Biddulph in Bloom.

Other Interests: Councillor Sheldon is Chair of the Moorlands Partnership Board.

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 May 2019 were signed as an accurate record.

18. STATION ROAD UPDATE (STANDING AGENDA ITEM)

The Chief Officer noted that payment had been made regarding the fountains, as agreed at the Town Council meeting the previous week. The contractor would 'set out' the site when these had been received.

The Chief Officer updated members that there had been a good level of interest in the 'sponsor a brick' idea that had been discussed at the previous

meeting. The Events and Partnerships Officer had continued to work on identifying a suitable design.

Councillor Harper queried whether the idea of including those that had been killed in the 'pit' had been abandoned. The Chief Officer noted that there had been some discussion that there were many people who had died as a result of mining-related injuries or illnesses who would not be included in this memorial; the brick idea would allow friends and relatives to have a memorial to these people.

Councillor Jones noted that both types of memorial could be possible; nothing had been ruled in or out at this stage.

Councillor Perkin agreed; both ideas could be incorporated into the design.

Councillor Yates identified that this was an emotive subject and wondered whether a Working Group was necessary. Councillor Jones did not feel that was necessary. When a design had been created it would have to come to this Committee for approval.

19. WORKING GROUPS:

a) TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUPS ESTABLISHED AT MAY 2019 MEETING

The Chief Officer tabled a list of Working Groups and the names of Councillors who had contacted her to be on those Groups. There were additional names added to the list; the Chief Officer would circulate a revised list.

b) TO NOTE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS MEETING DATE

The Christmas Lights Working Group would meet on Tuesday 16 July at 4.30pm.

c) VERBAL UPDATE ON YOUNG PEOPLE WORKING GROUP ACTIONS FROM 12 JUNE 2019

A very positive meeting had taken place; the Group would meet again in early September. This was good partnership working. A 'Community Council' would be established in September by the Middle Schools, which would work with young people on how they are perceived.

It was felt that some sort of outdoor shelter was needed for young people. With the approval of this Committee, the Chief Officer would investigate this and provide some recommendations in the Autumn. Agreed.

Councillor Rogers wondered whether the Bus Hub could be used as a venue for young people.

d) TO NOTE THE MEETING DATE WITH 'YOUR HOUSING' AND POLICE REPRESENTATIVES AND TO AGREE ISSUES TO INCLUDE

The Chief Officer noted that there would be a meeting on Thursday 27 June at 2pm with Your Housing and the Police; all Councillors were welcome.

Councillor Yates felt that the use of older people's accommodation should be considered.

e) ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR MCLOUGHLIN - USE OF COUNCIL CHAMBER FOR STORAGE AND OFFICE SPACE

Councillor Jones stated that, unfortunately, this is not in the hands of the Town Council; the situation with the Police must be handled very carefully.

Councillor Rogers wondered whether the second floor could be used as a store room. The Officer noted that the issue would still be the same.

The Chief Officer suggested that she could write to the District Council to ask them to identify suitable storage space. Councillor Sheldon wondered whether the Police could be asked directly. Councillor Harper felt a health and safety audit was needed.

f) ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR SMITH

'I would like to propose putting on an ethical fair at the Town Hall, perhaps on a quarterly basis? This would include vegetarian and vegan stalls, wellness, environmentally friendly products, Fairtrade (I've spoken to the Fairtrade Group and it's on their agenda to discuss also) holistics and maybe some demos etc.'

Councillor Smith introduced this item; she had spoke to the Fairtrade Group to ask for their thoughts. This should be a Town Council event, not a personal project.

Councillor Yates felt that this tied in with other projects that the Town Council is involved with. Stalls and/or information should be available on the frontage.

Councillor Jones stated there was 'nothing to argue with'; this was a good idea, providing Congleton were alright with a one-off Saturday event. The Chief Officer noted that this should not be on the same Saturday as the Congleton Maker's Market.

Councillor Sheldon thought this was a good idea to raise awareness of Fairtrade.

Councillor Smith thought that this should tie-in with the change of season, and take place in the Autumn. All agreed to work towards this.

g) ITEM REQUESTED BY COUNCILLOR YATES

Restricting Access to Dorset Drive to encourage use of the Inner Relief Road, presently Dorset Drive is used as a "Rat Run" to avoid the Station Road traffic lights.

Councillor Yates had provided a paper, which read:

I was contacted by [a resident] concerning the excessive speed and volume of traffic using Dorset Drive.

Being a resident of Biddulph West, I am aware of longstanding issues with traffic using Dorset Drive as an alternative route from Gillow Heath to Meadows Way thus avoiding the traffic lights on Station Road. I am also aware of various trials and schemes to reduce traffic speed along this long, straight residential estate road. Including a less than successful trial of plastic barriers set as chicanes, that resulted in a number of minor accidents.

Dorset Drive has a long stretch of high value, open amenity space that is recognised in the Neighbourhood Plan, resolving this traffic issue would no doubt enhance the amenity and safe use of this valuable space.

To me there are a number of options, that as a Town Council we should request of the County Council to take forward, as a Consultation Exercise with the residents on Haydon Park with a view to acting on the outcome:

Suggested options:

- 1/ Do nothing*
- 2/ Introduce Give Way Chicanes*
- 3/ Introduce Speed Humps*
- 4/ Establish an "Access Only" restriction (with or without 20 MPH Zone)*
- 5/ Truncate Dorset Drive, between Norfolk Grove and Sawyer Drive to remove the through route.*

My preferred options are 4 or 5, as there is no critical need for this road to be used as a through road for non-residential purposes.

Councillor Yates felt that a consultation was needed with the County Council. Councillor McLoughlin stated that they should be asked to review the Station Road traffic lights.

Councillor Jones thought it would be necessary to canvas the other residents; in theory, this sounded like a good idea.

Councillor Rogers suspected that this would cost a lot of money; 'Highways cannot even fill in pot holes'. We should ask other residents and ask for a survey; this is another way into town.

Councillor Sheldon wondered whether this issue could form part of the work of the Town Centre Highways Working Group.

Councillor Yates felt that the first stage was to get the consultation done; County Councillors have a new fund that could be accessed.

Councillor McLoughlin wondered whether it would be difficult to enforce 'access only'. A 20-mph restriction could be considered for all roads around the town centre.

The Chief Officer noted that she could add this to the agenda for the Town Centre Highways Working Group, and write to Highways to seek their input. This was agreed.

Councillor Perkin noted that this was a safety issues; we should look after people. However, just because people don't like it, isn't enough.

Councillor Jones fully endorsed what Councillor Yates wanted to do.

h) TO AGREE THAT REQUESTS FOR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE 2020 CALENDAR WILL BE MADE FROM JULY 2019 ONWARDS

There was a discussion about the content of the 2020 calendar. Councillor Sheldon thought it should display goods that are made in Biddulph; Councillor Salt felt there should be photographs taken by young people in the calendar.

Councillor Smith queried how many were sold; it had been agreed to print 400 calendars this year.

It was agreed to seek photographs of the town and to consider a prize for photographs taken by young people.

i) TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MOORLANDS PARTNERSHIP BOARD FUNDING FOR A527 FENCING AND REVISED COSTS FOR GALVANISING NEW FENCING

The Chief Officer noted that the additional A527 railings were due to be installed soon. The previous railings had not been galvanised (including priming and painting) and now needed additional treatment. The revised estimate for this work was £3513.70. Moorlands Partnership Board were unable to increase their offer, which would mean the Town Council would need to pay £2004.70 towards to total cost.

It was agreed that this was preferable, and would reduce the cost of ongoing maintenance.

j) TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FUNDING FOR BIDDULPH ARTISAN MARKET FOLLOWING RESPONSE FROM STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Chief Officer updated the Committee that she had received an email to confirm that £2000 would be ringfenced for the Biddulph Artisan Market; this could contribute to the purchase of gazebos and other items. There was no commitment for future years.

Councillor Jones felt that this offer should be accepted, but it was still not a 'fair' allocation. Councillor Edwin Wain should be encouraged to come to the Market, and pressure should be applied to him to increase this level of funding.

Councillor Yates wondered whether a written question should be submitted to query how the money allocated for markets was spent at the District Council. There should be a definition of a 'fair share'.

Councillor Jones noted that a very long debate had taken place last summer at the District Council.

Councillor Perkin felt it would be necessary to present information to the District Council about footfall, with plans and statistics to back this up. The Chief Officer confirmed that the Officers were working on this information.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm.

Signed Date