

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MAY 2019

PRESENT

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

Also, in attendance:

- Councillor Hawley
- Councillor Salt
- Sergeant Baddeley- Staffordshire Police

1. ELECTION FOR A CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

The Mayor called for nominations for Chair. Councillor Rogers thanked Councillor Davies for all he had done as Chair of the late Civic Committee.

Councillor Rogers noted that this was a new Council with new Committee structures; he nominated Councillor McLoughlin, a new Councillor who knew the town well, this was seconded by Councillor Swift.

Councillor Smith nominated Councillor Yates, who was new to Council, but not new to climate change in Biddulph; this was seconded by Councillor Brady.

A vote was taken, and Councillor McLoughlin was elected.

Councillor McLoughlin took the Chair and called for nominations for the position of Deputy Chair.

Councillor Rushton nominated Councillor Yates for Deputy Chair, seconded by Councillor Smith.

Councillor Davies nominated Councillor Rogers, seconded by Councillor Perkin; a vote was taken, and Councillor Rogers was elected Deputy Chair.

Councillor Salt noted that Independent Councillors were supposed to be independent. Councillor Jones responded that people should vote for who they thought was best for the job.

Sergeant (Sgt) Baddeley from Staffordshire Police was in attendance at the meeting, following a request from Councillor Salt that a Police presence was needed.

Councillor Salt noted that a raid had taken place on Kingfield Crescent; this had been warmly received by residents as there were a number of issues at the property.

Councillor Salt was also concerned about drug dealing in Biddulph Valley Park, Sainsburys car park, Halls Road and Station Road.

Sgt Baddeley noted that Inspector Thorley had highlighted the need to attend Town Council meetings on a regular basis.

Councillor Yates had had reports of mopeds at the rear of Sainsburys and street prostitution on the High Street/John Street.

Sgt Baddeley replied that this was the first he had heard of prostitution; it had not been reported to the Police. Sgt Baddeley noted that Your Moorlands was aware of the warrants in relation to the raids mentioned previously; it was positive for the community that action had been taken.

Force-wide there had been a 1% increase in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). In Biddulph there had been an 11% increase, which accounted for 44 incidents. In March there had been a peak. Staffordshire Police was working with partner agencies to deal with this.

Councillor Jackson noted that the Kingsfield Crescent situation had been going on for a while. More effective CCTV was needed in the area. It would also be beneficial for Your Moorlands if they sought the local intelligence that can be provided by Councillors.

Councillor Sheldon noted that ASB moved around.

It was agreed that a meeting with Your Moorlands/ Housing, the Police and Councillors was necessary. The Police had a contact and would make enquiries.

Councillor Jones noted that Councillors should continue to report incidents, and not through this Committee.

Sgt Baddeley confirmed that he would send a representative to future meetings, or attend himself. Sgt Baddeley had no problem with attending regular meetings.

Councillor Yates asked what the police strength was in Biddulph. Sgt Baddeley replied in June 2018 there were 4 Sergeants in the Moorlands, 21 Police Constables and 22 Police Community Support Officers working 3 shifts; there were also 2 special constables in Biddulph.

Councillor Rogers was thankful to Councillor Salt and to Sgt Baddeley, this should be a regular agenda item. All agreed.

2. APOLOGIES

Councillor Barlow

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations. Councillor Sheldon in any matters pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom
- b) Other Interests- none.

4. MINUTES

- a) It was moved to **sign** the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9 April 2019

- b) It was moved to **sign** the Minutes of the Tourism Sub-Committee meeting held on Tuesday 12 February 2019 (received by the Civic Committee on 9 April 2019)
- c) It was moved to **sign** the Minutes of the Young People's Working Group meeting held on Wednesday 13 March 2019 (received by the Civic Committee on 9 April 2019)

5. STATION ROAD UPDATE

The Chief Officer had provided a briefing note and read from this.

Background - as part of the Sainsbury's development, £52,000 was paid to SMDC as s.106 funding. This can only be spent on the development of the area of land next to Brammer's. The Town Council has led on the development of a scheme. The project will be split into (at least) two phases. The strip of stopped-up land is within the ownership of Sainsbury's. Therefore, this area and the section to the right will be considered when future ownership/ management is determined. The Town Council has taken on a license to manage the SMDC land at this site, and this is insured; it will require maintenance going forward.

An update on figures was given. To date, £2865 has been spent on Architects fees. A tender process has been completed and the builders are aiming to start on-site in the coming weeks. The attached schedule of works notes that completion of circles 4,5 and 6 will cost £55,471.96 (note, some provisional costs are included within this). This means that the current estimated cost will be £58,336.96 with the Town Council contributing £6,336.96 to supplement the s.106 money. We have been asked to pay for the fountains (est. £8,500) in the coming weeks.

Councillor Salt asked if the S.106 money had arrived. The Chief Officer confirmed that it had not, but the Town Council could pay this temporarily.

An update on timescales was received.

The supply of fountains has caused some small delays. When a delivery date has been agreed, the setting out process will resume. Applications have been made to Western Power and Severn Trent.

Pictures of proposed memorials were circulated, and the Events and Partnerships Officer updated members on recent discussions. This was noted.

Councillor Jackson proposed that the public could be invited to sponsor a brick. A memorial would have to be inclusive, people died in many ways as a result of mining, some had health issues following their retirement.

Councillor Jackson suggested a £25 sponsorship fee per brick, he thought families in Biddulph would be happy with this and it would be less likely to be vandalised.

Councillor Davies thought the wall would have to sit in a different position in circle 5 and confirmed that there was £8,000 in the budget.

Councillor Jones suggested that the wall could be vandalised. A brick with a name on would be a deterrent. There was a similar construction at Port Vale Football Club.

Councillor Yates asked if the bricks would be sold in Biddulph. There was discussion about the possible design and layout of the memorial.

The Events and Partnerships Officer confirmed that members were considering a centrepiece with wall around. This was agreed.

Officers would begin to gauge interest in sponsoring a brick. As part of this, the Chief Officer would investigate how to collect and hold the money.

Councillor Davies seconded the proposal. A vote was taken, and the proposal was agreed.

6. ITEM REQUESTED BY CLLR YATES: TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, INCLUDING TREE PLANTING, WASTE REDUCTION AND RENEWABLES

Note, provided by Councillor Yates.

Climate Change is a Global Catastrophe Risk (Existential Threat).

There is no doubt about the direct correlation between post-industrial increases in greenhouse gases such as CO₂ levels and global temperature rises.

Presently each UK household produces 13 tonnes per annum of these gasses. As a first world country we have a duty to lead and do our bit, our considerable bit.

A 20% reduction can be made at minimal personal cost, even financial savings without intervention.

- Consumption awareness (what smart meters do).
- Waste Reduction.
- Reduce red meat consumption (Cows and Sheep are ruminating animals produce high levels of CH₄).
- Buy local produce (Reduced airmiles).
- Grow your own (Wellbeing, reduction in food miles, increases environmental awareness).

The remaining 80% requires actioning at Government Level.

Enhancements to green spaces, emphasis on tree planting (1/3rd of all greenhouse gases are absorbed by trees), if we can aim to double tree planted areas that will both improve the aesthetic environment and help mitigate our emissions.

Educate and inform, areas where we can all take personal responsibility, involve schools, produce advice sheet.

Advise on insulation, low energy alternatives (lighting, TV's, timer switches, glass kettles) (offer grants).

Evaluate all policies and decisions made at council (planning, procurement) to minimise at worst and benefit at best the environment.

Use outside agencies (e.g. Woodland Trust) to achieve best practice.

Produce renewable energy plan, incorporate into the local plan – solar, bio, wind, hydro, geothermal.

Ensure business planning is “renewable friendly” (e.g. orientate buildings to permit south facing roofs).

As Local Council representatives of our community, we must take the lead in introducing policies and actions that stabilise and reduce our contribution of greenhouse gases.

I propose a working group is set up to formulate a “Green Town Policy” for Biddulph that can be rolled out across the Moorlands and beyond, that could become a blueprint for Parish Councils – raising our profile and help draw in grants.’

The Chief Officer reported that to date, the Town Council has developed Natural Environment policies within the Neighbourhood Plan and signed the Tree Charter.

This commitment was strengthened in November 2018, to celebrate the anniversary of signing the Tree Charter. Biddulph Town Council committed to the following actions for 2019:

- Map and identify ancient woodland.
- Identify mature and veteran trees.
- Increase the number of Tree Preservation Orders.
- Develop a tree planting scheme.

The Burial Ground Sub-Committee has agreed to embark on a tree-planting scheme and received initial recommendations at the March 2019 meeting.

Councillor Yates’ proposal was seconded by Councillor Jones; there was nothing to argue with.

Councillor Davies was in favour; this fits very well with ‘Garden Town of Staffordshire’ theme and the work of Biddulph in Bloom.

Councillor Rogers noted the significant amount of work that had been done over the past 20+ years in Biddulph; Biddulph in Bloom did a lot.

Councillor Sheldon updated members on the projects that Biddulph in Bloom were involved with.

Councillor Hawley noted that any Working Group should link with the environment group in the Neighbourhood Plan development.

Councillor McLoughlin agreed that local green spaces formed an important part of the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

All were in favour of establishing a Working Group.

The Chief Officer to organise a meeting open to all Councillors.

7. ITEM REQUESTED BY CLLR SALT: TO CONSIDER MAKING BIDDULPH A MENTAL HEALTH FRIENDLY TOWN AND APPROPRIATE ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES (CLLR SALT IS NOT A MEMBER OF THIS COMMITTEE, BUT HAS REQUESTED TO SPEAK ON THIS ISSUE)

Councillor Salt read a short statement:

‘Last week was dedicated to mental health awareness and I have decided to be open about my own struggles. The reason for this is because if we are able to talk and acknowledge that mental health is part of the human condition – then maybe we can break down some of the barriers and stereotypes and make progress. It’s the ambition of the Labour team and I, that with your help, we can make Biddulph the first ‘Mental Health Friendly’ town in the UK.

The term does not exist at present, but I am sure that our town can and will lead the way. My vision for this is that:

- Town Council officers and Councillors are mental health first aid trained.
- We sponsor and encourage resilience education for our young people.
- We pressure organisations like the CCG to improve the speed at which people can be seen if they are suffering.
- We are able to talk openly about mental health in all aspects of our town’s life.
- We actively encourage charities that bolster mental health within our community to apply for our grants scheme – I am thinking specifically Visyon or Mind, that may run a project but not be based in Biddulph.
- We have town mental health champions whether they be individuals, organisations and businesses.
- We create safe spaces to talk.

- We have 'frazzle' cafes.
- We develop a strategy for mental health.
- As you can see – lots of ideas to keep us busy.

I have toyed with the idea of placing my story in the public domain, however, if I had a broken leg - I would – it would be visible. Sadly, there's still stigma attached to mental illness that prevent people telling others that they are or have been ill.

So, this awareness week is a reason to tell, to admit that I have suffered, for over two decades. It stemmed from horrific bullying in my formative years, possibly a kind of PTSD. Then compounded with the loss of our Dad age 21 and then followed by our Nan, Grandad and friend's Mum in the next few months. In addition to post-natal depression and then finally came to a head due to an extremely stressful work place a couple of years ago.

I finally confided in an amazing GP and my wonderful husband (who continues to have my back.) My GP got me on medication - which have without doubt changed my life and the lives of the people that I live with for the better. I only wish I had the courage to seek help years ago. I'd happily take tablets for tooth ache but feel stigma attached to my 'happy pill' that I take each morning.

I had a quick referral to the mental health team and an incredible mental health nurse was so sympathetic. I had a long wait to see a person specialising in cognitive behavioural therapy.

Life is much better, I have my days when I struggle but, on the surface, I am well versed in making it look like I am serenely calm, I think the term is 'high functioning'.

Recently I have taken a bit of a dip due to a variety of circumstances that include watching a young woman desperate for mental health support, not receive it in time; and as a result, I have had to seek support once again, but I am coping! Just knowing I can talk about it and openly say to my husband that I am not well, makes such a difference.

I also need to box various aspects of my life off, compartmentalise them. I often need to stop watching the news as I really struggle to see such inequality in the world and not be able to create significant change. So, life in local politics (as you all know by my letters) can become very frustrating for me, and

occasionally I have to put myself back in my box and hibernate. What I have learnt, only very recently - are coping strategies and accepting that I am what I am.

It took me 20 years to make my struggle public, it took me 18 years to get help. Therefore, making Biddulph Mental Health Friendly is essential.'

The Chief Officer noted that she had investigated Remploy Mental Health First Aid training. In addition, she updated members on the Dementia Action Plan.

Councillor Rogers wondered whether a Working Group could consider mental health and the work around.

Councillor Jones felt there was (again) nothing to argue with and seconded the proposal.

All agreed.

8. UPDATE ON YOUNG PEOPLE WORKING GROUP CRIME PREVENTION WORKSHOPS

The Chief Officer noted that the April 2019 Civic Committee agreed:

The Young People's Working Group wishes to address some specific issues to prevent problems in the town in the future. £200 funding to be accessible to develop sessions which would be delivered by the detached youth workers and the Police.

The next meeting of this Group will take place w/c 10 June 2019. It is a well-attended Working Group, attended by Sainsbury's, Staffordshire Police, two middle schools and the High School.

Since the last meeting, James Bateman Junior High (JBH) coordinated a meeting with Woodhouse Academy (WA), Biddulph Youth and Community Zone and PCSOs. As a result of the meeting they have arranged:

1. For BYCZ to visit both schools and work with the most vulnerable pupils.

2. JBJH and WA will set up a 'community committee' comprising of 4 pupils from each of the middle schools.
3. Workshops will be held in September for our new Year 8 cohorts.

This was received.

9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON BIDDULPH NETWORK MEETINGS

The Chief Officer noted that the second meeting would be held tomorrow (**22 May 2019, 4pm**) with a presentation from Rethink.

At the start of 2018, the Town Council was approached by a number of organisations that were aware of issues around homelessness and wanted to help. They provided space for those rough sleeping and collected items to support rough sleepers.

As a Town Council we do not have a statutory duty in relation to homelessness. The statutory functions are managed at the District Council level.

We discussed the issue of homelessness at the Town Council and anecdotally felt that there were issues in the town with social isolation, a risk of homelessness and sofa surfing and insufficient access to mental health services.

We spoke to colleagues at the Citizens Advice Bureau who work with a wide range of people across the town and wider area. They will tell you more about their experiences shortly.

The Town Council felt that there must be something we could do, but wanted to be sure we were doing the right thing. The starting point for this seemed to be to get people working in Biddulph to come and talk about their experiences within the town.

There is a distinct identity in the town. Biddulph is quite different to other Moorlands towns and closer in some respects to Kidsgrove, Stoke and Congleton.

We researched the work of other councils and we very much like the model that Frome Town Council adopted. They started in a similar way to this and

developed service information on a website, culminating in the ability to identify commissioning priorities and smarter ways of working together.

This approach was agreed by the General Purposes Committee in 2018.

This was received.

10. TO CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN VE DAY 75 (DOCUMENT ATTACHED)

Councillor Salt proposed forming a working group; this was seconded by Councillor Jones all were favour.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FUNDING FOR BIDDULPH ARTISAN MARKET AND IDEAS FOR 2019

The following ideas were presented to the Officer from SMDC:

No.	Development	Est. Cost	Further detail
1	Expansion and marketing of Fresh Food Friday - the weekly stalls outside the Town Hall.	£2,700	Insurance, set-up (inc. flooring), licenses. Pedestrian Flooring to cover grassed area- City B cost is £18.95 + VAT per square metre, lawned area is 120sq m (£2274). This could be a phased introduction.
2	Analysis of footfall within the town centre; ensure that BTC can evidence increased footfall on the High Street.	£1,500	Estimate based on discussions with local providers and Town Councils.
3	Investment in new equipment; we would like to purchase two new gazebos during 2019.	£1,000	Each gazebo costs £495 +VAT from City B

4	Ongoing storage of Highways signage and stalls.	£2,000	Contribution to towards existing storage and enhancement of Wharf Road area.
5	We would like to trial an evening market.	£420	£180 for stall erectors, £160 for highways signage, £80 Chronicle advertising
6	Three themed markets around important dates: National Allotment week (12-18 August), Heritage Open Days/classic car event (13-22 September), and a young trader's market.	£1,260	
		£8,880	

SMDC had previously agreed: "This Council supports Biddulph Markets fairly, financially and with officer support to improve market provision in the town."

The Chief Officer noted that Councillors in Biddulph are under the impression that SMDC is using the main 'pot' of market funding to support Biddulph, hence why we had request £6,000 towards the projects above. The Chief Officer has requested confirmation.

Councillor Jackson felt that funding for Biddulph was like 'crumbs from the Lord Mayor's table'; this should be a consistent allocation every year. A Biddulph Councillor is now Chair of Resources at the District Council; Councillor Wain had been invited to visit the Artisan Market, but has not attended. District Councillors should make sure that this commitment is followed through.

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL FESTIVAL EVENTS

Tea with the Town Council- Wednesday 26 June, 11-1pm

Drop-in, meet your Councillors and Officers to see what projects are being worked on. Councillors please attend, if available.

Supporting 'Glow-in the Dark Disco'- Friday 12 July, 6.30pm

In partnership with Biddulph Youth and Community Zone.

Family Cinema- Tuesday 30 July, 10.30am

Mary Poppins Returns

Dementia Friendly Cinema- Wednesday 31 July, 1.30pm

The Greatest Showman

This is Me!- Sunday 14 July, 3.30pm

Officers supporting young person's talent show.

Councillor Rogers wondered if the new Councillors would like to get involved.

Councillor Salt noted that she was putting on an event about the celebration of women.

Councillor Smith was happy to be involved with the Festival.

13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEMENTIA ACTIVITIES AND DONATION FROM STAFF AT BIDDULPH HIGH SCHOOL

Biddulph High School staff donated £80 for dementia activities within the town.

As part of 150 birthday of Sainsbury's, they have committed to training all 171 members of staff to become Dementia Friends. This will be delivered by BTC Officers.

The information was received.

14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON TOURISM CABINETS FOR THE FOYER AND DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BIDDULPH HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (BDGHS)

The Chief Officer noted that in November 2018, the Tourism Sub-Committee agreed to purchase two cabinets to showcase local heritage items, or other promotional displays. These will be situated in the entrance of the Town Hall. The BDGHS had agreed to supply items for this, and to rotate these as often as needed.

The information was received.

The meeting closed at 9.16 pm.

Signed Date