

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020

PRESENT

- The Mayor - Councillor Davies
- The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Jones
- Councillor Barlow
- Councillor Brady
- Councillor Garvey
- Councillor Hall
- Councillor Hart
- Councillor Jackson
- Councillor Rogers
- Councillor Sheldon
- Councillor Yates

Other Attendees:

- Councillor Hawley
- Councillor McLoughlin
- Councillor Swift

60.19 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations:
Councillor Sheldon in anything pertaining to Biddulph in Bloom.
Minute 66 Councillor Salt was a resident of John Street.
- b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests: none were declared.

62. MINUTES

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on 11 February 2020 were **approved and signed**.

63. LENGTHSMAN

Standing agenda item - New jobs for the Lengthsman

Councillor Yates reported that the electricity box at the Station Road site had been opened whilst still locked. The Chief Officer noted that this was not a Lengthsman job, she would inform the contractor.

Councillor Sheldon noted that Gallagher workers were on-site the previous week.

BURIAL GROUND ISSUES:

64. TO APPROVE A QUOTATION FOR THE REMOVAL OF TREES IDENTIFIED AS A RISK IN THE WALKOVER SURVEY

The Chief Officer presented four quotations and recommended the cheapest quote.

Councillor Yates asked if the trees would be replaced by saplings. The Chief Officer responded that replanting would take place towards the end of the year. A conversation about a planting plan would need to take place at a later date.

Councillor Rogers asked if the firm was local. The Chief Officer responded that they were all local and were listed by the District Council as approved arboriculturists.

Councillor Sheldon noted that the firm had recently carried out work on the land adjacent to the bowling green.

Councillor Jackson proposed to accept the cheaper one. Councillor seconded the proposal. Councillor Sheldon abstained from the vote. The quote was accepted.

65. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE IN RELATION TO ENTRANCE GATES

The Chief Officer reported that the gates should be returned imminently; this was weather dependent.

Councillor Jackson thanked all those who had worked through this.

HIGHWAYS:

66. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON TOWN CENTRE HIGHWAYS ISSUES IDENTIFIED AT THE DEFUNCT TOWN CENTRE HIGHWAYS WORKING GROUP:

- a) A 20mph scheme.
- b) A temporary trial of a pedestrianised area (incorporating planters)
- c) A full pedestrianised scheme.

The Chief Officer noted that the above were the three options that the group wished to consider.

The Chief Officer had approached the County Council for their support with this project and was advised that she could contact Amey directly, the approved contractor. The Chief Officer queried whether Councillors were happy for her to contact Amey and seek quotation for a piece of work that would consider the options.

Councillor Jones proposed that this is accepted.

Councillor Rogers felt we could do a lot of the legwork ourselves and suggested sending a questionnaire to all traders.

Councillor Jackson added that it was time to resurrect these ideas as we had money in the pot.

Councillor Garvey suggested engaging with all stakeholders to deliver the best for the town as a whole.

Councillor Hawley noted that in the Neighbourhood Plan work had been completed on some of the ideas.

Councillor Salt was concerned about Officer time, adding that the Council needed to think of a way to support our Officers.

Councillor McLoughlin provided background information about the traffic flow since the addition of the Sainsbury's store.

Councillor Garvey noted that this was one of the reasons for the now defunct Working Group being set up, to provide support to Officers.

Councillor Garvey proposed that Amey are approached for quotations in relation to options within the town centre; seconded by Councillor Yates. This was agreed.

67. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH LOCAL BUS PROVIDERS

The Chief Officer reported that she had a good relationship with the two companies and there had been a very positive meeting; she had been joined by two members of the Transport Working Group. Notes were circulated to members:

- It was noted that Aldi would be doing a consultation in the town about a proposed new store. The draft artist impressions did not appear to provide space for public transport. This should be raised as a potential area of concern.
- There was a discussion about the Park Lane 'car park'. The volume of traffic prevented buses going up and down Park Lane, to and from Newpool Road, at particular times of the day. It was agreed that there were a number of possible actions here:
 - ✓ Make enquiries about whether Knypersley First School parents were using the (open) Lifestream Church car park. If they are, it may be possible to re-start the 7a route in this area.
 - ✓ Complete a 'safer routes to school'- type survey of parents at James Bateman Middle School and Knypersley First School. This could query whether they would use the bus to drop off their children. If parents would use the bus, what would they be prepared to pay. The Town Council could promote and encourage the use of public transport by entering into a 'Smart Ticket' scheme; there would be a window in the morning and afternoon where both companies would sell the same ticket on the 9, 7a and 94 routes for parents/ carers accompanying their children to school, or children using the bus alone. The aim would be to reduce parking on Park Lane, and improve access. This would be an innovative and pioneering response to the problem, with no financial implications for the Town Council. Dan Flanagan would send a proforma agreement for this scheme.
- There was a discussion about adding new bus stops along the A527. There was agreement that there had not been new stops added for many years. The two company representatives were open to the idea of

adding new stops. The Town Council would liaise with Staffordshire County Council and identify new options. Initially, there was discussion about a new stop between the bottom of Thames Drive and Halls Road.

- There was discussion about further promotion of the 93 bus. Another leaflet could be created in April, targeting the Kingsfield Road area. Currently, this stop is not well used.
- The group discussed the removal of Mow Lane from the 93 route. Halls Road would now be used as an alternative, which would provide a much safer alternative.
- The Chief Officer queried whether engines could be turned off when buses were waiting at stops. The company representatives agreed to reiterate this message to drivers. The Chief Officer would write a formal email to both, making this request.
- Chris Almond noted that messages could be added to the bottom of the 93-bus ticket; this could promote local events, or provide a voucher for a local business.
- There was a query about whether there were access issues on Well Street. No attendees felt that this was an issue. Further changes could be made to routes around Biddulph East when the Park Lane congestion issues had been explored further.

Councillor Hart congratulated the Chief Officer, it had been a very constructive meeting; there were cutting edge ideas to take forwards.

Councillor Salt noted that the bus stop on Well Street opposite Keen's dentist had been knocked over and not replaced.

Councillor Yates wondered if the Livestream church car park on Newpool Road, which was used by parents at school time could be used for parking by Roaches School staff. There could be a strategic drop off point a bit further away from the schools for cars to drop off children to be walked to and from school.

Councillor Sheldon wondered if the 93 bus could visit Washington Close.

Councillor Rogers thought it could travel from Washington Close along Linden Drive to Halls Road.

Councillor Barlow noted that the car park entrance at Livestream church only allowed one car in or out at a time which caused a bottleneck leading to

congestion at school times along Newpool Road. The entrance could be widened, but it was a private car park.

Councillor Hall asked about statistics for passengers using the 93 bus on Mow Lane adjacent to York Close and Essex Drive. The Chief Officer responded that there were no figures as there was no bus stop in that area. Councillor McLoughlin added that the bus did stop there for passengers at the wide grass verge.

Councillor Jackson added that Well Street was virtually a one-way street as cars are parked all the way up, he was surprised that the buses reported no issues. He felt we should explore the possibility of extending the entrance at Livestream if this Council paid for the work.

Councillor Sheldon noted that funds were available from the government.

Councillor Jackson proposed that the Town Council write to the District Council to repair the bus shelter opposite Edgeley Road. It was agreed to explore these ideas further and to provide an update to the next Transport Working Group.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair to move: -

“That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 10 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated.”

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

68. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE IN RELATION TO MORRIS HOMES TREES ADJOINING THE PARK LANE ALLOTMENT SITE

The Chief Officer reported the Lengthsman had created a living hedge.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed Date