

# **MINUTES OF THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2021**

## **PRESENT**

- The Mayor - Councillor Rushton
- Councillor Baddeley
- Councillor Davies
- Councillor Hawley
- Councillor Jackson
- Councillor Jones
- Councillor McLoughlin
- Councillor Perkin
- Councillor Rogers
- Councillor Sheldon
- Councillor Yates

### **1. ELECTION OF A CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR**

Councillor Rogers nominated Councillor McLoughlin as Chair and Councillor Davies seconded. There were no other nominations. All voted in favour.

Councillor Rogers nominated Councillor Davies as Deputy Chair; Councillor Yates seconded. There were no other nominations. All voted in favour.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Garvey, Councillor Salt and Councillor Smith.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

#### **a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations**

Councillor Sheldon declared an interest in any matter relating to Biddulph in Bloom.

#### **b) Other Interests**

None declared.

### **4. TO APPROVE THAT COUNCILLOR JONES WILL REPLACE COUNCILLOR BARLOW ON THIS COMMITTEE**

Councillor Jackson proposed to approve that Councillor Jones replace Councillor Barlow on the Committee. All voted in favour.

Councillor Jackson also confirmed that he had replaced Councillor Brady, as confirmed at the Annual Town Meeting on 4 May 2021.

## 5. MINUTES

- a) The Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 22 April 2021 (received at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 4 May 2021) were confirmed.
- b) The Notes of the Environment and Climate Change Working Group on 15 April 2021 were received.
- c) The Notes of the Environment and Climate Change Working Group on 13 May 2021 were received.
- d) The Notes of the Environment and Climate Change Working Group on 10 June 2021 were received.
- e) The Notes of the Young Peoples Working Group on 8 July 2021 were received.

Councillor Sheldon accepted to approve all minutes above, Councillor Jackson seconded. All voted in favour.

## 6. UPDATES ON CURRENT PROJECTS

- a) *To receive an **update** about a Changing Places facility in the town.*

Councillor McLoughlin read a briefing on behalf of the Chief Officer. The briefing stated that there is a similar facility at the Health Centre close to the old Wharf Road Public Toilets Block where the Changing Places facility is proposed. Investigations are underway regarding whether the Health Centre facility meets the specification and has suitable accessible for the public. A quotation had been received for the conversion of the Wharf Road toilet block and whether or how to progress with a Disabled Facilities Grant application will be considered when it has been established whether the current facility is adequate.

Councillor Davies asked whether Wharf Road would be considered for storage for the market storage; it was confirmed it was, with the block being split to provide both Changing Places facility and storage.

Councillor Yates asked whether a showering area for cyclists was being considered. The Chief Officer confirmed that the intention is that the Changing Places facility will also include shower facilities.

*b) To receive an **update** in relation to recent Artisan Markets in the town, using the Town Hall frontage*

Councillor McLoughlin read an update from the Chief Officer that the Markets have been well received. The Town Council has been trialling the 'market square' approach with the stalls on the Town Hall frontage. This negates the need for road closures and bus route diversion. Footfall has increased over the three markets so far and there have been many more enquiries from people wanting a stall. Enquiries have been made again with Cheshire East regarding the Market Charter, and a response from their legal team is awaited. Biddulph Town Council is also investigating the ownership of the wider pavement area outside the Town Hall to see if additional stalls could be placed there.

Councillor Rogers queried the Market Charter issue and it was confirmed that it was to enquire whether Cheshire East would intend to enforce the Market Charter if Biddulph was to hold the Artisan Market on a Saturday.

Councillor Yates said he had heard a concern from a market trader that the grass covering was slippery in the rain. It was noted that there has not been a wet market yet, but this would be monitored.

*c) Following item 6b), to seek **approval** to request additional funding to support Market activities from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council*

Councillor McLoughlin stated that previously the Town Council has requested £2000 from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, this could potentially fund two further community gazebos. Councillor Davies suggested increasing the figure requested. Councillor Jones proposed requesting £3000 and Councillor Davies seconded. All voted in favour.

*d) To **note** that the National Trust wish to open the gates onto the Bateman Walk as part of the Heritage Open Days in September, and to **consider** how the Town Council can support this.*

Councillor Rogers noted that this would be a good opportunity to promote the Classic Vehicle Show planned for the same day and this could benefit both parties. Councillor Jones suggested that the Visitor Centre Café could also be promoted. Councillor Davies said that given the Classic Vehicle Show was

occurring at the same time, it was a really good opportunity to offer people a reason to come to the Town Centre.

Councillor Yates asked if the gates could be opened to the Obelisk Walk in the Country Park. It was noted that this had happened before and it could be requested, though volunteers to help facilitate this would be required. The Town Council could also place an events board along the Bateman Walk.

All councillors voted to proceed with the above suggestions.

*e) To **approve** the proof of the 'Welcome to Biddulph' signage (quotation already agreed)*

Councillor Yates asked if the clematis could be shown in white, rather than gold.

Councillor Rogers asked if 'Garden Town of Staffordshire' could be added and said that it would be beneficial to show that Biddulph had won Britain in Bloom competitions multiple times.

Councillor Perkin and Councillor Sheldon asked if the town still held Fairtrade status.

Councillor Jackson asked if the dementia friendly initiatives could be shown on the sign, though it was noted that it is not currently possible.

Councillor Yates proposed approval for the sign containing the following:

- Fair Trade Town, once status confirmed.
- Twinned with Fusignano.
- Garden Town of Staffordshire.
- Clematis logo in white.

Councillors voted in favour though one councillor opposed. There were no abstentions.

*f) To **note** a date for 'Tea with the Town Council', on Friday 10 September 2021*

Councillor Yates asked if the Tea with the Town Council could happen at the same time as the Artisan Market, but it was confirmed it is not possible for staff to support both at the same time.

**g)** *To note the Classic Vehicle Show will take place on Saturday 11 September 2021, 2- 5.00pm*

Councillor Davies confirmed that that the date and time was correct following a query. He also noted that volunteers are being sought.

**h)** *To note that a review has been completed of accessibility of toilet facilities within the Town Hall and Bus Hub, in line with the Dementia Action Plan. Additional funding to be sought through the Disabled Facilities Grant allocation.*

Councillor Rushton proposed that the Chief Officer should pursue this funding opportunity; Councillor Jones seconded. All approved.

**i)** *To note that contributions for the Calendar for 2022 have been requested; the deadline in 31 August 2021.*

Councillor Jackson asked that the Chronicle (who were in attendance) help publicise the event.

Councillor Yates asked if there was or could be a theme for the calendar. It was confirmed that at present there is no theme, and that it had previously been important to ensure that people could recognise the images as being somewhere in Biddulph.

Councillor Sheldon suggested that there could be a 'Made in Biddulph' theme advertising the businesses that work in Biddulph.

Councillor Baddeley said there were some incredible pictures of Newpool Meadows on Facebook.

Quotes will be considered in the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting in September.

**j)** *To note that the deadline for the Support Staffordshire Community Officer was 19 July; interviews will take place week commencing 26 July 2021.*

Councillor Jackson asked if Biddulph Town Council were donating space or funding. It was confirmed that the Town Council are providing the office space but are included in the interview process.

A good calibre of applications has been received.

*k) To **note** that new storage provision will be required for Town Council items as the shed is no longer available; Councillors to help identify new options.*

Councillors considered potential options for storage. Getting more market gazebos and selling the stalls was considered in order to reduce the amount of storage space required. The use of the Visitor Centre workshop was also discussed, though it is hoped that this space will be used for community activities. It was agreed to approach some local businesses, consider advertising and to continually review any potential storage opportunities.

## **7. WORKING GROUPS**

*a) To **approve** that the Christmas Lights Working Group will meet in September*

Councillor Rogers proposed and Councillor Jones seconded. All voted in favour.

*b) To **approve** that the Cenotaph and Centenary Working Group will be renamed and called the 'Civic Events Working Group', to consider the Queens Platinum Jubilee in 2022 and the Royal British Legion anniversary later this year. This Group will meet in September.*

Councillor Jones moved and Councillor Rushton seconded. All voted in favour.

## **8. STATION ROAD DEVELOPMENT**

*a) To **receive** a verbal update on proposals in relation to the mining memorial*

Councillor Jackson said that a meeting had taken place between the family of George Humphries and the Town Council to present the proposal. The family had mixed feelings towards the proposal.

Councillor Jackson said in no way is the intention to denigrate what George Humphries had done and his importance to the town.

Councillor Rushton said she had received some calls about the memorial proposal following the meeting.

Councillor Sheldon said the general public should be consulted.

Discussion about Councillor support for the proposal will be considered at the Special Meeting of the Town Council on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

***b) To approve that the Chief Officer will approach the architect about costs and processes in relation to stage two of the development***

Councillor Jackson proposed and Councillor Jones seconded. All voted in favour.

***c) To agree when fountains will be used and ongoing management of the area.***

The Chief Officer said that this issue will need to be deferred to the Finance Strategy and Management meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> July, as there is a discussion to be had about the finances of ongoing maintenance.

## **9. TO CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

*The Town Council **considers** taking on a role within the Town Hall in relation to the management of lost property.*

Councillor Jackson said it would be beneficial to explore.

Councillor Rogers said that the responsibility should only relate to small items.

Some Councillors had concerns about the legal implications, but it was confirmed that this would all be explored should the Councillors agree for the proposal to be investigated. This would coincide with a review of the Service Level Agreement with the Police for reception services, which the Police make a contribution for.

Councillor Jones proposed to further explore this issue; Councillor Davies seconded. All in favour.

**10. REGENERATION PLAN**

*To **consider** the content of the draft Regeneration Plan, to be presented by the Chief Officer, and provide feedback on additional content (attached separately).*

Councillor Yates and Councillor Jackson said that they were both very pleased with the Plan.

Councillor Hawley said it identified the non-policy items to be followed up from the Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Jackson said he would like other councils to contribute to the regeneration of Biddulph and Councillor Rogers said he hoped that traders would be more involved in the regeneration of the High Street.

Councillor Davies and Councillor Rogers suggested that a Working Group may be beneficial in implementing the Plan.

Councillors agreed that initial consultation in relation to the priorities will take place with the community and other relevant bodies in September, when a number of events have already been arranged. The Plan will also add priorities regarding encouraging tourism and strengthening partnership working with traders. Once a list of priorities is approved, an action plan can be developed.

The meeting ended at 8.27pm.

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