

**NOTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
BIDDULPH
TUESDAY 20 MAY 2025, 6PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

- **The Mayor:**
Councillor A C Lawton
- **Deputy Mayor**
Councillor C Smith
- Councillor J I M Garvey
- Councillor M A Hopkins
- Councillor C Kisicki
- Councillor J T Jones
- Councillor A C W Parkes
- Councillor W Rogers
- Councillor J Redfern
- Councillor J Salt
- Councillor N R Yates
- Councillor C Wood

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer
- Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Margaret Warman – Governance and Compliance Officer
- 1 member of the public

1. Apologies

- Councillor C Brady (Absent)
- Councillor N Eardley
- Councillor A K Harper
- Councillor D J Hawley
- Councillor S Fletcher
- Councillor A H Hart
- Councillor K J Jackson
- Councillor C Kisicki (Absent)
- Councillor D Proudlove (Absent)

The Mayor, Councillor Lawton, recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.

2. To confirm the minutes of the last Annual Town Meeting held on Tuesday 24th May 2024

The minutes were confirmed.

3. Presentation of the Annual Report and achievements from 2023-24 by the Town Mayor

The Chief Officer read highlights of the draft report, which reflects achievements and challenges during the period of 2024-25.

The Chief Officer noted that this has been the year of key partnerships and capital projects, due to the relationships from partners; she also noted the funding that had been secured this financial year. She noted the below projects;

- Biddulph Scratch
- Film Projects – Feast and Flicks (Biddulph Works Together project) family films.
- The third year of Biddulph Works Together; this year, the project had provided 7000 meals
- The celebration of 50 years of Biddulph Town Council
- UK Shared Prosperity Funding – garden festival, Chinese new year, investment in new sound kit, Town Hall frontage regeneration project, new mosaic bench at Station Road
- Moorlands Partnership Board funding was received to enhance public art and celebrate mining heritage; mining lamps and Overton Road trough.
- Chain Reaction – cycle related projects
- Tree planting
- Development of Library of Things
- Funding to groups – Biddulph in Bloom, girl guides, etc.

The Chief Officer gave an update on day-to-day service provision within the town. The 'Year in Review' document was circulated to attendees.

4. Presentation on Town Council current areas of work.

Councillor Lawton invited the current Chairs of each of the Town Council committees to report back on the previous year's achievements:

Finance Strategy and Management Committee

Councillor Rogers noted the following points regarding the work of the Committee:

- Had a positive external audit, demonstrating that our accounts are well managed and are processes are effective.
- Approved the finances for four capital projects- mining lamps, mosaic bench, Overton Road troughs, Town Hall frontage
- Approved policies and quotations for the management of our functions
- Approved a Five-Year Strategy
- Allocated £70,000 of grants to community groups in the town
- Approved the commencement of the Cyber Essentials project

- Commenced processes for a 30-year lease of the Visitor Centre
- Approved Biddulph Works Together funding
- Set a very challenging budget for 2025-26
- Reviewed lettings and booking conditions
- Considered the review of assets
- Ensured staff management was effective
- Implemented new waste management processes
- Considered a revised three-year budget forecast

Councillor Rogers gave his thanks to the staff of the Town Council and committee members.

Planning Committee

Councillor Garvey reported that the Committee is a statutory consultee, not a planning authority. He explained that the committee reviews the planning applications and makes recommendations. However, Biddulph Town Council has produced the Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order, oversee by the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Working Group.

Recreation and Amenities Committee

The Mayor explained that the Chair of this committee was unable to attend, therefore the Deputy Chair, Councillor Parkes delivered a report.

Councillor Parkes explained that the committee oversees the operational services provided by the Town Council: allotment sites, burial grounds and green spaces. Focusing on areas of partnership work. He reported that:

- Memorial testing had been completed across three sites at the burial ground.
- There had been significant revisions to the Allotment Policy and paperwork, including consultation with current plotholders.
- The annual meeting of allotment holders took place.
- The Committee has moved forward with plans to create a new Garden of Remembrance at the Woodhouse Burial Ground
- The Town Council is a partner in the Trent Valley Way project, including Head of the Trent to Knypersley Reservoir footpath development.
- The Town Council is also a partner in the Transforming the Trent Head Waters project with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Town and Community Committee

Councillor Smith gave a brief description of the work of the Committee; the work relates to the town centre management, town hall management, heritage restoration, public toilets.

Councillor Smith reported that Biddulph Works Together continues to be triumph, which provides warm spaces, warm food and activities. This project has been funded by the Town Council for 4 years.

Councillor Smith gave credit to the Officers. She noted the different events such as feast and flicks, VE day, Chinese new year and the Biddulph Festival.

Councillor Smith noted involvement with the emerging Cultural Strategy and the upcoming Library of Things; she stated that Biddulph Town Council had become a member of the co-operative council.

Councillor Smith reported that Mental Health First Aid courses have been provided for community groups.

Councillor Smith stated that she is very proud of the achievements of the past year.

5. Open Forum- To discuss any other issues raised by any elector present.

The Chief Officer reported that no questions have been raised via email. There were no questions raised by attendees.

The Meeting ended at 6.30pm

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