

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007**

PRESENT

The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors Adams, Baddeley, Betts, Deane, Deaville, Gibson, Hall, Harper, Harris (Chair), J Harrison, K Harrison, Jackson, Jones, Shaw, Sheldon and Walley.

Also in attendance Councillors Davies and Hart.

98.07 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillors Proudlove and Redfern.

99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hart declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute 102 and left the room during the discussion.

100. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2007 were approved and signed.

101. STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Jill Norman, Chief Executive at the SMCVS was invited to address the meeting. Ms Norman gave an informative powerpoint presentation which outlined the work of the Staffordshire Moorlands Community and Voluntary Services.

Councillor Jackson thanked Ms Norman for a very interesting presentation and asked if thought has been given to varying the time which the Biddulph Neighbourhood Forum meets. It had.

Councillor Davies volunteered to act as representative on the SMCVS Executive Committee. Proposed by Councillor J Harrison seconded by Councillor Shaw. Agreed.

The Chair thanked Ms Norman on behalf of the council, noting that our grant of £2000 was very good value for money.

102. TOWN BURIAL GROUND

Councillor Adams gave a brief report of the meeting of the Town Burial Ground sub-Committee meeting held on 10 December 2007. The flooding improvements had been completed. Communication for the new ground was being pursued with other authorities.

Councillor Hart left the meeting prior to discussion of the following item:

102. DIVERSION OF FOOTPATH 29

A request had been received from the Countryside Officer for approval of the proposal to divert Footpath 29, with additional information that English Nature were looking to repair the tunnel. This request needed formal approval from Biddulph Town Council. It was noted that the tunnel would then only be open occasionally by invitation only; the diversion avoiding the tunnel would be a permanent arrangement for public safety reasons. Members expressed concern regarding the proposal, but would be in agreement if assured that repair work would be carried out to the tunnel. Concern was also expressed about the wording 'looking to repair' and it was suggested this council requested updates and a copy of the proposed timescale. It was noted that the tunnel should either be repaired and safe for everyone at all times, or not repaired at all. What was its function, its place in Biddulph's heritage? Would the project require funding from this Council?

Councillor Shaw proposed that this Council approve a temporary diversion for 12 months and that it be kept fully informed of progress. This was seconded by Councillor J Harrison and all were in favour.

Councillor Hart returned to the meeting.

103. STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS SPORTS AWARDS

Nomination forms were received from the District Council and were available from the Town Administrator.

104. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Letter of thanks received from Biddulph Moor Village Hall and Moor First Parents Association for allowing use of the A527 advertising boards.
- b) Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Data Collection form for the Arts Development Service received for completion. To be forwarded to Mr Eric Cox Secretary of the Biddulph Arts Forum.
- c) Foxlowe Bridge repairs – notice of closure of Crowborough Road for approximately 12 days from 28 January 2008 to allow bridge repair work to be carried out. Received.

105. MATTERS REFERRED FOR ACTION AND AWAITING RESOLUTION

Councillor Jackson asked if any response had been received from First Buses. The Town Administrator replied that a phone call had taken place with a formal letter to follow.

106. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED IN THE MONTH

The Footpath Committee meeting held on 10 December was inquorate. The following proposals to install lighting columns were in need of council agreement:

- Footpath 69 bottom of Craigside steps
- Footpath 23 Mow Lane to Whetstone Road
- Pole bracket between Marsh Green Road and Beaumont Close

The proposals were agreed to be carried out in the order given. It was noted that sufficient funding has been budgeted for. The footpath between Woodhouse Lane and The Uplands was to be discussed at the next meeting of the Footpaths Committee

The Chair thanked everyone for attending this meeting. Special thanks were expressed, on behalf of the town, to all those volunteers present in the room, and they were asked to take this back to their various organisations. Everyone was invited to make their way to the main hall downstairs to partake of festive refreshments.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm

Signed Date