



## **BIDDULPH PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE**

Notes of Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008

	<b>Introductions</b>	The Chair welcomed those present	
	<b>Present</b>	<p><b><u>Voting members</u></b>  Charlotte Atkins MP  Cllr Madelaine Lovatt (SCC) <i>Vice Chair</i>  Cllr Andrew Hart (SMDC)  Councillor Sybil Ralphs (SMDC)  Cllr Kevin Jackson (BTC) <i>Chairman</i>  Diane Casewell (Voluntary Sector)  Cllr Hilda Sheldon MBE (Community Rep -Biddulph in Bloom)</p> <p><b><u>Officers:</u></b>  Steve Holsgrove (SCC)  Will Spencer (SCC)  Kate Thacker (BTC)  Ruth Reeves (SMDC)  Michelle Wallace (SMDC)  Perry Wardle (SMDC)</p>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	Councillor Christina Jebb Jill Norman (SMCVS) Nigel Yates (Bus/Town Centre Devel Group) Sarah Humphreys (SMDC) Clive Rhodes (SMDC)	
<b>2</b>	<b>Notes of last meeting</b>	Approved as a true record. HS- how long new agreement at Labour Club. KJ - understood 12 months with rolling 3 months thereafter.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	HS Business Chamber KJ Children's Centre, Toy Library ML Children's Centre, Toy Library	
<b>4</b>	<b>Highways - verbal update from Steve Holsgrove</b>	SH reported on the present one way system, and said that the 2 new bus shelters at Wharf Rd terminal would go in that weekend. A Road Safety Audit to be undertaken following receipt of many complaints. It was the Police's job to enforce the one way orders	

		<p>AH commented that he was almost knocked down. SH said that no entry paint was now on roads - not normally necessary in other towns - was being ignored by motorists, also the no entry signs. He hoped that the Audit would deem the one way system to be safe. No other work was planned till Phase II, when S.106 monies released.</p> <p>ML asked SH to also look at John Street; complaints of HGV traffic on that street since one-way gone in. No weight restriction at present - may be right time to look at this.</p> <p>SH said the safety audit was to assess the system imposed, but could put vehicle count on John Street ML asked if comparisons could be done with earlier survey?</p> <p>KJ said that since traffic calming gone in, John St residents say that HGV and general traffic had increased, also traffic coming from north end, and unable to use High Street, were using John Street. AH said this was mostly through traffic and some deliveries that get stuck. Cross Street also has had large vehicles getting stuck. Warwick's fair were also using John Street.</p> <p>SH proposed putting supplementary signage on roundabouts</p> <p>KJ added that sat navs were sending lorries into town, rather than on inner relief road. Would it be possible to have those signs asking drivers not to trust sat nav?</p> <p>HS said that we were told some time ago that priority for Well Street over John Street would be changed, when would this be? This could work to calm John Street traffic.</p> <p>SH confirmed that the taxi rank would be relocated to lay by outside town hall; should be able to paint and re-surface lay-by and possibly provide 2 disabled parking bays, if this met with approval</p> <p>HS asked if we could have something more discreet than bus shelter.</p> <p>SH replied that this would come under Phase II</p> <p>AH reported that the County Council was now out of money (except for approx £14k), so would only have S.106 money. Once Phase II completed, were told street lighting would be done. Now understands this will not be done until 2023 under PFI.</p> <p>SH confirmed that there was no chance unless S.106 money was available.</p>	
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	<p>KJ said that we needed to look towards putting Town Council, District Council and S.106 money into this important scheme.</p> <p>CA asked how priorities were drawn up with ABB? How come this was not on the schedule?</p> <p>SH said that he had no information on this.</p> <p>DC asked whether there would be any parking restrictions opposite Wharf Road Car Park - will be an accident here, caused by parked cars. KJ/ML replied that this had been reported - and would be looked into.</p> <p>AH said that the loading bays at north end were to be signed, but at present the parking orders were not perfect. Parking officer to look into this.</p> <p>SH added that double yellows allow loading/unloading but also disabled parking, and this could cause blockage of the street. This had all been decided and discussed, but he could amend if wished.</p> <p>ML felt that once the Orders became effective, it should make a difference as people would not be parking there for long periods. Disabled people would park in the bays.</p> <p>SH said that there were 3 panels of pedestrian guard rails erected by the northernmost parking bay. Thinking of having a build-out there to deter people from ignoring the 1 way system</p> <p>ML pointed out that there were no dropped kerbs at that point. This needed to be looked at before making drastic changes.</p> <p><b>KJ proposed that SH, AH, ML and himself meet on site to look further at points raised and bring back to next meeting. The date for this was set - 22 July at 2 pm.</b></p> <p>AH also asked again about improving loading bay situation and SH replied that this had been considered for the past 18 months - thought that Executive represented the views of traders.</p> <p>KJ replied that not all of the traders were members of the Business Chamber and AH commented that if people don't buy into the process, they won't be part of the outcome.</p> <p>ML requested again that the Well street/John Street junction be reconsidered as it was agreed some time ago and SH agreed to do this.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Steve Holsgrove for attending the meeting.</p>	<p>SH KJ ML AH</p>
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5	Victoria Business Park	<p>CR was unable to attend</p> <p>The Chair felt that we not linking the new businesses needs to training provision and was concerned that there was no report. He added that throughout the agenda, officers listed to attend were not present, at very short notice and that this was frustrating.</p> <p>SR said that there may be extenuating circumstances and that she felt this Executive had received good support from officers.</p> <p>KJ said there should be report or a substitution if an officer was not able to attend, but SR said that she would not support criticism of officers without knowing the facts.</p> <p>CA added that it was important to request either a report or an officer.</p> <p>AH pointed out that reports were sometimes difficult as some areas of business were confidential and all members of the group were not cleared for this type of information.</p> <p>KJ said that it was more general than this; we should know if new a business with some required skill was coming in order that training could be geared to those skills.</p>	
6	Empty Property List: Perry Wardle	<p>An empty property list and update was circulated. In future, these would be sent out with agenda. The properties were given list of codes, for confidentiality reasons.</p> <p>ML asked for time frame on property A.</p> <p><b>KJ said that as Perry was responsible for commercial properties and I Young for residential, District Councillors should meet prior to next meeting to discuss list with officers. This was agreed.</b></p> <p>PW said that, on commercial property side, funding would be available from AWM and costings been done to bring properties back into use. The application for funds for this work to now go to AWM.</p> <p>KJ - AWM have said up to £120k available</p> <p>PW replied that if this was not sufficient, may be more available.</p> <p>HS asked if it was to bring the property into a useable condition or to restore to previous standard.</p> <p>PW replied that it was to bring them back into commercial usage, in same form. Would need to discuss whether demolition would be allowed. May be offices etc, not only retail.</p> <p>AH added that some people who have a portfolio of</p>	PW IY KJ ML AH SR HS

		properties put these dilapidated properties against their taxable income. These people are resistant to offers to improve. Must ensure money is available to carry this work out when the time came.	
7	<b>MTP Update - Michelle Wallace</b>	<p>MW circulated the Report and said that we were now concentrating on 5 projects - which were all ongoing. Implementation Plan was now approved, signed and ready to go for this year. Copies of the Plan were received.</p> <p>The Leek College Kingsfield Centre was re-opened on the 30<sup>th</sup> June now that the refurbishments were complete.</p> <p>HS asked what had happened with the Biddulph Valley Way Interpretation project?</p> <p>MW replied that there had not been enough economic outputs and AWM would not approve it, as the cost was over £25k.</p>	
8	<b>Biddulph Improvement Grant - Perry Wardle</b>	<p>PW - Biddulph Improvement Grant report was circulated. 16 applications had now been approved - 30 schemes expressed interest. Some applicants that came forwards that were not suitable for this scheme had gone forwards to Moorlands Partnership. Were investing in long term fabric of town centre.</p> <p>HS commented that very few of town centre properties had down-pipes.</p> <p>KJ asked for thanks to be passed to Chris Drage and Sarah Humphreys for their work on this.</p> <p>AH reported on one of the projects (dental surgery - John St), saying that this was an essential building brought back into use and help given to apply for grants. Good result for the town - lots of officer time had gone into it; also ticked boxes re Community Health. KJ also thanked CA for her work in persuading PCT. AH said it had shown PCT that DC was a good partner.</p> <p>HS commented that now several properties were looking better. How could we get them listed?</p> <p>PW said that there was a need to do assessment of special circumstances for those buildings and that they could be added to the local Heritage Register. Could ask Chris Drage to come out and look at these. HS agreed - now was the time to look after what had been done and preserve them for the future.</p>	CD

9	Work Plan - Ruth Reeves	<p>RR circulated a copy of the plan and reported that there were 5 priorities to take forward, which would take up 4 days of Rick Balls time. The plan showed suggestions of how to use this time.</p> <p>It was agreed that during the next couple of months RB should meet with the partners listed to produce a robust work plan and report back to September meeting.</p> <p>HS queried whether Biddulph in Bloom could be of any use in the Community Development Trust project.</p> <p><b>The plan was approved and it was agreed that a report be brought back to the next meeting.</b></p>	<p>RB</p> <p>RR</p>
10	Other Business	<p>a) CA spoke of a recent meeting with Hollinshead buses (<i>HS declared an interest and left the room</i>) They were worried about relocation and it was not in the plan that they should cease trading. PW had spoken recently to the owners and they were looking at 2 sites - one next to telephone exchange - and the County Council had agreed to pay costs for paying for site surveys (Rob Fletcher lead CC officer). He reported that the CC had also received another offer for that site. PW was also talking to Mr Haydon about the Victoria Business Park</p> <p>CA asked what time span was - when did the business have to vacate? PW had not seen the contract - planning application for a new coach shed would be lengthiest; should be looking into the risk of submitting a planning application before negotiations finalised.</p> <p>CA asked whether Business Park was a fallback position. PW replied that it was not first choice. Also a coach operator up there already. Will have to go to AWM with this.</p> <p>KJ said the Regen team needed to match up when the business needed to be off site and the setting up/relocation times.</p> <p>CA asked about the other business on the Sainsbury site. PW said that he was confident that 2 were sorted out and one was half done. Another did not require relocation. A lot of officer time gone into supporting businesses through relocation</p> <p>The Chair added that the Town Centre Co-ordinator was doing an excellent job in this role.</p> <p>b) John Street had been discussed earlier</p>	

		<p>c) KT had put list of meeting dates in Councils Connect and requested permission to put on Town Council website, plus meeting notes. This was approved and PW and KT to liaise and ensure public access/press releases etc given out</p> <p>RR suggested having 'Publicity' as regular agenda item in order to discuss what to be given to publicity officer. Highlight open to the public.</p> <p>d AH said that representatives of Sainsbury's were coming to present the planning application to the Town Council at next meeting on 15 July at 7.00pm. All Executive members and interested members of the public were also invited.</p>	<p><b>KT</b></p> <p><b>RR</b></p>
11	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	<p>5 September at 2 pm</p> <p>The Meeting closed at 3.35 pm</p>	