

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2024, 6PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

- **Mayor**
Councillor K Harper (Chair)
- **Deputy Mayor**
Councillor N R Yates
- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor N Eardley
- Councillor S Fletcher
- Councillor J I M Garvey
- Councillor A H Hart
- Councillor D Hawley
- Councillor F A Holdsworth
- Councillor M A Hopkins
- Councillor K J Jackson
- Councillor J T Jones
- Councillor C Kisicki
- Councillor A C Lawton
- Councillor D Proudlove
- Councillor J Redfern
- Councillor W Rogers
- Councillor J Salt
- Councillor C Smith

Councillor Jones was in attendance but did not sign the attendance sheet.

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Mrs Margaret Warman – Compliance and Governance Officer
- Ms Jodie Hannock – Events and Partnership Officer
- PCSO Josh Carter - Staffordshire Police
- Councillor Keith Flunder – Staffordshire Moorlands County Councillor
- Gemma Wall - Staffordshire County Council
- Rev. Yanyan Case – Biddulph Methodist Church

Councillor Rogers introduced the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chief Officer.

Rev. Yanyan Case led the Town Council in Prayer.

The Chief Officer recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.

The Chief Officer confirmed attendees will be named in the minutes, unless otherwise instructed.

79. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive a presentation in relation to Waste Minimisation projects at the Household Waste Recycling Centres- Gemma Wall, Staffordshire County Council

Gemma Wall gave a presentation on Waste Minimisation, detailing the recycling items that can be recycled and made re-use of. Gemma gave examples of different schemes such as:

- Tech Cycle (old laptops, hard drives, towers, mice, keyboards) all which can be repaired and gifted back out into the community.
- Community Repaint, where there are donations of paint that anyone can take away.
- Bike Repair and Donation; the recycling centres are working with repair schemes/cafes to complete safety checks and re-gift into the community.

Gemma Wall stated that items such as car seats and mattresses cannot be recycled.

The Councillors gave thanks for the informative presentation.

Staffordshire Police

PCSO Carter gave a verbal update on the anti-social behaviour in the town. He noted that there have been a couple of arrests involving weapons, these issues are ongoing. PCSO Carter encouraged Councillors to report incidences using the 101 number.

Gemma Wall left the meeting at 6.27pm.

Staffordshire County Council representative(s)

Councillor Flunder

Councillor Flunder stated that that Jodie Hancock and himself attended a conference at Alton Towers where there were over 200 businesses that took part in discussions linking to the District Council tourism strategy, he reported that there are potential funding streams available.

Councillor Flunder stated that there are changes ongoing within children's services; he reported that the family improvement board is now back up and running which is looking at the database of community groups that should be included within their remit.

Councillor Flunder stated that the health committee working group has been arranged.

Councillor Flunder stated that he is looking at presenting information to the cabinet member Councillor Victoria Wilson in relation to the car parking at Knypersley for the fishing groups.

Councillor Flunder stated that the foster caring awards are now open.

Councillor Flunder stated that the presentation from Mary from Connect Fibre would need to be considered to a future meeting [the representative was in attendance to speak to Councillors prior to the meeting].

Councillor Hawley explained, as the monitoring Councillor, the process for attending a meeting and encouraged the speaker to contact the Chief Officer prior to the meeting and go on a future agenda.

Councillor Yates

Councillor Yates reported that the Council Tax has been set at 4.99% increase.

Councillor Yates stated that in regard to the highway issues, all County Councillors are aware of the footpaths and roads that are in need of repair, however, it is difficult to plan footpath repairs with the knowledge that broadband operators are installing fibre broadband across the county, whereby footpaths will be dug up.

Councillor Yates reported that there are a backlog of footpath repairs in Biddulph. He explained that the surface for the A527, Staffordshire County section as it approaches Stoke-On-Trent, will receive treatment week commencing 19 February 2024; there should be a significant improvement.

Councillor Yates stated that there is an ongoing review of the online reporting system and benchmarking exercises to try and improve the system.

Councillor Yates stated that he has received the surface dressing list for Biddulph North for 2024, and reported that a lot of his suggestions were taken up.

Councillor Yates stated that the volunteering policy was being reviewed, which should enable groups to be covered on an ad hoc basis for activities such as repairs to footpaths.

Councillor Jones questioned whether New Street had been overlooked. Councillor Yates explained that he is hopeful that additional funds will become available.

Councillor Garvey requested that the surface dressing list be forwarded to the Biddulph North Councillors. Councillor Yates agreed.

80. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.

- Councillor A C W Parkes
- Councillor Rushton (Absent)
- Councillor Wood (Absent)

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations; Item 89f- Councillor Rogers has a relationship with a recipient of funds.
- b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests; Item 90- Councillor Hart as a member of the Moorlands Partnership Board. Item 90 – Councillor Hawley is a member of the National Trust.

82. MINUTES

- a) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 9 January 2024.

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Proudlove. **Signed and Agreed.**

- b) To **receive** the Minutes from the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9 January 2024

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Yates. **Agreed.**

- c) To **receive** the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16 January 2024

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Redfern. **Agreed.**

- d) To **receive** the Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

Amendment to minutes; Councillor Smith was Chair.

Proposed by Councillor Smith; seconded by Councillor Garvey. **Agreed.**

- e) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 23 January 2024

Proposed by Councillor Rogers; seconded by Councillor Hawley. **Signed and Agreed.**

83. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor stated that he is glad to be back in good health and gave thanks to Councillor Yates for 'stepping up'.

The Mayor stated that he will be in attendance at an event on this coming Sunday hosted by the Biddulph Running Club.

84. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

Councillors to note that these are existing standing agenda items and can be amended by resolution, if required.

a) To receive an update on the management of Town Council Assets
The Chief Officer reported that Citizens Advice have now relocated to the Town Hall on Mondays and Wednesdays.

b) To receive an update on health and safety activities (inc. risk management)
The Chief Officer stated that Councillor Holdsworth has been completing his induction as the Deputy Health and Safety Councillor and has visited the various sites around the Town.

Councillor Flunder left the meeting at 7.16pm.

c) To receive an update on 'Biddulph Works Together' project.
The Chief Officer stated that there hasn't been a recent meeting to report on. The research findings are being circulated to partners.

Councillor Yates stated that he has distributed copies to various cabinet members at the District Council.

85. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OUTSIDE BODY MEETINGS ATTENDED SINCE THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING (*Updates only from the following meetings: Biddulph in Bloom, Moorlands Assembly, Staffordshire Parish Councils Association, Moorlands Partnership Board, Twinning Association and Fairtrade*)

Councillor Hart stated that there had been no recent Moorlands Partnership meetings.

Councillor Garvey reported that he had attended the AGM for Biddulph In Bloom.

Councillor Jackson questioned Councillor Hart as to whether he is allowed to vote on projects relating to Biddulph. Councillor Hart stated that he can vote as long as there is no conflict of interest.

Councillor Rogers reported that a new Chief Executive will be appointed for Staffordshire Parish Councils Association.

86. TO APPROVE THAT COUNCILLOR EARDLEY WILL BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, SWITCHING WITH COUNCILLOR HOLDSWORTH WHO WILL BECOME A MEMBER OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All Agreed.

87. TO APPROVE THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION GROUP FOR NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE WITH A MEMBERSHIP FEE OF £50 THAT SUPPORTS GROUP EVENTS

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **Agreed**.

88. TO CONFIRM THAT LICENSE AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR PROJECTS AT THE GILLOW HEATH STATION AND FOR THE TOWN HALL FRONTAGE

The Chief Officer stated that the license agreements have been received from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. Councillor Hart gave thanks to the Chief Officer.

89. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a) To **confirm** the recommendations from the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting:

i. Committee budgets for 2024-25 (spreadsheet attached)

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **Agreed**.

ii. Fees and charges for 2024-25 (attached)

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **Agreed**.

iii. Precept requirement for 2024-5 of £419,195.00, based on tax base of 6338.

The Chief Officer confirmed that there has been an increased to £2.99 per household, per year.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Proudlove. All **Agreed**.

b) To **approve** the insurance requirements for 2024-25 based on an assessment of risk (quotations to be tabled; overarching risk assessment attached).

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **Agreed**.

c) To **confirm** the recommendations from the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting that the Financial Regulation (attached) should be amended to include internet banking arrangements.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **Agreed**.

d) To **approve** that £100,000 will be transferred from NatWest to Unity Bank to enable internet banking to commence.

Councillor Salt requested, for auditing purposes, that items be highlighted with subject to approval.

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **Agreed**.

e) To **approve** accounts to be paid in February 2024:

Expenditure over £500		
D&G Bus Ltd	No93 Bus Service – December	3173.00
Octopus Energy	Town Hall Electricity	1707.65

SMDC	Business Rates DD -	2800.00
E-On	Highway Lighting & Maintenance 2023 – 2024	6252.00
Wain Marsh Tree Services	Tree/Hedge Cut – Moorland Rd Allotments	750.00
Prism	Software & Support – INV 191396	958.22
Sandyford Property Investment Ltd	Rent – Brownlees Industrial Estate – Storage Unit 01/02/24-29/02/24	624.00
Hanley Print Services	INV 14183 – Banners (Referendum / over 50s / Pull Up Banner)	510.00
Octopus Energy	Visitor Centre – Electricity	562.74
Expenditure less than £500		
Chartered Institute of Housing	Member Renewal	394.00
Sarah Haydon	Reimbursement – Emergency travel Expenses - Resident	8.00
HEADS (Congleton Chronicle)	Energy Saving Day – Advertising	266.76
Rebecca Dobson	Biddulph Works Together – Groups (Feast & Flicks, Bereavement Group 15/1/24)	55.00
Ignite Facilities	Callout to Boiler Fault	100.80
Ignite Facilities	Gas Tightness Test	180.00
Culligan	<i>Cooler Rental – December 2023 (in credit £16.05 no payment due)</i>	
K. Wood	Window Cleaning – Jan	114.00
Fifteen Group	Telephones DD – INV 118986	122.56
Fifteen Group	Telephones DD – INV 119414	122.56
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd	Bin Emptying – INV 135202 w/c 15/01/24	229.68
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd	Bin Emptying – INV 135465 w/c 22/01/24	229.68
Toni's Treats	Event Refreshments	270.00
NatWest	Bank Charges – Dec	71.18
NatWest	Bank Charges – Jan	65.43
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies – INV 2842	71.70
Prism	Phone Charges – INV 191834	257.39
Myers & Co Solicitors	Employer Assist Membership 20/1 – 19/2 2024	150.00
Toni's Treats	Energy Saving Day – refreshments	55.00
Rebecca Dobson	BLPG – Warm Places 23.01.24/ Feast & Flicks 24.01.24	36.00
I&P Lifting Gear	Twelve Month Examination - Ladders & Tower Scaffold	288.00
Reliance High Tech	Lone working devices - JAN	73.14

Octopus Energy	Wharf Road – Electricity	135.79
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying w/c 29/1/24 INV 135708	199.19
Euro Digital Systems	Printing – INV 115793 – 28Dec24-27Jan24	123.31
Sandyford Property Investment Ltd	Building Insurance - Brownlees Industrial Estate – Storage Unit – 01/02/24 – 30/08/24	163.35
Sandyford Property Investment Ltd	Service Charge – Brownlees Industrial Estate – Storage Unit 01/02/24-29/02/24	24.00
Barry Harrison	Reimbursement – Park Lane Allotments – Lock replacement	25.50
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies – INV 2920	78.60
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies – INV 2920	78.60
Toni's Treats	INV 18 – Bereavement Group Refreshments 24/1/24	15.00
Toni's Treats	INV 19 – Feast & Flicks Food 24/1/24	75.00
E ON next	Xmas Lights supply – DEC	60.89

Credit Card		
Open Spaces Society	Annual Subscription	45.00
SLCC	The Law of Allotments – Reference Book	29.60
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks Food 17.01.24	19.00
Sainsburys	Learners Forum – Refreshments 17.01.24	13.10
Sainsburys	Biddulph Works Together Meeting Refreshments	13.75
Manchester Metropolitan University	Associate of the Institute of Place Management – Membership renewal	96.00
Sainsburys		10.20
Sainsburys		10.15
Facebook	Advertising	40.00
Facebook	Advertising	29.52
Facebook	Prime Membership	114.00
Giff Gaff	Mobile Phones – Feb	8.00
Giff Gaff	Mobile Phones – Feb	8.00
Giff Gaff	Mobile Phones – Feb	8.00
Sainsburys	Energy Saving Day - -Refreshments	52.30
Survey Monkey	Annual Renewal	408.00

f) To approve supplementary accounts (to be tabled)

Expenditure over £500		
Salaries	February	15619.19
HMRC	HMRC	4158.17
Staff Pensions	Pensions – February	6083.76
Unity – Biddulph Town Council	Account transfer	100000.00
Opus Energy	Town Hall – GAS (DD) 03 Jan – 04 Feb 24	3801.36
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	INV ---- Visitor Centre Cleaning	981.13
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	INV ----- Wharf Road Cleaning	1524.85
D&G Bus Ltd	93 Bus Service – Jan 2024	3674.00
Octopus Energy	Visitor Centre – Electricity – Jan 2024 (DD)	824.06
Octopus Energy	Town Hall – Electricity – Jan 2024 (DD)	1415.63
Mary Gibson	Storage – October 2023 - March 2024	1300.00
Waterplus	Water Supply – TH – 01/08/23 – 02/12/23	964.43
David Copestake	Lantern Storage and Upkeep (Donation)	500.00
Your Choice Fire & Security	CCTV Installation 4 cameras Town hall & Bus Hub	2812.97
Zurich Municipal	Insurance – Town Hall (Subject to quote approval)	2649.37
BASC (Swimming Club)	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Lawton, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Rushton, Cllr Eardley, Cllr Rogers	675.00
Moorlec Electrical Services Ltd	Visitor Centre Electrical Works – Heater	763.20
Philip Hardaker	Mosaic Seat project – initial payment	3000.00
Expenditure less than £500		
CASH	Volunteer Expenses Feb (£160.00), Petty Cash (£36.59)	196.59
Tidysite Skip Services Ltd	Bin Emptying – INV 136045 w/c 05/02/24	171.87
CASH	Knypersley Pool Race - Prize Donation	200.00
Fifteen Group	Telephones DD – Jan INV 119761	132.74
Standard Life	Voluntary Pension Payment - Feb	150.00
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies INV 2968	54.18
Moorland Contract Janitorial Ltd	Cleaning Supplies INV 2961	185.42

Waterplus	Water Supply – TBG (Inv amount £28.37 – note credit on account of £4.31)	24.06
Eon Next	Xmas Lights Supply 1 st Jan – 31 st Jan 24	14.38
Octopus Energy	Wharf Road – Electricity – Jan 2024 (DD)	140.51
NatWest	Bank Charges	49.47
SLCC	Training : Office Staff – INV BK214905-1	84.00
SLCC	Training : Office Staff – INV BK214904-1	24.00
1 st Biddulph Moor Scout Group	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Hawley & Cllr Rogers – for training, badges/certificates	125.00
Biddulph & District Community Orchestra	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Kisicki & Cllr Harper	140.00
Knypersley First School	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Lawton	100.00
The Newman Catholic Collegiate (Our Lady In Grace)	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Hopkins-Forest School Activities	250.00
The Green Tree House	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Jackson	150.00
Biddulph Moor Community Orchard Enterprise	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Hawley – Access Pathway & bench	100.00
Biddulph Moor Village Hall	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Hawley – Easter Event; Eggs for the children and entertainer	100.00
Biddulph In Bloom	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Kisicki	150.00
Biddulph District Brownies	Cllr Grant 23/24 – Via Cllr Fletcher	250.00
K.Wood	Window Cleaning – Feb INV KW110	114.00
Fenn	Copier Paper x5 boxes	107.70
John D Spruce	Painting – Town Hall	325.00
I&P Lifting Gear	Repair & Report – TH Ladder	114.00
Tonis Treats	BWT – BLPG 06.02.24, Feast & Flicks 07.02.24 & Dementia café 08.02.24	98.00
Leek Town Council	Civic Celebration – Mayor 2x tickets (Civic Allowance)	40.00
Cheadle Town Council	Spring Afternoon Tea – Mayor x2 tickets (Civic Allowance)	34.00
Waterplus	Visitor Centre – 01 Jan – 07 Feb 24	20.14

Credit Card		
Sainsburys	Meeting Refreshments 09.02.24	7.95
SMDC	Road Closures – Garden Festival, Classic Vehicle, Town Christmas Lights, Biddulph Moor Christmas Lights, Fresh Food Friday	325.00
Royal Mail	Stamps	75.00
Sainsburys	Feast & Ficks 06.02.24	16.90

Safety Signs 4 less (Value Products Ltd)	Town Hall Signs – Toilets Signs	34.77
Safety Signs 4 less (Value Products Ltd)	Town Hall Signs – CCTV, Danger – Fragile Roof, Health & Safety Law poster	31.56
Sainsburys	Milk	1.45
Facebook	Advertising – Social Media	48.41
Wickes	Paint & Masonry Drill Bill – Town Hall	60.40
Ovo Energy	BWT – Emergency Fuel Top Up – resident	20.00
SMDC	Brown Bags – Reception (Garden Waste)	70.00
Office Furniture Online	Tables	794.40
NALC	Training : Office Staff	39.22
SMDC	2x Tickets – Mayor – Chairmans Charity Curry Night (Civic Allowance)	40.00
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 24/1/24, Meeting 23/1/24 & Training Refreshments 24/1/24	38.00
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 24/1/24 & Training Refreshments 24/1/24	17.30
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 31/1/24 Additional Food	1.75
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 31/1/24 - food	11.05
Sainsburys	Biddulph Small Business Breakfast Event	90.45
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 24/1/24	18.00
Argos	Ink	13.59
Sainsburys	Feast & Flicks 14/2/23	45.75

Councillor Jackson queried the electricity payments for the Visitors Centre, he requested a monthly breakdown of electricity bills to be brought to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee.

Councillor Jones suggested a split detailing how much electricity used by the café and how much by the toilets.

There was a discussion about solar panels on the roof of the Visitors Centre; Councillor Yates stated that at the District Council climate change meeting he will investigate options for grants.

Councillor Jackson queried the payment to Chartered Institute of Housing. The Chief Officer explained it was a professional membership.

Councillor Smith left the meeting at 7.34pm

Proposed by Councillor Hart to be moved on block; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **Agreed**.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, the Council is to determine which items, if any, should be taken with the public excluded.

90. TO CONSIDER AN APPROACH FROM THE NATIONAL TRUST IN RELATION TO THE EXCAVATION OF THE LIME LODGE FOOTINGS AT THE END OF THE BATEMAN WALK

It was proposed by Councillor Hawley to request further information from the National Trust and invite them to a committee to discuss; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **Agreed**.

91. TO CONFIRM NEXT STEPS REGARDING THE ST JOHNS ROAD MINING LANTERNS

Further actions were agreed in order to move forward with the project. All **Agreed**.

92. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON A VIOLENT INCIDENT AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL AND TO CONFIRM AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

The Chief Officer gave a brief description of the incident and queried whether Councillors would support the individual being banned from the building; such action would need to be enforceable.

It was proposed by Councillor Garvey, to suspend Standing Orders 3x to allow the meeting to continue; seconded by Councillor Yates. All agreed.

93. TO CONFIRM I.T. ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024-27 (QUOTATIONS TO BE TABLED)

Quotations were considered and a provider agreed.

94. BIDDULPH IN BLOOM:

- a) To **confirm** the instruction of a Barrister to provide advice on the role of the Town Council with regard to becoming a trustee.

All **Agreed**.

b) To consider the proposal for a license to be granted to Biddulph Town Council for the creation of a memorial garden.

It was agreed that further information was needed.

The meeting ended at 8.49pm

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