

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2016

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Salt
The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Wood
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift
Councillor Whilding

1.16 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

The Mayor called for nominations for Chair. Councillor Hart proposed Councillor Davies as Chair and Councillor Rogers as vice chair, seconded by Councillor Jones. There were no other nominations and Councillor Davies was elected as Chair.

2 APOLOGIES

Councillor Court
Councillor Hall
Councillor Jackson

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Interests: Councillor Sheldon in any item relating to Biddulph in Bloom, as Chair. Councillor McGuinness, Churchwarden at St Lawrence's Church.

4 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Committee held on 12 April 2016.

5 POLICE UPDATE

Councillor Davies welcomed PCSO Shields and explained that a representative from the Police had been invited to provide an update in relation to some vandalism and anti-social behaviour in the town.

This was particularly around the Millennium Garden, Hanley Economic Building Society, High Street/John Street alley and parking issues.

There had also been some issues with large groups of young people in the Grange Country Park. PCSO Shields explained that alcohol had been seized, and it was likely to be a result of good weather and school leavers.

Councillor Rogers queried whether the Police were aware of new landlords in public houses in the town. PCSO Shields stated that there were a set of questions that new landlords had to complete to look at compliance/conditions of the licence.

Councillor Rushton suggested that it may be beneficial to talk to possible school leaver in May each year. PCSO Shields said he would take this forward.

PCSO Shields stated that the Police had issued Section 35 dispersal notices in February/March with colleagues from other areas at weekends. There were no large groups on the High Street as a result.

Councillor Davies stated that community policing was a great initiative.

Councillor Rogers asked what the view was in relation to parking on zig zags. PCSO Shields stated that parking issues were dealt with by 'Clear Streets'; PCSOs have limited powers in relation to parking. Councillor Jones felt that this was a police issue.

Councillor Hart stated that the General Purposes Committee had contacted Mark Deaville (Staffordshire County Council Highways Portfolio Holder) to complain about the arrangements with Stoke parking enforcement. This had resulted in some action initially, but then visits had reduced again.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer would write to Mark Deaville again and express the concerns and frustrations of the Civic Committee.

Councillor Lawson stated he would also raise this at the County Council.

Councillor Sheldon felt that the problems in the Millennium Gardens were not going away. Stones were thrown at Sainsburys and it was very dispiriting.

PCSO Shields stated that a camera had been installed, but there had been no reports of incidents. The Police will view footage if they receive complaints.

Councillor Rogers stated that there were issues on King Street where the alley was regularly blocked by cars. PCSO Shields agreed to monitor this.

Councillor Salt felt that there was a lot of apathy. People need to complain to help the Police investigate.

PCSO Shields felt that most of the young people in Biddulph were lovely kids. There are 6/7 PCSOs in Biddulph. They try their best to get round. No call is a pointless call.

PCSO Shields informed the meeting that there would be a knife amnesty in Staffordshire at the end of the month. There will be some media coverage over the next month.

6 UPDATE ON PROJECTS

The Chief Officer updated the meeting that Ironage Design were beginning the work on the Kissing Gates this week, and Geoff Booth would be starting the tops/bridge shortly.

7 ARTISAN MARKET REPORT

Councillor Davies presented the figures of April and May Artisan Markets. This is beginning to look more positive, only making a small loss.

Councillor Rogers felt that footfall was much greater.

Councillor Davies stated that there was an interesting variety of stalls.

Councillor Jones queried whether we still need to advertise in the Chronicle. Could this help to save money?

There was discussion about the success of the car boot element and suggestions about the inclusion of more furniture sales.

The Chair confirmed that we are still constrained by the requirements of other markets and the funding from the Portas Review.

Councillor Nicosia queried the size of the garage. Councillor Davies stated that it was in a good location, but not well maintained and other options could be considered.

There was further discussion about the possibility of changing the time or day of the market. Councillor Davies would take this forward.

8 MEETING WITH TRADERS

The Chief Officer stated that as she was new to the role she would like to introduce herself to traders and ask for their support and ideas. It is important to understand their priorities.

The Chief Officer proposed arranging a meeting on a Wednesday afternoon in September, with refreshments, to seek their thoughts.

The Biddulph Business Chamber does not meet regularly and therefore does not have a voice.

Councillor Hawley felt this was a good idea and would be useful for taking the Neighbourhood Plan forward; we could consider development of the town centre.

Councillor Rogers felt that the Town Centre Co-ordinator role had once been very effective. We should employ someone to put the ideas of the traders into place.

The Chief Officer will investigate what this role could look like and how it could be funded again.

Councillor Jones supported the idea of meeting with the traders to improve communication. He stated that high street trading was very difficult and traders feel the Council should do something to help.

Councillor Swift stated that shopping habits have changed.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm

Signed Date