

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 7 February, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor R Kenney in the Chair and
Councillors Mrs C Collier, G Collier, J Davies, Mrs J Farnham, I Fordham,
Mrs K Green, M Green, Mrs J Hood, T Jackson, Mrs E Mowatt, G Neagus,
A Osgathorpe, Mrs J Piggott and M Williamson

Absent: Councillors Mrs M Goodall, P Leason and M Shaw

GP17/129 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs M Goodall, P Leason and M Shaw

GP17/130 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None received

GP17/131 **To receive the reports of the County Councillors**

County Councillor I Parry was not present.

County Councillor P Jones reported that “Stafford & Stoke Sustainability and Transformation Plan” has been published and referred to the Cancer Care section, commenting that survival rates in Staffordshire are among the worst in the country. He suggested asking the UK’s leading oncologist, Professor Sikura, review the findings within the plan, especially the early diagnosis and process through hospital. He asked for Stone Town Council to support his suggestion by writing to the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Councillor Mrs J Hood supported the request, but was disappointed that the gap in social funding has not been mentioned. Also, doctors surgeries in Stone are sending all patients to Stoke hospital rather than Stafford, and asked for County Councillor Jones to allay the fears of how much worse this service has become. County Councillor Jones stated that in his opinion the cancer care was the most important issue, and the issue regarding social care is not down to funding but just needs to be run more efficiently. He also reported that many hospital consultants do not want to work in Stafford but prefer to work in Stoke or Wolverhampton which is why patients are referred there.

Councillor G Neagus asked for an update regarding the Meaford development and in particular jobs at the site. County Councillor Jones reported that there had been an objection to a planning application due to the proximity to the canal, but other than that, there was no update to give.

RESOLVED: to bring consideration of the Stafford & Stoke Sustainability and Transformation Plan back to the General Purposes Committee on 28th February

GP17/132 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

GP17/133 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on the 11th January, 2017, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record and that the recommendations of the Steering Group be adopted.

GP17/134 **Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England**

The Clerk presented his report* regarding proper practices which take effect for the 2016-17 accounts.

RESOLVED: to accept the Council's bank reconciliation process and to nominate a small group of Councillors to review bank reconciliations. Councillors nominated are Councillors Mrs J Hood, I Fordham, Mrs J Farnham, M Williamson, R Kenney and Mrs C Collier

RESOLVED: to determine that the Council's responsibilities in respect of reviewing the effectiveness of internal control are met by the work required to be undertaken by the internal auditor

RESOLVED: That no further review of the Council's compliance with the guidance be undertaken

GP17/135 **Ex-Servicemen's Bowls Match**

The Ex-Servicemen's Bowls Club has suggested the match with the Councillors takes place on Monday 19th June.

RESOLVED: to accept Monday 19th June as the date for the match, and to provide a buffet as in previous years

GP17/136 **Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2**

The Inspector's report regarding the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 was circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: to write to HMI Mike Fox for his excellent work in the examination of The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 saying that Stone Town Council welcomes and supports wholeheartedly his final report, and his comments in relation to Westbridge Park, despite Stafford Borough Council's iniquitous processing of planning applications during and after the Main Modification consultation period.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

GP17/137 **Members' Motions under Standing Order 4**

Councillor J Davies

"This year, Sunday 23 April is St George's Day, the day we acknowledge the patron saint of England. I ask the Town Council to resolve to purchase a Flag of St George to be flown on the flag pole at the top of the High Street on St George's Day this year and subsequent years, and on any other appropriate occasions. The purchase cost should not exceed £150.00"

RESOLVED: to purchase a Flag of St George for not more than £150.

GP17/138 **Members' Motions under Standing Order 4**

Councillor J Davies

"On 17 May 2016 the Council resolved to appoint annually two Mayor's Cadets and approved a related protocol. The draft protocol was amended prior to the resolution, removing the phrase "other occasions as requested by the Town Mayor". This phrase was removed to allay the fears of some councillors who perceived a risk under the draft protocol that every Mayor would need to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Subsequent discussions with the Officers Commanding the two cadet units has indicated that no such DBS check is needed.

I ask the Town Council to resolve to amend the subject protocol inserting, in place of the phrase removed at the earlier meeting, the phrase "other occasions as requested by the Town Mayor and agreed by the Officers Commanding the relevant cadet units."

Following discussion, it was also agreed that the Mayor should never be alone with the cadet(s).

RESOLVED: to change the Mayor's Cadet Protocol with the amendments above.

GP17/139 **Members' Motions under Standing Order 4**

Councillor J Davies

"I ask the Town Council to resolve to invite the new Chief Executive of Stafford Borough Council, Mr Tim Clegg, to a future Council Meeting in order for him to meet the Council and to answer any questions the Council may have."

RESOLVED: to invite Mr Clegg, Chief Executive Stafford Borough Council, for an informal meeting with Stone Town Council Members.

GP17/140 **Update from Working Groups**

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Councillor Mrs J Hood reported that the last meeting had been cancelled. A consultation will be conducted regarding Special Character Areas in Stone.

GP17/141 **To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local**

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organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC – Councillor J Davies attended a meeting on 13th January. The next meeting will be 16th February. He will also be attending the annual dinner in March.

Age Concern Stone & District – Councillor Mrs K Green attended a meeting and reported that the organisation is working hard and that the lunch club now has 30 members. Some donations have been received, and they will be re-forming the constitution shortly.

Stone Town Band – Councillor J Davies attended a rehearsal of the band. The next time the Texas flag is flown, Stone Town Band will play the Texas State Song.

Walton Community Centre – Councillor M Shaw was not present

Stafford District & Stone Access Group – Councillor Mrs C Collier reported that a new website is being created which has more information and allows people to make comments. ‘A’ boards remain an issue.

Stone Common Plot Trustees – No meetings have taken place

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Councillor Mrs J Farnham attended a liaison meeting with other Councillors, and was impressed by the work done, and stated that the group is an asset of the town which is going from strength to strength

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association – No meetings have taken place

The Chairman adjourned the remaining items until after the Planning Committee meeting

GP17/142 **To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next item of business is discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

RESOLVED: to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting whilst the next item of business is discussed.

GP17/143 **Internal Audit 2017-18 Onwards**

The Clerk presented his confidential report* to the Members regarding internal audit processes.

RESOLVED: to continue with the current internal audit arrangements.

Town Mayor

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