



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

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STONE
ST15 8JP

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1 July 2021

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** will be held at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on **THURSDAY 8 JULY 2021 at 7:00pm** for consideration of the matters itemised in the following agenda.

Please note that, following a risk assessment, a number of Covid-19 mitigation measures will be in place for this meeting to support social distancing and increase Covid safety:

- Hand sanitisers will be available in the room and ventilation will be maximised.
- Members of the public will be required to scan the NHS QR code or provide their names and contact details for track and trace purposes. This will be unnecessary for Councillors, whose attendance will be recorded in the normal way.
- Attendees are asked not to change seats unless unavoidable. Councillors will be spaced apart, and any seats where participants need to move will be changed between meetings (e.g. the Chairman's table and chair).
- Everyone in attendance will be required to wear face coverings throughout the whole period that they are in the Frank Jordan Centre. The only exceptions to this will be the meeting Chairman, for the duration of the meeting, and all other meeting participants, but only while speaking as part of the meeting.

Please take particular care when entering and leaving the meeting to ensure that social distancing is maintained. Attendees are reminded that the "rule of six" will apply whilst inside the Centre.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Agenda

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**
4. **Acceptance of Office**

To confirm receipt of Councillor Walley's Acceptance of Office following the by-election on 6 May 2021.

5. **To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 4 May 2021, Minute Numbers C22/001 – C22/010 (attached)**
6. **To receive the draft minutes and decisions of the under mentioned Committees:**
 - a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 May 2021, Minute Numbers GP22/001 – GP22/018 (attached)
 - b) Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 4 May 2021, Minute Numbers PC22/001 – PC22/006 (attached)

7. **Internal Auditor's Report 2020-21**

The Council is required to consider an Internal Audit Report before approving the accounts for submission to the External Auditors. The following reports have been enclosed:

- a. Formal Internal Audit submission to the External Auditors
- b. Report from Internal Auditor.

Members are asked to consider the reports.

8. **Annual Governance Statement 2020-21**

To consider the annual governance statement for submission to the external auditor

9. **Council Accounts 2020-21**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached) and the accounting statement for submission to the external auditor

10. **Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014**

Information for Quarter ending 31 March 2021 (attached)

11. To receive the forthcoming Civic Announcements

There are no civic announcements.

12. To receive the Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements (attached)

13. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.

14. To receive the draft confidential minutes and decisions of the undermentioned Committees:

- a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 May 2021, Minute Numbers GP22/001 and GP22/018 (attached).

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Town Council meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of the scheme are displayed in the Council's notice boards and website.

Stone Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held virtually on Tuesday 4 May 2021

NOTE: Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) and Government Guidelines on public gatherings, the meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Members of the public were invited to observe the meeting streamed live on YouTube.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs J. Hood in the Chair for Minute Number C22/001.
Councillor J. Powell in the Chair thereafter and
Councillors: A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson,
I. Fordham, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, P. Leason, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Town Council that in the absence of the Town Mayor, Councillor Mark Green, who had recently undertaken surgery, she had invited Mayoress, Mrs Kristan Green, to attend the meeting as her guest.

Before the meeting began Reverend Prebendary Cardinal led prayers

Councillor Mrs Hood thanked Reverend Prebendary Cardinal for leading prayers over the previous mayoral year.

C22/001 To appoint the Town Mayor for the ensuing year

Councillor Mrs Hood invited nominations for Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

Councillor Kenney nominated Councillor Jonathan Powell.

Councillor Best seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations and all members agreed.

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Jonathan Powell as Stone Town Mayor for the year 2021-22.

Councillor Mrs Hood requested the opportunity to say a few words about the newly appointed Mayor. She advised the Town Council that Jonathan had been born in Nairobi, Kenya, where his father had served in the British Army. His family later moved to Germany and then on to England to his father's home town of Stafford. Jonathan followed in his father's footsteps and spent a time in the Army before going to Wolverhampton University to pursue a career in Hospitality. He later moved into the Events Industry and relocated to Stone in 1999. He currently works at the JCB headquarters in Staffordshire.

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Council that Jonathan had always been an active member of Stone community and enjoyed coaching at Stone Rugby Club for seven years, working with many age groups.

She said that both Jonathan and Mrs Powell were proud to be given the opportunity to take on the positions of Mayor and Mayoress of Stone. Jonathan's focus was very much on Stone town's community environment its inclusivity and firmly believed that treating people as the strongest resource of our community was essential.

There was a short adjournment in the meeting while Councillor Powell donned the Mayor's Chain of Office and took the chair.

The Town Clerk invited Councillor Powell to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was signed and witnessed on camera.

Councillor Powell announced that his wife, Mrs Nancy Powell, would be his Mayoress. Mrs Powell received her Chain of Office away from the camera.

Councillor Powell stated that Reverend Prebendary Ian Cardinal, Rector of St Michael and St Wulfad and Aston and St Saviour Churches, had agreed to be Mayor's Chaplain for the year.

Councillor Powell addressed the Town Council. He expressed that he had been honoured to be elected Councillor for Walton North ward in 2019 and was now overwhelmed to be chosen as the next Mayor of Stone. He said that Stone had a great community, a vibrant energy and a wonderful friendly atmosphere. He hoped he could build on this during his term as Mayor when hopefully the previous months of uncertainty will be coming to an end.

Councillor Powell announced his chosen charities to be Stone Community Hub and Chuckle Productions who both do invaluable work in the local community.

C22/002 To appoint the Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year

Councillor Powell invited nominations for Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Mrs Hood proposed Councillor Mrs Kerry Dawson as Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year. This was seconded by Councillor R. Kenney. No further nominations were received and all members agreed.

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Mrs Kerry Dawson to Deputy Town Mayor for the year 2021-22.

Councillor Mrs Dawson was invited to don her badge of office and while doing this Councillor Mrs Hood offered some words about the newly appointed Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Mrs Hood said that she had known Kerry's family since the year 2000 and had watched her grow into the most charming, kind, considerate and hard working young woman. Kerry is married to Lee and they have three young children. Kerry is very busy with one of her roles being Bandmaster to Stone Scout and Guide Band.

Councillor Mrs Hood stated that Councillor Mrs Dawson and her Consort will make marvellous ambassadors for Stone and wished them both a fabulous year ahead.

The Town Clerk invited Councillor Mrs Dawson to sign the Declaration of Office which was witnessed on camera.

Councillor Mrs Dawson thanked the Town Council for appointing her to the position of Deputy Mayor and announced that her mother, Mrs Diane Edwards, would be her Consort. Mrs Edwards accepted the Deputy Mayor's Consort badge of Office, away from the camera.

C22/003 To thank and record the Town Council's appreciation of the services of the retiring Mayoral team

Councillor Mrs Hood expressed her appreciation of the services of the retiring Mayor. She said it was an honour to speak about her friend and fellow Town Councillor, Mark Green. Mark had been Town Mayor for the last two years, supported by his best friend, wife and Mayoress, Kristen.

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Council that they were an inseparable team and their first year in office had been hectic. They had accepted/attended 99% of their invitations and held the record for attending every event during the Stone Festival. They went on stage to switch on the Christmas Lights and last Christmas began the remote switch on in the film that was viewed by people all over the world. At the Stone by the Sea event the Mayor and Mayoress had rolled up their trousers and joined the children in the sand pit. On St George's Day they led the knights in a procession down the High Street. The Mayor and Mayoress had represented the town at HMS Collingwood and also in Southsea at the St Vincent Reunion where Stone has a very strong place in the hearts of those who served as members of the Ships Company on HMS St Vincent.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Town Council that one of Mark's proudest moments during his term of office had been laying the wreath on Remembrance Sunday as representative of the town. She said there was no doubt that Councillor Mark Green and his Mayoress, Kristan Green, had upheld the tradition of the Chain with respect, integrity and hard work. On behalf of the town, its residents and the Council, she extended to both of them her sincerest thanks.

On behalf of the Town Council, Councillor Kenney expressed his thanks and appreciation of the services of the retiring Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Jill Hood.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Powell, thanked the retiring Mayor, Mayoress and Deputy Mayor sincerely for their hard work and dedicated services to the Stone community. He said they were wonderful people who would be a very hard act for him to follow.

C22/004 Apologies for Absence

Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green and J. Hickling

C22/005 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations Received

None

C22/006 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 13 April 2021 (Minute Numbers C20/174 – C20/180), be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C22/007 Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 13 April 2021 (Minute Numbers GP20/366 – GP20/383), were noted.
- b) The minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee Meeting held on the 13 April 2021 (Minute Numbers P20/151 – P20/156), were noted.

C22/008 Committee Terms of Reference

The Council considered the terms of reference for the Council's General Purposes and Planning Consultative Committees.

RESOLVED: The terms of reference for the Council's General Purposes and Planning Consultative Committees were approved without amendment.

C22/009 To determine membership and elect the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of General Purposes Committee and Planning Committee for 2021-22

It was proposed that all members be appointed to both the General Purposes Committee and Planning Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED: That all Members be appointed to the General Purposes Committee and Planning Consultative Committee.

Chairman of the General Purposes Committee:

RESOLVED: That Councillor R. Kenney be appointed as Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the year 2021-22.

Vice Chairman of the General Purposes Committee:

RESOLVED: That Councillor I. Fordham be appointed as Vice Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the year 2021-22

Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee:

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor T. Kelt as Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee for the year 2021-22.

Vice Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee:

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor J. Davies as Vice Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee for the year 2021-22.

C22/010 **To defer other business under Standing Order 2, paragraph (j) to an appropriate meeting of the General Purposes Committee**

RESOLVED: That all other business under this Standing Order be deferred to the General Purposes Committee

TOWN MAYOR

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held virtually, on Tuesday 4 May 2021

NOTE: Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) and Government Guidelines on public gatherings, the meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Members of the public were invited to observe the meeting streamed live on YouTube.

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson,
I. Fordham, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and
R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

GP22/001 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green and J. Hickling

GP22/002 Declarations of Interests

None

GP22/003 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP22/004 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that she would not be delivering a report on this occasion as the Town Council is currently in the pre-election period known as ‘purdah’.

Councillor Mrs Hood thanked the Committee for the gracious way Members had received her reports. She said that it had been a testing four years as a County Councillor but hoped she would be returning to the next meeting.

Councillor Mrs Hood wished everyone well, particularly the Stone Town Mayor, Councillor Jonathan Powell, Deputy Town Mayor, Mrs Kerry Dawson, and their Consorts. She wished them a successful year ahead.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP22/005 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Councillor Fordham to address the Committee.

* 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.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that the new Mayor of Stafford Borough was Councillor Tony Nixon who is the ward member for Littleworth. The Deputy Mayor is Councillor Peter Jones who is the ward member for Eccleshall.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that he did not wish to speak further due to being in a period of purdah.

GP22/006 Representations from Members of the Public

The Committee noted that the Town Council's Public Participation Scheme had been suspended until after the by-election for the Stonefield and Christchurch Ward.

GP22/007 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 13 April 2021 (Minute No's GP20/366 – GP20/383), be approved as a correct record.

GP22/008 Minutes of Sub-Committees

There were no Sub-Committee minutes for consideration.

GP22/009 Sub-Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee considered the terms of reference for the Council's Sub-Committees, a copy of which had been attached to the electronic version of the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference for Sub-Committees are accepted with the following amendments:

- a. That 'The Town Market' listed under Section 4.13 of Estates Sub-Committee Functions, is removed and listed under Section 6.13 of Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee Functions.
- b. That the adopted Town Centre Strategy calling for an oversight of the appearance of the town centre including the appearance of assets not owned by Stone Town Council, is included under Section 4.13 of Estates Sub-Committee Functions.

GP22/010 To appoint the Members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the following Sub-Committees

RESOLVED: To appoint the following Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members to the Sub Committees for the municipal year 2021-22:

Tourism & Town Promotion

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Vice Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham

Members: Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, M. Green, P. Leason, C. Thornicroft

* 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.

Environment

Chairman: Councillor P. Leason

Vice Chairman: Councillor T. Kelt

Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Hatton, R. Townsend

Estates

Chairman: Councillor Mrs L. Davies

Vice Chairman: Councillor A. Best

Members: Councillors: I. Fordham, M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood, C. Thornicroft, R. Townsend

Management

Chairman: Councillor J. Davies

Vice Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham

Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, M. Green, T. Kelt

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Members: Councillors: A. Best, I. Fordham, J. Powell

Co-opted Members: J. Bonser, A. Osgathorpe

Mayor's Charity

Chairman: Councillor J. Powell

Members: Councillors: J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green, Mrs J. Hood and R. Kenney

In addition, the Town Mayor and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee are ex-officio members of all committees and sub-committees as set out in Standing Orders.

GP22/011 Stone Heritage Centre Working Group

The Committee considered the appointment of Members to the Heritage Centre Working Group.

RESOLVED: To make the following additional appointments of Council representatives to the Stone Heritage Centre Working Groups:

- Councillor Mrs Lin Davies
- Councillor Mrs Kerry Dawson

GP22/012 Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Committee considered appointments as the Council's representatives on outside bodies:

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments of Council representatives on outside bodies:

Stone ATC (Mayor plus 1 member)

Councillors: J. Davies and Town Mayor

* 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.

Age Concern Stone & District (2 members)

Councillors: J. Davies and C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group (1 Member)

Councillor T. Kelt

Trustees of the Town Hall Charity (all members)

All Councillors

Stone Community Hub Group

Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood and J. Powell

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor J. Davies

NOTE: Current membership of the following bodies will continue until the stated dates, or until retirement by an individual member, even if the members cease to be members of the Council.

Stone Common Plot Trustees (four year term)

Currently Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt and R. Kenney (all members' terms run to May 2023)

Richard Vernon Trust (four year term)

Currently J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies and J. Powell (all members' terms run to 2023)

SPCA Executive Committee (one member elected for a two year term)

Councillor M. Green (to December 2021)

GP22/013 Staffordshire Pension Fund

The Committee considered a consultation on the draft 'Funding Strategy Statement' of the Staffordshire Pension Fund which is administered by Staffordshire County Council.

A copy of an email from the Staffordshire Pension Fund and the draft Funding Strategy Statement (February 2021) had been attached to the electronic version of the agenda.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that there were two points that should be noted. The first point was that the Town Council's pension fund is pooled with all other parishes so the impact of what might happen at the Town Council is dampened by its spread across those parishes.

The second point was that if a member of staff should leave their employment early (through any reason other than ill health) a contribution is required by the Town Council towards the pension fund which can be spread over a five year period (and doesn't have to be paid all at once).

The Town Council noted the content of the consultation document.

* 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.

GP22/014 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made by the Council during the period 1 to 31 March 2021.

GP22/015 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meeting of the Steering Group had taken place.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of the Liaison Group had taken place on 14 April 2021. A representative from Fulford Parish Council had joined the meeting which resulted in the Group bringing under its wing all of the large parishes surrounding Stone. Councillor Davies said that it had been extremely useful to share knowledge and experiences and to note what a strong sense of community the Stone parishes have together.

Traffic Management in Stone Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

Promotion of Stone Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that no meeting of the Working Group had taken place.

Heritage Centre Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

GP22/016 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a meeting had been arranged to take place later this month.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt reported that the meeting of the Access Group scheduled to take place in April had been deferred until June.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney confirmed that no meeting had taken place.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meetings had taken place.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green was not available to provide a report.

* 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.

The meeting was temporarily suspended and then reconvened after the open session of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting had taken place.

GP22/017 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are 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 next item of business.

GP22/018 Stone Station Roof

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk which explored the repairs required to Stone Station roof and the potential options that were available to the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the position with the Station roof and authorises the Town Clerk to:

- a. Seek further quotations and professional advice regarding the station, including the short and long term requirements for roof repairs and maintenance prior to undertaking any further spending on the repairs themselves.
- b. Report back once the above information has been obtained to enable the Committee to determine the preferred way forward.

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Consultative Committee

Minutes of the meeting held virtually on Tuesday 4 May 2021

NOTE: Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) and Government Guidelines on public gatherings, the meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Members of the public were invited to observe the meeting streamed live on YouTube.

PRESENT: Councillor T. Kelt in the Chair, and
Councillors: A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, Mrs L. Davies,
Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, R. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and
R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

PC22/001 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: K. Argyle, M. Green and J. Hickling

PC22/002 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Councillor Mrs Hood confirmed that, as a member of Stafford Borough Council's Planning Committee, she would not be commenting on planning applications listed and abstained from voting on all items.

PC22/003 Representations from Members of the Public

The Committee noted that the Town Council's Public Participation Scheme had been suspended until after the Stonefield and Christchurch Ward by-election.

PC22/004 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 13 April 2021 (Minute Numbers P20/151 – P20/156), be approved as a correct record.

PC22/005 Planning Applications

The newly appointed Chairman, Councillor Kelt, invited the previous chairman, Councillor J. Davies, to take the lead for this item.

Application Number – 21/34155/HOU

Applicant – Mr J. Higgs

Location – 83 Alexandra Street, Stone

Development – Demolition of existing rear kitchen, bathroom and lean-to and erection of new two storey extension, including minor alterations and adaptations in association therewith.

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 21/33919/FUL

Applicant – Mr L. Clarke (CCP Developments (Stone) Limited)

Location – Former Stone Police Station, Radford Street, Stone

Development – Change of use of former Stone Police Station and associated outbuilding to provide eight apartments and related works including small elements of demolition and rebuild on main police station building, first floor extension to outbuilding to be converted, demolition of further outbuilding, provision of access off Northesk Street and car parking.

Observations: The Town Council wishes to endorse the well written observations forwarded by neighbouring residents (and uploaded to the Borough Council's 'Public Access' planning register on 26 April and 4 May 2021), in response to this development proposal.

Application Number – 20/33462/COU (amended plans)

Applicant – Mr L. James

Location – 41A High Street, Stone

Development – Change of use from shops (F2) to drinking establishment (Sui Generis) to include outdoor seating to the front of the premises

Amendments – Additional information showing details of the proposed external extraction and CCTV cameras. The description of the development has also been slightly amended from Class F2 to Class E.

Observations: The Town Council has noted the additional information provided in the amended plans but would like to restate its original observations, forwarded to the Borough Council on 3 February 2021. These are:

The Town Council asks that the following points are considered by the Borough Council in relation to the installation of an outdoor seating area at the front of the premises:

- The presence of waste bins in the vicinity of the drinking establishment should remain accessible for use by the general public, and not be obstructed.
- If the applicant intends putting up temporary awnings, parasols, shades or similar, they should be mindful not to restrict surveillance by the High Street CCTV systems fixed to the building(s).

PC22/006

To note the following items considered under delegated powers where no objections were forwarded to Stafford Borough Council due to no Member asking for the item to be considered by a special meeting of the Committee.

None

CHAIRMAN

Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

Stone Town Council

www.stonetowncouncil.gov.uk PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. NO PETTY CASH HELD			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes ✓	No □	Not applicable □

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

07/06/2021 DDMM/YYYY DDMM/YYYY

SANDRA MORRIS ACMA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

07/06/2021

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).



Black Rose Solutions Limited

74 Leacroft Road
Penkridge
Staffs
ST19 5BU

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sandie.morris@blackrosesolutions.co.uk

13th June 2021

Dear Les,

Stone Town Council – Internal Audit 2020/21

I confirm that I have carried out an examination of your accounts and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

I can state that I have no significant concerns about your internal control procedures (minor observations detailed in attached report) I found no material errors, omissions or irregularities in your financial records.

I would also confirm that I am totally independent of your Council and have no contact with any Member, employee or supplier.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sandra Morris ACMA

Black Rose Solutions Ltd

Internal Audit - Report

Name of Council

Stone Town Council

Date of Audit

7th June 2021

Annual Return - Internal Control Objectives

A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	YES
<div>Is the cashbook maintained and up to date? yes</div> <div>Is the cashbook arithmetic correct? yes</div> <div>Is the cashbook regularly balanced? yes</div>	
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES
<div>Are payments supported by invoices? yes</div> <div>Is all expenditure approved? yes</div> <div>Is VAT appropriately accounted for? yes</div> <div>Does the Council hold Power of Competence? yes</div> <div>If not, does the council monitor s137 expenditure against limit? n/a</div>	
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES
<div>Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity? no</div> <div>Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment? Jan-21</div> <div>Is Insurance cover appropriate and adequate? yes</div> <div>Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed? yes</div> <div style="text-align: right;">Date of update Financial Regs Jun-19</div> <div style="text-align: right;">Date of Update Standing Orders Jun-19</div>	
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	YES
<div>Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept? yes</div> <div>Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the? yes</div> <div>Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget? no</div> <div>Are reserves appropriate? yes</div> <div>The council has a comprehensive budgetary process. Progress against budget is regularly reported to council with all variances and required virements well documented.</div>	

13/06/2021

E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and		YES
Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	yes	
Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?	yes	
Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?	yes	
Is the council VAT registered?	yes	
Are returns submitted in a timely manner.	yes	
Is VAT reclaimed on exempt business activities reviewed and considered	yes	
Are receipts for business activities within the registration threshold?	n/a	
Various income streams are received by the council - hire of rooms, market income etc. Various independent, manual verifications and double checks are in place. As a further check it is suggested that a spreadsheet used to monitor market stall bookings be shared with other local staff to allow additional visibility and checking.		Note
A partial exemption calculation is performed to ensure that input VAT on exempt supplies is below the de minimis amounts.		

F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	N/a
Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts?	
Is petty cash expenditure reported to each council meeting?	
Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?	
No petty cash is held.	

G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	YES
Do all employees have contracts or employment with clear terms and	yes
Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?	yes
Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the	yes
Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer?	yes
Employees are paid via Sage Payroll and NI & PAYE is properly operated.	
Off payroll working (IR35) obligations were discussed with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk - no issues were noted. The council could consider keeping a list of all "personal service providers" with notes and evidence of status determination where applicable.	
	Note

H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES
Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its	yes
Are the assets and investments registers up to date?	yes
Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	yes

I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES
Is there a bank reconciliation for each account?	yes
Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion and	yes
Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	no
Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation?	n/a

J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES
Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure) ?	I&E
Are debtors and creditors properly recorded?	yes
Do accounts agree with the cashbook?	yes
Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	yes

K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review, it met the exemption criteria and correctly certified itself exempt	N/a
The council did not certify itself exempt.	

L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 it publishes information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency Code for smaller authorities	N/a
The council has turnover exceeding £25,000	

M. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2020 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	YES*
Date from	24/08/2020
Date to	05/10/2020
The council provided 30 days as required. There were, however, issues reported by external audit regarding publication dates.	

N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR.		YES
Notice of Period for Exercise of Electors Rights	yes	
Section 1 Annual Governance Statement	yes	
Section 2 Accounting Statements	yes	
Notice of Conclusion of Audit	yes	
Section 3 External Audit Report & Certificate	yes	
Internal Audit Report	yes	

O. Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			YES
The council is trustee of two charities			
Town Hall Charity	505718	Sole Trustee	
Richard Vernon Trust	236666	3 councillors appointed.	
Filings for both are up to date on the charity commission website. Both have minuted meetings separate from council business and separate bank accounts.			

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS



Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

Explanation of “No” answer to assertion 1 on the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21: “We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.”

The accounts will be submitted on Friday 9th July 2021 and the public rights period commenced on the next working day, Monday 12th July 2021. This does not comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in respect of the deadline for accounts submission or the timetable for the public rights period.

The AGAR, together with the Council’s final accounts report for 2020-21, was included on the agenda for the Council meeting on 29th June 2021 and all of the papers circulated with the agenda. The AGAR was planned to be submitted on 30th June 2021, with publication on the Council’s website the same day and the public rights period starting on 1st July 2021. This was in accordance with the Regulations.

On the morning of the 29th June 2021 meeting, the Council were informed of a Covid risk due to the possible infection of a member of staff at the location where the meeting was planned to be held. Unfortunately, due to the legal requirement to give three clear days notice of a change in venue, the only reasonable option open to the Council was to postpone the meeting.

The Council meeting was rearranged for the evening of Thursday 8th July 2021. Following approval of the accounts at that meeting they will be published on the Council’s website and submitted to the Council’s External Auditors on Friday 9th July and the public rights period will commence the next working day (Monday 12th July).

This cancellation was, however, beyond the Council’s control due to the need to put the health and safety of the councillors, staff, and members of the public that would have attended this meeting first. If it were not for this necessary cancellation, the Accounts and Audit Regulations would have been complied with.

Whilst it has been necessary to answer “No” to this question due to the late submission of the accounts, it is the Council’s view that “arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements” are in place in all other respects and the answer would have been “Yes” if the 29th June 2021 Council meeting had not been unavoidably delayed.

For your further information:

1. The accounts were actually finalised in May, with the accounts report finalised and the AGAR page 5 signed by the Clerk on 27th May 2021. The final internal audit meeting took place on 7th June 2021 and the AGAR page 3 was signed by the Internal Auditor on that day.

2. The Council meeting to consider the accounts was already delayed from its usual early June date until 29th June 2021 as a deliberate measure to hold it after the planned lifting of Covid regulations on 21st June 2021. This was largely due to a concern over being able to make sufficient, safe provision for public attendance. While broadcasting previous online meetings on YouTube, public interest in the Council had increased considerably, with over 200 views for a meeting being common and a peak viewing figure for a meeting of 650. The number of members of the public that would choose to attend this first face to face Council meeting following the removal of government permission to hold online meetings was therefore very uncertain, and potentially unmanageable in a Covid safe way prior to the (then) anticipated lifting of restrictions on 21st June. When the restrictions were not lifted on 21st June, however, it was decided to proceed with the meeting anyway with appropriate measures for Covid safety.

Explanation of “No” answer to assertion 3 on the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21: “We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.”

As stated in the commentary regarding assertion 1 above, the accounts will be submitted on 9th July 2021 and the public rights period commenced on 12th July 2021. This does not comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in respect of the deadline for accounts submission or the timetable for the public rights period.

The commentary regarding assertion 1 above explains that the reason for this delay was the last minute cancellation of the Council meeting at which the accounts were due to be considered due to a Covid risk at the proposed meeting venue beyond the Council’s control, and the legal restriction on being unable to change the location of the meeting without giving three clear days notice.

Whilst it has been necessary to answer “No” to this question due to the late submission of the accounts, the Council believes that in all other respects it has taken “all reasonable steps to assure itself that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances” and that the answer would have been “Yes” if the 29th June 2021 Council meeting had not been unavoidably delayed.

Whilst accepting that the Accounts and Audit Regulations have not been complied with as a result of postponing the meeting, the Council’s view is that holding the meeting in order to ensure that the Regulations were met would have presented an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the councillors, staff, and members of the public that would have attended.

Explanation of “No” answer to assertion 4 on the Annual Governance Statement 2020-21: “We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.”

The external audit of the 2019-20 accounts pointed out that:

“In undertaking the review of the 2019/20 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2020 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015

Accounts and Audit Regulations to start the period of 30 working days for the public to inspect the accounts the day after the AGAR was published and to do so as soon as possible after it was approved. In 2019/20 the AGAR was published on 20 August 2020 but the public rights period did not start until 24 August 2020. The Council should ensure that in 2020/2021 they comply with the Regulations and respond no to the relevant assertion (assertion 4) in its Annual Governance Statement.”

The 2019-20 AGAR was therefore formally available to the public on Thursday 20th August 2020, two working days (four calendar days) before the start of the public rights period on Monday 24th August 2020, rather than the public rights period commencing the day after the AGAR was published as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

For 2020-21, the public rights period was be planned to start on the day following publication of the AGAR, in accordance with the Regulations.

As a result of the unavoidable delay to the Council meeting referred to in the comments on assertions 1 and 3 above, however, the earliest possible day for publication of the accounts will be 9th July 2021. As this is a Friday, the public rights period will formally commence on Monday 12th July 2021, the next working day. Whilst this does meet the “next day” requirement of the Regulations it does not meet the timetable requirements, as set out in the answers to assertions 1 and 3 above.

Introduction

1. This report sets out the Council's accounts for 2020-21. It compares the final outturn figures with the original budget for the year and the forecast produced as part of the budget process.
2. The proposed financial submission to the Council's external auditors is also attached for approval.

Background

3. The Council's financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March. It is required to keep its accounts for that period in accordance with legal requirements, to report them for approval by the Council within three months of the year end, and to submit an annual return to its external auditors to a similar timescale.
4. The Council is also required to employ the services of an internal auditor, who examines the accounts, reviews the Council's internal control, completes the internal audit section of the annual return, and may produce a report identifying any areas of concern to Members. This internal audit has been performed by Sandie Morris, who will be reporting independently to the Council, as required.
5. Subject to certain limited requirements, councils which turn-over less than £6.5 million per annum are not expected to comply with the accounting standards required of larger local authorities and have more freedom to determine their own form of accounts, subject to national recommendations on proper practices.

Accounts 2020-21

6. The Council's net revenue spending for 2020-21 was £278,341. This can be seen in detail in the Income and Expenditure Account set out at Appendix 1. The resulting effect on the Council's balance sheet can be seen at Appendix 2.
7. This net spending of £278,341 compares with £295,140 in the previous year, an approved budget of £541,325 and a forecast made at the time the 2021-22 budget was prepared of £455,945. This is set out in more detail in Appendix 3.
8. Explanations of the major variations between the original budget and the forecast were included in a series of budget reports to this Committee and its Sub-Committees during

December 2020 and January 2021. Details of the major variations from the forecast that was made at the time the 2021-22 budget was prepared are set out later in the report.

9. In a number of cases identified below, spending was originally anticipated and provided for in 2020-21, but that expenditure has been delayed until the current year. In such cases I have recommended that the budgets be rolled forward to the new financial year to meet the costs when they are incurred. A figure of £159,252 has been contributed to the Rollover Reserve to allow this transfer between years to happen. The details of the makeup of this reserve are set out in the explanation of variances below.

Explanation of Variances from Forecast

10. Appendix 3 shows that the Council's net expenditure for 2019-20 was £177,604 less than forecast at the time the budget was prepared in January. Of this, £159,252 relates to budgets rolled over into the current financial year, leaving a true variance of £18,352 underspent.
11. Details of the more significant variances from forecast and proposals for rollover are set out below:
12. **Stone Station (net £3,897 underspent)** – An accounting adjustment was made in respect of rentals (£1,088), rates for Feb and March 2021 we included in the budget in error (£450), gas usage was reduced due to reduced use of the building (£600) and budgeted repairs to the roof were delayed (£1,800).
13. **Bus Shelters and Street Furniture (£4,206 underspent)** – A significant number of recurring maintenance tasks were not undertaken in the year due to the pandemic (£4,200). In addition, refurbishment of the Oulton Road bus shelter (£700) had not been undertaken as at 31st March 2021. An amount of £700 has been rolled forward to meet this latter cost.
14. **Building Maintenance (£19,700 underspent)** – The building maintenance budget of £10,000 was supplemented by a £9,700 rollover from 2019-20. This £19,700 has been rolled forward via the rollover reserve.
15. **Crown Meadow Improvements (£2,317 underspent)** - £900 of the underspending relates to maintenance work not undertaken due to the pandemic. A further £1,425 relates to work on the provision of a path across the amphitheatre not having been undertaken by 31st March 2021. This latter sum of £1,425 has been rolled forward into 2021-22.
16. **Allotments (£1,025 underspent)** – Works on tree removal (£350) at Newcastle Road were planned for 2020-21, but have been delayed to the current year. An amount of £350 has been rolled forward via the rollover reserve to meet this cost. In addition, a contingency of £500 provided in the budget for unforeseen works was not required.
17. **Environmental Initiatives (£2,750 underspent)** – Spending under this budget was delayed due to the pandemic. The unspent £2,750 has been rolled forward into 2021-22 via the rollover reserve.

18. **Grants to Outside Bodies (£6,385 underspent)** – This underspending has been rolled forward via the rollover reserve.
19. **Administration (£1,058 overspent)** – The overspend is mainly due to the higher than expected initial costs of providing iPads for Councillors in 2019. The 2019-20 budget provided for six Members to take up iPad provision but the actual uptake was sixteen. This initial overspend has continued to be recovered by greater than anticipated savings on paper, postage, etc. over this and the next few years. It was anticipated that this 2019-20 overspending would take a number of years to repay itself from savings. A negative amount of £1,058 will thus be rolled forward to reduce the administration budget in 2021-22 in anticipation of further savings.
20. **Miscellaneous (£6,564 underspent)** – The underspending relates to the as yet unutilised portion of the Helpline grant, a reduction in card charges due to reduced activity and the contingency provision, which was not required.
21. **Stone Heritage Centre Capital (£125,000 underspent)** – No cost was incurred by the Council in 2020-21. The budget provision has been rolled over into 2021-22.
22. **Covid Contingency (£4,000 unspent)** – This amount was not allocated to budgets in 2020-21. It may, however be required in 2021-22 due to the lockdown being longer than anticipated when the budget was prepared. This underspending has therefore been rolled over into the current year.

Audit Submission

23. The completed financial statement to be submitted to the Council's external auditors is attached at Appendix 4 and the summary year-end bank reconciliation which will accompany it is at Appendix 5. It should be noted that the net expenditure shown in the audit return is £133 different than set out in other parts of this report. This is because the Mayor's Charity Fund is required to be included within the accounts for external reporting purposes, but it is excluded from internal income and expenditure reports for the sake of clarity.

Recommendations

24. The Council are recommended to:
- a. Approve the Council's Accounts for 2020-21 as set out in this document, including the use of the rollover reserve to allow the transfer of budgets between financial years and its proposed use in 2021-22.
 - b. Note the variances between the forecast outturn for 2020-21 and the actual outturn, and the reasons identified for the major variances.
 - c. Approve the financial statement for submission to the Council's external auditors.

Stone Town Council

Income and Expenditure Account 2020-21

2019-20			2020-21`	
£	£		£	£
Income				
15,807		Frank Jordan Centre	9,125	
7,404		Stone Station	3,635	
18,040		Town Market	7,103	
3,679		Allotments	3,843	
585		Tourism & Town Promotion	-	
214		Community Bus	-	
-		Salaries & Employment Costs	1,116	
-		Administration	-	
1,822		Civic Dinner & Hospitality	-120	
218		Miscellaneous	4,921	
950		Interest	308	
-		Neighbourhood Plan	-	
	48,719	Total Income		29,932
Expenditure				
18,150		Frank Jordan Centre	18,552	
17,199		Stone Station	16,338	
7,638		Town Market	4,630	
100		Car Parking	4,782	
2,748		Bus Shelters & Street Furniture	1,594	
585		Street Lighting	771	
539		Dog & Litter Bins	740	
120		Joules Clock	-	
308		Town Electricity Supply	257	
15,979		Grounds Maintenance	17,349	
2,893		Crown Meadow Improvements	3,683	
2,621		Allotments	1,118	
-		Environmental Initiatives	-	
14,900		Christmas Lights	21,268	
360		Advertising	360	
17,866		Tourism & Town Promotion	8,605	
-0		Community Bus	-	
5,635		Grants to Outside Bodies	3,980	
149,018		Salaries & Employment Costs	162,679	
4,915		Accommodation	4,768	
6,632		Insurances	6,184	
34,701		Administration	21,288	
1,086		Audit & Legal Fees	975	
26,636		Town Council Elections	-	
2,460		Allowances - Mayor & Deputy Mayor	2,534	
1,199		Regalia & Presentations	381	
3,362		Civic Dinner & Hospitality	90	
2,069		Remembrance Sunday & War Memorials	987	
2,303		Miscellaneous	4,357	
1,838		Neighbourhood Plan	-	
	343,859	Total Expenditure		308,273
	295,140	Total Net Expenditure		278,341
Financing				
297,860		Precept	310,649	
18,399		Council Tax Support Grant	18,399	
11,461		Concurrent Functions Allowance	11,461	
-114,227		Transfer from (to) Earmarked Reserves	-18,377	
	213,493	Total Financing		322,132
	-81,647	Net Surplus for Year		43,791

Stone Town Council

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

2019-20			2020-21	
£	£		£	£
Current Assets				
2,672		Debtors	1,220	
4,044		Payments in Advance	2,303	
3,868		VAT Recoverable	6,612	
392,153		Cash at Bank and In Hand	436,756	
	402,737	Total Current Assets		446,891
Current Liabilities				
36,104		Creditors	15,596	
986		Receipts in Advance	198	
2,164		Payroll Taxation	5,312	
	39,253	Total Current Liabilities		21,106
	363,484	Total Net Assets		425,785
Represented by				
212,470		General Fund Balances	256,260	
148,980		Earmarked Reserves	167,357	
2,035		Mayor's Charity Fund	2,168	
	363,484	Total Reserves and Balances		425,785

Stone Town Council

Comparison of Actual 2020-21 with Budget and Forecast

Actual 2019-20 £		Actual Compared With			Actual Compared With Forecast		
		Approved Budget		Actual 2020-21 £	Outturn		Report Paragraph
		2020-21 £	Variance		Forecast 2020-21 £	Variance	
2,343	Frank Jordan Centre	11,715	-2,288	9,427	9,300	+127	
9,795	Stone Station	16,860	-4,157	12,703	16,600	-3,897	12
-	Stone Heritage Centre	20,000	-20,000	-	-	-	
-10,402	Town Market	-2,700	+227	-2,473	-2,300	-173	
100	Car Parking	5,000	-218	4,782	5,000	-218	
2,748	Bus Shelters & Street Furniture	9,025	-7,431	1,594	5,800	-4,206	13
585	Street Lighting	600	+171	771	800	-29	
539	Dog & Litter Bins	700	+40	740	800	-60	
120	Joules Clock	300	-300	-	300	-300	
308	Town Electricity Supply	400	-143	257	400	-143	
-	Building Maintenance	19,700	-19,700	-	19,700	-19,700	14
15,979	Grounds Maintenance	17,800	-451	17,349	17,400	-51	
2,893	Crown Meadow Improvements	5,935	-2,252	3,683	6,000	-2,317	15
-1,058	Allotments	1,410	-4,135	-2,725	-1,700	-1,025	16
-	Environmental Initiatives	2,750	-2,750	-	2,750	-2,750	17
14,900	Christmas Lights	26,600	-5,332	21,268	21,200	+68	
360	Advertising	-	+360	360	-	+360	
17,281	Tourism & Town Promotion	7,600	+1,005	8,605	9,000	-395	
-214	Community Bus	-	-	-	-	-	
5,635	Grants to Outside Bodies	-	+3,980	3,980	10,365	-6,385	18
149,018	Salaries & Employment Costs	158,300	+3,262	161,562	162,700	-1,138	
4,915	Accommodation	4,500	+268	4,768	5,000	-232	
6,632	Insurances	6,700	-516	6,184	6,200	-16	
34,701	Administration	20,230	+1,058	21,288	20,230	+1,058	19
1,086	Audit & Legal Fees	2,000	-1,025	975	1,200	-225	
26,636	Town Council Elections	-	+0	0	-	+0	
2,460	Allowances - Mayor & Deputy Mayor	3,300	-766	2,534	2,800	-266	
1,199	Regalia & Presentations	500	-119	381	200	+181	
1,540	Civic Dinner & Hospitality	1,700	-1,490	210	300	-90	
2,069	Remembrance Sunday & War Memorials	7,000	-6,013	987	1,300	-313	
2,085	Miscellaneous	6,000	-6,564	-564	6,000	-6,564	20
-950	Interest	-500	+192	-308	-400	+92	
1,838	Neighbourhood Plan	7,900	-7,900	-	0	-	
-	Stone Heritage Centre (Capital)	180,000	-180,000	-	125,000	-125,000	21
-	Coronavirus Contingency	-	-	-	4,000	-4,000	22
295,140		541,325	-262,984	278,341	455,945	-177,604	

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

Stone Town Council			
	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
1. Balances brought forward	331,791	363,484	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	297,860	310,649	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	78,579	59,792	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	149,018	162,679	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	195,728	145,461	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	363,484	425,785	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	392,153	436,756	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	306,312	307,062	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
	✓		N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

27/05/2021

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

08/07/2021

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Stone Town Council

Summary Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2021

BANK RECONCILIATION

Balance per bank statements as at 31 March 2021:

	£	£
Current Account	1,655.00	
Business Reserve	421,793.46	
National Savings	13,307.63	
	<hr/>	
		436,756.09

Less: unpresented cheques at 31 March 2021

None	<hr/>	0.00
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Add: unbanked cash at 31 March 2021:

Overbanking	<hr/> -0.50	-0.50
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Net balances as at 31 March 2021

436,755.59

CASH BOOK

Opening Balance 1 April 2020

392,153.36

Add: Receipts in the year	385,138.81	
Less: Payments in the year	<hr/> 340,536.58	
		44,602.23

Closing balance per cash book as at 31 March 2021

436,755.59

Stone Town Council

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Information for Period Ended 31st March 2021

Expenditure Exceeding £250

Date	Reference	Supplier	Description	Amount	Month
04/01/2021	D/Dbt 21/21	Stafford Borough Council	FJC Rates Jan 2021	£434.00	Jan-21
14/01/2021	ELEC 44/20	Sage UK Ltd	Annual Sage 50 Payroll Subscription	£255.44	Jan-21
15/01/2021	ELEC 44/20	Mazars LLP	Limited Assurance Review for ye 31/3/20	£800.00	Jan-21
20/01/2021	713402021773476	Pozitive Energy	FJC Gas Dec 2020	£446.79	Jan-21
22/01/2021	ELEC46/21	Stafford Borough Council	Election Charges 2019 Walton North Ward	£4,212.78	Jan-21
22/01/2021	ELEC46/21	Stafford Borough Council	Election Charges 2019 Walton South Ward	£6,642.58	Jan-21
22/01/2021	ELEC46/21	Stafford Borough Council	Election Charges 2019 Stonefield & Christchurch Ward	£8,497.13	Jan-21
22/01/2021	22183	Stone Gazette Ltd	Ad in ST15 Directory 2021	£360.00	Jan-21
22/01/2021	ELEC46/21	Stafford Borough Council	Election Charges 2019 St Michaels Ward	£7,283.30	Jan-21
25/01/2021	134027	Prism Solutions	IT support service Feb 2021	£714.92	Jan-21
26/01/2021	713402021785405	Pozitive Energy	FJC Gas Usage 01/01/21 to 20/01/21	£300.24	Jan-21
01/02/2021	3814	Cress Security	Annual Intruder Alarm Maint & Monitoring to 01/02/2022	£357.00	Feb-21
05/02/2021	INV-7933	EDG Security Limited	Replace LED fittings following test failure	£326.00	Feb-21
11/02/2021	713412021809027	Pozitive Energy	SSCC Gas Usage Jan 2021	£316.24	Feb-21
23/02/2021	Elec 49/21	Miscellaneous	GP20/337 Grant to Oulton First School (Christchurch Acad)	£500.00	Feb-21
23/02/2021	4279	Christmas Plus	Install & dismantle main displays for Xmas 2020	£5,517.00	Feb-21
23/02/2021	4279	Christmas Plus	Install & dismantle Zig Zag displays for Xmas 2020	£600.00	Feb-21
25/02/2021	135853	Prism Solutions	ICT Services Feb 2021	£714.92	Feb-21
25/02/2021	5813476/CE/106065	The Arch Rent Collectors	Rent 25.03.21 to 23.06.21	£1,087.50	Feb-21
01/03/2021	Elec 49/21	Miscellaneous	GP20/337 Grant to AED Donate	£500.00	Mar-21
01/03/2021	Elec 49/21	Miscellaneous	GP20/337 Grant to Stone Choral Society	£500.00	Mar-21
09/03/2021	713402021848281	Pozitive Energy	Gas Usage Feb 2021	£385.11	Mar-21
09/03/2021	713412021848279	Pozitive Energy	Gas Usage Feb 2021	£252.73	Mar-21
11/03/2021	7070286520	Stafford Borough Council	High St Bollards install / remove Jan to Mar 2021	£398.61	Mar-21
19/03/2021	1370546400	Adobe Systems Software	Adobe Pro DC Annual Subscription 2021/22	£343.68	Mar-21
24/03/2021	031577	MEB Total Ltd	Boiler Repairs Kitchen & Heating System	£458.55	Mar-21
25/03/2021	137560	Prism Solutions	IT support service Mar 2021	£714.92	Mar-21

30/03/2021	INV-0503	Current Electrical & Property Services	Marquees set up Mar 2021	£305.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	5	MJ Plant	Weed control x 8 / general odd jobs	£300.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	2	MJ Plant	Annual tree pruning & disposal of cuttings - amphi, C Meado	£1,200.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	3	MJ Plant	Annual removal of bullrushes at Crown Meadow scrapes - 3 vis	£500.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	4	MJ Plant	Cleaning and maint of war memorial stand, storage, disposal	£459.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	9	MJ Plant	Removal of willows and silver birch tree from scrapes x 2	£660.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	6	MJ Plant	Supply materials and re-build wall by steps	£350.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	7	MJ Plant	Roof repairs - replace rotten joists, new felt and battens.	£650.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	8	MJ Plant	Materials / labour - re-widening of Crown Meadow paths, fill	£1,130.00	Mar-21
30/03/2021	10	MJ Plant	Crown Meadow - spray weeds by bridge and clear top area	£380.00	Mar-21
31/03/2021	1	MJ Plant	Grounds Maint for C Meadow, Amphi, Allots, Old Bridge Abbey	£1,554.00	Mar-21

NOTE: The table above excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts.

Stone Town Council

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Information for Period Ended 31st March 2021

Procurement Information

1. Invitations to Tender for Contracts Exceeding £5,000

None

2. Contracted Agreements Exceeding £5,000

None

Stone Town Council

Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014

Information for Period Ended 31st March 2021

Decisions that would otherwise have been taken by the Town Council or one of its Committees that have been delegated to an officer:

1. Under a specific express authorisation; or
2. Under a general authorisation to officers to take such decisions and, the effect of the decision is to:
 - a. grant a permission or licence;
 - b. affect the rights of an individual; or
 - c. award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case, materially affects the Town Council's financial position.

None

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – to 29 June 21

Thursday 6th May

I attended the Scouts Stone and District AGM via zoom. It was very good to hear that the Pandemic and subsequent lock down of last year had not taken as heavy a toll on numbers as was thought. The feeling was very positive and looking forward to the future when the community returns to a more normal way of things.

Monday 7th June

The Mayoress and I attended the Stone and District Swimming Club for their in-house fundraising competition, raising funds for local charities. It was great to meet the young people, coaching staff, volunteers, and parents and hear how they became members, their enjoyment and the challenges they face. They ran the evening in two sessions, divided by age. It was a wonderful evening and we were both astounded at the abilities of all the participants. The Mayoress particularly enjoyed using an air horn to start and stop the timings.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – to 29 June 2021

Thursday 24th June

My family and I met the High Sheriff, James Friend, his wife, Sanda, and representatives from The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Transforming the Trent Valley project as they cycled through Stone on their way to The Wolseley Centre at Wolseley Bridge. The Stafford Borough Mayor and Mayoress were also in attendance.

I had the opportunity to talk to some volunteers from the Canals and Rivers Trust who were doing some maintenance work on Yard Lock – clearing overgrowth and repainting the lock itself. Sanda shared some of the picnic they had bought with them and I'm sure the CRT volunteers thoroughly enjoyed the beer she left for them once their work was finished!

The High Sheriff was hopeful that his tour would raise awareness of the environmental works being carried out by the aforementioned organisations, as well as fundraising for the High Sheriff Fund.