

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.

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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

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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

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.

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.

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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