

Stone Town Council – Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber, 15 Station Road, Stone, on
Tuesday 31 August 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs J. Hood in the Chair and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, R. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Powell and
C. Thornicroft

By Chairman's invitation: Councillor R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: I. Fordham and M. Green

TTP22/008 **Apologies**

Councillors: I. Fordham and M. Green

TTP22/009 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

None received

TTP22/010 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

TTP22/011 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on the 6 July 2021 (Minute Numbers TTP22/001 – TTP22/007), were approved as a correct record.

TTP22/012 **Tokyo 2020**

The Sub-Committee acknowledged the wonderful achievements of local Canoeist Adam Burgess who finished fourth in the Olympic Games recently held in Tokyo.

The Sub-Committee recognised the hard work of both Adam and the Stafford and Stone Canoe Club, a fantastic organisation whose achievements are world standard and bring tremendous honour to the town.

RECOMMENDED: That a congratulatory letter is sent to Adam Burgess in recognition of his personal achievements and those of Stafford and Stone Canoe Club in the Olympic Games 2021.

* 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.

TTP22/013 **Calendar of Events 2021 and 22**

The Sub-committee considered the events schedule for the remainder of 2021 and plans for 2022.

St Georges Day Event

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Knights involved in the St George's Day program had suggested holding an event on 25 September 2021.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the event could be agreed under delegated powers as there wouldn't be time for approval by the General Purposes Committee.

Christmas Lights Switch-On

The Chairman invited the Sub-Committee to consider whether a physical Christmas Lights Switch-On should be held in the High Street this year on Thursday 18 November 2021.

The Chairman reminded the Sub-Committee that the Switch-On was one of the most popular events in the year and asked members to consider how the Town Council should mark the start of the festive season in 2021.

The Chairman raised questions about whether families would be confident enough to attend a live event in the High Street this year and asked the Sub-Committee to consider whether it wished to take responsibility for the risks relating to Covid-19.

The Sub-Committee discussed the pros and cons of holding a physical Christmas Lights Switch-On, including both their concern about the potential for large attendances, as in previous years, where people have no choice but to stand in close proximity, and the desire to return to some sort of normality.

The Sub-Committee explored different approaches to holding a physical Switch-On event, and expressed their appreciation for the superb Virtual Christmas Lights Switch-On in 2020 which had reached more people than a physical event including people from all across the world.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that if it wanted to hold a live event, preparations would need to begin imminently in order to secure the necessary services such as staging. He also advised that some costs would (most likely) be incurred from the outset even if the Town Council later decided not to proceed.

RECOMMENDED: That the Christmas Lights Switch-On is delivered virtually in 2021 and that the preparations for a live event in the High Street are not progressed.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to update the Sub-Committee.

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The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that preparations for the Beacon Lighting on Thursday 2 June 2022 had commenced and a bugler and a bagpiper had been secured to perform.

The Town Clerk suggested that the Sub-Committee consider appointing a working group to determine the direction and shape of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

The Sub-Committee received a report that the architect at St Michael & St Wulfad's Church had been concerned about the fixing of the beacon to the roof and the Town Clerk was asked to write to the PCC at the Church.

RECOMMENDED: That the General Purposes Committee is asked to consider the arrangements for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Working Group.

TTP22/014 **Christmas Lights**

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to give an update on the 2021 Christmas lighting provision at Walton shops.

The Town Clerk reminded the Sub-Committee that the proposal for Walton shops was to erect two eight metre poles at the entrance to the car park to support curtains of lights that will run across to the tops of the shops. He advised the Sub-Committee that he had placed an order for a company to supply the poles and to put the holes in the ground. However, as the poles are higher than four meters, he has also needed to submit a planning application to Stafford Borough Council.

The Town Clerk further advised that he had submitted the planning application at the beginning of August, but did not know when it would be decided. He was investigating whether he would be able to use the legislation which permitted temporary use of the land for up to 28 days if the decision was delayed, but acknowledged that this could result in the removal of the lights before the Christmas period was over.

TTP22/015 **Christmas Trees**

The Sub-Committee considered the purchase of Christmas trees for the festive season.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council purchases illuminated Christmas trees to be installed in the High Street in 2021, to include the batteries to power them and all other costs to the maximum value of £2,500.

TTP22/016 **Floral Displays in Stone**

The Sub-Committee recognised the work of the Streetscene staff who had produced exceptional floral displays in the town this summer. The boxes on the

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railings, the podiums, hanging baskets, displays in Stonefield Park and in the whole of the town had been a delight.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council writes to the Streetscene Team to say thank you for the exceptional floral displays in Stone.

TTP22/017 Reports from Working Groups

To receive reports from Working Groups:

Remembrance Plaques Working Group

Councillor J Davies advised the Sub-Committee that Oak Tree Farm was beginning to come back into action after the Covid-19 pandemic.

He advised the Sub-Committee that in preparation for working with Oak Tree Farm he has sent out to the Working Group the first cut of the design which followed the design of the traditional blue wall plaque.

Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that obtaining the addresses of the soldiers who served in World War 2 (those commemorated on the war memorial) was proving challenging. The Stone Historical and Civic Society have the details of the soldiers who died in the First World War but no details for World War 2.

The Sub-Committee asked whether the Conservation Officer's permission would be required before installing the wall plaques and Councillor Davies confirmed that the point was listed for investigation.

Promotion of Stone Working Group

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-committee that although the Promotion of Stone Working Group had been transferred from the General Purposes Committee, some other working groups had been dissolved on the basis that their work would be consumed by this Group.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the configuration of the Working Group should be listed as an agenda item for consideration at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that it would be asked to consider co-option of members to the Working Group.

Chairman

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