

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in St Michael's Suite at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on Tuesday 7 September 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, J. Hickling,
Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and S. Walley

ABSENT: Councillors:, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Green, M. Hatton and R. Townsend

GP22/056 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Green and R. Townsend.

GP22/057 **Declarations of Interests**

Councillor A. Best declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Minute Number GP22/064) – Grant aid to local organisations: Christ Church School.

GP22/058 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP22/059 **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

Covid-19 Community Recovery Fund

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that she had been given a Covid-19 Community Recovery Fund for allocation to voluntary groups and organisations that had not been able to raise funds through the lockdown. She invited Town Councillors to suggest that local groups of any type (as long as they are voluntary) contact her. Further information about the opportunity was also available online.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP22/060 **To receive the report of Borough Councillors**

The Chairman informed the Committee that no report was available from Borough Councillors representing Stone.

GP22/061 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

GP22/062 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 August 2021 (Minute Numbers GP22/038 – GP22/055), be approved as a correct record.

GP22/063 **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee held on 27 July 2021 (Minute Numbers EST22/001 – EST22/008), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers EST22/005 and EST22/008 be adopted.
- b) Management Sub-Committee held on 27 July 2021 (Minute Numbers MAN22/001 – MAN22/010), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number MAN22/005 be adopted.

GP22/064 **Requests for Grants from Local Organisations**

Christ Church First School - £500

The Committee considered the grant application from Christ Church First School requesting £500 towards the installation of a bike and scooter park which formed part of broader improvement scheme to enhance the appearance and facilities of the school playground.

RESOLVED: To award £500 to Christ Church First School.

GP22/065 **Review of Standing Orders**

The Committee undertook to review the Council's Standing Orders* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The document had been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who had proposed revisions in respect of updated regulations and the consolidation, where appropriate, of temporary changes made during the pandemic. There had also been some revisions made to improve English and readability which have no material effect on the document.

RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the revised Standing Orders until the next meeting of this Committee in accordance with normal practice.

GP22/066 **Review of Financial Regulations**

The Committee undertook to review the Council's Financial Regulations* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The document had been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who proposed changes to Regulations 5.7b (to produce a report of all payments to each ordinary meeting of the General Purposes Committee), Regulation 5.10 (to allow payments to be made using PayPal) and Regulation 10.3 (relating to procurement, reflecting Britain's exit from the European Union and the latest contract threshold figures).

RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the revised Financial Regulations until the next meeting of the Committee in accordance with normal practice.

* 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.

GP22/067 Budget Monitoring Report – July 2021

The report of the Town Clerk was noted.

GP22/068 Stone Heritage Centre – Project Governance

The Committee considered the report* of the Town Clerk on the governance arrangements for the Stone Heritage Centre project and recommendations for an appropriate structure to the Committee.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee of the decisions already taken by him under delegated powers which included insuring the Fire Station as a vacant building, the appointment of Byatt Oliver as architects for the project and the appointment of Meddings Associates and Hindsight Heritage as interior design and concept consultants.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council:

- a. Replaces the current Heritage Centre Working Group with a Heritage Centre Steering Group, operating as proposed within the report.
- b. Adopts the terms of reference annexed to the report for the Steering Group.
- c. Appoints Councillor Leason as the Vice Chairman of the Steering Group.
- d. Notes the decisions already taken by the Town Clerk under delegated powers.

GP22/069 Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group – Appointment of Co-Opted Non-Councillor Member

RESOLVED: To appoint Helen Frost as a co-opted non-Councillor member of the Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group.

GP22/070 Covid-19 Commemoration

The Committee considered how the Town Council should commemorate the lives of local people affected by Covid-19.

The Committee suggested planting a number of trees on the Tilling Drive park in order to create an area of reflection for everyone touched by Covid-19. As well as loved ones that have been lost, people could reflect in situations such as university students not having an opportunity to experience their formal graduation, school children who have missed two years of schooling and babies born to grandparents who were unable to see them.

As an alternative, the Committee also suggested planting trees on the Town Council's land situated adjacent to Crown Meadow on the left side of Trent Close.

The Committee suggested installing a seat or bench, something similar to the seat designed by the sculptor, Philip Hardacre.

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RESOLVED: That an area of reflection is created through tree planting on the Town Council's land, adjacent to Crown Meadow, to the left of Trent Close.

RESOLVED: That the Environment Sub-Committee is asked to oversee the tree planting project in consultation with the Borough Council's Biodiversity Officer.

GP22/071 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Committee considered the setting up, membership and terms of reference of a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Working Group.

RESOLVED: That a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Working Group be set up under the leadership of the Tourism & Town Promotions Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: That the membership of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Working Group consist of:

Councillors: J. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, R. Kenney, P. Leason and J. Powell.

GP22/072 Christmas 2021

The Committee considered the purchase of illuminated Christmas trees to be installed in the High Street during the festive season in 2021. It was noted that the item had been considered and recommended by the Tourism and Town Promotion Sub-Committee at its meeting on 31st August 2021, at a cost of £2,500.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there was enough unspent money in the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee budget and it would not be necessary to approve additional budgetary provision for this expenditure.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council purchase illuminated Christmas trees to be installed in the High Street during the festive season in 2021.

GP22/073 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 30 July 2021.

Councillor Mrs Hood noted the rental payments for water dispensers, and asked whether the Town Council could go back to providing water which had been taken away for safety reasons during the Covid-19 period.

Some members suggested that the water machines should not be replaced for environmental reasons and the Chairman requested that the item be listed on the next General Purposes Committee agenda.

GP22/074 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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

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Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor J. Davies informed the Committee that the next meeting of the Stone Area Parish Liaison Group would be held in October. He said that he was beginning a tour around some of the neighbouring parishes to encourage them to get more involved and he would be attending a meeting of Fulford Parish Council on Thursday.

Heritage Centre Working Group

Councillor Leason advised the Committee that a meeting of the collection of Sub-Groups of the Heritage Centre Working Group had taken place yesterday and had considered the road map in relation to when things should be done. The Group also looked at allocating areas of responsibility to people regarding the collection and interests.

GP22/075 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 he had given his report on the last ATC meeting at the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee. He said that he had been delighted to see Stone ATC at the Farmers' Market on Saturday.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that there had been no meeting.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that there had been no meeting.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney confirmed that there had been no further meetings but he reported that there were numerous diseased trees (affected by Ash Dieback) on the Plot and work had been started on removing and trimming them as and when necessary.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Mrs Hood, Councillor Mrs Davies and Councillor Powell confirmed that no meetings had taken place.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green was not available to provide a report.

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

GP22/076 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 items of business.

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GP22/077 **Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 August 2021 (Minute Numbers GP22/038 and GP22/055), be approved as a correct record.

GP22/078 **Confidential Minutes and recommendations of Sub-Committees**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 July 2021, Minute Numbers EST22/001 and EST22/008.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the draft minutes
 - ii. To approve the recommendations contained in Minute Number EST22/008
- b) Management Sub-Committee Meeting held on 27 July 2021, Minute Numbers MAN22/001 and MAN22/010.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the draft minutes

CHAIRMAN