

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 7 December 2021

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

Officers: Mr L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, M. Green, M. Hatton, J. Hickling and Mrs J. Hood

GP22/123 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, M. Green, J. Hickling and Mrs J. Hood.

GP22/124 Declarations of Interests and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None

GP22/125 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP22/126 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood had given her apologies for the meeting.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP22/127 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Councillor Fordham to address the Committee.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that following presentations at the last General Purposes Committee meeting by members of the public and discussion with the Stafford Borough Council Cabinet Member for Leisure and Head of Operations about the development proposals for Westbridge Park and impact on Alleyne's Academy, Borough Councillors had asked Officers to meet with stakeholders and those organising the town's festivals to find a mutually acceptable solution to any issues.

Councillor Fordham understands from both stakeholders and Officers that constructive meetings have taken place and that more meetings will follow.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that a meeting had taken place between Town Councillors (himself and Councillor Kenney), Staffordshire Highways representatives, Stafford Borough Safety Officers and Staffordshire Police to discuss traffic movements in the High Street and the dangers presented to pedestrians.

As a result of the meetings plans have been devised to roll out a number of initiatives to improve the situation. The interventions (which will happen regularly and not be one offs) will be co-ordinated between Borough Council officers, Highways officers and the Police.

The Chairman invited Councillor Leason to address the Committee.

Councillor Leason advised the Committee that the Economic and Planning Committee at its last meeting had discussed the Planning Department and various problems it was encountering. He will submit a report to the Town Council with the details.

Councillor Leason said that following a meeting with Borough Officers the Food and Drink Festival Committee will be moving the Food and Drink Festival forward to July in 2022 due to the work beginning in Westbridge Park in the autumn.

The Chairman informed the Committee that he wished to change the order of the agenda so that budget overview (agenda item 9) followed Stone Heritage Centre (agenda item 16). The budget overview item would remain a public report.

GP22/128 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP22/129 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2 November 2021 (Minute Numbers GP22/101 – GP22/117), be approved as a correct record.
- b) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16 November 2021 (Minute Numbers GP22/118 – GP22/122), be approved as a correct record.

GP22/130 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Estates Sub-Committee held on 16 November 2021 (Minute Numbers EST22/009 – EST22/017), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers EST22/013 and EST22/017 be adopted.
- b) Management Sub-Committee held on 16 November 2021 (Minute Numbers MAN22/015 – MAN22/023), that the draft minutes be noted.

* 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.

GP22/131 **Provision of Hot Drinks**

The Committee considered the provision of hot drinks at Council and Committee meetings and concluded that it would like to have hot drinks to be available in the Council Chamber for attendees of meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Committee asks the Town Clerk to make the necessary arrangements to make hot drinks available in the Council Chamber.

GP22/132 **Town Council Payments**

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

GP22/133 **Update from Working Groups:**

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

It was reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had not met.

Heritage Centre Steering Committee

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre Steering Committee had not met but a full report would be given on the Heritage Centre later in the meeting.

Engagement with Young People

Councillor Mrs Davies advised the Committee that the Engagement with Young People Working Group would be arranging a meeting at the beginning of the New Year.

GP22/134 **To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council**

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that the next meeting would be held in the New Year.

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a new committee of Stone ATC had been elected at the Annual General Meeting on 9 November 2021.

Councillor Davies said that at a meeting on 30 November 2021 Stone ATC was reported to be in good shape with new members and a strong Civilian Welfare Committee that was better able to support the Squadron.

The Squadron's usual needs are money for the minibus etc, and they have various ideas for raising cash to support that.

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 no formal meeting had taken place but there had been an informal meeting between officers and the Newsletter who is

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suggesting they can write an article to promote the Group and recruit some new members.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney and Councillor Mrs Davies advised the Committee that they had attended a meeting with Trustees where a discussion had taken place on repairs to the lock keeper's house.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Mrs Davies advised the Committee that she and Councillor Mrs Hood had attended a meeting of the Stone Community Hub Liaison Group where a progress update had been given and the Hub seemed to be doing very well.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green was not available to provide a report.

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

GP22/135 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 items of business covered by minutes GP22/136 and GP22/137 below.

GP22/136 Confidential Minutes and Recommendations of Sub-Committee

- a) Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 November 2021, Minute Numbers EST22/009, EST22/016 and EST22/017.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the draft minutes
- ii. To approve the recommendations contained in Minute Number EST22/017.

GP22/137 Stone Heritage Centre

The Committee considered the report* of the Town Clerk (distributed with the agenda for the meeting) detailing the current position on the proposed Stone Heritage Centre.

RESOLVED: That the Committee directs the Steering Committee to retain the first floor of the Heritage Centre and asks that it gives due consideration to the effects of the layout of the building.

RESOLVED: That the Committee supports the costs for the Heritage Centre contained in the Town Clerk's report for inclusion in the budget recommendations to the Council.

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The open session of the meeting recommenced for the next item on the agenda.

GP22/138 Budget 2021-22 to 2023-24 Overview

The Committee considered the report* of the Town Clerk (which was distributed with the agenda for the meeting).

RESOLVED: To note the standstill budget position for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 and the issues related to setting the precept.

RESOLVED: That each sub-committee considers its financial needs for the next three years and reports back to the General Purposes Committee on 25th January 2022 with its budget proposals.

CHAIRMAN

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