

Stone Town Council – Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in St Michael's Suite at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on Tuesday 4 January 2022

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

Officers: Mr L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: Councillor T. Kelt

ABSENT: Councillors: I. Fordham, M. Green, R. Kenney and P. Leason

TTP22/026 Apologies

Councillor: I. Fordham, M. Green, R. Kenney and P. Leason

TTP22/027 Declarations of Interest, Requests for Dispensations, and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None received

TTP22/028 Representations from Members of the Public

None

TTP22/029 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on the 19 October 2021 (Minute Numbers TTP22/018 – TTP22/025), were approved as a correct record.

TTP22/030 Christmas Lights 2021

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that the Town Council's Christmas Lighting contractor, Christmas Plus, had done a fantastic job and the lights in the town were successful.

Walton residents were disappointed that the switching on of the lights at the shops had been delayed. This had mostly been down to storm Arwen which had hindered the work of Christmas Plus (who work countrywide) preventing a swift response following receipt of planning approval.

* 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 Chairman reported on the Christmas Lights Switch-On which went very well and everyone appeared to enjoy themselves. The event was well supported and the three schools who attended were fabulous, producing a fantastic sound. Sam the compere was brilliant, and the night went very smoothly given the concerns about Covid-19.

The Walton Lights provided a pretty display in the end and the Town Council did its absolute best. The boarding around the shops was so fragile that Christmas Plus was unable to fix anything too heavy or demanding on the structure.

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Sub-Committee that she was disappointed that at Walton Roundabout the trees in front of Kenilworth Court had not been dressed as they had been over the previous two years. She said the High Street however looked magnificent and thanked all the people who assisted in putting the Christmas trees up. The Town Council's markets/electrical contractor was also acknowledged as having done a great job.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that Christmas Plus was keen to get feedback on what people thought about Walton Lights. He said that a review meeting would be held in the near future. The plans for next year would need to include re-wrapping the Plane tree.

The Sub-Committee considered whether more Christmas lights were needed and concluded that there wouldn't be room to install more lights at Walton but it was hoped that additional balls/baubles could be installed on the Plane tree.

TTP22/031 Calendar of Events 2022

The Sub-Committee considered its plans for Town Council events in 2022 which included confirming the dates for longstanding annual events and looking at new events that could be developed.

The current arrangements for events are:

- St Georges Day – 23 April 2022
- Christmas lights – 17 November 2022
- Music Festival – 9 July 2022
- Stone by the sea – Provisionally in mid-August (date to be set)

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that this was the time for Stone to come back from the pandemic, marking the beginning of a new era and an opportunity to give local people and visitors something new. She asked Members if they would give consideration to ideas for new events that could be held in the town.

The Sub-Committee acknowledged the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June and the opening of Crown Wharf theatre and Heritage Centre later this year.

The Sub-Committee also acknowledged that it was important not to divert all attention to the opening of the theatre but to maintain some focus on events in the High Street. It

* 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.

was agreed that exciting times were ahead as a lot of people were keen to enjoy themselves.

TTP22/032 Signage

The Sub-Committee considered the retitling of the craft and collectables market and noted that this item was in accordance with minute TTP22/024 where Alleyne's Academy should be approached regarding the design of a new promotional sign.

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that there was a need to have smart and correct market signs and to dress the town in readiness for future events, including the upcoming Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that he would prefer to engage with Alleyne's Academy when it had been decided whether the Craft & Collectibles market would be retitled.

The Chairman suggested briefing the school on what the sign is for and asking students to come up with their design(s) along with any suggestions for renaming the market.

Although no prize will be awarded for the winning design (as more than one idea might be used in combination) the Town Council would offer the winners publicity.

TTP22/033 Markets

The Sub Committee considered matters related to the Town Markets.

The Sub-Committee reported that the markets were improving and stallholders were enjoying coming to Stone. The benefits of markets in adding atmosphere and vibrancy to a town were acknowledged.

The Sub-Committee suggested that a campaign be developed to get new market traders to come in to town and acknowledged the good work the Assistant Town Clerk was doing in recruiting new people and getting publicity out there.

Following the pandemic it was suggested a lot of people now working from home are looking to sell their wares on a market.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the Town Council operated a lower wind speed threshold to the Borough Council and the merits of this were discussed.

TTP22/034 Budget 2022-23 – 2024-25

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk* (issued with the agenda for the meeting) which considered the level of budget that the Sub-Committee may wish to recommend to the General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 25 January 2022 for the services under its control.

* 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 Sub-Committee reviewed the standstill budget and the amounts included for each service. It also considered other areas of growth or savings to be taken into account when setting the budget for 2022-23 and future years.

The Sub-Committee considered whether it wished to recommend to the General Purposes Committee an additional budget specifically for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee following the advice of the Town Clerk that there was no specific provision in the budget and costs would otherwise need to be met from the existing Tourism & Town Promotion events budget (which would limit the Town Council's funding to do other things).

RECOMMENDED: That the budget figures included in the Clerks report are accepted by the General Purposes Committee with the additional budgetary provision of £5,000 made available for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

TTP22/035 Reports from Working Groups

The Chairman invited the Working Groups to address the Sub-Committee:

Remembrance Plaques Working Group

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that Oak Tree Farm was not quite back to operating as normal.

Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that he had received a very kind offer from another researcher to assist him in finding the addresses of the soldiers (commemorated on the war memorial) who served in World War 2.

Councillor Mrs Davies advised the Sub-Committee that she has monitored the condition of some of her ceramics that have been outdoors (in the garden) over three winters and noted the paint hadn't degraded.

Promotion of Stone Working Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Working Group had not met.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Working Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Working Group would be arranging a meeting in the near future.

Market Strategy (Market Pricing & Strategy)

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that this working group had been transferred from the Estates Sub-Committee.

The Chairman said that a working group meeting would be arranged to establish that the group still had a useful purpose.

Chairman

* 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.