

# Stone Town Council – Management 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 J. Davies in the Chair and  
Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs L. Davies and T. Kelt

Officers: Mr L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

By Chairman’s invitation: Councillor Mrs K. Dawson

**ABSENT:** Councillor: Mrs A. Burgess, I. Fordham, M. Green, R. Kenney and J. Powell

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**MAN22/024** Apologies

Councillor: Mrs A. Burgess, I. Fordham, M. Green, R. Kenney and J. Powell

**MAN22/025** Declarations of Interest, Requests for Dispensations, and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None received

**MAN22/026** Representations from Members of the Public

None received

**MAN22/027** Minutes

That the Minutes of the Management Sub-Committee Meeting held on the 16 November 2021 (Minute Numbers MAN22/015 – MAN22/023), be approved as a correct record.

**MAN22/028** Budget 2022-23 – 2024-25

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk\* 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.

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.

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\* 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 Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the administration budget was overspent this year due to an IT refresh but the overspend would be rolled forward to the new year (2022-23).

He also confirmed that the figure for the by election in 2020 had been received from Stafford Borough Council and the cost was £7,800 (in round figures).

The Town Clerk asked the Sub-Committee to consider whether it wished to retain the grants budget at its current level as there had been very little demand for funding from charities and community groups recently.

The Sub-Committee concluded that it would like to recommend retention of the grants budget at the current level and encourage organisations to apply for the funding opportunity.

Councillor Mrs Dawson asked whether the Town Council's budget would include provision for youth engagement and the Town Clerk confirmed that the project had not been included within the budget but there was some margin in the miscellaneous budget as the costs were anticipated to be small in scale.

RECOMMENDED: That the budget figures included in the Clerk's report are accepted by the General Purposes Committee.

**MAN22/029 Grants Policy**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk\* which had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting. The current grants policy had also been enclosed with the agenda.

The Chairman reminded the Sub-Committee that it had at a previous meeting considered its policy for the payment of grants to larger organisations after identifying unintentional ambiguity and had asked the Town Clerk to undertake an analysis exercise based on experience of previously agreed grant applications to produce some proposals for revised criteria.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposals in the Town Clerk's report are accepted as revisions to the Grant Aid Policy for the 2022-23 financial year.

**MAN22/030 Updates**

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to provide updates on the following:

- a. Website/Facebook

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that a number of changes

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had been made to the Town Council's website over the previous two years (in the form of new content), but due to a number of issues and insufficient maintenance by the County, the time may have come to consider a review.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that it may wish to consider the development of a new website over the coming year.

The Sub-Committee suggested that at the relevant time the Town Clerk produces some proposals for a review of the website with associated costs.

b. Service Continuity Plan

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the IT update had taken place in December and the new equipment was operational. He said that the system was much easier to use remotely, and the security much improved. There are some features which are not yet up and running and it will be some time before all parts of the old system have been set up on the new system.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the IT updates should considerably improve continuity as they provide the ability to work from anywhere.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the telephone system was fully operational, and all staff have been taking calls from the office and home (on mobile phones) with no difference to the customer/caller experience. There are some details that need to be improved but the system is versatile and leading-edge technology.

The Sub-Committee concluded that it was good for the people of Stone to know that the investment made in the Town Council's IT systems would pay dividends in efficiency and provide resilience to challenges that might come along.

The Town Clerk was thanked for his work on the IT advancements.

**Chairman**

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