

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on Tuesday 17 May 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and  
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham,  
M. Green, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason (from Minute Number GP23/004),  
J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and S. Walley

Officers: L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

**ABSENT:** Councillors: Mrs A. Burgess, M. Hatton, J. Hickling and R. Townsend

The Chairman and Town Councillors welcomed Councillor Green back to the Council with a round of applause, following his period of absence due to ill health.

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**GP23/001**    **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs A. Burgess and R. Townsend.

**GP23/002**    **Declarations of Interests**

None

**GP23/003**    **Requests for Dispensations**

None

**GP23/004**    **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

**County Councillor Mrs J. Hood**

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

**Church Street**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that she would be visiting Church Street with Officers from the Highways Department on 23 May 2022 to look at whether double yellow lines could be extended at the top section (by the apartments). This follows residents' concerns that vehicles were being parked on both sides of the street, restricting and making access difficult (especially to emergency services).

**Recycling Facility**

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that Stone Traders were unhappy that the Stone Recycling Centre was turning them away when, due to the open borders policy, other users from the wider surrounding areas were successfully able to deposit their waste items at the facility.

### Potholes

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that the Highways Department were doing a good job in filling potholes but were still working through them.

She asked that Councillors encourage residents to report their Highways issues/faults through the online 'Report It' system, and if they are not online, Councillors could easily undertake the task on their behalf.

Councillor Mrs Hood read an email from the Highways Department explaining the current position on outstanding repairs to Walton Roundabout. Officers are aware of its poor condition and have included it on the Forward Structural Maintenance Programme along with the two roundabouts at the junction with Newcastle Road and Whitebridge Lane. Walton roundabout has been identified as a high priority along with other locations but there is no specific funding for it in the 2022-23 programme. There is however £3.2m identified for structural maintenance in the County which will be spent on a decision led basis by Cabinet members.

Councillor Mrs Hood reassured Councillors that she will continue to pursue the matter but there are too few resources, and the job will be expensive with four roads needing to be closed and not just the one.

Councillor Mrs Hood said she will also be looking at the installation of yellow lines on Whitebridge Road and a couple of other areas.

### **County Councillor I. Parry**

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

Councillor Green requested to know the date when County Councillor Parry last attended a meeting of the Town Council.

### **GP23/005 To receive the report of Borough Councillors**

The Chairman invited Councillor Fordham to address the Committee.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that Councillor Philip Leason had been installed as Mayor of Stafford Borough at the weekend which was a lovely occasion. A good Council meeting was followed by an excellent procession, an interesting multi faith service and most impressive march past. He said the day had reflected well on Philip and on the town.

Councillor Fordham and Committee Members wished Councillor Leason well for the next year.

The Chairman invited Councillor Leason to address the Committee.

Councillor Leason thanked Councillor Fordham for his report.

Councillor Leason advised the Committee that he would be inviting Councillors, Town Council staff and their partners to a reception in the Mayor's Parlour on the 23 June 2022 at 7:00pm. The details will be circulated shortly.

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that Stone Borough Councillors had been appointed to positions of responsibility at the Borough Council. She would be chairing the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Walley was appointed as the Walton Community Centre representative.

**GP23/006 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

**GP23/007 Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 April 2022 (Minute Numbers GP22/181 – GP22/197), be approved as a correct record.

**GP23/008 Minutes of Sub-Committees**

There were no sub-committee minutes for consideration.

**GP23/009 Sub-Committee Terms of Reference**

The Committee considered the terms of reference for the Council's Sub-Committees, a copy of which had been attached to the electronic version of the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference for Sub-Committees are accepted with the following wording replacing the current wording at paragraph 3.13:

To consider matters of Council policy related to environmental services. Whilst the scope of these services is likely to change from time to time, at the date of approval of these terms of reference this consisted of:

- a. Crown Meadow
- b. Grounds maintenance
- c. Allotments
- d. Environmental damage issues (e.g., climate change, waste control, pollution, biodiversity, green spaces)

**GP23/010 To appoint the Members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the following Sub-Committees:**

RESOLVED: To appoint seven members to each Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022-23.

RESOLVED: To appoint the following Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members to the Sub Committees for the municipal year 2022-23:

**Tourism & Town Promotion**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Vice Chairman: Councillor C. Thornicroft

Members: Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, P. Leason and S. Walley

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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.

### **Environment**

Chairman: Councillor R. Townsend  
Vice Chairman: Councillor T. Kelt  
Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Hatton and P. Leason

### **Estates**

Chairman: Councillor A. Best  
Vice Chairman: Councillor Mrs K. Dawson  
Members: Councillors: I. Fordham, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood and C. Thornicroft

### **Management**

Chairman: Councillor J. Davies  
Vice Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham  
Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson. T. Kelt and S. Walley

### **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood  
Members: Councillors: I. Fordham, J. Davies  
Co-opted Members:

### **Mayor's Charity**

Chairman: Councillor J. Powell  
Members: Councillors: A. Best. J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, Mrs J. Hood and R. Kenney

In addition, the Town Mayor and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee are ex-officio members of all committees and sub-committees where they are not members in their own right, as set out in Standing Orders.

## **GP23/011 Appointment to Outside Bodies**

The Committee considered appointments as the Council's representatives on outside bodies:

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments of Council representatives on outside bodies:

**Stone ATC** (Mayor plus 1 member)  
Councillors: Town Mayor and J. Davies

**Age Concern Stone & District** (2 members)  
Councillors: J. Davies and C. Thornicroft

**Stafford & Stone Access Group** (1 Member)  
Councillor T. Kelt

**Trustees of the Town Hall Charity** (all members)  
All Councillors

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**Stone Community Hub Group**

Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood and J. Powell

**Stone Area Parish Liaison Group**

Councillor J. Davies

NOTE: Current membership of the following bodies will continue until the stated dates, or until retirement by an individual member, even if the members cease to be members of the Council.

**Stone Common Plot Trustees** (four-year term)

Currently Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt and R. Kenney (all members' terms run to May 2023)

**Richard Vernon Trust** (four-year term)

Currently J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies and J. Powell (all members' terms run to 2023)

**SPCA Executive Committee** (one member elected for a two-year term)

Councillor M. Green (to December 2023)

**GP23/012**    **Town Council Surgeries**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk\* (which had been attached to the agenda for the meeting).

The General Purposes Committee had previously considered a Members Item and a follow-on report presented by Councillor Walley, asking the Committee to consider the introduction of Town Council surgeries or 'residents Engagement Events'.

The Committee resolved on 5 April 2022 that it wanted to have three once a month trial surgeries at the Frank Jordan Centre and Councillor Kenney, Councillor Walley and the Town Clerk had been charged with considering the detail for the engagement events and reporting back to the Committee.

The Town Clerk went through the report and the Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed model that had been presented.

RESOLVED:

The Committee resolved to:

- a. Support the proposals in the report for the surgery trial period.
- b. Ask Town Councillors to provide their names and availability to the Town Council office by 24 May 2022 in order that a rota can be drawn for three x once monthly trials, to be held at the Frank Jordan Centre.
- c. Authorise the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, to make any changes required to ensure the effective operation of the trial.

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**GP23/013     Town Council Payments**

RESOLVED: To note the list\* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 31 March 2022.

**GP23/014     Update from Working Groups:**

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Councillor Mrs Hood reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had not met.

**Stone Heritage Centre Steering Committee**

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre Steering Committee had not met as tender documents were awaited with the hope of a draft copy being available next week.

**Engagement with Young People**

Councillor Mrs Dawson informed the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

**Queen's Platinum Jubilee Steering Group**

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that the Group was making excellent progress with its plans for The Big Lunch. Lots of fun and musical entertainment was planned with a number of bands, food stands and hopefully a bar. The event will be free at entry and opened by Florence Brass Band.

**GP23/015     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 a meeting had taken place on 27 April with a good selection of parishes represented. There continued to be some disillusionment with the Borough Council on various issues.

At the next meeting in July, the Liaison Group is hoping that a representative from the Safer Roads Partnership will be in attendance to give a presentation on Community Speed Watch.

**Stone ATC**

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a very good meeting had taken place on 3 May 2022 with the Civilian Welfare Committee, consisting mainly of parents of existing cadets, who were doing an enthusiastic and competent job.

The Squadron is now back up to speed after the Covid-19 Pandemic. Their biggest issue currently is that their minibus has had to be scrapped and different sources of income are being investigated.

Councillor Davies advised that morale was high which was good to see.

**Age Concern Stone & District**

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

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### **Stafford & Stone Access Group**

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting had taken place on 20 April and most of the discussion had been on how to spend the money that was going to Stafford and whether access details could be included in the way the town was developed. There was some discussion on the survey with regards to access at Stone Station Platform (which was currently underway).

### **Stone Common Plot Trustees**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that the Stone Common Plot AGM had taken place on 27 April 2022 and a number of people had attended.

A number of new trustees were appointed to the board, and it was good to hear that only one farmer had brought his cattle to the Plot, cutting down the risk of tuberculosis. The only downside reported was that the footfall had increased to an enormous number of people during the pandemic, which didn't seem to be waning.

Councillor Green pointed out that there are access issues for disabled people when holding an AMG in the Council Chamber and suggested that this be considered in future years.

### **Stone Community Hub Liaison Group**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meeting had been held.

### **SPCA Executive Committee**

Councillor Green had not been able to attend the meetings.

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

### **GP23/016 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.

### **GP23/017 Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 April 2022, Minute Numbers GP22/181, GP22/196 and GP22/197 be approved.

**CHAIRMAN**