

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on Tuesday 7 June 2022

PRESENT: Councillor I. Fordham in the Chair, and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green, M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood,
T. Kelt, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft, R. Townsend and S. Walley

Officers: R. Mincher and Mrs T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, J. Hickling, R. Kenney and
P. Leason

GP23/018 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, J. Hickling,
R. Kenney and P. Leason

The Town Clerk also apologised for being unable to attend the meeting.

GP23/019 **Declarations of Interests**

None

GP23/020 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP23/021 **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 had visited Church Street
with Councillor Walley following his concerns about extending the double yellow
lines. The yellow lines had been a suggested solution to residents' concerns about
the restricted vehicular access in Church Street, caused by on street parking.

Both Councillor Walley and the Highways Officer at the County were happy with
the proposal which has been confirmed will be going ahead.

Tilling Drive

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that, following a site visit to Tilling
Drive with the Highways Officer, it had been agreed that double yellow lines would
be installed on both corners of Friars Avenue (which is extremely congested at
school times with cars parked up on the pavements).

Double yellow lines will also be installed on Whitebridge Lane (on the bend, near to Come Into Play).

Walton Roundabout

Councillor Mrs Hood was pleased to advise the Committee that the County Highways Department had allocated specific funding for repair work at Walton Roundabout. The work should be done by the end of the year.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

At the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee, Councillor Green had requested to know the date when County Councillor Parry had last attended a meeting of the Town Council.

Councillor Green asked that it be noted that the last meeting attended by Councillor Parry was on Tuesday 7 November 2017.

GP23/022 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

There were no reports from Borough Councillors on this occasion.

GP23/023 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP23/024 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 17 May 2022 (Minute Numbers GP23/001 – GP23/017), be approved as a correct record.

GP23/025 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 24 May 2022 (Minute Numbers TTP23/001 – TTP23/007), that the draft minutes be noted.
- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 24 May 2022 (Minute Numbers ENV23/001 – ENV23/010), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number ENV23/010 be adopted.
- c) Mayor's Charity Sub-Committee held on 24 May 2022 (Minute Numbers MC23/001 – MC23/005), that the draft minutes and the resolutions of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers MC23/004 and MC23/005 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.

GP23/026 **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 Common Plot Trustees (four-year term)

Councillor C. Thornicroft (for a four-year term ending in May 2026)

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

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

GP23/027 **Town Market Charges**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) exploring the Council's options for responding to an increase in charges made by the contractor employed by the Town Council to erect, remove and store its marquees.

The Town Clerk had identified three options to deal with the issue:

- a. Do nothing and cover the additional cost by approving a supplementary estimate from reserves.
- b. Stop the provision of marquees, and only rent pitches to traders with their own facilities.
- c. Increase the income received from market rentals to cover the cost of the contractor's increase.

The Committee considered the three options and discounted option b. as the Town Council's own marquees were smart visually and provided a branded presence in the High Street.

The Committee expressed a mixture of views about whether a price increase should be applied by the Town Council and whether the price increase could be phased.

The Committee acknowledged that good contractors were hard to find and that there had been no price increase by the marquee contractor for ten years and the increase in charges represented a 20% increase over that period.

The Committee expressed the importance of communicating to market stall holders that the price increases were the result of a contractor price increase and not a Town Council decision to increase the profit margin.

RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to the request for increased prices received from the Council's marquee contractor.

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RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to increase the charges to market stall traders with effect from 1 July 2022, and as set out in the Town Clerk's report (with the prices listed below):

	Current Charge	New Charge
Stall with Marquee	£33.50	£39.00
Stall with Marquee – Farmers' Market Day	£50.50	£56.00

GP23/028 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 30 April 2022.

The Committee commented on the ongoing costs of removing bullrushes and asked for clarification on the work undertaken.

The Committee requested further clarification and justification for the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association annual subscription and the value it brought the Town Council.

The Committee commented on the good value obtained from the hired Town Crier costume as Councillor Davies had performed the Town Crier role splendidly during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Proclamation/celebrations.

GP23/029 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 Group

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre Steering Group had not met.

Engagement with Young People

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

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Steering Group

Councillor Green thanked the Steering Group for the work it had undertaken in organising a number of celebratory events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2 and Sunday 5 June 2022.

GP23/030 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 July when a representative from the Safer Roads Partnership would be in attendance to talk about Community Speed Watch.

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Councillor Davies said that he would like to explore with other local councils their processes for dealing with grant aid, at the next meeting.

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of Stone ATC was taking place on this evening (7 June 2022) and a report would be given at the next meeting.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that no meeting of Age Concern Stone & District had taken place.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that no meeting of Stafford & Stone Access Group had taken place.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meeting of the Stone Common Plot Trustees had taken place.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Powell advised the Committee that no meeting had been held by Stone Community Hub Liaison Group.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green had not been able to attend SPCA Executive Committee meetings (due to ill health).

CHAIRMAN