



Stone
Town Council

Town Clerk
Les Trigg

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18 January 2023

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 24 JANUARY 2023 at 7:05pm**, or upon the rising of the Environment Sub-Committee, if later.

The agenda is set out below and I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

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

AGENDA

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations Received.**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
 - a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Management Sub-Committee held on 25 October 2022, Minute Numbers MAN23/001 – MAN23/008 (attached).

5. **Budget 2023-24 – 2025-26**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached).

6. **Updates:**

- a) Website/Facebook
- b) Service Continuity Plan

7. **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.

8. **Confidential Minutes**

To confirm as a correct record the confidential minutes of the Management Sub-Committee, held on 25 October 2022, Minute Numbers MAN23/001 and MAN23/008 (attached).

9. **Staffing Matters**

To consider an update from the Town Clerk.

Will any Councillors who wish to speak at this meeting, but are not members of the Sub-Committee, please inform the Chairman before the start of the meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Management Sub-Committee Meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of this scheme are displayed in the Council's notice boards and website.

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 25 October 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J. Davies in the Chair and
Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham T. Kelt, R. Kenney, J Powell
and S. Walley

Officers: L. Trigg

By Chairman’s invitation: Councillors: Mrs J. Hood and C. Thornicroft

ABSENT: Councillor: Mrs L. Davies

MAN23/001 Apologies

Councillor: Mrs L. Davies

MAN23/002 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

None received

MAN23/003 Representations from Members of the Public

None received

MAN23/004 Minutes

That the Minutes of the Management Sub-Committee Meeting held on the 4 January 2022, (Minute Numbers MAN22/024 – MAN22/030), be approved as a correct record.

MAN23/005 Grant Aid – Eligibility Criteria

The newly adopted grant aid eligibility criteria states that grants will normally only be paid to “Organisations with an annual turnover less than £100,000 who hold less than 12 months’ net expenditure (excluding grants) in reserves. Reserves in this case excludes those which are legally earmarked to specific spending and cannot be used to support the proposals for which grant aid has been sought.”

This has resulted in virtually all applications falling outside the Council’s criteria. It was suggested by the Town Clerk that this is changed to

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“Organisations with an annual turnover less than £100,000 who hold less than 12 months’ expenditure in reserves. Reserves in this case excludes those which are legally earmarked to specific spending and cannot be used to support the proposals for which grant aid has been sought, and expenditure excludes spending from such reserves.”

During discussions it was clarified that applications which failed to meet the criteria would still be brought forward to the General Purposes Committee for consideration, but it would not be discussed unless a Committee member moved a resolution, which was also seconded, to waive the criteria and approve a grant in the specific case of that application.

RECOMMENDED: That the suggested change to the criteria is adopted.

MAN23/006 Updates

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

a. Website/Facebook

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that an interactive map had been added to the Council’s website, which would allow users to access information such as the location of the conservation areas and details of the town’s listed buildings, as well as ward boundaries and other local information.

He further advised that a Council social media presence and a major redevelopment of the website would be tasks for the Events and Marketing Officer, once that post has been agreed to be filled.

b. Service Continuity Plan

The Town Clerk advised that significant steps had been taken to improve service continuity with the implementation of the new IT and telephone systems, but that there was not yet a fully documented plan.

The Chairman suggested that he discuss this with the Clerk, with a view to producing a documented plan.

The Sub-Committee also discussed the recent successful implementation of its “Operation Headstone” plan and noted that the plan will now be reviewed and updated to take into account lessons learned.

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MAN23/007 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.

MAN23/008 Staffing Issues

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk, setting out a number of staffing issues that had arisen and recommendations for resolving them.

RECOMMENDED: The recommendations in the report were agreed for recommendation to the General Purposes Committee.

Chairman

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Introduction

1. The Management Sub-Committee considers, on behalf of the General Purposes Committee, a number of the budgets under the control of that Committee. The purpose of this report is to determine the level of budget for these services that the Sub-Committee wishes to recommend to the General Purposes Committee budget meeting.

Background

2. The General Purposes Committee on 13th December 2022 considered the standstill budget for 2023-24 and indicative figures for the next two years based on a number of assumptions contained within the report.
3. The standstill budget was prepared on the basis that all Council services will continue at broadly their current level. Inflation has not, however, been included in Sub-Committee budgets beyond 2022-23. A separate estimate of inflation beyond this date has been made across the whole of the Council and will be considered by the General Purposes Committee.
4. The figures for this Sub-Committee on the above basis are:

Actual		Budget	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget
2021-22		2022-23	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
£		£	£	£	£	£
5,729	Grants	8,300	8,300	8,300	8,300	8,300
147,045	Salaries & Employment Costs	183,000	169,800	199,700	204,500	202,900
5,393	Accommodation	5,510	5,470	5,470	5,470	5,470
6,342	Insurances	7,040	6,620	7,000	7,000	7,000
35,969	Administration	18,900	20,250	38,250	28,250	28,250
1,044	Audit & Legal Fees	5,240	5,550	1,550	1,550	1,550
7,882	Town Council Elections	-	-	30,000	-	-
2,604	Allowances - Mayor & Deputy Mayor	3,190	3,190	3,190	3,190	3,190
307	Regalia & Presentations	500	3,100	500	500	500
2,238	Civic Dinner & Hospitality	3,500	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300
1,623	Remembrance Sunday & War Memorials	2,060	2,000	1,800	1,800	1,800
2,027	Miscellaneous	3,000	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900
-51	Interest	-50	-980	-1,500	-500	-500
218,151	TOTAL	240,190	229,500	300,460	266,260	264,660

5. In respect of the figures above, Members should note:
- a. The Grants budget is currently underspent. Any sum remaining unspent at the end of the financial year will be rolled-over and added to the budget for spending in 2023-24.
 - b. The Salaries and Employment Costs budget is forecast to underspend in the current year due vacant posts. The budget for 2023-24 and subsequent years includes, from July 2023, the cost of a new part-time post of Heritage Centre Manager
 - c. The Insurance budget includes an estimate of the additional premium in respect of the Heritage Centre.
 - d. The administration budget is currently overspent due to the cost of refreshing the Council's ICT provision in December 2021 partly being carried forward into this year, but this overspending will be rolled forward to be met from underspendings in future years. The 2023-24 figure includes £10,000 for the cost of replacing the Council's iPads.
 - e. The audit and legal fees budget includes an increase in external audit fees following the award of a new national contract, and a forecast increase in internal audit fees due to the need to award a new local contract. Neither of these fees have previously increased for some time.
 - f. The 2023-24 budget provides for the cost of the May 2023 election. Stafford Borough Council will not provide an estimate of their likely charge for the election, and have said that the actual figure will hopefully be available in December 2023 or January 2024. The figure included is therefore an estimate based on previous charges. No provision has been made for future by-elections, so should any be required the costs would need to be met from reserves.
 - g. The increase in the current year's forecast for the Regalia & Presentations budget relates to the purchase of Past Mayor and Past Deputy Mayor badges.
 - h. The Miscellaneous budget includes the cost of providing the infrastructure for the Stone Helpline. The budget figures assume that the Helpline will continue to be supported by the Council.
 - i. The interest budget provides for increased income following the recent rise in interest rates.
 - j. Other budgets have been provided at broadly current levels.
6. As reported to the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 13th December, the standstill budget is just the starting point for the budget process. Members will want to review this standstill budget and the amounts provisionally included. In addition, there are likely to be other areas where Members will want to undertake new developments or stop/change the things that the Council is doing now.

7. The Sub-Committee is asked to consider the standstill budget and any areas of growth or savings which they would want to be taken into account in setting the budget for 2023-24 and future years.

Recommendations

8. Members are asked to recommend their proposed budget for consideration by the General Purposes Committee.