

**Town Clerk**

Les Trigg

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15 Station Road

STONE

ST15 8JP

1 February 2023

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on **TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2023 at 7:00pm**, for consideration of the matters itemised in the following agenda.

I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg  
Town Clerk

#### **AGENDA**

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Requests for Dispensations Received**
4. **To receive a report from County Councillors representing Stone Town**
  - County Councillor Mrs J. Hood
  - County Councillor I. Parry
5. **To receive a report from Borough Councillors representing Stone Town**
6. **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.

7. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 13 December 2022, Minute No's GP23/128 – GP23/147 (attached).

8. **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 17 January 2023, Minute Numbers TTP23/027 – TTP23/036 (attached)
  - i. To consider the draft minutes
  - ii. To consider the Recommendations contained in Minute Numbers TTP23/032, TTP23/033 and TTP23/034 (NOTE: the recommendations in Minute Number TTP23/035 will be considered as part of agenda item 11)
- b) Estates Sub-Committee held on 17 January 2023, Minute Numbers EST23/028 – EST23/035 (attached)
  - i. To consider the draft minutes (NOTE: the recommendations in Minute Number EST23/032 will be considered as part of agenda item 11)

9. **Environment Sub-Committee – Budget 2023-24 to 2025-26**

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

10. **Management Sub-Committee – Budget 2023-24 to 2025-26**

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

11. **To Determine the 2023-24 to 2025-26 Budget for recommendation to the Council**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached) and budget recommendations related to Sub-Committees.

12. **Grants to Local Organisations**

To consider the following requests for grants from local organisations which meet the criteria within the Council's grants policy:

- a. **Organisation: Stone Choral Society**  
**Amount Requested:** £250  
**Reason:** To assist in determining the feasibility and popularity of a series of talks/masterclasses (running until June) which would if successful be able to run again.
- b. **Organisation: Stone Outward Division Rangers**  
**Amount Requested:** £500  
**Reason:** To support the costs of an increased annual subscription fee and to access activities provided by the Division.
- c. **Organisation: Stone Lions Club**  
**Amount Requested:** £500  
**Reason:** Prostate testing

To consider the following requests for grants from local organisations which do not meet the criteria within the Council's grants policy:

NOTE: These applications do not meet the Council's approved grants criteria, so will not be considered unless a motion is moved and seconded for each application individually that the criteria is waived, and the application approved:

- d. **Organisation: Windmills Charity**  
**Amount Requested: £1,000**  
**Reason:** To support Memory making sessions and activities.
  - i. Amount of grant requested
  - ii Level of reserves

**13. Review of Standing Orders**

To undertake a review of the Council's Standing Orders.

By convention, consideration of the attached Standing Orders document will be deferred until the next meeting of this Committee. The document circulated has already been reviewed by the Clerk, who is not proposing any changes.

A copy of the Town Council's Standing Orders is attached to the electronic version of this agenda.

**14. Review of Financial Regulations**

To undertake a review of the Council's Financial Regulations.

By convention, consideration of the attached Financial Regulations document will be deferred until the next meeting of this Committee. The document circulated has already been reviewed by the Clerk, who is not proposing any changes.

A copy of the Town Council's Financial Regulations is attached to the electronic version of this agenda.

**15. Meeting Schedule for 2023-24**

To determine the Council's Meeting Schedule for the Year 2023-24 (attached).

**16. Past Consort Badges**

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

**17. Review of Staffordshire County Council Divisions**

To consider a Boundary Commission for England review of division boundaries for Staffordshire County Council.

For information on the Review, please see the following link: [Staffordshire County Council | LGBCE Site](#)

**18. Town Council Payments**

To receive a list of payments made by the Council during the period 1 to 31 December 2022 (attached).

**19. Update from Working Groups:**

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- b) Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group
- c) Engagement with Young People

**20. To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings as a representative of the Town Council**

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group – J. Davies (Notes attached)

Stone ATC – Town Mayor & J. Davies

Age Concern Stone & District – Cllrs J. Davies and C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group – Cllr T. Kelt

Stone Common Plot Trustees – Cllrs: Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney and C. Thornicroft

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Cllrs: Mrs L. Davies, Mrs J. Hood & J. Powell

SPCA Executive Committee – Cllr M. Green

Stone Traders' Group Directors Meeting – J. Davies, I. Fordham, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and S. Walley (Councillors attend on a rotating basis)

**21. 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.**

**22. Confidential Minutes**

To approve the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee held on 13 December 2022, Minute Numbers GP23/128, GP23/145, GP23/146 and GP23/147 (attached).

**23. To consider the Confidential Minutes and recommendations of the undermentioned Sub-Committee:**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 17 January 2023, Minute Numbers: EST23/028, EST23/034 and EST23/035 (attached)
  - i. To consider the Minutes

**24. Heritage Centre**

To consider an update on the Stone Heritage Centre building works tendering process and the appointment of a main contractor for this work.



Members of the public are welcome to attend the General Purposes Committee meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of the scheme are displayed in the Council's notice boards and website.

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in St Michael's Suite at the Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone, on Tuesday 13 December 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and  
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson,  
I. Fordham, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, C. Thornicroft, R. Townsend and S. Walley

Officers: L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

**ABSENT:** Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, M. Green, M. Hatton, J. Hickling, P. Leason and J. Powell  
(mayoral engagement)

### **GP23/128 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, M. Green, J. Hickling,  
P. Leason and J. Powell (mayoral engagement).

### **GP23/129 Declarations of Interests**

Councillor Davies declared a personal interest in agenda item 11a – Grants to Local  
Organisations: RAFA (Minute Reference: GP23/138 (a)).

### **GP23/130 Requests for Dispensations**

None

### **GP23/131 To receive the report of the County Councillors**

#### **County Councillor Mrs J. Hood**

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

Councillor Mrs Hood provided the Committee with updates on County matters  
relating to the town:

#### Walton Roundabout

Confirmation has been received from the Highways Department that the defective  
road surface on Walton Roundabout would be repaired in February 2023.

#### Placements for Children

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that full County Council (at its  
meeting last week) had discussed the entitlement by eligible families to free  
sporting and other activities for their children during the school holidays, and the  
shocking finding that 37% fail to turn up.

She pointed out that there are families in the town with full time working parents  
who are struggling financially but just fall short of the eligibility criteria for the  
service and are having to either find childcare or work from home (with the

\* 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.

associated pressures of keeping children occupied and provided with meals while they work).

Councillor Mrs Hood said that she had asked Councillor Mark Sutton, Cabinet member for Children and Young People, whether he could investigate the setting up of an absentee notification system so that families outside the scheme could access unused places. The cost of living is such that working families are needing to use food banks and the opportunity would take some pressure off them.

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

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

#### **GP23/132 To receive the report of Borough Councillors**

The Chairman (as a Borough Councillor) reminded the Committee that Stone had benefited from the Shared Prosperity Fund through monies awarded to the Scout & Guide Hut and Crown Wharf Theatre.

The Chairman acknowledged Town Councillors input in starting the ball rolling by allocating the Town Hall Charity Fund to Crown Wharf Theatre. The trustees had also worked very hard and there had been private donations and fundraising events. The £500,000 grant from Stafford Borough will enable the theatre project to be completed at an earlier date and to a higher specification.

The Chairman thanked Borough Council officers and the Cabinet for supporting the bid which will be a massive boost to the town.

Town Councillors were also thanked by Councillor Davies for their contribution to the project and the achievement of a long-held dream.

The Chairman invited Councillor Fordham to address the Committee.

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that Stafford Borough Council and Cannock Chase District Council had agreed to move to stage two of a shared council services arrangement. When complete (assumed to be in the next financial year), all services except housing and elections will be delivered on a shared basis.

There will be a seven-person executive team to head up the joint services, led by a single Chief Executive and two deputies.

The Chairman invited Councillor Mrs Hood to address the Committee.

Councillor Mrs Hood drew the Committee's attention to a map she had brought to the meeting illustrating the proposed redevelopment of Westbridge Park. She informed Members that she had felt privileged to be invited to join the Board as ward representative, providing the opportunity to draw from her knowledge of the area and contribute to the design of the scheme.

Councillor Mrs Hood said that to see the project come to fruition after all the hard work was excellent and she commended everyone who had been involved. The cross-party working had been good natured and pleasant with disagreements worked through and resolved.

\* 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.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that there were no separate facilities for children with special needs in the park's design as all facilities would be fully inclusive and accessible.

She suggested that Town Councillors look at the plan and report any design concerns to her for feeding back to the Board. She said the redevelopment work should begin in April and conclude by the end of 2023 with a fantastic facility in Stone.

**GP23/133 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

**GP23/134 Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 1 November 2022 (Minute Numbers GP23/100 – GP23/119, be approved as a correct record.
- b) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 15 November 2022 (Minute Numbers GP23/120 – GP23/127, be approved as a correct record.

**GP23/135 Minutes of Sub-Committees**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee held on 15 November 2022 (Minute Numbers EST23/020 – EST23/027), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST23/027 be adopted.
- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 15 November 2022 (Minute Numbers ENV23/020 – ENV23/028), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers ENV23/026 and ENV23/027 be adopted.

**GP23/136 Budget 2023-24 to 2025-26 – Overview**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk\* (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) commencing the process of examining the budget and precept level for the financial year 2023-24 for recommendation to the Council.

The Town Clerk reminded the Committee of the budget process which begins with the Committee's consideration of the overall position of the Council followed by each Sub-Committee considering the details of their budgets and any changes they might want to make. The budget details for all Sub-Committee would then be brought back together at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee for determination of the budget recommendation to the Council.

The Council in February will determine the budget and precept to be requested from Stafford Borough Council.

\* 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 Committee that the figures in the report set the scene for the budget preparation. They are based on a standstill position and represented the continuation of the Council's existing activity and policies.

The Town Clerk drew the Committee's attention to the major budget issue this year which was the high level of inflation, addressed in the report by taking inflation out of individual budgets and creating a separate single inflationary budget that could be reconsidered, changed and updated as needed.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that in addition to the precept the Town Council receives two grants from Stafford Borough, Local Council Tax Support Scheme Grant (added to the precept) and a Concurrent Allowances Grant which were both forecast to continue at the same values as last year.

RESOLVED:

- That the Committee notes the standstill budget position for 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 and the issues related to setting the Council Tax and precept.
- That each sub-committee is asked to consider its financial needs for the next three years and reports back to the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee on its budget proposals.

#### **GP23/137 Members Items**

##### **Councillor Jim Davies**

*"At the Tourism and Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting on 25 October 2022 (TTP23/021) I suggested as a future event in February 2023 the recognition of the 80th anniversary of the death of Flight Lieutenant R N Stubbs DFC DFM RAFVR. On 15 November 2022 I met with Rev Paul Kingman of Christ Church and Air Vice-Marshall Ray Pentland (a local resident). We agreed to hold a service of commemoration on Sunday 26 February 2023 at Christ Church. The event would be arranged by the Stone & District Branch of the Royal Air Forces Association in conjunction with Christ Church. Stone Town Council would be asked to recognise and support the event.*

*I ask the Town Council to resolve to give its official recognition to this commemoration of one of the Town's most decorated heroes of World War 2 and to provide assistance and support where possible."*

RESOLVED: That the Town Council supports the commemoration of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Flight Lieutenant R N Stubbs and provides assistance and support where possible.

#### **GP23/138 Grants to Local Organisations**

The Committee considered requests for grant aid from local organisations.

The following organisation meets the eligibility criteria within the Council's grants policy:

- a. Organisation: RAFA**  
**Amount Requested: £500**

\* 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.

**Reason:** To provide support for the commemoration of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the life and sacrifice of Flight Lieutenant R N Stubbs DFC DFM RAFVR

**RESOLVED:** To award a grant of £500 to RAFA.

The following organisation did not meet the criteria within the Council's grants policy and at the Committee's meeting on 1 November 2023 had asked that further clarification be obtained on the value of reserves earmarked for the repair of the roof to enable an accurate assessment of the effective level of reserves held, before the application was approved:

- b. **Organisation:** Walton Community Centre  
**Amount Requested:** £500  
**Reason:** Timed sensors and flushing units for the Centre urinals  
**Criteria Not Met:** Level of reserves

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that Walton Community Centre had been unable to specify the value earmarked for expenditure on roof repairs and as a result he was not able to advise whether the application met the Council's criteria or not. He reminded Committee Members that they were able to award a grant whether or not the 'reserves' element of the criteria was met.

After considering the additional information there was no proposer/seconded to discuss the award of a grant to Walton Community Centre.

## **GP23/139      Floating Market**

The Committee considered the location for a floating market in Stone along with suggested dates for the market to take place.

Emails from the Chairman of the Roving Canal Traders Association\* and a map showing the proposed location\* were attached to the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee noted that this item had been considered by the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee at its meeting on 25 October 2022 (Minute Reference: TTP23/023).

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Traders Association/floating market organiser had agreed Stone as a potential location, but their process involved moving forward only when the local council had expressed its approval. After this had been done, they would go forward in bulk with everything they want to do in the following year.

The market organiser had confirmed that they would like to arrange for the market to take place on the late May Bank Holiday 2023 weekend. If the Council supported the market on this date, the proposal would be put forward to the Canal & River Trust.

The suggested location for the market was confirmed as the section of canal running from Stafford Street bridge and out in the direction of Marks and Spencer, the Leisure Centre and Scout Hut (detailed on the map).

\* 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 Committee that there would be no cost implication to the Town Council for holding the market.

Councillor Walley confirmed that he had attended previous floating markets and most stalls were set up on the boats with very little encroachment on the tow path.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council supports the holding of a floating market in Stone on the late May Bank Holiday weekend and that the Town Clerk is instructed to ask the floating market organiser to progress the necessary enquiries.

**GP23/140      National Pay Award 2022-23**

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

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Council historically supported the national pay award (although parish councils are not included in the negotiation mechanism) and pay increases in line with national pay awards were included in the contracts of employment for all Council staff.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council adopts the new 2022-23 salary levels for staff on national pay scales, as set out in the Town Clerk's report.

**GP23/141      Town Council Payments**

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

**GP23/142      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 Kenney advised the Committee that there had been no meeting of the Steering Group as it was awaiting the appointment of a building contractor.

**Engagement with Young People**

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

**GP23/143      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 of the Liaison Group would take place on 25 January 2023 (virtually on Zoom) and Town Councillors were invited to attend.

**Stone ATC**

Councillor Davies informed the Committee that the Air Cadets AGM had been postponed until the New Year.

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**Age Concern Stone & District**

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

**Stafford & Stone Access Group**

Councillor Kelt reported that a meeting had taken place the previous day and the main points of discussion had included the change of Chairman and manufacturing process for wheelchairs (as a guest from a wheelchair manufacturer had attended the meeting).

**Stone Common Plot Trustees**

Councillor Thornicroft reported on a meeting of the Common Plot Trustees where the Treasurer had provided a briefing on costs (with reference to water bills, tree surgeon costs, tractor repairs and maintenance of the Lock Keeper's Cottage). Finances were reported to generally be in good order.

He advised that the Plot generates revenue through the sale of grazing rights and hay crop from the meadow. Currently there is an agreement with a farmer to graze cattle and take the hay and the arrangements were continuing into 2023.

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that there was an issue with Ash Dieback on the Plot, and a tree surgeon had removed/made safe two dangerous trees. He said that all Ash trees would be monitored over the next two to three years.

Other discussions involved repairs to woodland steps, replacement of hay meadow fencing and the theft of wood from the woodland. Most of the funding for the Common Plot's activities comes from a Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

**Stone Community Hub Liaison Group**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meeting of the Liaison Group had taken place.

**SPCA Executive Committee**

Councillor Green was not available to provide a report.

**Stone Traders Group Directors' Meeting**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

**The meeting was adjourned and then reconvened after the Planning Consultative Committee meeting and the closed session of the Town Council meeting had taken place.**

**GP23/144 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.

\* 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.



**GP23/145      Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 1 November 2022, Minute Numbers GP23/100, GP23/117, GP23/118 and GP23/119 be approved.

**GP23/146      Confidential Minutes and Recommendations of Sub-Committees**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 15 November 2022, Minute Numbers: EST23/020, EST23/026 and EST23/027.

RESOLVED: To note the minutes and approve the recommendations contained in Minute Number ENV23/027.

**GP23/147      Heritage Centre**

The Committee considered an update on the Stone Heritage Centre building works tendering process and the appointment of a main contractor for this work.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that he was currently awaiting a report from the Council's mechanical and electrical engineering consultant.

**CHAIRMAN**

# **Stone Town Council – Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 17 January 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs J. Hood in the Chair and  
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, R. Kenney, P. Leason and C. Thornicroft

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Officers: L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: No Councillors

**ABSENT:** Councillors: Mrs K. Dawson, J. Powell and S. Walley

The Chairman welcomed Jon Cook to his first meeting of the Sub-Committee.

### **TTP23/027 Apologies**

Councillors: J. Powell and S. Walley

### **TTP23/028 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

None received.

### **TTP23/029 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

### **TTP23/030 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 25 October 2022 (Minute Numbers TTP23/017 – TTP23/026), were approved as a correct record.

### **TTP23/031 Calendar of Events 2023**

The Sub-Committee considered the Town Council's Calendar of Events and confirmed dates (as far as was possible) for 2023.

The Chairman invited the Sub-Committee to make comments as each event was discussed.

\* 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.

- Commemoration of the Death of Flight Lieutenant Stubbs  
Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the arrangements for a Church Service commemorating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Flight Lieutenant Richard Noel Stubbs DFC DFM RAFVR on 26 February 2023 at Christ Church, were progressing well.
- Texas Flag Raising, marking Texas State's independence from Mexico  
This event is scheduled to take place on Saturday 4 March 2023 at the flagpole in the High Street at noon.
- Anniversary of the death of the Earl St Vincent Commemoration  
Councillor Leason confirmed that a commemorative Church Service will be taking place on Sunday 12 March 2023 at 3pm in St Michael & St Wulfad's Church to mark the bicentenary of the Earl St Vincent's death.

He said that a representative of HMS Collingwood will be in attendance at the Service and will lay a wreath. Members of HMS St Vincent Association will also be invited to attend the occasion.

- St George's Day Re-enactment  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the St George's Day Re-enactment Group were keen to perform on Saturday 22 April 2023 and it was hoped that a variety of additional activities/attractions would be added to extend the itinerary, for the enjoyment of children.
- King Charles III Coronation (Saturday 6 May 2023)  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the second meeting of the King Charles III Coronation Working Group had been held (this evening) and lots of ideas were being explored for a celebration in Stone.

The event will take place in the High Street on Sunday 7 May 2023 (the day after the King's Coronation in London), and further details will be announced when confirmation has been received from various groups.

- Floating Market/Waterside Events  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Town Council was waiting for the Roving Canal Traders Association to make the necessary enquiries (following confirmation of the Town Council's support for a floating market in Stone) on the late May Bank Holiday weekend (provisionally 27, 28, 29 May 2023).
- Stone Carnival  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Town Clerk had spoken to a member of the Festival Committee who has provided a draft programme.
- Florence Brass Band Concert & Burma Star Commemoration  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Florence Brass Band Concert and Burma Star Commemoration would provisionally be taking place on Sunday 13 August 2023. Stafford Borough Council's Parks Division had been contacted

\* 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.

with a view to booking Stonefield Park. The event had been so successful in 2022 that everyone was keen to be involved again in 2023.

- **Stone by the Sea**  
The Chairman confirmed the event would run from Wednesday 16 to Saturday 19 August 2023 and Warwick Funfair would again provide the attractions (sand pit and children's rides).
- **Classic Car Event**  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that she was waiting for confirmation that a Classic Car event could be held in the High Street in September 2023.
- **Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 23 November 2023)**  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Christmas Lights Switch On would be held a week later this year on Thursday 23 November 2023, to avoid overlap/encroachment on the Remembrance Commemorations.
- **Texas Flag Raising, marking the anniversary of Texas joining the Union on 29 December 1848**  
This event will be held at the flagpole in the High Street on Friday 29 December 2023 at noon.
- **Puppet Festival**  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that she was still in talks with Pelham Puppets about the holding of a puppet festival in Stone.
- **Any other suggested new events for 2023**  
The Chairman invited new ideas for events in 2023.

Councillor Leason suggested holding a Heritage Week event, where shopkeepers put photographs and adverts in their windows showing the shops as they were many years ago.

Quite a lot of information was available on the history of Stone online to bring back memories for some of the older members of the town.

The Sub-Committee agreed that such a week could be co-ordinated through the Town Council's representatives at Traders Association meetings.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the Heritage Week should be held on the opening week of the Heritage Centre.

The Chairman called for Councillors to assist as stewards at the Coronation celebrations and Children's events in the town during 2023. She said that Stone Lions did a Stirling job in supporting the Town Council but more stewards in number were needed. She was also looking to ask for help from the scouts and guiding movement.

\* 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.

## **TTP23/032 Stone Traders Group**

The Sub-Committee considered a proposal from the Stone Traders' Group along with Stone Food & Drink Festival for a programme of events\* in 2023.

An email from the Chairman of Stone Traders Group had been attached to the agenda for the meeting.

The Sub-Committee welcomed the events and the Chairman asked whether Jon Cook would cover their publicity on 'A Little Bit of Stone' and whether Staffordshire Newsletter and the Sentinel could offer their support.

The Chairman appealed for lots of photographs to be taken and uploaded on social media to show people what was going on in Stone and attract more people into the town.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council accepts and welcomes the programme of events put forward by Stone Traders' Group and Stone Food & Drink Festival for 2023.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council waives its charges to Stone Traders' Association and Stone Food & Drink Festival in 2023 for the events held in the High Street.

## **TTP23/033 Rebekah Refurbishment**

The Sub-Committee considered the refurbishment of canal boat 'Rebekah' which was currently in a state of disrepair.

Following previous consideration of this item at the meeting of the Sub Committee on 25 October 2022 (Minute Reference TTP23/024) an email\* from Jon Fuller (the owner of the boat) setting out further information, had been attached to the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the likely costs of £10,000 to £12,000 for the refurbishment of Rebekah were beyond the means of the Town Council at present. He said that it may be possible to get some volunteer help and discounted labour, but this would not reduce the costs of the work significantly.

The Town Council agreed that it was not appropriate for the Town Council to consider paying for the refurbishment and acknowledged Jon Cook's offer of help to crowdfund through 'A Little Bit of Stone'.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Clerk is asked to write to Mr Fuller advising him that the Town Council does not have the funds to refurbish Rebekah, and to ask that due to the boat's poor condition, he arranges for it to be made safe or removed urgently.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council advises Mr Fuller of Jon Cook's offer to support the running of a fundraising campaign for the repair of Rebekah on social media.

\* 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.

#### **TTP23/034 Market Signage**

The Sub-Committee received an update on the replacement of the town's roadside market signs.

The Town Clerk circulated two draft designs\* for consideration by the Sub-Committee, pointing out that the Town Council's colours had been incorporated in line with the Sub-Committee's previous request. The first design had a purple flash and incorporated two different typefaces (in the heading and flash) and the second design had a green flash with one consistent font.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council commission new roadside market signs using the first design with a purple flash (but replacing Thursday with Saturday).

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council also replaces the plyboard backing and separate, detachable flash.

#### **TTP23/035 Budgets 2023-24 – 2025-26**

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 7 February 2023 for the services under its control.

The Sub-Committee reviewed the standstill budget and the amounts included for each service. It also considered costs and savings to be taken into account when setting the budget for 2023-24 and future years.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the overall position was that the budget was tight as energy costs had significantly increased. In managing this unprecedented situation, he said he had created a separate energy budget as well as taking inflation out of all individual budgets, putting it into a separate single inflationary budget to enable continual assessment.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the General Purposes Committee was looking to see reductions in individual budgets where possible in an attempt to offset some of the energy cost increases.

A draft proposal made by the Chairman, for the setting of the Tourism & Town Promotion budget for 2023-24 and future years, was circulated at the meeting. The recommendations included retention of hanging baskets, wall mounted Christmas trees with LED lights and Christmas lights in the town.

The Sub-Committee expressed concern about the energy price increases, estimated to be over 250% and the most significant factor in determining this challenging budget.

The Town Clerk said, as a check on the energy inflation estimate, guidance had been sought from the current energy supplier on the likely costs when the current contract came to an end. The information fed back was in line with the projection.

\* 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.

RECOMMENDED: That the budget figures included in the Clerks report are accepted by the General Purposes Committee with the additional provision of £2,000 in 2023-24 for the cost of a King Charles III Coronation event; and that the events budget is reduced by £2,000 in 2024-25 and subsequent years.

**TTP23/036 Reports from Working Groups**

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

**Remembrance Plaques Working Group**

Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that he had no new information to report whilst he was waiting for Oak Tree Farm and Councillor Mrs Davies to commence work on the project.

**Market Strategy (Market Pricing & Strategy)**

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that no meeting of the Market Strategy (Market Pricing & Strategy) Working Group had taken place.

**Earl St Vincent Commemoration Working Group**

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that the Earl St Vincent Commemoration Working Group had not met.

**King Charles III Coronation Working Group**

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that the King Charles III Working Group had met on two occasions and was waiting for contacts to come back to them.

Councillor Mrs Hood said that Sunday 7 May 2023 was going to be an exciting day.

**Chairman**

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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.

# Stone Town Council – Estates Sub-Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 17 January 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor A. Best in the Chair and  
Councillors: J. Davies, Mrs J. Hood, R. Kenney and C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: No Councillors

**ABSENT:** Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham and J. Powell

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**EST23/028     Apologies**

Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, I. Fordham and J. Powell

**EST23/029     Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None received

**EST23/030     Representations from Members of the Public**

None received

**EST23/031     Minutes of Previous Meeting**

That the minutes of the Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on the 15 November 2022 (Minute Numbers EST23/020 – EST23/027), be approved as a correct record.

**EST23/032     Budget 2023-24 – 2025-26**

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 7 February 2023 for the services under its control.

The Sub-Committee reviewed the standstill budget and the amounts included for each service. It also considered other costs and savings to be taken into account when setting the budget for 2023-24 and future years.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the overall position was that

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the budget was tight as energy costs were estimated to be increasing by over 250%. In managing this unprecedented situation, he said he had created a separate energy budget as well as taking inflation out of all individual budgets and putting it into a separate single inflationary budget to enable continual assessment.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the General Purposes Committee was looking to see reductions in individual budgets where possible in an attempt to offset some of the energy cost increases.

A draft proposal made by the Chairman, for the setting of the Estates budget for 2023-24 and future years, was circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Kenney congratulated the Estates Sub-Committee for absorbing energy costs and not passing them on to all users of the community centres whilst also reducing the budgets of the Sub-Committee over the next four years.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the budget figures included in the Clerk's report are accepted by the General Purposes Committee, after making the adjustments below:

1. To increase charges at the Frank Jordan Centre and the Stone Station by 25%, but with a new discount of 10% on the overall charge for community groups and similar bookings.
2. To cease maintaining bus shelters at locations which are no longer on bus routes and to remove them in the future when funds permit.
3. That due to the high cost of a quotation received for the restoration of Joules clock to working order, no action would be taken at present.
4. That provision for general building maintenance for 2022-23 is removed for the current year only.
5. As a result of the above, the Sub-Committee's budget will be reduced as follows compared to the standstill budget:

	£
2022-23	10,500
2023-24	3,500
2024-25	3,500
2025-26	3,500

**The meeting was adjourned and then subsequently reconvened later in the evening.**

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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.

**EST23/033      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 item of business.

**EST23/034      Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential minutes of the Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on the 15 November 2022 (Minute Numbers EST23/020, EST23/026 and EST23/027), be approved as a correct record.

**EST23/035      Update on Stone Station**

The Town Clerk updated the Sub-Committee on the current position on Stone Station Community Centre and confirmed that works to the roof are expected to commence in February 2023.

**Chairman**

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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.

**NOTE: This is a copy of the report originally submitted to the Environment Sub-Committee. It refers to considerations and recommendations being made by the Sub-Committee that now need to be made by the General Purposes Committee as part of its consideration of the budget.**

### Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to determine the level of budget for services under its control that the Sub-Committee wishes to recommend to the General Purposes Committee.

### Background

2. The General Purposes Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> 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:

<b>Actual</b>		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>2021-22</b>		<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
21,135	Grounds Maintenance	20,140	24,950	23,610	23,610	23,610
-500	Crown Meadow Improvements	13,415	10,960	-	-	-
-2,117	Allotments	-1,470	-1,320	-1,770	-1,770	-1,770
-	Environmental Initiatives	5,750	5,750	-	-	-
<b>18,518</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37,835</b>	<b>40,340</b>	<b>21,840</b>	<b>21,840</b>	<b>21,840</b>

5. In respect of the figures above, Members should note:
  - a. The Grounds Maintenance forecast for the current year includes the regular contracted works, repairs at the Anglers Car Park, plus a provision of £3,240 which needs the further approval of the Sub-Committee before proceeding. This sum for approval includes the removal of a split tree at the Amphitheatre (£640), replacement of the Walton Roundabout "Lock Gate" (£400), replacing plants/filling gaps in town borders (£600), replacing plants/refurbishing Walton Roundabout (£600) and work on the scrapes and benches (£1,000).

- b. The Crown Meadow Improvements budget is intended for one-off items only, therefore there is no budget provision has been made beyond the current year. The Sub-Committee will need to decide if there are items that it wishes to propose to the General Purposes Committee for inclusion in these future budgets. The current year includes provision for one-off work on the amphitheatre paths (£1,425), amphitheatre steps (£2,000), Covid Remembrance Orchard (£1,800), meadow information board (£1,500), Scrape 1 (£2,200), creation of a hedgerow (£1,250), moving trees (£200) bridge works (£525) and the Jubilee tree planting (£57). With the exception of the Jubilee tree planting, none of this work had been completed at the time of preparing this report.
  - c. The Allotments budget for 2023-24 and subsequent years includes provision for water charges (£660), general/grounds maintenance (£1,370) and the allotment competition (£160). Against this is set estimated annual income of £3,960.
  - d. The Environmental Initiatives budget is currently unspent, though there is an outstanding commitment for £1,200 relating to energy audits. Any remaining allowance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 can be rolled forward for spending in 2023-24. In line with normal practice, no budget provision has been made beyond the current year. If the Sub-Committee wishes to provide for additional budgets in future years, this will need to be recommended to the General Purposes Committee.
6. As reported to the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Potential Budget Changes**

- 8. The Council's grounds maintenance contractor has been asked to review items that, based on his experience of undertaking the work, the Council need to consider for inclusion in next year's budget. Any such items will be reported to the meeting.

### **Recommendations**

- 9. Members are asked to:
  - a. Consider whether they wish to approve the outstanding items referred to in paragraph 5.a above for recommendation to the General Purposes Committee..
  - b. Recommend their proposed budget for consideration by the General Purposes Committee.

**NOTE: This is a copy of the report originally submitted to the Management Sub-Committee. It refers to considerations and recommendations being made by the Sub-Committee that now need to be made by the General Purposes Committee as part of its consideration of the budget.**

### 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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:

<b>Actual</b>		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>2021-22</b>		<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
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
<b>218,151</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>240,190</b>	<b>229,500</b>	<b>300,460</b>	<b>266,260</b>	<b>264,660</b>

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 13<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Introduction**

1. This report considers the Budget to be recommended to the Council for 2023-24 and the indicative budgets for 2024-25 and 2025-26.

### **Background**

2. At a series of meetings during January 2023, Sub-Committees have considered their potential budgets for 2023-24 to 2025-26. It is now the role of this Committee to consider those potential budgets and decide, for recommendation to the Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023:
  - a. The budget for 2023-24.
  - b. Any contributions to or from reserves to be built into the budget.
  - c. The precept for 2023-24.
  - d. Indicative figures for 2024-25 and 2025-26 for each of the above items.
3. At the time of writing this report, the recommendations from all Sub-Committees are not all available. This report will thus focus on the sums available to spend and the impact on reserves. Details of all Sub-Committee budget proposals will be made available at the meeting.
4. This year's budget has been being prepared in the context of major inflationary pressures, particularly with respect to energy. For this reason, the three-year budget has been calculated without taking into account the effects of inflation beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. A separate estimate of inflation beyond this date has been made across the whole budget and added in as part of the General Purposes Committee figures below. This figure will continue to be reviewed in order that the most up to date estimates can be used when the Council finalises its budget in February 2023.
5. The figures below, therefore, assume that all Council services will continue at broadly their current level, adjusted for any known variations within existing Council policy.

### **Payments by Stafford Borough Council**

6. For a number of years, the Council has received payments of over £30,000 from Stafford Borough Council in addition to the precept. For 2023-24 this includes £21,552 to compensate for a previous reduction in this Council's Taxbase due to benefit changes and £11,461 for the cost of concurrent functions. The figures in this report assume that these



payments will continue into the foreseeable future at the same cash level as estimated for 2023-24.

### **Council Tax**

7. With reference to the determination of the Council Tax level by the Council, the Secretary of State has the power to require a referendum of local people before the Council Tax can be put up by more than a specified percentage.
8. Currently it is not expected that parish Council Taxes will be capped for 2023-24 providing that the sector as a whole “shows restraint”.

### **Standstill Budget**

9. A “standstill” budget was presented to the last meeting of this Committee. The figures are set out in Appendix A and can be summarised as follows:

<b>Actual 2021-22 £</b>		<b>Budget 2022-23 £</b>	<b>Forecast 2022-23 £</b>	<b>Budget 2023-24 £</b>	<b>Budget 2024-25 £</b>	<b>Budget 2025-26 £</b>
13,690	Estates	62,800	60,210	30,340	30,340	30,340
18,518	Environment	37,835	40,340	21,840	21,840	21,840
29,743	Tourism & Town Promotion	44,500	36,160	39,780	38,230	38,230
218,151	Management	240,190	229,500	300,460	266,260	264,660
525	Neighbourhood Plan	-	-	-	-	-
60,271	General Purposes	271,765	266,800	64,190	86,600	82,270
-46,987	Earmarked Reserves	-112,790	-112,790	-	-	-
<b>293,911</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>544,300</b>	<b>520,220</b>	<b>456,610</b>	<b>443,270</b>	<b>437,340</b>

10. The figures above and in Appendix A are based on the following:

- a. Known and forecast expenditure for the remainder of the current financial year.
- b. Forecast expenditure for the next three years, based on a standstill position. These figures assume that current services will continue with no growth or cutbacks other than those which have already been committed by previous decisions of the Council.
- c. A provisional estimate of the impact of inflation, totalling £50,690 for 2023-24, £58,100 for 2024-25 and £53,770 for 2025-26. This is based on the following levels of cost inflation and increases in charges for the Council’s services:

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>
Energy	258%	-18%	-23%
Staffing	5%	3%	2%
Other Costs	5%	3%	3%
Charges (Community Centres)	15%	10%	5%
Charges (Other)	10%	5%	3%

It should be noted that whilst an increase in of 15% on Community Centre charges has been included in the standstill budget, the actual increase in costs at the Centres is estimated to be over 35% due to their significant use of energy.

### **Reserves and Balances**

11. In considering its recommendations to Council, the Committee will also need to consider the level of general reserves (balances) held by the Council.
12. Excluding the reserves earmarked for the Neighbourhood Plan and rollovers, the standstill budget projects that the Council will be holding a reserve of £168,704 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. This represents around 3.8 months of net expenditure.
13. I would normally recommend that a Council the size of Stone Town Council should hold balances equivalent to around six months' net expenditure, unless there is a good, financially sound reason not to do so. Where balances are lower than this amount, there should be a plan to return them to this level, and an understanding by Councillors of the increased financial risk to the Council and the potential need for mitigations until the reserves are reinstated.
14. Due to the extreme challenges posed to this budget by inflation, however, I recommend that the level of reserves held should be reduced to the equivalent of around three months net expenditure in the short to medium term.

### **Conclusions**

15. This report has set out the background to setting the budget for 2023-24 and determining the financial strategy for the following two years. The Committee is thus asked to make recommendations to the Council regarding:
  - a. Whether it accepts the proposed standstill budget, and the assumptions behind it, as the baseline for setting the budget for 2023-24 and the medium term financial strategy (MTFS).
  - b. What adjustments it would want to make to the standstill budget, after consideration of the recommendations made by Sub-Committees.
  - c. What Council Tax and precept levels should be set for 2023-24, with indicative figures for 2024-25 and 2025-26, in order to ensure that the budget is balanced such that reserves do not fall below three months net expenditure in any year.
16. It should be remembered that whilst this Committee is responsible for making recommendations on the budget, the Council is free to set the Council Tax at any level in any year and does not have to follow this Committee's recommendations. In addition, only the Council's decision regarding the 2023-24 precept/Council Tax is binding on the Council. The indicative figures for the following two years can be changed as part of future budget setting processes.

### **Recommendations**

17. That the Committee considers the Sub-Committee budget proposals which will be presented to the meeting, alongside the additional information in this report, and determine the budget and precept level for recommendation to the Council.

# Stone Town Council

## Standstill Budget 2023-24 to 2025-26

Actual 2021-22		Budget 2022-23	Forecast 2022-23	Budget 2023-24	Budget 2024-25	Budget 2025-26
£		£	£	£	£	£
-2,102	Frank Jordan Centre	3,700	550	550	550	550
8,032	Stone Station	39,200	41,320	11,320	11,320	11,320
-	Stone Heritage Centre (Running)	20,000	-	25,000	40,000	40,000
-6,383	Town Market	-10,400	-5,630	-6,630	-6,630	-6,630
6,071	Bus Shelters & Street Furniture	7,780	5,460	5,460	5,460	5,460
607	Street Lighting	700	960	960	960	960
740	Dog & Litter Bins	1,020	760	760	760	760
-	Joules Clock	300	500	500	500	500
342	Town Electricity Supply	400	660	790	790	790
-	Building Maintenance	9,700	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
21,135	Grounds Maintenance	20,140	24,950	23,610	23,610	23,610
-500	Crown Meadow Improvements	13,415	10,960	-	-	-
-2,117	Allotments	-1,470	-1,320	-1,770	-1,770	-1,770
-	Environmental Initiatives	5,750	5,750	-	-	-
21,884	Christmas Lights	26,650	18,600	21,660	20,110	20,110
14,242	Tourism & Town Promotion	28,250	23,190	24,750	24,750	24,750
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
525	Neighbourhood Plan	-	-	-	-	-
71,732	Stone Heritage Centre (Setup)	263,265	278,300	-	-	-
-	General Contingency	-	-	-	-	-
-	Inflation Contingency	-	-	50,690	58,100	53,770
-11,461	Concurrent Functions Allowance	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500
-46,462	Rollover Reserve	-112,790	-112,790	-	-	-
-525	Neighbourhood Plan Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
<b>293,911</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>544,300</b>	<b>520,220</b>	<b>456,610</b>	<b>443,270</b>	<b>437,340</b>

# Application for Grant Aid



Name of organisation:

Stone Choral Society

Purpose of organisation:

The objects of the Society are to educate the public in the arts and sciences and in particular the art and science of music, by the presentation of concerts and other activities.

Amount of grant requested:

£250

Total cost of project (if appropriate):

Reason for grant request:

Stone Choral Society is putting on a series of Masterclasses which have as their subject aspects of music theory, training in music notation and understanding the voice and singing and its benefits for physical and mental well being. The project runs until June.

This project will foster community cohesion and encourages additional interest and education in singing and music which is beneficial to physical, social and mental health.

The reason for this grant request is to assist in determining the feasibility and popularity of the series of talks which would if successful be able to run again and be self funding.

Benefits to Stone residents:

Stone Choral Society is based in Stone and provides benefit to many of the residents of the community. Everyone is welcome to join the Masterclasses and they have been advertised locally.

The majority of the choir members are Stone residents as is our accompanist. Our Musical Director has her roots in Stone having been a pupil at Alleyne's School and still having family members living in Stone.

Stone Choral Society not only provides a significant artistic and recreational contribution to the life of the town but its concerts and workshop help to promote the image of the town both locally and regionally. Overseas trips have helped to foster cultural exchanges between the UK and other European countries. Stone Choral Society is also planning to become a major user and supporter of Crown Wharf Theatre.

Stone Choral Society has been active in the community for over 50 years. The choir has been involved in various community events during this time. In the recent past the choir has sung at Stone Town Festival and in June 2022 sung at the community beacon celebrations of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Other sources of funding secured or being explored (with amounts where known):

Not applicable

Is this an "exceptional" request (see notes)? If so, please explain why the Council should treat it as an exception:

Not applicable

Grants awarded by the Council in the last two years, and the uses made of the funding:

The Society received a grant of £500 in Spring 2021.

This was used as assistance in helping the choir through a period of financial uncertainty when usual activities in relation to fundraising were not allowed due to the Covid pandemic.

Statement of support from Council appointed representative (if applicable):

Not applicable



# Application for Grant Aid



Name of organisation:

**Girlguiding Stone Outward Division Rangers**

Purpose of organisation:

Providing girls aged 14 to 18 new challenges and opportunities to develop themselves. It helps them develop the skills and confidence to become the young women they want to be. In a safe environment we help Rangers to try new things, have fun and give something back to their community. We are a charity organisation run by volunteers.

Amount of grant requested:

**£500**

Total cost of project (if appropriate):

**£572**

Reason for grant request:

In February we will need to pay the annual subscription fee for every active member of the Rangers unit, including leaders. This money goes towards running guiding nationally and in local areas. This year there has been a significant increase in the amount set nationally. The total amount for 2023 will be £44 per member. The breakdown of this charge is: £28 to Central Headquarters, £6 to Midlands Region, £9 to Staffordshire County, £1 to Division. We currently have 11 girls and 2 leaders that we will need to pay for =  $13 \times 44 = £572$ .

The number of girls has been steadily increasing since Autumn 2021 when we only had 5 girls. At our last meeting we had 2 new girls come to try us out and I expect our numbers to increase to at least 15 over the coming weeks. We do collect subs from the girls of £20 per term and this goes towards the hire of the hall and the cost of running activities. We meet in the Christ Church Centre on alternate Friday evenings for which there is a hire cost. Before the Covid pandemic we were meeting in the community room in Stone Fire Station, free of charge. We were asked to vacate this space (as were all community groups) and they closed their doors to all community groups.

As it stands currently we do not have sufficient funds in our account to be able to pay the annual subscription fees and I am reluctant to ask the individual girls and leaders (who are volunteers) to pay for this in addition to the £20 per term that we charge the girls.



Benefits to Stone residents:

Our Rangers unit is open to girls aged 14 to 18 from Stone and its surrounding villages of Aston, Barlaston, Oulton, Tittensor and Yarnfield. The majority of the girls attend Alleynes High School and enjoy meeting their friends in the relaxed social setting that we provide at Rangers.

As members of Stone Outward Division the Rangers can also access activities provided by the division. These include the Smile project which takes girls out to Kenya to complete a service project for which they have to fundraise through serving their local community and holding events for local people. They can also take part in the bi-ennial Handful of Songs show which is staged for local residents to come and see.

Other sources of funding secured or being explored (with amounts where known):

None currently, however I hope to be able to put in a claim in future years for Gift Aid from the subs that are paid.

Is this an "exceptional" request (see notes)? If so, please explain why the Council should treat it as an exception:

N/A

Grants awarded by the Council in the last two years, and the uses made of the funding:

None

Statement of support from Council appointed representative (if applicable):

## **Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2021/2022**

### **Bank Account Summary**

	£
<b>Opening Balance</b>	£ 165.63
<b>Total Incoming</b>	£ 1,130.54
<b>Total Outgoing</b>	£ 980.84
<b>End Balance</b>	£ 315.33
<b>End Balance on Bank Statement</b>	

**Actual Balance for Rangers** £ 85.33

**N.B. amount in the account which is Tittensor Rainbows** £ 230.00

## Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2021/2022

### Bank Account Outgoing

ID	Date	Cheque no.	Spent on	Amount (£)
1	10/12/2021	BACS	Ingredients for Shortbread (10 Dec meeting)	£ 9.09
2	20/12/2021	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire Autumn 2021	£ 36.00
3	11/01/2022		Account Charge to 20 Dec 2021	£ 5.00
4	28/01/2022		Account Closure Cheque (HSBC)	£ 115.54
<b>BANK ACCOUNT SWITCHED FROM HSBC TO NAT WEST</b>				
5	09/02/2022	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire January 2022	£ 27.00
6	03/03/2022	Card online	Subscriptions/Census	£ 245.00
7	04/03/2022	BACS	Stone Outward Division - First Aid course	£ 5.00
8	23/03/2022	BACS	Refund expenditure - Easter Bonnets	£ 20.95
9	11/04/2022	BACS	Refund expenditure - Crème Egg Creations	£ 5.30
10	19/04/2022	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire March 2022	£ 27.00
11	21/04/2022	BACS	Census Tittensor Rainbows - Division payment	£ 5.50
12	21/04/2022	000001	Census Tittensor Rainbows - County payment	£ 379.50
13	15/06/2022	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire Apr/May 2022	£ 40.50
14	27/06/2022	Card online	EBAY - resources for Tiara craft	£ 4.99
15	27/06/2022	Card online	EBAY - resources for Tiara craft	£ 6.20
16	27/06/2022	Card online	EBAY - resources for Tiara craft	£ 4.78
17	12/07/2022	BACS	Refund expenditure - Taster Evening	£ 16.49

18	08/08/2022	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire Jun/July 2022	£ 27.00
19				
20				
			Total	£ 980.84

# Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2021/2022

## Bank Account Incoming

ID	Date		Details	Amount (£)
<b>BANK ACCOUNT SWITCHED FROM HSBC TO NAT WEST</b>				
A	14/12/2021	Cash	Subs Cash - [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
B	17/01/2022	Cash	Subs Cash - [REDACTED] (Spring)	£ 20.00
C	27/01/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
D	27/01/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
E	27/01/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
F	02/02/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
G	07/02/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
H	08/02/2022	BACS	Transfer from Division Acct - HQ Grant	£ 200.00
I	10/02/2022	Chq	Account Closure (HSBC) into Nat West	£ 115.54
J	16/02/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
K	16/02/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
L	03/03/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Census - [REDACTED]	£ 32.50
M	07/03/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Spring)	£ 20.00
N	11/03/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Spring)	£ 20.00
O	14/03/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Spring)	£ 20.00
P	23/03/2022	BACS	Transfer from Division Acct - HQ Grant Tittensor Rainbows	£ 200.00
Q	30/03/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 15.00
R	27/04/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 15.00
S	28/04/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 35.00
T	09/05/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Spring & Summer)	£ 30.00
U	17/05/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 35.00
V	23/06/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Summer)	£ 20.00
W	04/07/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Autumn)	£ 20.00
X	07/07/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 15.00
Y	11/07/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Summer)	£ 10.00

Z	11/07/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED] (Summer)	£ 20.00
AA	12/07/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 40.00
AB				
AC				
AD				
AE				
AF				
AG				
AH				
			Total	£ 1,130.54

## Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2022/2023

### Bank Account Summary

	£
Opening Balance	£ 315.33
Total Incoming	£ 618.50
Total Outgoing	£ 166.94
End Balance	£ 766.89
End Balance on Bank Statement	

Actual Balance for Rangers

£ 268.39

N.B. as at 23/01/2023 amount in the account which is Tittensor  
Rainbows

£ 498.50

## Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2022/2023

### Bank Account Outgoing

ID	Date	Cheque no.	Spent on	Amount (£)
1	30/09/2022	BACS	Refund [REDACTED] - Chocolate activity	£ 12.94
2	05/10/2022	BACS	Christ Church Centre Hire Sept 2022	£ 27.00
3	17/10/2022	Card	Stone Revellers - PANTO	£ 90.00
4	23/11/2022	BACS	Division XMAS event	£ 30.00
5	10/01/2023	BACS	Mental Health Badges - Tittensor Guides	£ 7.00
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
			Total	£ 166.94



## Stone Outward Division Rangers Accounts 2022/2023

### Bank Account Incoming

ID	Date		Details	Amount (£)
A	28/09/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
B	28/09/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 21.00
C	28/09/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
D	30/09/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 40.00
E	03/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 11.00
F	03/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 22.00
G	04/10/2022	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
H	14/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 11.00
I	14/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 11.00
J	17/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 13.00
K	17/10/2022	BACS	Subs & PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 31.00
L	18/10/2022	BACS	PANTO - [REDACTED]	£ 11.00
M	25/10/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
N	09/11/2022	BACS	XMAS - [REDACTED]	£ 10.00
O	09/11/2022	BACS	XMAS - [REDACTED]	£ 5.00
P	11/11/2022	BACS	XMAS - [REDACTED]	£ 5.00
Q	14/11/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
R	21/11/2022	BACS	Subs & XMAS - [REDACTED]	£ 25.00
S	23/11/2022	BACS	Subs & XMAS - [REDACTED]	£ 15.00
T	12/12/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 4.00
U	12/12/2022	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
V	03/01/2023	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 36.00
W	09/01/2023	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
X	09/01/2023	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 40.00
Y	09/01/2023	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
Z	18/01/2023	BACS	Tittensor Rainbows - [REDACTED]	£ 27.50
AA	23/01/2023	BACS	Subs - [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
AB	23/01/2023	BACS	Subs [REDACTED]	£ 20.00
AC				
AD				
AE				

AF				
AG				
AH				
AI				
AJ				
AK				
AL				
AM				
AN				
AO				
AP				
AQ				
			Total	£ 618.50

# STONE LIONS CLUB



CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION – REGISTERED NUMBER 118041

L.Trigg Esq.,  
Clerk to Stone Town Council,  
Station Road,  
Stone,  
ST15 8JP.





25/1/23

*Dear Mr. Trigg*

## PROSTATE TESTING – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

Please find enclosed the completed Grant Aid Application and a copy of our 2021/2022 accounts. The Accounts were prepared before we had received our bill from the Doctor's Laboratory for £5,607 for testing all the blood samples. This used all the £3,395.19 from the PSA Restricted Fund and so we had to use money from our general Charity Account for the balance.

If the Council agree to make a Grant for this event you can forward a cheque for Stone Lions Club c/o me or a Bank Transfer to our  Bank 

Yours sincerely,



Lion President Glyn Ravenscroft,  
Joint Organiser PSA Testing

# Application for Grant Aid



**Name of organisation:**  
STONE LIONS CLUB (CIO)

**Purpose of organisation:**

Volunteers who work together to help the local Community. That help can be provided to individuals or local organisations.

**Amount of grant requested:**  
£500

**Total cost of project (if appropriate):**

£9,000 - £10,000

**Reason for grant request:**

We are holding another PSA Tests event at the Stonehouse Hotel on TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL.

We have held a Restricted Fund for this event over the years but due to the lack of an 'open' event during 2020 and 2021 when we provided Home Testing Kits for men (with very little new income) that fund was emptied when we reverted to an evening event last year.

Last year 485 men were tested at a cost of approx £17.50 per test. We have been advised the Laboratory charges will have a 'slight' increase this year. Our overall cost will be dependent on the number of men who actually attend on the night.

**Benefits to Stone residents:**

The tests help to identify early stages of Prostate problems. For example last year 16 men had an 'Amber' warning notification (possible problems) and 15 men had a 'Red' warning – suggesting urgent consultation/treatment.

**Other sources of funding secured or being explored (with amounts where known):**

We seek assistance from surrounding Parish Councils, various local business organisations and have a facility for donations on the night. Last year we received £2,000 in external donations and £3,900 on the night. The external donations were less than previous years as I did not approach some usual business donors because of the financial situation with Covid.

**Is this an "exceptional" request (see notes)? If so, please explain why the Council should treat it as an exception:**

**Grants awarded by the Council in the last two years, and the uses made of the funding:**

We have received £500 in each of the last two years that has been used for our PSA Tests



## **Stone Lions (CIO)**

### **Notes on the accounts for the 2021/2022 year**

The year started with us banking with HSBC but in August they advised us that they would introduce a monthly charge of £5 for each account plus transaction fees. This was completely unacceptable and so we moved to the Co-operative Bank. They impose no charges. It took a bit of organising but was successfully accomplished before the end of October so escaped with no charges.

Our new bank allows us to view the accounts on line which HSBC would not allow. We have the facility to make BACS payments but the procedure is rather complicated so we have not done so yet. We have tried, but failed.

The attached sheets show the club accounts for the year just ended. The accounts have been run in accordance with Lions Clubs International requirements. Money raised from the public has been credited to the Charity account.

#### **PSA**

Within the Charity account is a PSA fund enabling us to hold a Prostate Testing event during the year. Some donations are given specifically for this event so this is classed by the Charity Commission as a Restricted Fund. Thus the figures have to be shown separately on our return to them.

#### **3C's**

This account is run as a "100 club" within the Charity account. For the convenience of the club this is run using a separate bank account. Any surplus funds are transferred to the Charity bank account, usually once a year.

#### **Admin account.**

This is money provided by members for the running of the club. The President for 2020/2021 requested that her Honorarium be used for a social event but due to Covid-19 regulations we were not able to hold the event during that year. The money was spent during this year which explains why we paid out for two Honoraria.

#### **Charity Commission**

The CC require our financial information to be presented in a different form to that shown on the attached sheets. They do not recognise our separation of Charity and Admin monies. The actual figures are exactly the same, just organised differently.

If you have any questions or need clarification on anything, just ask

Rod Niven  
Treasurer

# Charity Account

Year ending 30 June 2022

	Income	Expenditure	Balance	Balance 2020/21
<b>Fund raising events</b>				
Christmas market	343.71			
Christmas raffle	203.00			
Duck Race	8.00			
Easter Eggs	2,038.15	500.27	1,537.88	
Quiz Night	325.00			
Julie's knitting	90.00			
	3,007.86	500.27	2,507.59	831.15
<b>Donations received</b>				
A Clayton	275.98			
John Sanders memorial	760.00			
Arcadia Café	150.00			
Stone Rotary Club	110.00			
Stone Festival Committee	50.00			
PSA evening	3,906.83			
Joules Court Residents	180.00			
Other	79.21			
	5,512.02		5,512.02	2,264.50
<b>Other Income</b>				
Just Giving	19.42			
Easy Fundraising	10.50			
From 3C's account	2,006.00			
	2,035.92		2,035.92	1,973.59
<b>Welfare Donations given</b>				
Foxfield		300.00		
Friends of Margaret Junior School		350.00		
EA Babb - Ukrainian families		500.00		
RBL Poppy Appeal		100.00		
Milly Smiles - DG Partner App		250.00		
Stone Rugby Union FC		750.00		
Beds for Ukrainian family		200.00		
		2,450.00	-2,450.00	-5,711.32
<b>Welfare Donations given in previous year, money now returned, unused.</b>				
Hylands - washing machine	120.00			
Girl Guiding Stafford	250.00			
Lions Youth Brass	250.00			
	620.00		620.00	

	Income	Expenditure	Balance	Balance 2020/21
<b>Welfare Activities</b>				
Peace Poster Competition		125.00	-125.00	-164.90
Other				-114.38
<b>Mobility</b>				
Donations received	1,874.40		1,874.40	2,624.91
Insurance money received	155.00		155.00	
Expenses				
Disable Aids (Cannock) Ltd		3,030.79		
Mobile phone		115.38		
Other		106.53		
Total		3,252.70	-3,252.70	-2,424.14
<b>Club operating costs</b>				
Public relations		86.45		
Insurance		79.41		
Lottery licence		20.00		
Zettle reader		22.80		
Accounts examination		16.00		
		224.66	-224.66	-223.66
<b>Charity Account General Fund</b>	<b>13,205.20</b>	<b>6,552.63</b>	<b>6,652.57</b>	<b>-944.25</b>
<b>PSA Testing</b>				
<b>2021 testing</b>				
Test kits discount		787.50		
Other		24.00		
		811.50	-811.50	
<b>2022 testing</b>				
Restricted Fund Donations received				
Stone Town Council	500.00			
Stone Rural Parish Council	200.00			
Barlaston Parish Council	100.00			
Independent Racing Services	200.00			
DM & VA Kidd	100.00			
Other	50.00			
Gift Aid	26.25			
Testing expenses				
Nurses		780.00		
Test results costs (GFCT)		1,741.50		
Other		230.03		
	1,176.25	2,751.53	-1,575.28	
<b>PSA Restricted Fund</b>	<b>1,176.25</b>	<b>3,563.03</b>	<b>-2,386.78</b>	<b>-1,499.00</b>
<b>Charity Account total</b>	<b>14,381.45</b>	<b>10,115.66</b>	<b>4,265.79</b>	<b>-2,443.25</b>



Charity Account	General Charity account	PSA Restricted Fund	Total
1 July 2021 Account balance	4,567.32	5,781.97	10,349.49
Excess income over expenditure	6,552.67		4,265.79
Excess expenditure over income		2,386.78	
30 June 2022 Account balance	11,120.09	3,395.19	14,515.28

# Application for Grant Aid



Name of organisation:

Windmills - Acute Bereavement Support for Children and Young People in Staffordshire

Purpose of organisation:

Windmills want to preserve and protect the physical, emotional and mental health of children and young people in Staffordshire when someone significant in their life is dying, or has died, by providing bespoke focused and supportive bereavement care.

Amount of grant requested:

£1000

Total cost of project (if appropriate):

Approx £380 per child. Project on going depending on referrals

Reason for grant request:

Memory making is key part of what we do during the first sessions with our families. When someone dies, we all worry that we will lose our memories of our loved one. This is no different for a child or young person. By gathering and saving special memories in a memory box, a child can go back into those memories - happy or sad - when they are ready. This time gives children a safe place to talk about their loved one. The work we do with each children is tailored to their individual needs. We provide children with memory boxes, worry monsters and small teddies. One teddy can be left with their loved one and they can keep an identical one with them. We do handprints using special dry ink and clay hand casts. We also do many craft activities during our sessions with the children. This gives the children time to open up about their feelings without feeling the need to make eye contact. Some children find it easier to talk in this way. We take the children for days out with other bereaved children so that they feel less alone.

Last year we had 58 children referred to us. As we approach the end of 2022 we are at nearly 100 children and referrals are still coming in. The average cost per child is approximately £380.

Benefits to Stone residents:

Windmills support children from the whole of Staffordshire, however, in the past two years, we have supported four families from Stone which totals 8 children. This support has taken place in the home, hospital intensive care unit, hospices and in schools. We have worked with children at St Michaels First School and Christchurch Academy.

Other sources of funding secured or being explored (with amounts where known):

Albert Hunt Trust £1000

Stafford Borough Council Recycled Metals Scheme £12,000

Morrisons Foundation £5000

Asda Foundation £500

Pamela Barlow Trust £1000

Is this an "exceptional" request (see notes)? If so, please explain why the Council should treat it as an exception:

Grants awarded by the Council in the last two years, and the uses made of the funding:

None

Statement of support from Council appointed representative (if applicable):



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
Windmills - Acute bereavement support for children and  
young people in Staffordshire

No (if any)  
1197408

CC16a

## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/04/2021		31/03/2022

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Fundraising	-	4,345	-	4,345	-
Donations	22,933	-	-	22,933	24,703
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>22,933</b>	<b>4,345</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,278</b>	<b>24,703</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>22,933</b>	<b>4,345</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,278</b>	<b>24,703</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Fundraising activities	1,333	111	-	1,443	-
Days out and memory making	-	2,914	-	2,914	1,969
Craft supplies	-	709	-	709	-
Rent	4,200	-	-	4,200	2,190
Utilities	635	-	-	635	62
Office sundries	657	-	-	657	252
Bid writer services	2,818	-	-	2,818	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	600
Professional costs	70	-	-	70	-
Repayment to L C	670	-	-	670	-
Bank charges	131	-	-	131	34
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>10,513</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14,247</b>	<b>5,107</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
IT equipment	-	-	-	-	1,132
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,132</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>10,513</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14,247</b>	<b>6,239</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>12,420</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,031</b>	<b>18,464</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>16,854</b>	<b>2,609</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19,463</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>29,274</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,494</b>	<b>18,464</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Bank	29,234	3,220	-
	Petty cash	40	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>29,274</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	IT equipment		1,132	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	LC initial funding		626	31/12/2022
	ZT initial funding		849	31/12/2022
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	

# Stone

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## Town Council



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### Standing Orders

### Related to Council Business

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September 2021

# Contents

1	General.....	3
2	Rules of debate at meetings .....	3
3	Disorderly conduct at meetings.....	5
4	Meetings generally.....	5
5	Committees and sub-committees.....	8
6	Ordinary council meetings .....	9
7	Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees .....	10
8	Previous resolutions .....	11
9	Voting on appointments .....	11
10	Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer ...	11
11	Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice.....	12
12	Handling confidential or sensitive information.....	13
13	Draft minutes.....	13
14	Code of conduct and dispensations.....	13
15	Code of conduct complaints.....	14
16	Proper Officer .....	15
17	Responsible Financial Officer .....	16
18	Accounts and accounting statements .....	16
19	Financial controls and procurement .....	16
20	Staffing matters .....	18
21	Requests for information .....	18
22	Relations with the press/media.....	18
23	Execution and sealing of legal deeds .....	18
24	Restrictions on councillor activities .....	19

# 1 GENERAL

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- 1.1 These standing orders govern the conduct of the business of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Should there be a clash between the provisions of this document and those within other documents which prescribe the activities of the Council, the order of precedence shall be:
  - a. National Legislation
  - b. The Council's Standing Orders (this document)
  - c. All other documents
- 1.3 All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting. *(NOTE: Where a standing order incorporates a mandatory statutory requirement, the requirement and the circumstances in which the requirement applies is indicated in brackets following the relevant standing order below. This does not indicate that the application of the standing order is limited only to those circumstances, but just indicates the extent to which the standing order can be suspended by this provision).*
- 1.4 A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least three councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 10 below.
- 1.5 The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor as soon as possible after they have delivered their acceptance of office form.
- 1.6 The decision of the chairman<sup>2</sup> of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

# 2 RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

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- 2.1 Items on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- 2.2 A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- 2.3 A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer will be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- 2.4 If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to "the Council" in this document shall also be considered to refer to the General Purposes Committee for functions which have been delegated to that Committee.

<sup>2</sup> All references to "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" shall be considered to refer to the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor in respect of a full Council meeting.



- 2.5 The mover of a motion shall have a right to reply, not exceeding five minutes, at the conclusion of the debate immediately before the motion is put to the vote. No further debate shall take place once this right to reply has been exercised.
- 2.6 An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- 2.7 If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the amendment becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- 2.8 An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- 2.9 A councillor may make an amendment to their own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall require the consent of the seconder.
- 2.10 Subject to standing order 2.11 below, if there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- 2.11 In exceptional circumstances, several amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- 2.12 A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- 2.13 The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- 2.14 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- 2.15 Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
- a. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - b. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
  - c. to make a point of order;
  - d. to give a personal explanation; or
  - e. in exercise of a right of reply.
- 2.16 During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- 2.17 A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting, whose decision shall be final.
- 2.18 When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

- a. to amend the motion;
- b. to proceed to the next business;
- c. to adjourn the debate;
- d. to put the motion to a vote;
- e. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
- f. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
- g. to exclude the public and press;
- h. to adjourn the meeting; or
- i. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.

- 2.19 Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that sufficient information is available to make a sound decision, the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- 2.20 Excluding motions moved under standing order 2.18 above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed five minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

### 3 DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

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- 3.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- 3.2 If these person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- 3.3 If a resolution made under standing order 3.2 above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### 4 MEETINGS GENERALLY

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- 4.1 Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost. *(Mandatory: Council only)*
- 4.2 Public notice of the time and place of meeting shall be given by posting it outside the Council's offices at least three days before the meeting. The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning. *(Mandatory: Council. For committees, the minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the*

*day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting. There are no mandatory requirements for sub-committees)*

- 4.3 Meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.  
*(Mandatory: Council and Committees)*
- 4.4 Subject to standing order 4.3 above and the provisions of the Council's scheme of public participation, members of the public are permitted to:
- a. Make representations or raise issues at any ordinary Council meeting in relation to the work of the Council.
  - b. Raise issues at any ordinary committee or sub-committee meeting related to items of business on the agenda.
  - c. Present petitions at any ordinary Council meeting on issues within the Council's remit.
- 4.5 Subject to standing order 4.4, no more than two members of the public are entitled to speak at any full Council meeting, and shall each shall speak once only, for not more than 10 minutes. Where more than two members of the public have requested to speak, the Proper Officer shall determine which requests shall have preference, based on their relevance to the meeting, the urgency of the matter to be raised and the time that the request was received.
- 4.6 In accordance with standing order 4.4 above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a full Council meeting shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question.
- 4.7 In accordance with standing order 4.6 above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response, to a committee or sub-committee for further consideration or to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 4.8 Subject to standing order 4.4, no more than four members of the public are entitled to speak at any committee or sub-committee meeting, and shall each shall speak once only, for not more than three minutes (five minutes if there are two or less speakers). Where more than four members of the public have requested to speak, the Proper Officer shall determine which requests shall have preference, based on their relevance to the meeting, the urgency of the matter to be raised and the time that the request was received.
- 4.9 No response shall be made to a public submission made under paragraph 4.8 above, nor any debate entered into, as the item will be fully debated when the agenda item itself is considered.
- 4.10 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- 4.11 A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

- 4.12 A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- 4.13 Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- 4.14 The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present. *(Mandatory: Council and Committees)*
- 4.15 Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council. *(Mandatory: Council)*
- 4.16 The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting. *(Mandatory: Council)*
- 4.17 Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting. *(Mandatory)*
- 4.18 The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote. *See standing orders 6.8 and 6.9 below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council. (Mandatory)*
- 4.19 Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, their own vote will be recorded in the minutes. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- 4.20 In addition, any councillor may request that the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.
- 4.21 The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- a. the time and place of the meeting;
  - b. the names of councillors present and absent;
  - c. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - d. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - e. if there was a public participation session; and
  - f. the resolutions made.
- 4.22 A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.

- 4.23 No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council, committee or sub-committee are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.
- 4.24 If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- 4.25 A meeting shall not exceed a period of 1.5 hours, nor any group of meetings held on the same evening exceed 2.5 hours without a resolution of the meeting to continue beyond this limit.

## 5 COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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- 5.1 The council may appoint standing committees or other committees and sub-committees as may be necessary, and:
- a. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - b. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
  - c. shall permit a committee and sub-committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - d. shall appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee or sub-committee;
  - e. shall, after it has appointed the members of a committee or sub-committee, appoint the chairman of that committee or sub-committee;
  - f. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - g. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
  - h. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - i. may dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.2 Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee or sub-committee may appoint one or more working groups whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the appointing committee or sub-committee.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding any appointments made to sub-committees and working groups under standing orders 5.1d and 5.2 above, the Town Mayor and the chairman of the parent committee shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees and working groups with full voting rights.
- 5.4 The members of a committee, sub-committee or working group may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.
- 5.5 Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.

## 6 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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- 6.1 In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- 6.2 In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.
- 6.3 All meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees shall take place at 15 Station Road, Stone, with the first meeting commencing at 7:00pm, unless:
- a. it is specifically agreed otherwise at a previous meeting, or,
  - b. it is anticipated, prior to the dispatch of meeting notice(s), that there would be a good reason that the meeting(s) should not be held in this or another previously agreed location, wherein the Town Clerk would be authorised to arrange an alternative location for the meeting(s). This includes the calling of an online meeting where permitted by law, or the conversion of a previously planned online meeting to a physical one.
- 6.4 In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council directs.
- 6.5 The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
- 6.6 The Town Mayor, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.
- 6.7 The Deputy Mayor, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the council.
- 6.8 In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 6.9 In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 6.10 Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting may include:
- a. In an election year, delivery by the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - b. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
  - c. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - d. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;

- e. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- f. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
- g. Appointment of members to existing committees;
- h. Appointment of any new committees;
- i. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
- j. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
- k. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- l. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- m. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
- n. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
- o. Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- p. Review of the council's complaints procedure;
- q. Review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
- r. Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media; and
- s. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next annual meeting of full council.

## 7 EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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- 7.1 The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.
- 7.2 If the Town Mayor does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.
- 7.3 The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- 7.4 If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested by to do so by two members of the committee or the sub-committee, any two members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee or a sub-committee.

## 8 PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

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- 8.1 A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least six councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 10 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- 8.2 When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 8.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

## 9 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

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- 9.1 Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

## 10 MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

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- 10.1 A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- 10.2 No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least ten clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice, the day of the meeting, Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.
- 10.3 The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 10.2 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 10.4 If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 10.2 above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least ten clear days before the meeting.
- 10.5 If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.



- 10.6 Subject to standing order 10.5 above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- 10.7 Should any urgent business arise between scheduled meetings of the Council or any standing committee or sub-committee, the Proper Officer will call a special meeting to deal with the issue.
- 10.8 Where urgent planning business occurs between ordinary meetings of the Council's Planning Consultative Committee, the Proper Officer shall circulate details of the business to Members, asking for comments. Where the view of Members is clear, and where no Member has requested that a special meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee should be arranged to discuss the business, those views shall be conveyed to the Borough Council by the Proper Officer following consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee or other appropriate Member(s) in the absence of the Chairman.
- 10.9 Where any matter is so urgent that it is not reasonable to call a special meeting with the legally required notice periods, the Council's Proper Officer is authorised to take any decision on behalf of the Council which can legally be delegated by the Council to an officer. Before taking such a decision, the Proper Officer shall take reasonable steps to consult with Council Members, and shall report the decision and the reason for its urgency at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or one of its committees if the decision would normally have been taken there.

## 11 MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

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- 11.1 The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
- a. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - b. to move to a vote;
  - c. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - d. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - e. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - f. to change the order of business on the agenda;
  - g. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
  - h. to require a written report;
  - i. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
  - j. to extend the time limits for speaking;
  - k. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
  - l. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
  - m. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
  - n. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
  - o. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
  - p. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - q. to close a meeting.

## 12 HANDLING CONFIDENTIAL OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION

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- 12.1 The agenda, papers that support the agenda, and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- 12.2 Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

## 13 DRAFT MINUTES

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- 13.1 If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- 13.2 There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 11.1a above.
- 13.3 The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- 13.4 If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but that view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- 13.5 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

## 14 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

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*See also standing order 4.22 above.*

- 14.1 All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- 14.2 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

- 14.3 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall not take part in any debate or vote at a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a personal interest, though they would be permitted to take part in a public participation item in the same way as any member of the public.
- 14.4 Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer before the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- 14.5 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the meeting of the council, committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- 14.6 A dispensation request shall confirm:
- a. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - b. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - c. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding the remaining time to the next Council election) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - d. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- 14.7 Subject to standing orders 14.4 and 14.6 above, dispensation requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the council, committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- 14.8 A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 14.5 above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
- a. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business, or
  - b. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area, or
  - c. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

## 15 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

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- 15.1 Upon formal written notification from Stafford Borough Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 12 above, report this to the council.
- 15.2 Where the notification in standing order 15.1 above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Town Mayor of this fact, and the Town Mayor shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 15.4 below.
- 15.3 The council may:

- a. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - b. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- 15.4 Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office. *(Mandatory)*

## 16 PROPER OFFICER

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- 16.1 The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent or otherwise unable to act.
- 16.2 The Proper Officer shall:
  - a. at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on councillors, by email (where agreed) or by delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda. *(Mandatory for council and committees. See standing order 4.2 above for the meaning of clear days.);*
  - b. give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them); *(Mandatory for council and committees. See standing order 4.2 above for the meaning of clear days.);*
  - c. subject to standing order 10 above, include on the agenda all motions put forward by councillors unless withdrawn by the councillor themselves at least six clear days before the meeting;
  - d. convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in the office *(Mandatory);*
  - e. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
  - f. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities *(Mandatory);*
  - g. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
  - h. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
  - i. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
  - j. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
  - k. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form;
  - l. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; See also standing order 23 below.
  - m. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;

- n. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority;
- o. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- p. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used for the sealing of legal deeds without a resolution to that effect. *See also standing order 23 below.*

## 17 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

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- 17.1 The Town Clerk shall undertake the role of responsible financial officer, unless there is a council resolution appointing a different officer. The council shall appoint an appropriate staff member to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

## 18 ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

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- 18.1 "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England)
- 18.2 All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council's financial regulations.
- 18.3 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise the Council's income and expenditure compared with the approved budget and an explanation of significant variances.
- 18.4 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide each councillor with a statement summarising the council's income and expenditure for the year and the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- 18.5 The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices for a year to 31 March. The annual return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June or any other such date as specified in regulations.

## 19 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

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- 19.1 The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
- a. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - b. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;

- c. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - d. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
  - e. procurement policies (subject to standing orders 19.3 to 19.8 below).
- 19.2 Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly for fitness of purpose.
- 19.3 The letting of contracts by the Council must be in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, or subsequent replacement/supplementary legislation.
- 19.4 Contracts below the value of £25,000 are outside the scope of standing orders, but may be governed by the provisions within the Council's financial regulations.
- 19.5 Contracts above the value prescribed in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 of £189,330<sup>3</sup> or £4,733,252<sup>3</sup>, which have "detailed and complex" requirements will be undertaken in partnership with the Borough or County Council, who will be able to ensure that these complex regulations are adhered to.
- 19.6 Between these two figures, the Council may:
  - a. Advertise the contract or otherwise offer it on the open market. In this case the provisions of the 2015 regulations apply, and the contract must also be published on the "Contract Finder" website.
  - b. Offer the contract to a closed list of contractors, whereby the provisions of the 2015 regulations do not apply.
  - c. Offer the contract to its "preferred contractor" identified for that area of work, where the 2015 regulations regarding advertising on the "Contracts Finder" website would also not apply.
- 19.7 Subject to any additional requirements in the financial regulations of the council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works under standing orders 19.6a and 19.6b above where the value is anticipated to exceed £60,000 shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
  - a. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - b. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - c. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and/or other manner that is appropriate (standing order 19.6a only);
  - d. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - e. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;

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<sup>3</sup> September 2021 values. These figures may vary from time to time.

- f. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

19.8 Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value, or any, tender.

## 20 STAFFING MATTERS

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20.1 The Town Clerk shall act as employer for of the Council's paid employees and voluntary staff.

20.2 All written records in respect of staffing matters shall be kept confidential and secure. Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records if so justified.

20.3 Appointments, dismissals, performance, disciplinary issues and grievances shall be considered in accordance with the Council's Staffing Guidelines.

## 21 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

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21.1 Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

21.2 Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee. The said committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## 22 RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

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22.1 Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

## 23 EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

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*See also standing orders 16.2l and 16.2p above.*

23.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.

23.2 Subject to standing order 23.1 above, the council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.

## 24 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

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- 24.1 No Councillor shall purport to represent the Council, or make any suggestion that they have the authority to make a binding decision on behalf of the Council, unless previously authorised by a properly minuted resolution.
- 24.2 Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
- a. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - b. issue orders, instructions or directions.



# Stone

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## Town Council



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## Financial Regulations

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September 2021

# Contents

1	General .....	3
2	Accounting And Audit (Internal And External) .....	5
3	Annual Estimates (Budget) and Forward Planning .....	7
4	Budgetary Control and Authority To Spend .....	7
5	Banking Arrangements and Payments .....	8
6	Payment of Salaries .....	9
7	Loans and Investments .....	10
8	Income .....	11
9	Orders for Work, Goods and Services .....	12
10	Contracts .....	12
11	Payments Under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works (Public Works Contracts) ..	14
12	Stores and Equipment .....	14
13	Assets, Properties and Estates .....	15
14	Insurance .....	15
15	Charities .....	16
16	Risk Management .....	16
17	Suspension and Revision of Financial Regulations .....	16

# 1 GENERAL

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- 1.1 These regulations govern the conduct of the financial activities of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council or the General Purposes (GP) Committee<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Should there be a clash between the provisions of this document and those within other documents which prescribe the activities of the Council, the order of precedence shall be:
  - a. National Legislation
  - b. The Council's Standing Orders
  - c. Financial Regulations (this document)
  - d. All other documents
- 1.3 The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.4 The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - a. for the timely production of accounts;
  - b. that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
  - c. to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - d. identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.5 These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7 Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Town Clerk shall be the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), and as such shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to "the Council" in this document shall also be considered to refer to the General Purposes Committee for functions which have been delegated to that Committee.

The terms “Town Clerk” and “RFO” are, however, used separately throughout this document to allow for a situation where this may not be the case.

- 1.9 The Town Clerk and/or RFO may delegate items ascribed to them within this document to another employee, but will still remain accountable to the Council for those items.
- 1.10 The RFO;
- a. acts under the policy direction of the council;
  - b. administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
  - c. determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - d. ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
  - e. maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
  - f. assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - g. produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.11 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council’s transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.12 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- a. entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
  - b. a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
  - c. wherever relevant, a record of the council’s income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.13 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- a. procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
  - b. procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;

- c. identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
  - d. procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
  - e. measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.14 The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular, any decision regarding:
- a. setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
  - b. approving accounting statements;
  - c. approving an annual governance statement;
  - d. borrowing;
  - e. writing off bad debts;
  - f. declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
  - g. the consideration of any report from the Council's internal or external auditors,
- shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.15 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.16 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

## 2 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

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- 2.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2 The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts

shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 2.3 The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.4 The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.5 The internal auditor shall:
  - a. be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
  - b. report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
  - c. to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - d. have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.6 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
  - a. perform any operational duties for the council;
  - b. initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
  - c. direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.7 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.8 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.9 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any report from internal or external auditors.

### 3 ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

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- 3.1 The Council's budget shall be prepared on an "Income and Expenditure" basis.
- 3.2 The GP Committee shall consider a report of the RFO setting out the prospects for the following three years' capital and revenue budgets no later than January each year. Each Sub-Committee shall be asked to formulate its proposed budget for the next three years based on policy guidelines determined by the GP Committee, and to submit these proposals to the Committee for further consideration.
- 3.3 After considering the Sub-Committees' proposals, the GP Committee shall determine a balanced and affordable budget to be recommended to the Council for the following three financial years.
- 3.4 The Council shall review the GP Committee's recommendations not later than the end of February each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year and determine indicative precepts for the following two years.
- 3.5 The annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

### 4 BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

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- 4.1 The Town Clerk is authorised to seek tenders/quotations, place orders and make payments in accordance with the approved annual budget, the Council's policies, and these Financial Regulations. Where the annual budget identifies specific items for which no expenditure should be incurred without the express approval of the Council, the Clerk should refer proposed spending for approval before that spending is incurred. In all other cases, the Clerk is authorised to proceed without specific approval.
- 4.2 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a budget monitoring statement comparing actual expenditure against that planned for each approved budget head.
- 4.3 The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. Where there is no available budget, the Clerk shall, wherever possible, discuss the issue with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee or, in their absence, the Vice Chairman or Town Mayor before incurring the expenditure. Where no or insufficient budget provision existed, the Town Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 In general, unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Where a budget has been agreed by the Council as a "rollover budget", then unspent amounts may be rolled-over into the subsequent financial year by making

use of a rollover reserve. This provision may also be used on a one-off basis for specific items, subject to agreement of the Council.

- 4.5 All expenditure and income of the Council shall be included within its revenue account unless a specific Council resolution has determined that it shall be treated as capital. Once such as resolution has been passed, no expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any such capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained, to meet the full projected costs of the project.
- 4.6 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.7 Changes in earmarked reserves, other than the rollover reserve, shall require approval by council.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding the provisions above, all expenditure and income related to the Town Mayor's charity will, in the interests of transparency, be accounted for by the use of a specified reserve account for each Town Mayor.

## 5 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND PAYMENTS

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- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed.
- 5.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received or carried out in accordance with the needs of the Council.
- 5.3 The RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Clerk shall settle invoices promptly.
- 5.4 All cash received must be banked intact.
- 5.5 No petty cash account shall be maintained.
- 5.6 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance, pension contributions or other reasons, should be made from the Council's bank account.
- 5.7 A schedule showing payments from the Council's bank accounts shall be prepared by the RFO and presented:
  - a. To the Council on a quarterly basis in respect of payments over £250, and,
  - b. To the General Purposes Committee at each ordinary meeting.



- 5.8 For the purposes of the schedules referred to in paragraph 5.7 above:
- a. Staff salary and related payments should not be included, but total figures for a period should be made available to any Member on request. Details of payments to individual employees will only be made available in accordance with paragraph 6.4 below.
  - b. Payments in respect of the Mayor's Charity Fund will not be included, but should be made available to any Member on request.
- 5.9 The Council acknowledges that the commitment to make a payment occurs at the time an order is placed or similar arrangement made, not at the time a payment itself is made. It does not, therefore, consider that excessive controls on payments which may hamper the efficient operation of the Council need to be applied, providing that adequate controls over ordering and reporting are in place in accordance with these regulations.
- 5.10 Payments may be made by way of cheque, direct debit, bank transfer, purchasing card, PayPal, internet banking, BACS or CHAPS, provided that:
- a. All cheques shall be signed by two individuals included within the bank mandate, at least one of which shall be a Member of the Council and not more than one shall be an officer.
  - b. Transfers between Council bank accounts may be authorised by the RFO.
  - c. Payments via purchasing card can be made by a single authorised officer, and are limited to £1,000 in any single transaction, with a maximum of £5,000 outstanding at any one time.
  - d. Electronic payments and direct debits, including payments via PayPal and internet banking, can be made by a single authorised officer, but the supporting paperwork should also be signed by a second officer. All such payments should be included within the report to the General Purposes Committee required by regulation 5.7b above, subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph 5.8 above.
- 5.11 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted. Officers authorising payments will be required to follow these same arrangements in respect of pecuniary or other interests.

## 6 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

---

- 6.1 As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.

- 6.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 6.3 Once an employee's salary and conditions has been determined by the Council or an authorised Appointments Panel and a contract of employment has been signed, no changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council, except where required for the payment of overtime, absence cover, incremental progression or similar matters.
- 6.4 Payments to individual employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall not be open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a. by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - b. by the internal auditor;
  - c. by the external auditor; or
  - d. by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 6.5 Any termination payments beyond those required by law shall require the approval of the Council.

## 7 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

---

- 7.1 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 7.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the council in the first instance, though the renewal and extension of existing leases may be authorised by the Town Clerk providing that there is provision within the Council's budget and that he/she is satisfied that the arrangement represents value for money for the Council.
- 7.3 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 7.4 The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

- 7.5 All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 7.6 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 7.7 Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 above.

## 8 INCOME

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- 8.1 The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 8.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied by the Council shall be considered annually by the council as part of the budget process, and notified to the RFO who shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 8.3 The council will undertake a full review of all fees and charges periodically, following a report of the Clerk.
- 8.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 8.5 All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 8.6 A record shall be maintained by the RFO of the amounts making up the total of each paying-in slip.
- 8.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 8.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 8.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 8.10 Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the

Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 15 below).

## 9 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

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- 9.1 An official order number shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Details of orders shall be retained.
- 9.2 All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction.
- 9.3 A Member may not specify the use of a particular supplier, issue an official order or make any contract (verbal or written) on behalf of the council.
- 9.4 The RFO shall satisfy themselves as to the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of an order.

## 10 CONTRACTS

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- 10.1 Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to the following items:
  - a. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
  - b. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
  - c. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
  - d. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
  - e. for additional audit work of the external auditor;
  - f. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price: and
  - g. In circumstances where continuity of supplier is considered by the RFO to offer greater benefits to the Council than retendering.
- 10.2 Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015

("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations<sup>2</sup>.

- 10.3 The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive (which may change from time to time)<sup>3</sup>.
- 10.4 Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 10.5 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 10.6 Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to the requirements of Standing Orders related to procurement<sup>4</sup> and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 10.7 When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
- 10.8 Where the Clerk has determined that there is a benefit to the Council to let a contract in association with one or more other partners, or to make use of another authority's facilities such as the County Council's e-tendering system, the requirements of these regulations shall be replaced by the requirements of the regulations of the lead body for the letting of the contract.
- 10.9 When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 but in excess of £3,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph 10.1 above the Clerk or RFO shall, where possible, obtain 3 quotations. Below this figure, the Clerk or RFO shall seek to obtain the best overall value for money for the

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<sup>2</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

<sup>3</sup> Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts £189,330
- b. For public works contracts £4,733,252

<sup>4</sup> Standing Order 19 based on the version effective from September 2021 which was current at the time of preparing this document. This reference may change in subsequent versions of standing orders.

Council after taking into account cost, quality of service and availability, and shall strive to obtain one or more estimates for the work/service to be performed.

- 10.10 The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 10.11 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken.

## **11 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS (PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS)**

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- 11.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 11.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum by 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.
- 11.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Council and notified to the Contractor in writing before any work has begun, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision as a result.

## **12 STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

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- 12.1 Where the Council operates a system of stock control, or holds a supply of equipment for the use of a number of people, the Town Clerk shall be responsible for the arrangements for the care and custody of these stores and equipment.
- 12.2 Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 12.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 12.4 The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

## 13 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

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- 13.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 13.2 No tangible moveable property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.
- 13.3 No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 13.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 13.5 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

## 14 INSURANCE

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- 14.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.
- 14.2 The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 14.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 14.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 14.5 All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the council, or duly delegated committee.

## 15 CHARITIES

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- 15.1 Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## 16 RISK MANAGEMENT

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- 16.1 The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 16.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

## 17 SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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- 17.1 It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 17.2 The council may, by resolution, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that the advice of the RFO regarding the risks and implications has been considered prior to the suspension. Details of the suspension must be recorded in the minutes, and must include a record of the advice of the RFO if the council has chosen not to follow it.

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## Proposed Programme of Meetings and Events in 2023-24

**The first meeting on each evening will commence at 7:00pm**

Month	First Tuesday		Third Tuesday		Other	
May 2023	16th	Council – Annual Meeting	23rd	General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee		
June 2023	6th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee Town Hall Charity	20th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub Mayor's Charity		
July 2023	4th	Council General Purposes Committee (including Grants) Planning Consult. Committee Richard Vernon Charity	18th	Estates Sub Management Sub	9th	Civic Sunday & Mayor Making
August 2023	1st	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	15th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub	13th 16th to 19th	Florence Brass Band Concert (provisional) Stone by the Sea
September 2023	5th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	19th	Estates Sub Management Sub	16th	
October 2023	3rd	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	17th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub	21st	Trafalgar Dinner – TBC

Month	First Tuesday		Third Tuesday		Other	
November 2023	7th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	21st	Estates Sub Management Sub	12th 23rd	Remembrance Sunday Christmas Lights Switch-On
December 2023	5th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee			10th	Civic Carol Service
January 2024			16th	Planning Consult. Committee Estates Sub Management Sub, Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub		
February 2024	6th	General Purposes Committee (including Grants)	13th	Council Planning Consult. Committee		
March 2024	5th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	19th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub		
April 2024	9th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	23rd	Estates Sub Management Sub	20th 20th	Civic Dinner St. George's Day Event

### **Introduction**

1. Each year, the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor are presented with badges to commemorate their year of office, and for them to wear at future Council events. This report considers whether this practice should be extended to the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Consorts.

### **Background**

2. Up to 2019, the Council held a formal "Mayor Making" event as part of the Annual Meeting in May. Since then, this event has been moved to be a part of the Mayor's Civic Sunday, and the appointment of Mayor and Deputy at the Annual Meeting has not been the subject of any formal "ceremony".
3. One of the formalities that has been lost as a result of this change is that gifts are no longer presented to the outgoing Mayoral "team". The Mayor has proposed that this should be replaced with the presentation of "Past Consort" badges to the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor's consorts in recognition of the important roles that they play.

### **Proposal**

4. The current former Mayor/Deputy Mayor badges are prestigious items made of precious metals. It is not proposed that the consorts' badges are produced to the same standard. It is, however, estimated that good quality Past Consort badges could be purchased for around £80 each, providing that at least 5 of each is purchased at one time. This initial cost of around £800 could be met from reductions in the Civic Regalia budget in future years due to the Council no longer purchasing gifts.

### **Recommendation**

5. The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to award commemorative badges to past Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Consorts.
6. If the Committee supports this proposal, an additional budget of £800 will need to be agreed in the current year for the purchase of an initial stock of badges.

Date: 24/01/2023

Time: 18:20:13

## Stone Town Council - Payments

Page: 1

The table below lists payments made by the Council in the period identified, for the Committee's information.

The table includes payments by cheque, direct debit, PayPal, payment card, telephone banking and online banking. It excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts. All amounts exclude VAT.

Payment Date From : 01/12/2022

Payment Date To : 31/12/2022

<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
01/12/2022	68420	Prism Solutions	Line Rental	46.69
01/12/2022	68420	Prism Solutions	Line Rental	44.45
02/12/2022	wp-INV00380833	Water Plus	STN Water Usage Oct / Nov 2022	84.73
02/12/2022	INV-0794	Current Electrical & Property Services	Marquees for Nov 2022	195.00
02/12/2022	INV-0794	Current Electrical & Property Services	Marquees for Nov 2022	805.00
02/12/2022	wp-INV00377494	Water Plus	Water Usage Mount Road - Oct / Nov 2022	28.11
05/12/2022	SBC Rates	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Rates FJC Dec 2022	434.00
05/12/2022	SBC Rates	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Rates STN Dec 2022	225.00
05/12/2022	SBC Rates	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Rates Mkt Sq Dec 2022	35.00
06/12/2022	986606271	British Gas	Amhpi Elec Standing Charges Oct 22	13.79
06/12/2022	119907001	JB Window Cleaner	Window Cleaning Nov 2022	25.00
06/12/2022	303540	Hammond Hygiene Solutions Ltd	Cleaning supplies for FJC	25.28
06/12/2022	119907001	JB Window Cleaner	Window Cleaning Nov 2022	65.00
07/12/2022	V02053800466	EE	Mobile Phone Charges Nov 2022	12.00
07/12/2022	V02053800466	EE	Mobile Phone Charges Nov 2022	12.00
09/12/2022	wp-INV00440300	Water Plus	Water Usage - Newcastle Rd - Oct/Nov 22	125.04
10/12/2022	wp-INV00599212	Water Plus	FJC Water Usage Nov / Dec 2022	68.79
12/12/2022	3794043	British Gas	Town Elec Usage 61 High St 21/10/22 to 27/11/22	40.45

Date: 24/01/2023

Time: 18:20:13

## Stone Town Council - Payments

Page: 2

<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
12/12/2022	3787354	British Gas	Town Elec Pillar 1 30 High St Oct/Nov 22	11.70
13/12/2022	713382022260061	Pozitive Energy	FJC Elec Usage Nov 2022	157.00
13/12/2022	713392022260061	Pozitive Energy	STN Elec Usage Nov 2022	172.40
14/12/2022	119907002	Robert Mincher	Pack of batteries for bank card reader	1.67
16/12/2022	973778170	British Gas	Amphi Elec standing charge Nov 2022	12.50
16/12/2022	13785	All Print Equipment Ltd	Photocopier Usage - Nov 2022	57.23
16/12/2022	17297	Call Handling Services Ltd	Stone Helpline Charges Nov 22	1.18
16/12/2022	038455	MEB Total Ltd	FJC Boiler Call Out 28/11/22	87.88
19/12/2022	7070291505	Stafford Borough Council	Amphi Litter Bins 01/10/22 to 31/12/22	47.94
19/12/2022	7070291506	Stafford Borough Council	T&M / Whitebridge Bins 01/10/22 to 31/12/22	142.70
19/12/2022	7070291507	Stafford Borough Council	Install / remove bollards 01/10/22 to 31/12/22	416.32
19/12/2022	22	J & S Security Services	Switch On Event Security 2 x 8 hrs	108.00
19/12/2022	INV179886954	Zoom Video Comm Inc	ZOOM Subscription Dec 22 / Jan 23	47.96
20/12/2022	713412022260061	Pozitive Energy	STN Gas Usage Nov 22	240.36
20/12/2022	713402022260061	Pozitive Energy	FJC Gas Usage Nov 2022	328.37
21/12/2022	INV-0807	Current Electrical & Property Services	Marquees for Dec 2022	890.00
27/12/2022	wp-INV00317333	Water Plus	FJC Re-billing Water Usage July to Nov 2022	212.13
28/12/2022	743014903/001/12	Virgin Media Business	Broadband Usage 06/12/22 to 05/01/23	50.00
28/12/2022	5813476/CE/34593	The Arch Rent Collectors	Station Rental 25/12/22 to 24/03/23	1,184.25
28/12/2022	167763	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Service Charge Jan 2023	853.02
30/12/2022	VEO1105822	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	Waste Collection Nov 22 FJC	72.92
30/12/2022	VEO1105823	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	Waste Collection Nov 22 STN	60.92
				<u>7,441.78</u>

# Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

## Notes of the meeting held Virtually (on Zoom) on Wednesday 26 October 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillors: J. Davies (Stone Town Council & Hilderstone Parish Council) in the Chair and  
B. Eyre (Yarnfield & Cold Meece Parish Council), P. Jones (Eccleshall Parish Council), B. Fletcher (Stone Rural Parish Council) and R. Jones (Chebsey Parish Council)

Also:

Mr L. Trigg (Town Clerk to Stone Town Council)

Mrs S. Stokes (Clerk to Chebsey Parish Council)

Mr J. Fraser (Clerk to Yarnfield & Cold Meece Parish Council) from Minute Number L23/031

Ms K. St Leger (Clerk to Barlaston Parish Council)

Mrs T. Williams (Assistant Clerk to Stone Town Council)

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### **L23/025    Apologies**

No apologies were received from Councillors

Apologies were received from:

Mr D. Croxford (Parish Clerk to Salt & Enson Parish Council) and

Ms G. Keiher-Knapper (Clerk to Fulford Parish Council)

### **L23/026    Declarations of Interest**

None received.

### **L23/027    Notes of the previous meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 27 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

### **L23/028    Environmental Issues**

The Chairman advised the Liaison Group that this item had been listed to enable the opportunity to bring up any items arising from the consideration of Councillor Kelt's paper (issued at the meeting in April) on environment matters. The paper had provided a useful summary/overview of this important topic and the actions the Town Council was taking.

The Chairman invited the Liaison Group to share updates on environmental work/activity but there were none at this time.

The Chairman acknowledged that climate change was a global issue and the impact town and parish councils could have was limited, except to encourage residents to support local initiatives and to act as good citizens.

**L23/029     School Transport for over 16s**

The Chairman invited Councillor P. Jones to share an update on the County Council's decision to suspend the school transport vacant seat scheme for the over 16s. The Rural School Transport Action Group had the support of the local MP and County Councillors, and a number of local councils had expressed their objections about the loss of the service.

Councillor Jones advised the Group that it had gone quiet in the Eccleshall area, and the matter had not gone any further given that the Government was not supporting an over 16s transport service.

The Town Clerk advised the Liaison Group that the Parish Clerk to Fulford had shared an update after receiving an email (dated 3 October 2022) from the Senior Transport Coordinator at the County Council.

The Senior Transport Coordinator said most of the bus network was provided on a commercial basis and there wasn't the budget to support additional bus services. The County's priority has had to be sustainment of the current network to prevent any further loss of services but if circumstances change (in terms of opportunity to provide a service such as new funding streams), the matter would be reviewed.

The Staffordshire County Council's post [16 statement](#) details the different types of support available to post 16 students, including support that the authority may offer to those living in particularly rural areas.

The Liaison Group concluded that the County were missing the point in that reinstatement of the service did not require additional bus services but to occupy unused seats of buses already running.

The Liaison Group accepted that this was a battle the people of the County had failed to win despite Staffordshire County Council being one of only three County Councils in the Country who were not willing to provide an over 16s transport service.

**L23/030     Heritage Centre**

The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to update the Liaison Group on the development of Stone Heritage Centre.

The Town Clerk reminded the Group that the project involved the conversion of the old fire station into a heritage centre. The current position was that the Town Council had been out to tender for a building contractor. Tenders had been returned with discussions taking place with the tenderers.

The Town Clerk said that he was hopeful the building contract would be awarded in the near future, with timescales of around six weeks to the contractor coming onto site and four months for them to complete the work.

The Town Council wishes to encourage people to visit from a wide area and hopes the heritage centre will be completed at around the same time as the theatre which would be a great advantage to the whole area.

Hopes were high that there will be lots to look forward to in Stone, next year.

**L23/031     Meecebrook Garden Settlement**

The Chairman invited the Liaison Group to engage in general discussion on a new topic on the agenda, Meecebrook Garden Settlement. He said the proposal would affect all of us and particularly those living to the west of Stone.

Councillor R. Jones advised the Liaison Group that 974 acres of Chebsey Parish was falling into the Meecebrook development out of a total acreage of 2,600. The refusal of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to sell its land for the Garden Settlement had been seen as the reason for the push into Chebsey with a good proportion earmarked for development. The parish council was planning to inform its residents that the development would hit the parish with an impact on farms, farmland and greenfield areas.

Eccleshall is on the fringe and taking some of the Meecebrook settlement.

Councillor P. Jones said Eccleshall was talking to Chebsey to keep in touch along with Planners after querying how the Local Plan was going to be affected by Meecebrook – whether additional houses would be needed as well as Meecebrook and what happens if Meecebrook doesn't go ahead.

Mr Fraser said that Meecebrook was, just one part of the Preferred Options proposal the Borough Council had put forward in the Local Plan. It provides the Borough Council with its answer to urban sprawl and the need for additional housing. More housing would be provided through Meecebrook than their Housing Needs Survey had identified, and they are being helpful to the neighbouring areas by taking on additional housing (approximately 2,000).

Mr Fraser suggested there may be benefits to Meecebrook for Stone and Stafford because the towns wouldn't then need to accept additional housing developments. Places like Yarnfield and Eccleshall will be large settlements that would then only have to take 5% housing development according to the options proposal. If Meecebrook were to fall, then the Preferred Options paper falls as well because Planners would have to revisit how they deliver their housing across the borough.

It has been frustrating for Yarnfield who have been chasing the Borough Council for information about how it arrived at a decision that Meecebrook was the preferred option for a Garden Community given that the paper (produced some months/years ago) had identified seven potential sites including Hixon and Gnosall. Mr Fraser has been looking without success for information that informs the reasons the Borough Council had preferred Meecebrook and the reasons the other potential sites had failed.

Mr Fraser advised the Liaison Group that the Chairman of Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council had written to the Borough Council's Chief Executive about the lack of transparency, and Councillor P. Jones has been talking about this as both a Borough and Parish Councillor.



Ms Leger (Parish Clerk to Barlaston) confirmed that she had asked Councillor Gareth Jones (the Chairman of the Planning Committee) to attend a specific meeting for Parish Councillors, to assist them in gaining an understanding of the Local Plan Part 2 consultation document. She will give feedback on the outcome when a response has been received.

From a Stone Town perspective, the Town Council needs to look closely at the transport arrangements for Meecebrook because if they come anywhere near the Eccleshall Road into Stone, the A34 junction is already at capacity and will have an impact on the town.

It was thought that Eccleshall and Stone would benefit from additional footfall in the village and town.

Councillor Fletcher advised the Liaison Group that new development was going to cause problems as no one likes change, but if change happens, everyone wants to understand the reasons. He is encouraging people to make enquiries themselves.

He suggested waiting to see what happens and to keep in touch in between times. One good thing was that if the development does happen it will reduce the number of smaller developments in villages. One cluster of development, similar to the New Town principle (but on a smaller scale), taking all the housing requirements for the borough, may be a good idea.

## **L23/032    Ongoing Items of Interest**

### **a.    Planning including Neighbourhood Plans**

The Chairman invited the Liaison Group to share updates on planning issues and neighbourhood plans. He said that Neighbourhood Plans were mentioned in the Local Plan Part 2 and their impact can be discussed in due course.

There were no items for discussion on this occasion.

### **b.    HS2**

The Chairman invited updates on HS2.

Mr Fraser (Parish Clerk to Yarnfield and Cold Meece) advised the Liaison Group that he and the Town Clerk had discussed with HS2 representatives' the wish to arrange tripartite meetings between Stone town, Chebsey and Yarnfield & Cold Meece, the original partitioners to HS2.

He had talked to Joe Wilson, the HS2 Communications Officer, about regulating the meetings and the representatives of the three parish councils coming together on set dates (to be confirmed).

Yarnfield & Cold Meece parish were more interested in talking to the HS2 contractors – Keir and Balfour Beatty – than HS2 directly. They wanted to know the detail of what they were doing and how the

development plans were progressing on the realignment of Yarnfield Lane, the phasing plan and transport logistics etc. HS2 don't have any of this information.

Councillor R. Jones said that the realignment of the Eccleshall Road at the motorway bridge will have a major impact, as it had in Cold Norton when the bridge was repaired over four and a half months, causing a lot of problems in Yarnfield and Chebsey. The issue for Chebsey was the impact of this build because installing a new bridge and realigning the Eccleshall Road was significant.

Mr Fraser advised the Liaison Group that he would be sending a report to Staffordshire County Council Highways Department by the end of the week requesting a footpath and cycle route along the length of Yarnfield Lane. The County has received £5.6 million of HS2 funding for highways improvements in areas affected and Yarnfield Parish has submitted an expression of interest to say it would like a cycle route along its entire length. The partitioning process secured an agreement that HS2 would provide a cycle route and footpath along the realigned lane and railhead. Parishioners would like this to be joined up with the A34 and Yarnfield. Hopefully the request will be received positively.

A copy of the submission will be shared with the Stone Town Clerk and the Parish Clerk to Stone Rural.

Councillor Fletcher advised the Liaison Group that Stone Rural was in support of the proposal but doesn't believe it will be possible given the financial constraints and the money the County has available from HS2. Widening the carriage way and installing a cycle lane and footpath are ideal but questioned whether it had been costed.

Mr Fraser said that part of the report will include the costs of the work.

c. Highways, Traffic and Parking

The Chairman invited updates on highways, traffic, and parking matters.

The Chairman shared details of an email exchange with the Borough Council about parking charges when visits straddle the change in tariff from the hourly rate to the £1 flat rate charge after 6pm. He was told that if parking at 5.15pm for three hours, the charge that would apply was three hours at the pre 6pm rate, rather than the cheaper charge that applies after 6pm. There is an anomaly, and he will keep the Group updated after receiving a response.

d. Policing

The Chairman invited updates on Policing matters.

It was reported that there had been a change in Police Community Support Officer in Eccleshall.

After anti-social behaviour issues in isolated areas of Barlaston the parish council was considering employing a company called WCCCTV, a supplier of mobile surveillance systems which can be moved around the village. A meeting was due to be held very soon.

Barlaston was also arranging a monthly coffee morning that would combine a surgery with their local Police Community Support Officer.

The Town Clerk advised the Liaison Group that the Police sometimes use the Town Council's CCTV system but there were no regular updates on the effectiveness of the CCTV systems in the town.

e. Leisure and Recreation

The Chairman invited updates on matters relating to leisure and recreation.

The Chairman advised the Liaison Group that there was a display in Stone library on Victoria Park in Stafford (which was unrelated to Stone). He said there should be further publicity about the redevelopment of Westbridge Park (which was of interest to Stone residents), next year.

In Hilderstone the play area was showing signs of wear and tear and the Chairman asked for advice on dealing with its maintenance.

After two years of challenging the Borough Council about a plot of land designated as green space, Barlaston Parish Council had finally been told that in principle it could take on the land. The parish council was considering the figure that needed to be included in the budget and acknowledged that costs had increased significantly.

f. Commercial and Retail Activity

The Chairman invited updates on matters relating to leisure and recreation.

The Chairman said there was lots of pressure on the various trades and in Stone a couple of shops had been lost. The High Street however remains busy and attractive. He said the Walton shops were fully occupied.

It was reported that in Eccleshall some shops had been lost.

Barlaston residents were notified of a seven-day closure of Station Road to enable work to be undertaken to the railway line. Residents complained to their County Councillor about it and the timespan was shortened to a 48-hour period. The loss of revenue to the shops during this time however was 75%, due to the way the road closure had been installed. People didn't know the shops were open.

No shops have been lost in Barlaston but the chemist, which has been sold to a chain, has warned residents that if they don't use it, they will lose it. Unfortunately, they don't open on Saturday mornings, and they can't get the staff either.

The Chairman said that County Councillor Mrs Hood had reported that Stone Business Park was very busy, and premises were at a premium which was encouraging for all.

g. Future Governance

The Chairman advised the Liaison Group that he awaited with interest any further developments in the structure of local government.

The impact of parliamentary boundary changes to constituencies was awaited. The Chairman said he couldn't understand the rationale of putting Stone and Great Wyrley into the same peanut-shaped geographical area.

**L23/033     Joint Calendar of Events**

The Chairman asked parish council representatives to share the dates of their events to enable them to be added to the Joint calendar.

King Charles III Coronation would be discussed in 2023.

**L23/034     Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 25 January 2023 at 3pm, via Zoom.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance before closing the meeting.