

# Stone Town Council

## Minutes of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 14 February 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor J. Powell in the Chair and  
Councillors: K. Argyle, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton,  
Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, P. Leason and C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg and Mrs T. Williams

**ABSENT:** Councillors: A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, M. Green, J. Hickling,  
R. Townsend and S. Walley

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Before the meeting began Councillor Mrs Jill Hood led prayers.

**C23/085** Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, Mrs L. Davies, M. Green,  
J. Hickling and R. Townsend.

**C23/086** Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

None received

**C23/087** Representations from Members of the Public

None

**C23/088** Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 13  
December 2022 (Minute Numbers C23/076 – C23/084), be approved as a  
correct record.

**C23/089** Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 13  
December 2022 (Minute Numbers GP23/128 – GP23/147), were noted.

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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.

- b) The minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 13 December 2022 (Minute Numbers PC23/043 – PC23/048), were noted.
- c) The minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 17 January 2023 (Minute Numbers PC23/049 – PC23/054), were noted with advice from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that there had been a change to the minutes (since their issue with the agenda) to reflect inclusion of new planning applications that had been registered with the Borough Council but not yet received (in the form of consultation invitations) by the Town Council.

**C23/090 To consider the Council’s Budget for 2023-24 and to set the Council Tax for the Year**

The Town Council considered the Town Clerk’s budget report\*, which was based on the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee on 7 February 2023.

The Town Council considered a Proposal\* on the ‘Revenue Budget 2023-24 to 2025-26’ including the budget, precept and Council Tax for 2023-24, indicative budgets for 2024-25 and 2025-26, and recommendation for the wording of the Council Tax leaflet.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the key points to note were the effects of inflation and in particular energy inflation which had been difficult to manage within the budget.

The Town Council accepted the wording of the Council Tax leaflet (to be produced by the Borough Council) with the following small adjustments: To add clarity to the sentence referencing the King’s Coronation event (point 3, paragraph 3), and to state the provision of ‘litter bins’ rather than just dog bins (point 3, paragraph 5).

**RESOLVED:**

1. The Budget recommended by the General Purposes Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023, and set out in the Clerk’s report to this meeting and the attached detailed recommendations, is agreed.
2. The 2023-24 Council Tax for this Council’s purposes should be £58.15 for a Band D property, an increase for the year of £1.64, with indicative Council Tax levels of £59.84 and £61.58 for the following two years. This would result in a precept on Stafford Borough Council for 2023-24 of

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£369,163. Local Council Tax Support Grant of £21,552 would be added to this.

3. The wording for the 2023-24 Council Tax leaflet should be:

*“Stone Town Council provides services for the people and town of Stone.*

*These services include the provision of community facilities, such as the Frank Jordan and Stone Station community centres, allotment sites at Newcastle Road and Mount Road, and the Crown Meadow Nature Reserve and amphitheatre.*

*The 2023-24 budget, despite having to deal with excessive levels of inflation, especially in respect of energy costs, includes additional funding to provide further improvements at Crown Meadow and support for the King’s Coronation event. This is in addition to the development and operation of a new Heritage Centre within the exciting redevelopment at Crown Wharf.*

*Investing in and working to promote a vibrant town and encourage visitors is a key Town Council priority. In order to support this, the Council organises regular events such as the Town Market and monthly Craft Market together with town centre events such as the Music Festival, Stone by the Sea, the Classic Car event and the St Georges Day celebration. Christmas lights are provided in the High Street and at Walton, with the Council’s annual switch-on event being one of highlights of the town year. The High Street environment is enhanced by the Council’s provision of hanging baskets and bunting along the High Street, and newly refurbished noticeboards and fingerposts throughout the town.*

*The Council provides bus shelters, benches, litter bins and dog bins throughout the area, and takes responsibility for the upkeep of many local amenities and planted areas. It also provides grants and other support to help charitable and community organisations such as the Stone Community Hub, supports various festivals, and Council staff supply regular support and advice to local residents.*

*By considering the impact of every planning application, the Council seeks to develop and conserve the town, and the approval of its Neighbourhood Plan in May 2021 will help the*

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*Council to shape and protect the future of Stone for years to come.*

*At its monthly meetings the Council welcomes questions from the public and sets aside time to listen and respond. Assistance with public questions will gladly be given by the Council's staff."*

4. The Clerk is authorised to seek tenders/quotations, place orders and make payments in accordance with this budget, the Council's policies, and Financial Regulations.

**C23/091 Local Government Transparency Code 2015  
Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

The information\* for Quarter ending 31 December 2022 was noted.

**C23/092 Civic Announcements**

The Civic Announcements, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

**C23/093 Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements**

The Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's reports of engagements, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

The Town Mayor drew the Committee's attention to the Charity Pig Race which had been a great success and had raised an impressive amount of money for his Charities.

The Town Mayor said that Christ Church's Advent Window Openings had again been wonderful through December 2022, and his and the Mayoress's visit to St Mary's Home on Christmas Day had been one they would never forget. They were exceedingly warmly welcomed by the staff and residents and found the occasion to be a happy, humbling and emotional experience.

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

**C23/094 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.

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**C23/095**    **Confidential Committee Minutes**

- a) The confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 13 December 2022, Minute Numbers GP23/128, GP23/145 and GP23/146 and GP23/147 were noted.

**TOWN MAYOR**

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