



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

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15 Station Road
STONE
ST15 8JP

31 May 2023

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2023 at 7:05pm**, or on the rising of the Council meeting, if later.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence, and to consider the approval of any reasons given for absence under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

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 23 May 2023, Minute No's GP24/001 – GP24/019 (attached).

8. **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

There are no sub-committee minutes for consideration.

9. **Police & Fire Commissioner**

To welcome Mr Ben Adams, Police and Fire Commissioner, to Stone, to share information and discuss police resources and the recent increase in anti-social behaviour and crime in the town.

10. **Dissolution of the Management Sub-Committee**

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

11. **Heritage Centre**

To consider an update on the Stone Heritage Centre.

12. **Town Council Payments**

The list of payments for May 2023 will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

13. **Update from Working Groups:**

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

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

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group – J. Davies

Stone ATC – Town Mayor & one vacancy – J. Davies

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

Stafford & Stone Access Group – Cllr T. Kelt

Stone Common Plot Trustees – Cllrs: A. Burgess, J. Hood, T. Kelt, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Cllrs: J. Battrick, J. Hood and J. Powell

SPCA Executive Committee – M. Green

Stone Traders' Group Directors Meeting – Cllrs: A. Burgess, I. Fordham, J. Hood and T. Kelt (Councillors attend on a rotating basis)

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 the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 23 May 2023

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, A Burgess, J. Davies, L. Davies, K. Dawson,
I. Fordham, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, J. Metters, J. Powell and C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg & T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: P. Leason, A. Mottershead, N. Powell and R. Townsend

Before the meeting began the Chairman invited the Town Mayor to update the Committee on an occurrence of flooding in Stone's Friendship Twinning town of Bagnacavallo, Italy.

Councillor Davies read a letter he had received from Gabriella Foschini, President of the Twinning Association, sent in reply to a note of support he had sent her. Madam Foschini said the situation was terrible but thankfully no loss of life, with surface water flooding from heavy rainfall affecting Bagnacavallo as well as a number of surrounding villages/settlements. Councillor Davies said that he would send a good wishes message to the Mayor of Bagnacavallo.

GP24/001 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: P. Leason, A. Mottershead, N. Powell and R. Townsend.

Where a reason for absence is given, this reason was approved for the purposes of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

GP24/002 Declarations of Interests

None

GP24/003 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP24/004 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Jill Hood

The Chairman invited Councillor Hood to address the Committee.

Potholes

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that the County Highways Department had invited County Councillors to put forward five potholes in their areas for a fast-tracked residual repair. She said she was disappointed to be limited to five – making it a difficult decision – but had chosen: Valley Road, Newcastle Road, High

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Street, Trent Road, Millennium Way and Church Street. The deep pothole on the Uttoxeter Road would be filled as an addition to this list.

King's Coronation Event

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that she had given a report to the County Council on the Town Council King's Coronation celebration in Stone on Sunday 7 May, which had been a fantastic day and a great success.

The celebration had included a live concert which had been very well attended by local people and those from further afield with businesses enjoying very swift trade.

HS2

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that she had received confirmation that Pirehill Lane would not be considered as a haul road for HS2 construction traffic. She said there were issues with the route that had not been resolved and this was very good news for the people of Walton.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP24/005 **To receive the report of Borough Councillors**

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that Councillor Aiden Godfrey had been elected as Stafford Borough Council's Leader and he had formed a Cabinet of eight including three Stone Councillors. Councillor Kenney has been appointed Deputy Leader, Councillor Hood had been appointed Portfolio Holder for Communities and Councillor Fordham appointed Portfolio Holder for the Environment.

Councillor Fordham said that although their brief was borough wide, it was noteworthy that Stone town now had a stronger representation at borough level than had been the case for a number of years.

GP24/006 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

GP24/007 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 April 2023 (Minute Numbers GP23/193 – GP23/212), be approved as a correct record.

GP24/008 **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

There were no Sub-Committee Minutes.

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GP24/009 **Sub-Committee Terms of Reference**

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

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Management Sub-Committee could be dissolved and its responsibilities largely absorbed within the General Purposes Committee to reduce the number of sub-committee meetings and possibly enable all sub-committee meetings to take place on the same evening.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee terms of reference circulated with the agenda are approved, with the exception of the Management Sub-Committee, which should be removed and, wherever possible, its responsibilities absorbed into those of the General Purposes Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk report to the next meeting of this Committee on 6th June 2023 setting out proposals for any elements of the Management Sub-Committee's responsibilities that cannot be absorbed by the General Purposes Committee and proposing a new meeting timetable to take account of the change.

GP24/010 **Appointment of Members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen to the following Sub-Committees:**

RESOLVED: To appoint the following Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members to the Sub Committees for the municipal year 2023-24:

Tourism & Town Promotion

Chairman: Councillor J. Hood

Vice Chairman: Councillor A. Mottershead

Members: Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, B. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Powell and C. Thornicroft

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Environment

Chairman: Councillor R. Townsend

Vice Chairman: Councillor T. Kelt

Members: Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, B. Kenney, J. Metters, J. Powell and N. Powell

Estates

Chairman: Councillor J. Powell

Vice Chairman: Councillor A. Best

Members: Councillors: J. Battrick, L. Davies, I. Fordham, J. Hood, P. Leason, A. Mottershead, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

Mayor's Charity

Chairman: Councillor J. Davies

Vice Chairman: Councillor R. Townsend

Members: Councillors: L. Davies, I. Fordham, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, J. Metters and J. Powell

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

GP24/011 Appointment to Steering/Working Groups:

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments to Town Council Steering and Working Groups for the municipal year 2023-24:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

No appointments were made to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group

Members: Councillors: J. Davies, J. Hood, R. Kenney and P. Leason

Co-opted Members: S. Nuttall, S. Booth, T. Cockin and H. Frost

Engagement with Young People

Members: Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, K. Dawson and J. Powell

GP24/012 Appointment to Outside Bodies

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

Stone ATC (Mayor plus 1 member)

Councillors: Town Mayor with one post remaining vacant

Age Concern Stone & District (2 members)

Councillors: J. Davies and C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group (1 member)

Councillor T. Kelt

Trustees of the Town Hall Charity (all members)

All Councillors

Stone Community Hub Group (3 members)

Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Hood and J. Powell

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group (1 member)

Councillor J. Davies

Stone Traders Group Directors' Meeting (Councillors attend on a rotating basis)

Councillors: A. Burgess, I. Fordham, J. Hood and T. Kelt

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

Stone Common Plot Trustees (5 members for a four-year term)

Councillor C. Thornicroft (term runs to May 2026)

Councillors: A. Burgess, J. Hood, T. Kelt and R. Townsend (all members' terms run to May 2027)

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Richard Vernon Trust (3 members for a four-year term)

Councillors: J. Davies, P. Leason and J. Powell (all members' terms run to 2027)

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

Member: M. Green (new appointment to be made in December 2023)

GP24/013 **Covid-19 Reflection Orchard**

The Committee considered the wording of the Plaque in the Reflection Orchard which was an item carried forward from the previous meeting of the Committee (Reference Minute Number: GP23/204).

A copy of the suggested wording prepared by Councillor Townsend had been attached to the agenda for the meeting.

It was also suggested that a secondary plaque be placed on the bench to indicate when the orchard was opened, and that it was funded by Stone Town Council.

RESOLVED: That the following wording prepared by Councillor Townsend be installed on the plaque in the Reflection Orchard on Crown Meadow:

'You are invited to take a moment of rest and reflection to remember the people of Stone affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. These cherry trees and bench are dedicated to those who lost their lives and to those who worked tirelessly for others'.

RESOLVED: That a secondary plaque be placed on the bench to indicate when the orchard was opened, and that it was funded by Stone Town Council.

GP24/014 **Heritage Centre**

The Committee considered an update on Stone Heritage Centre following the appointment of a main contractor for the building works.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the builders were on site and working. He was aware that they had installed the new stairs and had prepared the window openings for secondary glazing to be installed.

GP24/015 **Town Council Payments**

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 March to 30 April 2023.

GP24/016 **Update from Working Groups:**

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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

Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group

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

Engagement with Young People

Councillor Dawson confirmed that no meeting had taken place.

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GP24/017 **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 no meeting had taken place but a new date would soon be arranged.

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies informed the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

Age Concern Stone & District

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

Stafford & Stone Access Group

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

Stone Common Plot Trustees

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

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

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

SPCA Executive Committee

M. Green was not available to give a report.

Stone Traders Group Directors' Meeting

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that he had a date for the next meeting of the Stone Traders Group Directors' which would be circulated.

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

GP24/018 **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.

GP24/019 **Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 April 2023, Minute Numbers GP23/193, GP23/211 and GP23/212 be approved.

CHAIRMAN

Introduction

1. At the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 23rd May 2023, a decision was taken to dissolve the Management Sub-Committee and absorb its responsibilities into the General Purposes Committee.
2. This report deals with the actions needed as a result of that decision.

Background

3. As the Management Sub-Committee was already reporting to the General Purposes Committee, most of its responsibilities can just be absorbed back into the main Committee without any further actions required. Even where the Management Sub-Committee is specifically mentioned in a Council policy or procedure, that document will not need to be updated until its next scheduled review provided that the responsibilities identified can be fully absorbed into General Purposes.
4. Some of the Management Sub-Committee's responsibilities cannot, however, be directly absorbed by the General Purposes Committee. These specifically relate to the Council's disciplinary procedure, grievance procedure and complaints procedure. The former Sub-Committee's responsibilities under these procedures, and recommendations for updating them, are set out below.
5. It should be noted that the decisions made by this Committee will be active immediately. Revised versions of the procedures themselves will be presented to the next meeting of this Committee for information and any further review.
6. In addition to realigning the responsibilities of the former Management Sub-Committee, its dissolution provides an opportunity to review the programme of meetings. This is also addressed below.

Disciplinary Procedure

7. Currently the procedure requires requests for appeals against disciplinary action to be made to the Chairman of the Management Sub-Committee, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Management Sub-Committee to sit on the Appeals Panel (with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the General Purposes Committee).
8. This can be amended for appeals to be made to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee forming the Appeals Panel along with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee.

Grievance Procedure

9. Similarly to the disciplinary procedure, the grievance procedure requires requests for appeals against grievance decisions to be made to the Chairman of the Management Sub-Committee, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Management Sub-Committee to sit on the Appeals Panel (with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the General Purposes Committee).
10. This can also be amended for appeals to be made to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee forming the Appeals Panel along with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee.

Complaints Procedure

11. The Complaints Procedure currently requires the Management Sub-Committee to sit as the Complaints Sub-Committee to hear complaints from members of the public.
12. This can be replaced by an ex-officio Complaints Sub-Committee made up from the six Chairmen of Committees and Sub-Committees plus the Vice-Chairman of the General Purposes Committee. These could be substituted by Vice-Chairmen should any conflict of interest arise in respect of a specific complaint.

Programme of Meetings

13. The removal of one Sub-Committee offers the opportunity to reduce the number of evenings required for meetings.
14. Currently, the Estates Sub-Committee is programmed to meet on the same evening as the Management Sub-Committee. It is recommended that the Estates Sub-Committee meetings are now moved to the same evening as the meetings of the Tourism and Town Promotion and Environment Sub-Committees.
15. A proposed, revised meeting timetable is attached to this report setting out the impact of this change.

Recommendations

16. The Committee is recommended to agree that:
 - a. Appeals under the disciplinary and grievance procedures are made to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, and that the appeals panels under both procedures are made up of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the General Purposes and Planning Consultative Committees.
 - b. The Complaints Sub-Committee is changed to an ex-officio group made up of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, as set out in paragraph 12 above.
 - c. The programme of meetings for 2023-24 is updated as attached.

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 Estates Sub Mayor’s Charity		
July 2023	4th	Council General Purposes Committee (including Grants) Planning Consult. Committee Richard Vernon Charity			8th 9th	Puppet Festival Civic Sunday & Mayor Making
August 2023	1st	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	15th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub Estates Sub	9th to 12th 13th	Stone by the Sea Florence Brass Band Concert
September 2023	5th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee			23rd	Classic Car Event
October 2023	3rd	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee	17th	Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub Estates Sub	28th	Trafalgar Dinner

Month	First Tuesday		Third Tuesday		Other	
November 2023	7th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee			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 Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub Estates 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 Estates Sub		
April 2024	9th	Council General Purposes Committee Planning Consult. Committee			20th 20th	Civic Dinner St. George's Day Event