



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

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STONE
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28 June 2023

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 4 JULY 2023 at 7:00pm** for consideration of the matters itemised in the following agenda.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Agenda

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

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

4. **To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 6 June 2023, Minute Numbers C24/016 – C24/027 (attached)**
5. **To receive the draft minutes and decisions of the under mentioned Committees:**
 - a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 June 2023, Minute Numbers GP24/020 – GP24/033 (attached)

b) Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 6 June 2023, Minute Numbers PC24/007 – PC24/012 (attached)

6. **To receive the forthcoming Civic Announcements** (attached).
7. **To receive the Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements** (attached).

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Town Council 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

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 6 June 2023

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

Officers: L. Trigg and T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, K. Dawson and P. Leason

Before the meeting began the Mayoress, Councillor Lin Davies, led prayers.

C24/016 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, K. Dawson and P. Leason.

C24/017 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

None received.

C24/018 Acceptance of Office

The Town Clerk acknowledged receipt of the Deputy Town Mayor's signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C24/019 Representations from Members of the Public

None

C24/020 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 16 May 2023 (Minute Numbers C24/001 – C24/015), be approved as a correct record.

* 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.

C24/021 Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23 May 2023 (Minute Numbers GP24/001 – GP24/019), were noted.
- b) The minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 23 May 2023 (Minute Numbers PC24/001 – PC24/006), were noted.

C24/022 Internal Auditor's Report 2022-23

The Council considered the following documents which had been circulated with the agenda, prior to the meeting:

- a. Formal Internal Audit submission to the External Auditors*
- b. Report from Internal Auditor*

The Town Clerk reported that the Council is required to consider an Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and accounts for submission to the External Auditors.

RESOLVED: To note the Internal Auditor's report and submission to External Audit.

C24/023 Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

The Council considered the Annual Governance Statement* which must be approved prior to consideration of the Council's accounts.

RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Governance Statement and supporting explanations for submission to the External Auditor for the year 2022-23.

C24/024 Council Accounts 2022-23

The Council considered the Town Clerk's report* and the accounting statement* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- a) To approve the Council's Accounts for 2022-23 as set out in the report of the Town Clerk, including the use of the rollover reserve to allow the transfer of budgets between financial years and the proposed use of those budgets in 2023-24.
- b) To note the variances between the forecast outturn for 2022-23 and the actual outturn, and the reasons identified for the major variances.

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- c) To approve the financial statement for submission to the Council's External Auditors.

C24/025 Local government Transparency Code 2015
Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014

The information* for Quarter ending 31 March 2023 was noted.

C24/026 Civic Announcements

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

C24/027 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 advised the Town Council that he had attended the Samaritans Annual General Meeting in Stafford on 18 May 2023 and was reminded of the invaluable service provided by the Charity. The Charity said it was very grateful for the support received from Stone.

The Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Townsend, thanked the Town Council for appointing him as Deputy Mayor.

He informed the Town Council that he had attended the Stone and District Scouts Annual General Meeting on 24 May 2023 which was very informative and provided a strong reminder of the popularity of the movement and the dedication of its members.

TOWN MAYOR

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Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 6 June 2023

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

Officers: L. Trigg & T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies (Mayoral Duty), L. Davies (Mayoral Duty) and
P. Leason

GP24/020 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies (Mayoral Duty)
L. Davies (Mayoral Duty), and P. Leason.

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

GP24/021 Declarations of Interests

None

GP24/022 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP24/023 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Jill Hood

The Chairman invited Councillor Hood to address the Committee.

Walton Island

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that the resurfacing works and collapsed
drain repairs on Walton Island would be starting tomorrow (7 June 2023), taking
13 weeks to complete. She said that local businesses had expressed concern about
the effects on their trade and she had asked highways officers for answers to the
questions that had been asked of her.

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that officers had been vague about the
diversion routes but assured her they would forward them when available.

HS2

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that there was currently a lot of
uncertainty with HS2. After being told HS2 had been suspended for two years, civil
works had continued. After being told Pirehill Lane would not be considered as a

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haul road for HS2 construction traffic she now learns from the HS2 Press Office that Pirehill Lane may still be included in the Schedule 17 routes.

Councillor Hood has written to Staffordshire County Council and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Alan White, and must now wait to see what develops. She said it was worrying that on Friday 9 June the Schedule 17 routes were due to be heard by the County Council.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that she was hoping Pirehill Lane would not be listed.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP24/024 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

Councillor Fordham advised the Committee that due to the close proximity of the last General Purposes Committee meeting, there was nothing new to report.

GP24/025 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP24/026 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23 May 2023 (Minute Numbers GP24/001 – GP24/019), be approved as a correct record.

GP24/027 Minutes of Sub-Committees

There were no Sub-Committee Minutes.

GP24/028 Police & Fire Commissioner

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Staffordshire Police and Fire Commissioner, Mr Ben Adams, and invited him to talk about the services provided by Staffordshire Police, and specifically about anti-social behaviour and crime in the town.

Mr Adams thanked the Committee for inviting him to attend the meeting.

He informed the Committee that the world had changed since he came into office two years ago. He has twelve months left of a three-year term which was reduced by one year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He said that a lot of positive things were going on with the Police and Fire Services and he was anxious to see these continue.

He informed the Committee that Staffordshire boasted low crime rates overall, but the situation with anti-social behaviour wasn't quite as commendable and remained a priority area for him. He disclosed that there had been a shift in the demographic exhibiting this behaviour with a notable 30% decrease among young people in public places contrasted by an increase in the 25–40-year age bracket

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where the incidents generally involved noise, dogs and neighbour disputes. The trend could relate to more people working from home or an increased awareness of their surroundings.

Mr Adams highlighted the encouraging news that crime in Stone had reduced by 13% in the last twelve months (over the previous 12) which was positive when considering the nationwide increase in crime following the pandemic.

Mr Adams advised the Committee that the four key points in his plan (made two years ago) mirroring public feedback on the changes needed in Staffordshire are:

- To tackle anti-social behaviour
- The need for more police officers to be out in the community
- Quicker responses to incidents when reported
- For phones to be answered more quickly

The improvements he believed had been made so far include:

- Improved responses to 999 calls
- Introduction of a triage system for 101 calls where most calls are answered within a few minutes and callers who are required to stay on the line might expect to wait around 20 minutes. Around a third of all calls are not police related and the triage system enables these to be addressed thereby freeing up the queue for those in genuine need of the service.
- Live Chat incident reporting which is working well as individuals can leave messages and receive responses via the website. This system provides a means for the public to report valuable information to the police.
- By May next year Staffordshire Police Force will employ 2,000 officers. A significant number are part of the nationwide government funded initiative to recruit 20,000 new officers, and an additional 100 officers (approximate) are financed by local taxpayers. Many of these officers are stationed within Local Policing Teams.
- Local Policing Teams now independently manage their response units, as opposed to units being despatched from Cannock, Stoke on Trent and Burton on Trent. Each Local Policing Team is led by a Chief Inspector who oversees locally set policing activities.

Mr Adams advised the Committee that Tim Norbury the Deputy Commander had asked him to convey the increase in patrols during the weekends. There was now a dedicated 'Safer Nights' operation in place, which is significantly benefiting Stone's nighttime economy. This has led to a decrease in the number of incidents occurring in the town centre. Colleagues in the Licensing Department have reported fewer incidents and are considering the potential appointment of a dedicated town centre officer to maintain order from Monday to Friday.

Mr Adams discussed the surge in 'protest' related policing, a topic that has gained national prominence and has subsequently increased the demand on Staffordshire police services. He drew attention to issues in Cannock following the housing of asylum seekers in local hotels, and an industrial protest around a factory with sites in Lichfield and Tamworth.

Mr Adams remarked on the surprising prevalence of crime in relationship contexts – domestic violence and crimes involving acquaintances. Additionally, he highlighted concerns regarding young and vulnerable individuals being an 'easy

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target' to be lured into criminal activities.

He said that annually, he has committed approximately £8million towards supporting victims (especially those of domestic abuse), diversification activities for the young, services for children who go missing, children at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, and measures to prevent or limit demands on the police by supporting ex-offenders to reduce reoffending.

Mr Adams clarified his role, which is external to the police service. He is responsible for recruiting the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer. He oversees the budget and seeks funding through the precept. Last year less financial support was requested than any other area in the country, although he still sees the sum (£12.50) as being substantial in the current economic climate.

£6million has been allocated towards addressing high harm crime which includes children's services handling online child abuse. The teams involved in this area comprise forensic experts, IT personnel and specialist staff. He said the Force were balancing high visibility policing with high-risk services, which, fortunately, impacted only a small proportion of the community.

Mr Adams said that Staffordshire's current situation was not ideal. Things went awry during the Covid-19 crisis, but the Chief Constable is steering the services back towards the level of excellence that should be expected. The police have undergone a special programme that focuses on identifying vulnerability and prioritising risky cases. There have been issues with the time available for proper investigations due to a response model that necessitated police rushing around the county under emergency conditions.

Mr Adams is hopeful that based on the feedback so far, Staffordshire might be the first service to emerge from this process, with confirmation expected in the autumn. Regardless, he emphasised that they are now a completely different police force, one where local leaders make decisions for local interests and specialists deal with high harm crimes.

Road safety remains a priority, with a surge in motorbike incidents being a cause for concern. More investment is being channelled towards speed cameras and efforts to tackle uninsured, intoxicated, and drug influenced drivers.

Mr Adams advised the Committee that the Fire Service was doing fine, keeping fire stations open and firefighter numbers up. They have expanded their role to responding to calls from people who have suffered falls. The ambulance service is facing its own challenges with slow response times putting people at risk of hypothermia, dehydration, and in serious need of hospitalisation. In such instances, the fire service has been stepping in to handle some of the calls initially meant for the ambulance service.

Generally, they provide an excellent service, often arriving on site within half an hour. With the use of specialist equipment, they can help individuals back into their beds or chairs, hopefully preventing a hospital admission. During these visits, they also carry out a fire safety check of the premises. Looking ahead there is a clear need for more of this integrated approach.

The fire service is a highly capable professional body that not only fulfils its primary role admirably but also has the capacity to assist other organisations. There is

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anticipation for a government White Paper that will enable expansion of these collaborative efforts over the coming years. This is pioneering work, and it is an area to watch closely.

At the end of Mr Adams presentation he invited the Committee to ask questions:

Questions

High Street

There is longstanding local concern about unauthorised vehicles accessing the High Street and the resulting risk of serious accident, potentially endangering school children who often converge there when a high volume of traffic is present. This is a worrying situation that requires immediate attention, given the dangerous situations that have been witnessed.

How might the Police and Crime Commissioner assist the Town Council in dealing with this situation via access controls or improving levels of enforcement?

Answer

Mr Adams questioned whether direct intervention by the Police would represent a good use of resources. PCSOs don't have the power of enforcement and manning a gate wasn't an option.

The police are currently considering the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system, which may enable management of the situation.

He acknowledged this was a complex issue worsened by food businesses with takeaway delivery drivers and customers parking on the High Street close to their destination.

Mr Adams said he was fully committed to staying engaged in discussions to find an effective solution. While the police are aware of the issue, their capabilities are stretched when dealing with higher-priority responsibilities.

He said the town's patrolling officer might have some capacity, but issuing fines, while possibly changing some people's attitudes, is unlikely to eradicate the problem entirely. Implementing a solution like ANPR may be more promising.

The Town Council acknowledged the local police efforts in conducting occasional operations. However, a sustainable solution requires some form of funding or an amplified voice on behalf of the Town Council to influence decision-makers.

Mr Adams said as Police and Fire Commissioner, he was committed to advocating for resolution as it could prevent potential harm.

He said contacting the County Councillor is an essential step in reaching out to the Highways Authority. Still, the solution should be a collaborative effort, in which the Police will play a part.

The Committee informed him that Stone has one of the best groups of police officers and were sorry to be losing one of its longer standing officers who was very highly thought of.

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Perception of the Police

We appreciate the hard work of our police officers in Stone and their increased efforts in communication is acknowledged and appreciated.

The move towards embracing digital and social media channels and productive interactions with PCSOs represent positive changes.

However, there is still a perception among many residents that policing is low level, lacking in visibility, unresponsive, and that the absence of a physical police station is a disadvantage. How can you combat this public perception?

Answer

Mr Adams advised the Committee that the feeling of safety was intrinsically linked to perceptions of one's local area. While most people are unlikely to experience serious crime, the stories we hear can lead to fears about becoming the next victim. Thus, addressing the perception of crime is very important.

He said that a recent initiative, a telephone survey conducted (nine months ago) in collaboration with the Chief Constable, was an attempt to gauge public sentiment on police visibility, public confidence, and the perception of fair treatment. The mixed responses provided valuable insights and a benchmark for comparison with other national regions. Regrettably, many of these responses were negative.

However, upon repeating the survey four months later, after the introduction of the Local Policing model, a significant shift in public sentiment was noted. A 9% increase in people feeling better informed and reassured demonstrates the power of increased visibility and localised messaging.

Mr Adams reaffirmed the commitment to doing a better job and was eagerly awaiting the additional officers (upon completion their training) and them becoming an active presence on our streets. However, he said that it was important to note that a visible police presence may mean different things to different people. For some, an absence of the police signified a peaceful area, while others may associate a visible presence with safety. Balancing these perceptions can be challenging, given the vast area to cover and prioritising more pressing issues.

However, he foresees an enhancement in police visibility which many residents may have already noticed, and the police are keen to hear reflections on this improvement. Also, improving the experience with their contact hub was a priority. If someone takes the time to report a concern, they must ensure a prompt response, contributing to a positive overall experience.

He said that feedback and engagement were vital as they make improvements and must continue the discussion to ensure expectations of residents are met.

Recording of Statistics

Are the statistics based on crimes reported or inbound calls to 101?

Answer

The statistics are based on legitimate crimes reported, excluding those calls that

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are not related to police matters (as identified by the triage system).

Crime recording has seen an increase since the lifting of the Covid-19 lockdown measures although general crime levels hadn't exceeded pre-Covid levels until recently. The nature of the crimes has shifted somewhat towards violent crimes, especially those related to domestic situations.

Domestic abuse in Staffordshire during the pandemic, despite national concerns, was lower. However, it's now apparent that individuals previously trapped in troubled relationships, unable to seek aid or refuge at that time, are now reaching out for assistance.

They have dedicated £5million to bolster domestic abuse support services and are seeing shifts in how certain incidents are classified. For example, neighbourhood incidents previously classified as anti-social behaviour are now often recorded as harassment, which is a crime. Changes like this can affect the overall balance of crime statistics, but generally crime figures are comparable.

They are aware the delay in response times for the 101 line can be a source of frustration and concern for residents. Mr Adams reassured the Committee that the matter was being taken seriously and was in discussion with the Chief Constable about adding another 60 staff to the contact centre to secure improvement.

Mr Adams said he understood the hesitation to use the 999 line for non-emergency incidents, and aimed to make the 101 service better and more efficient for those non-emergency calls. Mugging, while distressing and serious, falls under this category if there's no immediate danger or threat to life. They want to ensure that victims of such incidents can report them without undue delay.

Police Post/Station

People see a yellow box (intercom) with a sign indicating police assistance and they expect a response. It is disconcerting when they're left pressing the button, in all weathers, without any response.

Answer

Mr Adams advised the Committee that this was not the service the Police Force aimed for, especially if the signage implied accessibility.

However, they want resources focused on active-duty officers, not maintaining old, unsuitable and expensive buildings. Their aim is to have officers out in the communities, responding to crimes, and being present where they are needed most. Stone, being a significant area, warrants a base for officers to operate from but the option to report incidents at a police station is no longer feasible.

He said that if someone is pressing the emergency button, it demanded immediate attention, similar to a 999 call, even if it needs to be passed on afterwards. Mr Adams said he would ensure the issue was addressed and will find a means to report back on progress.

Mr Adams advised the Committee that he will not support further investment in building estates for police use as investment is now directed towards shared estates where police and fire services can collaborate, like Stone Fire Station. This

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strategy is being implemented all over the county. Investing in a more traditional town centre presence isn't beneficial, considering the high costs per visit. They're looking forward to creating efficient and cost-effective ways to serve communities.

Mr Adams advised the Committee that the primary focus should be on investing in personnel and ensuring they are in the right place, rather than on physical estates. Nevertheless, the idea of a police station still holds significant meaning for many residents, and this is something they need to address in their communication and branding within the town.

While they are planning to invest in vital infrastructure, the concept of having police stations in every town is deemed outdated. However, they do understand that the older generation often feel more secure with a tangible police presence, and that this transition must be carefully managed.

Mr Adams reminded the Committee that any issues or concerns can be sent directly to him and his deputy by writing to: Councillor@staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk providing an opportunity for him to listen and work on the Town Council's behalf.

At the end of the item the Chairman thanked Mr Adams for his update and insights. He said that it had been really helpful to have the information and discussion.

GP24/029 Dissolution of the Management Committee

The Committee considered the report* of the Town Clerk (which had been attached to the agenda for the meeting) dealing with the actions needed to dissolve the Management Sub-Committee and absorb its responsibilities into the General Purposes Committee.

The decision had been taken on 23 May 2023 by the General Purposes Committee to dissolve the Management Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed 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 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.
- c. The programme of meetings for 2023-24* is updated.

GP24/030 Heritage Centre

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

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The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the work was progressing, and that the Chairman and Town Clerk would be meeting for a tour of the building on Friday 9 June 2023.

GP24/031 Town Council Payments

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

GP24/032 Update from Working Groups:

Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group

The Chairman advised the Committee that there was no report.

Engagement with Young People

Councillor Dawson confirmed that the Working Group were in the process of arranging a meeting.

GP24/033 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 was not available to give a report.

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies was not available to give a report.

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 Powell advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

SPCA Executive Committee

Mr M. Green was not available to give a report.

Stone Traders Group Directors' Meeting

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that Councillor Hood would be attending the next meeting of Stone Traders Group Directors'.

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Consultative Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 6 June 2023

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

Officers: L. Trigg and T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies (Mayoral duty), L. Davies (Mayoral Duty) and
P. Leason

PC24/007 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies (Mayoral duty),
L. Davies (Mayoral Duty) and P. Leason

PC24/008 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Councillor Fordham confirmed that, as a substitute member of Stafford Borough
Council's Planning Committee, he would not speak or vote on the planning
applications listed on the agenda.

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that as a member of Stafford Borough
Council's Planning Committee, he would not speak or vote on the planning
applications listed on the agenda.

PC24/009 Representations from Members of the Public

None

PC24/010 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 23
May 2023 (Minute Numbers PC24/001 – PC24/006), be approved as a correct
record.

PC24/011 Planning Applications

Application Number – 23/37533/FUL

Applicant – Smarty's Investment Ltd

Location – 2 and 4 Taverners Drive, Stone

Development – Single storey side extension to form a laundry room

Observations: The Town Council has no objections to the development proposal in principle but asks the Borough Council to consider the parking situation as the existing parking difficulties are likely to be exacerbated whilst the work is in progress.

Application Number – 23/37488/FUL

Applicant – Mr L. Clarke (CCP Developments (Stone) Limited)

Location – Land off Northesk Street, Station Road, Radford Street, Stone

Development – Variation of Condition 2 (plans) and removal of Condition 8 (new sun tunnels/sun pipes) on application 22/36297/FUL

Observations: No objections

PC24/012

To note the following items considered under delegated powers where no objections were forwarded to Stafford Borough Council due to no Member asking for the item to be considered by a special meeting of the Committee.

None

CHAIRMAN

STONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

4 July 2023

CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Mayor

Saturday 8 July 2023	Puppet Tree Jamboree in Market Square
Saturday 8 July 2023	Stone Rocks at Christ Church Academy
Sunday 9 July 2023	Civic Sunday in Stone
Wednesday 12 July 2023	Christ Church Academy's Celebration Evening
Friday 14 July 2023	Mass of Thanksgiving at St Dominic's Church
Sunday 16 July 2023	Biddulph Town Mayor's Civic Service
Wednesday 19 July 2023	Allotment Competition Judging
Sunday 30 July 2023	Leek Town Mayor's Civic Service

Deputy Mayor

Sunday 9 July 2023	Civic Sunday in Stone
Wednesday 12 July 2023	Allotment Competition Judging

TOWN MAYOR

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 4 Jul 23

Saturday 3 Jun 23

For the start of this year's Stone Festival it was good to see the children enjoying the Teddy Bears' Picnic and, particularly, the Puppet Show in the Market Square. The Mayor was keen to see if there were any strings he could pull as a curtain raiser for the Puppet Festival in July.

Sunday 4 Jun 23

The work on Westbridge Park had caused the Dog Show to be moved this year to the Stone Hockey and Rugby Club which proved to be a very convenient location for this event which was clearly enjoyed by all the participants – canine and human. The Mayor was pleased to present the prize for Best in Show.

Monday 5 Jun 23

The canine theme continued on Monday evening with the Dog Derby, preceded by the human Steeplechase, both starting and finishing at the Amphitheatre and including Crown Meadow. The Mayor was very impressed that even the youngest competitors completed the steeplechase in fine style. For the Dog Derby it wasn't always clear whether the owners were leading the dogs or vice versa. The Mayor was pleased to present awards to the successful competitors.

The Mayor then proceeded to the end of Station Road to support the opening of the new steak house, "The Butcher's Block". A welcome addition to the attractive range of 'eateries' in the Town.

Tuesday 6 Jun 23

It was mechanical attractions which caught the eye on Tuesday evening when it was estimated that some 500 motorbikes and scooters (plus a few push bikes) were lined up in the High Street and were duly admired by an immense crowd. The Mayor was asked to select his personal favourites for two awards and he unashamedly was guided by his nostalgia for the 1960s.

Saturday 10 Jun 23

The Carnival for 2023 had to be significantly re-imagined because Westbridge Park was not available. The organising committee did an excellent job in devising a hugely successful and enjoyable event despite the limitations imposed this year. The Town Mayor was joined by the Borough Mayor in admiring and judging the 'walking floats' (motorised floats could not be used this year) and sharing the duty of awarding the prizes for an amazingly imaginative and eye-catching set of entrants.

The afternoon saw the Stone's Got Talent contest with a wide range of performers demonstrating that the Town certainly does not lack talent. The Mayor was delighted to present the awards and the canine theme continued with first place going to Teddy the Dog with owner Holly Ashbrook.

Friday 16 Jun 23

The town is rightly proud of its long association with the Royal Navy through its most famous son, John Jervis, Admiral of the Fleet the Earl of St Vincent. The Mayor and Mayoress travelled down to HMS Collingwood, near Fareham, as VIP guests for this year's Ceremonial Divisions. The reviewing officer was the Chief of the French Defence Staff, General Burkhard, and he was accompanied by the Chief of the British Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin. The Mayor and Mayoress were delighted to have a number of opportunities to explain the link between Stone and the Royal Navy and to extol the attraction of the town and its people, not least to General Burkhard who had to suffer the Mayor's efforts at speaking French!

Sunday 18 Jun 23

The Mayor was delighted to travel to Newcastle-under-Lyme for that Ancient and Loyal Borough's Civic Sunday, part of their celebrations of the 850th anniversary of the granting by Henry II of its first charter. The Mayor was particularly welcomed by the Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Simon White who, like the Town Mayor, was also in his third term as mayor. They had both been mayors together in 2017-18.

Saturday 24 Jun 23

Having completed a reconnaissance of Newcastle-under-Lyme the previous weekend the Mayor was joined by the Mayoress to support Newcastle's Armed Forces Day parade where their personal military experience and connections helped make this an enjoyable event. Moreover, it further strengthened the links between Stone Town and the Ancient and Loyal Borough. It was also valuable to make and renew friendships with the Lord Lieutenant, the Chairman of Staffordshire County Council and the Mayor of East Staffordshire.

Sunday 25 Jun 23

On a warm and humid morning, well over 400 runners assembled on Priory Road for the 2023 St Michael's 10K road race. The efficiency of the registration process and recent technical advances in timekeeping were very impressive. From a number of conversations it was good to learn how far and wide people had travelled and how favourable was their opinion of the Town. The Mayor was delighted to act as race starter.

Sunday 25 Jun 23

Immediately following the start of the road race the Mayor moved to St Michael's and St Wulfad's church for the farewell eucharist for Rev Preb Ian Cardinal and Stef Cardinal, his wife. Ian had been the Rector for some seventeen years and had been Chaplain to several

different Town Mayors. The current Mayor was joined by at least six past Town Mayors in paying a Civic tribute to a well-loved and highly-respected couple who would now be enjoying a very well-earned retirement.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 4 Jul 2023

Sunday 4 June 2023

The Deputy Mayoress and I attended the Hockey & Rugby Taster Sessions at Stone Hockey & Rugby Club as part of Stone Festival Week. The event was well attended with a good number of young people being introduced to the sports. A club official also updated us on the plans to build a new club house which is imminent. They also have longer term plans to introduce other sports for the residents of Stone. We were made very welcome, the sun was shining and it was great to see so many people enjoying sport and recreation.

Thursday 8 June 2023

I was delighted to attend the Kibblestone Scout Camp Annual AGM. The last time I went to Kibblestone was 50 years ago for the famous Lads and Dads weekend. Reassuringly, Kibblestone is still a magnificent natural environment that provides a unique outdoor experience for 1000's of young people each year. The AGM revealed that Kibblestone is busy again after surviving the catastrophic effects of the pandemic. There is a need to attract new client groups and there are hefty costs maintaining the site, especially the woodlands. I would like to commend the Kibblestone team of employees and volunteers who work hard to keep the camp open and successful. Stone is fortunate to have this remarkable facility on our doorstep.

Saturday 10 June 2023

The Deputy Mayoress and I visited the Crown Wharf Theatre during its Festival Week Open Day. The event was well attended and, as usual, very well hosted by the many volunteers. We were thrilled to see the continuing progress and learn of the plans for completion for the inaugural performance in October. Everyone involved should be congratulated and very proud of what they are achieving. The Crown Wharf Theatre is going to be a remarkable asset for Stone, which the Deputy Mayoress and I will definitely be supporting.