

Stone Town Council – Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

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

PRESENT: Councillor J. Hood in the Chair and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, K. Dawson, B. Kenney, R. Kenney, J. Powell and
C. Thornicroft

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Officers: L. Trigg and T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: L. Davies

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, P. Leason and A. Mottershead

TTP24/009 Apologies

Councillors: A. Burgess and A. Mottershead

TTP24/010 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

None

TTP24/011 Representations from Members of the Public

None

TTP24/012 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 June 2023 (Minute Numbers TTP24/001– TTP24/008), were approved as a correct record.

TTP24/013 Calendar of Events 2023-24

The Committee considered the Town Council's Calendar of Events for 2023-24 and gave updates on events that had already taken place:

- Puppet Festival (Saturday 8 July)
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that Mr Leech had been delighted with the Puppet Tree Jamboree and how well the event had gone on the day. In an email he thanked everyone who had given their support to the occasion.

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The Scout & Guide Band had been in attendance to lead the parade into the High Street and the Town Mayor had opened the show with children hugely excited to see Punch, Judy, and Crocodile. The Puppeteer, Professor James, was superb, and Sanctuary had proven to be an excellent choice of venue given the inclement weather on the day.

The Chairman declared the festival a huge success with its strong community feel and wide range of age groups getting involved. She suggested the Sub-Committee consider the event again next year if Mr Leech would like to run it.

- Florence Brass Band Concert & Burma Star Commemoration (Sunday 13 August 2023)

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Florence Brass Band Concert had been a very successful and enjoyable community occasion with friends coming together to listen to a high-class performance in Stonefield Park, a perfect setting for this quintessential English event.

The Town Council provided one hundred cream teas served by Age Concern volunteers and the Park Ranger, Steve, had pitched in with nothing being too much trouble.

The Town Mayor and Mayoress were in attendance and laid wreaths during the Burma Star Commemoration along with Royal British Legion representatives.

The Chairman concluded that the Concert should be repeated next year and suggested the Sub-Committee consider how the various elements of the occasion can be expanded or enhanced.

- Stone by the Sea (Wednesday 9 to Saturday 12 August 2023)

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that Stone by the Sea had unfortunately been cancelled due to circumstances beyond the Council's control. The organiser and operator of the event, Warwick's Funfair, had contacted the Council (on 7 August) to say their supplier had found a contamination of glass in the play sand and was trying to find an alternative supplier, which they were unable to do.

The Chairman expressed her disappointment at the cancellation of Stone by the Sea as it was a free event for families and of particular benefit to those unable to afford to pay for entertainment for their children. She said she would like to ask the Sub-Committee to recommend the Town Council consider a different event next year.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the cancellation of community events after they had been programmed and publicised reflected very poorly on the town.

- Classic Car Event (Saturday 23 September 2023)

The Chairman reported on her meeting with the Town Clerk and the organiser of the Classic Car event, Peter Creswell. She said the event in September would be similar in nature to the events held in previous years but there were some

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exciting additions including a display to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Mini Cooper S and an MG exhibition on the 100th anniversary of MG Motors.

The Chairman appealed for volunteer stewards to assist in ensuring the exhibits were guided into their correct positions. Once in place Mr Cresswell had his own stewards to look after the day.

The market will be cancelled on this Saturday as there will be no space for the stands.

- Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 23 November 2023)

The Chairman confirmed that Kath Stanway had accepted the Town Council's invitation to comper the Christmas Lights Switch-On in November and schools would be invited to take part as in previous years.

- Texas Flag Raising (Friday 29 December 2023)

The Chairman invited Councillor Davies to explain the reasons for raising the Texas State Flag which in December is a minor event to mark the Anniversary of Texas joining the Union in 1845.

The main event on the first Saturday in March (to coincide with the Farmers' Market) marks the anniversary of Texas gaining independence from Mexico in 1836. He said that representatives of the Florence Brass Band and Stone Choral Society should be invited to attend.

- Town Council's 50th Anniversary on 1 April 2024

The Chairman expressed her view to the Sub-Committee that the Town Council's 50th Anniversary should be marked without cost to the Town Council in view of the extremely hard economic times local people were living through.

Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the anniversary didn't need to be marked with a standalone event as such but could run as a thread alongside other celebrations and achievements in the town such as the opening of Heritage Centre and Crown Wharf Theatre. He said the working group would be meeting imminently to discuss the possibilities which as an example could involve people who worked for the old Stone Urban District Council being invited to talk about what life was like then and how that compared to the Town Council now.

- Floating Market (provisionally 25, 26, 27 May 2024)

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Floating Market organiser had been approached to ask whether they would like to return to Stone on the May Spring Bank Holiday weekend in 2024 and confirmation was awaited.

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Canal and River Trust had appointed a new Chaplain and her contact details are available to anyone needing help.

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- Any other suggested new events for 2023-24
80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings on Thursday 6 June 2024

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings was a national celebration drawn to the Town Council's attention by the Pageantmaster, Bruno Peek, who had sent the official Guide to Taking Part in D-Day 80.

The Town Clerk informed the Sub-Committee about the nature of the celebrations suggested which included the lighting of beacons and eating of fish and chips.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings should be celebrated and that a working group be set up at the next meeting to consider the arrangements.

TTP24/014 Reports from Working Groups

The Chairman invited representatives from each Working Group to address the Sub-Committee:

Remembrance Plaques Working Group

The Chairman invited Councillor Lin Davies to update the Sub-Committee on the work of the Remembrance Plaques Working Group.

Councillor Davies advised that she had made a contact with the replacement pottery manager at Oak Tree Farm who was happy to support the Remembrance plaques project.

Councillor Davies said that she had been testing colours and how they stood up to the winter weather to provide a head start and will be making samples over the next few months which will be brought to the Council for consideration.

Councillor Davies confirmed that no contact had yet been made with residents of the former homes of soldiers (where with agreement the plaques will be installed) as she needed samples for people to see.

Market Strategy Working Group

The Chairman reported that no meeting of the Market Strategy Working Group had taken place.

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TTP24/015 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.

TTP24/016 Christmas Lights

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

The purpose of the report was to consider the Christmas Lighting contract for the three-year period from 2023 to 2026.

RECOMMENDED: That the Sub-Committee recommends:

- a. Continuation of the Christmas Plus contract for a further three years under financial Regulation 10.1.g.
- b. Adding to the existing lighting contract: Main lighting display (Option One), lighting in Market Square and Adies Alley in line with the Town Clerk's report.
- c. That the Town Clerk explores the options for the purchase of artificial Christmas trees, to replace the annually purchased real Christmas trees, and to engage in discussion with Stone in Bloom before reporting to the next General Purposes Committee.

Chairman

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