

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 6 August 2024

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Davies, L. Davies, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, P. Leason,
J. Metters, J. Powell and C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, I. Fordham, A. Mottershead,
N. Powell and R. Townsend

GP25/039 **Apologies**

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

GP25/040 **Declarations of Interest**

None

GP25/041 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP25/042 **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor Jill Hood

Councillor Jill Hood advised the Committee that she had no report on this
occasion.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP25/043 **To receive the report of Borough Councillors**

The Chairman invited Borough Councillors to address the Committee.

Councillor R. Kenney advised the Committee that the ‘High Street Boost Stafford’
Programme had been launched within the last week and Stone will be getting an
equivalent ‘High Street Boost’ providing an opportunity for businesses to learn
how to enhance their operations, attract more customers and in turn increase
profitability. There will be business and retail workshops, interactive sessions led
by experienced retail experts with topics such as digital marketing strategy and

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customer engagement techniques. One to one personalised and fully funded support will also be available.

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that the Borough Council had introduced a 'Healthy Towns' initiative which after pressure had been extended to include Stone town. Any resident who has no more than £31,000 savings can apply for assistance with small repairs in the home. The repair must cost no more than £500 and be completed in a day.

Councillor Mrs Hood said she was pleased the scheme included Stone and hoped residents would take the opportunity to have outstanding repairs undertaken.

GP25/044 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP25/045 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2 July 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/023 – GP25/038), be approved as a correct record.

GP25/046 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 16 July 2024 (Minute Numbers TTP25/001 – TTP25/008), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP25/007 be adopted.
- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 16 July 2024 (Minute Numbers ENV25/001 – ENV25/010), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers ENV25/007 (i) and ENV25/010 be adopted.
- c) Mayor's Charity Sub-Committee held on 16 July 2024 (Minute Numbers MC25/001 – MC25/006), that the draft minutes be noted.

GP25/047 Budget Monitoring Report – June 2024

The report* of the Town Clerk was noted.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- Notes the approved adjustments to the Council's budget set out at Appendix A.
- Notes the Council's performance against budget at the end of June 2024.
- Refers the income situation at the Town Market to the Tourism and Town Promotion Sub-Committee for further analysis and recommendations.

GP25/048 Heritage Centre

The Committee considered an update on Stone Heritage Centre.

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The Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Heritage Centre Manager was involved in several projects including the arrangements for loan agreements, and that he had generated a significant number of useful contacts.

GP25/049 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 30 June 2024.

GP25/050 Update from Working Groups:

Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group

There was no additional update from the Steering Group.

Engagement with Young People

Councillor Dawson was not available to give an update on the work of the working group.

GP25/051 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 J. Davies advised the Committee that he was looking to hold the next meeting in the autumn and was considering extending invitations to more visiting speakers.

Stone ATC

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that the Squadron was doing very well. He said the next meeting will be held on 17 September 2024.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that he had attended a meeting on 2 August 2024 and was very pleased to note the charity was in a sound financial state. They are currently looking to recruit high quality volunteers both in the office and as case workers.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that the Access Group had visited Crown Wharf Theatre to look at the facilities and how accessible they were. This included the Crown Wharf Tap toilets and comments had been favourable.

He said the Access Group had a meeting in July that mainly dealt with Highways issues such as problems with traffic lights, dropped kerbs, e-bikes, scooters and reinstating services/making good after road works. Highways staff who were present confirmed that disruption from road works had a reinstatement target of six months. He said he understood the County were currently investing significantly in highway and footpath maintenance.

The next meeting of the Access Group will take place in October 2024.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that the next meeting would be held on 11 August 2024.

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Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

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

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that the next meeting would be held in September 2024.

Stone Traders Group Directors' Meeting

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

West Midlands Railway and other rail matters

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a new representative had been introduced to the group. There has been continued discussion on the service terminating at Stafford and Crewe with no encouragement from the train operating company. There were plans to ask local MPs to offer their support.

Councillor Kelt said there was an urgent review into the West Midlands Transport Schemes as a whole and they have received information on the Virgin application for the West Coast Main Line. The next meeting will be held in September 2024.

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that there was a possibility that parking charges would soon be introduced at Station Approach in Stone.

The meeting was suspended and reconvened after the Planning Consultative Committee meeting.

GP25/052 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.

GP25/053 Staffing Matters

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

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council reappoints to the post of Marketing and Events Organiser in line with the job description, person specification and recommendations enclosed in the report.

CHAIRMAN

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