



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

15 Station Road
STONE
ST15 8JP

Tel: 01785 619740

Email: clerk@stonetowncouncil.gov.uk

11 February 2025

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2025 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 Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992**
3. **Requests for Dispensations Received**
4. **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.

5. **To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 10 December 2024, Minute Numbers C25/067 – C25/074 (attached).**

6. **To receive the draft minutes and decisions of the under mentioned Committees:**
 - a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024, Minute Numbers GP25/095 – GP25/112 (attached).
 - b) Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024, Minute Numbers PC25/037 – PC25/042 (attached).
 - c) Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025, Minute Numbers PC25/043 – PC25/048 (attached).
 - d) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 February 2025, Minute Numbers GP25/113 – GP25/133 (attached). The recommendations included in Minute GP25/130 will be considered as part of agenda item 7 below.
7. **To consider the Council's Budget for 2025-26 to 2027-28 and to set the Precept and Council Tax for the Year**

To consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached).
8. **Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

Information for Quarter ending 31 December 2024 (attached).
9. **To receive the forthcoming Civic Announcements** (attached).
10. **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.

Please access the Council Chamber from the rear of the building.

Stone Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 10 December 2024

PRESENT: Councillor P. Leason in the Chair and
Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Davies, I. Fordham, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney,
R. Kenney, J. Metters, A. Mottershead, J. Powell and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, N. Powell and
C. Thornicroft

Prayers

Before the meeting began, Reverend Jim Cartlidge led prayers.

C25/067 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies,
K. Dawson and C. Thornicroft

C25/068 Declarations of Interest

None made.

C25/069 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

C25/070 Representations from Members of the Public

None

C25/071 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 5
November 2024 (Minute Numbers C25/058 – C25/066), be approved
as a correct record.

C25/072 Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The draft minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/076 – GP25/094), were noted.
- b) The draft minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 (Minute Numbers PC25/031 – PC25/036), were noted.

C25/073 Civic Announcements

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

C25/074 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 previously been circulated, were noted.

The Town Mayor drew the Council's attention to the Opening of Crown Wharf Theatre which had been an eagerly awaited and significant historical event for the town.

He advised the Council that he had attended the 'Shakespeare in Love' production which was fantastic and very well produced. He had also attended a most enjoyable and entertaining showing of the 'Treasure Island' pantomime.

The Town Mayor congratulated all the trustees, and everyone involved in creating this wonderful amenity for Stone.

The Town Mayor gave further details about his many engagements which included a Stone Choral Society Concert, the 4th Stone Brownies visit to the Council Chamber and Walton Flower Club's Diamond Anniversary.

He also referenced the well-attended Remembrance Sunday commemorations at Walton and Stone on 10 November and the Armistice Day commemoration on 11 November 2024. He expressed his appreciation to Reverend Jim Carlidge for leading the service at St Michael & St Wulfad's Church and to talented organist, Matthew Wright, for the music he played.

The Town Mayor spoke about the Town Council's Christmas Lights Switch On which had been a fantastic and well attended event with many people commenting on the quality of the lights.

The Deputy Town Mayor had no report on this occasion.

TOWN MAYOR

* 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.

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 10 December 2024

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Davies, I. Fordham, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, P. Leason,
J. Metters, A. Mottershead, J. Powell and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

GP25/095 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson and C. Thornicroft

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

GP25/096 Declarations of Interest

None made.

GP25/097 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

GP25/098 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Jill Hood

The Chairman invited Councillor Hood to address the Committee.

Meeting with County Highways

County Councillor Hood reported to the Committee that she had today (10 December 2024) met with Staffordshire County Council Highways officers, from various departments within the service.

The most pressing item of note was that she had some money to spend in the town and needed to identify a suitable project.

Councillor Hood invited Town Councillors to put forward ideas for highways related improvements where the work could be completed swiftly and within a defined timescale (necessary because the County elections were taking place in May 2025).

Councillor Hood informed the Committee about a complaint made by residents who had witnessed a highways team arrive to a job, sit in their truck while the engine was idling (throwing wrappers out of their window), and then disappearing.

* 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.

She said the matter was swiftly dealt with by the County Council and urged Councillors to report future instances of questionable conduct to her or the Highways Department.

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that Staffordshire County Council was proposing to install a cattle grid and tank on the Coppice as a remedy to the longstanding flooding issue that had continued to occur there. The tank was designed to capture boulders and stones carried with the flood water which could be periodically emptied. She said Staffordshire County Council had tried everything to prevent the houses from flooding.

Councillor Hood informed the Committee that the County were looking at the key points on the gyratory (the one-way system) in Stone where pedestrians were randomly crossing the road. The highways team were in collaboration with Morrisons, and she was hopeful that something positive would come from the review after the serious accident involving a pedestrian on Christchurch Way. She said this would be a capital programme with S.106 money fed into the project.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP25/099 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Borough Councillors to address the Committee.

Councillor Fordham made Councillors aware that the Borough Council, as statutory licensing authority, had at last week's Council meeting adopted the revised policies for the control of licensed establishments, taxis, pavement licenses and gambling establishments. The policies would shortly be published on the Borough Council's website and become effective from January 2025.

GP25/100 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

GP25/101 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/076 – GP25/094), be approved as a correct record.

GP25/102 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Environment Sub-Committee held on 5 November 2024 (Minute Numbers ENV25/019 – ENV25/026), that the draft minutes be noted.
- b) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 19 November 2024 (Minute Numbers TTP25/016 – TTP25/025), that the draft minutes be noted.

* 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.

- c) Estates Sub-Committee held on 19 November 2024 (Minute Numbers EST25/009 – EST25/016), that the draft minutes be noted.

GP25/103 Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28 - Overview

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) commencing the process for examining the budget and precept level for the financial year 2025-26 for recommendation to the Council.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the figures in the report set the scene for the budget preparation. They were based on a standstill position (after looking at potential levels of inflation and fees and charges) and represented the continuation of the Council's existing activity and policies.

The Town Clerk reminded the Committee of the budget process, beginning with the Committee's consideration of the overall position of the Council followed by each of the sub-committees considering (in January 2025) the details of their own budgets and any changes they might want to make. The budget details for all sub-committees would then be brought back together at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee for determination of the budget recommendation to the Council.

The Council would determine the budget and precept to be requested from Stafford Borough Council in February 2025.

The Chairman proposed a further recommendation (to those detailed in the report) that the Committee add £30,000 to enable a contribution to be made to the installation of an ANPR system at the top of the High Street. He said this would be a potential solution to the ongoing traffic management issues over many years. He also suggested approaching other authorities to ask for a contribution to the costs.

The Committee expressed support for the ANPR system which was suggested as the only way of taking control of traffic movements through the High Street. The safety of residents had been a big concern over several years due to motorists either not understanding or wilfully ignoring the traffic management order rules.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the standstill budget position for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 and the issues related to setting the precept, and:

- a. Authorises the reallocation of the inflation contingency, in accordance with the figures in the Town Clerk's report.
- b. Asks each sub-committee to consider its financial needs for the next three years and report back to the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee with its budget proposals.
- c. Agrees to consider its own budgets at the next meeting of this Committee.
- d. Did not give any specific instructions to sub-committees to which they would need to have regard while preparing their proposed budgets.

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- e. Agrees to consider contributing £30,000 towards the installation of an ANPR system in the High Street.

GP25/104 Liaison with Member of Parliament

The Committee considered appropriate arrangements for liaising with the Town's Member of Parliament for Stone.

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had chatted with Sir Gavin Williamson at an event in August and had pointed out to him that he had visited many of the community groups in the town but hadn't met with the Town Council, yet. Sir Gavin Williamson said he was in favour of an arrangement being made.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council formally writes to Sir Gavin Williamson CBE MP inviting him to attend a future meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

GP25/105 Heritage Centre

The Committee considered an update on Stone Heritage Centre.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre was opening its doors on Thursday 12 December 2024 on a three-day week basis on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

He said the Council was calling for members of the public who held historic items of interest to come forward to register their artefacts for future display at the heritage centre. A press release had been issued inviting people to contact the Heritage Centre Manager for more information, and for guidance purposes, a list of suitable items had been published on the Town Council's Facebook page and website.

It was reported that on Friday 6 December 2024 the Cubs, Squirrels and Beavers had spent an educational evening at the Heritage Centre, and it had been lovely to see how engaged and excited the children were, when collected.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the period of the grant would conclude on 31 December 2024. He said the £40,000 award had been spent and visitor numbers were now in the 600s which had exceeded the 500-visitor requirement by some margin.

The Town Clerk said the Heritage Centre Manager had been interviewed on BBC Radio Stoke during morning of 10 December 2024 about the opening of the Centre and call for items.

The Heritage Centre Manager was thanked for his hard work in bringing the facility forward.

GP25/106 Government Consultation on Remote Meetings

The Committee considered a government consultation seeking views on the introduction of remote attendance and proxy voting in local authority meetings in England. Links to the full consultation and online survey had been provided with the agenda for the meeting.

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The Chairman advised the Committee that the national consultation could be supported by Councillors individually and collectively as a Town Council.

The Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of remote meetings and made the following key points:

- That the Committee was broadly happy to see the introduction of remote meetings but only in special and clearly defined circumstances.
- That the process should be tightly controlled to avoid regular remote attendance and consequential loss of coherence, a worrying and significant disadvantage of remote working.
- Remote meetings should be held only in exceptional circumstances (such as the Covid-19 pandemic) rather than be the norm.
- Concerns were expressed that remote meetings did not encourage prior or post meeting discussion/conversation and only worked for the Town Council during the Covid-19 pandemic because Councillors knew one another and were already used to working together. A lot of interaction, communication and team building would be lost.
- The technical means to hold remote meetings must be available.
- Attendees who are present both in person and remotely can make meetings challenging technically and make them difficult to control with examples given of experiences elsewhere that did not work well when trying to link in with people.
- The decision to hold remote meetings should not be forced upon councils who should be free to decide for themselves.
- Most Councillors were opposed to proxy voting (voting outside of the Council Chamber) for reasons relating to the importance of hearing the debate and being fully informed.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee summarise and submit the Committee's responses to the remote meetings survey questions in line with the discussion.

GP25/107 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 31 October 2024.

An apparent duplicated payment in the report was not duplicated but a cancelled payment that had appeared in the report in error.

GP25/108 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 a report.

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GP25/109 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 a date for a meeting of Stone Area Parish Liaison Group would be arranged early in the New Year now the opening of the Heritage Centre was set.

Stone ATC

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of the Squadron's Civilian Welfare Committee had taken place on Monday 9 December but neither he nor the Town Mayor were able to attend. He understood the next meeting would be held on or around 7 January 2025.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Davies was not aware that a meeting of Age Concern Stone & District had taken place since Councillor Thornicroft's last report.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that no meeting of Stafford & Stone Access Group had taken place, but he had updated the website to incorporate agendas and minutes of meetings.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that a meeting of Stone Common Plot Trustees had taken place in the usual format.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that a meeting of the Community Hub Liaison Group had taken place in the Council Chamber and attendees were introduced to the new Community Hub Manager.

Councillor Hood said that a request had been made for a window in the kitchen to be replaced, and that the Hub would like permission to store some items upstairs in the mezzanine.

Councillor Hood indicated a wish to stand down from the Group.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting of the SPCA Executive Committee had been cancelled due to the proximity of the Annual General Meeting scheduled on Monday 16 December 2024.

Stone Traders' Group Directors Meeting

Following advice received from Stone Traders Group, considered by the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee on 19 November 2024 (Minute Reference TTP25/024) there would no longer be Town Council representation at management meetings.

West Midlands Railway and other Rail Matters

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that he had attended a meeting at the end of November and the new Stakeholder Manager from West Midlands Trains had been present. They discussed engineering work disrupting weekend and particularly Sunday travel and difficulties in sorting out the bus route replacement

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service. He said the recent bad weather had extended the need for the replacement bus service.

Councillor Kelt reported that HS2 was not yet dead and buried in that a discussion could resurrect the Birmingham to Crewe section but not as a high-speed line.

He reported that there were almost 58,000 journeys in the April to June quarter this year which was a 1.9% increase over the journeys taken in the same quarter last year (2023).

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

GP25/110 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.

GP25/111 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024, Minute Numbers GP25/076 and GP25/094 be approved.

GP25/112 Confidential Minutes Sub-Committees

- a) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2024, Minute Numbers: EST25/009, EST25/015 and EST25/016.

RESOLVED: To note the minutes.

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Consultative Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 10 December 2024

PRESENT: Councillor T. Kelt in the Chair, and
Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Davies, I. Fordham, J. Hood, B. Kenney, R. Kenney,
P. Leason, J. Metters, A. Mottershead, J. Powell and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

PC25/037 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, L. Davies,
K. Dawson and C. Thornicroft

PC25/038 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

Councillor I. Fordham 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.

PC25/039 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

PC25/040 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on
5 November 2024 (Minute Numbers PC25/031 – PC25/036), be approved as a
correct record.

PC25/041 **Planning Applications**

Application Number – 24/39636/FUL

Applicant – Mr S. Whiting

Location – 18 A Victor Street, Stone

Development – Change of use of ground floor from class E to class C3

Observations: The Town Council has no objections to the proposed development
but asks the case officer to consider whether access to the garage is viable.

The Town Council also asks that planning conditions are included with the planning approval, if awarded, to cover the construction work as vehicular access may otherwise be an issue.

Application Number – 24/39800/HOU

Applicant – Mr & Mrs Hardman

Location – 22 Woodland Avenue, Stone

Development – Demolition of existing detached garage and construction of a new 2 storey side extension to dwelling.

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 24/39882/HOU

Applicant – Mr R. McNamara

Location – 21 Eccleshall Road, Stone

Development – Single storey extension to side and rear of property (to create a larger kitchen, dining area, utility and study to side).

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 24/39843/FUL

Applicant – English Dominican Congregation

Location – St Dominics Convent, 21 Station Road, Stone

Development – Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) on Application 20/32135/FUL

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 24/39842/FUL

Applicant – English Dominican Congregation

Location – St Dominics Convent, 21 Station Road, Stone

Development – Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) on Application 18/28402/FUL

Observations: No objections

PC25/042

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.

Application Number – 24/39790/POTH

Applicant – Mrs Brown (Freedom Leisure)

Location – Stone Leisure Centre, Stafford Street, Stone

Development – Installation of 254 roof mounted solar PV panels of total installed capacity 113.03kWp

Observations: No objections

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Consultative Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 14 January 2025

PRESENT: Councillor T. Kelt in the Chair, and
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, A. Burgess, J. Davies, K. Dawson, I. Fordham,
J. Hood, R. Kenney, P. Leason, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: L. Davies, B. Kenney, J. Metters, A. Mottershead, J. Powell and
N. Powell

PC25/043 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: L. Davies, B. Kenney, J. Metters,
A. Mottershead, J. Powell and N. Powell

PC25/044 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None made.

PC25/045 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None received.

PC25/046 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on
10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers PC25/037 – PC25/042), be approved as a
correct record.

PC25/047 **Planning Applications**

Application Number – 24/39976/HOU

Applicant – Mr D. Alcock

Location – 6 Airdale Road, Stone

Development – Alterations and re-development including detached garage

Observations: The Town Council objects to this planning application due to the
positioning and size of the new garage and the massing of the main building
which will be a much larger structure than at present.

Application Number – 24/39981/POTH

Applicant – Mr B. Budd (Nelson Land Limited)

Location – 42 – 44 High Street, Stone

Development – Proposal to split the existing ground floor retail unit by separating the rear raised ground floor from the main retail unit, with the section facing the High Street remaining in retail use and the rear element changing use into 1.no. new dwelling house.

Observations: The Town Council has no objections to the proposed development but asks that the developer comply with the conditions outlined by the Highways Department and the Conservation Officer in their representations.

PC25/048

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.

Application Number – 24/39982/POTH

Applicant – Mr B. Budd (Nelson Land Limited)

Location – 42 – 44 High Street, Stone

Development – Change of use from Use Class E to Use Class C3 i.e. 1 no apartment. The apartment is to be accessed from the exiting front door which is located on the High Street. The front door and window are to be retained under this application. Changes to the front door and windows are to be made under a separate application. Internal alterations include the reorganisation of the plan arrangement, and any other upgrades as deemed necessary by Building Control e.g. thermal, fire or sound upgrades etc.

Observations: No objections

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 4 February 2025

PRESENT: Councillor I. Fordham in the Chair for agenda items 1 to 10 & 12 to 19 (Minute Numbers: GP25/113 to GP25/130),
Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair for agenda items 11, 20 and 21 (Minute Numbers: GP25/131 to GP25/133), and,
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, J. Davies, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Metters and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, R. Kenney (to GP25/130), A. Mottershead, J. Powell, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

GP25/113 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Burgess, L. Davies, R. Kenney ((to Minute Number GP25/130), due to his attendance at a Borough Council meeting), A. Mottershead and C. Thornicroft

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

GP25/114 Declarations of Interest and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None made

GP25/115 Requests for Dispensations

None received

GP25/116 To receive the report of the County Councillors

The Chairman invited County Councillors to address the Committee:

County Councillor Jill Hood

Councillor Hood had no report to deliver on this occasion.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP25/117 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Borough Councillors to address the Committee but there were no reports.

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GP25/118 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

GP25/119 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/095 – GP25/112), be approved as a correct record.

GP25/120 Minutes of Sub-Committees

RESOLVED:

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025, (Minute Numbers TTP25/026 – TTP25/034), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP25/031 be adopted.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP25/033 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025 (Minute numbers ENV25/027 – ENV25/035) that the draft minutes be noted.

The recommendation of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number ENV25/034 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

- c) Estates Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers EST25/017 – EST25/026), that the draft minutes be noted.

The recommendation of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST25/023 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Fordham, deferred agenda items 9 (General Purposes Sub-Committee – Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28), 10 (225-26 to 2027-28 Budget Recommendation), 11 (Grants to Local Organisations) and 12 (Meeting Schedule for 2025-26) to a later point in the agenda, when the Chairman, Councillor R. Kenney, may be available to take the Chair.

GP25/121 Membership of Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

The Committee considered the appointment of a new member to Stone Community Hub Liaison Group following the resignation of Councillor Jill Hood.

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Robert Townsend as a member of Stone Community Hub Liaison Group.

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GP25/122 **Heritage Centre**

The Committee considered an update on Stone Heritage Centre.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre was now open, primarily for the purposes of the Heritage Centre Manager speaking to people who may be willing to loan their historic items to the Town Council as future exhibits.

The Heritage Centre Manager had reported that several people had come forward with interesting items. Rather than the Town Council building a large, owned collection of items, the preference was to compile a catalogue of artifacts that could be loaned from individuals or museums, supporting a constantly changing exhibition display.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre Manager had spent the day (Tuesday 4 February) at the County Museum Collection Stores at Beacon Business Park, Stafford, to discuss the arrangements for loans and relevant pieces for Stone.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Council was about to put out a call for people who were in possession of WWII memorabilia that could be displayed on VE Day and VJ day, and individuals who had memories of VE Day and would be willing to have their recounts recorded, with a view to capturing the information as a permanent record for the future.

GP25/123 **Stafford District (B) Payphone Consultation**

The Committee considered a British Telecom consultation seeking views on its proposal to remove a public telephone box in Stone after research had shown that the payphone was no longer regularly used.

An email from Stafford Borough Council had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting along with a spreadsheet detailing the location of the telephone box (and others that were outside the boundary of the town) and a BT payphone notice.

The Committee noted that the total calls from the payphone on the Lichfield Road were 14, made over the last twelve months, with no calls to any recognised helplines. The site was not a high frequency accident or suicide location and there was no other evidence of need.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council raises no objections to British Telecom's proposal to remove the payphone on the Lichfield Road, Stone.

GP25/124 **Standards Consultation**

The Committee considered a government consultation seeking views on the introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England to ensure consistency of approach amongst councils investigating serious breaches of their member codes of conduct, including the introduction of the power of suspension.

Electronic links to full details of the consultation and the online survey had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

* 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.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the current standards and conduct framework for local authorities (established by the Localism Act 2011) required every local authority to adopt a code of conduct, the content of which must as a minimum be consistent with the seven Nolan Principles of standards in public life, and sets out rules on requiring members to register and disclose pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Beyond these requirements, it was for individual councils to set their own local code which may or may not align with the Local Government Association's model code of conduct and guidance.

Every principal authority must also have in place arrangements under which it can investigate allegations of breaches of its code of conduct but there is no provision in current legislation for a sanction to suspend a councillor found to have breached the code of conduct. Sanctions are limited to less robust measures such as barring members from Cabinet, Committee, or representative roles, a requirement to issue an apology or undergo code of conduct training, or public criticism.

The Committee discussed whether the Council should respond to the consultation collectively (through compiling the responses of all Councillors or delegating the authority to respond) and/or suggest that each Town Councillor should respond to the consultation individually.

The Committee concluded that, as there would be very many opinions to document in response to the thirty questions in the survey if answered collectively as a Town Council, it was considered less cumbersome if each Town Councillor responded to the consultation individually.

RESOLVED: That Town Councillors respond individually to the Government's Consultation on Standards.

GP25/125 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 November to 31 December 2024.

GP25/126 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 a report.

GP25/127 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 briefed the Committee on a meeting of Stone Area Parish Liaison Group held on 29 January 2025 at the Heritage Centre, where attendees had been invited on a tour of the building with the Heritage Centre Manager.

The County Officer at Staffordshire Parish Council's Association was in attendance and the main topic of discussion, apart from the Heritage Centre, had been the potential impact of the government's proposed reorganisation of local government.

* 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.

Councillor Davies said the group provided a great opportunity to work in coordination with other parishes as the reorganisation and devolution of powers develop.

Stone ATC

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of the Squadron's Civilian Welfare Committee would be taking place this evening (4 February 2025).

Age Concern Stone & District

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

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting of Stafford & Stone Access Group would be taking place on Monday 10 February 2025. He also informed the Committee that he and other members of the Access Group had recently visited the Heritage Centre to discuss access with the Heritage Centre Manager which had been a productive meeting.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that no meeting of Stone Common Plot Trustees had taken place.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Battrick and Councillor Hood confirmed there was no new information to report.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting of the SPCA Executive Committee had taken place on 3rd February 2025. A lot of its content was procedural, but the reorganisation of local government had also been discussed. The Association was rooting for parish councils to play a full part in the devolution process.

West Midlands Railway and other Rail Matters

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that he had been unable to attend a meeting held last month but didn't think any of its content impacted Stone town directly.

GP25/128 Meeting Schedule for 2025-26

The Committee considered a proposed meeting and civic events schedule* for the period May 2025 to April 2026 which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee noted that as Stafford Borough Council's 2025-26 programme of meetings was not yet available, some amendments may subsequently need to be made to avoid future clashes.

RESOLVED: To approve the meeting schedule for 2025-26 with any necessary amendments agreed in consultation with the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee Chairman.

* 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.

GP25/129 General Purposes Committee – Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk* (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) examining the 2025-26 to 2027-28 budget requirements for the specific services managed directly by the General Purposes Committee, including those which had previously been the responsibility of the former Management Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee recommends for consideration later in the meeting alongside the proposals from Sub-Committees, the adoption of the standstill Committee budget for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28, as detailed in the Clerk's report, with the following adjustments:

- a. In respect of the ongoing discussions with Stafford Borough Council, the provision of an additional £7,500 per annum from 2025-26 to allow the Council to occupy additional office space in the 15 Station Road building, plus an additional £5,000 in 2025-26 only for additional furniture etc.
- b. The provision of £1,000 in 2025-26 for the replacement of the wooden stand used for wreath laying at the war memorial.
- c. An allowance of £30,000 to support the introduction of ANPR in Stone High Street, partially funded by the removal of the £10,000 provision in the current year for Market square improvements.
- d. An increased inflation provision of £1,197 in 2025-26, £418 in 2026-26 and £656 in 2027-28 for the Council as a whole as a result of budget changes put forward by this Committee and all of the Sub-Committees.

GP25/130 Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28 for recommendation to the Council

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* (which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting) alongside the budget proposals from Sub-Committees and from this Committee.

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Council that:

1. The Standstill Budget included in the Clerk's report to this meeting be recommended to the Council for adoption with the following amendments:
 - a. Estates:
 - i. An additional provision of £12,000 should be made in 2025-26 for repainting the Stone Station which should be funded from the Building Maintenance Reserve.

* 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. Environment:

- i. The £1,560 in the current year's budget for Hedgerows is used instead for improvements to the paths at Crown Meadow in 2025-26 with an additional contingency of £1,000.
- ii. £300 is added in the current year for cutting back Willow trees.
- iii. An Environment Initiatives budget of £810 for 2025-26 is added to the anticipated carried forward sum of £1,190.

c. Tourism and Town Promotion:

- i. An allowance of £1,000 should be made for the additional costs of VE Day and VJ Day events. These events would be in addition to VJ Day themed High Street event on 16 August 2025, which would be funded from the existing Tourism and Town Promotion budget.

d. General Purposes:

- i. In respect of the ongoing discussions with Stafford Borough Council, the provision of an additional £7,500 per annum from 2025-26 to allow the Council to occupy additional office space in the 15 Station Road building, plus an additional £5,000 in 2025-26 only for additional furniture etc.
- ii. The provision of £1,000 in 2025-26 for the replacement of the wooden stand used for wreath laying at the war memorial.
- iii. An allowance of £30,000 to support the introduction of ANPR in Stone High Street, partially funded by the removal of the £10,000 provision in the current year for Market Square improvements.
- iv. An increased inflation provision of £1,197 in 2025-26, £418 in 2026-27 and £656 in 2027-28 for the Council as a whole as a result of budget changes put forward by this Committee and all of the Sub-Committee.

As a consequence of the above, the precept on Stafford Borough Council for 2025-26 would be £409,788, with Local Council Tax Support Grant of £26,210 to be added. This would result in a 2025-26 Council Tax for this Council's purposes of £63.99 for a Band D property, an increase for the year of £2.99, with indicative Council Tax levels of £67.13 and £70.42 for the following two years.

* 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.

After arriving at the meeting during the deferred agenda item 10 (Minute Number GP25/0130), Councillor R. Kenney took the Chair for the remaining items on the agenda.

GP25/131 Grants to Local Organisations

The Committee considered requests for grant aid from local organisations. Before consideration, the Town Clerk reminded the Committee that £2,600 remained within the Grants budget.

The following organisations met the eligibility criteria within the Council's grants policy:

a. **Organisation: Big Top Musical Adventures**

Amount Requested: £500

Reason: To offer sound hearing sessions to support the mental and emotional well-being of Stone residents.

RESOLVED: To decline the award of a grant to Big Top Musical Adventures.

b. **Organisation: Bromfield Court Residents Focus Group**

Amount Requested: £250

Reason: To purchase plants and shrubs for a spring and summer display at Bromfield Court.

This application was withdrawn as no accounting information had been provided.

c. **Organisation: Stone Lions Club**

Amount Requested: £500

Reason: Prostate screening.

RESOLVED: To award a grant of £500 to Stone Lions Club.

d. **Organisation: Stone Gang Show**

Amount Requested: £500

Reason: To support Stone Gangshow

RESOLVED: To award a grant of £500 to Stone Gang Show.

The following organisations did not meet the eligibility criteria within the Council's grants policy for the reasons stated, and no proposer or seconder came forward to instigate a discussion about making an award of a grant. The applications were therefore not considered due to their ineligibility.

e. **Organisation: Stafford & District Bereavement & Loss Support**

Amount Requested: £500

Reason: To support the 'Circle of Friends' group who meet fortnightly at Coop Funeral Care in Stone.

i. Level of reserves

f. **Organisation: Douglas MacMillan Hospice**

Amount Requested: £200

Reason: To support Dramatherapy sessions in the children's hospice.

* 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.

- i. Turnover is over £100,000
- ii. Level of reserves

GP25/132 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.

GP25/133 Confidential Minutes Sub-Committees

- a) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 14 January 2025, Minute Numbers: EST25/017, EST25/025 and EST25/026.

RESOLVED: To note the draft minutes.

CHAIRMAN

Introduction

1. This report considers the setting of the Town Council's Budget for 2025-26, with indicative figures for the following two years.

Background

2. At a series of meetings during January and February 2024, the General Purposes Committee and its Sub-Committees considered their potential budgets for 2025-26 to 2027-28. As a result of this consideration, the General Purposes Committee on 4th February 2025 recommended a budget for approval by the Council.
3. The budget proposed by the General Purposes Committee is set out at Appendix A. It can be summarised as follows:

Actual		Budget	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget
2023-24		2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£		£	£	£	£	£
4,531	Estates	58,300	27,820	12,400	22,400	22,400
20,823	Environment	38,950	33,540	24,370	21,000	21,000
44,691	Tourism & Town Promotion	48,160	49,120	48,980	53,980	50,980
480,722	General Purposes	448,458	410,820	388,687	367,898	432,006
-154,676	Earmarked Reserves	-150,888	-150,888	-	-	-
396,090	TOTAL	442,980	370,412	474,437	465,278	526,386
	Planned Contribution to (from) Balances			-38,439	-6,079	-42,446
	Precept Required (incl LCTSG)			435,998	459,199	483,940
	Band D Council Tax Equivalent			63.99	67.13	70.42

4. The Council is not required to accept the above budget, and is free to set the Council Tax at whatever level it thinks appropriate. The rest of this report does, however, assume the acceptance of the proposed budget, and a number of the comments made below may need to be reconsidered if the budget changes.

Robustness of Budget

5. In setting its budget and precept, the Council must determine:
 - The estimated expenditure for the year.
 - Such allowances as it considers appropriate for contingencies.
 - Such financial reserves as the Council considers appropriate to raise or utilise in the year.
 - Such reserves as are sufficient to meet any revenue account deficit from any earlier year.
6. These issues have been considered as part of the budget setting process so far, and have resulted in the proposed budget under consideration today.
7. The Clerk's role, as Responsible Financial Officer, is to advise members on the robustness of their plans, and in particular the adequacy of their reserves (balances) to meet possible future issues.
8. Excluding the reserves earmarked for the Neighbourhood Plan and rollovers, the recommended budget projects that the Council will be holding a reserve of £248,962 as at 31st March 2025. As can be seen from the table in paragraph 3 above, the three-year budget proposed by the General Purposes Committee would result in movements in these balances as follows:

	Budgeted Contribution to (from) Balances £	Estimated General Fund Balance £	Number of Months Net Expenditure
31 March 2025	-	248,962	-
31 March 2026	-38,439	210,523	5.2
31 March 2027	-6,079	204,444	5.1
31 March 2028	-42,446	161,998	3.6

9. I would normally recommend that a Council the size of Stone Town Council should hold a general reserve equivalent to around six months' net expenditure, unless there is a good, financially sound reason not to do so. Where balances are lower than this amount, there should be an understanding by Councillors of the increased financial risk to the Council.
10. Due to the extreme challenges posed in recent budgets by inflation, however, I recommended to the General Purposes Committee at that time that the level of reserves held should be reduced to the equivalent of no less than three months net expenditure in the short to medium term.
11. The alternatives to the proposed approach would have been to reduce the budget, potentially endangering the delivery of the Heritage Centre and other Council services, setting the precept/Council Tax at a significantly higher level, or taking out a loan for the capital project.

12. This budget continues with the replenishment of general reserves from that “three-month” level and back towards the recommended “six-month” level, with the estimated reserves for 31st March 2026 and 31st March 2027 both being higher than estimated when the current year’s budget was set in February 2024. The level of reserves does fall back to 3.6 months by 31st March 2028, but that is often the case in an election year due to the costs of the election itself and related spending.
13. In conclusion, the General Purposes Committee’s recommended use of reserves in these circumstances represents, in my view, a financially responsible approach to setting the Council’s budget. On this basis, I am able to advise the Council that the proposed level of reserves should be adequate to ensure that the Council’s current plans can be reasonably sustained into the future. This will, however, need to be monitored throughout the year and examined very closely when the 2026-27 budget is considered next January/February.

Council Tax Leaflet

14. The Council also needs to determine the wording to be used on the Council Tax leaflet.
15. The wording for 2024-25 was:

“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 2024-25 budget includes additional funding to provide further improvements at Crown Meadow, support for a late summer music event which would also provide an opportunity to celebrate any local Olympic successes, and funds to improve the Market Square. This is in addition to the opening of a new Heritage Centre within the extensive 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 Puppet Festival, 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 recently refurbished noticeboards and fingerposts throughout the town.

The Council provides bus shelters, benches 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 its approved Neighbourhood Plan helps the Council to shape and protect the future of Stone.

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."

16. Councillors are asked to consider the wording for the 2025-26 leaflet.

Recommendations

17. That the Council determines its budget, precept and Council Tax for 2025-26, indicative budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28, and the wording of the Council Tax leaflet.

Stone Town Council

Proposed Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28

Actual		Budget	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget
2023-24		2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£		£	£	£	£	£
-9,897	Frank Jordan Centre	-14,880	-29,750	-23,100	-13,100	-13,100
9,769	Stone Station	43,080	30,400	29,800	17,800	17,800
-	Stone Heritage Centre (Running)	45,000	20,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
-1,737	Town Market	-6,100	-3,380	-2,020	-2,020	-2,020
2,078	Bus Shelters & Street Furniture	7,500	4,720	5,150	5,150	5,150
1,039	Street Lighting	1,000	940	1,000	1,000	1,000
839	Dog & Litter Bins	900	860	900	900	900
-	Joules Clock	-	-	-	-	-
703	Town Electricity Supply	700	650	650	650	650
-	Building Maintenance	20,000	20,000	-2,000	10,000	10,000
22,776	Grounds Maintenance	23,600	23,000	23,050	23,050	23,050
975	Crown Meadow Improvements	11,735	9,940	2,560	-	-
-2,928	Allotments	2,425	600	-2,050	-2,050	-2,050
-	Environmental Initiatives	1,190	-	810	-	-
22,869	Christmas Lights	23,260	24,000	21,000	24,000	21,000
23,558	Tourism & Town Promotion	31,000	28,500	30,000	32,000	32,000
3,900	Grants	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
200,116	Salaries & Employment Costs	236,340	228,100	237,200	238,400	239,300
7,020	Accommodation	6,900	8,240	14,760	14,760	14,760
6,893	Insurances	10,700	10,560	10,760	10,760	10,760
42,215	Administration	36,380	36,380	41,380	36,380	48,380
1,183	Audit & Legal Fees	1,500	1,860	1,450	1,450	1,450
27,786	Town Council Elections	-	-	-	-	30,000
2,924	Allowances - Mayor & Deputy Mayor	3,400	2,940	3,440	3,440	3,440
235	Regalia & Presentations	200	700	200	200	3,500
2,569	Civic Dinner & Hospitality	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600
2,449	Remembrance Sunday & War Memorials	2,000	2,500	3,500	2,500	2,500
515	Miscellaneous	1,000	800	800	800	800
-6,035	Interest	-3,300	-6,400	-5,600	-4,300	-3,600
-	Neighbourhood Plan	-	-	-	-	-
200,412	Stone Heritage Centre (Setup)	103,298	110,000	-	-	-
-	Town Centre Improvements	10,000	-	30,000	-	-
-	Inflation Contingency	-	-	10,657	23,368	40,576
-11,461	Concurrent Functions Allowance	-11,460	-11,460	-11,460	-11,460	-11,460
-154,676	Rollover Reserve	-150,888	-150,888	-	-	-
-	Neighbourhood Plan Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
396,090		442,980	370,412	474,437	465,278	526,386
	Planned Contribution to (from) Balances			-38,439	-6,079	-42,446
	Precept Required (incl LCTSG)			435,998	459,199	483,940
	Band D Council Tax Equivalent			63.99	67.13	70.42

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Procurement Information

1. Invitations to Tender for Contracts Exceeding £5,000

None

2. Contracted Agreements Exceeding £5,000

None

Payment Information

The attached appendix sets out all Council payments for the period over £250, excluding salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity and transfers between the Council's bank accounts.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Decisions that would otherwise have been taken by the Town Council or one of its Committees that have been delegated to an officer:

1. Under a specific express authorisation; or
2. Under a general authorisation to officers to take such decisions and, the effect of the decision is to:
 - a. grant a permission or licence;
 - b. affect the rights of an individual; or
 - c. award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case, materially affects the Town Council's financial position.

- None

Date: 11/02/2025

Time: 10:28:36

Stone Town Council - Payments over £250

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The table below lists payments over £250 made by the Council in the period identified.

The table includes payments by cheque, direct debit, payment card, telephone banking and online banking. It excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts. All amounts exclude VAT.

Payment Date From : 01/10/2024

Payment Date To : 31/12/2024

<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
01/10/2024	5813476/CE/49380	The Arch Rent Collectors	SSTN Rent 29.09 to 24.12.24	1,184.25
01/10/2024	INV0630254	Furniture@Work	Grant Heritage Centre - 7 tables & 1 table trolley	1,185.00
09/10/2024	01019987	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas usage 01.09 to 31.10	563.36
09/10/2024	01019987	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Elec Usage 01.09 to 31.10	834.65
09/10/2024	01019987	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Elec Usage 01.09 to 31.10.24	635.40
09/10/2024	INV-0044	Keele Christmas Tree Farm	Christmas trees x 100	1,500.00
09/10/2024	7070295532	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Hanging Baskets x 106 (chg for 105)	5,985.00
09/10/2024	01019987	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Gas usage 01.09 to 31.10	480.61
14/10/2024	INV5001447	MEB Total Ltd	SSTN - Caretaker's Flat - Repairs to boiler	334.73
17/10/2024	5353	Christmas Plus	3 x Clusterline - Post Office	270.00
22/10/2024	INV0954	The Mill at Stone	71 Trafalgar Dinner Meals plus 5 drivers	1,600.17
24/10/2024	41UG031-0008	Geosphere TA Parish Online	Parish Online Digital Mapping Subscription 24/25	600.00
25/10/2024	206779	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Managed Service - Nov 24	1,216.06
29/10/2024	50902	Panda Press (Stone) Ltd	Safety signs for Crown Meadow	559.00
06/11/2024	25550	Stone Gazette Ltd	Half page Ad- Nov/Dec Gazette	400.00
06/11/2024	MEM251371-1	Society of Local Council Clerks	SLCC Membership 2025	300.00
12/11/2024	INV-1000284086	Christmas Tree World	Christmas tree lights x 20 sets	299.83
12/11/2024	Inv1857	The Secret Kitchen	Buffet for 101 - Remembrance Sunday	938.50

Date: 11/02/2025

Time: 10:28:36

Stone Town Council - Payments over £250

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<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
14/11/2024	INV-1696	IG Stage Hire	50% payment for Christmas Lights 24 Stage Hire	375.00
14/11/2024	176803306	Steve's Sound Systems	Hire of PA System Armistice & Remembrance	280.00
20/11/2024	2411008	Crown Highways	Installation of poles at Walton for Christmas lights	749.75
20/11/2024	131102	E On	Highways Lighting Maint and Energy 2024/25	940.30
21/11/2024	01062424	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Elec Usage 01.11 to 30.11.24	424.89
21/11/2024	01062424	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Gas usage 01.11 to 30.11	538.19
21/11/2024	01062424	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas usage 01.11to 30.11	593.21
21/11/2024	01062424	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Elec Usage 01.11 to 30.11	424.95
22/11/2024	47	MJ Plant	FJC Weed Control x 8 visits	328.00
22/11/2024	48	MJ Plant	Canoe Club Hedgecutting	330.00
22/11/2024	46	MJ Plant	Weed Control CM, Amp and surrounding area	338.00
22/11/2024	50	MJ Plant	CM - cleaning and painting of CM benches	516.00
22/11/2024	53	MJ Plant	Marquee set up - Oct 24	1,042.50
22/11/2024	45	MJ Plant	Oct - Grounds Maint of Amp, CM, MR, Abbey St and old	1,732.00
22/11/2024	44	MJ Plant	Sept-Grounds maint, Amp, CM, MR Allot, Abbey Street	1,732.00
22/11/2024	49	MJ Plant	Annual maint of Town borders and Walton Roundabout	4,507.00
22/11/2024	51	MJ Plant	Maint of war memorial, maint of stand and removal of	532.00
25/11/2024	208502	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Managed Service -Dec 24	1,286.26
25/11/2024	52	MJ Plant	Marquee set up - Sept 24	695.00
26/11/2024	21112024	Samantha Lloyd Music	Compere for Christmas Switch on 24	300.00
28/11/2024	INV000234	Hearts Cross Medical	Medical support at Christmas Switch on 24	350.00
29/11/2024	5476	Christmas Plus	Installation of Festive Display 2024 - 70%	5,250.00
29/11/2024	INV-1081	CE & PS Ltd	Replace electrical timer (B&M pillar)	340.00
29/11/2024	INV-1081	CE & PS Ltd	Christmas Switch on 24 - Hire of lighting & barriers install	1,059.60
29/11/2024	564	Hazzard Promotions	Hire of sound system for Switch on 24	400.00

Date: 11/02/2025

Time: 10:28:36

Stone Town Council - Payments over £250

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<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
03/12/2024	SBC Rates	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Rates FJC Dec 2024	279.00
13/12/2024	IL/4152	Lowe & Elliott	SSTN Building Valuation for Insurance purposes	266.66
13/12/2024	IL/4152	Lowe & Elliott	HC Building Valuation for Insurance purposes	266.67
13/12/2024	211211	Prism Solutions	Grant HC - Canon Printer	866.76
13/12/2024	211211	Prism Solutions	Grant HC - TV Stand	331.18
13/12/2024	211211	Prism Solutions	Grant HC - Samsung TV	521.95
13/12/2024	IL/4152	Lowe & Elliott	FJC Building Valuation for Insurance purposes	266.68
16/12/2024	0151254184	EPSON UK Ltd	Grant HC -Epson Scanner - Expression 13000XL	2,767.50
18/12/2024	7070295906	Stafford Borough Council	Install/Remove Bollards Oct to Dec 24	471.90
19/12/2024	01100967	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Elec Usage - 01.12 to 31.12.24	486.87
19/12/2024	01100967	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas Usage -01.12 to 31.12.24	673.04
19/12/2024	01100967	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Elec Usage - 01.12 to 31.12.24	446.44
19/12/2024	01100967	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Gas Usage - 01.12 to 31.12.24	608.22
27/12/2024	210405	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Managed Service - Jan 25	1,255.53
27/12/2024	5813476/CE/50572	The Arch Rent Collectors	Station Rent 25.12 to 24.03.25	1,184.25
				61,977.87

STONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
18 February 2025
CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Mayor

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Thursday 20 February 2025 | An Evening with the Army Benevolent Fund at The Mill Restaurant |
| Saturday 22 February 2025 | Staffordshire Moorlands Chairman's Chairty Ball at Alton Towers Resort |
| Saturday 1 March 2025 | Texas Flag Raising in Stone High Street to mark the anniversary of Texas gaining its independence from Mexico on 2 March 1836. |

Deputy Mayor

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Thursday 20 February 2025 | An Evening with the Army Benevolent Fund at The Mill Restaurant |
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TOWN MAYOR

TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS – 7 February 2025

1 to 24 December 2024 – Christmas Advent Windows

During December I attended a number of the Advent Window Openings organised by Christchurch.

Tuesday 2nd December – Staffordshire Girl Guide AGM

An interesting evening learning about the various activities and opportunities that are available to Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and Young Leaders in the County.

Friday 6th December – St Dominic's Priory School Nativity Play

A wonderful play performed by the infants with beautiful singing and enthusiastic acting. They really put their hearts and souls into it.

Sunday 8th December – Town Mayor's Civic Carol Service

A wonderful well attended service with inspiring readings and musical pieces by the Church Choir, St. Michael's First School Choir and Ben Hollingshurst singing Pie Jesu.

Thursday 12th December – Gala Night at the Pantomime at Stafford Gatehouse

A fun evening, watching another first-class panto at the Gatehouse. Very enjoyable despite being somewhat soaked by one of the cast members with a water pistol.

Sunday 15th December – Borough Mayor's Civic Carol Service

A lovely service with the usual superb music from St. Mary's Choir and organist.

Tuesday 17 December – HMP Drake Hall Community Carol Service

A very enjoyable event led by the prison chaplaincy team and the choir.

Wednesday 18th December – Stone Choral Society Christmas Concert

A packed church enjoyed the wonderful singing of the choir accompanied by a brass band. It really put you into the Christmas Spirit.

Thursday 19th December – The Stone Alzheimer's Club Christmas Party

A wonderful party with music and dancing and a nice lunch. We were joined by Cllr Jim Davies and Sir Gavin Williamson CBE MP. Santa even found time to attend and gave everyone a gift.

Monday 20th January – The Formal Opening of the Hilary Term of the Crown Court

Always an interesting service to attend, full of tradition, and followed by lunch in the County Buildings.

Monday 27th January – Visit to the Crossroads Youth Club

An interesting evening meeting the young people and answering questions about the role of the Mayor and work of the Town Council.

Saturday 1st February – Stone Scout & Guide Band AGM

It was nice to hear about the work of the band over the last 17 months and to present some awards. The band are not only great ambassadors to Scouting and Guiding but of the town itself.

TOWN DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS – 7 February 2025

1 to 24 December 2024 – Christmas Advent Windows

It was my pleasure to attend the advent windows and to see members of our community creating a great atmosphere for the town, and especially in engaging children from within the community in creating some of the art projects that were on display throughout December. This adds a great deal of festive cheer to the town, and it was wonderful to see people of all ages in attendance.

Sunday 15 December 2024 – The Lord Mayor of Stoke on Trent Christmas Carol Service

Myself and my consort, Sarah Goodall, attended the kind invitation from the Lord Mayor of Stoke for their annual carol service at Stoke Minster. The quality of the singing of the choir was beyond fantastic, with the beautiful acoustics providing a perfect environment for a very well attended event. I was glad to have had the opportunity to be there in person, though the BBC recorded the event for broadcast on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to bring the brilliant experience to the residents around the area.

Wednesday 25 December 2024 - St Mary's Nursing Home Christmas Visit

On Christmas day, myself and my consort, Sarah Goodall, attended the kind invitation to drop by Saint Mary's Nursing Home. We received a kind and warm welcome from the residents and staff who were there, and the event was decorated to the nines with staff going above and beyond to make the day a true celebration. We were grateful to be included in the judging of a costume competition amongst the staff, much to the amusement of those in attendance. We extended sincere compliments to the staff who work throughout the year to give a sense of community and compassion to the residents.

Sunday 29 December 2024 – Texas Flag Raising

It was a wonderful sunny day on the occasion of the Texas flag raising, and councillor Jim Davies gave the event the flair and ceremony to mark the occasion. Members of the Stone Army Cadets were out in force, demonstrating discipline and diligence, and real civic engagement. It was wonderful to hear about our connection to Texas, and we were regaled with some local history to accompany the event, expertly delivered by Councillor Davies.

Friday 27 December 2024 – Friendship Meeting with Bagnacavallo

Whilst I had attempted to attend the online Zoom meeting with the Sindaco of Bagnacavallo, alongside other European countries in attendance, regrettably, I had to send on the greetings via email as the meeting was near conclusion after I realised the daylight-saving difference in the meeting co-ordination. I have included the words sent to our friends in Bagnacavallo

“Dear friends,

I wish you all greetings from the town of Stone, in Staffordshire, England, and a happy Christmas and New Year. On the lead up to Christmas this year, our town lights were damaged by a Storm. The streets were empty, and cold, and we had a sudden reminder how a town can be without community spirit. I am delighted to say that we recovered very quickly. The lights were fixed, and after a short time, residents and visitors of all ages came out to celebrate the start of the Christmas season, and the warmth of our town was renewed with the sound of traditional English carols.

We are mindful of our international friends, with much harsher winters, and we hope that the warmth of your communities bring you into a happy New Year, and the coming spring.

With kind words of friendship, I greet you from Stone.

*Jason Metters,
Deputy Town Mayor, Stone”*