

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 July 2025**

PRESENT: Councillor J. Hood in the Chair and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, L. Davies, B. Kenney and R. Kenney

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

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

By Chairman's invitation: R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, K. Dawson, A. Mottershead and J. Powell

TTP26/001 Apologies

Councillors: K. Dawson, A. Mottershead and J. Powell

TTP26/002 Declarations of Interest

None made.

TTP26/003 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

TTP26/004 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

TTP26/005 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 March 2025 (Minute Numbers TTP25/035 – TTP25/041), were 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.

The Sub-Committee considered the Town Council's Calendar of Events for 2025-26 and gave updates on events that had taken place:

2025 – Taken Place

- St George's Day Re-enactment (Saturday 26 April 2025)
This event went ahead as planned and was a great success. The re-enactment team have confirmed that they are pleased to return to Stone again next year.
- VE Day Commemoration (Thursday 8 May 2025)
Councillor Davies thanked Town Council staff and the Grounds Maintenance Contractor for their work on this event and gave thanks for the support of the town.
- Mr BuzzKing's Puppet Things (30 May to 2 June 2025)
This event was held at the Heritage Centre over a three-day period and was well attended and successful.
- Floating Market/Waterside Events (31 May to 1 June 2025)
The Chairman reported that the floating market was a wonderful two-day event with a variety of narrowboats and all sorts of crafts. She said the boaters commented that they loved coming to Stone.

The Scout & Guide Band were practising on one of the market days which prompted the idea that the Band should be asked to play at the floating market next year, assuming the Town Council was successful in securing some new dates.

The Chairman commented that the event was seen as an attraction that drew a lot of new people into the town.

2025/2026 – Upcoming/Agreed

The following events to be hosted by the Town Council, and their agreed dates, were noted by the Sub-Committee:

- Classic Car Event
Unfortunately, it did not appear that it would be possible to hold a Classic Car Event in 2025.
- Children's Summer Inflatable Whale Event (12 August 2025)
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that this new event involved a life size whale where children are invited inside, and the operators make the experience great fun.

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- Summer Street Party (16 August 2025)
The Marketing and Events Organiser confirmed the music entertainment for the Street Party which included two support bands: the Funk Breakers and Herbaceous Borders, both of which are reported to be very good. The headline act is a Fleetwood Mac tribute band called Fleetwood Mad. All bands have been highly recommended.
- Florence Brass Band Concert & Burma Star Commemoration (17 August 2025)
The Chairman reported that the Florence Brass Band was looking forward to performing in Stonefield Park on Sunday 17 August 2025. She said the Town Council arrange this event and send the invitations which include the Association of the Burma Star in association with the Royal British Legion. Cream teas will be served on the day by Age Concern volunteers.

Councillor Davies suggested the VE/VJ Working Group consider incorporating some references to VJ Day.

- Vegan Market (20 September 2025)
The Marketing and Events Organiser confirmed arrangements for the vegan market which included (after learning from last year's event) the need for Town Council staff to be present during market set up to ensure the shop frontages were not concealed.
- Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 20 November 2025)
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the usual arrangements will apply. Talented singer and presenter, Kath Stanway, will act as compere on the day.

The Chairman said she had written to Alleyne's Academy (as the school has a successful drama section), to ask whether it would be possible for them to put on a sketch for the children. The school also has a successful music department and there was a suggestion that it may start up an orchestra again.

The suggestion to speak to Christ Church Academy was also made as their music department was brilliant. Appointing Mr Harrison to take the lead on the music would be a boon. He had been approached and reassurances given that the Town Council would deal with all administration if he could look after the Christmas songs.

The Chairman reported that the Christmas Card Competition would run again during the festive season 2025.

The Chairman reported to the Sub-Committee the changes to be introduced to the Christmas lighting display in 2025. These included replacement light strings and additional clusterline lighting to replace the 'Merry Christmas from Stone' sign which will be moved to the bottom of the High Street. One replacement sphere and two new spheres will be installed on the Plane Tree along with several snowfall tubes.

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The Town Clerk had confirmed that the costs could be met within the existing Christmas Lights budget.

- Texas Flag Raising, marking the anniversary of Texas joining the Union on 29 December 1845 (Monday 29 December 2025)
Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the usual arrangements would apply with the December 2025 event being low key.
- Texas Flag Raising, marking Texas State's independence from Mexico (Saturday 7 March 2026)
Councillor Davies reported that the Texas Flag Raising ceremony in the High Street to mark Texas State's Independence from Mexico in March was higher profile. He said the Florence Brass Band will be invited to accompany the singing of the Texas State Song. He also said the impact of the American soldiers' presence in Yarnfield and Stone for the three or four years they were resident was dramatic and there was a need for the town to recall its history.

Jon Cook said he had noted that quite a few questions had been raised on 'A Little Bit of Stone' around the meaning behind Texas Flag Raising ceremonies. The suggestion was made that the details be published on Facebook.

It would also be appropriate to tell the story of Stone's connections with Carthage in Texas through the Town Council's Heritage Centre.

- Any other suggested new events for 2025/26
The Chairman invited Sub-Committee members to put forward new ideas for events in 2025.

The Chairman said it would be lovely if the beautiful lanterns, stars and different shapes that were hanging in the arcade could be replicated in weatherproof form for the High Street.

TTP26/007 Bleed Kits

The Sub-Committee considered the purchase of bleed kits for use in the town.

The Chairman reported on the latest recommendations on safety at events which included the availability of bleed kits to treat accidents and injuries to save lives. She said that bleeding control packs could be used for any injury that induced bleeding as they were not just for violent stabbings.

The Sub-Committee supported the purchase of two bleed kits.

TTP26/008 Membership of Working Groups

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments to the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee Working Groups for the municipal year 2025-26:

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Remembrance Plaques Working Group

Councillors: L. Davies (Co-ordinator), J. Davies and P. Leason

Market Strategy Working group

Councillors: J. Hood (Co-ordinator), J. Davies, R. Kenney, A. Mottershead and C. Thornicroft

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Friendship Agreement Working Group

Councillors: J. Davies (Co-ordinator), L. Davies, J. Hood, J. Metters and R. Townsend

VE/VJ Day Working Group

Councillors: J. Davies (Co-ordinator), L. Davies and J. Hood

TTP26/009 Reports from Working Groups

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

Remembrance Plaques Working Group

Councillor L. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the development of Remembrance Plaques was continuing as a work in progress.

Market Strategy Working Group

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the impact of the Town Council's decision to offer free tables to market traders. She said there used to be one or two table sales per Farmers' market whereas now there were around ten tables in use. Enquiries had been received from new traders which the free tables may have influenced. However, a restructured price list with the cost of a shared/half marquee listed first, appeared to be working better.

Friendship Agreement Working Group

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the Friendship Agreement Working Group would be meeting when more information was available on the reorganisation of local government. He said that changes to the structure of local government will have an important impact on future friendship arrangements.

VE/VJ Day Working Group

The Chairman expressed the need to arrange a meeting.

Councillor Davies said that when the VJ Day preparations had been completed the VE/VJ Day Working Group would dissolve.

Chairman

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