



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

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15 Station Road
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10 September 2025

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT SUB COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 7:05pm**, or on the rising of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee, if later.

The agenda is set out below and I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Councillors: R. Townsend (Chairman), T. Kelt (Vice Chairman), J. Battrick, A. Burgess, B. Kenney, J. Metters, J. Powell, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft.

AGENDA

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Requests for Dispensations**
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. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Sub-Committee held on 15 July 2025, Minute No's ENV26/001 – ENV26/009 (attached)

6. **Environment Sub-Committee Works Update**

To receive an update on the work being undertaken by the Council's Grounds Maintenance contractor (update attached) and to consider any variations required.

7. **Crown Meadow and Allotment Update**

To receive an update from the Chairman

8. **Reports of Working Group**

- Environmental Working Group (Co-ordinator: Councillor R. Townsend)

Will any Councillors who wish to speak at this meeting, but are not members of the Sub-Committee, please inform the Chairman before the start of the meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Environment Sub-Committee Meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of this scheme are displayed on the Town Council's noticeboards and website.

The Council Chamber is accessed from the rear of the building.

Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

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

PRESENT: Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and
Councillors: T. Kelt, B. Kenney, R. Kenney, J. Metters, and C. Thornicroft

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

By Chairman's Invitation: A. Best

ABSENT: Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Burgess, P. Leason, J. Powell and N. Powell

ENV26/001 Apologies

Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Powell and N. Powell

ENV26/002 Declarations of Interest

None made.

ENV26/003 Request for Dispensations

None received.

ENV26/004 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

ENV26/005 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 March 2025 (Minute Numbers ENV25/036 – ENV25/045), were approved as a correct record.

ENV26/006 Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update

The Chairman drew the Sub-Committee's attention to the Grounds Maintenance Works Update which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Chairman pointed out that the report had reduced in size as several of the previously listed items had been completed. He said the team were largely on top of outstanding projects and the new footpath improvement project had

been added which is intended to alleviate surface water from settling on the path. The Chairman reported that he was hopeful the work would be completed before the wetter weather set in.

ENV26/007 Crown Meadow

The Chairman provided the Sub-Committee with a further update on Crown Meadow:

Crown Meadow (General)

The Town Council was well underway with its marketing/publicity of Crown Meadow with its first article featured in the June/July edition of the Stone & Eccleshall Gazette. The article had also been published on the Town Council's Facebook page and website, and on 'A Little Bit of Stone'.

Numerous comments have been made by members of the public demonstrating the information had been noted and was well received.

A second article was recently published on the Town Council's Facebook page and website and 'A Little Bit of Stone' but would not feature in the Stone & Eccleshall Gazette this time due to a lack of editorial space and the need to publish an alternative Town Council article regarding the High Street. The Chairman said that he would be meeting with the Town Clerk and the Marketing and Events Organiser to look at a schedule for publishing articles about Crown Meadow over a twelve-to-eighteen-month time frame.

Site Visit with Biodiversity & Ecology Officer

The Chairman reported on a recent site walkabout with Stafford Borough Council's Biodiversity & Ecology Officer, the Vice Chairman of the Environment Sub-Committee, the Grounds Maintenance Contractor and Deputy Town Clerk. The overall conclusion drawn from the meeting was that the maintenance and renovation work done by the Town Council on Crown Meadow had been successful.

The Scrapes – A good amount of work had been undertaken on both scrapes one and two, involving removal of the invasive Willow saplings, pollarding the mature Willow (that had generated the saplings), and a huge dig out of Scrape Two to remove unwanted Willow saplings and to reinstate the depth of the Scrape. The group had discussed whether Scrape Two should be deepened further, from its current 60cm depth to one metre, to encourage it to retain more water. Some fauna and flora were noted to be thriving in the dryer conditions, but some species were showing signs the conditions were not right.

The Sub-Committee discussed the health and safety aspects of deepening the scrape and agreed this was an important consideration. It was however pointed out that the sides of the Scrape were stepped and there was only a couple of areas that were proposed be made deeper.

The Sub-Committee discussed introducing new species of wetland flowers to the renovated scrapes as there was space (following the cutting back of grasses) to add to the number and variety of flowers present. The Chairman said consideration would be given to the most suitable flower varieties for use, the costs and the time of year that new planting should take place, before reporting back to the Sub-Committee.

Himalayan Balsam – The Chairman reported that four Himalayan Balsam pulling sessions had taken place on the Meadow and a significant area had been cleared. He said that a good team had rallied and the pulling of the invasive plant in a controlled and organised way had yielded successful results.

Woodland between carpark and amphitheatre – The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that work may be needed to improve tree health and safety in this small area of woodland. There is a case for planting new trees, and in the amphitheatre to replace the dead and dying Cherry trees.

The Sub-Committee explored grant aid opportunities for the planting of new trees with the Queen's Green Canopy suggested as a starting point for investigation, along with the possibility of inviting members of the public to sponsor a tree (after establishing that the Town Council has the legal power to do this).

Connecting the Meadows – The Chairman reported that the Biodiversity & Ecology Officer during the Crown Meadow walkabout had talked about the work that had been done on the flood plain meadows that lie to the north and south of Crown Meadow. The idea of connecting the meadows with a nature walkway along the valley was briefly discussed. The Biodiversity & Ecology Officer advised the group that discussions had taken place in the past about connecting all three meadows which would require perhaps two footbridges across the River Trent and access through private land on the other side of the river. A member of the Sub-Committee pointed out that Staffordshire County Council had recently prepared the costs for footbridges at Burston so this might be a source of reference for possible costs.

A question was raised about how many Black Poplars were left in the area. It was suggested that although some had been lost it was the Silver Birch and Cherry trees that hadn't fared well during the previous spell of Meadow floodings, and Black Poplars are considered a resilient species for floodplains.

The Sub-Committee acknowledged the need to consider future proofing the planting on Crown Meadow to take account of the effects of climate change and the shift towards extremely hot and extremely wet weather.

ENV26/008 Membership of Working Group

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments to the Environment Sub-Committee Working Group for the municipal year 2025-26:

Environmental Working Group

All Members of the Environment Sub-Committee

Co-ordinator: Councillor R. Townsend

ENV26/009 Reports of Working Groups

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the main activity of the Environmental Working Group had been to coordinate the removal of Himalayan Balsam through organised volunteer pulling sessions which had been very successful.

Chairman

Stone Town Council - Environment Sub

Dept	Job Description	Details	Current Status	Approved Budget	Est Date
Allotments	Asbestos Removal	Remove and dispose of asbestos. Asbestos survey confirmed issues as low risk and requires monitoring.	MP has removed asbesto pile from plot 2A and stacked in a layby on the site. MP will add to the pile as he gradually clears asbestos items from other plots. MP will inform us when finished, and we will then obtain a quote to have asbestos professionally removed by a specialist. Raised borders on plot 13 to be dug out and replaced with sleepers as budget allows - MP is liasing with the plot holder on this, as they need to agree to the work. 30.08.24 MP confirms that the plot holder is going to give up the plot soon, and then work can commence on the removal. 24.10.24 Plot holder has renewed for another year, investigation underway to resolve before next growing season. Nov 24 - MP will investigate using gravel boards as a cheaper alternative to sleepers. March 2025: No immediate prospect of being able to remove asbestos sheeting from Plot 13 until an affordable option for new boards is reached. Costs to STC to replace with gravel boards or sleepers is too great.	1825	Work started March 24
Grounds Maint	Walton Roundabout pruning and re-planting	Cut back/prune exisitng shrubs & ivy to promote new growth. Insert new shrubs where required.	March 2025: Pruning and cutting back has been completed. Spaces left by dead shrubs and Formia have now been filled by new growth. Mick recommends that new plants are not necessary at this stage and other more pressing remedial work is required. Use remaning budget towards restoration of other town borders, specifically the overgrown laurel copse opposite the Star Inn and for pollarding of overgrown silver birch trees in town borders on Christchurch Way and Stafford Street.	600	Aut 25
Grounds Maint	Town borders pruning and re-planting	Cut back/prune exisitng shrubs & trees to promote new growth. Insert new shrubs where required.	Time sensitive. Has been rolled over from 2022/23. MP has now done some cutting back in Spring 2024. Remaining budget will be used for further cut back and planting new shrubs later in 2024. 27.8.24. MP confirmed the plan to cut back, remove and replant where required and particularly on Stafford & Lichfield St borders. 24.10.24 - MP confirmed that work has commenced and is ongoing. Nov 24 -MP has indicated that work will be completed by 31.03.25. 10.3.25 Town borders were visited and reviewed by Mick, Robert and Rachel. Several areas for replanting were agreed with the aim of getting this done by end of current Fin Yr. Some remedial tree work and pollarding was also indentified to keep some trees in Town Borders manageable and safe. Mick to advise on how much of this work can be done within existing budget (£600 + £600) and from the tree maintenance budget.	600	Aut 25
Grounds Maint	Re-install Lock Gate	Replace damage lock gate on Walton Roundabout	Canals Trust to source lockgate or MP to manufacture. Areed that MP will make if Canals trust does not supply soon. 27.8.24. MP is committed to reinstating lock gate. No date given.10.3.25: Waiting on Canal Trust to find us a lock balance arm. 28.6.25 DTC to discuss this project with MP and seek a way forward. 03.09.25 -CRT have promised to source a lock balance arm.	400	
Environmental Initiatives	Foot path improvements to alleviate against flooding	Raise the level of the diagonal foot path so that floodwater runs off it rather than in to it.	Budget for this project approved for 2025/26. Mick will scrape the footpath to widen it then use the scrapings and additonal aggregate to build up the footpath by a few inches where necessary so that the water runs off the footpath, rather than into the footpath. 03.07.2025 - Work to commence in late Summer early Autumn.	1560 +£1000 contingency	Late Summer/ Early Autumn