

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

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

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

Officers: L. Fleetwood & T. Williams

ABSENT: Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, I. Fordham and R. Townsend

GP26/079 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: J. Battrick, K. Dawson, I. Fordham and R. Townsend

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

Apologies were also received from Officers: L. Trigg and R. Edwards

GP26/080 Declarations of Interest

None

GP26/081 Requests for Dispensations

There were none

GP26/082 To receive the report of the County Councillors

The Chairman invited County Councillors to address the Committee.

County Councillor Jill Hood

Councillor Hood informed the Committee that the County Council's Cabinet had met to confirm its East West proposal for Local Government Reorganisation.

The Eastern Unitary authority will serve an approximate population of 689,784 residents covering Staffordshire Moorlands, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth and Stoke on Trent areas.

The Western Unitary Council will serve an approximate population of 487,794 residents covering Newcastle under Lyme, Stafford, Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire.

* 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 Hood advised the Committee that the Deputy Leader, Martin Murray, had spoken about this split being the best option for delivering quality services and meeting the aspirations of the people of Staffordshire.

The County Council would be submitting its proposal to the Government by the deadline of 28 November 2025.

County Councillor Andrew Mynors

Councillor Mynors was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP26/083 To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Borough Councillors to address the Committee.

Councillor Rob Kenney

The Chairman said the North South proposal for local government reorganisation had been analysed and was proven to be the best arrangement.

Councillor Jon Powell

Councillor Powell informed the Committee that he had called in planning application 25/41057/OUT (Land at Marlborough Road, Walton).

GP26/084 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP26/085 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 October 2025 (Minute Numbers GP26/063 – GP26/078), be approved as a correct record.

GP26/086 Minutes of Sub-Committees

There are no minutes for consideration.

GP26/087 Stone Town Policing

The Chairman invited PCSO Neil Moffatt to step forward to deliver his (verbal) Police report and allow Town Councillors to consider policing issues in Stone.

PCSO Moffatt shared information on the following topics:

- Homelessness in Stone – a number of homeless people in the town have been offered accommodation and will soon be moving away from their camps. Streetscene will be tending the areas after they have gone.
- Anti-Social Behaviour – a reduction in instances of anti-social behaviour had been noted in Westbridge Park.

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- Anti-Social Behaviour – a large group of children have been issued with community protection warnings after causing disturbances outside Morrisons.
- Anti-Social Behaviour – individuals have been accessing the rooftops behind the Card Factory.
- There have been two attempted burglaries in Walton where the perpetrators have been trying to access high spec vehicles on residents drives.
- StoreNet Retail Radio System – a Stone PCSO will be attending a meeting to encourage businesses to sign up to the system which provides retail radio links to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- ‘Hot Spot’ patrols – are taking place in towns such as Stafford, Stone and Newcastle after government funding was awarded to increase the numbers of police patrols.
- There will be a visible police focus in town centres on knife crime (Ditch the Blade), Bonfire Night and Christmas initiatives.
- Driving through Stone High Street – officers are issuing £100 fines and working to deter people from breaching the Traffic Regulation Order. The Police welcome County Enforcement Officers in respect of addressing parking in the High Street.
- E-scooter presentations – have been undertaken by PCSO Moffatt at local schools to educate children on the legalities of riding E-scooters.

Town Councillors raised the following points:

- Concerns were expressed about a particular group who have been visiting Stone. The Local Policing Team have been aware of their presence in town. Their activities have included placing a banner across the footbridge near Aldi.
- Letters have been issued stating that Staffordshire Police were proposing to change PCSO shift patterns, moving the end time from 10pm to 9pm.

PCSO Moffatt confirmed there were three PCSOs in Stone.

The point of the changes was said to be alignment of resources with a stronger police presence during busier times of day. Town Councillors expressed concern about loss of PCSO cover during the nighttime.

At the end of the item the Chairman thanked PCSO Moffatt for attending the meeting and giving his report.

GP26/088 Engagement with Young People Working Group

The Committee considered disbanding the Engagement with Young People Working Group due to the limited availability of time resources.

RESOLVED: That the Engagement with Young People Working Group be disbanded.

GP26/089 Town Council Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 to 30 September 2025.

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GP26/090 Update from Working Groups:

Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that a meeting of the new Heritage Centre Steering Group would be arranged shortly.

Engagement with Young People

The working group has been disbanded in accordance with Minute Number GP26/088 (above).

GP26/091 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 meeting of the Liaison Group would take place in January 2026 when it was hoped there would be greater clarity on the direction of Local Government Reorganisation to assist in directing discussions.

Stone ATC

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that he and the Town Mayor had attended an excellent annual dinner on 17 October 2025.

The Squadron was in very good shape. It had a limit on the number of cadets that could be accommodated due to the size of the building and Councillor Davies had highlighted the need for larger accommodation with the MP for Stone.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that there had been no meeting.

Stafford District Access Group

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that the next meeting would be held on 8 December 2025, which the Local Policing Commander would be attending.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that a meeting would be taking place on 6 November 2025.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Powell advised the Committee that a meeting of the Community Hub Liaison Group was in the process of being arranged.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Kelt informed the Committee that a meeting had taken place on 3 November which followed the usual format of items on policy, training, health and wellbeing and general information (that came through on email).

He reported that increased subscriptions had been agreed and the accounts accepted. Some new roles in relation to the creation of parishes were proposed. Green Belt issues were discussed although the role the Committee can play was unclear.

The SPCA AGM will be taking place on 24 November 2025.

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West Midlands Railway and other Rail Matters

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that he had attended the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership meeting in Stoke on Trent where they ran through the activities and achievements during the year.

The next rail users group meeting will take place on 27 November 2025.

CHAIRMAN