

Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 November 2025

- PRESENT:** Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and
Councillors: J. Battrick, T. Kelt, N. Powell, J. Powell and C. Thornicroft
- Officers: L. Trigg (attended the meeting virtually on Teams), R. Edwards,
L. Fleetwood and T. Williams
- By Chairman's Invitation: No requests
- ABSENT:** Councillors: A. Burgess, B. Kenney, R. Kenney and J. Metters
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ENV26/018 **Apologies**

Councillors: B. Kenney, R. Kenney and J. Metters

ENV26/019 **Declarations of Interest**

None made.

ENV26/020 **Request for Dispensations**

None received.

ENV26/021 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None received.

ENV26/022 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 September 2025 (Minute Numbers ENV26/010 – ENV26/017), were approved as a correct record.

ENV26/023 **Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update**

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

He advised the Sub-Committee that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor will be working on the town borders over the winter and early spring. As part of this work some Silver Birch trees will be subject to pollard treatment as a lot of them are shallow rooted and subject to wind damage.

It was suggested that an alternative and more robust tree species could be considered as a replacement for the Silver Birch (potentially through an initiative that provided free trees).

The Deputy Town Clerk has sourced a balanced lock arm/beam for Walton Roundabout from Canal and River Trust operatives working on Star Lock. The Grounds Maintenance Contractor will install it when it is available.

The footpath on Crown Meadow which is scheduled to be built up to prevent surface water flooding, will not be completed in the immediate term but should be completed before the end of the financial year, subject to weather conditions.

The Chairman reported that he and the Deputy Town Clerk had visited the allotment site in Mount Road and surveyed the Mare's Tail which was noted to be prolific on a couple of allotment plots. The weed is known to spread like wildfire unless contained and is difficult to eradicate. The solution was considered to be allocating Plot 2A to a knowledgeable new allotment holder who was able to manage it. Plot 1A had a more serious Mare's Tail problem which will need further consideration.

ENV26/024 Crown Meadow

The Chairman provided the Sub-Committee with an update on Crown Meadow and the allotment sites:

Mount Road Allotments

The boundary wire fence was in need of repair and possibly replacement with old broken down concrete posts and tangled wiring. It was not known whether the remedial work would require a budget but a quotation would be requested from the grounds maintenance contractor.

Recording of Flora and Fauna

The Chairman will be visiting the allotments sites next week with David Emley, Photographer and recorder of wildlife, to consider the criteria and parameters for David recording the flora and fauna, starting next month with the goodwill of allotment holders. He said there was an awareness of the importance of the allotment sites in the ecological and natural world and publishing this information would be interesting and informative.

Crown Meadow (General)

The Chairman said he hoped to work on the development of a long term ecological and management plan for Crown Meadow with the Grounds Maintenance Contractor's input. The plan would steer the improvement and

future proofing of Crown Meadow; providing guidance on future budgets for tree planting, woodland maintenance, attracting wildlife, meadow flowers and the like. He has sought the advice of an authoritative body and secured their offer of help.

The Chairman will continue to consult with the Ecology and Biodiversity Officer at Stafford Borough Council in moving forward with formation of a five year plan.

ENV26/025 Reports of Working Groups

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman reported that the Environmental Working Group hadn't met recently but would be considering the five year plan for Crown Meadow as its next project.

Stafford Borough Sustainability Panel Meeting: Councillor Kelt advised the Sub-Committee that he had attended a Stafford Panel Meeting on 17 November 2025.

He said that things were starting to move with potential future impacts next year in the Borough (including Stone) in areas such as tree planting and educating schools. There was a lot of work and progress in East Staffordshire on biodiversity, more so than in Stafford Borough. Councillor Kelt said the Panel geographically covered Staffordshire although it was a Stafford Borough initiative.

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association has issued information about Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESP), a nationwide initiative looking at local requirements for decarbonisation, growth and access to cheap and affordable low impact energy. The Plans will be looking at the way energy is generated, stored and distributed with findings/developments driven down to individual regions.

Councillor Kelt was not clear how RESPs will impact Stone and the Sustainability Panel in Stafford. The project has been going since 2023 and will start producing something in 2026. He has applied to attend a webinar to learn more and gain an understanding of the impact on Stafford borough and in turn Stone.

Chairman