

Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 13 January 2026

PRESENT: Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and
Councillors: J. Battrick, T. Kelt, J. Metters, J. Powell, N. Powell and
C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg (attended the meeting virtually on Teams), R. Edwards,
L. Fleetwood and T. Williams

By Chairman's Invitation: J. Davies and P. Leason

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, B. Kenney and R. Kenney

ENV26/026 Apologies

Councillors: B. Kenney and R. Kenney

ENV26/027 Declarations of Interest and declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None made.

ENV26/028 Request for Dispensations

None received.

ENV26/029 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

ENV26/030 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 November 2025 (Minute Numbers ENV26/018 – ENV26/025), were approved as a correct record.

ENV26/031 Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Grounds Maintenance Works Update document (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) contained no new information of note. He said the Grounds Maintenance Contractor was however mindful of the budgets and the target

dates detailed. A window in the weather was necessary for some of the jobs listed.

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that he had an additional late budgetary proposal to present to the meeting for replacement border fencing and posts at the Mount Road allotment site. A written report*, prepared by the Chairman, was issued to Councillors at this point in the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That a sum of £1,100 be included in the budget for 2025-26 for replacement boundary fencing (in line with the details contained in the report) at the Mount Road allotment site.

ENV26/032 Crown Meadow

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that he did not have a progress update for Crown Meadow on this occasion.

The Chairman introduced his proposal for the main budgetary item (previously circulated to the working group) to create a long term ecological plan for Crown Meadow. He informed the Sub-Committee that a good job had been done maintaining Crown Meadow on a year by year basis, but he would like to see a longer term structured plan (in addition to regular maintenance) that focussed on flora, fauna, trees, diversity and biodiversity.

The objective of the Plan was to secure and enhance the long term ecological development of Crown Meadow which required a new level of advice. The Chairman acknowledged the valuable advice provided by the Town Council's Grounds Maintenance Contractor and Ecology and Biodiversity Officer at Stafford Borough Council. However, additional support was needed to project into the future and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust had been identified as having the necessary expertise in this field. Representatives from the Town Council and the charity had already met on one occasion and their staff had expressed an interest in offering support (seemingly at no cost).

The Chairman was seeking approval for his proposal to create a five year plan in consultation with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, and other advisors, along with a contingency budget to enable any initial works that are identified, to commence.

An updated report*, produced by the Chairman, entitled 'Long Term Ecological Plan for Crown Meadow' was distributed to members of the Sub-Committee at this point in the meeting.

The Sub-Committee expressed support for the Plan and the proposal to obtain advice from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. The suggestion was made that the services of Support Staffordshire could be explored along with opportunities for external grant funding for environmental project work, with match funding a possible requirement.

The Chairman said he didn't know what the Plan would reveal but a number of ideas could be explored. He proposed a fund allocation go into the Environmental Initiatives Budget and when an idea was identified, the Working Group would return with its proposal.

The Chairman was aware that Staffordshire Wildlife Trust had a tree nursery which included the species 'Black Poplar' which it might be possible to plant in Crown Meadow.

RECOMMENDED: That a contingency sum is made available within the Environmental Initiatives Budget to support a Crown Meadow Five Year Management Plan.

ENV26/033 Budget 2026-27 – 2028-29

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk* (issued with the agenda for the meeting) which considered the level of budget that the Sub-Committee may wish to recommend to the General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2026 for the services under its control.

The Sub-Committee reviewed the standstill budget (initially considered by the General Purposes Committee on 9 December 2025) and the amounts included for each service. It also considered other areas of growth or savings when setting the budget for 2026-27 and future years.

The Sub-Committee considered whether it wished to recommend to the General Purposes Committee additional sums for inclusion in the Environmental Initiatives budget.

RECOMMENDED: That the standstill budget set out in the Clerks Report for the years 2026-27 and 2028-29 is accepted, after making the adjustments set out below, arising from consideration of reports presented at this meeting:

- a. A provision of £1,100 should be made in the current year's budget for the repair/replacement of the boundary fence at Mount Road Allotments.
- b. A provision of £2,000 in 2026-27 and £3,000 per annum in subsequent years should be added to the Environmental Initiatives budget to provide funding for the proposed Crown Meadow Management Plan.
- c. As a result of the above, the Sub-Committee's budget would be changed as follows compared to the standstill budget:

	£	
2025-26	1,100	Increase
2026-27	2,000	Increase
2027-28	3,000	Increase

2028-29	3,000	Increase
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ENV26/034 Reports of Working Groups

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman reported that the Environmental Working Group had been active looking at the five year Crown Meadow Management Plan.

Chairman