

Stone Town Council

Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

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

PRESENT: Councillor J. Metters in the Chair and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, and J. Powell

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

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

Note: At the start of the meeting and in the absence of the Sub-Committee Chairman and the Sub-Committee Vice Chairman, the Town Mayor, Councillor Jason Metters, was appointed to take the chair for the meeting.

By Chairman's invitation: P. Leason and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, J. Hood, B. Kenney, R. Kenney and A. Mottershead.

TTP26/024 Apologies

Councillors: L. Davies, K. Dawson, J. Hood, B. Kenney, R. Kenney and A. Mottershead

TTP26/025 Declarations of Interest and declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None made.

TTP26/026 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

TTP26/027 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

TTP26/028 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 November 2025 (Minute Numbers TTP26/017 – TTP26/023), 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 and gave updates on events that had taken place:

2025 – Taken Place

- Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 20 November 2025)
The Christmas Lights Switch-On had been a most successful event, although not discussed in detail on this occasion.
- 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 it was nice to raise the Texas State Flag, particularly as the Town Council had been in recent contact with Carthage in Texas. Councillor Davies was joined by Cary Bailey, dressed in his US commemorative Air Force Uniform, and the occasion was well supported by the Army Cadets.

2026 – Upcoming/Agreed

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

- Texas Flag Raising, marking of Texas State's Independence from Mexico (Saturday 7 March 2026)
Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the March Texas Flag Raising would be a bigger commemoration than the December event, with a band and additional groups invited. He was hoping for a good turnout.
- Other Events
In the absence of the Sub-Committee Chairman, Councillor Hood, the detailed arrangements for the events listed on the agenda were not individually discussed at this time.
- Any suggested new future events
The Chairman invited Sub-Committee members to put forward new ideas for events in 2026.

The suggestion was made that a formal Opening of the Heritage Centre be arranged. The Town Clerk informed the Sub-Committee that this was an item for the Heritage Centre Steering Group to consider, with its recommendations being reported to the General Purposes Committee.

The Town Clerk anticipated the costs of an Opening event would be covered by the existing Heritage Centre budget.

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A member of the Sub-Committee reported that new residents to the town had offered him their observations on what a fantastic place Stone was with the many community events held and the tremendous community spirit they generated.

The Sub-Committee recognised that the community events arranged by the Town Council and other organisations/community groups were very much appreciated by the general public.

TTP26/030 Stone Traders' Group

The Sub-Committee considered Stone Traders' Group's proposed event schedule* for 2026 which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee of two enquiries/questions that had been raised with the schedule:

- Whether it would be acceptable for the Halloween event (31 October 2026) and the Christmas market to be moved from a Sunday to a Saturday.
- Whether the Town Council would award the Traders' Group a subsidy (no value suggested) to support the cost of holding the Halloween event.

RECOMMENDED: That Stone Traders' Group's event schedule be accepted along with agreement that the Halloween event and Christmas Market be moved from a Sunday to a Saturday on the understanding that Town Council market traders who trade on Saturdays are accommodated within the events.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council do not agree to a subsidy but suggest the Traders Group may wish to apply for a Town Council grant.

TTP26/031 Rebekah

This item was deferred to a future meeting when the Chairman, Councillor Hood, was available to give a verbal report.

TTP26/032 Budget 2026-27 – 2027-28

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, and the amounts included for each service. It also considered potential costs and savings when setting the budget for 2026-27 and future years.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the Chairman had made additional recommendations for funds to be allocated to the replacement of outdated Christmas lighting display features, and for a children's summer holiday event.

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RECOMMENDED: That the standstill budget set out in the Town Clerk's report is accepted, after making the adjustments set out below:

- a. A one-off provision of £3,000 should be made in 2026-27 for the replacement of outdated Christmas lighting display features.
- b. An ongoing increase of £1,000 per annum should be made to the Tourism and Town Promotion budget to provide additional funding for a summer holiday children's event.
- c. As a result of the above, the Sub-Committee's budget would be changed as follows compared to the standstill budget:

	£	
2025-26	0	No change
2026-27	4,000	Increase
2027-28	1,000	Increase
2028-29	1,000	Increase

TTP26/033 Reports from Working Groups

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

Remembrance Plaques Working Group

Councillor J. Davies gave a report on behalf of Councillor L. Davies who was not present at the meeting. He suggested to the Sub-Committee that the Remembrance Plaques project be launched at the same time as the Opening of the Heritage centre. The plaques were designed and locations for installation identified.

Market Strategy Working Group

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that no meeting of the Markets Strategy Working Group had been held.

Friendship Agreement Working Group

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that there was a need to arrange a Friendship Agreement Working Group meeting in the near future, particularly following contact with Carthage, and in view of other liaison/friendship arrangements and how these will align with local government reorganisation.

Chairman

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