

Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 2 June 2026

PRESENT: Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and
Councillors: A. Best, I. Fordham, J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, J. Powell and
N. Powell

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

By Chairman's Invitation: None

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, J. Metters and C. Thornicroft

ENV27/001 Apologies

Councillors: J. Metters and C. Thornicroft

ENV27/002 Declarations of Interest

None made.

ENV27/003 Request for Dispensations

None received.

ENV27/004 Representations from Members of the Public

None received.

ENV27/005 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026 (Minute Numbers ENV26/035 – ENV26/042), were approved as a correct record.

ENV27/006 Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update

The Chairman referred the Sub-Committee to the Grounds Maintenance Works Update, which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Chairman highlighted the following points:

- Allotments and removal of asbestos – The Deputy Town Clerk will be undertaking a survey of all the plots to identify the remaining asbestos in accordance with the report on file. Removal of the asbestos was

expected to take place after the growing season had ended in October 2026. The plot with the larger quantity of asbestos would be dealt with as a separate project.

- Town Borders – the Grounds Maintenance Contractor had: removed ivy from the identified trees, trimmed low branches, removed dead Rowan from lower Christchurch Way beds and other locations. Lavender plants had been purchased for planting, Workhouse Bridge borders had been cleared and the M&S border had been trimmed near to the sunken garden.
- Grounds maintenance (installation of lock gate on Walton Roundabout) – the Deputy Town Clerk reported that the contact for the lock gate had not been contactable recently.
- Environmental initiatives (improvements to alleviate flooding) – The Grounds Maintenance Contractor had not been able to start work on this project because the ground conditions were not sufficiently dry. It was hoped the work would be done before the winter season.
- Boundary Fence at Mount Road allotments – It was confirmed that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor had completed the fencing work which was a really good job.

ENV27/007 Crown Meadow

The Chairman provided the Sub-Committee with updates on the following items:

Development Plan

The Chairman was hoping to begin consultations with various authorities (including Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Stafford Borough Council, Dr David Emley, plus one other) with a view to formulating a long term plan for Crown Meadow. He was aiming to be in a position to present the Plan to the Council in good time for it to be implemented in the New Year.

He suggested it might be beneficial to form a Development Plan Working Group when information started to come through for consideration.

Himalayan Balsam

The Chairman said that the pulling of Himalayan balsam last year had proven successful as there was very little left in these areas this year, and other species were starting to come through and thrive.

Three sessions had been held so far and as the plants were easy to pull, quite a lot of work could get done. He was hoping to expand the pulling sessions in the future.

Pulling the Himalayan Balsam up by the roots was considered the best way of removing it. There was discussion about the use of strimming which although effective in preventing the plant from going to seed, it was also aggressive on other vegetation.

Swans

The Chairman reported that the swans nesting on Crown Meadow had successfully hatched their eggs and it was good to see them come back to the scrape after the work undertaken in the autumn of 2025. He said he would include a reference to this news in an upcoming article in the Stone & Eccleshall Gazette.

Allotments

The Chairman reported that he had made a first visit to the allotment sites accompanied by Dr Emley, with a view to making a record of the species that were there. Dr Emley was pleased to note a significant range of flora and fauna and would be keeping records and considering how to use them.

Crown Meadow

Reference was made to fencing that had been erected on an adjoining farmer's field which prevented cows from wandering across the river when the water level was low.

ENV27/008 Memberships of Working Groups

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

Environment Working Group

All Members of the Environment Sub-Committee
Co-ordinator: Councillor R. Townend

ENV27/009 Reports of Working Groups

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman reported that the working group had no report other than the work on Himalayan Balsam which had been given earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Kelt provided the Sub-Committee with information on a Stafford Borough Panel meeting held on 18 May 2026 (which he had been unable to attend). He advised the Sub-Committee that the main part of the meeting involved a presentation on the biodiversity strategy, given by the Borough Council's Biodiversity and Ecology Officer. The discussion was borough level but would be taken forward to an action plan and short term targets on the next agenda in two months' time.

The strategy document hadn't formally been issued but was available should anyone want to view it.

Councillor Kelt said that a workshop about looking after ancient trees in the borough had been cancelled, but hopefully would be rearranged.

Chairman