

Stone Town Council

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

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

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

ABSENT: Councillors: A. Burgess, J. Davies, L. Davies, K. Dawson, B. Kenney, P. Leason,
J. Metters, A. Mottershead and C. Thornicroft

Prayers

Before the meeting began, Reverend Paul Kingman, led prayers.

C27/012 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: J. Davies, L. Davies, K. Dawson,
B. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Metters and C. Thornicroft

C27/013 Declarations of Interest

None made

C27/014 Requests for Dispensations

None received

C27/015 Representations from Members of the Public

None

C27/016 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 12 May 2026 (Minute Numbers C27/001 – C27/011), be 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.

C27/017 Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 19 May 2026 (Minute Numbers PC27/001 – PC27/006), were noted.

C27/018 Internal Auditor's Report 2025-26

The Council considered the following documents which had been circulated with the agenda, prior to the meeting:

- a. Formal Internal Audit submission to the External Auditors*
- b. Report from Internal Auditor*

The Town Clerk advised the Council that the report of the Internal Auditor, the first of three reports that needed to be considered in relation to the presentation of accounts for the previous financial year, looks at and provides assurance as to what has been done in relation to the accounts of the Council.

The Town Clerk said that he was pleased to report that the auditor had found no material errors, omissions or irregularities in the financial records and had no significant concerns about the internal control procedures.

Councillor Fordham thanked the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk for the work they had undertaken on the Council's accounts.

RESOLVED: To note the Internal Auditor's report and submission to External Audit.

C27/019 Annual Governance Statement 2025-26

The Council considered the Annual Governance Statement* which must be approved prior to consideration of the Council's accounts.

The Town Clerk advised the Council that this report required the Council to declare whether it had sound systems of internal control including arrangements for the preparation of Accounting Statements. He pointed out that the only thing that was different to last year was a new Assertion 10 relating to effective information technology and data management in accordance with proper practices.

RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Governance Statement for submission to the External Auditor for the year 2025-26.

The Town Mayor signed the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 to confirm that it had been received and considered.

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C27/020 Council Accounts & Audit Submission 2025-26

The Council considered the Town Clerk's report* and the accounting statement* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk gave a detailed explanation of the accounts, their variances between forecast outturn and actual outturn, and differences in the way some figures had been presented this year.

He said the underlying position of the Council's accounts was an underspend of £7,750 against budget.

The Town Clerk pointed out the underspendings referred to in report paragraphs 22 and 23 showing underspendings on the "Stone Heritage Centre Capital" and "Town Centre Improvements". He explained that the accounts for 2025-26 included the payment of these sums into earmarked reserves, rather than rolling them forward, as would have been done in previous years.

RESOLVED:

- a) To approve the Council's Accounts for 2025-26 as set out in the report of the Town Clerk, including the use of the rollover reserve to allow the transfer of budgets between financial years and the proposed use of those budgets in 2026-27.
- b) To note the variances between the forecast outturn for 2025-26 and the actual outturn, and the reasons identified for the major variances.
- c) To approve the financial statement for submission to the Council's External Auditors.

The Town Mayor signed the Accounting Statements 2025-26 to confirm that it had been received and considered.

**C27/021 Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014**

The Information* for Quarter ending 31 March 2026 was noted.

C27/022 Civic Announcements

The Civic Announcements, which had previously been circulated, were noted.

The Town Mayor called for Councillors to enter a team at his Quiz Night in support of his charities.

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C27/023 **To receive the Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements**

The Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's reports of engagements, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

On this occasion reports were enclosed for the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor 2025-26 and Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor 2026-27.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Best, gave an account of the engagements he had attended as Deputy Town Mayor 2025-26 and the engagements he had attended during May 2026.

The Deputy Town Mayor 2026-27, Councillor Townsend, gave an account of the Craig Sumner Art Exhibition at Stone Heritage Centre.

The Town Mayor 2025-26, Councillor Metters, was not available to give his report.

TOWN MAYOR

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