

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 6 December, 2016

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Kenney in the Chair and  
Councillors J Davies, Mrs J Farnham, I Fordham, Mrs M Goodall, Mrs K Green,  
M Green, Mrs J Hood, T Jackson, Mrs E Mowatt, G Neagus, A Osgathorpe,  
Mrs J Piggott and M Williamson

Councillors Mrs C Collier, G Collier and P Leason for part of the meeting

**Absent:** Councillors M Shaw

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**GP17/102** **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor M Shaw

**GP17/103** **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

Councillor I Fordham declared a pecuniary interest in Minute Number GP17/114 due to the location of the property.

Councillors G Neagus, Mrs J Piggott and M Williamson declared a personal interest in Minute Number GP17/110 due to their membership of the Festival Committee.

**GP17/104** **To receive the reports of the County Councillors**

County Councillor I Parry was absent.

County Councillor P Jones reported that Staffordshire County Council has been written to by the Secretary of State regarding the repatriation of children from Calais. This is different from the Syrian families who have already been settled in Staffordshire.

Councillor Jones commented that the financial situation for the County Council is still “trying”.

There has been £1.6m set aside for dealing with potholes.

A bollard at Harecastle Road will be replaced soon.

Highways are considering the appropriateness of traffic calming measures on the Priory Estate following a petition to stop racing. This is currently a police matter.

He referred to the outbuild of bollards on Newcastle Road which were erected by Stafford Borough Council without consulting Highways. This is a concern as long vehicles find it difficult to turn left onto Newcastle Road, and there is a planning application for an additional four houses in the area.

The Health Authority is producing a Sustainability and Transformation Plan which will include a reconfiguration of services. County Councillor Jones urged Members

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to consider and make comments on the plan when it is available.

Councillor Mrs J Hood asked the County Councillor about the proposed new footpath outside Mojo's. She commented that it is a waste of money as there is already perfectly adequate footpaths in the area. Councillor Jones took information away about this.

Councillor Mrs J Hood referred to a public meeting held by Sir Bill Cash MP regarding the proposed HS2 Railhead development, and said that comments had been made that an old traffic study has been used for accessing the site. County Councillor Jones said he would look into the study which had been used.

Councillor G Neagus commented that the "Welcome to Stone" signs are hidden by foliage and asked for this to be looked at. He also referred to potholes on the entrance to Whitebridge Estate which cause problems for cyclists. He also asked for an update on the additional jobs promised at the new Meaford Industrial Estate. County Councillor Jones could not update regarding the jobs, but said that Stafford and Newcastle Colleges will be offering advance materials courses to work with industry at Meaford.

Councillor M Green thanked County Councillor P Jones for attending and noted that County Councillor A Parry was again not in attendance.

**GP17/105     Representations from Members of the Public**

None

**GP17/106     Minutes**

**RESOLVED**

- a) Management Sub-Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2016, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**GP17/107     Budget Overview**

The Committee considered the report of the Clerk\* who also added that the report should also have pointed out that the £14,800 rollover on the Building Maintenance budget had been offset against the approved supplementary estimate for building works at the Frank Jordan Centre within the 2016-17 standstill forecast.

RESOLVED: To note the standstill That the Committee notes the standstill budget position for 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 and the issues related to setting the precept, and

RESOLVED: Asks each sub-committee to consider its financial needs for the next three years and report back to the General Purposes Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017 with its budget proposals.

**GP17/108     Stone Radio**

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The Clerk presented his report\* and asked Members to decide if they were happy with the content, and if they would prefer a solicitor to produce the contract instead.

The Clerk confirmed that paid bookings made at least a week in advance will always take priority over the Radio using the site. The Radio are able to use Stone Station Community Centre when others are not on site and must give at least a weeks' notice to use the facility.

With regards to live music, Stone Radio will be liaising with the Caretaker to prevent him from being disturbed.

RESOLVED: To accept the contract with the addition of a clause to say that only sympathetic signage can be used at the Centre.

RESOLVED: Not to ask a solicitor to draw up the contract.

**GP17/109     Letter from Sir William Cash MP regarding Stone High Street**

A letter was received from Sir Bill Cash MP regarding Stone High Street and Westbridge Park.

RESOLVED: to write to Sir Bill Cash MP to say that the letter has been received and considered.

**GP17/110     To receive a letter from Stone Festival Committee**

Following the success of the Soap Box Derby in 2016, Stone Festival Committee asked for support from Stone Town Council to hold the event in 2017.

RESOLVED: to support the event and pay for the road closure.

**GP17/111     Christchurch Way / Lichfield Road Highways Works**

An email from Highways was circulated showing a proposed new footpath at the bottom of Town near the splinter island.

Councillor R Kenney has also found out that the crossing at The Swan and the crossing by Thai Lanna will remain. He is awaiting a response regarding the number of pedestrian accidents in the area.

RESOLVED: to write to Highways stating that the Council does not support the proposals due to their unnecessary nature and cost and the requirement that the splinter island would need to be retained. In addition, it was suggested that the County Council should undertake a further traffic flow survey in the area, with a view to the removal of the splinter island and an ending to the traffic congestion that it creates.

**GP17/112     Letter re Stone & District Angling Society**

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A letter has been received regarding the renewal of contract between Stone Town Council and Stone & District Angling Society.

RESOLVED: to enter a new agreement with Stone & District Angling Society on the same terms as the previous contract.

**GP17/113 Members' Motions under Standing Order 4**

**Councillor J Davies**

"During Christmas 1993 John Howland from the city of Carthage in Texas returned to Stone on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the time he had spent in the town as a member of the US Army Air Force awaiting his posting to his operational unit. He had never forgotten the wartime kindness and hospitality of the town and brought with him a proclamation from the Mayor of Carthage bestowing a number of gifts on Stone, including: "The flag of the Lone Star State of Texas to be displayed on all festive occasions as a reminder of the lasting friendship and appreciation of the people of Stone, Staffordshire, by the people of Carthage, Texas". The Town Council formally accepted those benefits and honours on 18 December 1993.

Now that the town has a permanent flagpole I ask the Town Council to resolve:

1. To fly the Lone Star State flag on three appropriate festive occasions each year: 29 December (the anniversary of the admission of Texas as the 28<sup>th</sup> state of the Union in 1845), 2 March (the anniversary of Texas gaining its independence from Mexico in 1836) and on 4 July (American Independence Day).
2. To purchase a Lone Star State Flag for this purpose in order to preserve the original presentation flag, the cost not to exceed £150."

RESOLVED: to purchase the flag to be flown on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 4<sup>th</sup> July and Thanksgiving Day. Also, to ask Texas to fly the Stone Town flag on occasions.

**GP17/114 Member's Motions under Standing Order 4**

Councillor I Fordham left the room for this item.

**Councillor R Kenney**

"Stafford Borough Council Planning Committee has deferred indefinitely a decision on the future of the grade 2 listed Church of St John landmark on the North Eastern entrance to Stone. This follows a failure to reach agreement with the developer who wishes to convert the church to residential use and build apartments on the site. The fabric of the church is deteriorating and it has now been surrounded with ugly boarding. Residents are dissatisfied with the situation and fear the loss of the building. They are demanding a sensible accommodation between Stafford Borough (whose planners seem to prefer a commercial use) and the developer.

I propose that the Town Council reiterates its support for a residential use that will safeguard the fabric of the church and urges Stafford Borough Council to reach an immediate accommodation with the developer that has the support of residents.

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Proposed Resolution:

"Stone Town Council is most concerned about the deteriorating state of the grade 2 listed Church of St John and the boarding now surrounding the building and reiterates its support for residential use. The Council urges Stafford Borough Council to enter into serious negotiations to find an acceptable residential solution."

RESOLVED: to write to Stafford Borough Council stating "Stone Town Council is most concerned about the deteriorating state of the grade 2 listed Church of St John and the boarding now surrounding the building and reiterates its support for residential use. The Council urges Stafford Borough Council to enter into serious negotiations to find an acceptable residential solution."

Councillor I Fordham returned to the meeting.

**GP17/115 Member's Motions under Standing Order 4**

**Councillor R Kenney**

"It has been raised by a member of the public that the Crown and Anchor Pub is not a listed building. This is one of the most significant buildings in the town and should have protected status.

I propose that the Council take steps to ensure that this building is protected for the future."

RESOLVED: to contact Stafford Borough Council to request that the Crown & Anchor Pub become a listed building

**GP17/116 Update from Working Groups**

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Councillor Mrs J Hood reported that the HS2 Railhead proposal has impacted on the timescale for the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan. Regulation 14 will not be actioned as quickly as originally thought, and there will need to be a further consultation. The next meeting will take place in January.

**GP17/117 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council**

**Stone ATC** – The Mayor – the next meeting will take place in January

**Age Concern Stone & District** – Councillor Mrs K Green – no meetings have taken place

**Stone Town Band** – The Mayor – no meetings have taken place

**Walton Community Centre** – Councillor M Shaw was not present

**Stafford & Stone Access Group** – Councillor Mrs C Collier – no meetings have taken place

**Stone Common Plott Trustees** – Councillor R Kenney reported that the last meeting had clashed with a Stone Town Council meeting, therefore nobody was able to represent Stone Town Council at the Common Plott meeting.

**Stone Community Hub Liaison Group** - Councillor R Kenney reported that it was an interesting first meeting, and was very productive.

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Councillor M Williamson attended the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association Executive meeting and will report back at the next meeting.

**Town Mayor**