

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Christchurch Suite, Frank Jordan Centre,
Lichfield Street, Stone
on Tuesday 5 September 2017

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: G. Collier, Mrs C. Collier, Mrs K. Green, M. Green, Mrs J. Hood, J. Davies,
P. Leason, Mrs E. Mowatt, A. Osgathorpe, M. Shaw, M. Williamson, T. Jackson,
G. Neagus, Mrs J. Piggott, I. Fordham and Mrs M. Goodall

ABSENT: Councillor Mrs J. Farnham

The Chairman announced that item 8 of the agenda (Stone Neighbourhood Plan) had been withdrawn. He also announced that the meeting would be adjourned at item 22 to enable the Planning Committee Meeting to be held. The Meeting would then reconvene for the confidential items.

GP18/038 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor: Mrs J. Farnham

GP18/039 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP18/040 **To receive the Report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that she had attended the official opening of Stone Boules Club (Le Coche D'or Petanque Club) at The Stone House where three new Courts have been built by members themselves. The Club is made up of able bodied and disabled people, together with Parkinson's sufferers. The Club has been moved around a lot but can now stay at this venue for as long as it wishes to.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised that two new trees (Turkish Hazel) would soon be planted in the High Street. Also, the wall located by Bargain Booze, Hanley Economic Building Society and Subway has been repaired.

Booklets detailing Staffordshire County Council's Bus Review Consultation have been issued to local people over this last few weeks. The feedback received has been that residents are disappointed that funding is being withdrawn from bus services. Some routes are more popular than others but withdrawal could cause both social isolation and a negative impact on the High Street's economy.

Councillor Mrs Hood reported that at a full Staffordshire County Council Meeting, Members voted unanimously to oppose the joint governance of the Police and Fire and Rescue Services in Staffordshire. The Police and Crime Commissioner should be

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asking for more Government funding and should listen to the people. More staff are needed on the front line and money should not be getting wasted on a consultation.

Councillor Mrs Piggott asked that Staffordshire County Council investigate the accumulation of water on the road outside Londis. A car was seen driving through the water and soaking people at the bus stop.

Councillor Mrs Goodall asked that the grids/drains in the roads be cleared, particularly in the north end of Stone.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry had tendered his apologies for the meeting.

GP18/041 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP18/042 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) Tourism and Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 18 July 2017, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record and that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers: TTP18/013 and TTP18/014 be adopted.
- b) Estates Sub-Committee held on 15 August 2017, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record and that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST18/010 be adopted.
- c) That the recommendations of the Estates Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST18/011 be adopted, with the Terms and Conditions of Hire for the Frank Jordan Centre updated in accordance with the papers* circulated with today's agenda, and with the addition of replacing the main exterior sign.

GP18/043 Notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meetings

Noted

GP18/044 Stone Neighbourhood Plan

Item withdrawn as the final draft of the Plan is not yet available.

GP18/045 Data Protection Policy

The Committee considered a draft Data Protection Policy* (circulated prior to the meeting) and recommendation that this be adopted by Stone Town Council.

The Town Clerk advised that an updated policy/report would be brought to a future meeting before May 2018, when the 2016 EU Directive known as the General Data

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Protection Regulation (GDPR) takes effect. This Regulation will introduce significant changes to Data Protection law.

RESOLVED: That the Data Protection Policy is adopted by Stone Town Council.

GP18/046 **Budget Monitoring – June 2017**

The Committee considered the report* of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

GP18/047 **Circulation of Large Reports with Meeting Papers**

The committee considered whether large reports/papers should be circulated to Members by email only, rather than printed and enclosed with the agenda.

RESOLVED: That paper copies of agenda items which are greater than ten sides will in future be emailed to Members, rather than sent by post, unless a specific request is made for paper by an individual Member.

GP18/048 **Subsidised Bus Review Consultation**

The Committee considered a Staffordshire County Council public consultation outlining four options on how the smaller £1.3 million bus subsidy budget could be spent during 2018/19. Subsidised bus travel is being reviewed in order that the statutory responsibilities of the County Council can be protected and funded.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council makes representations (before the closing date of 17 September 2017) opposing option 1 and strongly opposing options 2, 3 and 4.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mark Deaville, Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Commercial be invited to a future meeting.

GP18/049 **Stafford Borough Council Local Plan Review**

The Committee considered a Stafford Borough Council public consultation on the 'Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report' as part of the Local Plan Review. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to appraise new planning policies and proposals as they are being prepared. The Sustainability Appraisal reports will be prepared and consulted upon as part of the evidence base prior to the Plan being independently examined.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the Local Plan Review, with no items to raise with the Borough Council.

GP18/050 **Police and Fire Consultation**

The Committee considered the Business Case detailing the four options identified by the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner for amalgamating the governance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services with that of Policing.

After consideration of the implications of the merging of services, Members decided that Stone Town Council would support the position of Staffordshire County Council.

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RESOLVED: That all emergency services should work more closely together to provide better public protection. To oppose the recommendations in the Business Case that the Governance Model be adopted.

GP18/051 Request from the Richard Vernon Trust to Adopt a Bench

The Chairman of the Richard Vernon Trust, Councillor Leason, reported that the proposed bench, to be located in the churchyard of St Michael and St Wulfad's Church, was to commemorate 100 years since the ending of World War 1 in 2018. The Trust are looking to purchase the bench but would like the Council to adopt it in order that future maintenance is taken care of.

RESOLVED: That Stone Town Council adopt the new proposed bench, taking on maintenance responsibility after its installation by the Trust.

GP18/052 Canal & River Trust – Canal Adoption Meeting

The Committee considered a request for the Council to be represented at a meeting of local organisations who are looking to become involved in a scheme to adopt a stretch of canal through Stone, and thereafter work together to look after its appearance. Use of the Council Chamber has also been requested.

RESOLVED: That the following Councillors represent Stone Town Council at the meeting: Councillors: R. Kenney, Mrs J. Hood and P. Leason. The Council Chamber would be provided as a venue for the meeting.

GP18/053 Stone Town Council Representative on Walton Community Association (Stone) Ltd

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that no response had been received to the Council's letter asking for the date when Walton Community Association's constitution had changed. Attendance at meetings by representatives of both Stafford Borough Council and Stone Town Council was thought to be included in the Association's constitution.

RESOLVED: To note that no response had been received.

GP18/054 Non-Cheque Payment

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 April to 30 June 2017.

GP18/055 Update from Working Groups

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Councillor Mrs Hood reported that she had been confident that agreement would be reached at the Steering Group meeting on 30 August 2017 for the Neighbourhood Plan to go to Regulation 14. However, after receiving two objections to the wording of a paragraph, a further meeting has been called for 6 September 2017.

Councillor Mrs Hood apologised that progress with the Neighbourhood Plan had been delayed. However, an additional meeting of the General Purposes Committee

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is scheduled for later during the month which would enable the final draft to be considered.

RESOLVED: To note the update on the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Protocol for Marking the Death of the Sovereign or other member of the Royal Family Group

Councillor Davies reported that he had a meeting with the Town Clerk tomorrow morning to discuss calling a meeting of the Working Group.

GP18/056 Members' Motions under Standing Order 4

Councillor Mrs J. Hood

'Stone residents are being ignored by HS2, who once again have refused to bring the HS2 2a: consultation to Stone which is the second largest settlement within the borough and will be hugely impacted upon by the Railhead Compound, which originally billed as temporary, is now being described as permanent.

HS2 state that hundreds of heavy goods vehicles (one per minute) will travel down Yarnfield Lane heading north and south throughout the day and night. The impact on Stone will be chaos as the A34 and Yarnfield Lane tries to cope with the volume of backed up traffic with no planned changes by Highways to the Wayfarer junction. We also have to consider light pollution from the compound across the town and the welfare of Walton residents who will suffer sleep deprivation due to construction noise. Dust will threaten the health of many of those residents with breathing conditions. I ask Stone Town Council to consider their support of the Stone Railhead Crisis Group in their alternative plan to re-site the compound'.

RESOLVED: To reimburse the costs of the Stone Railhead Crisis Group for the purchase of banners, leaflets, a marquee and hire of a room, to the value of £258.90.

GP18/057 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 advised that he and Councillor Green had attended a meeting on 24 July 2017 and that the ATC are looking for civilian instructors to assist with its work.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Mrs Collier reported that the 'Transport to Hospital' scheme was working very well. Lunch Club, now held at the Crown & Anchor, was also going very well. She also reported that there were two new recruits in the office.

Stone Town Band

The Mayor reported that no meeting had taken place.

Walton Community Centre

Councillor M. Green reported that he is waiting for an invitation to a meeting.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Mrs Collier reported that the long-standing Treasurer had retired. A replacement Treasurer has been appointed. The ongoing struggle with A boards was continuing but the website is up and running.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

No report

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

No report

SPCA Executive Meeting

Councillor Williamson reported on a meeting of the Executive Committee he attended on 4 September 2017. The main points discussed were:

- The accounts for the year 2016-17 have been audited and found to be in order
- Update on the General Data Protection Regulation which will take effect in May 2018.
- A proposal by NALC to set up a 'Larger Council's Committee' (for Councils with a precept greater than £250,000 or an electorate greater than 6000). SPCA is not in support of the proposal.
- 'Disclosable Personal Interests and the Precept'. NALC's legal topic note has highlighted a lack of clarity on this issue. Councillor Williamson advised that he wishes to discuss the matter with the Town Clerk to verify the Council's position and explore the need to ask the Government for dispensation.
- Diane Wallace of the Dementia Action Group gave a talk on Dementia in Stafford Borough. Councillor Williamson suggested Diane be invited to a future meeting of Stone Town Council.

The meeting was suspended to enable the Planning Committee Meeting to take place, after which it was reconvened.

GP18/058 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next item of business is discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

GP18/059 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

Estates Sub-Committee held on 15 August 2017, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record and that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST18/013 be adopted.

GP18/060 Computer Support Contract

The committee considered a report of the Town Clerk which explores the potential for entering into a contract for support of the Council's IT systems.

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RESOLVED: To authorise the Town Clerk to enter into a contract for IT support, as set out in the report.

GP18/061

Debt Recovery

The committee considered a report of the Town Clerk detailing a debt recovery issue.

RESOLVED: That the matter be reviewed again in two months.

Town Mayor