

**STONE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Town Clerk**

Les Trigg

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15 Station Road  
STONE  
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5<sup>th</sup> December, 2016

A meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber, 15, Station Road, Stone** on **TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2016** at 7pm.

I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg  
Town Clerk

**AGENDA**

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations Received**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation

4. **Debt benefit and consumer advice**

To consider the letter from Staffordshire County Council (attached)

Members of the public are welcome to attend the General Purposes Meeting as observers. Persons attending should enter the Borough Area Office through the rear entrance door (adjacent to the car park). The Council Chamber is at the top of the stairs.



Dear Colleague

**Re: Debt benefit and consumer advice**

In the wake of a £15m gap in our budget this year as a result of not receiving an anticipated £15m from the Better Care Fund we have had to introduce additional spending controls across all of our operations, and have made a number of savings to Health and Care services.

One of the savings was to Debt Benefit and Consumer Advice, currently commissioned from Citizens Advice at an annual cost of £439k. This is not a statutory duty for the County Council and with reducing unemployment in Staffordshire, and a range of alternative sources of information and advice increasingly available, we do expect that the need for this service will fall.

We have heard concern from many quarters about the impact on people and communities if these services were no longer available. We would therefore like to explore whether the District and Borough Councils, Parish Councils, Police and Crime Commissioner and/or NHS would be prepared to contribute to the cost of these services from April 2017. We estimate that around £300k collectively from all partners would be required to maintain some level of service.

We would be very grateful if you could confirm by 13 January 2017 whether any funding would be available from your organisation.

Yours sincerely

**Alan White**  
**Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing**  
**Member for Lichfield Rural East**