

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in St Michael's Suite, Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone on Tuesday 23 January 2018

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

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Jackson and Mrs E. Mowatt

GP18/134 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Jackson and Mrs E. Mowatt

GP18/135 **Declarations of Interests**

None

GP18/136 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

The Town Clerk advised that a general dispensation was effective for all Members in respect of the 2018-19 budget recommendations (agenda item GP18/140).

GP18/137 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

GP18/138 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) Environment Sub-Committee held on 12 December 2017, copies having been circulated to Members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record. The recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number ENV18/008 were considered under Minute Number GP18/140, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.
- b) Management Sub-Committee held on 12 December 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 MAN18/015, be adopted. The recommendations contained in Minute Number MAN18/014 were considered under Minute Number GP18/140, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.

- c) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 9 January 2018, 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 TTP18/028, TTP18/029, TTP18/030, TTP18/032 and TTP18/033 be adopted.

RESOLVED: To appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee and Chairman of the General Purposes Committee to liaise with the newly formed Stone Traders Group Ltd (TTP18/029).

The recommendations contained in Minute Number TTP18/031 were considered under Minute Number GP18/140, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.

- d) Estates Sub-Committee held on 9 January 2018, 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 EST18/022 and EST18/024, be adopted. The recommendations contained in Minute Number EST18/023 were considered under Minute Number GP18/140, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.

GP18/139 **Notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meetings**

Noted

GP18/140 **2018-19 Budget Recommendations to the Council**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* (circulated with the agenda) containing the Sub-Committee budget proposals, along with additional information to determine the budget and precept level for recommendation to the Council. An additional financial summary containing budget proposals to the Committee for 2018-19, indicative budgets for 2019-20 and 2020-21 and the potential impact on Council Tax, was issued at the meeting.

Councillor Kenney informed the Committee that the market contractors had reported that the condition of the marquees was poor and required replacement. He suggested that an additional sum of £7,000 be put in the budget for replacement of the marquees during 2018-19.

Councillor Kenney gave an update on Crown Wharf. He advised that contracts have been exchanged and Joules had outlined an offer on the Heritage Centre and Theatre. The external shell of a building will be provided for a peppercorn rent and Stone Town Council would be required to supply the internal fixtures and fittings and finance the running costs when operational. Councillor Kenney suggested the Town Council make provision for the future running of the Heritage Centre and adding £25,000 per annum to the budget for this purpose. The £100,000 Crown Wharf reserve would be available for the original fitting out of the Heritage Centre.

The meeting was adjourned and then reconvened while the Town Clerk added these additional figures to the existing budget proposals.

The Town Clerk reported the results of the amendments made during the meeting*. He advised that if there is agreement on the Sub-Committee proposals with the two

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additional items raised above, the Council Tax (parish element) would need to be set at £49.55 for 2018-19. This represents an increase of 10.9% over the previous year, with a further indicative 3% increase in each of the following two years, giving figures of £51.04 and £52.57 respectively.

In monetary terms, this represents an increase of £4.85 for the year 2018-19.

Following a request for a named vote, the following votes were cast:

Councillor	Mrs C. Collier	Abstain
	G. Collier	Against
	J. Davies	For
	Mrs J. Farnham	For
	I. Fordham	For
	Mrs M. Goodall	Abstain
	Mrs K. Green	For
	M. Green	For
	Mrs J. Hood	For
	R. Kenney	For
	P. Leason	For
	G. Neagus	For
	A. Osgathorpe	For
	Mrs J. Piggott	For
	M. Shaw	For
	M. Williamson	Abstain

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Council the budget set out in the Clerk's report with the addition of a £7,000 one off provision for purchase of new marquees in 2018-19 and an ongoing cost of £25,000 per annum from 2018-19 for running costs at the new Crown Wharf heritage centre.

GP18/141 **Meeting Schedule for 2018-19**

The Committee considered a proposed programme of meetings and events for the period May 2018 to April 2019.

RESOLVED: To approve the schedule of meeting and event dates, with Mayor Making set to take place on 8 May 2018.

GP18/142 **Westbridge Park Public Consultation**

The Committee considered an email (dated 9 January 2018) from the Red Kite Network Ltd, a landscape architecture, ecology and greenspace consultancy, recently appointed by Stafford Borough Council to carry out a feasibility study and masterplan for the development of play, football and outdoor event facilities at Westbridge Park, Stone. As part of a public consultation, representatives of the Town Council had been invited to attend a meeting on Monday 5 February 2018 to share ideas and comments.

RESOLVED: That all Members should have the opportunity to attend a meeting with Red Kite Network Ltd and that Stone Town Council would ask for a private discussion, following which a formal response would be submitted. The suggested

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date for a meeting was 14 February, with 21 February being suggested if the 14th is not possible.

GP18/143 **Land at Jasper Way, Stone**

The Committee were advised that planning application 17/27434/FUL for a vehicle distribution compound on land at Jasper Way, Stone had recently been approved by Stafford Borough Council.

The Committee expressed its disappointment that the Borough Council had approved the development proposal and had disregarded the representations made by Stone Town Council and views of the wider community.

The vast area to be covered by the Jaguar Land Rover compound will only offer the potential for between 70 and 90 jobs (which is thought to be an optimistic number for this type of operation). The distribution compound is not an effective use of industrial/business land in respect of generating large scale employment opportunities. Jobs are needed for local people and to support the occupants of new homes constructed over the course of the Borough Council's Local Plan.

Other adverse environmental impacts will involve:

- Congestion and traffic flow issues – the A34 will be gridlocked and the development will co-exist with the development of the HS2 compound.
- Drainage issues resulting from large expanses of hard surface ground treatments such as tarmac
- Air pollution and emissions
- Car parking congestion which is already spilling down Diamond Way

The Committee considered possible recourse actions such as a Judicial Review, but it was agreed that the costs would be prohibitive.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council write to Stafford Borough Council expressing its disappointment at the decision made to approve planning application 17/27434/FUL and that the representations made by Stone Town Council and views of the wider community had been disregarded. The Town Council should also ask for better representation on the Planning Control Committee.

GP18/144 **Big Conservation Conversations: Where are the outstanding conservation areas?**

The Committee considered an email from the organisation 'Civic Voice' which is undertaking a national survey on the condition of existing conservation areas and threats they are facing. It is asking the Town Council to donate £50 to help fund a Parliamentary event for making a case for investment into their future long-term protection.

RESOLVED: To decline the request to assist Civic Voice in fundraising for protecting the long-term future of conservation areas.

GP18/145 **Members Motions under Standing Order 4**

Councillor J. Davies

'At their AGM in October the HMS St Vincent Association asked that their original standard be laid-up in St Michael's and St Wulfad's church. This was agreed by the church and the date of Sunday 4 March 2018 had been pencilled-in. The Association

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has now confirmed the date, so planning can begin. The Town Mayor is an honorary member of the Association; therefore, there is a civic involvement with this event. I would ask the Committee to agree a grant of £350 to meet the cost of refreshments, the order of service, a pike for the flying of the standard and a fixed standard holder at the church, in respect of the Council's support for the event'.

RESOLVED: To approve a grant of £350 to support HMS St Vincent Association with its standard laying event, and that this should include the surviving members of the Royal Naval Association who instigated the link between the Association and Stone.

Town Mayor