

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in St Michael's Suite, Frank Jordan Centre, Lichfield Street, Stone on Tuesday 5 March 2019

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

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Jackson, G. Neagus and A. Osgathorpe

GP19/186 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Jackson, G. Neagus and
A. Osgathorpe

GP19/187 **Declarations of Interests**

Councillor Mrs J. Hood declared a personal interest in item 9 (Minute Number
GP19/194) – St Michael's Community Hall

Councillor P. Leason declared a personal interest in item 9 (Minute Number
GP19/194) – St Michael's Community Hall

Councillor R. Kenney declared a personal interest in item 9 (Minute Number
GP19/194) – St Michael's Community Hall

GP19/188 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP19/189 **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood had no report on this occasion.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP19/190 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

GP19/191 **Minutes**

There were no minutes for consideration.

GP19/192 **Crown Wharf Development**

The Committee considered a proposed Heads of Terms document* reflecting a potential agreement between Joules Brewery Limited and Stone Town Council for the Town Council to lease the old Fire Station building (as part of the Crown Wharf development) for its conversion and use as a Heritage Centre.

The Proposed Heads of Terms had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heads of Terms allowed the Council until 30 September 2019 to make a firm decision as to whether to proceed with the development. This time frame would allow the Town Council to fully understand the costs involved and to submit an application for Heritage Lottery Grant Funding. If the offer to take on a lease of the building is accepted the Town Council would have until 30 June 2020 to complete the conversion works. This date would allow the spreading of the costs over two financial years.

The Town Clerk highlighted clauses relating to the requirement for the building to be illuminated, and clauses relating to termination of the agreement, should the Town Council in the longer term decide not to continue with the leasing arrangement.

Heads of Terms were proposed to the Committee for acceptance.

An amendment was proposed for the Heads of Terms to be looked over by a solicitor before they are accepted, but the amendment was lost.

RESOLVED: That the Proposed Heads of Terms between Joules Brewery Limited and Stone Town Council are accepted.

GP19/193 **Debit and Credit Cards**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* asking that support is given to the introduction of card payments for all Council services, and to consider its future position with regard to cheque receipts.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is authorised to enter into an agreement with Sage Pay to provide a facility for the Council to accept credit and debit cards as set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Council works towards the elimination of cheques receipts, other than in exceptional circumstances, by 31 March 2020.

GP19/194 **To consider the following request for a grant:**

As the Chairman and Vice Chairman had both declared an interest in this item, the Town Mayor was appointed to take the Chair.

ST MICHAEL'S COMMUNITY HALL

The Committee considered the grant application received from St Michael's Community Hall requesting £500 for the provision of three extra radiators in the main room and loft insulation to prevent loss of heat.

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RESOLVED: To award £500 to St Michael's Community Hall.

GP19/195 **HS2 Phase 2a Additional Provision 2**

- a) The Committee considered an invitation from Staffordshire County Council to submit comments in response to a consultation on the Additional Provision 2 to the Phase 2a High Speed Rail (West Midlands Crewe) Hybrid Bill (AP2) and Supplementary Environmental Statement (SES).

A copy of an email from the HS2 Project Manager at Staffordshire County Council had been enclosed with the agenda.

- b) The Committee also considered whether the Town Council wished to prepare a petition in respect of HS2 AP2.

A draft petition prepared by the Stone Railhead Crisis Group had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

The Committee were supportive of the draft petition produced by Stone Railhead Crisis Group and were not in favour of accepting the invitation to contribute to Staffordshire County Council's HS2 consultation.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, is asked to finalise the content of the petition produced by Stone Railhead Crisis Group, as the Town Councils submission to HS2 Phase 2a Additional Provision 2.

GP19/196 **Stone Parish Area Liaison Group – Planning Item**

The Committee considered a draft proposal* made by Stone Area Parish Liaison Group to send a letter (a copy of which was circulated with the agenda) to Stafford Borough Council regarding its planning process in pursuance of the aims set out in 'Statement of Community Involvement 2018 Update'.

At the last meeting of the Liaison Group (on 30 January), concerns were shared about how town and parish council planning observations are dealt with by the Borough Council and how the planning process does not give value or weight to the opinions of town and parish councils (in the Stone area) despite being the closest tier of local government to the community with the most in depth knowledge of their areas. The Borough Council also offers parish councils no greater right than members of the public to speak at Planning Control Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk on behalf of Stone Town Council is asked to produce a modified version of the draft letter prepared by Stone Area Parish Liaison Group, for submission to Stafford Borough Council.

GP19/197 **Ex Servicemen's Bowls Match**

The Ex-Servicemen's Bowls Club has suggested the bowls match with Town Councillors takes place on Monday 17 June 2019 at 6:00pm.

RESOLVED: To note the date for the Ex-Servicemen's Bowls Match and to provide the buffet as in previous years.

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GP19/198 Non-Cheque Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 January to 31 January 2019.

GP19/199 Members Motions under Standing Order 4

Councillor J. Davies

'Sunday 11 November 2018 was Remembrance Sunday and the centenary of the end of the Great War. The support of the people of Stone is always impressive for Remembrance Sunday and it was surpassed far beyond expectations in 2018. During the events that morning a panoramic photo was taken from the first floor of Granville's Brasserie of the magnificent scene in the town centre.

It would be a great pity if the Town Council did not obtain a copy of that photo for posterity, especially with our heritage centre in prospect. A framed copy of that photo is available from the Vantage Point Creative framing shop at a cost of £220. I now ask the Town Council to purchase such a framed copy as a record of that historic day in the town's history'.

RESOLVED: That the Council does not purchase the framed photograph.

GP19/200 Members Motions under Standing Order 4

Councillor J. Davies

'With effect from 29th July 2002 Stafford Borough Council introduced charges for parking in the car parks at Crown Street, Westbridge Park and Christchurch Way. It is now some sixteen and a half years since then so it is high time to review those arrangements particularly in the light of pressure to reduce or eliminate car park charges to encourage greater numbers to come into the town centre.

I now ask the Town Council to resolve to write to Stafford Borough Council requesting a statement of the yearly income from these car parking charges since their introduction'.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is asked to write to Stafford Borough Council to request a statement of the yearly income from car parking charges at Crown Street, Westbridge Park and Christchurch Way since their introduction.

GP19/201 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Councillor Mrs Hood, informed the Committee that the Plan is currently with the Inspector.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies reported that no meeting had been held since the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

Traffic Management in High Street Working Group

Councillor Kenney reported on a meeting of the Traffic Management in the High Street Working Group on 4 March 2019. Representatives from Staffordshire County Council and Stafford Borough Council were in attendance. The issues

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discussed included on street parking before and after the road closure, and the speed and volume of traffic using the High Street as a through route.

The Working Group has concluded that it will look at enforcement of the road traffic regulations and also the sequencing pattern of the lights at the bottom of the High street. It may be possible to alter the sequence timings to delay motorists and deter them from using the High Street as a shortcut. It will also assist in speeding up the flow of traffic on Christchurch Way.

GP19/202 **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 Deputy Mayor reported on a welfare meeting he had attended at the beginning of February. There is a strong number of cadets involved and Stone ATC is in very good health.

Age Concern Stone & District

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs K. Green, reported that Age Concern were doing very well. The Luncheon club was very popular and thirty people had attended a meal today at Burston. They are very short of volunteer drivers to transport people to the Luncheon Club and to medical appointments.

Mrs Green reported on the very committed volunteers and the work they do in the office.

Councillor Mrs Collier said that Girlguiding have some new badges and it has been suggested that a liaison meeting be set up between the youngsters and the older community.

Stone Town Band

The Mayor reported that Stone Town Band do not hold meetings which is the reason she had not been aware of any dates.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor Mrs C. Collier advised that she had attended a meeting last week and potholes on roads and pavements were raised as an issue. Repairs involving tar and plastic infill are now taking place.

The Kingsmead car park in Stafford which is the closest one to the Gatehouse Theatre has closed and the Access Group are negotiating with the owner of the B & M car park to do something about the two hour limit.

It has been suggested that a better map is produced showing the locations of disabled parking spaces.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney reported on the number of cattle put out to pasture and issues with TB.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

It was reported that no meeting of the Stone Community Hub Liaison Group had taken place.

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SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor M. Green had attended a meeting last night where concerns were raised about potholes around the County.

TOWN MAYOR