

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone on Tuesday 21 May 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and  
Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies,  
M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

**ABSENT:** Councillors: Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Green, J. Hickling and P. Leason

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**GP20/001**    **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Green,  
J. Hickling and P. Leason

**GP20/002**    **Declarations of Interests**

None

**GP20/003**    **Requests for Dispensations**

None

**GP20/004**    **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

**County Councillor Mrs J. Hood**

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that Staffordshire County Councillors have each been allocated a sum £20,000 which they can use on projects of their choice, within their divisions. Councillor Mrs Hood has been allocated a higher value of £30,000 as it includes an unspent sum, rolled over from the previous financial year. She said she would be working with residents and Councillors in several areas to identify need and priorities. She will be earmarking the pavement outside the Royal Exchange, which is in disrepair and dangerous for pedestrians to use.

Councillor Mrs Hood said she was disappointed to lose Stone's local Community Highway Liaison Officer, who has recently retired. She was pleased to report that after a very proactive recruitment campaign, the post has been filled and the function now fully staffed. Amey has also been recruiting and is fully staffed.

Councillor Mrs Hood invited questions from the floor and the following topics were raised:

- Concern about the areas dependence on the A34, which is overpopulated with slow moving traffic. The road is sometimes used as a diversion for the M6 motorway. Pollution is a concern and screening with shrubbery was suggested.

Councillor Mrs Hood said she would raise the issue with the County Highways Department.

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- The poor condition of some pavements in Stone, such as those on the Lichfield Road, are presenting difficulties for people wheeling buggies and those in wheelchairs.
- Congestion caused by the splinter island on Christchurch Way, during peak time periods.

Councillor Mrs Hood advised that both the Lichfield Road pavement and the splinter island have already been referred to the Highways Department. The Church has also experienced difficulties in respect of funeral cortèges accessing Church Street due to the island.

**County Councillor I. Parry**

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

**GP20/005 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

**GP20/006 Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 9 April 2019 (Minute Numbers GP19/203 – GP19/219), be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**GP20/007 Minutes of Sub-Committees**

There were no minutes for consideration

**GP20/008 Sub-Committee Terms of Reference**

The Committee considered the terms of reference for the Council's Sub-Committees, a copy of which had been attached to the agenda for this meeting.

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference are accepted with the following amendment to Membership And Appointment for all Sub-Committees which should state:

The Sub Committee shall consist of seven members, or any other number as determined by the General Purposes Committee, drawn from the membership of the Town council.

**GP20/009 To Appoint the Members, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the following Sub-Committees**

RESOLVED: To appoint the following Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members to the Sub Committees for the municipal year 2019-20:

**Tourism & Town Promotion**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Vice Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham

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Members: Councillors: T. Adamson, A. Best, J. Davies, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft

#### **Environment**

Chairman: Councillor P. Leason

Vice Chairman: Councillor T. Adamson

Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, M. Hatton, T. Kelt, J. Powell, R. Townsend

#### **Estates**

Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham

Vice Chairman: Councillor A. Best

Members: Councillors: Mrs L. Davies, M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood, C. Thornicroft, R. Townsend

#### **Management**

Chairman: Councillor J. Davies

Vice Chairman: Councillor I. Fordham

Members: Councillors: K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, T. Kelt

#### **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Members: Councillors: T. Adamson, A. Best, I. Fordham, J. Powell

Co-opted Members: J. Bonser, A. Osgathorpe

#### **Mayor's Charity**

Chairman: Councillor J. Davies

Members: Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs L. Davies, M. Hatton, J. Powell

In addition, the Town Mayor and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee are ex-officio members of all committees and sub-committees as set out in Standing Orders.

#### **GP20/010 Appointment of Members to Working Groups**

The Committee considered the appointment of Members to Working Groups.

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments of council representatives to the following Working Groups:

#### **Traffic Management in the High Street**

Councillors: M. Green, Mrs J. Hood and R. Kenney

#### **GP20/011 Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies**

The Committee considered appointments as the Council's representatives on outside bodies:

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments of Council representatives on outside bodies:

#### **Stone ATC (Mayor plus 1 member)**

Councillors: J. Davies and Town Mayor

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**Age Concern Stone & District** (2 members)

Councillors: T. Adamson and C. Thornicroft

**Stafford & Stone Access Group** (1 Member)

Councillor T. Kelt

**Trustees of the Town Hall Charity** (all members)

All Councillors

NOTE: Current membership of the following bodies will continue until the stated dates, or until retirement by an individual member, even if the members cease to be members of the Council.

**Stone Common Plot Trustees** (one member for a four year term)

Members: G. Collier and M. Shaw to May 2020

Councillors: Mrs J. Hood & R. Kenney to May 2020

Councillor T. Adamson to 2023

**Stone Community Hub Group**

Councillors: M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood and J. Powell

**Richard Vernon Trust** (two members for a four year term)

Members: R. Kenney to 2021, J. Davies and Mrs L. Davies to 2023

**Stone Area Parish Liaison Group**

Councillor J. Davies

**SPCA Executive Committee** (one member elected for a two year term)

Councillor M. Green (to 2021)

**Stone Town Band**

Note: Stone Town Band has been removed from the list as no regular meetings are held

**GP20/012**     **Review of Standing Orders**

The Committee undertook to review the Council's Standing Orders\* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The document had been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who had proposed changes to section 13 to reflect changes in the consideration of meeting minutes.

RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the revised Standing Orders until the next meeting of this Committee in accordance with normal practice.

**GP20/013**     **Review of Financial Regulations**

The Committee undertook to review the Council's Financial Regulations\* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The document had been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who proposed changes to section 5 to reflect the move to setting up direct debits online, rather than by paper. Consideration had also been given to any changes which may be needed as a result of the recent decision to accept debit and credit cards for payments to the Council, but none were required.

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RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the revised Financial Regulations until the next meeting of the Committee in accordance with normal practice.

**GP20/014**     **HS2 Petitioning**

The Committee considered the progress of the HS2 petitioning process, and any action it wished to take as a result.

The view was expressed that the Committee were unhappy with the process and supported the position of the Stone Railhead Crisis Group (SRCG) who had already put forward their written representations to Parliament in this respect.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk, in consultation with Councillors R. Kenney and Mrs J. Hood, are authorised to compile a letter to Parliament in support of the SRCG position.

**GP20/015**     **HS2 Phase 2a – Meeting of Highways Sub-Group**

The Committee considered an email from Staffordshire County Council which had been circulated with the agenda.

The email confirmed the arrangements for the first annual meeting on Thursday 6 June (at the North Staffordshire Conference Centre in Stoke on Trent) to discuss traffic, transport and highway matters related to HS2 Phase 2a. Questions or issues are requested by 30 May in order prepare for the meeting.

The Council considered the appointment of a representative to attend the Highways Sub-Group on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs J. Hood be appointed to represent the Town Council at the HS2 Phase 2a Meeting of the Highways Sub-Group.

**GP20/016**     **Stafford Safer Neighbourhood Panel**

The Committee considered the appointment of a Stone representative to the Stafford Safer Neighbourhood Panel following the provision of additional information, for the Council to reconsider its appointment in the light of this new information.

A copy of an email from Gerald D'Arcy, Safer Neighbourhood Panel member, had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised that there are two membership statuses: Full Member (admittance to the panel following a successful interview process) and Council Member (vetted but no interview and no vote, with an opportunity to speak only when answering a question).

RESOLVED: That Councillor T. Adamson be appointed as the Town Council's representative on the Safer Neighbourhood Panel. His application would be for Full Membership.

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**GP20/017 Fly the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day**

The Committee considered a letter from Seafarers UK regarding flying the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council participate in Merchant Navy Day and fly the Red Ensign in the High Street on 3 September 2019.

**GP20/018 Non-Cheque Payments**

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

**GP20/019 Update from Working Groups:**

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

The Town Clerk advised the Committee about discussions with the Borough Council's Principal Planning Officer regarding the map that would enable the Examiner to visit all Open Green Spaces designated within the Stone Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Councillor Mrs Hood, summarised the progress of the Draft Stone Neighbourhood Plan and confirmed that it had been submitted to Stafford Borough Council under Regulation 16 and was currently undergoing examination by a Planning Inspector.

**Stone Area Parish Liaison Group**

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of Stone Area Parish Liaison Group would be held next month.

**Traffic Management in High Street Working Group**

Councillor Kenney reported on the meeting held between the Town Council and Borough and County representatives. The Highway's Department is now in the process of considering enforcement action against motorists using the High Street as a through route. They are also looking at changing the sequencing of the traffic lights at the bottom of the High Street, in an attempt to slow them down and deter people from using the High Street as a short cut. He hoped these courses of action would be implemented very soon.

**GP20/020 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**

Councillor Davies advised that there had been no meeting of Stone ATC.

**Age Concern Stone & District**

It was reported that no meeting has taken place.

**Stafford & Stone Access Group**

No information was available on meetings.

**Stone Common Plot Trustees**

Councillor Kenney reported that no meeting had taken place since the AGM.

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**Stone Community Hub Liaison Group**

It was reported that no meeting had taken place.

**SPCA Executive Committee**

No information was available as Councillor M. Green was not present at this Committee meeting.

**TOWN MAYOR**