

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 30 July 2019

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

ABSENT: Councillors: I. Fordham and J. Hickling

GP20/057 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: I. Fordham and J. Hickling

GP20/058 **Declarations of Interests**

None

GP20/059 **Requests for Dispensations**

None

GP20/060 **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that the environmental impact of climate change had been a topic of discussion at the meeting of full Council on Thursday 25 July 2019.

A climate change emergency was declared by Staffordshire County Council with a number of action points agreed. These included plans to make improvements to air quality, a reduction in carbon emissions, changes to planning policy, improvements to the natural environment, the processing of waste and installation of electric charging points in Staffordshire. Targets have not yet been set. In order to achieve the range of environmental improvements the County Council must work with all age groups within the county as well as other local authorities.

Councillor Mrs Hood informed the Committee that the County Council had decided to phase out bus passes for under twenties (Your Staffordshire Card scheme).

Councillor Mrs Hood provided information on the Staffordshire Warmer Homes initiative which is managed by Staffordshire County Council to deliver funded first time central heating systems to eligible homes across Staffordshire. The scheme begins in October to assist the poorest people in society who must be elderly, disabled or have a family with young children. Councillor Mrs Hood said the scheme will be advertised in various ways (website, Newsletter, word of mouth etc) but she appealed to everyone to play their part in publicising the potential opportunity.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP20/061 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP20/062 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 2 July 2019 (Minute Numbers GP20/036 – GP20/056), be approved as a correct record.

GP20/063 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Management Sub-Committee held on 16 July 2019 (Minute Numbers MAN20/001 – MAN20/007), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers MAN20/005 and MAN20/006 be adopted.

GP20/064 Budget Monitoring Report

The report of the Town Clerk* was noted.

GP20/065 Consultation on the Draft Stafford Borough Economic Growth Strategy

The Committee considered a consultation on the Draft Stafford Borough Council Economic Growth Strategy. An email from the Economic Development Manager had been attached to the agenda along with an electronic copy of the draft Stafford Borough Council Economic Growth Strategy 2019-2024.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had obtained an extension to the closing date for submission of the Town Council's comments.

The Committee discussed the consultation document and considered that:

- Although Stone is the largest settlement in the Borough outside Stafford, reference to Stone within the document was sparse, and the strategy weighted disproportionately in favour of the county town.
- The document did not give sufficient consideration to the environmental impact of its proposals.

Councillors Green and Leason reported on a briefing they had attended on the document, and an undertaking given that Stone would feature more in the next version of the strategy.

Members queried whether they would have the opportunity to comment on the updated strategy before it was finalised.

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RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman, is authorised to compile a representation on behalf of the Town Council, for submission to Stafford Borough Council.

GP20/066 Members Motion

Councillor Mrs J. Hood

'SSAFA are holding a charity event to highlight the needs of ex-service men and women in Stone and the surrounding area. There are many groups attending on the day September 14th and ask that we support this event in paying for the road closure'.

RESOLVED: That the proposal is supported subject to first checking that the High Street will be needed as the event is taking place within the Crown Hotel.

GP20/067 Non-Cheque Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 June to 30 June 2019.

GP20/068 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Councillor Mrs Hood, informed the Committee that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were awaiting comment from the Examiner.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that there had been no recent meeting.

Traffic Management in High Street Working Group

Councillor Kenney reported that no meeting had taken place.

He asked that the Town Council write to the County Council requesting that the road traffic signage/information at the top of the High Street is verified.

GP20/069 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 he had attended a welfare meeting of the ATC two weeks ago. He said the Squadron was most grateful to the Town Council for the award of a grant towards its bus signwriting project. He said the Squadron was in good health with 13 Cadets and a recruitment exercise planned after the summer holidays.

Councillor Davies was pleased to see Stone ATC at Civic Sunday this year and hoped the date would not conflict with activities again next year.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft informed the Committee that he had attended a meeting of Age Concern on 5 July. He provided an overview of the charity and listed its main areas of activity which include a car transport scheme, drop in coffee morning,

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lunch club and welfare advice. The Charity in Stone operates independently and is run by volunteers. Its income sources are grants, donations and fundraising.

He forwarded thanks to the Stone Town Council office for holding a charity box.

Councillor Adamson and Councillor Thornicroft had attended the AGM on Friday 26 July. It was reported that Age Concern now held a bank of three + drivers. There are plans to advertise coffee mornings locally, and it was confirmed that the venue for the next lunch club would be the Plume and Feathers.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor T. Kelt advised the Committee that he had attended the AGM of Stafford & Stone Access Group and also one of its regular meetings (held in June). The August meeting has been cancelled and the next meeting is in October.

Councillor Kelt has undertaken site visits with the secretary. He advised that the aim of the charity is to improve access for all, mothers with prams, wheelchair users, those with walking problems and those with health problems which limit their activities.

The Access Group runs a website and operates mainly in Stafford with plans to make a visit to Stone.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

It was reported that no meeting had taken place.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

It was reported that no meeting had taken place.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green advised that a meeting had taken place while he was on holiday. He offered to answer members questions upon release of the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association report.

The meeting was suspended to enable the Planning Committee and Confidential item on the Town Council meeting to take place. The Committee was then reconvened for the confidential item on the agenda.

GP20/070 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are 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.

GP20/071 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee Meeting held on the 2 July 2019 (Minute Numbers GP20/036, GP20/055 and GP20/056), be approved as a correct record.

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GP20/072 Staffing Matters

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED: To agree changes to the terms and conditions of employment of a member of staff.

CHAIRMAN

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