

# Stone Town Council – Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber  
at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 19 November 2024**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J. Hood in the Chair and  
Councillors: A. Best, A. Burgess, J. Davies and L. Davies and P. Leason

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards, G. Hodson and T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: No Councillors

**ABSENT:** Councillors: K. Dawson, B. Kenney, R. Kenney, A. Mottershead and J. Powell

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**TTP25/016 Apologies**

Councillors: B. Kenney and R. Kenney

**TTP25/017 Declarations of Interest**

None

**TTP25/018 Requests for Dispensations**

None

**TTP25/019 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

**TTP25/020 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 September 2024 (Minute Numbers TTP25/009– TTP25/015), were approved as a correct record.

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\* 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.

## TTP25/021 Calendar of Events

The Sub-Committee considered the Town Council's Calendar of Events for 2024-25 and gave updates on events that had taken place:

### **2024 – Events that have taken place**

- Remembrance Commemorations (10 and 11 November 2024)

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Remembrance commemorations at Walton and Stone had run smoothly on both 10 and 11 November, appropriately honouring the soldiers who fought and lost their lives in the two world wars and other conflicts.

The Chairman said that on Remembrance Sunday she noticed that there were people standing on the sidelines wearing medals who would have been most welcome to take part in the parade.

Although no complaints were received by the Town Council about the quality of the sound, questions were raised about whether the people at the back of the parade could hear the service. The Chairman said she hoped the Council could find the budget to have speakers installed in the High Street, next year.

She said the Parade Marshal and Church had done the commemorative services proud.

- Vegan Market (Saturday 16 November 2024)

The Chairman confirmed that a successful vegan market had taken place on Saturday 16 November 2024, the first market of its kind to be held in the town.

The market stalls had been erected a little too close to the shop fronts which caused a problem with access for wheelchair users and mobility scooters outside one shop as stock had been displayed on the pavement.

Members of the Sub-Committee who had been to the market reported that it was well attended with a wide variety of produce available. They said the market had provided something different and the shopkeepers at the bottom end of town were pleased the stalls extended so far down.

The Sub-Committee expressed that it was keen to book the market again in 2025.

### **2024/2025 – Upcoming/Agreed**

- Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 21 November 2024)

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that Stone in Bloom had installed 25 Christmas trees in the town and for the first time had planted a live 6ft Christmas tree (decorated) in the anchor bed on Christchurch Way.

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- Texas Flag Raising, marking the anniversary of Texas joining the Union on 29 December 1845 (Sunday 29 December 2024)  
The usual small-scale arrangements for the Texas Flag Raising event in December will be made.
- Texas Flag Raising, marking Texas State's independence from Mexico (Saturday 1 March 2025)  
The usual arrangements for the marking of Texas State's independence from Mexico will be put in place.
- St George's Day Re-enactment (Saturday 19 April 2025)  
The Chairman expressed the need to ensure the booking was secure with the Knight re-enactment group.
- VE Day Commemoration (Thursday 8 May 2025)  
Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that a report of the working group would be given later in the meeting.
- Floating Market/Waterside Events (24, 25, 26 May 2025)  
The Chairman said she hoped the successful Floating Market would return in 2025.
- Music Event/Street Party  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Town Council had been asked by Stone Traders' Group not to hold any celebration in the month of May 2025 as it would clash with the Food and Drink Festival.
- Any other suggested new events for 2025  
The Chairman invited Sub-Committee members to put forward new ideas for events in 2025.

A Literary Book Festival was suggested. The Chairman said that a Book Festival had been held in Stone some years ago lasting for about a week. As the event had been very expensive, further research would be needed to ensure that it was a viable option.

The Chairman called for ideas for a children's event to add to the popular Puppet Festival that was proposed be held again in 2025.

- Date for installation of Christmas trees in 2025  
The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Town Council needed to be mindful that the Christmas tree installation in 2025 did not clash with Stone Traders' Group event dates in the High Street.

## **TTP25/022 Town Markets**

The Sub-Committee considered Minute Number GP25/047 (from the General Purposes Committee meeting on 6 August 2024) relating to income from the Town's Markets

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The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that the General Purposes Committee had noted from the Budget Monitoring Report that income from markets had gone down significantly. The Committee recommended the matter be referred to the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee, as the sub-committee responsible for markets.

RESOLVED: To refer the issue to the Market Strategy Working Group for consideration and a report back.

**TTP25/023 Christmas Lights**

The Sub-Committee considered issues relating to the Christmas Lights.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that after issues in previous years with the Walton Roundabout lights, the Town Council's electrical contractor would be testing the installation on the morning of the Christmas Lights Switch On.

The Town Clerk informed the Sub-Committee that the Christmas lights in the town were on a three-year cycle for changes to the display but as the display intended for last year had been late in arriving, the new lights had been introduced this year.

**TTP25/024 Stone Traders Group**

The Sub-Committee received advice from Stone Traders Group that Town Council representation was no longer needed at its management meetings. The reason was that the Group did not see that there was any benefit or purpose to the arrangement continuing.

The Town Clerk informed the Sub-Committee that he had advised the Group's Secretary that the benefit was in the long term when members of the Council had regularly attended meetings and understood both the role and the point of view of the Traders which would reflect in more informed discussions in the Council Chamber.

Councillor Fordham asked that it be recorded that he had not been invited to any Stone Traders Group Meetings.

The Traders Group had also advised in its correspondence a proposal to remove several of its events that were similar to Town Council events. These included the Four Wheel Fest, Transport Fest and any music festival.

**TTP25/025 Reports from Working Groups**

The Chairman invited co-ordinators from each Working Group to address the Sub-Committee:

**Remembrance Plaques Working Group**

Councillor L. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that she would have a test/prototype plaque ready as soon as she was able.

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Councillor J. Davies confirmed that the Working Group was aiming to progress the installation of plaques at the homes of fallen soldiers from World War 1 and World War 2. He said the Working Group's research had identified the homes of individuals named on the War Memorial and would be recommending which individuals were commemorated on a rolling programme. The rolling programme would continue for some time in collaboration with the ATV/JAT and coincide with the opening of the Heritage Centre.

### **Market Strategy Working Group**

The Chairman reported that no meeting of the Market Strategy Working Group had taken place.

### **Friendship Agreement Working Group**

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that he had sought feedback from members of the working group on various ideas and was in touch with the President of the Association of Amici di Neresheim. He said he had also sourced various examples of policies from other organisations which provided a useful template.

### **VE Day Working Group**

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the working group was making several recommendations in respect of marking VE Day 2025. The first recommendation was to hold a small-scale celebration on the evening of 8 May 2025, which was also the day of the Food and Drink Festival. He said the Working Group did not propose the Town Council attempt to compete with national events that were taking place on that day.

He suggested on behalf of the Working Group that the Council also consider holding an end of WWII event at the end of the summer, something similar to the Summer Street Party held in August 2024. This occasion could mark both Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan.

Councillor Davies put forward the suggestion to make budgetary provision for a beacon lighting event by the canal on the evening of 8 May, preceded with an open-air celebration in Stonefield Park. The celebrations would benefit from the purchase of two VE 80 flags for Stonefield Park and the flagpole in the High Street.

Councillor Davies proposed that the Heritage Centre Manager and Marketing and Events Organiser were invited to join the Working Group to look after the work needed and to lead in with the going live of the heritage centre.

He said that a meeting of the VE Day Working Group would be arranged as soon as possible.

Councillor Leason advised the Sub-Committee that the Borough Council will be planting the pictorial bed in Stonefield Park to commemorate the end of the war.

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He said that if two separate events were held, a small event could take place in the amphitheatre prior to the beacon lighting on the canal.

**Chairman**

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