

Stone Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 February 2025

PRESENT: Councillor J. Metters in the Chair and
Councillors: J. Davies, L. Davies, I. Fordham, J. Hood, R. Kenney, J. Powell,
N. Powell, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

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

ABSENT: Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, T. Kelt, B. Kenney,
P. Leason and A. Mottershead

Prayers

Before the meeting began, Licensed Lay Reader, Councillor Lin Davies, led prayers.

C25/075 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, A. Burgess, K. Dawson, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, P. Leason and A. Mottershead

C25/076 Declarations of Interest and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None made.

C25/077 Requests for Dispensations

None received.

C25/078 Representations from Members of the Public

None

C25/079 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers C25/067 – C25/074), be approved as a correct record.

* 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.

C25/080 Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The draft Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/095 – GP25/112), were noted.
- b) The draft Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers PC25/037 – PC25/042), were noted.
- c) The draft Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers PC25/043 – PC25/048), were noted.
- d) The draft Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4 February 2025 (Minute Numbers GP25/113 – GP25/133), were noted. The recommendations included in Minute GP25/130 were considered as part of agenda item 7 (Minute Number C25/081).

C25/081 To consider the Council’s Budget for 2025-26 to 2027-28 and to set the Precept and Council Tax for the Year

The Town Council considered the Town Clerk’s budget report*, which reflected the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee on 4 February 2025.

The Town Council considered a Proposal* on the ‘Revenue Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28’ including the budget, precept and Council Tax for 2025-26, indicative budgets for 2025-26 and 2027-28, and recommendation for the wording of the Council Tax leaflet.

RESOLVED:

In respect of the Town Council’s budget for 2025-26 to 2027-28:

1. The Budget recommended by the General Purposes Committee on 4th February 2025, as included in the draft minutes at Council agenda item 6(d) and set out in the Clerk’s report to this meeting, is agreed.
2. The 2025-26 Council Tax for this Council’s purposes should be £63.99 for a Band D property, an increase for the year of £2.99, with indicative Council Tax levels of £67.13 and £70.42 for the following two years. This would result in a precept on Stafford Borough Council for 2024-25 of £409,788.12. Local Council Tax Support Grant of £26,210.12 would be added to this.
3. The wording for the 2025-26 Council Tax leaflet should be:

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“Stone Town Council provides services for the people and town of Stone.

These services include the provision of community facilities, such as the Frank Jordan and Stone Station community centres, Stone Heritage Centre, allotment sites at Newcastle Road and Mount Road, and the Crown Meadow Nature Reserve and amphitheatre.

The 2025-26 budget includes additional funding to provide support for the introduction of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) in Stone High Street, further improvements at Crown Meadow, support for VE Day and VJ Day commemoration events, improvements to wreath laying arrangements on Remembrance Sunday, and improvements to the Council’s office accommodation.

Investing in and working to promote a vibrant town and encourage visitors is a key Town Council priority. In order to support this, the Council organises regular events such as the Town Market and monthly Craft Market together with town centre events such as the Summer Street Party, Puppet Festival, the Classic Car event and the St Georges Day celebration. Christmas lights are provided in the High Street and at Walton, with the Council’s annual switch-on event being one of highlights of the town year. The High Street environment is enhanced by the Council’s provision of hanging baskets and bunting along the High Street, and noticeboards and fingerposts throughout the town.

The Council provides bus shelters, benches and dog bins throughout the area and takes responsibility for the upkeep of many local amenities and planted areas. It also provides grants and other support to help charitable and community organisations such as the Stone Community Hub, organises remembrance events, and Council staff supply regular support and advice to local residents.

By considering the impact of every planning application, the Council seeks to develop and conserve the town, and its approved Neighbourhood Plan helps the Council to shape and protect the future of Stone.

At its monthly meetings the Council welcomes questions from the public and sets aside time to listen and respond.

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Assistance with public questions will gladly be given by the Council's staff."

4. The Town Clerk is authorised to seek tenders/quotations, place orders and make payments in accordance with this budget, the Council's policies, and Financial Regulations.

**C25/082 Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

The information for Quarter ending 31 December 2024 was noted.

C25/083 Civic Announcements

The Civic Announcements, which had previously been circulated, were noted.

The Deputy Town Mayor drew the Town Council's attention to the Army Benevolent Fund Evening which both the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor were supporting.

He also highlighted the Staffordshire Moorlands Chairman's Charity Ball at Alton Towers Resort, which the Town Mayor will be attending on 22 February, and the Texas Flag Raising ceremony in the High Street at noon on Saturday 1 March 2025.

C25/084 Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements

The Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's reports of engagements, which had previously been circulated, were noted.

The Deputy Town Mayor advised the Town Council that a report on a Carol Concert engagement at Aston and Little Stoke Scout Group was missing from the report and that a letter of apology was in the process of being drafted.

TOWN MAYOR

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