



STONEHOUSE
TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF

THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held on Monday 23th April 2018 in the Town Hall, High Street, Stonehouse

The Report of the Annual Town Meeting held on 24th April 2017 was circulated together with the written Annual Reports received from Stonehouse Community Organisations and recipients of Grant funding.

Present:

25 members of the public, 11 Town Councillors, District Councillor Mattie Ross, County Councillor Lesley Williams

1. Welcome from the Chair of Council

Councillor Theresa Watt, Chair/Town Mayor, opened the meeting by welcoming all those in attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mary Coates, Chair, Stonehouse Community Centre Association, Town and District Councillor Gary Powell, District Councillor Chris Brine and Gill Jennings, Town Clerk.

3. Town Council Annual Report 2017-2018

Cllr. Watt pointed out that various reports had been made available for information: the Town Council's Annual Report for 2017/18 and those received from community organisations and grant recipients.

Cllr. Watt thanked all Stonehouse Town Council staff and councillors for their hard work. She thanked all the volunteers in the town for the time they put into the community of Stonehouse.

4. Presentation of the Made Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Kambites gave a presentation on Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan which was passed at referendum and is now part of the statutory development plan for the district. Five areas have been designated as Local Green Space as a result of the Plan. The Town will receive 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy payments due because it has a made Plan.

Cllr Watt drew attention to the minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting which were available for information. As there were no amendments or objections, she signed them as a true record.

5. Civic Awards 2018

The nominations received for the four categories were judged by an independent panel made up of a member of staff, a councillor and a member of the public.

Cllr. Theresa Watt, Town Mayor, presented the following Awards and Cllr. Gibbs read the citations:

Category 1 Community Group of the Year

Highly Commended

Stonehouse Community Centre - Mary and Sarah were highly commended for the work they have done to revitalise the Community Centre, sprucing up the interior, adding decorations and flowers for events and generally being helpful and courteous in their dealings with hirers. Their hard work has resulted in the Community Centre becoming a very pleasant and not merely a functional environment.

Winner

Stonehouse in Bloom Committee - hours and hours of hard work throughout the year running table top sales, a pop up café in the post office as well as the countless hours digging, planting, watering and protecting flowers led to spectacular floral displays and Stonehouse to win a prestigious Gold award this year. This truly was a community effort which helps to bind the community together.

On accepting the award on behalf of the Stonehouse in Bloom Committee, Cllr. Curtis said the award was also for everyone in the town who has supported Stonehouse in Bloom in any way.

Category 2 Business of the Year

Highly Commended

The Curiosity Shop - have kept a presence in Stonehouse for many years and deal very sensitively with clients at times of bereavement when doing house clearances. They sell new and second hand items and provide a truly personal service, arranging deliveries and collections as needed.

Winner

Hurn's Hardware - provide a personal service to their customers with deliveries and advice which the larger chains are unable to match. Will give advice on what to get and order things for you if they don't normally stock it. It's a shop which brings people to the town as well as contributing their time and efforts into helping with projects around the town.

Category 3 Person making an outstanding contribution to Stonehouse over a period of time

Highly Commended

Simon Lewis - has been an active member of the Stonehouse Community over many years and is nominated particularly for his involvement with Memory Link and for the time he puts into organising the highly successful Horticultural Show each summer.

Winner

Leigh Binns - was nominated for the extensive work she has done around Stonehouse over many years. Leigh has strengthened the Beavers and restarted the Scout Group, been an active volunteer at All Pulling Together where her input and enthusiasm led to the formation of a monthly book club, supported Stonehouse Crafty Stitchers. She organises the Neighbourly Food Surplus Scheme and is setting up a new project through the Independence Trust. She uses social media constructively to support the Community and has recently become a Town Councillor.

Category 4 - Vicky Wakefield-Heath Young Person of the Year (up to the age of 25)

Cllr Watts welcomed Vicky Wakefield Heath's family members to the meeting, including her son, who helped present the Vicky Wakefield Heath Cup, presented in memory of Vicky, who was herself an exceptional young person.

Winner

Amie Radford - has been a student at Maidenhill School for the last 5 years and in that time has really made her mark. She manages to balance her studies with her role as a young carer and a part time job. Amie has been an Ambassador for Gloucestershire Young Carers and has done assemblies, met with GCC dignitaries during Young Carers Week and has been on Radio Gloucestershire. She also organised a hat, gloves, scarves collection at Christmas to raise money in support of Shelter, and is currently learning sign language.

6. Overview of Projects for 2018 -2019

Cllr. Watt gave a presentation on Town Council projects being developed in the year ahead including:

Oldends Lane pavilion extension and housing

Town Council want to provide high quality community facility at a cost of just under £1million, to be partly financed by a development of small unit housing. Planning permission has been refused but Council will pursue this project.

Cllr. Watt invited those present to complete a short survey on this proposed development included in the Annual Report for 2017 - 2018.

Oldends Lane play area renewal

Good response to survey on what people would like to see at play area. Contract out to tender in May to June.

Wharfdale Way site: progress towards a canal side amenity site for Stonehouse Funding available from Town Council and possibly from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to improve this site and link canal to town. Survey out soon.

Youth Centre

New youth services provider, The Door, has been appointed.

Finally a brief summary of the findings of a metal detectorist on Doverow Hill was given with a full display of photos and a report available to view.

7. Public Question Time

A resident commented that the survey on the proposed Oldends Lane development didn't have an opportunity for general comments. Cllr. Watt advised that all comments were welcomed by Stonehouse Town Council and could be written on the survey or sent by e-mail.

A resident commented that he believed that Oldends Lane recreation ground was 20 acres held in trust for recreational purposes. Cllr. Watt advised that the housing would only be built on the site of Magpies Club and on a small part of the car park. The latter would be marked out properly so there would be little, if any, loss of parking. Cllr. Gibbs added that the plans are publically available at Town Hall and on Stroud District Council's website; there was a need for excellent facilities in that part of town and he invited residents to view the plans.

Cllr. Callinan asked what small unit private housing was and if it was affordable. Cllr. Gibb responded that the housing proposed was 2 bedroom properties likely to fall in a lower price band but not "affordable" within a technical definition.

A resident asked about progress on the project to relocate the library to the Town Hall. Cllr. Callinan responded that it was progressing slowly with discussions with the County Council now moving to the terms of a lease. Cllr. Watt added that the Town Council were keen to see the facility fully used and the library secure in the Town Hall. Cllr. Gibbs added that the Town Council were entering into negotiations with the County Council on the understanding that the library becomes a community hub, a multi -functional facility for the town.

A resident contributed that Bloomers Café was a great asset to the town as it raises funds for In Bloom and brings people together and helps them. She asked for help to find alternative premises should the old Post Office no longer be available.

A member of staff from the Community Centre advised it still has space for bookings and needs support as it raises all the funds it needs by itself. Support for existing groups and facilities is also important.

Cllr. Amor advised that the Events Group had proposed a Train Trail this year to be launched at an Equalities Event on 30th June which celebrates suffrage and 100 years of votes for women.

Cllr. Binns thanked all those involved with the success of the St George's Parade on 22nd April, especially Cllr. Powell who helped with the road closure.

A resident thanked all the councillors and all those who make Stonehouse such a great place to live.

A resident asked about the land purchase and possible changes to public rights of way referred to in the Annual Report (bullet point 3 under the Report of the Amenities and Recreation Committee). Cllr. Watt explained this referred to the possible purchase of the Athletics Field at the end of Oldends Lane recreation ground and the diversion of footpaths due to Network Rail's closures of pedestrian

rail crossings. Cllr. Callinan advised that a Public Works Loan for a community facility would run for 20 years and the difference would be made up from reserves.

A resident commented that the Stonehouse station extension works were taking a while and causing problems with parking. He suggested that rail users be encourage to use the town car park which is connected to the station with a recently refurbished path. Cllr. Watt advised that flyers showing the location of the town car park are kept at the ticket office and the Town Council has asked Stroud District Council to provide a small area of long stay parking in the town car park with the needs of rail users in mind.

There were no further questions raised so Cllr. Theresa Watt closed the meeting. Those in attendance were invited to stay for refreshments.
