



STONEHOUSE
TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting) of a meeting of the TOWN BUSINESS COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 13TH MAY 2019 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE.

Councillors Present:

Theresa Watt (Chair of Council/Mayor) Convenor
Mike Davis
Carol Kambites
Pam Swain
Sally Pickering

Also Present:

Councillor Neil Gibbs (Vice Chairman/Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor Debbie Curtis
Richard Lacey (Locum Clerk)
Two residents (SHIP Group)

Attendees are reminded that the Proceedings of this meeting may be recorded, filmed or photographed but that any person requiring such a record is asked to give polite notice at the start of the meeting.

B/1 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Binns

B/2 To appoint a Committee Convenor

Members present considered procedures for the election of Convenors for this and the Town Environment Committee. Cllr Pickering proposed, Cllr Swain seconded and all present resolved to recommend that the Chair of the Town Council should convene the Town Business Committee and the Vice Chair to convene the Town Environment Committee whilst both would be encouraged to attend each other's committee meetings for the purpose of continuity.

Cllr Watt therefore acted as Convenor for the meeting.

B/3 To appoint a Deputy Committee convenor

Cllr Watt proposed, Cllr Pickering seconded and all present agreed to the appointment of Cllr Kambites as Deputy Convenor for the year 2019/20.

B/4 Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable.

None were declared.

B/5 To approve the minutes of the Finance and Strategy Committee meeting held on 25th March 2019

Cllr Swain wished it to be recorded that in respect of item K1/575 it was Cllr Gibbs and not her who had advised the engagement process at the Town Hall.

Subject to the above amendment Cllr Davis proposed, Cllr Watt seconded and all present agreed the Minutes were a true record of the meeting.

B/6 Adjournment for public participation

Residents Gill Sermon and Michael Giles of the SHIP Group advised Members present that they were attending the meeting to raise the matter of the Ship Inn site and therefore the Convenor Cllr Watt rescheduled item B/18 as below to facilitate discussion.

B/7 Update on progress with Town Hall premises

1. To consider finalising details of lease with Gloucestershire County Council Libraries for Town Hall premises.

The Locum Clerk advised Members present that he had had discussions with the Town Council solicitors who were asking if they were ready to proceed to drafting a Draft Lease subject to satisfactory completion of alteration works and in accordance with the terms outline in their letter dated 4th February 2019. The Locum Clerk reiterated those details to Members present who confirmed that those were the wishes of the Town Council as agreed by them. The Locum Clerk was instructed to proceed providing there were no amendments made at the Annual General Meeting on Monday 20th May 2019.

2. To receive an update on progress towards temporary relocation of Town Council. At present no date could be determined for the temporary relocation of the Town Hall but preliminary discussions and work was being undertaken to facilitate the move when a firm date had been agreed for the works to commence. The Locum Clerk was being asked to accept a project management role for the temporary relocation of staff and fixtures and this was being considered.

B/8 Update on progress with Oldends Lane redevelopment

1. To receive an update on progress of planning application for Oldends Lane redevelopment.

Members were advised that Sport England had considered the application and have resolved not to object. However, there are still outstanding details required from our Architect to resolve the County Highways position.

2. To consider expenditure of £215.12 (inclusive of VAT) in order to get a pre-development agreement from Severn Trent that they have the capacity in the system to receive the water flows from the site.

Members present resolved after a proposal by Cllr Kambites, seconded by Cllr Swain to authorise this expenditure.

B/9 To consider a request from Stonehouse Allotment Society to erect two buildings on the site.

Following due discussion Cllr Kambites proposed, Cllr Pickering seconded and Members present resolved to give permission for the buildings provided that a compost toilet rather than a chemical one be installed.

B/10 To receive a report on property maintenance and agree any actions

Members were advised that Groundsperson Ray Kaye had suggested that a larger water bowser be hired for the In Bloom season to try and minimise the amount of times during a watering cycle that the bowser needs to be refilled. At present the necessity for this during the watering cycle leads to less sustainability and increased man hours to achieve this. It was understood that Ray had done some research on this and therefore he would be asked to appraise Members so that a decision could be taken.

B/11 To receive an update on proposals for the Rest Garden

Members present felt that this item should be included in the Town Environment Committee agenda at which time costings and specifications for fencing and or low level hedging needed to be available.

B/12 To consider a proposal to provide a bin near the new play facilities at Oldends Lane Recreation Ground.

Cllr Swain proposed, Cllr Kambites seconded and agreed to authorise a suitably sized bin for the location. Town Hall Administration Staff to ascertain who will take the responsibility of regular emptying.

B/13 Policy Working Group

1. To consider for recommendation a draft Council Strategy document.

Members present discussed the draft document as supplied and resolved following a proposal by Cllr Watt seconded by Cllr Swain to take the Strategy document to the next full Town Council meeting for adoption.

B/14 Finance

1. To consider and approve cheque payments to date.

Following due discussion Cllr Pickering proposed, Cllr Watt seconded and all present agreed to authorise the payments as listed.

2. To consider and approve financial information to date

Members were advised that the financial figures up to the year end balanced and that the new year totals were currently being worked upon.

3. To recommend to Town Council the appointment of Irena Litton as Locum Responsible Financial Officer

Those present were advised that, due to other commitments, Jenni Marshall could not continue as the Locum Financial Officer but Irene Litton from Leonard Stanley and Painswick Parishes would agree to fulfil that role. Cllr Pickering proposed, Cllr Swain seconded and all present agreed to authorise the appointment.

4. To note the appointment of GAPTC as replacement independent Internal Auditor.

Members present were advised that the Council's regular independent Internal Auditor was too ill to continue and Mary Leonard of Kingswood Parish had been recommended by GAPTC to fulfil that role. Members present were content to confirm the appointment.

5. To consider a grant application from PSALMS, Stonehouse Local Management Group for equipment for Club Pulse

Members present were sympathetic to the application from Psalms who they regarded as doing excellent work in the Town. Due to the limited funds available for grants in the annual budget Cllr Pickering proposed, Cllr Swain seconded that a figure of £500 be granted. Whilst discussing applications received Members present resolved to recommend that the regular payment of £2,000 to CAB and £500 to the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme respectively be authorised so the Town Council were aware of how much was available in this financial year.

6. To consider a grant application from Stonehouse Allotment Association towards cost of toilet.

In view of the restricted budget for grants Members present discussed the application for a grant. Cllr Kambites proposed, Cllr Pickering seconded and all present agreed to a grant of £250.

7. To consider advice regarding St Cyr's Church's eligibility for a grant for churchyard maintenance.

Members were advised of the position regarding eligibility for such a grant but felt that they were unable to authorise a monetary grant but would be pleased to assist in giving qualified advice through a Councillor on how to make the churchyard more biodiverse and thereby save mowing and maintenance costs.

B/15 **To receive notes of a Communications Working Group meeting of 26th April 2019.**
Members present noted this.

B/16 **To note proposed format for Annual Town Meeting 3rd June 2019 and agree any changes.**

Members present discussed the format and felt that this should include the Annual Report (Committee Convenors to be asked to supply their Committee's annual summary), Civic Awards, a three minute presentation by the Youth Services/Forum and a presentation by Cllr Debbie Curtis on behalf of Stonehouse In Bloom.

B/17 **Youth Services**

1. To receive a report on meeting with Youth Service provider
Cllr Swain advised Members present of the latest report.
2. To consider an application to Gloucestershire County Council for youth services
Funding.

Members present required further details of what format such an application should take and items that could be included and resolved to ask County Councillor Williams for further details.

B/18 **To consider the feasibility, including costs and timescales, of funding or part funding a viability and options appraisal study for proposals for the Ship Inn site.**

Having been invited by the Convenor to speak Gill Sermon and Michael Giles advised those present that the National Trust and other bodies were in favour of linking the canal to the Town of Stonehouse. Unfortunately the results of the recent public survey were not available at the meeting to discuss but the residents present advised that there was a majority in favour of the principle of a community use being found for the site rather than housing. There had been no decision on whether the Town could have the ground but the view was expressed by Members that the District Council would need a funding options appraisal as there is a value to the land in the District Council Housing Committee budget and therefore SHIP would need to provide a business case. District Council Officer Alison Fiske is dealing with the matter and the Housing Committee would need to know where the current allocation of 9 houses planned for the site could be accommodated elsewhere. Cllr Kambites advised that she understood that although the proposed use of the land by SHIP was not in the Local Plan this could be amended if the matter was regarded as a minor amendment.

At present SHIP have no firm costings but are meeting with Alison Fiske and it was suggested that they return to the Town Council after that meeting with firm proposals. It was suggested that letters be written to all members of the Housing Committee of the District Council to urge them to return the land allocation to enable it to be removed from their budget and therefore be dealt with by the District Council as a whole.

Members present wished to show their support for the aims of SHIP and in anticipation of an appropriate proposal resolved the following resolution proposed by Cllr Swain, seconded by Cllr Kambites and agreed by all present:

Stonehouse Town Council urges Stroud District Council members to:

- support the Ship Inn site to be a vital link between Stonehouse and the canal and to provide a gateway to the Stroud Valleys
- consider positively any viable proposals that come forward to support the Ship Inn site's role as a link and gateway.

The residents then left the meeting.

The public will be excluded from the following item by an adjournment called under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

B/19 Date of next meeting

Following discussion regarding meeting schedules it was resolved that the next Town Business Meeting would take place on 24th June 2019 and the Town Environment Committee would meet on 1st July 2019.

B/20 Staffing -Confidential

To consider Staffing Committee and Human Resources Working Group Minutes, consider recommendations and agree any actions.

Members present discussed in detail the Minutes of the HR Sub Committee held on 9th May 2019.