



**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council
held on Monday 11th November 2019 at 7.00pm
in the Town Hall, High Street, Stonehouse**

Present:

Councillors: Neil Gibbs Chairman, Gwen Atkinson, Debbie Curtis, Vice Chair
Carol Kambites, Michael Davis, Tim Jackson, Kevin Parsons,
Sally Pickering, Jennie Smith, Pam Swain, David Thorpe,
Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Richard Lacey (Project Manager - Town Hall changes), County
Cllr Lesley Williams

Attendees were reminded that the Proceedings of the meeting could be filmed, photographed or recorded.

**A Presentation was given by the West of Stonehouse Travel Plan Coordinator,
William Nelson**

The presentation was very well received by Members especially in light of the relevance the post has to linking up the Town with the new development. William Nelson represents (PEP) Peter Evans Partnership who has just been awarded a five year contract by the GCC to design a travel plan for residents on the West of Stonehouse development. Their work will include providing local Information packs to residents on sustainable travel, producing and distributing regular Newletters, gathering information around resident's travel habits etc.

A key issue was raised by Members including a concern about children in particular riding or walking to Maidenhill School across the rail crossing at Oldends Lane. Also mention was made of the local efforts to promote the potential of reinstating the Old Bristol Road railway station. Whilst William Nelson was unaware of these issues, he did say that he would refer them to the County Council.

A G E N D A

TC2296 To receive apologies

Apologies were given by Cllrs Leigh Binns and John Parker

- TC2297 To receive declarations of interest**
- There were no declarations of interest
- TC2298 To approve the minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th November 2019**
- The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman
- TC2299 To receive a report from the County Councillor.**
- A written report was presented by Cllr Williams to the Council. The report included matters such as highway repairs to the B4008, organising the walkabout with the Highways Manager around the Stonehouse in Bloom route to consider future works including the repaving of the footpath leading to Park Junior School; she also acknowledged that she had been kept informed of the developments with the prospective new Library. Council acknowledged and gave their appreciation of Cllr Williams support
- TC2300 To receive a report from the District Councillors.**
- No written reports were received
- TC2301 To consider the council's first draft budget for financial year 2020/21**
- The Clerk presented his supporting papers reflecting on a number of key areas of spend; these included a potential increase in Salaries following initial feedback on the staffing review, the renaming of the budget heading of Grants to 'Supporting the Community' and increasing budget provision in order to provide Committees with the ability to respond more positively to emerging needs, increasing the Tree budget to allow improved management of the Town Council's tree stock and to include a 'Climate Change' heading to provide support the greening of the many activities undertaken by the council.
- Members were asked to discuss the draft budget and feedback its comments to the Clerk within the next two weeks. This would enable a further draft to be tabled before finalising the budget.
- Members **Agreed** to provide feedback from both Committees within the next two weeks
- TC2302 To receive brief reports from the Members on external meetings attended.**
- Cllrs Watt and Pickering attended the Stroud Business Voice meeting

Where Kathy O’Leary spoke about making Stroud the greenest District in Gloucestershire

Cllr Smith attended and reflected on the ‘Be a Better Cllr Training’

Cllr Kambites attended a meeting on the Industrial Strategy

The subject of Bristol Road Railway Station was mentioned at all relevant external meetings

Cllr Atkinson attended the Canal trust meeting with the Heritage Lottery representatives as a show of support

TC2303 To receive the RFO’s report including the bank reconciliation for October 2019.

The council received and noted the RFOs report and monthly bank reconciliation

TC2304 To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed.

Cllr Pickering asked for future budget sheets to show the percentage spend for each budget line

The council **Approved** the accounts for payment as presented by the RFO.

TC2305 To receive minutes of the Business Committee of the 21st October 2019

The council received and noted the minutes. There were no questions or comments

TC2306 To consider and agree recommendations listed at B/48, minutes of Business Committee 21st October regarding: revision to Financial Regulations, setting up three user Payment Controls for on-line banking, payments list, approval of payments, RFO reports and use of an Action Plan.

Council **Approved** the following recommendations 1, 2, 3a), 3b), 3c) and 3d):-

1. That the revision of Financial Regulations in line with recent NALC guidelines includes the removal of the requirement for a countersignature from the Clerk or other officer on cheques.
2. That the Town Council set up three user Payment Controls for on line banking as follows:
One User who is a Full Access Delegate User, the RFO or Deputy Clerk, creates a payment instruction. They are designated a “Creator” who can only create payment instructions.
Two Full Access Account Signatory Users who are Council Members must also authorise the same payment instruction.

3. Recommendations from Locum RFO:

a) that a list of all regular payments is compiled and presented to the next meeting of the Town Business Committee.

b) That all payments are 'Approved' at the Full Town Council meeting; list to comprise payments ready to be made for approval and a list of payments that have been paid since the last meeting for ratification.

c) That the monthly RFO reports are published on the website.

d) That an Action Plan is established to assist with planning and monitoring the Council's work and budget setting; Action Plan to include reference to meeting requirements of Town Council's Climate Change objectives.

TC2307 To receive minutes of the Environment Committee of the 28th October 2019

The council received and noted the minutes. There were no questions or comments

TC2308 To consider and agree the recommendation at E/70, minutes of Environment Committee of 28th October 2019 to adopt (with a power supply) the BT phone boxes proposed for removal at Woodcock Lane and Haven Avenue

Council **Resolved** to adopt the two BT phone boxes with power supply at Woodcock Lane and Haven Avenue

TC2309 To agree that Terms of Reference for Committees are altered so that Chair is a member of the Town Environment Committee and Vice Chair is a member of Town Business Committee.

Council **Resolved** to alter the Terms of Reference so that the Chair becomes a member of the Town Environment Committee and Vice Chair becomes a member of the Town Business Committee.

TC2310 To receive an update on the Staffing Structure Review
Council received an update on the Staffing Structure review highlighting the timeline and a presentation of the final report to Town Council at its meeting on the 9th December 2019.

The update was noted

TC2311 To receive an update on the council's planning application for Oldends Lane Pavilion extension and housing development (due to be determined by 31 October 2019).

Council received an update on the current position of its planning application and discussions had with key Officers at Stroud District Council. Cllrs expressed concern around the delay in getting approval

having initially been advised that the application would be fairly straight forward.

The Clerk advised of the need for a further drainage report for the site and that this would be placed on the Business Committee Agenda for the 18th November for approval.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

The Council will by resolution exclude the public from the following items as due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest.

TC2312 To receive a report and consider and agree terms of lease of Town Hall to GCC Libraries

The Project Manager, Richard Lacey, reported to Council of the last week's activity on the latest draft lease dated 01/11/19. It had been suggested that GCC provide a draft wording acceptable to themselves for further consideration by the Town Council but had declined to do so. They had, however, suggested amendments to the latest draft and it was agreed that both parties meet with their legal representatives to try and resolve outstanding issues and this took place at Shire Hall on 07/11/19.

The STC Solicitor presented the case for the wording of the 01/11/19 draft and this was accepted by GCC representatives present with the proviso that the Director of Asset Management and Property Services would agree the wording. Previously STC had been assured that all decision makers would be present at the meeting. Shortly after the conclusion of the meeting the Head of Library Services advised that this was not to be the case.

Subsequently STC Solicitor, Laurence Lucas, requested that GCC forward a draft wording relating to the only outstanding issue, that of revision to Rent section 6 by means of the addition of 6.3. This was received on the afternoon of 11/11/19 and therefore Councillors had not had an opportunity to review this prior to the meeting.

The Project Manager advised Members present that the STC Solicitor had felt that all efforts to ensure the Town Council had a say in any future underletting had been incorporated in the draft lease and that Councillors consider whether to allow an underletting wording that would allow for renting by GCC for financial consideration. After due discussion Councillors voted unanimously to allow clause 6.3 to be incorporated subject to minor wording "tidying up" by the STC Solicitor.

The Project Manager was instructed to advise Laurence Lucas accordingly and Members present resolved to meet again at 6pm on Monday 18/11/19 to agree the revised wording, subject to Members

approval of this document which would be forwarded to them as soon as received from the STC Solicitors.