



**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council
held on Monday 9th December 2019 at 6.00pm
in the Stonehouse Community Centre, 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, John Parker

In Attendance: Ward Cllrs Mattie Ross and Chris Brine (Both arrived at the
meeting at 7pm)

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

AGENDA

TC2313 To receive apologies

There were no apologies. All Town Councillors were in attendance

TC2314 To receive declarations of interest

A declaration of interest was noted by Cllr Sally Pickering in
connection with Agenda Item 2330

**TC2315 To approve the minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town
Council held on 18th November 2019**

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the
meeting and duly signed by the Chairman

TC2316 To receive a report from the County Councillor.

No reports were received by the County Councillor

TC2317 To receive a report from the District Councillors. (This agenda item was revisited on arrival of the Ward Cllrs)

Ward Cllr Mattie Ross confirmed that Stonehouse was to receive a new Neighbourhood Warden, Katie Markwick, in the new year. Cllr Ross was invited to take part in the discussion around Agenda item TC 2326.

By agreement, the Chairman brought forward Agenda Item TC2327

TC2327 To consider for approval the recommendations made by the Town Council's staffing consultant following his recent Staff Structural Review

Earlier in the year, Council had employed the services of a GAPTC recommended consultant to undertake a review of the Council's staff structure. The consultant's reports were distributed to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

The consultants report was very well received particularly the recommendation for additional staff as this supported the Town Council's future ambitions.

Concern was raised in connection with the Office Apprentice taking on responsibility for the Facilities and Communications Coordinator (FCC) duties in the officer's absence with particular reference to being the first on call to deal with social media. The Clerk highlighted that the Apprentice would be very closely managed and advised. However, these responsibilities would pass up-line to the Deputy Clerk in the FCC's absence. This would be made clear in the respective Job Descriptions. In addition, it was also agreed that reference to 'Groundsman' be changed to 'Grounds-person'.

Discussion took place with reference to how the additional posts, in particular, recommended within the reports would be financed. Owing to the projects currently earmarked in the Council's 'Reserves', Cllrs agreed that these should not be placed at risk and that in fact, the running of the council's day to day business should be reflected in its Precept.

Council therefore **APPROVED** the recommendations in the consultant's reports subject to the following changes:

- That the FCC Officer's duties are passed to the Deputy Clerk in the officer's absence
- Current reference to the 'Groundsman' be altered to 'Grounds-person'
- That the additional staff costs be funded, from 2020/21, through the Annual Precept

TC2318 To receive brief reports from Members on external meetings attended.

The Chair highlighted a very positive meeting that he had with Stroud District Council's Chief Executive, Kathy O'Leary with particular reference to the 'Ship Inn' site. Kathy O'Leary welcomed a further meeting to discuss the Ship Inn site with representatives from both Stonehouse Town Council and S.H.I.P.S.

TC2319 To receive RFO's report including the bank reconciliation for November 2019.

The Clerk was unable to provide the Bank Reconciliation for November. However, budgets had been updated and were presented to Council with specific mention of the increased expenditure in relation to the recent office move. Mention was also made of the legal costs relating to the Library agreement with GCC.

Question was raised about the future involvement of Richard Lacey in the Town Hall/Library project. It was agreed that his services would be retained throughout the refurbishment project to ensure the council's interests were considered and addressed in full.

Council therefore **RESOLVED** to continue to engage Richard Lacey as the Council's project representative for the duration of the refurbishment project.

TC2320 To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed.

Council **APPROVED** the payments as presented by the RFO.

TC2321 To approve dates of Committee, Parish, Town Council and Hr Sub Committee meetings for the 2020 Calendar year

Council **APPROVED** the meeting dates for the 2020 Calendar year

TC2322 To receive minutes of the Business Committee of the 18th November 2019

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

TC2323 To approve a statement formalising the arrangement between the Town Council and SIB in relation to SIB having regards to and implementing the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures in support of the Rest Garden external funding bid.

Council **RESOLVED** to write to Stonehouse In Bloom asking for confirmation that they would follow and implement Stonehouse Town Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in support of the Barnwood Trust's funding requirements for the Rest Garden

and, subject to the council receiving a positive response,

Council **AGREED** to delegate Authority to the Clerk to sign the Funding Agreement presented by the Barnwood Trust.

TC2324 To receive minutes of the Environment Committee of the 25th November 2019

The council received and noted the minutes. A question was raised with regards the progress of the 'Stroud Auctions' planning application; the Chair mentioned that Stonehouse Town Council had made representation to the District Council to 'Call In' the application. There was no further update.

[TC2325 To approve the proposed draft response to the consultation on a draft Local Plan with the inclusion of the additional comments made by the Business Committee at its meeting on the 25th November 2019.](#)

The Chair conveyed his thanks to the Officer responsible for producing the draft response to the consultation.

Council **APPROVED** the response subject to a typo in section Dei1 - the word 'contains' to be removed from the text.

Ward Cllrs Mattie Ross and Chris Brine arrived at the meeting halfway through discussion on Agenda Item TC2326.

TC2326 To consider feedback to Stroud District Council on its Consultation on proposed new Street Trading Resolution and revised Street Trading Policy

In support of the discussion, the Chair welcomed comments from the Ward Cllrs in light of their knowledge of the subject matter.

Discussion involved some uncertainty around when the charges would apply but this was later resolved. Cllrs felt heartened about the consideration given to community groups in the District Council charging policy but were concerned at the restriction of only allowing community groups such as Gardening Club, APT etc to hold 1 event per year before a charge would be considered. Cllrs also felt that the application process should be made as simple as possible so as to not deter groups from applying.

Council therefore **RESOLVED** that the response to the District Council on its consultation is to include the following:

- That STC is heartened by the District Council's charging policy in that it considers and supports local community groups but that it should consider allowing more than one event per year before charging is considered and
- For the application process to be made as simple as possible so as not to deter community groups from holding much needed funding events

TC2327 **Item brought forward - See above**

TC2328 **To consider for approval the use of GAPTC recommended internal auditors to undertake an internal audit of the council's finance systems**

Council **APPROVED** the use of GAPTC approved internal auditors to undertake the council's internal audit of its finance systems for the current financial year.

TC2329 **To consider setting up a Working Group for reviewing the Council's Policies**

Council **RESOLVED** to continue with its current Policy Working Group, members of which include Cllrs Sally Pickering, Carol Kambites, Pam Swain and Theresa Watt

TC2330 **To consider the use of Ecotricity as a short-term supplier on a 'Rolling monthly contract' for the Council's Pavilion at the natural termination of its existing supply contract with OPUS Energy, prior to establishing a long-term supplier**

The Clerk notified the meeting that it had raised this agenda item in light of the Business Committees' decision on 18th November, Agenda Item B/68 and that he was concerned that he had insufficient time to present a further report to Business Committee prior to the termination date of the supply contract for the Council's Pavilion. The Clerk recommended therefore that the council should enter into a Variable rate supply contract with Ecotricity for the Pavilion's electricity supply from the 18th January 2020 as an interim measure until such time as agreement is reached on the electricity supply for all the council's buildings.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's recommendation to set up a Variable rate supply agreement for the supply of electricity to the Council's Pavilion from the 18th January 2020 as an interim measure.

TC2331 **To note the date of the next Town Council Meeting.**

Monday 13th January 2020 at 7pm - Stonehouse Community Centre

