



DRAFT
Minutes of a Town Business Committee
held on Monday 30th November 2020 at 7.00pm
in the Stonehouse Community Hall

Present: Councillors: Leigh Binns, Mike Davis, Neil Gibbs (Chair) Carol Kambites (Vice Chair), John Parker, Sally Pickering, Pam Swain and Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth, Town Clerk, Ward Cllr Gary Powell

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

B/150 To receive apologies

Apologies from David Thorpe

B/151 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

B/152 To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 26th October 2020

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record; they are to be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

B/153 To consider the latest budget position

The budget, as presented to full town council on 16th November, was discussed. An overview of the budget position was provided by the Clerk noting total expenditure of £185,269.07 (Actual Net up to 30th October) and total income of £359891.35 (Actual Net up to 30th October). With this year's additional unexpected income from network rail, council will exceed its targeted income at year end irrespective of any remaining income due. The Clerk noted several key expenditure budget headings including IT costs (overspend due to necessary purchase of hardware), underspend on salaries (due to delay in appointing a business support apprentice) and several other headings that were affected by the covid crisis)

The Clerk was asked to promote the availability of council's 'Grants' within the community.

Committee **NOTED** the latest budget update

B/154 To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed
Committee APPROVED the payments list presented, totalling £10831.65

B/155 To consider the final proposed Business Committee budget for financial year 2021/22

Council, at its meeting on 16th November asked the Clerk to review the latest revised 2021/22 budget in support of establishing funding for an additional part-time post. A detailed update was presented to Business Committee showing savings of £6,000 set against its budget; this was generally accepted.

It was agreed that the action plan included within the council's Strategy should be updated and brought back to Business Committee for consideration in January 2021, before a final decision is made on the 2021/2022 Council 'Precept'.

Further to this, committee considered the potential transfer of the council's 'Amenities' budget identified under cost code 1190/1 to 1190/6 totalling £50,000, to Environment Committee. It was felt that work covered by the amenities budget would fit in well under Environment Committee. Members felt the suggested change would be a positive one.

A question was raised in relation to funding to improve equipment in Children's play areas. The Clerk believed there was a 'Reserve' budget allocated to improving children's play areas

Committee AGREED in principle with standstill Precept for next year (2021/22) and would consider a final draft of the committee's budget in January '21

B/156 To consider the Stonehouse Community Climate Action Forum's recommended response to Stroud District Council's consultation on its Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy

Cllr Pickering presented the draft response. A comment was made in relation to the need to keep the name of 'Stroudwater' in reference to the 'Stroudwater (Bristol Road) Railway Station'; a suggestion that the response to question 8 should include more than one theme and that these could be detailed in the explanation section of the question.

Committee thanked Cllr Pickering for her work and APPROVED the response subject to the addition of the amendment. Cllr Pickering agreed to submit the response to Stroud District Council directly on behalf of the council.

B/157 To update the terms of reference and membership of the Canal rejuvenation Working Group following the recent success of the heritage Lottery bid

The revised Canal Rejuvenation Working Group terms of reference was distributed for comment. It was suggested that reference to the council's provision of officer support under the heading 'Expertise' should be reworded to demonstrate a clear intent and, that reference to individual councillors names should be replaced with reference to five Town councillors and three Ward Cllrs. Cllr Swain to reflect these changes and distribute an amended copy.

Committee APPROVED the revised Terms of Reference for the working group subject to the agreed amendments

B/158 To consider an in-principle proposal to the use of CCTV in the Old Chapel Garden

Cllr Gibbs provided an overview of his proposal. The proposal was discussed in detail and it was suggested that whilst there was no need at the present time to progress the matter, it could remain under review.

B/159 To receive updates and consider recommendations from the following Working Groups

- **‘Support Stonehouse’**

Cllr Parker updated the committee on the group’s activities to date. He confirmed that the toiletries purchase was in place and half of the items totalling £1,087.30 had already been purchased by the council and delivered to APT for distribution. The total original order has been priced at £1982.16. The remainder to be paid for on delivery.

The group put forward a proposal for the council to purchase every child (approx 500) attending Park Junior, Park Infant schools and The Shrubberies an age appropriate book each as a present for Christmas from the council. The books will be stamped with a ‘Support Stonehouse’ logo on the inside cover. The local Paper bag mill have offered to provide the necessary paper bags free of charge in support of the project; the schools will distribute the books to the children; the total cost was estimated at £1,300

Committee **APPROVED** a maximum expenditure of £1,300 for this initiative. Proposed by Cllr Parker; Seconded by Cllr Kambites; All in favour

- **‘Canal Rejuvenation’**

Cllr Swain highlighted that the working group had held 4 recent meetings one of which included Brendan Cleere, Director of Place at Stroud District Council. Hannah McDonell from ‘Creative Sustainability’ had now commenced work on delivering Stroud District Council’s action plan in support of its latest HLF funding. Cllr Swain had recently attended a ‘Stroud District Tourism Forum’ meeting. She felt that the forum was very useful and that there was much to promote within the district. Cllr Swain will continue to attend future meetings

B/160 Date of next meeting: To be determined