



**DRAFT**

**Minutes of a (Virtual) meeting of the Town Council  
held on Monday 15th February 2021 at 7.00pm using  
'Microsoft Teams'**

**Present:**

Councillors: (Chair) Cllrs Neil Gibbs, (Vice Chair) Carol Kambites, Debbie Curtis (Part of meeting), Michael Davis, Tim Jackson, John Parker, Sally Pickering, Jennie Smith, Pam Swain, David Thorpe and Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth - Town Clerk, Ward Cllr Mattie Ross and Chris Brine and, a member of the public.

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

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A member of the public asked whether the Town Council had highlighted the availability of land for housing at Bridgend and whether the district council had responded to the town council. The Chair of Council confirmed that they had been informed and that the town council had received an acknowledgement from Alison Fisk, one of its Officers.

- TC2551 To receive apologies.**  
Apologies were given by Cllr Kevin Parsons and County Cllr Lesley Williams. The Clerk had not received apologies from Cllrs David Thorpe or Tim Jackson
- TC2552 To receive declarations of interest.**  
There were no declarations of interests.
- TC2553 To approve the minutes of the Town Council held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

Council **ACCEPTED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting; the minutes to be duly signed by the Chair at a later date.

**TC2554 To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and town councillors.**

Cllr Gibbs - Was invited to meet with the Chair of Stonehouse Town Football Club to be shown around the club ground and to generally discuss the clubs future aspirations.

Cllr Kambites - attended a Stroud District funding related meeting arranged by Siobhan Bailie

Cllr Davies - attended the webinar 'Stroud against Racism'.

**TC2555 To receive reports from County and District Councillors**

Ward Cllr Ross - she commented on discussions taking place with regards to further development north of Stonehouse. Town Cllr Kambites confirmed that the Town Council had received a pre application consultation

Cllr Chris Brine joined the meeting at 09:11

Ward Cllr Brine - Mentioned the following

- The District Council's grants were being reviewed - Organisations were being vetted against funding criteria
- Stroud Leisure centre was closed - SLM the company operating the centre has sought financial help from SDC - there have been some redundancies
- There is a Health and Being Review - already received 1,000 responses - more wanted - Way forward to be determined in June/July 2021
- Reference was made to the work done by the Pulse and Museum
- Flytipping was a major issue

The Chair thanked both Ward Cllrs for their contribution

**TC2556 To receive RFO's budget report including the bank reconciliation for January 2021.**

Officers reiterated the potential underspend and expected above target income for the year. The latest budget position has not changed since the previous budget report. An issue was raised at the last meeting in relation to the percentage balance figures given in the report - this was a report error that has now been resolved. The Town Council now has 6 full months of utility figures - this will help plan next year's budgets and costs in more detail.

Officers commented on the fact that Members have not been provided with each month's Bank Statements alongside the

reconciliation statement. Officers will be working to include the Bank Statement at future meetings.

Council **NOTED** the latest budget report and Reconciliation statement for the period up to and including January 2021. (Current budget spend - Actual Income £416,225.82 and Actual Expenditure £246,559.55)

**TC2557** To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed.

Council **APPROVED** the payment list representing a total value of £10,011.12

**TC2558** To receive minutes of Business Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> February '21 and approve the following recommendations:

- **Approve the revised list of Standing Order, Direct Debit and Annualised payments for the 2021/22 financial year (BC - B/187)**

Council **APPROVED** the revised list of SO, DD and annualised payments

- **Waive Stonehouse Town Football Club's outstanding charges to the council totalling £1,700 for the use of the Pavilion and Oldends Lane football pitches for the 2020/21 financial year (BC - B/188)**

Council **APPROVED** Business Committee's recommendation to waive the £1,700 annual charge to Stonehouse Town Football Club

- **Adopt the following policies (BC - B/190)**

- **Financial Regulations**

Council **APPROVED** the revised Financial Regulations

- **Health and Safety Policy**

Council **APPROVED** the revised Health and Safety Policy

- **Environment Policy**

Council **APPROVED** the Environment Policy

- **Code of Conduct**

Council **APPROVED** the revised Code of Conduct

- **Grants Policy**

Council **APPROVED** the revised Grant Policy

Officers were asked to update the revised policies with the review dates prior to publishing

The Policy Working Group were thanked for their work.

- **Approve the spend of up to £1,000 for the purchase of toiletries for distribution by 'All Pulling Together' to residents in need through the Councils working group, 'Support Stonehouse' (BC - B/191).**

Council recognised the need for the continued financial and other support provided through 'Support Stonehouse' and all its Members.

Council **NOTED** the urgent decision made by Business Committee to provide additional funding (actual spend £761.70)

- TC2559**      **To receive an update on the Local Resilience Support Grant secured by the Town Council for Stonehouse Town Football Club.**  
Officers presented Members with an overview in his support paper on the issue with the recommendation to forward all payments made to the town council to date by Stroud District Council to the football club. Officers were sure of the eligibility of the funding application but had raised a concern to the district council about a caveat presented in their award letter; Officers would seek further clarification.  
Council **RESOLVED** to forward all outstanding grant funded payments totalling £6,001 to Stonehouse Town Football Club and asked Officers to continue to seek suitable clarification.
- TC2560**      **To receive an update from the ‘Support Stonehouse’ working group and consider its recommendations.**  
Cllr Pam Swain provided the following detailed overview:  
Since the beginning of January between 44 - 65 adults and 29 - 42 children have received food items each week. The higher numbers are the most recent. Since November some food parcels have been delivered with the help of volunteers. Toiletries have been given to between 32 - 39 adults and 22 children each week. Freezers of Love-Morley Hall - Can we help?  
To date, from 30th October, (1st session) a total of 261 meals have been given out and we have received a total of £396.92 (cost £3.80 per meal). ‘BECOMING A FRIEND’ scheme - residents commit to giving £5 per week via standing order which entitles them to a takeaway meal, even if they have their takeaway every week, (some don’t) the £1.20 difference helps provide more meals.  
Cllr Gibbs highlighted an offer made by the local Rotary branch to provide help and support; Chair of ‘Support Stonehouse’ confirmed that this would be welcomed by the working group  
Council **NOTED** the efforts made by all supporting organisations operating through the ‘Support Stonehouse’ network
- TC2561**      **To provide Council with the latest position on the state of Stagholt Brook.**  
The Clerk presented his report. He highlighted the maintenance and inspection work undertaken on a regular weekly basis to ensure that the Brook ran freely and would not flood. He stated that it was difficult to secure quotations for the kind of reinstatement work needed for the Brook in its current condition. Cllr Sally Pickering agreed that it was difficult. A question was raised about the potential for flooding further down stream; it was agreed that this would be brought to the EA’s and GCC’s attention; it was also suggested that contact with the Local History Society might be of use. Ward Cllr

Mattie Ross agreed to contact the District Council's Rural Suds Officer about flooding from Horsemarling lane.

Council APPROVED Officer's recommendation to award the reinstatement work to 'JPR Environmental' as the work was urgently required.

**TC2562 To receive and note the minutes of the Doverow Hill Trust meeting.**

Cllr Theresa Watt provided an overview of the meeting highlighting current year's spend of £1,704 plus vat on tree works; she also stated the previous clerk was to be removed as Trustee and that the new Clerk and Cllr John Parker would be added as Trustees. The family related Trustee had offered his resignation - he was thanked for his contribution over the years.

Work is currently underway to ensuring the site is well protected in the future.

Council NOTED the report

**TC2563 To receive and consider Stroud District Council's official response to the town council's request in relation to the SHIP INN site.**

Council NOTED the district council's response to its resolution and hoped that the District Council took advantage of the alternative available land at Bridgend for its Housing commitments and would as a result allocate the SHIPS INN site for community use.

**TC2564 To consider High street planting during 2021/22 in support of 'Stonehouse In Bloom'.**

Cllr Pam Swain provided Council with the views of 'Stonehouse In Bloom' highlighting the strong feeling that it should proceed with High Street planting this year. The feeling was that it was even more important to brighten up the town, to encourage High Street businesses as they reopen, but also to support people's general health and well-being. It could encourage more people to get outside and others to come and revisit the town. Some SIB members expressed concerns about the financial contribution SIB make to watering some of the baskets as there has been no income in the past year.

Council understood the necessity to bring back some normality and life into the High street. Officers felt that there would be no need to pay for additional watering as the grounds staff had increased form the previous year.

Council RESOLVED to proceed with the High street planting this coming year within the budget set by Council in January 2021; In Bloom expenditure budget of £7,000 and £0 expected income.

**TC2565 To consider a request from the department of 'Prevention, Wellbeing and Communities' at Gloucestershire County Council to use Oldends lane car park as a base for a mobile covid testing facility.**

Officers presented a report; a start date is yet to be determined but is likely to be within the next two weeks.

Council **RESOLVED** to allow the free of charge use by the NHS of the Oldends Lane Car Park as a testing station with immediate effect.

**TC2566 To consider a response to the Government's 'Right to regenerate' consultation.**

Officers had formulated a draft response to the consultation. Members raised grave concerns about the serious impact of what is being suggested by Government and the potential for crucial local land to be lost to developers; Members felt therefore that the response needed to reflect this.

Council **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Deputy Town Clerk and, Town Cllrs Carol Kambites, John Parker and Mike Davis to formulate and send a revised response to Government on its consultation.

**TC2567 To receive the Clerk's latest update.**

Council **NOTED** the Clerk's update

**TC2568 Date of the next Town Council meeting: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**