



## **Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.00pm at the Town Hall**

### **Present:**

Councillors: Councillors: Debbie Curtis, Mike Davis, Mark Edwards, Neil Gibbs, Carol Kambites (Vice Chair), Gary Powell (Chair), Val Randell, Keith Terry, Wendy Thomson and Theresa Watt.

In Attendance: Clerk to Stonehouse Town Council; The Chair and Secretary of Great Oldbury Youth Football Club (GOYFC), Ward Cllr Mattie Ross and other local residents

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

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The Chair and Secretary of GOYFC addressed Cllrs on the issue of the club's grant application; she explained that the club was currently running two youth teams and was hoping to run 4 teams next season - the pitches at Great Oldbury would be ready to play on in April 2024 but in the meantime the matches were being played at Park Junior school. A question was raised as to whether the club had also applied to Eastington Parish Council for funding bearing in mind the majority of residents from Great Oldbury currently fell into its parish. The representative said she would look into this. The Clerk apologised for not having advised the representative of a decision to delay discussion on the matter until its Business Committee meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May. The Chair of council thanked the club's representative for her attendance.

### **TC3041 To appoint the Chair of Council/Town Mayor**

The sitting Chair requested nominations for a Chair of Council. Cllr Neil Gibbs proposed Cllr Kambites - this was seconded by Cllr Davis. All Cllrs voted in favour of Cllr Kambites as the new Chair/Mayor of Council. Cllr Kambites took her new position as Chair of Council and chaired the meeting, thanking Cllr Powell for his term in office. The Acceptance of office was signed by both Cllr Kambites and the Town Clerk

### **TC3042 To appoint the Vice Chair of Council/Deputy Town Mayor**

The new Chair requested nominations for Vice Chair of Council. Cllr Davis Proposed Cllr Watt as Vice Chair - this was seconded by Cllr Powell. All Cllrs noted in favour of Cllr Theresa Watt as the new Vice Chair of Council. The acceptance of office was signed by Cllr Watt and the Town Clerk

**TC3043 To receive apologies**

Apologies were given by Cllrs Rachel Armstrong, Keith Creighton, John Callinan and Marcus Dixon

**TC3044 To receive declarations of interest**

Interests were declared by Cllrs Mark Edwards, Val Randell and Keith Terry in relation to agenda item TC3508

**TC3045 To approve the minutes of Town Council meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> April '23**

Council **APPROVED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting

**TC3046 To approve Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

Cllr Mike Davis highlighted the fact that recent changes had been made by NALC to Standing Orders (SO) and that this would be considered through the policy working group at a later date. For the time being however, he proposed the recently revised SO document be approved at the meeting; this was seconded by Cllr Debbie Curtis - Council voted to **APPROVE** the authority's Standing Orders

The Clerk identified an amendment to clause 5.2 of the council's Financial Regulations. A proposal to approve them was put forward by Cllr Theresa Watt and seconded by Cllr Mark Edwards. Council voted to **APPROVE** the amended Financial Regulations

**TC3047 To approve the appointment of Councillors to Committees, Working Groups and as representatives to external Organisations**

Council **APPROVED** the following changes (Cllr Wendy Thomson would decide on which working groups to join when she has been given more information) :

**Business Committee** - No Change

**Environment Committee** - Gary Powell to vacate his position

**HR Sub Committee** - No Change

**Working Groups** - Cllr Watt added to 'Recreation', Cllr Armstrong removed from 'Policy', Cllr Powell removed from 'Support Stonehouse'.

**Representatives on Ext Orgs** - Cllr Creighton to replace Cllr Kambites on the 'Market Towns Forum', Cllr Watt to fill the position for 'Chartered Parishes', Cllr Curtis on 'Stonehouse School Trustees' and Keith Creighton on 'Stroud Tourism Forum' and 'Boat Mobility'

- TC3048**      **To receive and note confirmation that Stonehouse Town Council retains the General Power of Competence**  
Council **NOTED** the Clerk's confirmation that the Town Council retains its General Power of Competence
- TC3049**      **To receive a report on the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Internal Control Check for 2022/23**  
Council **NOTED** the report and thanked Cllrs Keith Terry and John Callinan for their work
- TC3050**      **To approve Year End Accounts, Balance Sheet and Bank Reconciliation for 2022/23**  
  
Cllr Theresa Watt proposed the year end accounts be approved; this was seconded by Cllr Gary Powell. Council voted to **APPROVE** the accounts for financial year 2022/23
- TC3051**      **To approve the 2022/23 Accounting Statements by Resolution and for the meeting's Presiding Officer to sign the Accounting Statements**  
  
Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounting statements for the 2022/23 financial year. The Statement was signed by the Chair of Council and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) at the meeting
- TC3052**      **To receive the internal audit report for the 2022/23 financial year**  
  
Council **NOTED** the internal audit report produced by GAPTC with its 7 minor recommendations. The Chair thanked Officers for their efforts during what had been a very difficult period.
- TC3053**      **To approve the Annual Governance Statement for April '22 - March '23**  
Council **APPROVED** the Annual Governance Statement. The Statement was signed at the meeting by the Chair of Council and Town Clerk
- TC3054**      **To approve dates for the 'Exercise of Public Rights'**  
  
Council **APPROVED** the dates for the 'Exercise of Public Rights'
- TC3055**      **To receive the Minutes of the Business Committee meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> April '23 and to approve the following recommendations:**  
    **1. B/521 - Committee RECOMMENDS adoption of the Risk Review subject to the addition of the Deputy Clerk as a limited signatory on the council's Lloyds bank account**  
  
Council **RECEIVED** the Business Committee minutes. A question was raised in respect of updating members on key actions and why the minutes do not reflect their current position. It was explained that this may be something that Business Committee discuss at a later date but for the present, Council were only receiving the draft minutes at this meeting.

Council **APPROVED** the amended Annual Risk Review noting the requirement within the council's Risk Review Policy that requires risk scores of 4-6 to receive immediate and/or continuous management and monitoring.

**TC3056**      **To receive the Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> May '23 and to approve its recommendations.**  
Council **RECEIVED** the Environmental Committee minutes. There were no recommendations

**TC3057**      **To receive RFO's budget report and bank reconciliations for April '23**  
Council **NOTED** the budget report totalling 'Actual Net Income of £187,607.60; total Actual Net Expenditure of £20,837.93 and Reserve movement of £2,926.98.  
Council also **NOTED** the bank reconciliation for April '23 with a closing balance of £181,884.66

**Cllrs Mark Edwards, Val Randell and Keith Terry left the meeting at 7.55pm due to a declared interest in agenda item TC3058**

**TC3058**      **To approve the latest payment list**  
Council **APPROVED** the payments totalling £22,080.33

**Cllrs Mark Edwards, Val Randell and Keith Terry returned to the meeting at 8pm**

**TC3059**      **To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and Town Cllrs**  
The newly elected Chair thanked Ex Chair Gary Powell for his time in office. Thanks also were given to those who involved in the organisation of the King's Coronation and Canal Festival.  
Cllr Thomson attended a solar panel event in Hucclecote which she found very helpful  
Cllr Powell attended the opening of the STFC's new Welfare Unit  
Cllr Gibbs started the Stagholt consultation on the weekend of the canal festival; help was needed for the letter drop in Little Australia and Arrowsmith Drive; it was suggested that the touch rugby group should be consulted about the project

**TC3060**      **To receive and request reports from County and District Councillors**  
Thanks were given to Gary Powell for his time in office and congratulations offered to the newly elected Chair and Vice Chair of Council.  
The Ward Cllr welcomed a discussion about the recent town council grant to Stonehouse Community Association. The District Council were progressing well with Housing's retrofit project and has recently been awarded with a further £1.5M grant. Also noted was the fact

that people fleeing Sudan were exempt from the application process to enter the UK

**TC3061 To approve the Council's Insurance renewal**

Cllrs were advised that Officers had found it difficult to secure quotes with the exception of that provided by the incumbent insurer. This is partly because of the existence of the skateboard park and 'zip' line. The council faced an injury claim (reported to council at the time) totalling a pay-out by the insurer of approx £6,500 earlier in the year. The increase in premium is based on the impact of the recent claim, an increase in the value of contents at 8% inflation and buildings at 13% (based on building valuations in 2022).

Council **APPROVED** the new 2023/24 insurance cover with a Premium of £6,617.88, Insurance Premium Tax of £794.14 and an Admin Fee of £75 totalling £7,487.02

**TC3062 To approve an annual contract for website support**

Officers explained that three quotes were sought and only two received. The Communications working group met to discuss the offers and felt that as the council was going through a transitional period in the further development of the council's website, the offer provided by 'Jo Mews Creative' should be recommended to council.

Council **APPROVED** the quotation of £100 per month to include all care, hosting, support and tasks involving key changes to the website

(Cllr Thomson felt three quotes should have been secured and so voted against awarding the contract at this stage)

**TC3063 To receive an update on discussions with the Town Market CIC and approve the 'In Principle' agreement reached with an independent stallholder and the Market CIC**

The Clerk and Cllr John Callinan met with one of the Market CIC Directors and had discussed financial matters and conditions laid down by the town council on the future use of the town greens. It was highlighted that the Market CIC costs could be significantly reduced and market stall holders could benefit greatly if the market arrangements were changed. The Clerk and Cllr Callinan were told that the list of conditions appeared reasonable but would have to be agreed by the Market CIC committee. Whilst it was suggested that the council would receive feedback within a week to 10 days, Officers have so far not received a response.

To date, the Fruit and Veg stall holder is in the process of signing up to the revised agreement with the town council; we have been advised that further stall holders may also be interested in signing up to the council's agreement

**TC3064 Date of next meeting - Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Council **NOTED** the date and time of the next meeting

***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.***

Council **RESOLVED** to exclude the public from

- TC3065**      **To consider and recommend key actions to resolve Councillor relations**  
Council **RESOLVED** to focus on creating a concerted effort to report the town council's positive actions more regularly, clearly demonstrating the council's ongoing efforts and commitment to the community