

# Stonehouse Town Council



**MINUTES (subject to approval at the next Committee meeting)**  
**of a meeting of THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 23**  
**NOVEMBER 2015 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE**

**Present:**

**Jo Byrne (Deputy Convenor of Committee)**

**Theresa Watt (Chair of Council/Town Mayor)**

**Pam Swain**

**Tim Jackson**

**Also present:**

**Town Clerk Gill Jennings**

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**Attendees are reminded that the Proceedings of this meeting may be recorded, filmed or photographed but that any person requiring such a record should inform the Chairman at the start of the meeting.**

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**K1/239 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

**Apologies were received from Cllr Rob Waite and Cllr Paul Stephens (Governor's meeting)**

**K1/240 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable.

**Councillor Jo Byrne declared an interest in K1/245 October payments (one-off payment for preparing artwork)**

**K1/241 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(Maximum of 15 minutes – Any member of the public may speak only once in respect of any business itemised on the Agenda for a maximum of 5 minutes)

**No adjournment was called**

**K1/242 TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 OCTOBER 2015**

**The Minutes were approved as a correct record.**

**K1/243 COMMUNICATIONS**

1. To receive a written report on the benefits of updating the Content Management platform and to consider provision in the budget. **The Committee considered a report written by Councillor Waite and decided that quotes would be sought on a few alternative systems.**

1. To receive a report from the Communications Working Group and agree any actions.

**The Working Group had not met.**

2. To consider whether to go ahead with letterhead changes and incur printing costs

**The Committee agreed with the Clerk that this cost should be avoided and other versions of the letterhead would be investigated.**

**K1/244 YOUTH WORK**

1. To agree expenditure on bar stools and security arrangements and to receive a report from the Youth Working Group

**The Committee agreed expenditure on the purchase of bar stools at a cost of £89.97 and considered whether to incur costs of an additional camera to monitor vandalism of the front door locking system.**

### K1/244 Youth Work (continued)

Young Gloucestershire had suggested manual locking instead of use of the remote control pad. This would be investigated by the Clerk. In the meantime the lock is secured within a locked box. The culprits of this vandalism had been reprimanded and had apologised. Councillor Swain reported that the young people had been working with a disabled artist on a nativity painting for Gloucestershire Cathedral and this was being televised for Songs of Praise. The youngsters had also taken part in the recent litter pick and will participate in Goodwill Evening.

### K1/245 FINANCE

1. To check and agree expenditure/receipts totals against budget headings for October 2015 and bank reconciliation

**Expenditure £10116.55 and Income £1375 was agreed**

2. To agree payments due to date

**Payments to date were agreed as correct £39364.**

3. To appoint an Internal Auditor

**The Committee agreed to appoint Peter Newman as Independent Internal Auditor for the accounts 2105-16**

4. To receive an audit report from the Council's internal auditors

**The audit report was noted and councillors were reminded to initial cheque stubs and transfers.**

5. To receive a report from the Staffing Committee meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> November

**The Committee noted the advice that the budget must have due regard to pension provision and temporary staff cover. The Clerk was asked to provide information about NEST at the next meeting.**

6. To agree Clerk's training fees for January 2016 – **Fees were agreed in the sum of £900**

7. To discuss any spending plans in 2016-17 and draft budgets

**The Committee considered the budget total taking in requests from ART and Regen Committee. Items for cuts and increases were highlighted. This budget would be presented to full Council in December but could not be finalised until the local council tax scheme receipt was confirmed.**

### K1/246 COUNCIL POLICIES

To receive a report from the General Policy Working Group and to consider any changes or additional policies.

**The Group had not met. The Clerk asked them to consider a Scheme of Delegation.**

### K1/247 STONEHOUSE CHAMBER OF TRADE

To assess response to invitations and further assistance

Despite the low attendance at the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> November some progress was made in that the High Street traders seemed geared to form a trade association whilst the other business might join a business club. It was agreed that businesses need to network and make people aware of where they are based and what they do. A trade directory might be the way forward and this would be investigated further by the Communications Working Group.

### K1/248 CILS & S106 West of Stonehouse

To discuss the Local Plan modifications requested by the Inspector and consider input to the Draft CILS Policy. Cllr Watt to report on a meeting with Stroud District Council.

The Inspector had reported that the Plan was sound WITH the modifications. The Plan has subsequently been adopted by Stroud District Council. Councillor Watt and Councillor Kambites met with David Lowin, Planning Officer at Stroud District Council, to discuss what might be achieved from CILS/S106 in Stonehouse.

### **K1/248 CILS & S106 West of Stonehouse** (continued)

Due to the CILS policy being in draft form it appears that payments cannot be enforced from the current West of Stonehouse application. Draft S106 agreements are already under consideration and there would be no funding for community or infrastructure improvements in Stonehouse. This matter needed further discussion with Ward Councillors, Network Rail and local MP. Currently Bristol Road station is at the bottom of priorities for CILs funding.

### **K1/249 TOWN HALL**

1. To discuss a plan of renewals and redecoration

**The Clerk advised the Committee to think about setting aside a sum in the region of £10,000 for redecoration, floor re-sealing, Clerk's office lighting and improvements to the car park entrance for safety reasons.**

2. To review scale of charges and use of building

**The Committee agreed to keep the hire charge at £13 per hour. The Facilities Working Group have not yet met to discuss the future use of the building and would also look further into point 1.**

3. Storage of Council Documents

**The Clerk was authorised to remove Council Minutes 1982-2002 to County Archives and to investigate safe storage of legal documents.**

### **K1/250 GRANTS**

1. To consider a request for support from Stroud Valleys Project

The Committee considered a letter from Stroud Valleys Project but felt that the Council had already contributed and there was currently no specific project in Stonehouse.

### **K1/251 CORRESPONDENCE**

1. To agree responses to correspondence from ARK Housing Consultancy and Stroud District Council

**The Committee agreed to write to ARK with the considered view that no fee was due to them.**

**The Committee agreed to write to Stroud District Council regarding the neighbourhood warden scheme. There had not been any visible warden presence since Phil Drew had left. This was one expenditure which might have to be removed from the 2016-17 budget.**

2. To consider a response to the Review of Polling Districts

**The Committee declined to make a response**

### **K1/252 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To recommend changes to the schedule of meetings.

**The following dates were recommended to ensure a second view of the budget by full Council:**

**4<sup>th</sup> January – DCP & Regeneration Committee**

**11<sup>th</sup> January – Amenities & Recreation Committee**

**18<sup>th</sup> January – Finance & Strategy Committee**

**25<sup>th</sup> January – Town Council**

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