



Stonehouse Town Council

Town Hall, High Street, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire GL10 2NG

**MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Town Council Meeting)
OF A MEETING OF STONEHOUSE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 7th OCTOBER
2013 COMMENCING AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE.**

Present: Chairman/Town Mayor Chris Brine
Vice Chairman Simon Lewis
John Aldis, David Drew, Antony Howarth, Carol Kambites, Gary Powell,
Vicky Redding, Clare Sheridan, Paul Stephens, Pam Swain, Robin Waite,
Theresa Watt

Also Present: Town Clerk Gill Jennings 12 members of the public
County Councillor Lesley Williams, Kate Wilson (Stroud News & Journal)
BBC Film Crew

TC1373 To receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Govier and District Councillor Mattie Ross

TC1374 Declarations of Interest

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

John Aldis & David Drew declared an interest in TC1376

Clare Sheridan declared an interest in K3/52

TC1375 To agree the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 2nd September 2013

The Minutes are circulated herewith and require agreement as a true record.

It was noted that Lynne Gasser had taught at Park Junior School.

Acceptance of the Minutes proposed by Cllr. Anthony Howarth, seconded by Gary Powell

TC1376 Food Bank

Will Mansell of Stroud District Council Food Bank will be present to give an insight into the work of the Food Bank in Stonehouse.

This item was postponed.

TC1377 Adjournment for Public Participation (to a maximum of 15 minutes)

A resident of Court View enquired whether there was any democracy under the Localism Act and any mechanism available to have an appeal decision overturned. He explained that despite objection by STC and Stroud District Council to an application on the former C & G Training site, the application had been allowed by the Appeals Inspector.

The Town Council were sympathetic to his views.

A neighbour of the Spa Inn was concerned about the future of the site if planning was not allowed and the inn became derelict.

Cllr. Drew was concerned that current planning legislation did not allow for the prevention of this.

TC1378 To Receive Minutes of the Development Control Panel Meeting of the 16th September 2013

Members may address questions to the Chair

The Minutes were noted.

TC1379 To Receive Minutes of the Regeneration & Environment Committee Meeting of the 16th September 2013

Members may address questions to the Chair

The Minutes were noted.

K2/43 Local Plan

Councillors are requested to note initial observations and are asked to submit further comments to the Clerk

Councillor Drew added that he felt it important that all reference to possible or future development of the West of Stonehouse should be removed from the text.

K2/47 Spa Inn

The Regeneration Committee voted in favour of requesting a nomination of the Spa Inn as a community asset. In order to make a nomination the Town Council must produce a business plan for the Asset in the future. A draft is enclosed for consideration. This action is dependent on the decision taken on the options on this Agenda.

The Council considered the following points to make a Resolution.

Lloyd Stephens and Jo Scuse Wadworth Brewery, Cllr Brine, Cllr Waite, Town Clerk and prospective tenant Mark Holder met to discuss the terms of the tenancy offer and declining trade at the Spa Inn. It transpires that Mr Holder's business partner had offered to purchase the inn for £240,000 in 2011 but this offer had been declined. Having discussed the difficulty in turning the pub around in the 12 month term, the brewery declined to increase the term to allow time for better trading figures to emerge.

They did however agree to delay going back to SDC Planning for a further month to allow the Council time to consider any options:

1. The Council invite the community to purchase the pub as a co-operative pub – this means that interested parties put forward a stake in the business – if it isn't sufficient to purchase the pub the Council might become a shareholder as well to make up the difference. This option ensures that there is sufficient local interest to support the pub in its future operation. This can either be the purchase of the leasehold or freehold. In this case a Right to Bid would be appropriate.
2. The Council supports an application by Mr Holder to become tenant of the Spa Inn. This would be support in principle and there would be no guarantee of the tenant's debts and Wadworth would be the landlord.
3. The Council decides that there is too much risk attached to the Wadworth's tenancy offer in that they were uncompromising on the 12 month term, handing over premises which are out of use, and operating on their standard terms, which does not make it attractive for a community venture or tenant. Also that there is insufficient evidence of community commitment to option 1 and insufficient time to pursue.

Since this meeting Wadworths have written on the 25th September to state that the pub has been cut off from the septic tank by a neighbour and that they have been advised to appeal on the grounds of non-determination. They would be minded to drop the appeal if the Council proceed with a purchase or nomination.

There was comment about the way in which the pub had been cut of at such a crucial time. There was also comment about the way in which the new build had been allowed in close proximity to the septic tank. (Ward Councillors to investigate how this had passed through building regs).

Wadworths had now closed the pub and stated they could not now let the pub without waste disposal. Nonetheless in the Council's view it might be possible for an ingoing tenant to reduce the financial input by providing services. Mr Holder had advised the Council that he would like to be considered as tenant if the Town Council took over ownership with an option for him to purchase in the future. Another prospective tenant was looking at the Inn at the first opportunity. The Council were given a business plan based on a purchase price of £195,000 to achieve a modest profit. The Council did not discuss this in detail as it was proposed that the business plan should come from the community.

Continued -

K2/47 Spa Inn (continued)

Before making a nomination of the pub as a Community Asset the Council would have to be convinced that there was a strong community group willing to work with the council and the Plunkett Foundation. A news item would be run through the website.

The Council agreed that they could only offer support in principle to any reasonable offer made by a tenant to Wadworths. The Council was not in a position to guarantee a tenancy or a tenant's debts.

K2/48 High Street Repairs the County Council have announced that due to the impending Winter they will go ahead with mastertint tarmac.

Councillor Lesley Williams advised that there was an opportunity for the Town Council to visit other areas to look at materials which had worked. Cllr. Drew felt that the County should look at reinstatement as he had been advised that the wrong coping stones had been used.

TC1380 Ship Inn Site

The Petition is now available on the website and in the Town Hall. A letter to David Hagg is circulated for approval.

The Council approved the letter to David Hagg which is a formal complaint about the way in which the Council's Right to Bid was handled.

Councillor Lesley Williams reported that she, Chris Brine and John Jeynes had met with David Hagg regarding the future of the Ship Inn site and the petition would be too late to prevent the hand over.

The purpose of their visit was to ensure recognition by Stroud District Council of the crucial importance of keeping this as a public amenity site. She felt it was unfortunate that there was no joint working with Wycliffe College. The site represented a capital receipt and the transfer had been agreed a long time ago.

TC1381 To receive the Minutes of the Amenities, Recreation & Tourism Committee held on Monday 23 September

The Minutes were noted.

Cllr Gary Powell questioned why the Committee were preventing progress on the Boule Court.

Cllr Lewis explained that the Committee felt they had been misled by the S106 officer at Stroud District Council and wanted some clarity. The Clerk advised the Council that its original decision could not be overturned by the Committee and any information she obtained would be placed before the Council. However it was likely that the delay would result in increased costs whereas proceeding immediately would have meant delivering the project within budget.

TC 1382 To receive the Minutes of the Finance & Strategy Meeting held on the 30th September 2013

Members may raise questions to the Chair

The Minutes were noted.

Councillor Lesley Williams encouraged the Council to continue talking to the Library Service to ensure that services were maintained. Cllr Brine asked whether the S106 monies from Bristol Rd and sale of Horsemarling Lane land might be invested in redevelopment of the library. Councillor Williams would make enquiries but felt it was unlikely due to budget constraints.

Resolutions:

K1/48 Shared Location - The Council believes that the physical space in the Town Hall would be an issue whereas in the future a virtual library would take up less space. Therefore for the time being the library should remain where it is. That the Town Council would continue dialogue with the Library Service in an effort to ensure provision is maintained in Stonehouse either at the same or different location or in another format.

K1/52 Elm Road Site - The Council agreed to respond to SWJP Developments stating that the asking price is unrealistic but that the Council has applied for funding for a CLT feasibility study to include this site and that it will work with the community in seeking partnership funding for any feasible project.

TC1383 Authorisation of Payments

The Council are asked to agree payments to date in October.

Payments totalling £1892.63 were agreed.

TC1384 To receive Brief Reports from County/District Councillors

Councillor Lesley Williams submitted a written report attached to the Minutes.

Councillor Gary Powell advised that Stroud District were now building their own houses and looking at ways to increase revenue by leasing part of Ebley Mill. As Chair of Licensing Committee he would shortly be looking at new laws for scrap metal merchants, preventing sales for cash.

TC1385 Matters of Information

1. Stonehouse Railway Station – a letter has been sent to the Station Master at Gloucester requesting signage and a platform shelter
2. An email has been circulated regarding the drop-in session held at APT on 26th September re: recruitment for the Motorway Service Area
3. An email has been circulated regarding the Stroud Festival of Manufacturing & Engineering 11–15 November 2013
4. SDC have advised that they are consulting on the location of polling stations. **B/F Finance Cttee**

TC1386 Dates of Future Meetings

21 October Development Control Panel	6.15pm
21 October Regeneration & Environment Committee	7pm
28 October Staffing Committee	6.15pm
28 October Amenities Recreation & Tourism Committee	7pm
4 November Finance & Strategy Committee	7pm
11 November Town Council	7pm
