



**Minutes of a Town Business Committee
held on Monday 3rd February 2020 at 7.00pm
in the Stonehouse Community Hall**

Present: Councillors: Carol Kambites (Acting as Chair in Cllr Gibb's absence) Mike Davis, Sally Pickering, Theresa Watt, Pam Swain, John Parker

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth, Town Clerk

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

A G E N D A

B/83 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Leigh Binns and Neil Gibbs. Apologies were also received from County Councillor Lesley Williams and Ward Councillor Mattie Ross

B/84 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

B/85 To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 6th January 2020

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chairman

B/86 To agree payments in accordance with the budget as listed in the attached report.

A list of payments was not produced and the Agenda Item was not discussed.

B/87 To consider the following Grant applications

Owing to pressures on the current year's (2019/20) budget, Cllrs considered that it should not allocate further grant funding this year but consider the following grant requests for the 2020/21 financial year.

- Stroud Valleys Canal Company (SVCC) - £500

Business Committee AGREED to offer a grant of £200 but wished to receive details of the equipment being purchased

- Stonehouse Allotment Association - £1,449 + vat (£1,738.80)

Cllrs welcomed the idea of improving drainage within the allotments and wished to support the improvement. They were however unsure as to what the recommended work consisted of and, whether it was the best option to resolve the issue. Cllrs wished to receive details of the chosen option and details of alternatives that had been considered

B/88 To consider a contribution towards the purchase, by 'Gloucestershire Heritage Hub' of a manuscript including old taxation records relating to Stonehouse

The general feeling was that there was value in supporting the purchase of the manuscript and that Members would like to be able to put it, or at least a copy, on show in the town.

Business Committee APPROVED a contribution of £100 towards its costs providing Gloucestershire Heritage Hub was successful in purchasing the item and that it agreed to showing the manuscript in Stonehouse.

B/89 To receive a report and further consider the use of an 'Off the shelf' package to manage the council's finances and assets

Business Committee AGREED with the Clerk's recommendation. Owing to a proportion of the cost being recommended for funding from the council's reserves, the matter will be put forward for approval by full Town Council

B/90 To receive a report on the Council's EBAY account set up by Council officers following the recent move out of the Town Hall

Business Committee received the Clerk's report. The Clerk highlighted that all money accrued to date and through future sales through the Ebay account, will be banked and shown as a receipt in the council's accounts in the current financial year.

B/91 To receive a request from consultants of Network Rail in consideration of the use of the Council's car park at Oldends Lane between May and June 2020.

Members received and discussed the request presented by Network Rail's Consultant. It was noted that the consultant would notify nearby residents of the impending work. The Clerk mentioned that he had spoken with Stonehouse Football Club and that whilst they may struggle for a short period of time, they felt the disruption would be manageable.

Business Committee AGREED to Network Rail's request as detailed in their Consultant's emailed proposal dated 27th January 2020 at a charge of £600 per week.

B/92 To receive a report and consider the council's current approach to the printing and distribution of its Newsletters

Members received the Clerk's report. There was substantial debate over the report's recommendation.

The reasons for the recommendation were clear but there was concern that some of the more elderly and less able residents that do not access information online may potentially be bypassed even though it was accepted that the report's recommendation

included the printing and distribution of a smaller number of Newsletters to key local outlets.

The debate also included the suggestion that it was necessary to ensure that every resident received a physical copy of the Council's annual accounts.

It was agreed in principle that the recommendation was a useful way forward but that the Council should, at least for the next two Newsletters, remain with the current distribution of hard copies to individual households.

Business Committee therefore AGREED the following:-

- That the next Newsletter should contain a list of roads within the Town and a request for members of the public to volunteer as distributors
- That the council will continue to print and distribute the next two Newsletters in the way it currently does
- That the frequency of Newsletters should be increased and that these should be published online with a distribution of a small number of printed Newsletter to local outlets

B/93 To note progress regarding the refurbishment of the Town Hall for co-location by the Town Council and GCC Libraries.

Members received the project update report. Concern was raised that the GCC Project Manager stated that he may not be able to accommodate either the cost of a transferrable TV screen used for meetings or a digital display showing the energy generated by the Town Hall's Solar Panels.

The report was noted and Officers asked to pursue the inclusion of the items mentioned above with the Project Manager

B/94 To consider appointing a new Councillor to act as the council's representative at future Market Towns Forum meetings.

Cllr Carol Kambites highlighted her willingness to be replaced as the Town Council's representative at future Market Towns Forum meetings. Theresa Watt volunteered to replace her.

Business Committee AGREED to raise the matter at Full Town Council providing all Town Councillors with the option to also put themselves forward.

B/95 To consider registering as a member of Gloucestershire's 'Keep Safe Scheme' to support adults with learning disabilities.

Business Committee AGREED to the council registering for the 'Keep Safe Scheme'

B/96 To consider an application for a .Gov.uk domain name for Stonehouse Town Council

Business Committee AGREED for the Council to apply for a .Gov.UK Domain name for the authority

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.

B/97 To inform Councillors of a recent concern raised with Lloyds Bank concerning the security of the Town Council's bank accounts and, to report on Lloyds' resolution

Business Committee was informed of the recent correspondence between Lloyds Bank and an ex employee of the council in relation to council business. Members shared their concern at the fact that Lloyds had not fully removed reference to the employee's details. This was highlighted by Officers in their complaint to the Bank.

Members felt that the council had taken the correct course of action in dealing with the problem and, in receiving the Bank's reply, there was no further action needed.

B/98 Date of next meeting: 2nd March 2020