



**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council
held Monday 17th November 2025 at the Town Hall**

Present:

Councillors: Councillors: John Callinan, Keren Capeling (Vice Chair of Council), Debbie Curtis, Marcus Dixon, Stephen Hunter, Carol Kambites, Simon MacGregor, John Parker (Chair of Council), Carol Trim and Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth - Town Clerk; County Councillor Dean Botterill; numerous members of the public.

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

The Chair gave an overview of how the public session would commence and the protocol to be followed.

A member of the public (a grandparent of a child attending Hopelands School) highlighted the impact of the recent introduction of increased charges for parking at the community centre. The gentleman asked if anything could be done to provide free parking for certain times of the day used for the dropping off or collection of attending pupils; he stated that it was going to be difficult finding parking without upsetting local residents. The Chair suggested that the individual approach the Community Association on the issue. Cllr Carol Trim added the fact that she was aware of local businesses having problems with loading and unloading their stock and that many local businesses were finding the changes difficult to deal with. Cllr Trim was aware of a meeting between the town council and local high street businesses to discuss the matter of parking generally.

A member of the public raised the issue of local government reorganisation and the district and county council's preferred options. The response was that it was thought that both authorities would opt for a single unitary authority. SDC to provide Government with its preferred option imminently.

One of the organisers of the Carol concert requested support from the council for the event on the town green and asked for the town mayor to attend. She also mentioned her disappointment about the lack of consultation re car parking issue at the community centre.

A member of the public raised a concern with regards the numerous bags of rubbish thrown regularly over the railway fencing along the footpath between the railway

station and the High street car park. The Clerk stated that this issue had been reported to SDC along with evidence gathered a few months ago. The evidence provided details of the property the rubbish had come from. The Clerk has not been updated since providing the information.

A member of the public raised a concern about the potential breakdown in communications between the group raising the flag issue and the town council. The Chair stated that it was unfortunate that he felt this way - efforts had been made to ensure the concerns of the group raising the flag issue were heard.

A member of the public raised an concern about the timing of the town council posting a link on social media to a racism hotline on Armistice Day. The Chair stated that the council made no apology for sharing important content such as that on social media and that the timing and content of posts were an item of discussion for the communications working group.

Cllr Dean Botterill asked about a CCTV camera on a lamp post opposite the council offices and whether the town knew anything about this. He had contacted several agencies including the Police and no one knew anything about it. The Clerk stated that the town council also knew nothing of such a camera. Dean Botterill also requested a list of contracts issued in the last three month; he was asked to write to the council asking for the information.

A member of the public raised an issue with regards the removal of the Union flag after the memorial service on the Memorial Green.

TC3511 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Keith Creighton, Val Randell, Keith Terry

TC3512 To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest

TC3513 To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 28th Oct '25

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

Following agreement of council, the Chair brought forward agenda item TC3522 for discussion

TC3522 To receive the minutes of the 'Flag Response Task and Finish Group' meeting and to approve its recommendations:-

The Chair read the agenda item and accompanying recommendations from the working group

Cllr Carol Kambites asked for each of the following recommendations to be voted on separately.

- **In light of the volume of correspondence from the general public raising concerns about flags in Stonehouse, the Town Council formally write again to Gloucestershire County Council to insist**

that all flags are immediately removed from lamp posts in Stonehouse, and attempt to contact the groups responsible for attaching the flags to insist the same.

Council **APPROVED** the recommendation

- The Town Council to approve the installation of two additional flagpoles on the Town Green, outside the medical centre. One of which will be used to respectfully fly the Union flag at all times, with the others used to fly appropriate national/regional/event flags.

Members raised a query in relation to the size of the new poles. Members were advised that this would be explored when seeking quotations. Potential options will be presented to Business Committee

Council **APPROVED** the recommendation

- That reserve funding be allocated and quotes be sought for the installation of two additional flagpoles, and that in the interim period the Union flag is flown from the existing flagpole outside the medical centre, with the Ukrainian flag continuing to fly below it.

Cllr Carol Kambites proposed an amendment to the recommendation as follows: to insert the following wording between the words 'period and the Union flag' with '*once all flags attached to public property including lamp posts have been removed*'; the proposal was seconded. The amendment was discussed with questions being raised in relation to the speed with which the flag can be erected on the council's flag pole and the details of the specific area that the existing flags (currently erected on lamp posts) were to be removed from.

In an effort to secure a final workable resolution to the issue, the Chair proposed a suspension of Standing Orders in order to allow County Councillor Dean Botterill to speak on the matter - the proposal was seconded and all voted in favour.

The County Councillor was asked to speak as he had shown a willingness to provide input to the discussion in light of its importance to the community. The County Councillor stated that in an effort to finally resolve the matter he would provide a personal guarantee to have all the flags removed from the main road through the town from the Horsetrough roundabout to Horsemaring lane. The chair thanked Cllr Botterill for his input and resumed the meeting under the council's Standing Orders.

The information from Cllr Dean Botterill provided the clarification needed to further the proposal and the Chair proposed to add the following detail to the amendment to read '*once all flags attached to public property including lamp posts from the Horsetrough roundabout to Horsemaring lane, have been removed*'. The final amendment was proposed and seconded; all voted in favour.

The Chair proposed the final amended recommendation:

'That reserve funding be allocated and quotes be sought for the installation of two additional flagpoles, and that in the interim period, once all flags attached to public property including lamp posts from the Horsetrough roundabout to Horsemarling lane have been removed, the Union flag is flown from the existing flagpole outside the medical centre, with the Ukrainian flag continuing to fly below it'.

The proposal was seconded; all voted in favour.

Council APPROVED the final amended recommendation as detailed above.

- TC3514 To announce the councillor vacancy left by the resignation of Neil Gibbs**
Council acknowledged the Notice of Vacancy published on 11th Nov 2025
- TC3515 To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and town councillors**
The Mayor and Deputy Mayor presented the Town's Remembrance Day Wreath to the 'Poppies to Paddington' train - the Mayor said he was moved by the experience of seeing so many wreaths on the train. The Mayor also thanked those involved in arranging the Remembrance Day and Armistice Day events - they were both really well attended by the residents of Stonehouse.
- TC3516 To receive reports from County and District Councillors**
Cllr Carol Kambites provided a written update. Cllr John Callinan highlighted the district council's wave three grant secured for improving the council's housing stock - there were about 50 properties to benefit in and around the Stonehouse area; 9 properties have been improved so far. It was recommended that officers at SDC be congratulated for securing these grants.
County Councillor Dean Botterill had provided a written report which was distributed on the day of the meeting. Cllr John Callinan raised a question about the footpath between Festival road and Laburnum and the recent notice from Glos County Council in relation to a 1.5M pinch point; it was stated that the width of 1.5M was adequate for a disability scooter to negotiate easily.
The Chair thanked Cllr Dean Botterill for his input.
- Cllr Dean Botterill left the meeting
- TC3517 To receive RFO's budget report and bank reconciliations for Oct '25**
Council **NOTED** the latest budget position with total Actual Net Expenditure of £303,396.48; total Actual Net Income of £429,130.43 and total reserve movements of £32,062.90.
Council also **NOTED** the bank reconciliation for October 2025 with a closing balance of £21,226.11.
- TC3518 To approve the latest payment lists**

Council **APPROVED** the BACS payment list totalling £2,276.17. (One Council signatory thought the payment list was a duplicate from a previous month. The Clerk stated that this was not the case and that her view was likely down to the fact that there were regular payments made to certain contractors and that those contractors were listed in alphabetical order. (Officers have since confirmed that there was no duplication).

Council **APPROVED** Debit Card payments totalling £161.44

Council **RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVED** Direct Debit payments totalling £1,504.50 Net

- TC3519 To approve a refund for the annual Goodwill event**
Council **APPROVED** the recommended refund of £72 to a stallholder for the Goodwill event.
- TC3520 To receive an update on the budget setting process for 2026/27 financial year**
The Clerk advised Cllrs that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of both committees have met and considered the 2026/27 draft budget. Cllrs asked that Officers provide the detailed outcomes of continued discussions of all budget items to committees for all future meetings up to the final decision
- TC3521 To approve the schedule of council meetings for the 2026 calendar year**
Subject to bringing forward the planned Environment meeting scheduled for the 7th Dec 2026 to Tuesday 1st December 2026 and using the full name of the Annual Town Meeting on the Calendar, Council **APPROVED** the schedule of council meetings for the 2026 calendar year.
- TC3522 To receive the minutes of the 'Flag Response Task and Finish Group' meeting and to approve its recommendations:-**
- In light of the volume of correspondence from the general public raising concerns about flags in Stonehouse, the Town Council formally write again to Gloucestershire County Council to insist that all flags are immediately removed from lamp posts in Stonehouse, and attempt to contact the groups responsible for attaching the flags to insist the same.
 - The Town Council to approve the installation of two additional flagpoles on the Town Green, outside the medical centre. One of which will be used to respectfully fly the Union flag at all times, with the others used to fly appropriate national/regional/event flags.
 - That reserve funding be allocated and quotes be sought for the installation of two additional flagpoles, and that in the interim period the Union flag is flown from the existing flagpole outside the medical centre, with the Ukrainian flag continuing to fly below it.

Agenda Item brought forward - see above for details

- TC3523** **To receive draft minutes of Business Committee meeting of 3rd November '25 and approve its recommendations:**
Council **NOTED** the draft minutes.
- **To approve a three year grant of £5,500 per year to the 'Fig Tree' for financial years 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29**
Council **APPROVED** the three year grant of £5,500 per year to the Fig Tree for financial years 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29
 - **To approve the replacement of Cllr Neil Gibbs and Cllr John Callinan as bank signatories with Cllr John Parker and Cllr Keren Capeling**
Council **APPROVED** the replacement of Neil Gibbs and Cllr John Callinan as bank signatories with Cllr John Parker and Cllrs Keren Capeling
 - **To approve the nominated town councillors to undertake regular bank reconciliation checks**
Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** Cllrs John Callinan and Carol Trim to undertake regular bank reconciliation checks
 - **To approve the Council's revised Standing Orders**
Council **APPROVED** the latest Standing Orders
- TC3524** **To receive draft minutes of Environment Committee meetings of 27th October '25 and approve the committee's recommendations.**
Council **NOTED** the draft minutes
- TC3525** **To note the date of the next town council meeting Monday 8th Dec'25**
Council **NOTED** the date of the next meeting