



Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 23rd January at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors: Councillors: John Callinan, Keith Creighton, Debbie Curtis, Mike Davis, Marcus Dixon, Mark Edwards, Neil Gibbs, Carol Kambites (Vice Chair), Gary Powell (Chair), Val Randell and Keith Terry.

In Attendance: Clerk to Stonehouse Town Council.

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

- TC2968 To receive apologies**
Apologies were received from Cllr Rachel Armstrong and Theresa Watt; Ward Cllr Mattie Ross also offered her apologies
- TC2969 To receive declarations of interest**
Declarations of interest were made by Cllr Keith Creighton in relation to agenda item TC2978 and Marcus Dixon in relation to agenda item TC2981D
- TC2970 To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 12th December 2022**
Council **APPROVED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting
- TC2971 To note the resignation of Chris Brine from the town council and to note the process for filling the vacancy**
Council **NOTED** the resignation; The Chair listed the many projects Chris Brine was involved in and wished to thank him for his contribution to the community during his time as Town Councillor. The Notice of Vacancy is shortly to be published.
- TC2972 To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and town councillors**
Cllr Carol Kambites highlighted the Big Solar Project event held at the Library and the need to get interest from companies on the industrial estate. Also she and others attended 'Homestart's Christmas lunch -

Homestart valued the council's financial support that is making a big difference to their operation.

Cllr Neil Gibbs has consulted with a number of planning consultants re Stagholt field and its potential future use.

Cllr Debbie Curtis highlighted the planning needed for the canal festival in May and also fed back on the productive discussion with 'Hitchins' (housing developer) about the future use of Wyatt's Field

TC2973 To receive and request reports from County and District Councillors

County Cllr provided a written update - no other updates were provided.

TC2974 To receive RFO's budget report and bank reconciliation for December '22

The budget report was discussed. The clerk highlighted a number of issues: Income from STFC would be made shortly including the annual rent, GCC had not yet been charged for the utility costs, the council had taken receipt of its new van and the budget line shows payment from earmarked reserves, payments made from a combination of earmarked reserves and Ecotricity made in relation to the Bristol road railway station. The clerk also confirmed that the income shown against budget heading Misc Building hire was a contribution to the feasibility study in relation to the railway station.

Council **NOTED** the latest budget positions with expenditure totalling £309,340.23, total income of £379,699.16 and reserves payments totalling £78,425.14 and income of £10,000.

Council also **NOTED** the bank reconciliation for Dec '22 with a closing balance of £459,874.74

TC2975 To approve the latest payment list

The Clerk explained the reason why a number of payments were relisted on the payment list totalling £25,671.73. Those payments previously approved were clearly identified.

Council **APPROVED** the payment list totalling £25,671.73

TC2976 To approve the Council's signatories for the transfer of money from its new CCLA account to the Lloyds bank business account, as and when required

The Clerk acknowledged the delay in transferring funds from the town council's Lloyds bank accounts to CCLA.

Council **APPROVED** the following:

For the council's three existing signatories (Cllrs Carol Kambites, Theresa Watt and Michael Davis) to authorise the transfer of:

- A. initial funds from both its Lloyds accounts (Business Instant Account and Business Account) to CCLA.
- B. funds from CCLA to the town council's Lloyds bank account as and when required

TC2977 **To consider for approval a request for funding from Stonehouse Community Association (SCA)**
In considering the funding support request, Council felt the information provided was confusing and needed clarifying. It was felt that there may be wider issues to consider in light of the financial difficulties currently being experienced by the SCA.
Council **DEFERRED** the matter until such time as a meeting could be held with the following Town Council Members namely Cllrs John Callinan, Mike Davis, Val Randell, Keith Terry and Mark Edwards and Trustees of Stonehouse Community Association. The Clerk was tasked with arranging the meeting.

Cllr Keith Creighton left the meeting for the following agenda item (8.10)

TC2978 **To approve Support Stonehouse grant applications from:**

- **St Josephs**
Council felt that any future application should include more detailed information however, with the need to expedite matters **APPROVED** a grant of £300
- **Bethel Church**
Council **APPROVED** a grant of £390

Cllr Keith Creighton returned to the meeting at 8.20pm

TC2979 **To approve a new Earmarked Reserve in support of forced changes made to In Bloom's planting display from 2023**
The clerk explained that changes to the future planting regime for the town were forced on the In Bloom committee by GCC; further to this, changes to the annual display were recommended by Heritage In Bloom, suggesting the display be more concentrated within the town centre. Taking into account all factors, for the town to have a display worthy of Stonehouse's name and past performances, the town council are asked to commit to a more consolidated display in future years which will require funding to erect addition posts.
Council **APPROVED** a new Earmarked Reserve totalling £10,000 for the purchase and erection of 30 new planter posts.

TC2980 **To approve the following Council documents:**
As convener of the council's 'Policy working group, Cllr Mike Davis provided an overview of the changes made to the policy documents listed:

- **Code of Conduct**
Council **APPROVED** the revised Code of Conduct
- **Reserves Policy**
Council **APPROVED** the revised Reserves Policy
- **Investment Strategy**
Council **APPROVED** the revised Investment Strategy
- **Risk Management Policy**
Council **APPROVED** the revised Risk Management Policy

The Clerk provided details of the updates to the following documents:

- **Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**
Council APPROVED the revised Publication Scheme
- **Full Asset Register**
Council APPROVED the updated Asset Register
- **Major Asset Register**
Council APPROVED the updated Major Asset Register
- **Transparency Code**
Council APPROVED the updated Transparency code

TC2981 **To receive the Minutes of the Business Committee meeting 16th January '23 and approve the following recommendations:**
Council received and NOTED the minutes of the meeting

- A. **BC Agenda Item B/468 - To approve 'The Door's' proposal for additional funding of up to £15,000 to be made available for the organisation to provide additional support and services to the youth of Stonehouse and, for requests to draw down funding to be made through the 'Youth Working Group' for approval by Business Committee or Council.**

Cllr John Callinan highlighted the need to support the young people of Stonehouse especially during this time of hardship. Whilst the Door will continue to try and secure external funding for much of its additional activities, it was clear that some of the funding streams had dried up, hence the proposal for financial support to enable the organisation to undertake some of its additional non contractual but much needed activities

Council **APPROVED** Business Committee's recommendation in full

- B. **BC Agenda Item B/470:**

- I. **To approve the Council's total budget for 2023/24 as presented to Business Committee at its meeting on 16th January '23 and,**

Council APPROVED Business Committee's recommendation to set a gross budget of £415,980 and a net budget of £391,793 for the 2023/24 financial year

- II. **To approve the Precept for financial year 2023/24, capping the increase to 5% through the use of general reserves**

In light of the financial difficulties faced by the community, Council felt that the precept should be capped at 5% with the difference being funded through reserves.

Council therefore APPROVED a cap of 5% increase in precept for financial year 2023/24 equating to a

total of £373,973.21; the difference between the 2023/24 net budget and the precept (£17,820) being funded through the council's reserves

C. BC Agenda Item B469 - To approve the following new earmarked reserves:

- I. £5,000 - 'Canal Spring Festival (May '23)'
 - II. £5,000 - 'Additional Youth Support (May '23)'
- Council APPROVED Business Committee's recommendation (i and ii) in full.

Cllr Marcus Dixon left the meeting for the following agenda item (8.45pm)

D. BC Agenda Item B/472 - To approve the conditions recommended by Business Committee for the continued use of the town greens by the Town Market CIC

Council APPROVED Business Committee's recommendation in full. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting between representatives of the town council (Cllrs John Callinan, Debbie Curtis and Carol Kambites) and the Directors of the Town Market CIC

It was AGREED that Cllrs Debbie Curtis and John Callinan would be the town council's representatives at the Market CIC meetings.

Cllrs Marcus Dixon returned to the meeting at 8.55pm

The Chair was advised of a recommendation from Environment Committee that had not been included within agenda item TC2982. Council voted to suspend Standing Orders in order for the item to be discussed and for a decision to be made.

TC2982 To receive the Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of 9th Jan '23

Council received and NOTED the minutes

A. Recommendations E/585 - for Stonehouse Town Council to:

- a) approve the submission of the simple business case for community facilities on the former Ship Inn site to Stroud District Council for inclusion in the consultation (Canal Opportunities in Stonehouse) work currently being undertaken by consultants DHUD and Associates and
- b) to arrange a meeting between Stroud District Council's consultant and the Canal Rejuvenation Working Group to present the business case and discuss its inclusion within the planned consultation work

Council **APPROVED** the recommendations.

TC2983 To consider for approval the Youth Pod for use by Glos Young Carers

There are currently up to 19 young carers in the community who are helped by the organisation.

Council **APPROVED** the free of charge use of the Youth Pod by Glos Young Carers each Monday to provide local support for the young carers of Stonehouse

TC2984

Date of next meeting - Monday 13th February 2023

Council NOTED the date of the next town council meeting