



Minutes of a Town Business Committee Meeting held on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7pm at the Stonehouse Town Hall/Library, Queens Road, Stonehouse, GL10 2QA

Present: Councillors John Callinan, Keren Capeling, Carol Kambites, John Parker, Carol Trim and Theresa Watt (Committee Chair).

In Attendance: Town Clerk and a representative of the Stonehouse School Trust

All residents of the Parish are welcome to attend and a period of up to 15 minutes will be set aside at the beginning of the meeting for members of the public to raise questions.

Attendees are reminded that the Proceedings of this meeting may be filmed, photographed or recorded.

There were no questions or comments. The representative of Stonehouse School Trust has attended the meeting to speak on behalf of the Trust's grant application. The Chair suggested that he be asked to speak during the relevant agenda item.

B/959 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Keith Terry and Val Randell

B/960 To receive Declarations of Interest

There was a declared interest from Cllr John Parker in relation to Agenda item B/966 Re the grant application from Stonehouse School Trust

B/961 To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026

Committee **APPROVED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to an amendment to agenda item B/955 in relation to the Oldends Lane Working Group update - at the time of the meeting in January, the working group were merely at the point of arranging a meeting with the climate change working group

With agreement of the Committee, the Chair brought forward agenda item B/966. In light of Cllr Parkers declared interest, he left the meeting.

- 1. Stonehouse Schools Trust (SST) - to undertake tree works**
A representative of Stonehouse School Trust was invited to answer Member's questions. It was acknowledged that the London Plane

trees were heavily braced and were located directly outside the Park Infant school - pollarding to reduce weight was necessary - the last time they were pollarded was in 2024. The trees are insured for Public Liability by Stonehouse School Trust. The Trust is currently in the process of proving to Land Registry that they own the trees - if successful, the Trust plans to transfer ownership to a more appropriate body. The tree surveyor thought that felling the trees could be considered at some stage but there is currently an appropriate set of measures that can be put into place to safely manage the trees.

There was concern that one of the limbs encroached the driveway into the school driveway and that it could be hit by high sided vehicles reversing in the school entrance - Committee asked if the tree surveyor could be instructed to check the relevant tree for this problem.

Committee **APPROVED** the grant application in full; £1,056 inc vat

2. **Stonehouse Community Association - to conduct a feasibility survey on the installation of solar panels to the community centre**
Committee **DEFERRED** the item due to an anomaly with the application

B/962 Matters arising

Committee **NOTED** the matters arising as detailed in the supporting papers

B/963 To receive the latest budget position

Cllr John Callinan confirmed that he had spent time with the Clerk earlier in the day in relation to some of the budget lines and as a result had no further queries.

Committee **NOTED** the latest budget position of Total Actual Net Expenditure of £364,654.51; total Actual Net Income of £436,405.49; Total Reserve movement of £38,500.17.

B/964 To approve the following payment lists for

1. **BACS payments**

Committee **APPROVED** the BACS payment lists of £25,101.80 and £500

2. **Debit Card Payments**

Committee **RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVED** the Debit Card payment list totalling £917.94

B/965 To recommend changes to the council's reserves

Committee felt that it was time to review all of the council's earmarked reserves ensuring further clarity. It was established that the council's priorities should be reviewed before making changes to the earmarked reserves. A query was raised as to why the Christmas Lighting Earmarked reserve had not been used; it was explained that this may be due to error or timing - The Clerk is to look into the matter. It was also suggested that the reserves report should show a total of Earmarked Reserves.

Committee **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** the item until the council's priority projects were reviewed

B/966 To approve the following grant applications:

1. **Stonehouse Schools Trust - to undertake tree works**
Agenda item brought forward - see above for details
2. **Stonehouse Community Association - to conduct a feasibility survey on the installation of solar panels to the community centre**
Agenda Item brought forward - see above for details

B/967 To approve the following in relation to the Oldends Lane Working Group:

1. **Cllr John Callinan as the working group's convener**
Committee **APPROVED** Cllr John Callinan as the working group Convener
2. **The Co-option of two members of the public, namely Gary Powell and Neil Gibbs onto the working group**
Committee **APPROVED** the co option of Gary Powell and Neil Gibbs as new members of the Oldends Lane Working Group as they met the criteria. Cllr Keren Capeling was also added to the working group.
3. **Officer time to produce scoping documents to allow the working group to secure preliminary advice from experienced contractors on the development, resurfacing and re-landscaping of Oldends lane car park**
Committee **APPROVED** the use of Officer time to produce scoping documents in support of the Oldends Lane Working Group's next project phase

B/968 For Business Committee to:

- a) **receive an update report from Officers on 'Assertion 10' and, Committee received the update report on progress being made with regards to 'Assertion 10'.**
- b) **recommend to full council a change to its website 'design' and 'host' to bring the website into line with Assertion 10' requirements.**
Committee received the Officer's report identifying some of the key issues being experienced with the current website and hosting in addition to providing costed options.
It had been established that the council's current website did not meet the requirements on which Assertion 10 is based; it was agreed that it did not make sense to persevere in trying to make the current website compliant as well as resolve the complexities of the system.
Committee **RECOMMENDED** that council award the work to 'Aubergine' at a cost of £999 plus vat to Migrate, Host and Support

the website for the first year and £399 plus vat for subsequent years

B/969 To approve a change to the council's waste contractor

Committee **APPROVED** the award of the council's waste contract to 'Smiths of Gloucester' at a monthly cost of £28 plus vat, £55 for the Duty of Care documentation and £15 one off container delivery

B/970 To receive an update from the last HR Sub Committee meeting and to recommend approval by full council of the new 'Staff Sickness' policy

The Chair of HR Sub Committee provided an overview of the HR meeting held on Tuesday 27th January '26. In addition to the recommendation to adopt a Sickness Policy, mention was made of one of the Business Support Officers taking a two month sabbatical leave from the beginning of March until the beginning of May '26. Interim arrangements will be put into place for this period.

It was made clear that 'Peninsula' the town council's HR support provider strongly recommended the adoption of the sickness policy in light of further legislative changes.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** Council approval of the new Sickness Policy

B/971 To receive updates from the following working groups:

1. Climate Change Action Forum

Committee received the latest minutes of the working group

2. Communications

Looking to review comms policy re press releases social media releases - Chair and Deputy to write short piece for newsletter to introduce themselves - it was recommended all agendas be placed on social media - all grant recipients should be encouraged to publicly acknowledge receipt of grants.

3. Oldends Lane Development

Meeting to be arranged to commence feasibility work on the car park resurfacing project; meeting with Climate change working group still to be arranged

4. Support Stonehouse

'Pull out' based on Support Stonehouse work has been designed for the council's next Newsletter

5. Youth

Not met recently

6. Policy

To meet shortly to discuss this year's ICC reports

7. Internal Control Checks

Next checks to be determined

8. Local Government Review

It was suggested that consideration be given to arranging a meeting with the cluster group of parishes to which Stonehouse belongs

B/972 To note the date of the next meeting - Monday 2nd March 2026

Committee **NOTED** the date of the next meeting