



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

Present: Councillors John Callinan, Keren Capeling, Carol Kambites, Val Randell and Keith Terry.

In Attendance: Town Clerk

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.

The Vice Chair of Business Committee took over as Chair for the meeting in light of the Chair's absence.

B/973 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs John Parker, Carol Trim and Theresa Watt

B/974 To receive Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were raised by Cllr Keren Capeling in relation to agenda item B/978 and both Cllrs Keren Capeling and Keith Terry in relation to agenda item B/979

B/975 To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 2nd February 2026

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

B/976 Matters arising

Committee **NOTED** the Clerk's update on matters progressed since the last committee meeting - see notes in supporting papers

B/977 To receive the latest budget position

Cllrs raised the question as to the payback period of the council's existing solar panels on the town hall. The Clerk said he would look into this.

Committee **NOTED** the latest budget position showing total 'Actual Net' Income of £447,910.30; total 'Actual Net Expenditure of £391,268.24 and total Reserve Movement of £36,505.17

Cllr Keren Capeling left the meeting at 7.10 in light of her declared interest in agenda item B/978

B/978 To approve the latest BACS payment list and provide retrospective approval for Debit Card Payments

Committee **APPROVED** BACS payments totalling £9,615.17 and **RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVED** Debit card payments totalling £52.74

Cllr Keith Terry left the meeting 7.15 in light of his declared interest in agenda item B/979. Cllrs Keren Capeling had already left the meeting

B/979 To approve a grant application from Stonehouse Community Association

Business Committee's supporting papers served to confirm the full scope of works the energy advisor would cover within the £900 cost; the energy audit would look to offer the following:

- A meeting on site to discuss current use of the building, future plans, motivations and areas of interest
- Analysis of current energy use & benchmarking of current carbon emissions
- Site survey to assess building fabric, space & water heating / cooling systems, lighting, other site facilities and options for renewable / low carbon technologies
- Provision of energy advice report making recommendations for improvement works (no cost, low cost & capital cost), quantifying potential savings (cost and carbon) where possible
- Follow up discussion to review report & to make any required updates & changes etc.

In light of the financial difficulty faced by the community association in keeping the community centre open, committee felt this was important to identify long term cost savings.

Committee **APPROVED** the award of a grant of £900 plus vat to Stonehouse Community Association

Cllrs Keren Capeling and Keith Terry returned to the meeting at 7.20

B/980 To approve purchase of Thermal Imaging Device

Cllrs considered the purchase of a thermal imaging device as an excellent idea to help engage residents on the issue of improving the energy efficiency of their homes, especially in light of increasing energy costs.

There was a concern as to whether there would be a GDPR issue in terms of the information gathered by the device. Whilst it was established that there wouldn't be, it was agreed that on return of the device by residents, the device's memory would be erased

Committee **APPROVED** the purchase of the Thermal Imaging Device at a cost of £299 plus vat

B/981 To renew the council's subscription to the Cotswolds Canal Trust (CCT) Committee felt that it was important for the town council to support the Cotswold Canal Trust and **APPROVED** the town council's annual subscription for 2026/27 of £45.

B/982 To consider and recommend to town council the renewal of the town council's long term (3 year) gas supply arrangements from December 2026

In light of the suggested energy price increase later in the year, agreeing a new long term gas contract was considered to be a prudent decision; based on new unit rates, the town council would benefit from an annual saving of approximately £200

Committee **RECOMMENDED** council approve entering into a new three year agreement from 3rd December 2026 for the supply of gas to the town hall at the following costs: Unit rate of £0.655 per kWh and a standing daily charge of £0.3694.

B/983 To approve the following key council documents

1. Transparency Code Information relating to the council's activities

It was explained that the document is one of the council's key documents and allows residents to look into the council's land based assets, latest procurements and references to a variety of other information that the public may have an interest in.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** Council adopt the update version of the Transparency Code Information

2. Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The Clerk confirmed that the Publication is another key council document that allows residents to find out about the council's day to day business and Councillors

Committee **RECOMMENDED** adoption of the updated Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

3. Data Protection Policy

It was explained that in light of the need to adopt an IT policy, it was necessary to review the council's 'Data Protection' and 'Communication and Engagement' Policies to ensure they adequately knitted together.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** the policy to council for adoption

4. Communications and Engagement Policy

The Council's Communication and Engagement Policy has also been reviewed and cross referenced to Data Protection the newly formed IT policy. Committee **RECOMMENDED** the policy to council for adoption subject to the following changes:

To make the following changes to the wording from the penultimate paragraph of Appendix II - remove the wording 'facilities and communications Coordinator' and change 'Town Clerk and Chair' to 'Town Clerk or Chair'.

There was comment about the formatting of policies in general and that this would be considered by the council's Communications Working Group - this work has still yet to be done. The Clerk suggested querying with Aubergine (the council's new design and hosting provider) the best

font and other formatting for all policies to ensure the council's compliance with current digital requirements.

5. IT policy

The adoption of a new IT policy is a clear requirement of Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the 2025/26 and future financial years. Various examples of IT policies were considered and it was determined that the NALC Model document provided much of the detail required and was chosen to form the basis of the council's new IT Policy.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** the policy to council for adoption.

B/984 To recommend for council approval the final versions of the following leases

1. Stonehouse Town Football Club

Cllrs were advised that negotiations with the new 25 year lease has come to a close on advice by the council's solicitor; further minor amendments have been requested by the club and their solicitor but advice has been to make no more changes in light of the relatively small rent being applied to a significantly sized facility

The Clerk highlighted the main talking points in relation to the new lease:

- The liability of the trustees is limited to the assets of the club
- The first rent review should take place on the 1st September 2028 and then every five years beyond that date
- The football club should be limited to existing flows into the new sewer system and therefore needs to seek permission to extend this, should they need to.
- That the football club would not be required to contribute towards the sewer running costs or repairs. (Cllrs felt this would be fair in light of the club's contribution towards the sewer installation)

Committee **RECOMMENDED** that:

- Negotiations should cease with the football club and that there should be no further changes to the lease
- The new lease be approved by council

2. Magpies Social Club

Cllrs were advised that negotiations with the new 10 year lease has come to a close on advice by the council's solicitor; further minor amendments have been requested by the club and their solicitor but advice has been to make no more changes in light of the relatively small rent being applied to a significantly sized facility

The Clerk highlighted the main talking points in relation to the new lease:

- The liability of the Trustees is limited the assets of the club
- The tenant has a break right exercisable on 6 months notice at any time. The landlord will only have the right to break on 31st December 2029 after giving no less than 3 months notice.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** that:

- Negotiations should cease with the football club and that there should be no further changes to the lease
- The new lease be approved by council

B/985 To receive an update on the council's progress towards meeting the requirements of Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

Committee was provided with an update on Officer's progress with the requirements of Assertion 10 as detailed in the support papers.

Recommendation for the adoption of an IT policy will be submitted to full council on 16th March. The council's new website designer and host is already discussing the council's requirements with Officers with future meetings involving the Communications working group. More detailed work on the GDPR is also underway with Officers recommending to GAPTC that a working group be set up to consider providing guidance on systems that could be used to apply to GDPR.

B/986 To receive updates from the following working groups:

- 1. Climate Change Action Forum - minutes attached**
- 2. Communications**
Next meeting - Monday 9th March 2pm. Through Cllr Keith Terry, the working group are currently looking at policy formats
- 3. Oldends Lane Development**
The working group had two meetings - the last one took place last Friday. The minutes of the meeting will be submitted to the next Committee meeting
- 4. Support Stonehouse**
Latest version of council newsletter is now out - the next meeting will take place on Friday 6th March to review if future actions are necessary
- 5. Youth**
The annual event arranged by The Door is to take place Tuesday 10th March - the next meeting will be held on 29th April at the pod
- 6. Policy**
Looking at Memorial policy next. The policy group would like an updated Policy list.
- 7. Internal Control Checks**
3rd and 4th quarter ICC to be done in March '26
- 8. Local Government Review**
A review of key national Local Government Review (LGR) documents is to be produced shortly to see how parish and town council's will be impacted by the LGR. The review is to be brought to BC for consideration

B/987 To note the date of the next meeting - Tuesday 7th April 2026
Committee **NOTED** the date of the next meeting

DRAFT