



**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council
held Monday 16th March 2026 at the Town Hall**

Present:

Councillors: John Callinan, Debbie Curtis, Marcus Dixon, David Drew, Simon MacGregor, John Parker (Chair of Council), Val Randell, Keith Terry, Carol Trim and Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth - Town Clerk, two members of the public and County Councillor Dean Botterill.

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

Public Questions

County Cllr Dean Botterill suggested, that in light of the recent incident outside the Shrubberies school, it would be helpful for the town council to make representation to Glos County Council for a 20mph speed limit to be implemented outside schools and if this required a Road Traffic Order, then it would be helpful to apply for double yellow lines to be installed. Asked about whether this should also include Wycliffe college, Cllr Botterill suggested not, as the school was fenced off.

The town council confirmed that the matter was not on the agenda so no immediate commitment was possible at the meeting, but that the town council of course supported the principle of road safety around schools. Councillor Simon MacGreogr stated that in light of the condensed nature of the town, the Town Council had already put forward a request to Glos County Council to be included in the County Council's drive to further implement 20mph zones around Gloucestershire and as such requested an extension of the speed restriction within Stonehouse to cover remaining parts of the town; this was thought to be a more helpful move to reduce the risk of accidents to children and other vulnerable people more generally throughout the town and not just in isolated areas. Cllr Botterill rejected this option on the basis that drivers could get frustrated when having to drive more slowly. A member of the public stated that the priority should be to protect children in this particular case.

Another member of the public raised the issue of dogs currently being allowed to run freely without leads on Laburnum playing field. She claimed there had been a 'Dogs on Lead' sign at the entrance to the playing field when she made a past complaint to the council but officers found no evidence of a sign; she was concerned that dogs

were on occasions entering the children's play area. The issue was supported by Cllr John Callinan who also remembered the presence of a similar sign several years ago. He stated that he knew of numerous residents who were nervous and uncomfortable around dogs, especially dogs that are allowed to run freely and agrees that they should be kept on leads. The member of the public stated that she wish to repair the relationship with the town council following recent events.

The County Councillor also raised concern about the council's wish to purchase a Thermal Imaging Device to help residents, amongst other groups, to get a better understanding of heat loss within their property stating that it was an ill-conceived idea, not properly thought out and necessitated a waste of money to be trained to use the device. The Chair thanked him for his thoughts and stated that the council considered the thermal imaging device to be a useful tool that would prove to be good value for money and will raise people's awareness of the value of insulating their homes.

TC3572 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Carol Kambites

TC3573 To receive declarations of interest

Declarations of interest were raised by both Cllrs Keith Terry and Keren Capeling in relation to Agenda Item TC3582 (E/1032)

TC3574 To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 16th February '26

Cllr John Callinan asked whether the two issues (Lime trees and dog waste) raised by a member of the public at the previous meeting were going to be pursued in future meetings. The Clerk stated that they would.

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

Following a request by County Councillor Dean Botterill, the Chair, with agreement, brought forward agenda item TC3577

TC3577 To receive reports from County and District Councillors

County Councillor Dean Botterill highlighted his written report to the town council and had assumed it had been presented in time to have been included in supporting papers. There was some confusion with the Clerk stating that he believed that he had not received the report; having looked through his files, it appeared that he had received them but mistakenly omitted to include them - he apologised to the county councillor. Cllr John Callinan raised a question in relation to the issue of youth provision within Stonehouse (citing the way that the 'Door's' work was currently being funded by the town council) and mentioned the county councillor's previous statement which identified that there was cross party support from his administration to support youth provision locally. Councillor Botterill stated that he was in favour of supporting youth provision and as a result had already allocated £1,000 from his grass roots fund. Cllr Callinan thanked him for that.

Cllr John Callinan spoke on the issue of Gov funding to Stroud District Council to raise the EPC of council buildings and in the case of the properties along Midland road, the prevention of damp issues - he stated that works were about to start on 8 properties in Midland road.

Cllr Carol Kambites had submitted a written report

David Drew raised the issue of the Stratford Park Lido and why it was to cost so much (£5M) to reinstate the pool. Councillor Callinan stated that the district council were meeting to discuss the Lido and that council could submit questions and/or comments. It was suggested that if there was a strength of feeling amongst councillors to try and retain the use of the Lido for the future, council may wish to write a letter of support.

Councillor Dean Botterill left the meeting along with 2 members of the public 7.25pm

TC3575 To note Matters Arising

The Clerk detailed the following key actions since last the previous town council meeting:

1. Processed approved payments
2. Notified 'Edge It Systems' of authorisation to enter new three year financial software contract
3. New Sickness Absence Policy updated to website
4. Notified 'Aubergine' of authorisation to enter into new contract to design and host the council's new website
5. Completed a number of changes to earmarked reserves - some will need to be undertaken into the new financial year
6. Set aside the agreed three year earmarked reserves for the Ship Inn site
7. Made enquiries for the application of the Certificate of Lawfulness for the short term development of the Ship Inn site

TC3576 To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and town councillors

The Chair was recently in Mumbai, India, with work, and met the Mayor of Mumbai. She was very interested in the Stonehouse Community Arboretum project and the work being done in Stonehouse. Cllr Debbie Curtis mentioned the forthcoming meeting with representatives of the Heritage Lottery funders at the Ship Inn Community Space - the funders will be visiting other sites along the canal corridor - town councillors were invited to attend

Councillor Drew raised concern of specific parking issues at Gloucester road citing a need for a wide scale review of parking more generally in light of growing concerns around the town and neighbouring estates; he asked if the matter could be added to the next Business Committee Agenda. The Clerk highlighted the ongoing parking issues with High street businesses. A question was raised in relation to whether taxpayers money should be used to accommodate businesses, whose owners do not live in Stonehouse

TC3577 To receive reports from County and District Councillors

Agenda item brought forward. See above for details

TC3578 **To receive RFO's budget report and bank reconciliations for Feb '26**
Council NOTED the bank reconciliation for the council's operating account for Feb '26 - the closing balance totalling £29,247.83. A question was raised in relation to one of the redactions re a payment for £580. It was stated that this was due to GDPR requirements

Council NOTED the total 'Actual Net' Income of £451,846.61; total 'Actual Net' Expenditure of £464,623.69 and Reserve Movements totalling £53,065.86

TC3579 **To :**

- **approve the latest BACS payment list and**
Council APPROVED BACS payments totalling £7,569.03 and £6,438.00
- **retrospectively approve Debit Card payments and**
Council RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVED Debit Card payments totalling £284.79
- **to note Standing order and Direct Debit payments**
Council NOTED Standing Order and Direct Debit payments totalling £10,990.94 and £4,525.00 retrospectively

TC3580 **To receive the latest position on changes to the Stagholt playing field covenant**
Supporting papers show the revised covenant agreed with Glos County Council. Town Council agreed to pay GCC's legal fees of £500; this payment has now been made.
The revised covenant is ready to be signed in line with clause 23 of the council's Standing Orders
Council received the revised Covenant.

TC3581 **To receive draft minutes of Business Committee meeting of 2nd March '26 and approve the following recommendations:**

- **B/982 To approve Business Committee's recommendation to enter 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.**
The town council currently has its gas and electricity supplied by 'Yu Energy'. The gas supply contract runs until December 2026. Two utility brokers have provided the council with a number of options culminating in a recommendation to extend the gas contract with Yu Energy for either two or three years. Supporting papers include recommendations from two brokers; an update provided today Monday 16th March provides a marginally improved offer. Quotations offered within supporting papers included the council making an annual saving from 2027 of approx. £307.21 over two years or £339 over three years.

Councillor John Callinan suggested that it would be prudent to commit the council to a renewed contract at this stage in light of rising energy prices. It was suggested that the markets remained quite volatile.

Council **APPROVED** a new gas supply contract with YU Energy through Brokers TUS for a period of three years from 3rd December 2026 at costs of 36.88 pence per day Standing Charge and 6.1370 pence per kWh as per the last minute offer submitted by the broker on 16th March '26

- **B/983 To approve Business Committee's recommendations to adopt the following the reviewed council key documents and policies**
 - **Transparency Code Information**
Council **APPROVED** the updated Transparency Code Information
 - **Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**
Council **APPROVED** the updated Freedom of Information Publicaiton Scheme
 - **Data Protection Policy**
Council **APPROVED** the updated Data Protection Policy
 - **Communications and Engagement Policy - 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'.
A question was raised as to why the latter change was being recommended and it was explained that in the event that the Clerk was unavailable to provide the go head for an urgent communications to be posted on social media, then the option to liaise and agree a post with the Chair of Council would prevent unnecessary delay.
Cllr Simon MacGregor asked whether the deputy clerk and Vice Chair could act in the absence of the Clerk and the Chair and the response was affirmative.
Cllr Debbie proposed the following amendment to the motion - to change the wording to 'Clerk/Deputy Clerk or Chair/Vice Chair'; the amendment was seconded; all voted in favour
Approval of the revised motion was proposed and seconded; all voted in favour
- **IT policy (New Policy)**
The Clerk stated that the incorrect draft policy was inserted in the supporting papers. Therefore he asks that council approve the new policy with the recommended changes:
 1. To remove 'The Introduction' to the policy in page 2
 2. To remove the last paragraph under the heading 'Purpose of the IT Policy' commencing with 'Council will also need to determine and clearly state

3. To add a section headed 'Third Parties' which includes a single paragraph that states
'The council uses third party services, such as Edge Finance, to process and store data on its behalf. The council remains the Data Controller and ensures that these providers meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. Data sharing agreements or contracts will be maintained, and as such relationships will be reviewed periodically to ensure ongoing compliance and security'

Council understood the need for the revisions to the document and therefore **APPROVED** the amended IT Policy

- **B/984** To approve Business Committee's recommendations in relation to the new leases with Stonehouse Town Football Club and Magpies Social Club:
 - To cease further negotiations with both organisations on the new leases
 - To approve the new leases in their current form

The Clerk highlighted the length of time it had taken to reach the current position in agreeing to the current revised leases - both are very similar in their content.

The Clerk mentioned there were a number of concerns raised by an anonymous complainant in relation to the social club. Recent discussion with the club suggested there were some issues that needed resolving and that they would prioritise them. It was recommended that the lease be signed only if and when issues found to be of concern were appropriately resolved.

Cllr David Drew suggested that whilst the council could have considered incorporating increased lease payments into the lease should a significant increase in income to the organisation be generated, he was aware that the timing for this was too late. Council **APPROVED** the signing of the new 25 year lease with Stonehouse Town Football Club

Council also **APPROVED** the signing of the 10 year lease with Magpies Social Club at the appropriate time

TC3582 To receive draft minutes of Environment Committee meeting of 9th March '26 and approve the following recommendations:

- **E/1029** To recommend to Full Council the redesign and relocation of the Kingfisher to the Ship Inn Community Space, with the work to be undertaken by Stonehouse in Bloom volunteers at a cost of no more than £120.

Council **APPROVED** the redesign and relocation of the Kingfisher sculpture to the Ship Inn Community Space with the work to be undertaken by Stonehouse In Bloom volunteers at a cost of no more than £120

- **E/1030 To recommend to Full Council that a Task and Finish Working Group be set up to identify locations for signage to link the station, canal, Cotswold Way, and the Town Centre, and establish a suitable design and source costings.**
Cllrs felt that a task and finish working group would be an appropriate way to review signage and develop a proposal. Council **APPROVED** the proposed new working group to include Cllrs Theresa Watt, Debbie Curtis, Val Randell and Marcus Dixon
- **E/1032 To comment on Planning Application S.26/0180/FUL Stonehouse Community Centre, Stonehouse S.26/0180/FUL** Click [here](#).

There was wide debate on the issue and Cllrs drew attention to local resident objections which included the proximity to the adjacent properties, the turning area for visiting cars, the potential for car users to be fined for driving through to the rear car park, the impact of deliveries and collections being made throughout a 24 hour period and ingress/egress by car users to and from Regent street. Local residents highlighted alternative locations for the lockers within the community centre site as it was felt that the canopy acted as an amplifier. Highways acknowledged difficulties with the site but have not objected

Questions were raised about the income this facility would generate (approx £1500 per year), whether the facility needed Planning approval (yes it did), would visitors be fined for using the car park (No), were there implications on the council in terms of its position as Landlord.

Council **APPROVED** the following response to the Planning Authority:

‘In considering the planning application, Stonehouse town council understands the need for Stonehouse Community Centre to generate additional income to ensure its long term financial viability but also appreciated the range of local residents’ concerns’

TC3583 To note the date of the next TC meeting Monday 20th April ‘26
Council NOTED the next town council meeting