



Minutes of a Town Business Committee Meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026 at 7pm at the Stonehouse Town Hall/Library, Queens Road, Stonehouse, GL10 2QA

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

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth - 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.

There were no members of the public in attendance

B/1044 **To receive apologies**
There were no apologies

B/1045 **To receive Declarations of Interest**
Declarations of interest were raised by Cllrs Keith Terry and Keren Capeling in relation to agenda item BC1051

B/1046 **To approve the minutes of the Business Committee meeting on 1st June '26.**
Committee **APPROVED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting

B/1047 **Matters arising**
Committee **NOTED** the update provided by the Clerk
Mention was made of the success of the Canal Festival and the thanks expressed by St Cyr's Church for the council financial support

B/1048 **To receive a letter of Thanks from the 'Great Western Air Ambulance Charity' (GWAAC) for the town council's financial contribution towards the provision of its services**
Committee **NOTED** the letter of Thanks from the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity noting the increasing number of incidents attend by the Charity and the £2,200 cost of doing so on each occasion

B/1049 **To receive the latest budget position**

A query was raised in relation to the net cost associated with the budget; it was explained that this related to the council's cost net of its income.

Committee **NOTED** the latest budget position with total Net Actual Income of £217,556.11; total 'Net Actual' Expenditure of £106,163.02 and Reserves movements of £612.10.

Cllrs John Callinan and Carol Kambites apologised for not declaring an interest at the start of the meeting but stated that they should leave the meeting in light of their involvement in the 'Walking festival' (agenda item B/1050) the Cllrs left the meeting at 7.07pm

B/1050 **To approve the latest BACS payment list and provide retrospective approval for Debit Card Payments**

Committee **APPROVED** BACS payment totalling £25,189.76

Cllrs John Callinan and Carol Kambites returned to the meeting at 7.08pm

Committee **RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVED** Debit Card payments totalling £720.99

Cllrs Keith Terry and Keren Capeling left the meeting in light of their declared interest in agenda item B/1051 - 7.09pm

B/1051 **To approve payment from earmarked reserves to Stonehouse**

The Clerk explained that the earmarked reserve set aside for tree works at the community centre was not intended to include supporting the cost tree surveys; for this reason, the request from Stonehouse Community Association to pay for a recent survey costing £150 plus vat has been raised at Business Committee.

Committee **RESOLVED** to support this cost (£150) but in future would need to be asked ahead of any planned work.

Cllrs Keith Terry and Keren Capeling returned to the meeting - 7.11pm

B/1052 **To review the council's current Financial Reserves and recommend suggested changes to full council for approval**

The Clerk reminded Committee that a review of the council's Reserves had been referred to Business Committee by full town council. Cllrs' understanding of the reserve headings varied and so an explanation was needed by some Cllrs. This was provided, albeit to a limited extent by the Clerk. It was explained that Environment Committee would also be reviewing the council's Reserves primarily from the aspect of support needed for projects initiatives that would normally report to that committee.

Cllr John Callinan raised a number of questions that he asked for written replies to in relation to the following existing reserve

headings: Community Facilities, Neighbourhood Plan Review, Stroud District Council Market Town's Initiative Funding, Stagholt Brook Repairs and Court View. In general Cllr Callinan asked to be provided with information on when each of the earmarked reserves were allocated, by whom ie which committee and for what purpose. *At a follow up meeting with Cllr Callinan on Tuesday 7th July, he also asked for a copy of the letter from Stroud District Council confirming the Market Town funding; for the council to explore with Severn Trent Water who is directly responsible for the maintenance of Stagholt Brook; what the reserve for Court View was to be specifically spent on.*

Cllr Callinan also asked for a total spend on the Ship In Site since the town council had taken responsibility for its day to day management. Cllr Callinan confirmed that he would be putting all of his questions to the town council in writing.

There was some discussion on the reserves as a whole and it was considered sensible to conduct a review once the council's priorities were established.

It was however **RECOMMENDED** that the following minor changes be approved:

- To Delete the earmarked reserve for 'Elections' - it was felt that financial support for Elections should be included in the council's revenue budgets
- To Delete the earmarked reserve 'Oldends Lane Sewage Development'
- To Delete the earmarked reserve for the 'Neighbourhood Plan Review' - it was felt that the use of Neighbourhood Plans may soon be outdated
- To consolidate the amounts currently held in the following earmarked reserves in a new earmarked reserve called 'Market Town Funding' and to Delete those reserve headings that will no longer hold reserve funding:
 - Stroud DC Tourism Grants - £651
 - Stroud District Council Market Towns Initiative Funding - £43,325
 - Tourism Market Towns - £1,010

B/1053

To review the council's Financial Risk Assessment for 2026 and recommend changes to full council for approval

Discussion on the revised, track changed Financial Risk Assessment was centred on the scoring of the risk associated with the council's management of its tree stock, as it was given a high risk score. The Clerk highlighted his concerns and reasons for scoring the risk so highly reflecting on the need for an improved process to agree remedial actions necessary following advice from tree surveyors contracted to undertake the council's annual tree surveys.

Cllr John Parker stated it was necessary to improve the council's inspection regime, survey specification and associated processes needed improvement but disagreed with the current high scoring for

this element of the council's operation; he felt it was unwarranted. Cllr Parker also felt that there were discrepancies with the surveys undertaken ie some risks were not being identified and necessary works not being recommended in recent years and that with an improved tree survey specification produced by the Council's Community Arboretum and Open Spaces (CAOS) working group, this would deal more adequately with the current issues. In light of this and the expediency with which this was promised, a risk score of 6 was agreed in light of a reduced likely-hood of an incident arising from a more thorough approach to tree surveys and an improved decision making process. The wording relating to the tree management risk would be revised accordingly.

Discussion moved to the risk score given to item 1 on the assessment relating to insurance. It was agreed that this would be reviewed in time for the next full town council meeting.

Cllr Callinan asked Cllr Parker when the minutes of the latest CAOS meeting will be brought to the council's attention - Cllr Parker confirmed that he had already provided the minutes to Environment Committee for its next meeting; town councillors had been copied in.

Subject to the recommended changes, Committee **RECOMMENDS** Council approve the revised Financial Risk Assessment.

B/1054

To approve the award of contract to undertake Fire Risk Assessments for the Pavilion, Workshop and Pod buildings

Committee noted Officers' work in securing three quotation, the lowest of which was presented by Stroud Alarms at £840 plus vat
Committee **APPROVED** the award of contract to undertake Fire Risk Assessments for the Pavilion, Workshop and Pod buildings to 'Stroud Alarms' at a total cost of £840 plus vat

B/1055

To approve the award of contract to undertake an EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report) inspection on the Council's Pavilion, Pod and Workshop buildings

Committee noted Officers' work in securing three quotations, the lowest of which was presented by 'MD Electrical' at £864 plus vat
Committee **APPROVED** the award of contract to undertake EICR reports for the Pavilion, Workshop and Pod buildings to 'MD Electrical' at a total cost of £864 plus vat

B/1056

To receive an update on Assertion 10 (Digital Compliance) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2026/27

Committee **NOTED** the council's latest position with regards the ongoing work to ensure full compliance with Assertion 10 of the AGAR. Officers' hoped that the remaining work to the council's new website would be complete by Business Committee's next meeting in September.

- B/1057** To seek permission from GCC to install cycle racks to two locations on High street pavements (outside 'Trafalgar' chip shop, 'Lobby's Tackle') and, outside the 'Pod' and if successful to approve their installation.
Committee **APPROVED** the work at an approximate cost of £350 subject to permission being granted by Gloucestershire County Council in relation to the cycle racks planned for the High street.
- B/1058** To discuss and recommend the Communications working group report to Environment Committee in future
Committee **RECOMMENDED** for council to approve the Communications working group reporting to Environment Committee in future as the clerk for the committee currently provides the officer support for the group
- B/1059** To receive the newly updated 'Parish and Town charter' and recommend for council approval
Some Cllrs had difficulty in accessing the latest revision to the Parish and Town Charter and asked that a PDF copy be sent to all Cllrs prior to the full town council meeting in July so that it can be considered for adoption.
- B/1060** To receive updates from the following working groups:
1. **Climate Change Action Forum**
Minutes of last meeting noted - the working group hopes to present a new draft action to the next meeting for consideration
 2. **Communications**
Not met
 3. **Oldends Lane Development**
Not met
 4. **Support Stonehouse**
Not met recently - meeting will be scheduled for the autumn
 5. **Youth**
Not met
 6. **Policy**
Met recently - scheduled list of policies to be reviewed
 7. **Internal Control Checks (ICC)**
ICC working group members to discuss next Internal Control Checks
 8. **Local Government Review**
An academic looking into Local Government Reorganisation has been invited to offer some thoughts on the subject matter along with some helpful advice at the next Full town council meeting on the 20th July
- B/1061** To note the date of the next meeting - Monday 7th September 2026
Committee **NOTED** the date of the next meeting

DRAFT