

**Minutes – subject to acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting of Stonehouse Town Council – to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE STONEHOUSE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009 IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE**

**Present:** Councillors Mrs M Ross (Chair of Town Council)  
J Aldis Mrs C Sheridan  
S Lewis Mrs P Swain  
Mrs T Macgregor Mrs T Watt

**In Attendance:** County Councillor Mrs L Williams  
2 members of the public  
Matt Wicker/Dave Purnell – Stonehouse Youth Workers  
4 members of Voice of Young Stonehouse  
Kim Bedford – Chief Officer  
Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils  
N Wakefield – Stroud News & Journal  
R A Lacey – Town Clerk  
Mrs E Lawrence – Deputy Clerk

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs Latchford (Vice Chair of Town Council) – unwell  
Councillor C Brine – family commitment  
Councillor D Drew M.P.  
Councillor G Powell - unwell  
District Councillor L Williams

Before declaring the meeting open, Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) welcomed the representatives from the Voice of Young Stonehouse but also wished to make a special mention about one of its members, Annie Pickering. Councillor Mrs Ross, on behalf of the Town Council, congratulated Annie on her recent success in winning a competition to attend, as a young reporter, the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Copenhagen. This will indeed be a superb opportunity for a young person to attend such an important Conference.

**TC/794 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair reminded Members of their obligations within the requirements of the Adopted Model Code of Conduct, to declare personal or prejudicial interests where applicable.

Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) declared an interest in Minute No. TC/749 – Accounts for Payment.

**TC/795 CONFIRMATION OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Mrs Sheridan proposed that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2009 should be approved as a correct record. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Lewis and agreed by all Members present. A copy is appended in the Minute Book that is held in the Town Council Office for public information.

**TC/796 TO CO-OPT ONE MEMBER TO SOUTH WARD**

Members present were informed that one application had been received from Mr Roger Govier, a resident in South Ward.

As Mr Govier was in attendance Members requested that he leave the meeting whilst they considered his application. Following discussion Councillor Lewis proposed that Mr Govier should be co-opted as a Town Councillor for the South Ward. Councillor Mrs Swain seconded the proposal and it was agreed by all Members present.

Mr Govier was welcomed to the Town Council and invited to join the meeting.

It was noted that a further vacancy still exists for a Town Councillor in South Ward and applications will be considered at the next Town Council meeting due to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010.

#### **TC/797 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

#### **TC/798 PRESENTATION BY VOICE OF YOUNG STONEHOUSE**

Prior to commencing the presentation on the youth survey that had been undertaken by V.O.Y.S. during the summer months, Members present were shown the mural that young people had designed and painted in preparation for its display in one of the Town Council bus shelters on the Ebley Road. Members present welcomed the finished mural and congratulated everyone involved for producing such a colourful and interesting picture.

The four young ladies representing V.O.Y.S. then outlined the analysis that had been collated from the responses of a youth survey that had been produced by the group and then circulated to every house via the Newsletter. The group had also gone out on the High Street to question young people on their views on youth facilities in the town.

The general indications from the survey revealed that young people felt there was a lack of appropriate facilities and if there was more available then there would be greater involvement. This was something that V.O.Y.S. would like to see addressed.

From the discussion that followed, the main points raised were:

- Are young people fully aware that there was a Youth Club in Stonehouse?
- Is there a lack of awareness which is having an effect on attendances at the Club?
- The POD is well-used – the newly-formed Girls Club meet there on a Monday night
- In addition to Youth Club nights there is also an average 15 young people meet at the POD on a Friday night
- It is a good venue but its size restricts some of the activities that can take place
- Some young people consider the current Youth Centre building to be the ideal location – it is central for most areas in the town.
- Young people would like somewhere warm and dry to gather with friends – e.g. a Youth Café (similar to The Door in Stroud) – maybe in a building in the High Street
- Should there be some communication with Wycliffe College re community use of their swimming pool?

The V.O.Y.S. representatives sought the Town Council's response to the results of the survey and enquired as what ideas Members may have to obtain better facilities in Stonehouse?

Members present responded:

- The Town Council is very concerned about the impending loss of the Church Hall and thereby a facility used not only by the Youth Club but also other organisations such as the PHAB Club.
- It was as a result of discussion at a recent Town Council meeting that the matter became a priority issue and thus a special meeting was arranged in the Town Hall of interested parties specifically to discuss and plan the most effective way forward to achieve suitable facilities for young people.
- Suggestion that Schools should become the communication link with young people - informing on such matters as the youth facilities/services that are available in the town and encouraging more involvement.
- The Town Council were due to discuss the formation of a Working Group to look at the feasibility of providing a youth/community facility at their Oldend Lane Playing Field site.
- The Town Council would certainly welcome ideas, suggestions etc that young people would like to put forward and invited members of V.O.Y.S. to join in with future discussions on youth facilities in Stonehouse.
- There is an opportunity for V.O.Y.S. to have a specific page in the Newsletter for regular updates, articles etc.
- Suggestion that the formation of a Stonehouse Youth Council would be extremely beneficial to both the young people and local stakeholders.

Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) thanked the young people representing V.O.Y.S. for giving their time to attend the meeting and for their informative presentation. They were assured that the Town Council will make every effort to support where possible any action to bring together people with the relevant experience and interest in youth services to achieve facilities that young people will feel are worthy of support.

#### **TC/799 GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF PARISH & TOWN COUNCILS**

Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) welcomed Kim Bedford, Chief Officer for the G.A.P.T.C.

Kim Bedford explained to Members present that the G.A.P.T.C. is an association which supports the majority of local Parish and Town Councils in Gloucestershire. It provides a wide range of advice, support services and, through the Gloucestershire Training Partnership, training for Clerks and Councillors.

Several training courses are arranged throughout the year, including the very successful "Nuts & Bolts – How to Be a Good Councillor". This is an excellent one day course to introduce Councillors to matters such as meeting procedures, powers, best practice and much more.

Kim Bedford noted the Town Council's interest in attending the training that will be taking place in March 2010 on Annual Town Meetings and hoped that this will assist in drawing together a format that can be used to encourage increased attendance by local residents.

Members present were also informed that arrangements could be made to hold "In House" tailor-made training courses if this was felt to be beneficial. The suggestion was put forward that it may be possible to invite Parish Councils adjoining Stonehouse to become involved in local training sessions.

Membership to the G.A.P.T.C. also gives access to the National Association of Local Councils.

During discussion one Member present raised the issue of the G.A.P.T.C. membership fee. Although the Town Council had recently agreed to become members, and whilst it was accepted that Stonehouse is one of the larger market towns, there is still an element of concern that the fee was excessive. Would membership fees be better balanced if a “banding” system were introduced?

Kim Bedford responded that membership fees are set proportionately according to registered electorate and having reviewed various methods of setting fees it is still felt that the current system is appropriate. Parish and Town Councils need to ensure that they are taking full advantage of the various services available to them and thus achieving value for their membership fee.

Members present agreed that it will be beneficial to hold a specific meeting to set out a structured strategy for future years and from which the availability of G.A.P.T.C. support services could be more fully utilised.

Kim Bedford stressed that she is always very willing to assist wherever possible.

Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) thanked Kim Bedford for attending the meeting and giving Members an insight into the services and support available.

#### **TC/800 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

As there were no members of the public present the Chair of Town Council proceeded to the next item of business.

#### **TC/801 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Remembrance Day Parade and Service** – once again it was with great pleasure that Members of the Town Council joined the Parade and Service. Grateful thanks were extended to the Royal British Legion for their excellent organisation of the day. The large attendance of local people was indeed a marvellous indication of the respect for such an important occasion. Many complimentary comments were extended on the refurbished War Memorial and the newly planted borders around the Green.
- **Armistice Day – Service at the War Memorial** – some members of the Royal British Legion Stonehouse Branch led a short service on the Green and it was pleasing to see the support given by Town, District and County Councillors, local residents and children from the Park Infant School
- **Youth Facilities** – The meeting held in the Town Hall had been well attended and included representatives from various groups/organisations.
- **Foxes Field Planning Appeal** – Councillor Mrs Ross wished to record appreciation to the Town Clerk for his extremely professional and informed presentation of the Town Council's objections to the planning application at the recent Planning Appeal. Other commitments meant that Councillor Mrs Ross was able to attend the Appeal for limited short periods, however, the Town Clerk was there for the four days which proved to be invaluable in the final production of his document.
- **Goodwill Evening** – very well attended event despite the wet weather that fell later in the evening. Congratulations and thanks were extended to Councillor Lewis and the members of the Events Group for their hard work, and also to the many other volunteers who helped out on the night. A de-brief meeting is to take place in early January 2010.
- **Christmas Carols on the Green – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December – 11am** – all Members were encouraged to join in with the singing of some favourite Christmas carols on the Town Green outside the Medical Centre. Music will be provided by a small group from the Nailsworth Silver Band.

On a personal note, Councillor Mrs Ross wished to record her thanks to Councillor Mrs Latchford (Vice Chair of Town Council) for carrying out her supportive duties during recent weeks and at the Town Council meeting held in October 2009.

**TC/802 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

As Councillor Mrs Ross had declared an interest in this item it was necessary for her to step down as Chair during consideration of the list by Members present and she took no part in any discussion or decision. In the absence of Councillor Mrs Latchford (Vice Chair) it was agreed that Councillor Lewis (Convenor of the Finance & Strategy Committee) should Chair the meeting for this particular item.

A list of accounts requiring authorisation for payment had been circulated to all Members. Following consideration, Councillor Mrs Macgregor proposed that the payments be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Watt and agreed by all Members present.

Councillor Lewis (Convenor of Finance & Strategy Committee) then invited Councillor Mrs Ross to return to the Chair.

**TC/803 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL MEETING OF THE REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

As Councillor Mrs Latchford (Convenor of Committee) was not in attendance it was not possible for her to present the Minutes for the additional meeting. Having been circulated with a copy of the Minutes Members present agreed to note them.

A copy of the Minutes is appended in the Minute Book that is held in the Town Hall for public information.

**TC/804 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

As Councillor Mrs Latchford (Convenor of Committee) was not in attendance it was not possible for her to present the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Having been circulated with a copy of the Minutes, Members present agreed to note them.

A copy of the Minutes is appended in the Minute Book that is held in the Town Hall for public information.

**TC/805 TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION FROM THE REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

**Minute No. F2/53 – Update of Matters Arising from Previous Minutes (E) – Warm & Well Event**

**That the Stonehouse Warm Well and Happy Event should take place on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2010.**

Councillor Lewis proposed that this Resolution should be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Mrs Sheridan and agreed by all Members present.

**TC/806 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES RECREATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

In the absence of Councillor Powell (Convenor of Committee), Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) presented the Minutes of the Amenities Recreation & Tourism Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Members present noted the Minutes. A copy of the Minutes is available in the Minute Book that is held in the Town Council Hall for public information.

**TC/807 TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS FROM THE AMENITIES RECREATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2009**

**Minute No.F3/49 – Update of Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**(a) – Allotments**

- (i) That new Terms of Lease for starter plots should be subject to a satisfactory probation period of three months.**

Councillor Lewis proposed that this Resolution should be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aldis and agreed by all Members present.

- (ii) That any further allocation of existing plots should also be subject to a three month probation period.**

Councillor Lewis proposed that this Resolution should be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aldis and agreed by all Members present.

It was noted, however, that both of the above Resolutions will also need to be considered at the Annual Town Meeting for final approval.

**Minute No.F3/49 – Update of Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**(e) – Youth Strategy**

**That full Town Council should consider siting a youth/community facility at Oldend Lane.**

One Member raised concern about the necessity of this particular Resolution when taking into account a similar Resolution from the Finance & Strategy Committee. Some discussion followed during which it was stressed that both Resolutions came as a result of consideration by the two Committees following the points raised at the youth meeting held in November.

Councillor Mrs Macgregor proposed that the Resolution be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aldis and approved by the majority of Members present with one Member abstaining.

**Minute No.F3/54 – Staffing**

**That Andrew Bignell's temporary contract be extended from the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.**

Councillor Mrs Macgregor proposed that this Resolution should be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aldis and agreed by all Members present.

Councillor Mrs Ross (Chair of Town Council) wished to record that the Town Council were very pleased that Andrew Bignell had returned to Stonehouse to undertake a temporary contract.

**TC/808 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

Councillor Lewis (Convenor of Committee) presented the Minutes of the Finance & Strategy Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009.

As there were no matters raised Members present noted the Minutes. A copy of the Minutes is available in the Minute Book that is held in the Town Hall for public information.

**TC/809 TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS FROM THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

**Minute No.F1/42 – Update of Matters Arising from Previous Minutes (f) – Youth Strategy**

**That the Town Council explores development of the Oldend Lane site for a youth facility and as a matter of urgency form a Working Group of interested persons for that purpose.**

Councillor Mrs Macgregor proposed that the Resolution should be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aldis and agreed by all Members present.

Councillors Mrs Ross, Mrs Sheridan, Mrs Watt, Mrs Swain and Mr Aldis indicated that they would like to be involved with the Working Group.

**Minute No.F1/44 – Town Council Standing Orders**

**That a Working Group be set up to review both the Financial Standing Orders and the general Standing Orders.**

Councillors Lewis, Mrs Sheridan and Mrs Watt indicated their willingness to be involved in the Working Group.

**Minute No.F1/48 – Town Council Meetings – 2010**

**That the calendar of 2010 meeting dates be approved as published.**

Councillor Mrs Macgregor proposed that the Resolution be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Mrs Sheridan and agreed by all Members present.

**TC/810 TO APPROVE THE ADOPTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PRECEPT**

Councillor Lewis proposed that the Town Council's precept of £165,875 for the financial year 2010/2011 be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Mrs Sheridan and agreed by all Members present.

Councillor Lewis wished to record grateful thanks to Mr Lacey (Responsible Financial Officer) for his work. Thanks were also extended to the Members of the Amenities Recreation & Tourism Committee for their diligence in achieving such a structured budget.

## **TC/811 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Councillor Mrs Williams informed Members present that a written report had not been prepared for circulation. Councillor Mrs Williams wished to draw Members attention to the availability of an information leaflet that has been produced by the County Council's Highways on the maintenance of the County's highways during extreme cold weather conditions.

Some Members present expressed dissatisfaction with the current surface condition of the B4008 particularly the section through the town which has some severely dangerous potholes.

Councillor Mrs Williams advised Members present to complain to the Divisional Highways Manager.

A Member raised the issue of the old Ship Inn site (adjoining the canal and A419) which had been included in Councillor Mrs Williams report for the Town Council meeting held in October 2009. It was stressed that this is an important local site that the Town Council has expressed, for some considerable time, a desire to see this area allocated for canal associated facilities. It was agreed by Members present that this matter should be strongly pursued and therefore should be included for consideration at the next meeting of the appropriate Town Council Committee.

## **TC/812 STROUD DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Members present noted that there were no written reports available for circulation.

## **TC/813 STONEHOUSE PARTNERSHIP REPORT**

Members present noted that there had been no further Partnerships meeting held since the Town Council meeting held in October 2009 and therefore no updates were available to report.

## **TC/814 SUNDRY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CLERK**

- County Air Ambulance Trust – letter of thanks for Town Council grant.
- National Association of Local Councils –  
Direct Information Service Issue Nos.720-722
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council - 2008/2009 Review  
- Gloucestershire History
- Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association – “The Playing Field” Newsletter
- Volunteer & Community Action (Stroud District) Ltd. – Annual Report 2008/2009
- Cotswold Canals Trust – The Trow (Winter edition)
- The Wildlife Trusts – “Natural World”

## **TC/815 DATES OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Regeneration & Environment Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	7pm
Finance & Strategy Committee	11 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	7pm
Amenities Recreation & Tourism Commttee	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	7pm
Full Town Council	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2009	7pm

**TC/816 TO NOTE MATTERS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT COMMITTEE AGENDAS**

- **Regeneration & Environment Committee – Consideration of the Town Council to sign up to “10:10” – reducing CO2 emissions by 10% during 2010.**
- **Regeneration & Environment Committee – “Ship Inn” site**
- **Amenities Recreation & Tourism Committee – “Ship Inn” site**

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.32pm.**

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