



STOKE GIFFORD

PARISH COUNCIL

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STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 9th July 2024

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire all those present should leave the building calmly, breaking a fire alarm panel on the way out, and assemble on the far side of the car park at the assembly point.

Attendees are reminded to either switch off or make silent their mobile phones.

PRESENT:

Cllrs D Addison, R Barber, M Brown, S Bandcroft, J Brunwin, K Cranney, A Hyde, K Marsden, P Richardson & A Shore.

In attendance was J Rendell [Parish Clerk] and six local residents.

1	To elect a Chair of the Finance & General Purpose Committee. Councillor Penny Richardson proposed the current Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden remain as Chair of the Finance & General Purpose committee for the 2024/ 25 period, seconded by Councillor Dave Addison, a vote was taken, 9 for 1 against, proposal carried.	
2	Welcome and apologies for absence. The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden thanked members and officially welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies noted from Councillors Brian Mead and Neel Das Gupta.	
3	To receive notification of any member's personal or prejudicial interest. None.	

<p>4</p>	<p>Public Session [3-5 MINUTES PER PERSON WITH A MAXIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PER SESSION] – Six residents were in attendance.</p> <p>Recently a resident arranged a meeting to discuss some concerns he had over the Brooklands Hall project and the financial risks of the Parish taking over the management of the building. This was a residents meeting held at the Little Stoke Community Hall. Attendees had mixed views with some residents in favour and some against. A local resident attended the meeting and was disappointed with a few aspects of the meeting, residents/ members present were bickering and talking over each other and at times conversations were heated. Points were raised regarding the overall financial risk to the Parish Council, the Business Case figures may need reviewing, and the need for public engagement informing residents of the plans and up to date Business Case is advised.</p> <p>The resident will be contacting the newly elected MP in the hope support will be given on the installation of a Multi-Use Games Area alongside the Brooklands Hall to be managed by the parish council.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Minutes of the last Finance & General Purpose Committee approved at April Full Council 2024.</p> <p>The Finance & General Purpose minutes dated Tuesday 12th December 2023 were agreed as an accurate record at the April Full Council meeting.</p> <p>All actions were discussed and have been completed.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>To note the expenditure and general accounts for June 2024.</p> <p>The Clerk tabled financial correspondence for June 2024 which included payments totalling £36,320.97 for the Co-operative general account, with a cash book balance of £531,041.65.</p> <p>A discussion was held, Council noted the expenditure and bank balance for July 2024. Councillor Sue Bandcroft proposed acceptance, seconded by Councillor Penny Richardson, unanimously carried.</p> <p>The Clerk then tabled the Lloyds account for June 2024 which included £80,021.00 expenditure and bank balance of £137,401.73.</p> <p>A discussion was held, Council noted the expenditure and bank balance for the Lloyds account, July 2024. Councillor Sue Bandcroft proposed acceptance, seconded by Councillor Jan Brunwin, unanimously carried.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant Aid application – Brightwell West of England Therapy Centre. <p>The Brightwell (West of England Therapy) have submitted a Grant Aid Application for a total of £1,000.</p> <p>The Clerk invited a representative to discuss the application, but no one was present.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson would like members to have seen the breakdown of residents that use the facilities on offer.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore proposed to defer this application until September Full Council and asked the Clerk to invite a representative to be present to talk through</p>	<p>Clerk to contact Brightwell.</p>

	<p>the application and seek information about the number of residents that use the service from within the Stoke Gifford parish, seconded by Councillor Keith Cranney, a vote was taken, 8 for 2 abstentions, proposal carried.</p>	
7	<p>CIL funding schedule for 2024/25 and 5 year plan.</p> <p>The Clerk tabled the 5 year plan which includes confirmation of £74,313.03 received for the parish to spend during the financial year via Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>The Clerk suggested the following works:</p> <p>Installation of solar panels to the community hall – approx. £30k</p> <p>Create a gravel car park to accommodate 30 vehicles on the Gallivan Playing Fields, obtain planning permission for access and egress points and to build a barrier around the car park with waste land to protect the green area – approx. £25k</p> <p>Install drainage to prevent site flooding at Little Stoke park - £5k</p> <p>Install electric car charging points at Little Stoke Park.</p> <p>Councillor Sue Bandcroft mentioned it may be a good idea for a sub committee to meet to go through the proposals and prioritise the provision of estimates to ensure Council are obtaining best value and getting the most out of the CIL funds.</p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Dave Addison mentioned members and officers have been looking into the installation of Solar Panels for a while now and proposed for the Clerk to arrange for a site survey and obtain costs for this work including the batteries sufficiently sized for the site, seconded by Councillor Keiron Marsden, unanimously carried.</p> <p>The Clerk will email members and look to arrange a sub-committee meeting to prioritise the work carried out via CIL.</p>	<p>Clerk to arrange sub meeting to discuss CIL works.</p>
8	<p>Grant Aid policy for 2025/26.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore tabled some comments on the way in which council could look into Grant Aid allocation.</p> <p>This email is more about the general approach, principles etc. Just some thoughts & ideas which I thought I'd share ahead of this evening's meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm concerned about simply looking at each request in the order received and potentially spending a high proportion too early on in the year, thereby potentially disadvantaging a worthy cause arising mid-year or later in the year ○ Clearly splitting the budget equally on a monthly or quarterly basis wouldn't work ○ Think we may need to consider allocating a higher % of the annual total (for things that need contracting at the start of the year, such as CAB, summer 	

	<p>playscheme etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ But perhaps hold back a proportion, to ensure we can consider good causes arising through the whole year • Some suggestions (based on £18000 annual total): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Q1 £12000 – Q2 £2000 – Q3 £2000 – Q4 £2000 b. Q1 £10500 – Q2 £2500 – Q3 £2500 – Q4 £2500 c. April-July £12000 – Aug-Nov £3000 – Dec-Mar £3000 d. April-July £11000 – Aug-Nov £3500 – Dec-Mar £3500 • Alternatively, if we’re going to simply consider them all from the start of the year, potentially leaving little left unspent after Q1, then I think we need to have sight of everything so we can consider each application side-by-side (but not at the busy May meeting) ○ In this case, I think we should clearly communicate a deadline for applications (which I don’t think we’ve done before) • I’m mindful of creating potential dependency if we always fund all the same causes every year (particularly external groups/organisations, as distinct from summer playscheme/CAB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. On funding external groups/organisations, maybe we should support LS Ladies one year (for purpose XX), Bowls club another year (for a new mat), Scouts another year (for special HQ trip), Four Towns & Vale Link another year (for new minibus), etc? ○ I’m not suggesting we can’t or shouldn’t consider an application from a previous applicant, but I’m suggesting that allocating to the same organisations (summer playscheme & CAB aside) every single, consecutive year may not be the best idea <p>Following discussion Councillor Dave Addison believes the policy currently in place works well which allows each application received to be reviewed and decided upon in isolation. It is acknowledged that at the start of the financial year a high percentage of the Grant Aid budget may be allocated as that’s when the larger amounts are requested (CAB and the summer Play Scheme) where submitting their application for the forthcoming year. Considering this and to keep the Grant Aid budget accessible to as many groups’ clubs and organisations as possible Councillor Dave Addison proposed to take CAB and Playscheme out of the GA and to look into creating a service level agreement, seconded by Councillor Penny Richardson, proposal carried.</p>	
9	<p>Update from the Brooklands Community Centre project.</p> <p>A Local resident from Harry Stoke would like to see a MUGA included within the plans and will be addressing the local MP for support on this.</p> <p>A local resident from Rossall Avenue feels this is a financial risk to the Parish Council and would like to see members updating the Business Case to ensure the financial implications are addressed more in detail. Staff wages need to be inline with inflation</p>	

<p>and hall income revisited in projections from year 1 – 4.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown feels we should delay the decision until Full Council in September, review the Business Case and hold a Brooklands Hall review day where site drawings and Business Case can be presented.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown also mentioned SGC had plans to erect a temporary Community Centre within the local area and feels the Parish should not take on the Brooklands building which would allow SGC and Crest to run the temporary building.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison looks at this in a different way and would like to see SGPC take on the management of the Brooklands Centre, and approach SGC requesting any available funding through the s106 should it not be required due to the Brooklands Centre being built.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison highlighted to members that SGC have given a target date for a final response of Wednesday 10th July and members should vote on one of the following three options:</p> <p>1. Proceed on Current Information</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Council have agreed to all 3 key points we raised on the proposed lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First breakpoint at 3 years, not 5 • Any surplus from operating the Community Centre can be used elsewhere in the Parish and is not required to be retained for use in the Community Centre • The Sinking Fund can be reserves held by the Parish Council rather than a separate bank account and is not to be handed over at the end of the lease. <p>If we decide to proceed with the lease now, the Parish Council could be exposed to the following financial risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £27k shortfall in SGC cover for the £87k projected deficit in setting up the Centre • £32k fitting out costs for the Centre <p>We would hope to cover most, if not all, of the fitting out costs from grants or by using the “Match My Project” scheme run by Sovereign.</p> <p>The £27k deficit could be covered using reserves. Grants to cover revenue are much harder to find than grants for capital expenditure.</p> <p>2. Continue to Negotiate</p> <p>There are still areas not related to the lease where we could continue to negotiate. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of a MUGA adjacent to the Community Centre • Further financial support for the startup costs of the centre • Battery Capacity <p>Based on feedback from South Gloucestershire so far, there does not appear to be much, if any, scope for further progress in these areas (at least in the short term). Crest have submitted a construction plan to South Gloucestershire Council and have said that they need a decision by the 10th July to get the project started.</p>	<p>DA to contact SGC.</p>
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	<p>3. Reject the offer and stop negotiations. Decide that the project poses an unacceptable risk to the Parish Council and decline to take it on.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore felt that we should continue seeking to negotiate with SGC on potentially taking on Brooklands Park for the benefit of the expanding community, but that it was premature to make a final decision this evening. This due to there still being missing information (e.g. regarding batteries associated with the solar panels) and points still in discussion with SGC, that we haven't yet held the public consultation recently promised) and because we need to be certain of negotiating the best deal for precept payers. Cllr Shore felt that SGC's further attempt at imposing a deadline should not cause us to rush the decision, as being the only real potential operator on the table, it should put us in an even stronger negotiating position.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion there were three proposals on the table:</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore proposed option 2 Continue to negotiate, seconded by Councillor Richard Barber, a vote was taken, 4 for, 5 against, 1 abstention, proposal not carried.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison proposed option 1 Proceed on current information with the proviso that all reference to a sinking fund is removed and replaced with the wording SGPC will retain sufficient earmarked reserves to maintain the building in good condition, a vote was taken, 6 for, 4 against, proposal carried.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown proposed option 3 Reject the offer and stop negotiations but withdrew this proposal when the option 1 vote was carried.</p> <p>Following the proposal and due process Council are to proceed with option 1. Councillor Dave Addison asked the Clerk to inform SGC.</p> <p><i>Councillors Mike Brown and Keith Cranney left the meeting.</i></p>	
10	<p>To receive recommendations from Parish Council Committees relating to expenditure across the Parish of Stoke Gifford.</p> <p>Finance.</p> <p>None.</p> <p>Planning & Transportation.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore thanked the committee members for taking part in a round robin to clear three planning applications in between committee meetings. There are currently a handful of applications for discussion at the July 23rd meeting.</p> <p>Recreation & Leisure.</p> <p>None.</p>	
11	<p>Any other business relevant to this committee.</p> <p>- Update following the Trust Committee AGM.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Dave Addison informed members the accounts are yet to be signed off and approved, it is hoped they will be ready within the next two weeks.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore attended the 2024 AGM and believes there is need for more active committee members.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Barber would like to see the council celebrate special events throughout the year and purchase a flag to erect on the mast outside the parish office to show armed forces day and also pride.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison informed members Councillor Brian Mead has handed in his resignation and will stand down as a parish councillor due to health reasons. Members thanked Councillor Brian Mead for his efforts. The Clerk is liaising with SGC on the vacancy.</p>	Clerk to liaise with DA.
12	<p>Date of next meeting.</p> <p>Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 19:00</p>	
15	<p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS.</p> <p>To resolve, by the nature of the sensitivity of items to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies Admissions to Meeting].</p> <p>None</p>	

Meeting closed 21:05

Signed: _____

Date: _____

K Marsden (Chair)
On behalf of Stoke Gifford Parish Council