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STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE MEETING
Held on Tuesday, 10th December 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, M Gallagher, A Hyde, K Marsden and P Richardson.

In attendance was J Rendell [Parish Clerk] and five members of public.

1	Welcome and apologies for absence. The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies noted from Councillors Neel das Gupta and Andrew Shore.	
2	To receive notification of any member's personal or prejudicial interest. None.	
3	Public Session [3-5 MINUTES PER PERSON WITH A MAXIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PER SESSION] – Six residents were in attendance. A resident and ex council member was concerned to hear rumours of a potential increase in precept rise for 2025 of circa 6%. The resident believes the previous admin left approx. £350k and the precept increase for 2024 was 4.7%. The resident believes the council will be making a profit at the end of the current year. The resident would like to see value for money and does not feel an increase in precept of 6% is necessary. Councillor Dave Addison thanked the resident for sharing concerns and mentioned the council precept went from £465k precept in 2022/23 to £345k in 2023/24	

	<p>due to the boundary change where the Cheswick and Stoke Park area was removed and formed as a new standalone parish. Councillor Dave Addison highlighted that many councils across the country are struggling financially and with the recommendations provided by the working group the precept budget and five year plan for 2025/26 this parish will budget for a £46,544 deficit where it is hoped that through careful financial planning by members and staff this will be reduced further throughout the year.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of the last Finance & General Purpose Committee approved at September Full Council 2024.</p> <p>The Finance & General Purpose minutes dated 16th July 2024 were agreed as an accurate record at the September Full Council meeting.</p> <p>All actions were discussed and have been completed.</p>	
5	<p>To note the expenditure and general accounts for November 2024.</p> <p>The Clerk tabled financial correspondence for November 2024 which included payments totalling £55,534.35 for the Co-operative general account, with a cash book balance of £532,294.15.</p> <p>The month accounts include items from CIL funding and Sports VAT budget.</p> <p>A discussion was held, Council noted the expenditure and bank balance for November 2024. Councillor Sue Bandcroft proposed acceptance, seconded by Councillor Tony Hyde, a vote was taken, 9 for, 1 abstention, proposal carried.</p>	
6	<p>Investment options for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Clerk tabled information on the fixed rate bank accounts currently in place and also current offers sourced from the website. All offers are protected up to a total of £85,000 by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.</p> <p>Stoke Gifford Parish Council fixed savings account.</p> <p>The parish currently have £80k in two separate savings accounts earning 3.6% AER (annual equivalent rate).</p> <p>Both accounts are with Lloyds Bank and will expire next year in February and April 2025 respectively.</p> <p>Our current savings should be in the region of £6k over both accounts after 12 months.</p> <p>To proceed again for a further 1 year fixed rate officers have carried out research on a Business fixed rate account (available at the time and rates may change):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allica Bank 1 year fixed 4.56% @ £80k - Recognise Bank 1 year fixed 4.25% @ £80k - Lloyds Bank 1 year fixed 2.93% @ £80k 	

	<p>- Virgin Bank 1 year fixed 4.15% @£80k</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison mentioned Virgin Bank is a reputable company and would prefer to see council use a more prominent company that members have heard of when looking to invest such amounts of money. Councillor Dave Addison asked the Clerk to open an account with Virgin Bank as this takes time and defer a decision until January Full Council, seconded by Councillor Penny Richardson, proposal unanimously carried.</p>	<p>Clerk to open a Virgin account.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>To receive recommendations from budget working group in relation to the precept demand and budget for 2025/26. To include 5-year plan.</p> <p>The budget working group has met to review current budgets and expenditure, and to discuss the Budget and Precept Demand for 2025/26.</p> <p>A paper was subsequently presented to the committee which made recommendations for a Precept Demand of £400,000 equating to a 3.6% increase.</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Council have advised that indicative Band D properties have increased from 4607 to 4742. The revised Band D cost would be £84.35 a difference of £2.95 per annum which was £81.40 in 2023/24. The cost per month per household would be £0.25.</p> <p>A budget of £665,944 expenditure was recommended with an income of £619,400.</p> <p>The list shows several areas where budgets have been adjusted and income levels addressed. The presented budget will, if all budgeted items are fully spent, result in a deficit of approximately £46,544.</p> <p>In the main the 5 year plan works well. The work scheduled for the current year are complete, mainly via CIL funding and items have been identified for 2025/26 onwards including tree work and to reinstate sections of Little Stoke path.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison believes it's a good budget and should withstand any unforeseeable works required or any potential jobs offloaded by SGC. Staff continue to work hard on budget underspends.</p> <p>Following discussion, Councillor Mike Brown proposed to have a 0% increase and to defer the discussion on budgets until January Full Council 2025, a named vote was agreed, seconded by Councillor Keith Cranney, a vote was taken, 3 for, Councillors Mike Brown, Keith Cranney and Richard Barber, 7 against, Councillors Dave Addison, Sue Bandcroft, Janet Brunwin, Max Gallagher, Tony Hyde, Keiron Marsden and Penny Richardson, proposal not carried.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison then proposed to approve all recommendations set out by the working group, seconded by Councillor Sue Bandcroft, a named vote was carried out, 7 for, Councillors Dave Addison, Sue Bandcroft, Janet Brunwin, Max Gallagher, Tony Hyde, Keiron Marsden and Penny Richardson, 3 against, Councillors Mike Brown, Keith Cranny and Richard Barber, proposal carried.</p>	<p>Clerk/ Finance Officer to send precept to SGC and update budget.</p>

	<p>£225.00 utilities per month £230.00 (£268 for seven days)</p> <p>Recycling bin to be held independently.</p> <p>Trust Grounds</p> <p>£2,400 per annum</p> <p>Park Traders (general)</p> <p>£60.00 per visit.</p> <p>Allotments</p> <p>£1,500 per annum</p> <p>BROOKLANDS</p> <p>Whole Hall</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">One Off</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£26.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regular hrly</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3hr Party Rate</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£70.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>Meeting rm Brooklands</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">One Off hr</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regular hrly</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Daily Rate (8hrs)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£110</td> </tr> </table> <p>Café Rent Per month £550</p> <p>Café - Elec (Pay electric bill as by use)</p> <p>Bin contract to be held independently</p> <p>Following discussion Councillor Dave Addison proposed to proceed with the Working Groups recommendation above, seconded by Councillor Penny Richardson, proposal unanimously carried.</p> <p><i>As Councillor Dave Addison declared an interest in the Trust Ground discussion, he did not vote on the Trust Ground hire.</i></p>	One Off	£26.00	Regular hrly	£18.00	3hr Party Rate	£70.00	One Off hr	£18.00	Regular hrly		Daily Rate (8hrs)	£110	
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<p>9</p>	<p>To note new meeting dates for 2025.</p> <p>The Parish Clerk informed members of the meeting dates for 2025.</p> <p>Councillor Sue Bandcroft would like to see the Public Meeting arranged for Tuesday 6th May and the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 13th May. Previously Council have held both meetings on the same evening and this can feel rushed with a late finish, seconded by Councillor Janet Brunwin, a vote was taken, 9 for, 1 against proposal carried.</p>	<p>Clerk to amend meeting dates and promote on website.</p>												

10	<p>Grant Aid Policy 2025/26.</p> <p>Councillor Keiron Marsden asked the Clerk to add Grant Aid to the Recreation & Leisure agenda to be discussed and any recommendations ratified at the following Full Council meeting.</p>	
11	<p>Update on Brooklands Community Hall</p> <p>A resident has witnessed recently a person waiting for a bus on the estate where three separate buses didn't turn up. The resident feels people living on the estate have been harshly dealt, with a severe lack of services and support from South Glos Council and the Development Company.</p> <p>Brooklands Community Hall – discussion points:</p> <p>Funding agreement – SGC to pay SGPC £60k on or after April 2nd 2025 and arrange for £15k in 2026. £5k in legal fees to be paid from SGC to SGPC on or after 2nd April 2025.</p> <p>Clerk will request for an up to date building specification to understand the building and contents SGC will be handing over to the parish in the summer 2025.</p> <p>Arrange for the funding agreement from CREST and how they will be funding the agreed £10k to SGPC.</p> <p>Council to agree on the approved air sourced heat pump or budget for circa £80k on a ground source heat pump. Councillor Dave Addison proposed to move forward with the scheduled air sourced heat system, seconded by Councillor Penny Richardson, proposal carried.</p> <p>Council to request for SGC to supply batteries alongside the solar panels.</p> <p>The café to have a separate electrical meter board to the community centre.</p> <p>The approval of a Solicitor to oversee the handover of the building, the Heads of Terms and lease agreement. Councillor Dave Addison proposed to proceed with Barcan & Kilby, seconded by Councillor Keith Cranney, a vote was taken, 9 for 1 abstention, proposal carried.</p>	Clerk to approve Solicitor.
12	<p>Little Stoke Community Café & Warm Spaces.</p> <p>The Clerk informed members that the Café have requested to open business on a Monday. They currently run from Tuesday to Sunday. The Clerk has also had a request to run a separate warm space session in the café on a Monday.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson is in favour of offering a warm space in the community hall and asked the Clerk to see if we can accommodate the service in another room in the community centre and possibly for a longer period of time, allowing the Café to open on a Monday in the new year.</p>	

	<p>The Clerk will liaise with office staff and see if both warm spaces and the café can be accommodated.</p>	
13	<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>None.</p> <p>Recreation & Leisure.</p> <p>None.</p>	
14	<p>Any other business relevant to this committee.</p> <p>Virtual community engagement pop up meeting. Councillor Dave Addison highlighted that SGC are running a virtual community engagement pop up meeting and members can attend, along with members of the public. The link to register to attend can be found on the SGC website.</p> <p>Your voice counts in shaping your community. Thursday 12th December @ 12:00 or 18:00. 01454 868113 Communityengagement@southglos.gov.uk</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour. Councillor Max Gallagher has been approached by local residents in Gallivan Close reporting three men in a BMW roaming the street and trying front doors and parked vehicles. Police are aware.</p> <p>Councillor Keiron Marsden has been approached by a resident who regularly uses the Forty Acres field. There is a section of grass between the hedgerow that is getting more footfall due to the works being carried out by Balfour Beatty and is currently full of mud and barely useable. Councillor Sue Bandcroft mentioned the area isn't an official walkway and other routes can be taken.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson and the Clerk have been in touch with Balfour Beatty about the area recently and they aren't able to assist. The Clerk will continue to link with the contractor and see if there's anything to be done in the meantime.</p>	
15	<p>Date of next meeting.</p> <p>Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 19:00</p>	

16	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS. To resolve, by the nature of the sensitivity of items to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies Admissions to Meeting]. None	

Meeting closed 21:25

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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