



STOKE GIFFORD

PARISH COUNCIL

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STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 14th July 2020 at 7pm at
Little Stoke Community Hall, Little Stoke Lane, Little Stoke, BS34 6HR

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 E Brown [Chair], K Cranney, M Brown, D Addison, D Pembury, P Reich, A Shore and Simon Waters.

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

	Welcome and apologies for absence.	ACTION
1	The Clerk, John Rendell welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Brian Allinson, Jenny James, Matt Lavis and David Beesley.	
2	To receive notification of any member's personal or prejudicial interest. Councillor Ernie Brown declared his membership of the South Gloucestershire Council Planning Committee. Councillor Dave Addison declared he was Chair of the Stoke Gifford Trust Committee. Councillor Keith Cranney advised he was a member of the South Gloucestershire	

	Council Regulatory Committee.	
3	<p>APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATIONS BY COUNCILLORS</p> <p>None received.</p>	
4	<p>PUBLIC SESSION [3-5 MINUTES PER PERSON WITH A MAXIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PER SESSION] – 5 residents were in attendance.</p> <p><u>Gipsy Patch Liaison Group</u> – a local resident wanted an update on the meeting held earlier in the week (Microsoft Teams online). Neighbouring properties continue to be concerned by the removal of trees and extensive traffic noise/ pollution. Councillor Ernie Brown raised these concerns on behalf of the residents at the meeting and SGC officers continue to carry out research on all removal of trees and possible re-routing of underground services. The next meeting will be held at the Community Hall on August 24th at 10:00.</p> <p><u>Parkway Railway Bridge</u> – a local resident expressed concern with the length of time the scheme has now been in situ. The original information received was a two-week trial. Councillor Ernie Brown reassured the meeting that District Councillors have been liaising closely with South Glos Council and the scheme seems to be working relatively well with minimal disruption to traffic. SGC plan to continue with the scheme but will continue to review the flow of traffic every two weeks.</p> <p><u>Community Café</u> - a local resident is really pleased to see the Café working so well especially over the past few weeks being open to local residents offering a takeaway service and would like to see the momentum carried forward.</p> <p>The Community Hall should look to increase bookings now the doors are officially open again. Parish Clerk (John Rendell) has been working on advertising and marketing the Community Hall and the service being provided now that all the building work has been completed. Parish Clerk is confident revenue will increase once residents regain confidence in the hiring of Community Buildings for family functions, meetings/ seminars, and sports hire.</p> <p>Highbrook Community Centre – a local resident urged Councillors to ensure they have looked through everything in detail before agreeing to take over the management and operation of Highbrook Community Centre. Councillor Dave Addison explained many meetings have been held with South Glos Council Property Services ensuring the services installed</p>	

	<p>are modern efficient and cost effective. Parish Clerk and Councillor Dave Addison continues to work on a business case that will be presented to South Glos Council. Early signs look like Year 1 will be tight financially allowing for the equipment and start up but we plan to be able to break even from Year 2 onwards once the Community Hall becomes established and local housing development up and running.</p> <p>5-year plan – a local resident enquired about the 5-year plan and how Councillors/ Officers plan to implement the proposed works and fit within budget restraints etc.</p> <p>Councillor Ernie Brown explained that despite the COVID-19 pandemic disaster, the financial situation of Council is strong and due to this we continue to follow the 5-year plan accordingly. Many of the larger projects are being funded by South Glos Council and other items already budgeted for without impacting on the day to day operation of the council. The 5-year plan is forever evolving, and Councillors/ Officers continue to monitor throughout the year.</p> <p>Consultation from South Glos Council to residents – a local resident is concerned that local people being directly affected by local schemes implemented at Unitary Authority level are not being consulted. Councillor Keith Cranney sympathised with the resident and urged all residents to make contact directly with South Glos Council with their concerns.</p>	
5	<p>Presentation by Committee Chairs to review previous year.</p> <p>The Parish Clerk invited all Committee Chairs to present their reports covering the previous year whilst in post. See appendix A.</p>	
6	<p>Chair and Clerk to sign Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20.</p> <p>The Parish Clerk noted the difficulty at the start of the Internal audit which coincided with COVID-19. The Audit was carried out remotely with the SGC auditor working from home and this caused some issues when sending over the required documents. We have now received a clear audit and the Chair, Councillor Ernie Brown and Parish Clerk duly signed off the audit report 2019/20. The Clerk informed members the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return notice was made available for inspection on 22nd June and will be taken down on 31st July 2020.</p>	Clerk/ Chair
7	<p>To review the Parish Council 5-year plan.</p> <p>Councillor Ernie Brown ran through the 5-year plan and explained Councillors and Officers will continue to follow the plan and update accordingly.</p>	

8	To approve Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Control Policy, and Risk Assessments. The Parish Clerk presented the Policies & Procedures to members and asked for input where required. Councillor Dave Addison proposed acceptance across the board, seconded by Councillor Mike Brown, proposal carried.	Clerk to amend review date. July 2020
9	To approve signatories authorised to sign on Council's behalf. The Parish Clerk asked Councillors present to sign the approved signatories form, Councillors Ernie Brown, Mike Brown, Keith Cranney, Andrew Shore duly signed. Councillor Ernie Brown would like to add Councillor Dave Addison as an approved signatory.	Clerk

Meeting closed 20:20.

Signed _____

E Brown (Chair)

On behalf of Stoke Gifford Parish Council

Date _____

Appendix A.

Chairman (Stoke Gifford Parish Councils Report 2019 / 2020

The year saw the start of the CPME Metro Bus Gipsy Patch Railway Bridge widening works and road closure being undertaken by Griffiths Contractors with Network Rail, The project got off to a good start but sadly the works came to a temporary end as the Covid 19 Virus took hold of the country. The stopping of the contract came at a time that the bridge was due to be moved into position.

However now that the country is beginning to ease its forced Covid 19 lockdown the contractor is planning to resume their project and are now hoping to prepare for a possible closure of the rail network and a bridge move in November 2020.

Stoke Gifford Parish Councils New Offices

With the Parish Councils new office and meeting room and Café facilities now completed.

We have welcomed the opening of the Little Stoke Community Café being operated by Hayley Mannion which has proved to be a great success but again owing to the Covid 19 lockdown of food premises it was forced to temporarily close until restrictions were lifted, but is now currently opened and serving the public again.

We saw an incursion again of a traveller gaining access to Meade Park but with the support of Police and other agencies we successfully regained the park with minimum cost to the council or council tax payers.

We again saw another Highly Successful Stoke Gifford Trust Ground Fete in the Village run by the Trust Committee.

Stoke Gifford Parish Council continued to operate up to Covid 19 lockdown its successful Car-Boot Sales.

Graffiti

Graffiti has been an increasing issue of great concern to us as a Parish Council and our residents throughout this area.

In order to tackle the problem, we negotiated a contract with Streetcare to enable us to remove much of the unsightly artwork or (Criminal Damage) from residents property within Stoke Gifford.

Grant Funding

Stoke Gifford Parish Council and its district council members have continued to fund and support our Citizens Advice Centre here in the Parish which has been highly successful in helping our residents and community here throughout Stoke Gifford- Little Stoke – Cheswick – UWE – and Parkway North - Harry Stoke.

We have continued to provide community grant funding to many of our local community groups.

Policing

The Police continue to run Beat Surgeries here in Stoke Gifford Community Centre attended by officers of Stoke Gifford neighbourhood policing team on Wednesday mornings.

We have now seen a change of Police Beat Manager due to promotion we have said farewell to P.C. Julie Rudyard who has been of great support here in Stoke Gifford for several years.

We now say Hello and Welcome to P.C. Elizabeth Ball who as a long standing Police Officer and Beat Manager who previously covered the Winterbourne and Cheswick beat and also supported us here in Stoke Gifford over many years now joins us here as the Beat Manager of Stoke Gifford Beat Team

Elizabeth Ball is supported by her fellow PCSO who I am sure is now well known to most of our local residents PCSO Archie Flook, has provided great support to us all here throughout Stoke Gifford.

Stoke Gifford Parish Appointments

Stoke Gifford Parish Council said farewell to its Clerk – Steve Shields who moved on to pastures new.

We now say Hello to our new Parish Clerk – John Rendall who has joined us with previous experience in his prior role at Bradley Stoke Town Council.

We now say Hello to Rachel Madden who has joined our office admin staff.

Also Hello to Steve Liddiatt who has joined our Grounds staff.

The Parish Council has seen the appointment of a new Parish Councillor – Cllr Andrew Shore.

Parish Council news updates.

The Parish Council has now set up its new website which is now proving to provide more information to all our residents on what is happening here within Stoke Gifford.

The Parish Council now has a new I.T. System and a long awaited I.T. support contract.

The Parish Council has installed new Park Signage across all its park areas.

The Parish Council has improved and fitted a new Kitchen to replace its outdated kitchen within the Parish Councils Main building.

Works are being undertaken to improve the Councils Toilets here in the main building

The Parish Council are actively taking part in discussions with South Gloucestershire Property Services and acquisitions team to enable us to express our interest in taking over the running of a new community facility planned to be built in our parish ward area “ Highbrook Community Hall”

The Parish Council has installed what has proved to extremely popular Gym equipment here in Little Stoke park this project was funded and made possible by Tesco which hopefully now can continue to be used freely by residents again now that Covid Lockdown restrictions are eased.

The Parish Council has continued to install and maintain new noticeboards and bus shelters Dog Bins and Litter Bins and Benches where required here in Stoke Gifford.

We have improved the lighting within the Muga and it will have another further lighting upgrade in the near future.

We have improved the football goal posts.

We have improved our parish meeting room furniture.

Cheswick has seen a new Notice board installed - I would like to express our grateful Thanks to all our local residents and parish councillors who regularly provide help in keeping the Noticeboards up together and clean all your help is invaluable Thank You

Grounds Staff

The Parish Councils grounds staff have continued to provide grounds maintenance of all our parks here throughout Stoke Gifford throughout the Covid 19 Lockdown.

They have kept all our park facilities clean and cleared of litter and have kept all areas well maintained.

I would like to say a Big Thank You in appreciation for all the work they have continued to carry out on behalf of the Parish Council and our residents.

The last 12 months have seen many changes and I would like to express my grateful Thanks to our Clerk - John Rendell and the Admin Team and Parish councils Caretaker / Cleaner for all that they have done to keep the ship afloat here throughout the year and especially through the Covid 19 lockdown. Thank You

Last but not least “Thank You” to all our Parish Councillors and District council members here within Stoke Gifford Parish and especially Thanks again to all our local residents here in the Stoke Gifford Parish for attending the meetings and offering to help and contribute in anyway possible.

Cllr Keith Cranney

Chair- Stoke Gifford Parish Council 2019/20

Planning Report

The change by South Gloucestershire Council to the planning procedure has made it difficult for residents to attend and voice their opinion at Sites visits. Your councillors have been working hard to try and change the procedure as locals know the area and impact on society. As a result, it is understood that the procedure is currently under review and we are hopeful it will be changed to allow residents to have their voice.

As well as the many domestic planning applications, there are two major topics which have occupied the planning committee.

The first of these is the planned development adjacent to Sainsbury's on Fox Den which has the potential to significantly worsen peak time traffic around Brierly Furlong into Stoke Gifford Village.

The second is the ongoing Harry Stoke development. One conclusion after considering the huge amount of documentation associated with Harry Stoke is that reviewing and commenting on such large developments is very difficult with the current planning portal.

There remains several topics which have the potential for major impact on the area over which the Parish Council have very little influence.

The metro bus work on Gipsy Patch Lane and the proposed arena on the old Filton airfield are both examples of developments where we could have hoped for more consideration of input from the Parish

Going forward, I would like to wish Councillor Andrew Shore success as the new chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee.

Councillor Dave Addison

Recreation and Leisure Committee

This has been a very difficult start to the year with Covid-19 taking a stronghold on the country, fortunately for the Parish our finances have been very well managed by our exceptional staff & Councillors.

Parks & Open spaces.

Ground staff have been very busy keeping all of our parks & spaces in excellent condition & due to no football & rugby they have managed to catch up on some much needed maintenance in other

areas, e.g park furnishings, BMX track & the tower in Meade park. We as a council have received many complimentary comments by residents & visitors about how well kept our parks & open spaces are. It has been great to see so many people enjoying these areas since the lock down and I'm sure that all of you are aware of how fortunate we are as a Parish to have such great parks and now having experienced them for the first time they will be used a lot more, unfortunately although the majority of people do clear up their rubbish there are a few that do not & this has meant a lot of additional work for the ground staff, so a big Thankyou to the ground staff.

If you are not aware, we are always looking for volunteers to litter pick in other areas of the parish not covered by our ground staff & litter picking equipment is available from the office.

We have also had new signage put up in all the parks, & new notice boards in some areas.

Football.

We hope will be resuming in September and we look forward to being able to accommodate our local teams again.

Cricket.

Bradley Stoke cricket club have shown an interest in using Little Stoke park for playing matches & the use of our facilities ie. changing rooms, showers & of course tea & sandwiches.

Outside Keep fit exercise equipment.

New exercise equipment has been installed outside the Little Stoke community Hall which now that lockdown has been reduced can be taken full advantage of.

BMX track.

This facility seems to be a lot more popular recently & the Parish will be soon be carrying out a much needed make over & we would like to hear from anyone who would like to start & run a BMX club perhaps for the younger children.

Little Stoke Park Community Hall extension.

The new build has been completed and the new facilities have been up and running for well over 8 months now, the addition of the Cafe has been a great success & with a lot of effort by the owner Hayley & her staff during these last few months the cafe has been operating a take away service which has been a bonus for all the park users during the lock down period.

In addition to the building extension we have also refitted the old kitchen & we are in the process of refurbishing the existing toilet facilities.

Mike Brown

Financial Report

Having been Chair of Council for the last seven years I welcomed this new role as the Chair of Finance. It has been a challenging year but a rewarding one. Stoke Gifford is one of the largest Parish Councils in the country with two railway stations, a university, and many green and open spaces for the public and sporting enthusiasts to use and enjoy.

As a Parish Council we currently hold three finance meetings throughout the year and treat them each with the same authority as Full Council, this saves time and effort as the decision stands without having to be moved to Full Council for approval. Again, we have managed to keep our spend within budget. I have always thought the running of Council should be treated as a business and not a given that we can rely on increasing our precept to offset any financial impact. This is achieved by ensuring our Parish Council finances are properly regulated and stay within our budget targets, and this has been substantiated by clear audits for a number of years.

The Parish Council receive several sources of income from the precept to the hire of our sporting facilities, funding from building developers (S106) and S. Glos community infrastructure levy (CIL). Our Little Stoke new community hall extension, mainly funded from S106 monies has been a concern with the contractor letting us down and given notice, however I am pleased to say it is now fully open and working well. Although the works took far longer than expected this has also been in our favour by allowing council to build up funding without having to use additional sources such as a public works loan and pay interest.

One of the main benefits is the addition of the café bringing more people into the park and using our facilities. It is a pleasure to see and of course the business it brings in is also very welcoming. One of the most important lessons I have learnt in my many years is that you are either 'growing or not growing'. And by not growing you are stagnating (at best) or declining (at worst). Therefore, seven years ago as Chair of Council I introduced a 5 year plan, this is a live working document to be reviewed at each Finance meeting for inputs from both councillors and residents. It allows us to set goals, challenges and plan our financial future to meet our increasing needs.

With the impact of COVID 19, apart from the precept there has been zero revenue coming into council however due to good fiscal control over the past seven years we have managed to overcome the financial loss and still keep the precept for Yr 20/21 to a bare minimum of approx 2% whilst some neighbouring councils have had to increase by 15%. Should we have a second wave of this virus, resulting in nil income from the hire our facilities we will still have sufficient funding in our emergency reserves to be financially sound. Again this is due to good business management by our staff and Parish Councillors.

Financial Status

At end March 2020 the Parish Council had £165,000 in General reserves (minimum mandatory amount being £107,500, 25% of precept), also a further £142,000 in EMR (better known as emergency reserves) plus the Precept of £430,000. Should there be zero revenue this year due to a second wave of the virus and yet still continuing to maintain our facilities we will only use £29,500 of our EMR, still leaving us financially well off and more important not asking residents for any financial support by increasing the precept beyond keeping inline with inflation.

Ernest Brown
Chair of Finance