



# STOKE GIFFORD

PARISH COUNCIL

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## STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 19:00

at Little Stoke Community Hall, Little Stoke Lane, Bristol, 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:

Councillors D Addison, R Barber, S Bandcroft, J Brunwin, M Brown, N DasGupta, M Gallagher, T Hyde, K Marsden, P Richardson, and A Shore.

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

1	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence.</b>  The Chair, Councillor Dave Addison welcomed all present to the meeting.  The Clerk reported that apologies were received from Councillor Keith Cranney.	<b>Actions:</b>
2	<b>To receive notification of any member's personal or prejudicial interest.</b>  None.	
3	<b>Public Session [Maximum of 15 minutes, up to 3 minutes per person]</b> six residents were in attendance.  A resident shared concerns over the increased Parish Council precept, following the December Finance & General Purpose meeting where members agreed to increase the precept to £445,000, an increase to a Band D household of 65p per month (@9.2%) and take to Full Council in January for ratification.  The Chair, Councillor Dave Addison informed the resident that increasing the precept by 9.2% instead of the lower proposal gives the council an extra £15,000 income which covers the proposed extra expenditure on Christmas lights.	

	<p>The Meade Park security barrier has been knocked and needs realigning. A resident mentioned the possibility of local contractors fixing the barrier whilst they conduct works on the highway. The Clerk confirmed the Grounds team have this on the list of jobs and will discuss in more detail in the coming days.</p> <p>Balfour Beatty still need to attend 40 Acres to carry out rectification works to the pathway. The Clerk continues to chase the Supervisor.</p> <p>Large vehicles are being parked at the corner of roads on Kingsway and surrounding areas causing blind spots which is problematic when approaching junctions. The Clerk encouraged the resident to report it on the SGC website, and to send images and report to the Clerk who will follow up.</p>	
4	<p><b>To approve minutes of the last Full Council meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025, and Finance &amp; General Purpose meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025.</b></p> <p>The Full Council minutes dated Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025 was agreed as an accurate record, proposed by Councillor Andrew Shore, seconded by Councillor Keiron Marsden, proposal unanimously carried. (two abstentions due to not being present at the meeting).</p> <p>The Finance &amp; General Purpose minutes dated Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025 was agreed as an accurate record, proposed by Councillor Penny Richardson, seconded by Councillor Sue Bandcroft, proposal unanimously carried. (two abstentions due to not being present at the meeting).</p>	
5	<p><b>To approve the expenditure and general accounts for December 2025.</b></p> <p>The Clerk tabled financial correspondence for December 2025 which included payments totalling £66,572.53 for the Co-operative General account, with a cash book balance of £503,137.05.</p> <p>The Clerk then tabled financial correspondence for December 2025 which included payments totalling £0 for the Brooklands Park Community Hall account, with a cash book balance of £38,014.28.</p> <p>The Clerk then tabled financial correspondence for December 2025 which included payments totalling £8.50 for the Brooklands Park Community Hall account, with a cash book balance of £227,028.05.</p> <p>Council noted the expenditure and bank balance for all three accounts in December 2025, proposed by Councillor Sue Bandcroft, seconded by Councillor Keiron Marsden, proposal unanimously carried.</p> <p>- <b>Confirmation of Precept approved by Finance &amp; General Purpose committee.</b></p> <p>Chair of the Finance &amp; General Purpose committee, Councillor Keiron Marsden explained to members that all councillors were invited to attend a pre meeting in November 2025 to talk through the precept and hire costs, and then formally discussed and approved a motion at the Finance &amp; General Purpose meeting in December, to be ratified at the Full Council meeting in January 2026.</p>	

<p>Decision made in December 2025, to be ratified January 2026.</p> <p><i>Councillor Dave Addison advised members to find a middle ground of the two options set out by the pre-budget working group and proposed a precept demand of £445k at an increase to a Band D household of 65p per month (up by 9.2%), seconded by Councillor Mike Brown, a vote was taken, 7 for, 1 against, 1 abstention, proposal carried.</i></p> <p>Report/ review from Councillor Keiron Mrasden.</p> <p><b>Budget Financial Year 2026-7 Overview</b></p> <p><i>To be read in conjunction with the Draft Budget for FY 2026-7 income and expenditure diagram, and the Draft Budget document to be presented to the December 2025 Finance Meeting comparison with FY 2024-5.</i></p> <p><i>The total budgeted expenditure for next financial year is £26k more than for the current financial year:</i></p> <p><i>Apart from cost of living uplift and addition of a part time waste operative to our staff costs, the largest single increase in expenditure next year is for Christmas lights. We are allowing for slightly increased maintenance costs on our ageing 3G pitches (coming up to replacement in 2 years) together with our grass pitches and both community halls.</i></p> <p><i>We are taking on responsibility for managing the grounds at St Michael's Church graveyard, plus, there are further small increases in hall cleaning costs, vehicle repairs, and insurance.</i></p> <p><i>Total budgeted income for next year is £6k less than this year:</i></p> <p><i>This year's budget included grant income totalling £90k for Brooklands initial fit-out, startup and legal costs, whereas next year we are expecting £20k in Brooklands grant income.</i></p> <p><i>Increases in the projected commercial income from Brooklands (as a result of updated competitive room hire pricing, and having secured agreement with the cafe operator) mean that with the expected grant income, this new community centre should more than cover its operating costs next year (apart from salaries) and be on track to cover all costs as utilisation increases over its first three years.</i></p> <p><i>Our other sources of commercial income - Little Stoke Hall room hire, together with our grass and 3G pitches, and parks income (from traders) - also continue to exceed targets, and their budgeted income is increased again for next year.</i></p> <p><i>The draft income budget for next year includes a £30k increase in council tax precept - however, this will need to be adjusted, for reasons covered later in this document.</i></p> <p><i>The draft budget as it stands shows a £91k deficit, meaning that if all targets are met, the net effect will be to drain our general reserves by just over £91,000.</i></p> <p><i>This is significantly larger than the small deficits predicted by previous years' budgets. So far, we have been able to avoid going into deficit in practice, as a result of over performance of our sources of commercial income - but these will not stretch to covering the whole £91k.</i></p> <p><b>Budget Analysis</b></p> <p><i>The income and expenditure diagram for the draft budget shows that precept income covers our staff and administration costs plus vehicles and the satellite building - and that is it.</i></p>
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<p><i>Community projects are un-funded.</i></p> <p><i>Our grass pitches more than pay for themselves within the parks budget, but the money they make (together with traders and allotments) is dwarfed by the cost of maintaining our parks and green spaces - and this is un-funded.</i></p> <p><i>Our 3G pitches pay for themselves, but need replacing soon, and we are currently putting aside everything they make into Earmarked Reserves to pay for their replacement.</i></p> <p><i>Thankfully, our community centres pay for themselves, with some income left over, and we are getting grants from SGC for Brooklands to help with startup costs while the business grows.</i></p> <p><i>For the last few years, we've been holding precept rises to the level of inflation, and setting budgets with increasing levels of deficit - so far made up by our commercial income - but if we use up general reserves at a significant rate, they won't last long.</i></p> <p><b>Future Shocks</b></p> <p><i>South Gloucestershire Council are telling us that in the Financial Year after next, we will need to pick up the cost of the work they currently do for us via special expenses (green spaces, playgrounds etc).</i></p> <p><i>We also know that, at some point soon in the next few years, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that currently funds our 5 year plan capital programme, will dry up.</i></p> <p><i>The outlook for the medium to long term, is that we will need to significantly increase the precept over the next few years to cover the projected future funding gap.</i></p> <p><i>Ideally, we will be able to make gradual increases and absorb some of the strain using our general reserves, until we are operating at a steady state with a higher level of precept. But - if we have spent all our general reserves then we will not be able to use them as a buffer, and we will be faced with sudden large increases - or drastically cutting services. So, we face a choice.</i></p> <p><i>Should we go with the modest level of precept increase in the draft budget, which raids the general reserves and risks not having sufficient reserves in the future to absorb the shocks?</i></p> <p><i>Or should we raise the precept further now, back to the 2022 level, limiting the deficit to a level we can hopefully cancel out with over-performance of our sources of commercial income?</i></p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Dave Addison mentioned that Staff will continue to closely monitor the budget items, hoping to make savings where possible which will help the overall deficit. This has worked well in recent years where the staff provides an effective financial management practice. Regular and effective budget monitoring provides vital information for decision making, ensuring that spending remains within planned limits and identifying potential variances and risks early.</p> <p>Councillor Sue Bandcroft wished to acknowledge the excellent work that is being produced by the Parish Council staff, (office and operational).</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore shares the view that increasing the precept to the agreed</p>
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	<p>amount may well be a concern to residents, but it is a balancing act with the report provided by Councillor Keiron Marsden, and the minutes captured from the December meeting.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion, Councillor Keiron Marsden proposed to proceed with the decision made at Finance &amp; General Purpose in December 2025, a precept demand of £445k at an increase to a Band D household of 65p per month (up by 9.2%) seconded by Councillor Tony Hyde, a vote was taken, 7 for, 1 against, 3 abstentions, proposal carried.</p>	Clerk to inform SGC.
6	<p><b>Brooklands Park &amp; Highbrook View.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crest Nicholson – Lot 4 sports pitches and pavilion.</li> </ul> <p>The Clerk confirmed Winterbourne Parish Council will not be registering their interest in the management of the site. SGPC have registered our interest in the site (December 2025) and will closely monitor the progress made in the coming weeks. It is noted the large green space, sports pitches and in particular the cricket facility will require specialist maintenance and the current team of three Groundstaff would not be able to manage the area on top of the current workload. Additional machinery would also need to be purchased.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown is pleased to see the sports facility in the plan but is concerned over the size of the green space, amount of sports pitches and the additional cost for extra staff and the machinery required to take over the management.</p> <p>Councillor Keiron Marsden highlighted that SGPC have specialist Groundstaff and the sports facilities currently under our management is a good earner for the council.</p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Dave Addison informed members we are not looking to spend money and time on the site, however SGPC has registered interest to see who else becomes interested and to potentially work collaboratively going forward ensuring there remains a sports facility for the area.</p> <p>See update from Brooklands Park Administrator on the Community Hall.</p> <p><i>We had a very productive week at Brooklands Park last week. John, Craig (the new caretaker), and I completed several training sessions, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mechanical systems training</b> – air source heat pumps, ventilation systems, and hot water insulation (Tuesday)</li> <li>• <b>Mains electrical systems training</b> – including the PV system and EV chargers (Wednesday)</li> <li>• <b>Fire, security, and access systems training</b> – fire alarms, CCTV, and access control (Thursday)</li> <li>• <b>Operational equipment demonstrations</b> – roller shutters, catering equipment, and the coffee machine (Friday)</li> </ul> <p><b>Solicitors</b> - John has received an update from the solicitors regarding the lease agreement and the Heads of Terms. Our solicitor has been in contact with SGC and is currently await-</p>	

	<p><i>ing further information, so things are moving forward with this.</i></p> <p><b>Snagging</b> - Crest have continued working through snagging items last week. SGC/SGPC have also been reporting issues directly to John Perkins.</p> <p><b>Open Day</b> - As you are aware, we plan to hold an official 'open day' once we are fully operational. Hayley and I are now meeting regularly with the Residents Association to plan the event and explore ideas. Assuming we open around 2nd February, we are proposing a date of either <b>7 March</b> or <b>14 March</b> but again this is all dependant on when we get the keys. Dave, do you think Claire H (MP) might be willing to cut the ribbon, or would the Chair of SGC be more appropriate?</p> <p><b>Harry Stoke Land Meeting</b> - John and Andrew are meeting with Crest and the Residents Association at the end of the month regarding plans for the land at Harry Stoke.</p> <p><b>Lot 4 – Sports pitches</b>- John has had confirmation that Winterbourne Parish Council are not able to manage this, so we have registered our interest in the management of the new facility.</p> <p><b>Handover of Brooklands</b> – John Perkins to Crest planned for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026.</p>	
7	<p><b>Planning applications.</b></p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore informed members there are currently three planning applications on the portal to be discussed at the January Planning &amp; Transportation meeting.</p>	
8	<p><b>Update on Trees for Climate project.</b></p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson continues to carry out research spending time on seeing how this project can be rolled out in Stoke Gifford. 40 Acres has been identified as recreational space where the proposed trees could be installed. The Clerk put a map of the site and the proposed tree install on the screen.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson has engaged with SGC Arboriculture Officer Neil Gazzard on the species and positioning of the trees.</p> <p>An Archaeological assessment is required and the general cost for this to take place is in the region of £3,000. Three quotes have been obtained.</p> <p>At a meeting in 2025 members agreed to devise a Public Consultation to gauge public opinion on this project before commencing with the assessment.</p> <p>Members have some reservations on this project.</p> <p>Councillor Keiron Marsden is not in favour of spending the amount of money it would cost on this project. Not convinced the 40 Acres site needs any more trees and would like to see members proceed with a public consultation that was originally approved in 2025. Councillor Marsden does not believe the park needs more trees planted especially in open space 'safe' areas where planting trees would make the area more dense and po-</p>	



	<p>tentially unsafe.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore is not in favour of the of the proposed whips as they are not substantial enough for the site and they look a mess when planted and for many months/years after. Planting trees would make the area more challenging to maintain. Councillor Andrew Shore is not in favour of spending the amount of money quoted and believes no works should commence before the Public Consultation is conducted.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown mentioned that a lot of time and investment is currently under-way in removing Ash Dieback from many trees within the parish and would like to see the effort spent in looking to replace the dead trees rather than adding to areas within 40 Acres where there are many trees already in situ.</p> <p>Residents shared some views on the project, concerned over the cost covering the survey and any further on-costs with planting and after care (watering etc), and would like to see the 40 Acres park remain as an open space, and not make it any harder to manage and maintain.</p> <p>Councillors Sue Bandcroft and Janet Brunwin would like to see the Parish Council protect the green space from climate change by enhancing the natural resilience. Increasing the green cover will improve water management, boost biodiversity, protect and connect habitats.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion, Councillor Dave Addison proposed the Parish Council proceed with the Public Consultation (approved at the recent Finance &amp; General Purpose meeting) to ensure members can gauge public opinion on the project before going any further, seconded by Councillor Nell DasGupta, proposal unanimously carried.</p> <p>Councillors Mike Brown Sue Bandcroft, Penny Richardson, Andrew Shore alongside the Clerk will create a Public Consultation and add to the Parish Council website.</p>	<p>Working group create public consultation and add to the website.</p>
9	<p><b>Any other business.</b></p> <p>2026 Community Fete venue – a site meeting has been arranged for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February to discuss logistics for the fete scheduled to be held at Little Stoke playing fields on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Councillors Andrew Shore Mike Brown and Dave Addison (Parish Council representatives on the Stoke Gifford Trust Committee) will meet with Head Groundsman Martyn Rendell and the Clerk to plan the on-site logistics.</p> <p>Road works on the highway - Councillor Sue Bandcroft would like to see SGC improve communication when organising the various planned work schedule across the parish and keep the residents better informed.</p> <p>Local Police update – Councillor Keiron Marsden has noticed through social media channels residents are adding CCTV or Ring Doorbell recordings of anti-social behaviour theft and vandalism across the parish onto the social media platform, and the images may not be passed through the correct lines to the Police. When the Stoke Gifford Beat Manager was in post a representative was periodically present at meetings to talk through the issues across the parish and give a general update. The Clerk confirmed the post is still vacant and the Police hope to have</p>	<p>The Clerk to contact the Police for an update on Beat Manager.</p>

	someone in post in February. Once in post the Clerk will invite the Beat Manager to Council meetings to give updates.	
10	<b>Date of the next Parish Councillor Surgery.</b>  17 <sup>th</sup> January – Little Stoke Park 10:30-12:30.	
11	<b>Date of next meeting.</b>  10 <sup>th</sup> February 2026.	
12	<b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS.</b> To resolve, by the nature of the sensitivity of items, to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies Admissions to Meeting].  None.	

Meeting closed 20:30

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

D Addison (Chair)  
On behalf of Stoke Gifford Parish Council