



STOKE GIFFORD

PARISH COUNCIL

Community Hall, Little Stoke Lane, Little Stoke, Bristol, BS34 6HR

Tel: 01454 865202

Email: clerk@stokegifford.org.uk

Web: www.stokegifford.org.uk

STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 11th March 2025

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, M Brown, S Bandcroft, J Brunwin, K Cranney, N DasGupta, M Gallagher, A Hyde, K Marsden, P Richardson and A Shore.

In attendance was J Rendell [Parish Clerk] a representative from Heart Heroes and nine members of public.

1	Welcome and apologies for absence. The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies noted from Councillor Richard Barber.	
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] – Nine residents were in attendance. <i>The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden proposed to move item 6 (Grant Aid) to be discussed before item 3 (Public session), seconded by Councillor Sue Bandcroft, proposal carried.</i> <i>Members then discussed agenda item 6.</i>	

	<p>The condition of the road along the Kingsway is poor and in need of attention. Residents of the north ward had hoped this work would have been carried out by SGC as it has been reported to SGC for many months.</p> <p>Councillor Keith Cranney recalled this was raised at the Community Engagement forum in 2024 and the SGC Transportation Officer, Darren Davison was present and agreed to look into it. The Clerk will contact Darren Davison for an update.</p> <p>The heating boiler in Little Stoke Community Centre had packed up and stopped working for a period of two weeks in February. The Clerk confirmed the two printed circuit boards (PCB) in the boiler had blown and have now been replaced. The boiler was installed in 2018 and is a heavy duty industrial boiler unit that is expensive to replace parts. The Clerk informed members that replacing the boiler would be in the region of £11k and will add to the five year plan.</p> <p>The notice board on Ratcliffe Drive is showing signs of wear and tear and the perspex may need replacing. The Caretaker has recently cleared debris from the perspex but it remains scratched and in places difficult to see the documents on show. The Clerk will ask the caretaker to revisit the notice board and advise accordingly.</p> <p>The road network though Little Stoke and surrounding areas are gridlocked at peak times every day following the extensive road works being carried out in Bradley Stoke. The resident enquired whether the SGC operatives had carried out a safety and impact audit prior to agreeing the works. District Councillor, Dave Addison informed the resident the parish have been consulting with SGC, in particular Richard Gillingham regarding a network audit through Little Stoke. Parish councillors are expecting this audit to take place through April or May.</p> <p>A resident was hoping to see the basketball hoops reinstated at the Trust Ground. Councillor Dave Addison confirmed the hoops were removed following various reports of anti-social behaviour, but the committee hope to see the hoops reinstated in the coming weeks.</p>	Clerk to contact DD.
4	<p>To note the minutes of the last Finance & General Purpose Committee approved at the January Full Council 2025 meeting.</p> <p>The Finance & General Purpose minutes dated 9th December 2024 were agreed as an accurate record at the January Full Council meeting.</p> <p>All actions were discussed and have been completed.</p>	
5	<p>To note the expenditure and general accounts for February 2025. To include the Year-end budget and 5 year plan.</p> <p>The Clerk tabled financial correspondence for February 2025 which included payments totalling £34,031.10 for the Co-operative general account, with a cash book balance of £433,883.57.</p> <p>A discussion was held, Council noted the expenditure and bank balance for February 2025. Councillor Dave Addison proposed acceptance, seconded by Councillor Sue Bandcroft, unanimously carried.</p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden presented members with a budget year-to-date</p>	

<p>report as well as the 5 year plan.</p> <p>Introduction This report summarises SGPC revenue and expenditure against budget for the current financial year to date (FY 2024-5). It references figures from the document Annual Budget - By Centre (Actual YTD Month 11) 28-Feb-2025. The FY runs from 1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025.</p> <p>Background The budget for the current financial year FY 2024-5 was approved by Councillors at the December 2023 Finance Meeting. It set a deficit target of £30,131 and precept of £375,000, an increase of £30,000 over the previous year's precept, equating to an increase for council taxpayers of 4.8%, or 31p per month for a band D property. <i>(The budget for the next financial year FY 2025-6 was approved at the December 2024 finance meeting, with a deficit target of £46,544 and precept increased by £25,000 to the new figure of £400,000, equating to a 3.6% increase for council taxpayers, or 25p per month for band D).</i></p> <p>Income and Expenditure Our Parish Council receives income from several sources: <u>Council Tax precept</u>: South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) collects from council tax payers and distributes to Parish Council <u>Income from its assets</u>: Little Stoke Hall and room hire, 3G and grass pitches, park traders, allotments <u>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</u>: a charge levied by SGC on new developments in our Parish. Our Parish Council spends this money on operating and looking after our community buildings, vehicles & equipment, sports facilities, parks & open spaces, and on employee salaries (Parish Councillors are not paid). It also provides funding towards youth provision and supports local organisations through community grants.</p> <p>Reserves The Parish Council holds reserves in its bank accounts to dip into in the event of unforeseen emergencies, to cover things which may need to be fixed or replaced - e.g. buildings, equipment, vehicles, 3G pitches, and unforeseen issues affecting projected income. A "balanced" budget is one in which revenues are equal to expenditure, i.e. no deficit or surplus. A surplus would mean some money gets deposited into reserves, while a deficit means some of the money in reserves gets spent. Councils that "go bust" do so because they use up their reserves - either by spending more than their income, or by encountering circumstances that drastically affect their income.</p> <p>Transparency and Financial Management Our annual independent financial audit awarded us the highest rating, noting that "systems and processes are excellent, providing good assurance." Parish Council finances (apart from individual salaries) are fully transparent: all income and expenditure are itemised in the monthly cashbook report, which is published to councillors (and the general public) for review and scrutiny at each monthly full council or finance meeting, and for councillors to approve. The Parish Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) works with our accounts staff</p>	
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	<p>throughout the year to ensure income and expenditure are on track with regards to the approved budget for the current financial year.</p> <p>Budget income and expenditure to date is reviewed by Councillors regularly through the year, at finance meetings (and some full council meetings) to monitor any areas of overspend and agree any necessary adjustments whenever new requirements arise.</p> <p>Year-To-Date Report</p> <p>This is the final year-to-date report with one month to go.</p> <p>Un-Budgeted CIL Income</p> <p>The current FY budget does not assume any CIL income will be received; Parish Council only finds out what (if any) CIL will be received from SGC just before the start of each new financial year.</p> <p>Any CIL which is received is considered a bonus and is normally used to fund capital projects from the 5 year plan, which is used to give visibility of upcoming projects. This FY we received £71,502 in CIL, of which £51,918 has so far been spent on projects from the 5 year plan including solar panels. The remaining £19,584 is currently held in reserves to fund the agreed Meade Park play equipment once it has been installed, early in the next FY.</p> <p><u>Over-Budget Income</u></p> <p>So far this FY we have received over-budget income from Little Stoke Hall room hire, 3G and grass pitches, parks, and reclaimed VAT, totalling £29,718 to date.</p> <p><u>Unspent</u></p> <p>So far, we have not spent the budgeted funds put aside for elections, training, and parks capital projects, totalling £30,500.</p> <p><u>Slight Overspend</u></p> <p>So far, we have slightly overspent on IT office equipment (councillors approved a refresh), publications, satellite building maintenance, LS Hall building maintenance (replacement boiler) and vehicle repairs, a total overspend of £7,386 to date.</p> <p><u>Outcome</u></p> <p>Obviously, there will be further expenditure during March, so these are not the final year-end figures.</p> <p>Approved budget target: £30,131 deficit</p> <p>Actual year-to-date as of 28 Feb: £70,441 surplus</p> <p>Even with projected expenditure for March, we should still be able to achieve a budget surplus at end-of-year.</p> <p>Council reserves have already increased by £19,584 (remaining CIL for Meade Park play equipment to be installed during April) plus £8,500 (carrying forward funds put aside to cover a possible election) totalling £28,084 extra in reserves so far.</p> <p>Also, councillors approved a proposal to invest a total of £160,000 of existing reserves in two interest earning one-year fixed-term accounts. The first £80,000 one year fixed term account has raised £2,903 in interest.</p> <p>If the second one year fixed term account pays similar interest (due next month) then that should amount to £5,800 of extra un-budgeted income, equivalent to a saving of 1.5% from the council tax precept.</p> <p>- Bad debt</p> <p>The Clerk informed members as we approach the financial year-end it is likely we will have several sports invoices as 'bad debtors.' This is due to the fact the sports season overlaps and it is hoped all invoices will be paid in full by week two in April.</p> <p>Officers have contacted the Aretians Rugby Club to chase outstanding invoices from</p>	
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	<p>January 2025 and the Clerk will continue to do so in the hope all invoices will be paid this current financial year. Officers will discuss any potential financial assistance the Parish Council can offer should it be required.</p>	
6	<p>Grant Aid request 2024/25 allocation. Heart Heroes (Bristol Hub).</p> <p>A representative from Heart Heroes was present to talk through the grant application. The amount requested is £960.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed there is £2,332 left remaining in the 2024/25 Grant Aid budget.</p> <p>The purpose of the grant application.</p> <p>The grant would be to cover the cost of hall hire for 12 months from 1st April 2025 for our 'I Can' inclusive club for children between the ages of 4-11 that are living with heart conditions. This club started in April 2022 and sees 20-25 children attend each month to participate in a range of activities, from cooking, drumming, exercising, acting, dancing, gardening, magic etc. Each month we do a different activity and the idea of the club is to focus on what the children can do, not what they can't do. Unfortunately, children with heart conditions often struggle to keep up with their healthy peers so find it hard to participate in some clubs such as football and dancing. 'I Can' allows them to feel part of a fun group that accepts every ability, allowing them to have some independence from their family while having lots of fun and making friends. 'I Can' Bristol has been running at Little Stoke Community Centre since April 2022 and the hall and wider facilities are perfect. We are very keen to continue using the hall so are looking for funding for the room hire for the coming year. The group supports a number of local families (Little Stoke, Stoke Gifford and Bradley Stoke) as well as some families from a little further afield. It is great to see the support and friendship these children have built up from these monthly sessions</p> <p>The benefit of the organisation to residents in Stoke Gifford.</p> <p>There are a number of families from Stoke Gifford, Little Stoke and Bradley Stoke that have children with heart conditions that attend the 'I Can' project. This has enabled the children to become part of an inclusive group where they benefit from being with others that understand what it is like living with a heart condition. The friendships that have developed are very special too. In addition, parents have connected with other local families that understand the difficult journey their children are on. This is hugely beneficial for everyone providing support and friendship to families that are dealing with a very challenging situation.</p> <p>Following discussion, Councillor Keith Cranney proposed to offer the full amount requested (£960) to such a worthy cause, seconded by Councillor Dave Addison, proposal carried.</p>	<p>Clerk to contact Heart Heroes and arrange payment.</p>

7	<p>Councillor surgery venues and budget allocation for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden informed members the parish council will be funding all surgeries going forward including refreshments where necessary, using the miscellaneous budget.</p> <p>It is hoped that members will hold the surgeries in all wards within the parish. Venues to include Little Stoke Community Centre, Trust Grounds and Brooklands Park Community Centre.</p>	
8	<p>Pathway improvements on little Stoke Park.</p> <p>The Clerk informed members the original pathway around Little Stoke Park (Clay Lane to Little Stoke Lane side) needs improvements. The work has been on the 5 year plan for several years however other works have taken priority. The Clerk urged members to look into this work even if in two or three separate stages.</p> <p>The office staff often receive comments/ feedback about the condition of the pathway and the fact it is not wide enough to accommodate the many users.</p> <p>Hundreds of park users continue to use the park each day.</p> <p>The Clerk has met with a grounds contractor to look at the works required and presented the required works.</p> <p>Work Description: 400m of Footpath Replacement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply and erect Heras Fencing/Chapter 8 barriers to secure working areas for duration of works including any necessary road/footpath signs. • Excavate oversite approximately 640m² to depth of 200mm to remove defective footpath surface, edgings and sub-base and cart excavated materials to tip. • Lay RootGuard membrane over troublesome roots if required to help reduce effects of tree roots lifting tarmac path. • Supply, place and compact 100mm of Type 1 aggregate to form new footpath sub-base ready for new tarmac surface. • Install 480No PC Concrete flat top edgings on concrete bed and haunch to form suitable retaining edge for new footpath surface to eliminate risk of subsidence and ingress of soils and vegetation. • Supply, place and compact 70mm of 20mm dense binder course tarmac and 30mm of 6mm dense surface course tarmac to form new footpath. <p>The Clerk highlighted the need to widen the path and the above works would include the wider path to allow users to remain on the path when passing other users.</p> <p>Councillor Max Gallagher reaffirmed the popularity of the path and uses it daily highlighting the poor surface and lack of width to accommodate the users.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown believes that as the pathway runs alongside a hedgerow with</p>	

	<p>trees, we need to be mindful of the roots.</p> <p>Councillor Sue Bandcroft agrees this work needs to be looked into and suggested we add to the up and coming Annual Parish Council meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed for the Clerk to add an agenda item to the 2025 annual meeting agenda.</p>	<p>Clerk to add to Annual meeting agenda.</p>
9	<p>Update on Brooklands Community Hall</p> <p>Brooklands Community Hall – discussion points:</p> <p>The Clerk informed members the public art consultation day held at the Crest offices went well. The artist and project manager for the artwork were present along with representatives from Sovereign and South Glos Council to hear the views of residents. Plans were presented by the artist on artwork through the new community centre and on the café tabletops.</p> <p>There will be another community day planned for April and once a date is confirmed the Clerk will present on the council notice boards and parish website.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Addison informed members the S106 money provisionally set aside for a temporary facility continues to be discussed at SGC level. District Councillors and the Clerk are in contact with SGC officers to see if any further funding can be sought towards the fitout costs.</p> <p>The Brooklands sub-committee plan to meet with SGC and contractors again in April.</p>	
10	<p>To receive recommendations from Parish Council Committees relating to expenditure across the Parish of Stoke Gifford.</p> <p>Planning & Transportation.</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Shore continues to link with SGC on the installation of additional welcome to Stoke Gifford signage across the parish. Locations have been identified and agreed by SGC and utility checks have been successfully carried out.</p> <p>We are awaiting final costs from SGC.</p> <p>Recreation & Leisure.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson informed members contractors will be relaying the pathway to the BMX facility soon. The pathway made of stone is difficult to navigate and the grounds team struggle with the stones being mislaid across the grass when cutting. The pathway will be a more stable stone to dust surface.</p> <p>The parish council are looking into recycling and how we can be a little more efficient across the parish. We continue to look into recycling and being greener with the waste at Little Stoke Community Centre.</p>	
11	<p>Any other business relevant to this committee.</p> <p>Councillor Penny Richardson asked the Clerk to remove information on MAF funding currently on the Parish Council website.</p>	<p>Clerk to remove MAF on website.</p>

	<p>LI25/1775/STS Street Trading application: Councillor Dave Addison informed members SGC had recently received a Street Trading application from Baked and Bearded to trade on North Road. A link to the application to make comment can be found on the SGC website.</p> <p>Councillor Max Gallagher was pleased the Parish Council had purchased the Ukraine flag, a Pride flag and Armed forces flag to fly on the flagpole at Little Stoke Park at various times of the year for the Parish Council to show respects. These will add to the flags already in store to represent Remembrance Day and St George's day.</p> <p>The Chair, Councillor Keiron Marsden asked the Clerk if it is possible for parish councillors to have an allocated door access fob to the community centre. This would help when collecting the surgery banner, and access to the building for meetings. The Clerk will arrange for all members to have a door access fob.</p> <p>Councillor Keith Cranney informed members that previous employee and local resident Ken Davey had recently passed away. The office has sent a condolences card to the family home from all at the parish council. Ken's wife Ira who has cleaned Little Stoke Community Centre for the past eight years has retired following Ken's passing. The funeral is due to be held at Westerleigh Crematorium on Friday 14th February 15:30.</p>	Clerk to arrange fobs.
12	<p>Date of next meeting.</p> <p>Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 19:00</p>	
13	<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 21:10

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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