

Town & Parish Councils Forum (T&PCF)
Tuesday 14 July 2015
10.00 am at Baileys Court Activity Centre, Bradley Stoke

Present:	Malcolm Watson (Chair)	Pucklechurch Parish Council
	G Riley	Downend & Bromley Heath
	H D Jones	Hawkesbury Parish Council - Clerk
	John Hughes	Olveston PC
	Steve Shield	Stoke Gifford PC
	Beverley Ewens	Emersons Green Town Council
	Hannah Saunders	Cromhall, Charfield & Rockhampton PC
	Lin McManus	Marshfield PC
	Nick Sweet	Marshfield PC
	Illegible signature	Marshfield PC
	Peter Tyzack	Pilning & Severn Beach PC
	Graham Smith	Alveston PC
	John Hunt	Siston PC
	Sharon Robbins	Bitton PC - Clerk
	Gail Whitehead	Thornbury Town Council
	Roger Avenin	Bradley Stoke Town Council
	Bob Symons	Pucklechurch
	Elaine Weightman	Doynton PC
	Rich Nichols	Emersons Green
	Sharon Petela	Bradley Stoke Town Council
	Jane Hathway	Falfield PC
	Lesley Reuben	Filton Town Council
	Deborah White	ALCA
	Matt Lloyd	BT - Broadband
	Rhianon Wakely	SGC – Project Officer Broadband
	Cllr Ian Boulton	SGC
	Amanda Deeks	SGC – Chief Executive
	Mark Pullin	SGC – Safer & Stronger Communities Manager
	Stephanie Kruse	SGC – Strategic Partnership Officer
	Greg Evans	SGC – Section 106 & CIL Officer
	Mark King	SGC – Head of Street Care & Transport
	Marilyn Curnock	SGC – Note taker
	Cllr Claire Young	SGC
	Dawn Bramley	Falfield & Oldbury PC
	Christine Howard	Dyrham & Hinton
	Krystyne Hutchinson	Dodington PC
	Pat Trull	Wickwar PC
	A Carrall	Wickwar PC

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
1.	SGC = South Gloucestershire Council; SG = South Gloucestershire; T&PCs = Town & Parish Councils; ALCA = Avon Local Councils Association; SG ALCA = South Gloucestershire area ALCA group; SSCG = Safer & Stronger Community Group; CLP = Community Led Plan WERN = West of England Rural Network Welcome from Malcolm Watson – Chair	

2.	<p>Apologies were received from: Jodie Bailey, Angela Hocking, Cllr John Goddard, Cheryl Kirby, Victoria Hicks, Wendy Mayo, Victoria Bywater, Michelle Sparano Cllr G Gupta BSTC, Cllr E Hardwick BSTC</p>	
3.	<p>Amanda Deeks – SGC Chief Executive, had been invited to attend by the TPC. She thanked them all for their valuable contribution and help. She spoke of growth and economy and a positive future.</p> <p>Some points of her presentation were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing growth and consultation later in the year, possibly. • South Gloucestershire Council had a Net budget 184 million, 43 million has already been saved. A further 40million is likely to be taken out. 100 million of the total is social care. 50 Million community and planning services of which 20million is waste collection. Further 20million spent on support systems. 10 million on capital and technical financing. • Only 1500 on job seekers allowance out of 271,000 population. This is a very low number. • Graham Smith (Alveston) – travellers issues over the last few months. Also raised by a number of people. Amanda advised a basic guide for parish and town councils in dealing with travellers would be provided – a frequently asked questions issue. • 28,500 houses need to be built and a question was asked if this number can be negotiated downwards? Amanda explained the national framework, the core strategy and the need for houses. • Peter Tyzak – Lots of empty homes in South Gloucestershire that need to be brought back in to use. . • Deborah White asked about the costs of Parished / Unparished areas and also the potential expansion of Bristol boundaries. • Local Council Tax support – Mark to speak to Chris Manvell • Planning and the number of car parking spaces. Is there a rural / urban divide. • Malcolm, what might be devolved for 16/17 to give them time to plan for precepts. Mark King – now looking at playing fields and a consultation starting later this year. Malcolm would like the TP Councils to be involved in a different way in the consultations than the formal one. Can it be clear that organisations can respond and can they all come out with an Executive summary. • Malcolm also wanted to raise the reduction of funding to the TPC forum. <p>Amanda invited question and answers.</p> <p>Q. Travellers arriving on open green space what is best way to remove them?</p> <p>A. Negotiated route is best, with travellers unit, police to attend.</p> <p>Q. Houses where they will go.</p> <p>A. Most areas identified now i.e. Harry Stoke, Emersons Green, Yate, Thornbury.</p> <p>Q. Neighbourhood planning and void properties.</p>	

	<p>Q. Housing – Clerk of Charfield rate of growth.</p> <p>Q. Rural parishes, parish and unparished areas. Worry about grass cutting in unparished areas.</p> <p>Q. Greater Bristol</p> <p>A. Secretary of State advising authorities to work together which makes sense, particularly on issues such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport and skills combined with all unitary authorities. • Government grants - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work together if money is given. 2. Plan transport together etc. <p>Authorities will still retain their individual identities.</p> <p>Q. Devolving down further.</p> <p>A. Need to see how this works at district level first.</p> <p>Q. Planning new houses – causing parking issues as less parking space but more cars per household.</p> <p>Q. Skills – construction work affected by shortage of construction workers. Apprenticeship budget (control). Construction colleges.</p> <p>Q. Problems on this year’s election day.</p>	
4.	<p>Notes of the 14 April 2015 meeting. Agreed as accurate, except for:</p> <p>Page 1 Item 3 link to be sent out.</p> <p>Page 2 Item 5 – reword sentence.</p> <p>Page 3 Item 7 – SGC website issues/concerns - Mark Pullin responded.</p>	
5.	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy – Greg Evans, SGC gave slide show presentation which is on public website, to explain what is CIL and how it works. Presentation to be sent out with minutes.</p>	
6.	<p>Issues raised by parishes: <i>Deferred to next meeting due to lack of time.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning liaison – ideas for best practice for parishes/councillors without computer. • Elections – concerns raised regarding the recent election service provided by SGC. <p>Response received from Natalie Carr - Democratic Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first pack of nomination papers received was for the district elections and not the parish elections – this was an error on the part of the person making up the information pack. The majority of nomination paper requests were dealt with by experienced members of the election team who knew to check which set of papers a person was requesting. It appears that your request was dealt with by a member of the temporary office who did not provide the parish ward you were standing in on the request for nomination papers form. This led to district nomination papers being issued (as Pilning and Severn Beach is the name of a district ward) and not parish papers for the parish election. 	

At future large scale elections we will be ensuring that only experienced staff deal with requests for nomination papers and will be making changes to our information request pro-forma so that we have telephone or email contact details for any candidates and can double check their requirements if there is any doubt over which information is required before we send this in the post.

2. The bundle did not include expenses forms – nomination paper packs issued at elections do not include expenses forms. Our experience has shown that a large percentage of those who request nomination packs do not end up standing for office. Also as expenses forms are only necessary once someone stands validly nominated it is felt too early to issue the forms with the other information we send out. Electronic versions of the expenses forms were available on the South Gloucestershire website and also directly from the Electoral Commission website.

At future elections we will be amending our information pack to make clear that paper expenses forms will not automatically be issued and also will provide the web links to them in this information and will also display the links to the forms more prominently on the elections pages of the Council website. We also send several information emails to Parish Clerks throughout the election period and perhaps it would be helpful to include a link to the election expenses forms and/or a pdf copy of the forms in an email to parish clerks. We would be interested to receive any thoughts you have on whether this would be helpful to candidates.

3. None of the letters said where to return expenses forms – your point is noted. We will display prominently on the South Gloucestershire website where returns are to be made for future elections and if in future we use a temporary office we will include within the candidates information pack the dates we will be using the office and an alternative address when that office has closed.
4. In relation to the suggestion to email councillors with a reminder that expenses forms are due. Given the large number of parish councillors elected across South Gloucestershire and the fact that we cannot require candidates to provide email addresses to us, this is not a feasible option at the moment. It may be more of an option by the next set of elections in 2019 when we expect to be undertaking far more processes electronically. Perhaps what we would be able to do is to issue a reminder to parish councillors via The Parish Clerks as we keep our parish clerk details up to date and I would have thought that most parish clerks will have an email distribution list set up for their councillors and could circulate the link. Again I would be interested to hear the thoughts of forum members on this.

	<p>Following each election we undertake a large exercise to determine areas of improvement in future years. If there are any areas that parish councillors/parish clerks would like to provide feedback on it would be greatly appreciated and would feed into this review process.</p>	
	<p>Matthew Lloyd from BT gave information and talk regarding Broadband with Rhianon Wakeley from SGC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems in Bradley Stoke, Aust, Hinton & Dyrham, Cromhall, Charfield middle of village not getting broadband. • Option for community funded projects. • Phase 2 in progress. 	
7.	<p>Future arrangements for the Town & Parish Councils Forum (T&PCF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three candidates for the job. • To look at selection process i.e. clerk of any parish council or appropriate person. 	
8.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the Clerks present suggested that the time given to AD had been excessive. This view was not supported by others present. • MW (Chair) stated that as he was neither a Chairman nor a Clerk it was unconstitutional for him to retain the position of Chair of the Forum. He suggested that the post should, as it always had been prior to his appointment, a post that should be filled by a Clerk. For that reason an important agenda item for the next meeting will be to appoint a new Chair. Clerks (or Chairmen) who would wish to be nominated are asked to contact MW or Michelle Sparano. <p>Michelle Sparano is leaving and we wish her all the best and thank you for your contribution and help.</p>	
9.	<p>Date of next meeting Thursday 8th October at 10.00am Venue: tbc</p>	