



CROMHALL PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2021-2023

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What is Cromhall Parish Council?

Cromhall parish council is a legally incorporated body and is the first tier of local government closest to the community. The council has seven councillors who represents the views of its community and as a small parish council receives funding from higher tiers of Local Government via the precept. Within its limited remit, it has discretionary powers to provide and monitor efficient services and amenities to meet local need; influences other decisions makers and strives to improve the quality of parish life. or provide cost effective local services and amenities. These range from arranging grass cutting, providing litter and dog bins, maintaining bus shelters and providing a play area to having the right to be notified of, and comment upon, planning applications.

Councillors are holders of set-term public office, normally four years, responsible to and acting as advocates of their electorate. They raise issues and contribute to council decision making for the whole parish. With no authority to make individual decisions, councillors provide community leadership through collective decision making. At meetings, they must act with integrity, respect and accountability and can influence and contribute to formal council decisions or resolutions. Councillors are unpaid and receive no allowance for their duties other than travel costs for duties beyond the parish.

How the parish council operates:

The Parish Council will carry out its statutory duties as required by:

- Aiming to meet on a minimum of 10 occasions per annum to deal with the business of the Council, running these meetings within the Standing Orders of the Council. All meetings are open to the public with a period set aside for members of the public to address Council.
- The Council elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairman annually.
- The Council works to its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which lay down the rules by which we operate and conduct our business. Our Standing Orders are based on a model prepared by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
- All Parish Councillors are expected to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct also adopted from NALC.

As part of the statutory planning process, South Gloucestershire Council



has to consult the Parish Council on planning applications.

Whilst Highways and transport issues are not part of the parish council's area of responsibility, we know they can be extremely important to residents. As a council, we spend a lot of time working on your behalf to inform and influence the appropriate authorities to find solutions.

Parish Council staff

The Parish Council employs one part-time Clerk to the Council or "Proper Officer" for 10 hours per week. The clerk supports the Council and carries out all the functions required by law and is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Main areas of responsibility

Cromhall Parish Council wishes to give parish residents a better understanding of what the Parish Council can do and what it is trying to achieve, either alone or by working with partners such as South Gloucestershire Council. This document aims to outline our plans although there may be occasions when Council has to make decisions contrary to our stated commitments if budget constraints, new legislation or changes in our policies make that necessary. Any changes will, however, be reflected in an updated Plan.

The Parish Council contributes to improving the quality of life for the residents of Cromhall in a number of ways:

- providing a democratic and representative voice for the community and promoting its views.
- Providing amenities and services that benefit the community.
- Working in partnership, contribute to improved services to meet the needs of Cromhall's residents.
- Striving to ensure there is a fair share of investment in the parish by regional authorities.

The Parish Council has the following responsibilities:

- Management and maintenance of the Townwell children's play area.
- Management of grass cutting of identified verges and village greens.



- Management of three village greens and Hawkers Knapp.
- Maintenance of bus shelters and notice boards in the parish.
- Contributes to the cost of grass cutting at the school playing field.
- The provision of small community grants.
- Submitting comments on all planning applications and change of use applications in the parish as a statutory consultee of the local planning authority.
- Provision of litter and dog fouling bins and their emptying.

Good Governance

Cromhall Parish Council aims to be a competent parish council, which is open and accountable and ensures sound financial management of Parish Council resources.

The Parish Council aims to:

- Be well-informed about the needs and opinions of the parish's residents by consulting them on major issues.
- Encourage Councillors keep abreast of new opportunities and policy. [1]
[SEP]
- Promote public participation in all Parish Council meetings and initiatives.
- Deal with enquiries from members of the public in a professional and efficient manner.
- Be an effective custodian of the Council's property and documents

The Parish Council recognises the role of good communication in building positive relationships with the public and with organisations that provide services in the parish. We will continue to seek to improve established channels of communication and find new ones.

The Council will:

- Use the Parish Council website to:



- provide clear information about the Council and its activities including agendas and minutes.
 - Provide regular news of Council initiatives.
 - ensure up to date Financial information is available.
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- Provide an opportunity at Parish Council meeting for public participation.
 - Invite representatives of outside agencies to address the Council on key matters of interest.
 - Undertake Governance reviews and implement any approved recommendations.
 - Review training needs of both Councillors and staff on an annual basis.
 - Attend relevant conferences and meetings.

Community facilities

Play and recreational areas

Although the Parish Council has no specific responsibility for health and wellbeing, our recreational facility helps support activities that promote health and wellbeing of our residents.

- The Parish Council will maintain and provide the Townwell play area for children of all ages keeping it well maintained and safe. It will maintain the present facilities to current standards with weekly inspections and the play area will receive an annual external inspection from appropriately qualified play inspectors. [SEP]
- The council will continually monitor and develop a planned programme of repairs and replacement to meet community needs.

Protecting Open Space

- The Parish Council will maintain a watching brief on all open spaces in the parish and seek to protect it from inappropriate development.

Road Safety

- The Parish Council will work with Highways, South Gloucestershire Council and other agencies to find ways to reduce speeding across the parish to make the parish a safer place for all residents.

**Bus shelters**

- The Parish Council will maintain bus shelters at current standards.

Notice boards

- The Parish Council will maintain the parish notice boards around the parish at current standards.

Grass cutting of verges

- The Parish Council will maintain its agreed grass cutting schedule for various named verges in the parish and will review this every three-years.

Purchasing policy

- The Parish Council will look at the cost effectiveness and environmental sustainability of all major procurement.

The Parish Council will continue to send representatives to meetings that have a direct bearing on the work of the council and the parish areas.

Financial information**Income**

The residents of Cromhall fund the Parish Council through the 'precept'. The precept is the local tax levied by the Parish Council that South Gloucestershire Council collects on our behalf as part of the Council Tax bill.

Each year the council carefully considers the needs of the community for the following year and decides what improvements it can provide to the community. It reviews the income it can generate and expenditure and this informs the level of precept required. For 2021/22 and again in 2022/23, the precept will be £22,330.00.

Expenditure

The budgeted expenditure for the Council in 2021/22 is £22,460.00 and 2022/23 £25,760.00.

The main items of expenditure are:

Office administration, salaries, contractors and on-going expenditure.

General maintenance including play areas and grass cutting.

Grants to local groups.

Projects (next page)

Reserves

Currently the Council holds unallocated reserves around £1,460.00.



The Council has allocated reserves called earmarked reserves; money is set aside for various functions. This includes holding up to 12 months of the precept to protect against major problems requiring emergency funding that could affect the Council's business, building reserves for future replacements at the play area and funds for election and legal costs. These reserves are carefully reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain appropriate.

Table 1 Table of earmarked reserves

Earmarked reserves		
ELECTION ACCRUAL		£2,000.00
LEGAL SERVICE		£1,000.00
PLAYGROUND		£17,500.00
WALL REPAIRS/VILLAGE GREEN		£4,500.00
HAWKERS KNAPP		£1,000.00
VILLAGE GATES		£1,000.00
PARISH COUNCIL CONTINGENCY		£10,000.00
CIL		£1,200.00
TOTAL EARMARKED FUNDS		£38,200.00
NON EARMARKED RESERVES		
General		£1,460.00
TOTAL NON EARMARKED		£1,460.00
TOTAL RESERVES		£39,660.00

Key projects

Recent achievements:

- Restored the edging and resurfaced the driveway across Bibstone Green.
- Remedial work to address health and safety concerns over the wall at Bibstone Green.
- Installed new swings at the play area.
- Commissioned project with South Gloucestershire Council to install three sets of village gates.
- Project to instal a defibrillator.
- Programme to review assets throughout the parish including ongoing work at Bibstone village green, fencing at playing fields and the replacement of play equipment which is uneconomic to repair.



Table 2 Action plan

CROMHALL PARISH COUNCIL ACTION PLAN						
Priorities and Objectives:	Activities:	Timeframe:	Resources:	Power:	Notes	Objective Achieved:
Bibstone Village Green roadway improvements	To protect edges from further erosion caused by parking	Ongoing for 2022/23	Earmarked reserves £5000	Enclosures Act 1845 LGA 1894 s8	Awaiting approval of quotes	2022/23
Defibrillator	Install equipment at De Smit building and register with ambulance service	2022	£2500	Public Health Act 1936 s234	Awaiting final installation	2022
Play area	Review, repair and replace equipment which is uneconomic to repair	2022	£5000	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19	Project required	2022/23
Options for improving bio-diversity within the parish						
Hawkers Knapp	General improvements	ongoing	Earmarked reserved £1100	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 s40		Jubilee Oak tree to be planted



Bulb planting	Increase areas of planting	late Autumn	From general funds £200	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 s40		2022
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