### BRADLEY STOKE TOWN COUNCIL

**Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee of Bradley Stoke Town Council held at The Jubilee Centre, Savages Wood Road, Bradley Stoke on Monday 19th February 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: Natalie Field (Chair)

Jenny James

James Nelson

Ben Randles

Jon Williams

Officers: Sharon Petela (Town Clerk)

Phil Francis (Deputy Town Clerk/Activity Centres Manager)

Graham Baker (Youth Development & Participation Worker)

Representative from: Bradley Stoke Community Singers

Bradley Stoke in Bloom

Bradley Stoke Radio

Christ the King Youth Group

Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group

**1 Submissions from the Public**

None

**2 Apologies**

Apologies received from Councillor Aleena Aditya

**3 Declarations by Members**

None

**4 Announcements by the Chair**

None

**5 To confirm Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 18th December 2023**

Acceptance of the Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee held on 18th December 2023 were proposed by Councillor Jon Williams, seconded by Councillor James Nelson and carried unanimously. Minutes were then signed as a correct record.

**6 Service Level Agreements, Community Development, Grant Aid and Youth Grant Aid Applications**

**6.1 Service Level Agreements (SLA)**

**6.1.1 Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group**

The Chair of Committee invited the representative from the group to address the meeting.

Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group last reported to the Council in October 2021. This report covers two years to 31 December 2023. The last two years have been much better than the previous. Activities have returned to normal, with monthly Saturday workdays and weekly Green Gyms continuing and public walks and talks returning to usual levels.

# **Workdays**

The Conservation Group normally runs monthly workdays on the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 to 16:00, with Green Gym weekly on Thursdays from 10:00 to 13:00. Most of our volunteers attend a whole workday whilst others attend for as much as they can. Tasks are coordinated between both groups and flow from the site management plan.

We have a strong core membership of local Bradley Stoke residents and in 2022-23 have had an average attendance of 9 people at our monthly workdays and 14 at Green Gym. We have 47 members in the Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group, around 12 of these are regular attendees on Saturdays and others are occasional participants. 19 of our members attend the Green Gym.

Our workday tasks include amongst other things; laying hedges, stream clearing (removing litter and trolleys and pruning vegetation to allow more light to reach the brooks), pond maintenance, hay cutting, coppicing, orchard maintenance, clearing bramble, removing ivy from trees where appropriate, clearing Himalayan Balsam and litter picking including taking part in the Big Spring Clean. Sometimes we have to change the focus of our workday due to weather, for instance we avoid the woods in high winds. These tasks are picked up at a future workday.

# **Community events**

We arrange many events each year which are free and open to all. The SLA fund is used to compensate event leaders. Although there is no charge to join in, we ask people to book in advance and limit the number of places for safety reasons. We use Eventbrite for people to book places at our community events.

Since our last report, we have held public events covering a variety of wildlife subjects. These normally start each year with our Dawn Chorus walks and then follow the flow of ‘most optimum time’ for the subject. Spring and summer for butterflies and moths, autumn for bats and owls. General walks can take place at any time of year but the weather is often a guiding factor. We also partner with other local groups who hold events on the reserve to provide advice and help for their event. E.g. Earth Hour.

We are happy to chat to members of the public whilst carrying out survey work on the reserve. This work is often not advertised in advance due to the time of day or need to follow specific procedures, or the availability of qualified surveyors. Moths and bird ringing are particularly attractive to passers-by as the wildlife is so close. The same goes for our reptile survey mats and pond surveying. We also highlight online events by email or on our Facebook page. These have been on a range of subjects, some of which we would not ordinarily consider for ‘live’ walks.

# **Volunteers’ hours**

During the years January 2022 to December 2023 approximately 5,500 hours were given by volunteers. Hours are valued at £13.90, making a total value to the community of over £76,450. This is the direct labour cost only and to do the same work with council employees or contractors would cost significantly more. Many hours are also given for group administration, planning activities, escorting walks and attending training courses. Committee meetings have moved to monthly online meetings, with roughly quarterly face to face meetings.

During the last two years, members of the group attended training courses on a range of wildlife management subjects, from pond management and water monitoring to grassland and hedgerow management, fruit pruning, invasive weeds, small tools training and working in water training. Several members have also attended first aid training.

Our committee members attend ad-hoc meetings with South Gloucestershire Council officers, members of the public and other organisations to discuss activities or works on the reserve. For example, last year there were meetings regarding the proposed Parkrun and reserve management.

# **Survey Work**

The group continues to run, or support, wildlife surveying in many areas. This often involves our own volunteers but also supports outside groups that survey on the reserve.

**Birds -** The group undertakes annual monitoring of the bird boxes installed around the reserve, recording use and damage and replacing boxes as required. Our members support national survey efforts run by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), submitting monthly reports and other notable sightings. We are also supporting the local BTO Bird Ringing Group with ongoing bird ringing sessions, some of which are open to the public. Our Dawn Chorus Walks regularly record more than 30 species on the reserve in the two hours following dawn. Notable species for the reserve are kingfisher, pied flycatcher on passage, the occasional barn owl and water rail during the winter. Our lake and brooks have also seen a big increase in sightings of little egret.

**Bats -** We do not monitor our bat boxes internally, as we do not have the required licence, but they are replaced as required. We have recorded at least six species during our bat walks. The group owns several bat detectors which are used for surveying and on public walks.

**Newts -** Five members of the group hold Great Crested Newt licences and we continue to survey our thriving population in the Bradley Stoke ponds, submitting survey results to Natural England. Pond maintenance on the reserve, and in the town ponds, is timed to minimise disturbance to our healthy populations of protected great crested newts as well as the smooth and palmate newts.

**Water Voles -** Several group members have been on training sessions run by Wessex Water on water vole ecology and habitat requirements. Surveys have found signs of water vole activity and there are sporadic sightings, but our brooks are not ideal for water voles. Ongoing habitat improvement works should help.

**Otters -** Surveying of otters is always difficult, as they are so unpredictable. Members of the Greater Bristol Otter Group, including some of our members, regularly survey the reserve for signs of otters (spraint markings are the most common sign). We also get regular reports from dog walkers of encounters with otters.

**Water Blitz -** We take part in the Water Blitz, run each year by the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART). Our four samples from the reserve showed that our waterways fare better than some, the main regular pollutant being from road run-off.

**Slow Worms -** The group has installed over 25 slow worm survey mats, originally to monitor the relocated slow worms but have now expanded the survey to all of the reserve. The mats have shown that the relocated slow worms have thrived and that we have slow worms in areas we were previously unaware of their presence and has also revealed a thriving population of field voles and shrews.

**Butterflies and Moths –** The reserve is very good for both butterflies and moths, holding the only record in the area for some species. Surveys are undertaken using various methods and areas on the reserve are improved with specific species in mind.

**Bioblitz/iNaturalist –** The Three Brooks Reserve is now a ‘place’ on the iNaturalist database, so any records made on the reserve are automatically included in searches based on the reserve. Most records are added during the various BioBlitzes run by national and international nature conservation organisations, but local observers can add records to iNaturalist at any time via the web or phone app.

# **Issues on the Reserve**

**Pollution in the brooks -** Pollution in the brooks is a growing problem and probably the most visible other than litter. The incidences of fuel and oil spilled (or deliberately disposed of) into the brooks upstream of the reserve appears to be increasing in frequency and also severity. All pollution incidents are logged and reported to the Environment Agency, although no compensation or mitigation has yet been delivered to the reserve. We have also had some sewage spills into Hortham Brook, causing the death of many fish and remaining in the brook and lake for many days. The group has a small spill kit, but it is often too late to deploy once the extent and location of the spill is known.

**Flooding -** Over 7600 Acres (3000ha) of land drain through the reserve and, although it isn’t a major problem for our wildlife during the winter, flooding does pose problems later in the year once nesting has started around the lake. Water voles would be affected by prolonged flooding any time of the year. The main concern raised to the group is one of access to the reserve by the public. Although flooding doesn’t normally restrict access for longer than 24hrs, our Facebook page comments reflect the disruption it causes. The lake de-silting project went some way to alleviating the issue by storing more water in the lake. However, heavy rain fall continues to cause flooding where more water falls than can flow under the motorway.

**Ash Die-back -** Towards the end of summer 2017, we discovered that ash die-back had reached the reserve. This could significantly alter our landscape in years to come. South Gloucestershire Council are surveying all SGC land, starting with that near roads and paths, and reacting to issues. We continue to monitor the situation.

**Dogs -** Although most dog owners are responsible, we continue to have problems with the lack of removal of dog waste bags by a few owners that find it acceptable to leave full bags hanging in trees or at the side of a path. We remove all we can reach with our regular litter picking activities. The number of dog owners using the Nature Reserve to exercise their dogs has an impact on the ability of the group to manage the reserve in line with the agreed Management Plan. This causes a conflict where areas designated as being managed for wildlife are used extensively by dog owners, primarily because there is no other large area suitable for exercising dogs in Bradley Stoke.

**Vandalism in the reserve -** Vandalism, litter and fires continue to be an issue and we log all incidences and report to the appropriate authorities where we can.

# **Benefit to the community**

During lockdown, and to varying extents since, the reserve has become more and more popular for exercise and relaxation. Dog ownership has risen significantly and therefore dog walkers have also increased. Many Bradley Stoke residents found the reserve for the first time during lockdown. Comments include praise for the reserve and that they wish they’d found it earlier!

The paths around Savages Wood, which provide a continuous surfaced access route around the woodland and through the new plantation, are lasting well. This means that all of the community can enjoy the woods without additional specialist equipment or support. Further extensions to the surfaced path network are an aspiration for future years. As part of the paths project, a Radar Key controlled gate was installed behind the leisure centre, providing level access to the woods from the car park.

We offer the opportunity for anyone who is interested to take part in our workdays, we always find something appropriate to a volunteer’s age and ability. All volunteers are given training in how to use tools correctly and safely. Our workdays aim to maintain wildlife habitats and to ensure that people can enjoy the reserve.

Anyone not able to get to workdays can remain connected to the reserve through our open meetings, Facebook page, Website and articles in the Bradley Stoke Journal. Each year, we offer a variety of guided walks free of charge.

The 10 bat detector kits that we supplied for Bradley Stoke library are maintained by the group. They are available for library members to borrow for free. We continue to give away free children’s I spy sheets and nature trails.

We run a Green Gym every Thursday. The aims of Green Gyms are to improve health and the environment at the same time. Objectives are to improve health and wellbeing – by increasing or maintaining fitness, reducing isolation and supporting better mental wellbeing, and to increase employability by increasing knowledge, skills and confidence.

Our maintaining of the site is contributing to the biodiversity of the reserve, which in turn hugely contributes to making the reserve a popular and important site. The wildfowl are a popular draw at the lake and we also have otters visiting alongside our resident mammals.

The reserve is enjoyed by many people: walkers, runners, horse riders, cyclists, photographers, bird watchers, dog walkers, families and school groups.

There are measured running routes and an orienteering trail. There are also many ‘Gyms’ and ‘PokéStops’ registered in the popular Pokémon Go mobile phone game, further encouraging visits to the reserve to find these locations.

The reserve is open to all the community, our work potentially benefits all of those people who live or work in Bradley Stoke as well as visitors. Each workday we are stopped by users of the reserve who thank us for all our hard work.

The Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group continues to be grateful for the invaluable support of Bradley Stoke Town Council.

**Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group breakdown of SLA grant 2021 – 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SLA grant 2020 - 2021** |  | **£2,000.00** |
|  |  |  |
| **Item** | **Spent** |  |
| Insurance | £320.00 |  |
| Misc - Petrol | £0.00 |  |
| Misc - Phone | £10.00 |  |
| Misc - Refreshments | £167.19 |  |
| Misc - Training | £0.00 |  |
| Misc - Tools - pond liner | £164.99 |  |
| Misc - bird related items | £98.67 |  |
| Misc - bench repairs | £61.20 |  |
| Misc - Misc | £106.38 |  |
| Misc - Tools | £260.52 |  |
| Misc - Room hire | £75.26 |  |
| Website - Hosting & Domain | £47.99 |  |
|  |  |  |
| Events - earth hour | £50.00 |  |
| Events - Bat Walks x 1 | £50.00 |  |
| Events - Owl Prowls x 2 | £200.00 |  |
| Events - Nature walks x 2 | £107.30 |  |
|  |  |  |
| Amount spent | £1,719.50 |  |
| Amount remaining |  | £280.50 |

SLAs are from Bradley Stoke Town Council and run for 1 year

Applied for Received

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SLA grant 2020 - 2021 | June 2020 | June 2020 |
| SLA grant 2021 - 2022 | October 2021 | March 2022 |
| SLA grant 2022 - 2023 | not done |
| SLA grant 2023 - 2024 |

 The representative also mentioned the owl sculpture carved out of a tree trunk and the dormouse boxes plus the two new varieties of apple (Bowsland Blush and Green Jim) which have been registered on the reserve.

Following discussion Councillor Natalie Field proposed that Three Brooks Nature Conservation Group be awarded a Service Level Agreement of £2,000 towards their running costs, seconded by Councillor Jon Williams. A vote was taken, 4 in favour, 1 abstention, proposal carried.

The Chair thanked the representatives for addressing the meeting.

**6.1.2 Christ the King Youth Group**

The Chair of Committee invited the representative from the group to address the meeting.

2023 Church Youth Worker Provision

The parishes of Christ the King Bradley Stoke and Holy Trinity Bradley Stoke have been providing funding for youth work in 2023, particularly in the provision/costs of our youth worker.  The funds for this are legally managed by the Parish of Christ the King, Bradley Stoke. 2023 activities were supported by a Service Level Agreement of £2,350.00 from Bradley Stoke Town Council.

Group: Trailblazers

“Trailblazers” is Christ the King’s youth group aimed at children from Reception to Year 6, but over the course of this year it has covered ages 3 to 13 at some times. Trailblazers has had a fantastic year of attendance with an average attendance of 16 children. The evening is designed for the children to interact with each other and adults and junior leaders through games, individual and team challenges, races, a bible quiz, memory challenge and prayer square.

This year we were able to continue the arrangement of trips for the attendees at the end of each full term, which on one occasion included 30 children (across Trailblazers and 4Mation) going 10-pin bowling with the inclusion of some party food. The group is lively and fun packed with a snack shack each week and we run from 6 – 7pm Wednesday evenings during term time.

Group: 4Mation / Friday Night Itch

4Mation has provided a full set of sessions across 2023, aimed at the 11-14 age group, but accepting of a wider age range as friendship groups transition from Trailblazers. A change in provision occurred over the summer holiday break with 4Mation formally closing at the end of the school term and re-launching as Friday Night Itch (FNITCH name selected by the kids) in September 2023. The return to Friday nights has helped retain the number of volunteers to run the programme. (The group is now on Fridays, running 19:30 to 21:00).

FNITCH kids are able to participate in pool, table tennis and other arranged games such as indoor hockey and assorted relay / race games. Running as a café format they can also relax and chat with their friends and the volunteers about daily life, social news and any other concerns and even have a go at graffiti art work!  Through the year the kids have enjoyed time using the equipment and simply hanging out in the space we have available.

We have added a breakout session to the agenda with the extended duration as a “half-time” to the evening, where we re-locate to a meeting room to discuss selected topics relevant to the age group.

FNITCH (previously 4Mation) covers an age group with youths whose interests are growing and as such the sessions have had changing attendance both in numbers and individuals, however recently we have been pleased by a core group of 8-10 children attending almost every week. The CRB checked volunteer leadership team work hard to keep continuity across the weeks and are pleased with the number of regularly attending children.

Group: Friday Club

This new group has had mixed success over 2023, aimed at the Year 3 to Year 8 age group, this session was running early evening at the Holy Trinity Church setting. The format of the session is similar to Trailblazers in its approach and focused on the same age group. Attendees peaked at 23 per session but have tailed off of late with the decision taken to close the group for the current term to undertake a review for 2024.

Group: Rock Solid

For information, our resources also support an extra club being made available to school children at Holy Trinity every Thursday lunchtime with games, videos and discussion.

2023 Finances

Expenditure on youth work by Bradley Stoke Parish churches (including Youth Worker and room hire charges) remains at £22,500. We are grateful for Bradley Stoke Town Council’s contributions in the past. We are of course, experiencing the need to pay more for energy and utilities bills to ensure the buildings are comfortable for use. The same uplift in energy costs that all parts of the community are experiencing.

2023 Beneficiaries - We can report the following:

Number of Bradley Stoke youth benefiting from the project:

 Total number attending Number of different individuals sessions attending

Trailblazers (age 3-13) 587 (~16/wk for 36 wks) 25

4Mation/FNITCH (age 11-16) 301 (~12/wk for 26 wks) 16

Friday Club (age 6-12) 400 (~20/wk for 20 wks) 25

Total beneficiaries 1288 (~48/wk) 66

2023 Youth Session Provision Conclusion

2023 has seen a well attended set of youth sessions with a high number of regular attendees. We continue to look at the balance of the services across the community (as the age group vary over time), which will require changing resources, as outlined within the new SLA application for 2024-2025.

**SLA Application 2024-2025**

We are grateful for the Service Level Agreement funding provided in earlier years and we would like to ask for this to re-start in 2024-25. Our provided resources (Vicar and Youth Worker Trainee and a large team of volunteers) have been stable over the course of 2023-24 which has enabled us in turn to have a core team to assist in the organisation of the volunteer community, which in turn provides a stable set of Youth sessions across the year. We are expecting this to continue into 2024-25 and so we are aiming to provide a similar level of service throughout this next year. We wish to re-apply for the same level of SLA request we had in previous years, £2,350.00, requesting for Council support to continue this approach.

We would request, if the Council feels able, that a small increase of £150.00 to bring the total to £2,500.00 would help the Church offset the increased energy costs associated with running the Church facilities and keeping the buildings open and comfortable during the colder parts of the year in particular.

Christ the King and Holy Trinity Churches play an active role in the community and, through our youth projects we are in regular contact with approximately 100 children who come to our weekly youth groups and wider sessions (e.g. Rock Solid).

Christ the King (CTK) And Holy Trinity Church (HTC) feels that engaging and educating youth in a safe and fun environment is key to helping them to develop social skills, life skills and confidence.

CTK and HTC continue to/intend to engage with youth through a number of groups:

* Trailblazers – this group meets on a Wednesday evening and is aimed at 5 to 12 year olds
* FNITCH – this group meets on a Friday evening and is aimed at 11 to 16 year olds (previously it was set at the 11-14 year old age range).
* There is a hope to develop a group for those aged 15-18, but efforts on the existing activities need to be stable for this can be assessed.
* Rock Solid – a lunchtime club at Holy Trinity School. This restarted earlier than anticipated in 2022 and currently provides fun and thoughtful material for around 20 pupils. This club will continue throughout 2024.
* Events are offered throughout the year which are of interest to youth as we work to partner with wider churches in Patchway and Stoke Gifford affording a wider format and style of events to the youth community. These include activities on Good Friday and at Harvest Festival, which are open to all and a Summer Holiday Club – this year with an Olympics theme – “Going for Gold”.

All of the groups are open for any youth in the community to attend. Youths attend our clubs from across Bradley Stoke and there is a very strong attendance from the local social housing families.

Trailblazers continues to have a high proportion of children from outside of the Church community – around 70%. Trailblazers has no charge for a session and is runs every week during term time.

4Mation had been running for over a decade and needed a refresh into the FNITCH format on a Friday. This group had an average attendance of 30 per week as 4Mation and is currently around 10 per week but growing back as FNITCH. Over 90% are from outside of the Church community. This group is free to attend and now runs on Fridays during term time. We intend to run a full set of sessions with anticipated trips in 2024-2025.

We aim to provide an integrated youth service across all groups that is to a consistent high standard and that links groups together so that we do not ‘lose’ children as they transition from group to group. This is seen as a real strength and one of the reasons for providing overlapping ages across the sessions and then developing a separate provision for the 15-18 age group. These activities will continue to offer a different range of opportunities and are supported by a fantastic combined HTC / CTK Volunteer community.

Holy Trinity Primary students can attend Rock Solid, a lunchtime club. This club attracts around 20 different pupils with fun and thoughtful session material.

All of the youth groups are run by volunteers co-ordinated with the Youth Worker Trainee – now around 20 volunteers across all of the groups. These volunteers range from 14-18 year olds who help as ‘young leaders’ (also helping them with their Duke of Edinburgh award volunteering needs) to retired individuals and everything in between.

In our youth groups the focus is on having fun, being creative, learning respect for leaders and peers, improving social skills and confidence, and teamwork. The groups do also represent the Christian faith whether through a story or a topic for discussion – this is done in a sensitive and engaging way without putting any pressure on the youths.

**The projected annual costs of Bradley Stoke Parish youth provision for groups for 2024-25 are (maintained from 2023-2024 levels):**

Hire Charges for use of Church £10,800 (detailed breakdown available based on sessions/yr)

Youthwork materials £ 500 (teaching/discussion materials/DVDs/admin/photocopying)

SWYM Trainee Youth Worker Charges £10,000

Expenses for groups (refreshments, games equipment) £ 300

Group trips £ 900

Total projected costs £22,500

**Projected income for youth provision (maintained from 2023-2024 levels):**

Donations from Church Councils £10,800

(room hire and admin)

Voluntary donations - church members/other groups £9,350

(SWYM Charges use)

Requested from Bradley Stoke Town Council £2,350

(as per 2023-2024 SLA)

Total projected income £22,500

Additional Optional request to cover increased energy costs £ 150

Requested from Bradley Stoke Town Council £2,350

as per 2023-2024 SLA (as above)

2024-2025 SLA Request from Bradley Stoke Town Council £2,500

**The outcomes for the youth provision over the year are expected to be:**

Youth group sessions:

Trailblazers 40

FNITCH 30

Rock Solid 40

Total number of sessions 110

Number of Bradley Stoke youth benefiting from the project:

 Total number attending Number of different individuals sessions attending

Trailblazers (age 5-12) 800 (20/wk for 40 wks) 25

FNITCH (age 11-16) 600 (20/wk for 30 wks) 25

Rock Solid 1000 (25/wk for 40 wks) 30

Total beneficiaries 2400 (65/wk) 80

This project is made possible due to volunteers providing over 2,000 hours of their time at no cost.

Over the course of the year we also anticipate that the groups will be involved in community action – in previous years the groups have been involved in litter picking the local area, helping to fundraise at the Jubilee Centre Fireworks, having a stall at the Community Festival and painting fences as part of ‘the Noise’.

**2024-2025 SLA Application Conclusion**

We feel that this Service Level Agreement offers good value for money to Bradley Stoke Town Council as it would deliver a weekly term time youth provision to all ages at an average cost to the Council of around £21 per session (notably each attendee obtaining at least an hour of activity for just over £1 of Council SLA support).

The Parish Church Councils (PCC) of Christ the King, Bradley Stoke and Holy Trinity, Bradley Stoke are grateful for the on-going support received from Bradley Stoke Town Council towards its youth provision.

Without this Service Level Agreement the youth clubs will still continue as the Church feels that they are vital to the local community. However, there will be fewer resources available to run the clubs and make the clubs attractive for the youth, and potentially there may have to be fewer sessions throughout the year. This reduction in quality/effectiveness of youth service could mean the desired benefits of improving social skills and confidence for the youth cannot be achieved.

Following discussion Councillor Jon Williams proposed that Christ the King Youth Group be awarded a Youth Service Level Agreement of £2,500 towards their running costs, seconded by Councillor James Nelson, with this being a one-off increase of £150 on their allocated funding of £2,350, with a review of all Service Level Agreements for 2024/25 to be presented at April’s Leisure, Youth & Amenities committee meeting. A vote was taken, 4 in favour, 1 abstention, proposal carried.

The Chair thanked the representative for addressing the meeting.

**6.2 Community Development Grant Aid (CDGA)**

**6.2.1 Bradley Stoke Radio (BSR)**

The Chair of Committee invited the representatives from the group to address the meeting.

To start the year, it is always good to reflect back on the Christmas Festive period and the busy time it is for all. For the radio station, the highlight is working with the community of Churches in Bradley Stoke and the collaboration between the Churches, led by BSEC, The Willowbrook Centre, the local primary schools, the radio station and all the people who join in to watch the performances, listen and join in with the Community Carol service. It is a huge event that packs out the ‘mall’ at the Willowbrook and seems to be getting bigger and better year on year. The Radio Station broadcasts and records the carol service over the Christmas period. The equipment that we use is starting to show its age and we will be looking at replacing microphone stands and speaker stands in the coming months to continue to support at events like this.

We have continued to develop links with UWE Law students who are developing their public speaking skills and understanding of their subject while hosting a fortnightly radio programme, we are also in the final process of starting a collaboration with SGS Sports journalist students who will be planning and preparing a live sports show from and for Bradley Stoke Radio – overseen and supported by Geoff Twentyman. Another young person is joining us and learning skills and volunteering as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award. Harry will be linking up with Bradley Stoke Cricket Club to bring match reports when the season kicks off (Bats off?)

We have had a social media campaign looking for new volunteers and have hosted an open morning. We had packed studios as five new volunteers came along to visit the studios and members came along to help demonstrate and share their passion for community radio. This will be followed up with more bespoke training and 1:1 sessions and new programming in the future – all community based content!

We continue to welcome guests into the studios with presenters – a popular show to do just that, is Saturday Brunch with Jon Lock. Just ask the Mayor, he is a welcome contributor!

Thank you for your continued support for Bradley Stoke Radio, ‘your voice in the community’

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| £4000 CDG 2024 |  | Outgoing | Remainder of CDG |
| 25/1/24 | PPL | £883.62 |  |
| Total Remainder |  |  | £3,116.38 |

Up and coming events include, International Women’s Day March 8th, Callicroft School Fayre May 11th.

The Chair thanked the representative for addressing the meeting and, along with councillors and reminded Bradley Stoke Radio that they will be eligible to apply for grant funding later in the year to make up any shortfall in their finances.

**6.3 Grant Aid (GA)**

**6.3.1 GA500 - Bradley Stoke Community Singers (BSCS)**

The Chair of Committee invited the representatives from the group to address the meeting.

Bradley Stoke Community Singers is a choir that serves the town of Bradley Stoke. We are totally inclusive, having a membership covering a wide range of ages and abilities and are always open and ready to welcome new members. We are one of the few choirs in South Gloucestershire and Bristol that is free to join and take part in, no subscription is charged.

We rehearse weekly during term time at Bradley Stoke Community School, in one of the large classrooms, as we need a fairly large room to accommodate all our choir members. Typically we have a weekly attendance of between 30 to 40 people, although many more are listed as members.

The Choir is a non-profit making group and since our formation in November 2012, we have performed two concerts a year (prior to the Covid 19 pandemic).

In addition we have given our time freely to sing at the Willowbrook Centre, MS Centre, Meadowbrook School, Bradley Stoke Festival, Tesco Bradley Stoke as part of their Christmas Market and at Southmead Hospital, Baileys Court Primary School Summer Fayre and John Lewis at the Mall in aid of the Southmead Hospital Charity. We have also sung at the Toby Carvery in Bradley Stoke to raise funds for St Peters Hospice, Costas for the Costa Foundation and the Aztec Hotel for Teenage Cancer Research. We have twice performed at the Aerospace Museum, Cribbs Causeway by singing under Concorde. On the second of those occasions in December 2023 we took part in an event called “Carols Under Concorde”, this was a community carol service attended by 750 people of all ages. We will also be singing at the International Women’s Day Red dress event on 8th March 2024.

The grant funding will be used towards publicity and marketing, sheet music, printing costs of tickets and posters, flyers, equipment for choir members, concert expenses, including: table settings for concerts (audience seating is set out in cafe style, with decorated tables, giving a nice relaxed and friendly atmosphere), hire of Holy Trinity Church or other venues when Bradley Stoke Community School Hall is unavailable. Also the Association of Choirs Insurance.

Following discussion Councillor Ben Randles proposed that Bradley Stoke Community Singers be awarded Grant Aid of £500 towards their running costs, seconded by Councillor James Nelson, carried unanimously.

The Chair thanked the representatives for addressing the meeting.

**6.4 Larger Grant Aid**

None

**7 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 18th December 2023**

 **7.1 Update on Red Dress Project for International Women’s Day – 8th March 2024**

To celebrate International Women’s Day, Bradley Stoke Town Council (councillors and staff) are working with Southern Brooks to organise an innovative textile project (working with local schools and community groups across the area) to produce pieces of embroidery which can be sewn onto a red dress. The local Red Dress Project is based on the model used for the worldwide community development approach to produce ‘The Red Dress’ (see [https://reddressembroidery.com](https://reddressembroidery.com/)). The founder of the worldwide Red Dress project, Kirstie Macleod will be a guest speaker at our launch event.

The year-long project will be launched at our International Women’s Day event taking place on Friday 8th March 2024 from 6.30 – 8.30pm in Bradley Stoke Community School. This first main event will be the start of the red dress project in the area and it is anticipated that work will be carried out on the dress throughout 2024 culminating with a finale event in March 2025. The format for the launch event has the themes of past, present and future and will involve a local choir, singers and inspirational speakers. Booking for this free-to-attend event is available through Eventbrite. Detailed programme to be available in due course.

In order to be sustainable we are repurposing/recycling a pre-loved dress and dyeing it red.

This project has received funding from South Gloucestershire Council through their Member Awarded Funding scheme. Councillor Ben Randles (Bradley Stoke South Ward) awarded £700, and Councillor Sam Scott (Charlton & Cribbs Ward) awarded £250.

**8 Matters within the scope of the Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee**

**8.1 Bradley Stoke in Bloom (BSIB) update by Steering Group**

The representative from BSiB expressed their disillusionment regarding limited communication between the group and various departments in South Gloucestershire Council (SGC). Good works that the group have undertaken are often not acknowledged, suggestions are ignored and works done are sometimes subsequently ill-managed by SGC Streetcare teams.

Councillors questioned what they could do to assist the group to improve communication lines and urged the group to speak to the SGC ward councillors to see what they can do to improve the situation.

Councillors and BSTC officers are meeting with two departments from SGC on Wednesday so this would be a good starting point.

**8.2 Youth Development & Participation Worker (YDPW) update by Graham Baker**

Graham Baker, Youth Development & Participation Worker presented the following report:

**Headline news since last LYA Committee report on the 18th December 2023.**

* **Youth work sessions delivered:** since the last report, we have delivered the following youth work sessions:
* **Four core youth work sessions per week** (**28 core sessions** during this reporting period). The sessions have taken place at the skatepark, the Jubilee Centre (Girls Project) and Jubilee Hardcourts and surrounding area.
* Each core session comprises of between **2hrs and 2.5hrs of face-to-face youth work**.
* The core sessions have generally been well attended; however, some sessions have been impacted by extremely bad weather (e.g. skatepark unusable) and/ or other factors. However, the attendance range for the Skatepark and Jubilee Hardcourt sessions has been between **20 and 45 young people** with the majority in the **12-to-18-year age range**. The gender breakdown has been approximately **30%** girls and young women and **70%** boys and young men.

Since the last report, the Girls & Young Women’s Project has held **7 weekly core sessions** at the Jubilee Centre. The age range is mainly between **13 and 16** with up to **10 young women** attending each session during this reporting period.

* **Holiday sessions/ activities:** in addition to the above core youth work sessions, we went Ice-Skating during the first week of the school Xmas holidays and Paintballing during last week’s February half term.
* **Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) & ASB update:** in recent years BSTC, as part of the South Glos Youth Work Partnership, have been working with the VRP on a range of projects and issues. Please see below for a summary and update of activity in recent years.
* **Festival youth work update:** as discussed at our community festival planning meetings, we are once again planning two full days of activity (see below for detail).
* **Upshot:** the Upshot ‘monitoring, evaluation and learning system’ is now taking shape and we have just moved from a demo to a live system and will now start populating the data base and using for session registers, etc. Also, as the Upshot system if now being adopted by other SG youth work partners, there is discussion apart harmonising the measurement of ‘outcomes’ across the partnership.
* **South Glos Youth Work Partnership:** the partnership continues to meet on a range of issues and following on from the recently renewed 5-year SGC YAO (Youth Activity Offer) bid, an initial ‘Phase One’ Lotteries proposal has now been submitted. Through the lotteries bid we hope to secure a similar amount to the SGC YAO funding (£14k per year), but over a shorter 3-year period.
* **Stoke Gifford youth work sessions:** the organisation currently delivering youth worksessions in Stoke Gifford are refocusing their areas of delivery & the SGYWP are inviting other organisations to express an interest in taking on delivery either individually or in partnership.

Following discussion Councillor James Nelson proposed that BSTC expresses an interest in being involved in the Stoke Gifford Youth Work provision going forward, seconded by Councillor Jon Williams, carried unanimously.

**Our recent and planned youth work strands explained below:**

* **Girls’ Project youth work sessions** have taken place every Tuesday throughout this reporting period, apart from a two-week Xmas & new year break. We also had a pre–Xmas Ice Skating trip. The sessions offer a safe space and a range of activities, discussions, and support. We promote the Girls Project using closed group Instagram and this helps inform/ remind people of upcoming sessions, any specific focus, and future projects as well as help supportively signposting to organisations or useful information. We also support individuals/ small groups outside of the formal session.
* **Skatepark building and outreach youth work sessions:** we have continued to runtwo well attended core youth work sessions per week, apart from a seasonal break. In addition, when attending the site for various reasons, we regularly provide extra ad hoc support and/ or engagement, with young people and the wider community. The youth work sessions engage both regular skatepark users and young people who attend mainly for the youth work sessions and a safe, supportive, social space that also offers free food and drink. Our food offer is supported by the Fareshare (recycled food) charity through bi-weekly collections from Tesco (Hatchet Rd).

**Jubilee hardcourt area youth work sessions:** these sessions offer the opportunity for informal engagement in sporting activities (basically a kick about or a chance to have a go at tennis, frisbee, etc), drinks squash/ hot chocolate, occasional BBQs), etc. As with all our sessions, we offer an environment for support, discussion and challenge on numerous topics, issues, lifestyle choices, and anti-social behaviours. We also offer support and activities outside of the formal sessions, including supportive signposting, advocacy, etc (see one to one below).

* **Occasional outreach and ad hoc youth work sessions** with young people in the Jubilee Centre area, Willowbrook, etc. As mentioned above, we continue a limited amount of outreach and ad hoc sessions. Detached, outreach and project youth work sessions will increase in frequency when we recruit additional part team sessional youth workers and additional long term project funding is confirmed.
* **One to one support:** 1-2-1 / small group work has continued throughout this period, including support for parents/ carers. This work can cover a wide range of issues including, liaison with parents/ carers, peer conflict, informal counselling, bereavement, mental health and well-being, college/ schoolwork experience placements, NEET, CV writing support, references, etc.
* **Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) & ASB update:** in recent years BSTC, as part of the South Glos Youth Work Partnership, have been working more closely with the VRP on a range of projects, issues & initiatives & improving communication; please see below for a summary:
* Attendance last year at an all-day VRP practitioner workshop. A useful discussion forum and networking opportunity.
* VRP occasionally attending South Glos Youth Work Partnership meetings.
* Street Doctor First Aid Training (funded through VRP), focusing on unconsciousness and bleeds. We have engaged with two rounds of training in recent years, with four sessions being delivered as part of our August 2023 Summer programme.
* Theatre in Education performances on the impact of Knife Crime (funded through VRP), with 35 young people attending a performance at the Jubilee Centre.
* YD&PW regularly attending ASB multi agency meetings & more recently the SG Violence Reduction Partnership meeting re a detached youth work funded initiative that occasionally covers the local areaplus supporting the roll out of trauma first aid kits.
* SGVRP are also offering various CPD training opportunities.
* **Festival youth work update:** as discussed at our community festival planning meetings, the youth work team are once again planning and supporting two full days of activity. On the Saturday we are hosting the Kings Ramps half pipe, including regular pro rider demos and ‘have a go’ sessions, Mc’ing, etc. Alongside will be the extremely popular ‘spray paint a board’ session and a youth work tent with project info, etc. On the Sunday we move to the skatepark to hold our annual festival competition with the half pipe moving there to provide extra capacity and a different ride experience, plus more pro rider demos, prizes and again Olas Arts offering Art workshops on old vinyl records. We are also hoping to make a feature of having possibly 3 of the world’s best female scooter riders present, but that will need to be confirmed nearer the festival. The main costs are as follows:

Kings Ramps - £4k + VAT for 2 full days and Olas Arts £970 for 2 full days (including an assistant artist on both days and materials for the Sunday workshops).

 Following discussion Councillor Jon Williams proposed acceptance of the Kings Ramps quote for £4,000 to provide their services over the Community Festival weekend, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field, carried unanimously.

 Following discussion Councillor Jenny James proposed acceptance of the Olas Art quote of £970 to provide their services over the Community Festival weekend, seconded by Councillor Jon Williams, carried unanimously.

* **Review of Youth Work Provision/ strands** (separate agenda item 8.3).
* **Staff training, development, and recruitment**: there continues to be recruitment challenges across the South Glos Youth Work Partnership, however, following the confirmation of further five year YAO funding and the setting up of new Youth Work Level 2 and 3 p/t qualification routes, at City of Bristol college, it is hoped that a new recruitment drive will enable our youth work vacancies to be filled and the team to develop and be able to regularly deliver all the various strands within our five year plan.

No decision made on staff recruitment pending ongoing review of youth work provision.

* **Strategic lead on other current & evolving projects.**
* **Development & review of Youth Work Policies & Procedures.**
* **Reporting, evaluating & data collection:** including the current setup of the Upshot monitoring & evaluation package, regular reporting to SGC on SG Youth Offer funding, including, as mentioned earlier, contributing to bids for future funding.

**8.3 Review of Youth Work Provision in Bradley Stoke**

Graham Baker, Youth Development & Participation Worker presented the following report:

As previously highlighted, through reports to Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee, our current youth work provision includes several complementary delivery strands as follows:

**Our model of youth work involves several complementary strands:**

* **Skatepark sessions;** regular & ad hoc sessions.
* **Jubilee Hardcourts:** street sessions with informal sports focus.
* **Girls & Young Women’s Project:** weekly girls only sessions + trips, etc.
* **Detached & Outreach sessions:** planned & ad hoc.
* **Project work:** e.g., Street Art project/s.
* **Events & competitions:** e.g., 2 days of activities at our recent Festival
* **Offsite trips & residentials:** e.g., Multi activity weekends, Ice Skating, etc.
* **One to one** & small group support.
* **Volunteering** - school/college placements.
* **Golden thread:** YP having a voice, being listened too, respected & valued.
* **Work with other partners, agencies & groups.** e.g., funding, training, support, etc.
* **Presence** in the community.

The key benefit of offering different strands of youth work is the opportunity to reach different cohorts of children and young people. For example, young people who attend our Girls & Young Women’s Project would not necessarily feel comfortable engaging with another type of youth work session. Likewise, the provision and development of free and/ or affordable associational spaces/ activities for children, young people, and the wider community offers different choices and opportunities e.g., the skatepark, green spaces and play areas, Jubilee Hardcourts and the proposed Fitness Area and Multi Use Games Area and/ or Basketball facility.

When fully staffed, the plan has been to deliver **seven core youth work sessions** per week (utilising significant external funding of £10K per year, increasing to £14K in April 2024). In addition, our youth work offer includes the other strands highlighted above, i.e., two days of activities at our annual festival, schoolwork experience placements, various art projects, one to one and small group support, trips and residentials, etc.

We are currently delivering **four core weekly youth work sessions**, including two at the skatepark, one at the Jubilee Hardcourts and the Girls and Young Women’s sessions at the Jubilee Centre (please see separate bimonthly report/s presented to Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee). Unfortunately, we have some part time youth work vacancies, but when the vacancies are filled, as previously stated, the plan is to **offer seven core youth work sessions, including three at the skatepark, two detached/ street-based sessions, the Girls and Women’s Project session and the Jubilee Hardcourt session**.

Regarding the skatepark site, the intention has always been to continue to enhance and develop the building and site generally, deliver three core sessions, our usual additional events and competitions, additional holiday activities/ hours, occasional project-based work, including Art Projects, develop coaching opportunities (funding dependant), etc.

As previously mentioned, we have been in receipt of £10K per year of external Youth Activity Offer funding from South Gloucestershire Council (£50K over 5 years). As part of South Glos Youth Work Partnership, we have now successfully retendered and will be in receipt of £14K per year from SGC YAO (from April 2024) for the next 5 years with a possible 2-year extension. As part of the retendering process SGC requested us (BSTC) and Yate TC, to give presentations to other Town & Parish councils, as we are seen by SGC as good practice models. In addition, we are part of a further SG Youth Work Partnership bid for Lottery funding over 3 years (we are requesting a similar amount per year to the YAO funding).

Councillors thanked Graham Baker for detailed report and commented that they are keen to look at “what next” to move youth provision forward in the town.

Following discussion, Councillor Natalie Field proposed that a working group of councillors and officers be established to draft a model of youth provision for the future which will encompass spending and staffing requirements going forward, with the report being presented to March Finance committee to review and look at a potential carry forward of unallocated youth budget into the forthcoming financial year, seconded by Councillor Jon Williams, carried unanimously. The working group will be open to all councillors.

**8.4 Update on D-Day 80th Anniversary beacon lighting event – 6th June 2024**

Beacon has been ordered for the event. Unable to source a fish and chip van as not financially viable for short duration of the event. D-Day anniversary bunting will be sourced to cordon the beacon off. Bradley Stoke Radio were asked if they could provide a small sound system for the event.

**8.5 Update to BSTC response to SGC Library Service Changes consultation**

The following comments were lodged as part of the consultation:

* The consultation is not designed for public bodies to respond to on behalf of residents of the town
* As a Town Council we encourage our residents to sign up for the open access facility
* Councillors are concerned in particular regarding the 25% budget reduction for books and other materials, but appreciate that there is a need to save money
* The reduction in staffing hours for Bradley Stoke is less than in other areas, however, the loss of the staffed 5 – 6pm hours may impact. The Town Council will continue to promote the open access provision to the community
* Difficult to assess the impact on the reduction to staffed opening hours as no details have been provided of footfall during the current opening hours and times. One possible option would be to increase the opening hours into the evening on one day per week.
* The proposed changes will impact on vulnerable groups (especially long-term unemployed and individuals with mental health concerns). Libraries provide an opportunity for human connections and interactions when they are staffed

However, at the time, there was no information regarding the footfall figures throughout the day. That information has now been supplied by Councillor John Bradbury and it is clear that there is increased footfall later in the day with the start of the day being quieter.

It was noted that the public consultation has closed and the decision is due to be made by SGC later this week, however, councillors felt it was worth passing on this observation to SGC.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed that the Town Council suggest to SGC that, if they do have to reduce the staffed hours at Bradley Stoke Library, it would be preferable to open an hour later rather than closing an hour earlier, due to the reduced footfall first thing in the day, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field, carried unanimously.

**9 Date of next meeting**

Monday 15th April 2024 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm