



# **Gnosall Parish Council**

## **Business Plan**

### **2016-17 to 2019-2020**

(Approved at Council Meeting, October 2017)

## **Contents**

Introduction	Page 3
Details of Gnosall and Gnosall Parish Council	Page 4
Corporate Vision	Page 6
Structure	Page 7
Finances	Page 8
Key Objectives	Page 9
Photo Gallery	Page 12

## Introduction

This Business Plan aims to inform parishioners of Gnosall Parish, with a clear understanding of the Council's priorities and objectives over the next three years. Whilst some of the issues facing the Parish are not directly under the control of the Parish Council, the Council and Officers will seek to use their influence to ensure that other service providers also respond to the needs and aspirations of residents. The document will be modified as situations develop and will be adapted and enhanced regularly.

Our Mission Statement is ***“to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the Parish of Gnosall and those who visit it”***.

What we do: Gnosall Parish Council acts within a framework of legislation conferred by Parliament. The role of any Parish Council may briefly be described as an executive body with many statutory functions and, as the elected body of the parish, it has powers of decision. As a local government body, the Parish Council deals with local issues and concerns through its principal powers and duties. The Parish Council can be the voice of its parishioners on many issues. Several bodies, including Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council consult with Gnosall Parish Council to gather local opinion and concerns. The Parish Council is often the body required to take a lead on issues or initiatives affecting the interests of its area. This is seen as a natural role, as a local council may be the only body with initial access to information and with the resources and capability to act. The Parish Council is also the first port of call for many residents enquiring about public services and the it endeavours to answer these queries as efficiently as possible.

The next Parish Councillor elections will be held in May 2019. This Plan covers the period up to the end of April 2020, as the budget will be set for that financial year before the elections take place. However, following the democratic processes the Parish Council is aware that policy and direction may change at the discretion of the new Council.



A Parish Council Meeting, October 2017

## **Gnosall and Gnosall Parish Council**

Gnosall Parish is made up of the village of Gnosall, which is in two distinct parts (Gnosall to the north and Gnosall Heath to the south-west and separated by Doley Brook floodplain), with the smaller settlements of Moreton, Outwoods, Bromstead and Knightley in the wider rural part of the parish. It is a civil parish, with great diversity of both urban and rural character in the Borough of Stafford, Staffordshire, England, with a population of approximately 5000 people across 2,048 households (2011 census). It lies on the A518, approximately half-way between the towns of Newport (in Shropshire) and the county town of Stafford in Staffordshire.

The origins of the village can be traced back over 900 years to the Domesday Book, although the main expansions of population occurred around the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century when Gnosall was first connected by rail and then again in the planned expansion of housing in the late 1970s.

Many of the residents play an active part in the local community. Gnosall has a thriving primary school academy, a small but vibrant village centre, it has three parish churches, active community centres as well as a memorial village hall and supports a host of community and recreational groups and activities.

Gnosall contains rural features such as The Acres - twenty five acres of recreational open space that includes several play areas, allotments, wetland and a boardwalk that links the two parts of Gnosall. The Acres is owned and maintained by the Parish Council as is the Village Green nearby. There is also the former railway line (also known as The Greenway and Sustrans Cycle Route No. 55) and the Shropshire Union Canal which are cherished by local people.

Gnosall has excellent transport links with a regular bus service to both Stafford and Telford.



Fishing from the Boardwalk



The Acres Open Space

## **The Parish Council**

The Parish Council has premises in Gnosall that house the parish office, Grosvenor Centre and GG's Youth Club. The Parish Council was accredited Quality Status in 2008 and again in 2012. It won a Pride in Your Patch Award in 2016 and has won many awards for regeneration and environmental work carried out on The Acres. It is currently The Best Kept Large Village in Staffordshire after winning in 2016 and 2017 and previously in 2010.

Gnosall Parish Council was founded in 1895 and celebrated 120 years in 2015 with a special community event. The family histories of the first councillors were explored and their descendants invited to come along. Below is a photo of the first Chairman of Gnosall Parish Council, Thomas Addison Ash, with his family in the early 1900s.



The village of Gnosall expanded considerably in the 1970s and the number of councillors in the wards was later changed by the Boundary Commission to reflect this, with the rural Knightley Ward losing two councillors and Gnosall Ward gaining two.

## Corporate Vision

*To improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the Parish of Gnosall and those who visit it.*

Gnosall Parish Council will:

- Continue to be an inclusive and accessible parish council that supports the needs of residents of all ages as well as existing and new businesses utilising its facilities, landscapes, history, leisure and tourism assets to offer a sustainable and thriving parish.
- Work for all wards in the parish, working together with parishioners and other principal authorities to improve facilities and services and to keep the parish clean and safe as well as celebrating the local environment, history and heritage.
- Ensure all its members will work together to serve and lead the community to undertake a range of services responding to the needs of the parish.
- Manage resources effectively and wisely.
- Exercise its duties within its discretionary powers, keeping up to date with the latest relevant legislation.



The Parish Council Office

## Structure

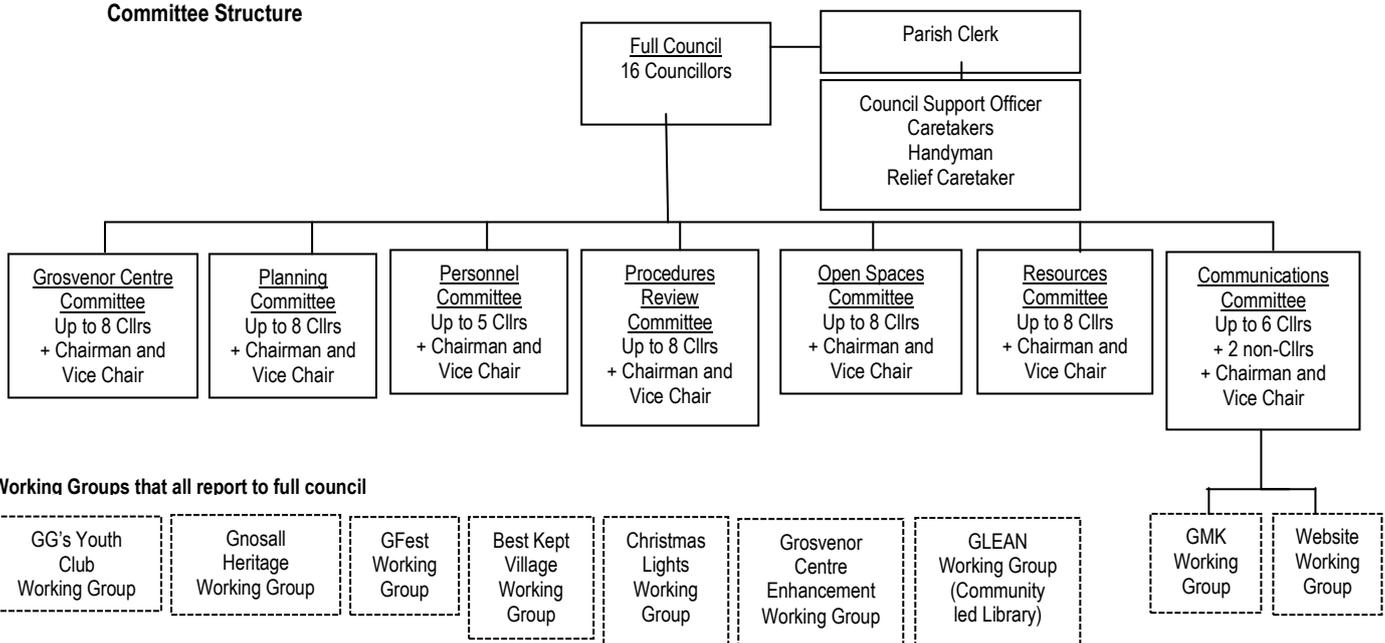
A statutory annual meeting is held in May at which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council are elected by the Council members at the start of the civic year (which runs from May to April). Gnosall Parish Council has four part time employees – the Clerk, the Council Support Officer and two Caretakers. The decisions of the Parish Council are carried out by the Council's staff, led by the Clerk. The Parish Council operates a committee system which enables members to consider more complex issues in detail at committee level. Each committee has a Chairman nominated and voted for by his/her councillor colleagues. Recommendations from committees are presented to the full Council for approval (or otherwise). Decisions are founded on majority vote from all councillors present at the meeting at which the decision is made. The Council has seven principal committees which meet around every six weeks as well as several Working Groups. Since having Quality status, the Parish Council has at least one meeting per year for all Councillors. This meeting is held as a workshop where Councillors carry out a self assessment review process to keep standards high and address any issues.

Linked to the Parish Council, but separate entities are the GFest Working Group, the Best Kept Village Working Group, GG's Youth Club, GLEAN Community Library and Gnosall Heritage Group. The bank accounts for these groups are sub accounts linked to the Parish Council's bank account.

There are sixteen parish councillors, twelve representing Gnosall ward, three representing Moreton, Outwoods and Bromstead and one representing Knightley. The full Council meets once a month (except August). Councillors are elected every four years, the next election being 2019. The minutes of meetings are included on the Parish Council's website

[www.gnosallparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.gnosallparishcouncil.org.uk)

### Gnosall Parish Council Committee Structure



## Finances

The Parish Council has detailed Financial Regulations that govern the conduct of financial management by the Council. The Financial Regulations are reviewed annually. The Council's Resources Committee ensures that the financial affairs of the Council are maintained in good order, both to meet the requirements of the Local Government Acts, the current Accounting and Audit Regulations and accepted accounting, together with procedural standards. The Resources Committee meets quarterly to review financial statements and where necessary recommend adjustments to the annual budget.

The Parish Council strives to optimise resources and their use to the benefit of those people living in the parish in the most effective way whilst still delivering the high quality services and projects that parishioners have come to expect from us.

This way of working has enabled the Parish Council to keep the precept relatively low in comparison with other parishes in the Borough, less than £1 per week for Band D council tax payers. It is our intention to continue to deliver high quality services at excellent value for money. To achieve some of our aims and objectives we will seek grant funding wherever possible to support the financing of some of the planned projects. We earmark reserve funds for some major projects.

A summary of the Council's accounts is included in the published Annual Report.



## Key Objectives

As part of its long term plan and to complement the budget making process, the Council and its committees review priorities annually (usually in November). The list of each of the committees priorities are reviewed by the Resources Committee when setting the budget and precept.

The table below shows the Council's main priorities for the next 3 years.

	<b>Committee/Working Group</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Estimated budget</b>
New or enhanced Grosvenor Centre	Grosvenor Centre Enhancement Working Group	2017-20	£2-£3 million
Resurfacing of allotment road	Open Spaces Committee	2018-20	£60,000
Acres Project phase 3	Open Spaces Committee	2018-2020	£50,000
New sports facilities on The Acres	Open Space Committee	2017-18	£50,000
Illumination of Multi Use Games Area	Open Spaces Committee	2018-19	£5,000
Gnosall Festival (GFest)	GFest Working Group	2017 and 2019	£1000-£2000
Creation of new community led library	Library Working Group (GLEAN)	2017-18	£20,000

## Rolling programme of other council activities

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Open Spaces Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing maintenance of open spaces including Burial Ground, The Acres recreational area, Chippy Jumps and The Wold</li> <li>• Review of groundwork contract and possible implications of cut backs by other tiers of Government</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance of outdoor facilities and assets (play park equipment, benches, notice boards)</li> <li>• Ongoing Risk Assessments and Health and Safety checks</li> </ul>
Grosvenor Centre Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining Grosvenor Centre to meet the needs of hirers</li> <li>• Review hire costs and facilities</li> <li>• Regular Risk Assessments and Health and Safety checks and Fire Assessment checks</li> </ul>
Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of planning applications in line with Gnosall Neighbourhood Plan and Stafford Borough Council's Local Plan at meetings every 3 weeks</li> <li>• Training for all councillors on up to date planning legislation To organise a public meeting for planning proposals deemed large or otherwise in the public interest.</li> </ul>

Resources Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prepare a budget for the Council in consultation with Chairmen of relevant committees.</li> <li>• Audit on a quarterly basis actual receipts and payments of the Council with reference to bank statements.</li> <li>• Review banking arrangements and balances.</li> <li>• Review Council's systems and controls, to report on problems (if any) and to propose improvements which may seem to be necessary, as required by the Council's Financial Regulations.</li> <li>• Review once a year the insurances of the Council.</li> <li>• Consider as necessary the Council's position with regard to Value Added Tax.</li> <li>• Consider requests for donations from organisations within the Parish.</li> <li>• Monitor all external fund-raising.</li> </ul>
Procedures Review Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out an annual review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.</li> <li>• Review Policies and Procedures.</li> <li>• Review Terms of Reference for all committees as and when necessary.</li> <li>• Check relevant new legislation and report any changes needed to policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
Personnel Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be responsible for staff recruitment and retention.</li> <li>• To ensure that all staff have contracts of employment that comply with current legislation and to review contracts and pension requirements where necessary.</li> <li>• To consider the annual appraisal of the Clerk's performance and other Council personnel.</li> <li>• To make recommendations to Council on annual salary awards for inclusion in the budget process.</li> <li>• To investigate and apply the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures and take all necessary action thereon.</li> <li>• To examine any other employment, contracted or volunteer matters of the Council that may arise from time to time, including monitoring and implementation of correct procedures.</li> </ul>
Communications Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with the community and local organisations about the needs of the Parish.</li> <li>• Support the production of the Parish Council's regular Newsletter (GMK).</li> <li>• Continue to develop and make recommendations to ensure the Parish Council's website and social media sites remain functional and effective communication tools.</li> <li>• Act as the link to other organisations via the website and social media to encourage community engagement.</li> <li>• Monitor effective communication in line with the Council's Communications and Community Engagement Policy.</li> </ul>

	Separate working groups linked to this committee oversee the production of the GMK Newsletter and the website.
Christmas Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To plan and coordinate the annual Christmas lights event including the purchase and illumination of 5 parish Christmas trees, the internal and external decoration of the Grosvenor Centre, a family Christmas show with refreshments including publicity.</li> </ul>
GFest Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With event organisers, to plan and coordinate events, obtain necessary funding for the biennial 9 day festival across the entire parish usually consisting of at least 40 different events and arrange press coverage and advertising.</li> </ul>
Grosvenor Centre Enhancement Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To manage a project to develop a new Grosvenor Centre considering options that would best fulfil the needs of the expanding local community and include a greater range of community amenities for leisure and educational needs</li> <li>• To design a multi-use building without competing with any existing facilities or services already adequately provided in the village.</li> <li>• To consider the historic setting and ensure a new building compliments the Conservation Area whilst ensuring optimal sustainability and environmental standards</li> <li>• To seek funding to meet the costs of this project potentially through an affiliated CIO</li> </ul>

## Photo Gallery



The opening of the Chippy Jumps Park, June 2017, a project funded with S106 money



Receiving one of three Green Awards for organisations demonstrating an active commitment to good environmental practice and sustainable development



Gnosall Parish Council's Pride in Your Patch Award 2016