

Report for Stow Town Council from District Councillor Dilys Neill

There was a full council meeting last night (Wednesday 27th November.) Items on the agenda include a review of Council tax support, and it was agreed that the thresholds for providing support would be raised by 4%. The qualifying levels of income vary according to the number of people in the households, single, couples & number of children. relief is available from 20% - 100% depending on income. Although most of the Council tax collected goes to the County Council it is administered by the District Council who deal with support as well as collection.

We also reviewed the Council's licencing regulations for gambling as required by the gambling act. This has to be done every three years, and council resolved that we would not approve a casino in the district.

The leader of the Council reminded that the Government is conducting a review of Local Government and you may have heard that there more mayoral posts may be created. Over the years, there has been a move towards unitary authorities rather than District & County Councils and their may well be proposed for Gloucestershire under the review. There are clearly pros and cons for this model and CDC will submit a response to the consultation.

My particular hobby horse as you know is the number of empty properties, not just in our town and district but nationwide. I raised a member question about this. Local planning authorities have limited powers to get empty properties back into use, and it would need national legislation to deal with this. I also raised the question of control of the number holiday lets; again we are awaiting a further response from government to a survey commissioned a couple of years ago.

I enclose two other items: a report about the work of CDC which I gave to Rotary Club and also a list of grants available to local communities which was prepared by one of my councillor colleagues.

Talk for Rotary 12th November 2024 by Ward District Councillor Dilys Neill

Local government structure:

Town & Parish Councils

District, Borough & City Councils

County Councils

Unitary Authorities, including London & Metropolitan Boroughs

Statutory Functions

County:

Adult & children's social care, roads & transport

Education,

footpaths,

flooding,

fire & public safety (community safety partnership)

Libraries,

waste management,

trading standards

District:

Waste collection, street cleaning

Council tax collection & relief

Housing including homelessness, & housing advice

Planning applications, building regulation

Licence applications (includes taxis, licensed premises, gambling)

Running elections

Food hygiene & food safety

Environmental health

Local plan

Town & Parish:

Allotments

Bus shelters

Community centres

Playgrounds

Grants

Neighbourhood plan

Discretionary services, district council.

Car parks, Open spaces & parks

Economic development

Public toilets

Visitor information centres

Leisure centres, Grants (Crowdfunding)

Budget

Gloucestershire County Council; £609 million

Cotswold District Council: £15.1million

Stow Town Council £200,000.

For the District council, main income is from council tax & business rates with small government grants & investment income.

Structure of District Council

34 elected members, average ward size is about 2,000

Leader & Cabinet model currently seven Cabinet members

Chair & Vice Chair of Council

Committees: Audit, overview & scrutiny , planning & licensing

Working groups to look at issues “task & finish groups”

Officers: CEO, deputy CEO / chief finance officer. Monitoring officer

Other officers were employed by Public, transition in progress to be employed directly by CDC

Ubico - Teckal company, contracted to collect waste.

Corporate strategy / priorities

- Delivering good services
- Responding to climate emergency
- Delivering housing
- Supporting communities
- Supporting the economy

Local plan.

Government sets a target for number of houses to be delivered

Plan includes

- Development boundaries & residential development
- Housing mix & provision for special groups e.g. elderly care
- Economy including employment sites, retail & tourism
- Town centre usage
- Built, historical & natural environment
- Infrastructure
- Special spaces.

Ward member role

Engagement with the general work of the council including serving on committees & working groups & representing CDC on outside bodies.

Engagement with town & parish councils & directly with residents.

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November 2024 Funding opportunities

1. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Grants are available to support the installation of electric vehicle chargepoints through the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV). The closing date for all grants is 31 March 2025. For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-grants-for-low-emission-vehicles>.

2. Community Energy Projects

Funding is available for projects involving community groups coming together to purchase, manage, generate, or reduce energy consumption. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, solar panels, wind farms, hydro power, rural heat networks, electric vehicle charging points, car clubs, and fuel poverty alleviation schemes. The programme is delivered through the government's Local Net Zero Hubs. For further information, please visit [Localnet zero: central support for local authorities and communities - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-net-zero-hubs).

3. Energy Resilience

Funding from £500 to £150,000 is available for projects that help community businesses retrofit their buildings with energy-saving measures. For further information, please visit [https:// www.powertochange.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/energy-resilience-fund/](https://www.powertochange.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/energy-resilience-fund/).

4. Protected Landscapes Funding

Funding is available for farmers and land managers in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for projects that:

- Support nature recovery,
Mitigate the impacts of climate change,
Provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy, and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage,
Support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.
The programme runs until March 2025, though applications will close sooner if all funding is allocated. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at [https:// www.gov.uk/ guidance/funding-for-farmers-in-protected-landscapes](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funding-for-farmers-in-protected-landscapes).

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5. Gigabit Broadband Connection

Grants of up to £4,500 are available to cover the costs of a gigabit-capable connection, aimed at helping people and communities upgrade their broadband in areas without existing coverage, planned commercial coverage, or Project Gigabit procurements. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at [https:// gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/](https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/).

6. Electricals Recycling

Funding between £50,000 and £100,000 is available for projects that expand or develop existing methods, or introduce new creative and practical approaches, to make it easier for residents to repair, reuse, or recycle small household electricals. Applications are currently open on a rolling basis. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/partnerships-with-material-focus/electricals-recycling-fund/>.

7. Amenity Projects

Grants between £2,000 and £100,000 are available to Parish or Town Councils and other eligible entities for amenity projects under Object D of the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). The closing date for the next round of applications is 20 November 2024. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/funds/fcc-community-action-fund/>.

8. Environmental

Funding between £10,000 and £75,000 is available to create or improve buildings or outdoor spaces for the benefit of the community, offered to not-for-profit and other eligible organisations. Nature conservation grants are also available. The next funding round closes on 7 January 2025. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.veoliatrust.org/funding/>.

9. Neighbourhood Planning

Grants for technical support with complex issues or assessments are available. Please note that all expenditure covered by the grant must be completed by 31 March 2025. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>.

10. Community Trees, Hedgerows and Orchards Projects

a. Grants between £250 and £2,500 are available for community groups aiming to establish trees, hedgerows, and orchards. The deadline for applications is 1 December 2024. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://treecouncil.org.uk/grants-and-guidance/our-grants/branching-out-fund/>.

b. Funding is available for community projects that aim to:

Create and conserve indigenous trees, woodlands, forests, habitats, and associated biodiversity,

Foster community engagement in tree planting to promote reforestation and increase

awareness of the importance of trees and forests for environmental and human well-being,

Encourage social cohesion and inclusion.

The deadline for applications is 13 December 2024. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.internationaltreefoundation.org/uk-grants>.

- **11. Football**

Grants between £10,000 and £500,000 are available for football clubs, schools, and local sports associations to build or refurbish grassroots facilities. Eligible projects include changing rooms, 3G pitches, fencing, portable floodlights, pitch improvements, and clubhouse refurbishments. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/looking-for-funding>.

12. War Memorials

Funding between £5,000 and £20,000 are available for the repair and conservation of war memorials, with work undertaken following best conservation practices. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <http://www.warmemorials.org/grants/>.

13. Heritage

Grants ranging from £10,000 to £10 million are available for heritage projects of all types and scales. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>.

14. Historic Building

a. Grants ranging from £1,000 to £250,000 are available for the repair and conservation of rural historic buildings and structures, including their gardens, grounds, and outbuildings. These grants are offered to various types of organisations and individuals who demonstrate a sustainable, long-term commitment to the care, management, and public access of the historic country houses in their stewardship. Full details on current eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.historichousesfoundation.org.uk/>.

b. Grants of up to £20,000 are available to assess the viability of historic building projects and/or to develop plans for historic buildings. Applications are reviewed during monthly grant decision meetings. More information on eligibility, deadlines, and how to apply can be found at <https://ahfund.org.uk/grants/england/>.

15. Places Refurbishment and Equipment and New Buildings

Funding is available for capital initiatives, including new building projects, refurbishments, and equipment for libraries, secondary schools, sixth form colleges, historic buildings, landscapes, and more. Decisions are made in June and December each year. The application deadlines are 5 January and 1 September annually. Full details on eligibility, deadlines, and the application process can be found at <https://www.wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/>.