

Appendix 3

Stonebroom Community Governance Review Public Meeting on 1st November at Stonebroom Community Centre.

Attendance 40 to 50 people.

Arguments for a separate Stonebroom PC

- Stonebroom is very different from the rest of Shirland and Higham.
- Not named in PC title so do not feel part of the PC.
- Only 4 of 12 Parish Cllrs are from Stonebroom.
- Stonebroom residents' voice a minority as it's only around a third of the electorate. This can only get worse.
- Community governance not effective as it is such a large geographical area.
- Stonebroom residents often ask why there cannot be a separate PC for Stonebroom.
- So can put local infrastructure issues forward for resolution.
- PC could employ someone to deal with overgrown footpaths, sweep pavements etc.
- Petition had 300 signatures not just the 187 to qualify for consideration of a separate parish.
- Ensuring Stonebroom has a voice.
- Such a big geographical area so is unwieldy.

Arguments against a separate Stonebroom PC

- Geographically very close.
- Served on the PC some years ago. Very few attended. Never saw any rudeness. Saw money being shared. Recently seen some very unfair comments about our Parish Cllrs.
- A worry that Stonebroom becoming isolated from other villages.
- Don't see the need for a separate Stonebroom PC.
- All villages feel hard done by.

Statements about Shirland and Higham Parish Council

- The people of Stonebroom feel they are not particularly well represented.
- Ideas are suggested to Shirland and Higham PC but are rejected. There is £200k+ in their reserves.
- Don't attend the PC meetings as don't feel welcome.
- Feel don't get as many services as other parts of the PC.
- PC decisions are partisan with Stonebroom's concerns voted down.
- The Petition and number of people at the meeting demonstrate that the people of Stonebroom feel disenfranchised and that things cannot carry on this way.
- Confidence in local governance low
- Disappointed that concentrated on the guidance.

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- There should be a referendum of Stonebroom residents. This would be a better indication of how Stonebroom residents feel.
- Perception that PC does not treat each village equally. They are very different areas. PC tried to do their best.
- A lot of people in Stonebroom who very active in Community Groups. Get frustrated at things being in the way.
- Come away from PC meetings feeling disenchanting.
- Feel as though hitting against a brick wall.
- PC Facebook page 18 years out of date.
- Seen how PC treats people – accused of having a hidden agenda.
- Constant battle for anything at Stonebroom.
- Not the right balance of Members for Stonebroom at the PC.
- PC so rude.
- Feel non Stonebroomers trying to stop them.
- Stonebroom a neglected area.
- Chair of PC – had previously come off the PC as thought it biased towards Stonebroom. Majority of votes in favour of Stonebroom. Tried to work with all areas of the parish council – Higham, Mickley, Shirland and Stonebroom but the parish council is consistently criticised.
- Since 2019, the PC has sought to put something in every parish area. Examples given.
- It's not about money. It is a fact Stonebroom people want more but are told no every time.
- Wanted to get something for the Stonebroom's children's football team but hit a brick wall.
- Stonebroom Cllrs don't represent residents.
- PC run in an archaic fashion and doesn't represent Stonebroom people. Shouldn't have to wait between meetings for a decision
- The Pavilion is not promoted, raises no money. What can we do to get it used? Do we need to keep it?
- Parish Cllrs should walk round Stonebroom and asking what residents want.
- Large number of Cllrs do not read documents and emails sent them.
- Asked for extra grass cutting for youth football teams run by parents and grandparents. Lost interest because of negative issue.
- Ex Parish Councillor stated that running a parish council is hard work and Shirland and Higham do excellent work. There are rules and regulations when running a parish council.
- Councillors from Stonebroom area in a minority when the parish council are taking decisions
- Criticism over parish councillors not reading emails and responding

Further points

- Might be useful to understand what a precept is.
- What would be the cost of a separate PC?

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- Cannot make an informed decision on what we know currently.
- Does the amount of money in balances have to reach a certain level?
- If Council run more efficiently could be run more cheaply.
- Upset the discussion started with the financial aspect. This is no argument for a Stonebroom PC.
- Villages do interact with one another.