Tel(01453) 754 331 Fax (01453) 754 957 democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

Council Offices Ebley Mill Ebley Wharf Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 4UB

To all Members of Stroud District Council

18 April 2018

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill on **THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2018 at 7.00pm.**

David Hagg Chief Executive

Please Note: This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site (www.stroud.gov.uk). By entering the Council Chamber you are consenting to being filmed. The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest

3 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the Council held on 22 February 2018

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive announcements from the Chair of Council and the Chief Executive

5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairs of Committees will answer questions from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS

Noon on Monday, 23 April 2018

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and sent by post or email (democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk)

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

6a AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 10 APRIL 2018

Annual Report 2017/18 (A&S Agenda Item 10)

The relevant committee report is also available on the website page for this Council meeting.

The Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee will present this item.

The Committee recommends that "the Committee's Annual Report 2017/18 is approved."

6b STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 12 APRIL 2018

Redevelopment of Brimscombe Port, Thrupp (S&R Agenda Item 11)

The relevant committee report is available on the website page for this Council meeting.

The Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee will present this item.

The Committee recommends that "£1.6 million of capital funding be allocated to delivering infrastructure at and redevelopment of Brimscombe Port Thrupp".

7 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

See Agenda Item 5 for the submission deadlines

8 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

8a Motion regarding the Mental Health Challenge is proposed by Cllr Skinner and seconded by Cllr Davies

Background:

The Council notes 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.

The World Health Organisation predicts that depression will be the second most common health condition worldwide by 2020.

All Councillors can play a positive role in championing mental health.

Motion:

The Council resolves to:

- Sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge and to appoint two elected members as Mental Health Champions;
- 2. Support positive mental health in our community, including in local schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces;
- 3. Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community;
- 4. Tackle discrimination in the grounds of mental health in our community;
- 5. Proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.

8b Motion regarding the reduction of single use plastic in the Stroud District is proposed by Cllr Braun and seconded by Cllr Denney.

Background:

Stroud District Council notes that:

- Every year an estimated 8 million tonnes of plastic enters the world's oceans, adding to the plastic debris which is endangering marine life and the environment [1].
- The majority of plastic packaging in the UK is not recycled ^[2], and there is a risk of plastic products ending up in the ocean through littering, from landfill sites, and disposal via waste water ^[3].
- Recent studies have found microplastic contamination in a third of fish caught in the English Channel ^[4], and in 72 % of European tap water samples ^[5], and there is a growing understanding of the risks posed to human health by the toxic chemicals present in plastics ^[6].
- Media reports have succeeded in raising public awareness of the problems of single use plastic and our throwaway culture, prompting action across Stroud District, by individuals, organisations and businesses, for example the adoption of the Refill scheme to reduce use of disposable plastic bottles [7] [8].

It is time for Stroud District Council to take a lead on this issue on behalf of our District.

Motion:

The Council resolves to:

- 1. Become a 'single use plastic free' authority as soon as possible by ending:
 - a. the purchase and procurement of single use plastics through the Council's supply chain, and
 - b. the sale and provision of single use plastic products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws at Ebley Mill and at all council events
- 2. Form a task and finish group which will report to the July 2018 meeting of Strategy and Resources, setting out an action plan to deliver this commitment.
- 3. Encourage the District's businesses and institutions to commit to reducing single use plastic waste in their organisation, for example, by taking the 'plastic free pledge' [9].
- 4. Encourage local shops, cafes, restaurants and market stall holders to:
 - a. provide a discount to customers who purchase drinks or food in their own reusable containers and invite customers to bring their own; and
 - b. support the Refill initiative, and, where possible, offer free tap water refills
- 5. Provide information to residents on how to minimise use of single use plastic products and how to avoid disposal of plastic items via waste water.
- Investigate the possibility of requiring pop-up food and drink vendors at large events in the District to avoid single use plastic as a condition of their contract
- 7. Explore the creation of a 'plastic free network' that could provide business support, practical guidelines and advice to help local businesses and organisations transition from single use plastic to sustainable alternatives.

- [1] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-31432515
- [2] https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/nov/21/only-a-third-of-uk-consumer-plastic-packaging-is-recycled
- [3] https://greenpeace.org.uk/plastic-end-ocean/
- [4] http://www.nerc.ac.uk/planetearth/stories/1343/
- [5] https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/most-tap-water-is-contaminated-with-plastic-scientists-discovera3627971.html
- [6] http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/364/1526/2153.short#sec-5
- http://www.gazetteseries.co.uk/news/gloucestershirenews/16076822.Wotton_under_Edge_businesses_join_free_bottle refill scheme/
- [8] http://stroudtown.gov.uk/2018/01/29/national-refill-scheme-coming-stroud/ [9] https://plasticfreepledge.com/

8c Motion regarding Single Use Plastic in the Stroud District is proposed by Cllr Cooper and seconded by Cllr Davies.

Background:

The Council notes the increasing concern over "Single Use Plastic".

Following the interest raised by the BBC programme "Blue Planet" there is growing public concern over the estimated 9 million tonnes of plastic that enters our seas and oceans every year.

The Conservative Government, following the success of the "Plastic Bag Levy", has announced it is looking into banning plastic straws and introducing a bottle deposit scheme.

Motion:

The Council resolves to:

- 1. Eliminate Single Use Plastic by the Council in all facilities by no later than 2020.
- 2. Seek to eliminate Single Use Plastic in the Council supply chain by 2025.
- 3. Work with the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Partnership to consider how they could promote the reduction of SUP across Stroud District.

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Council Offices Ebley Mill Ebley Wharf Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 4UB

COUNCIL MEETING

22 February 2018

7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud

Minutes

Membership: Martin Baxendale Ρ Ρ Nick Hurst Ρ Skeena Rathor **Dorcas Binns** Р Julie Job Α Sue Reed Р Catherine Braun Haydn Jones Р Mark Reeves Р Α Ρ Chris Brine Р John Jones Α Steve Robinson George Butcher Ρ Norman Kay Ρ Mattie Ross Р Р Ρ Miranda Clifton Darren Loftus Α Tom Skinner Р Ρ Р Nigel Cooper Stephen Lydon Nigel Studdert-Kennedy Doina Cornell Р John Marjoram Ρ Haydn Sutton Ρ Ρ Ρ Α **Brian Tipper** Gordon Craig Phil McAsev Ρ Karen McKeown Ρ Chas Townley Ρ Rachel Curley Stephen Davies Ρ Р Jessica Tomblin Р Jenny Miles* Paul Denney Α Dave Mossman Ρ Ken Tucker Р Р Р Р Jim Dewey Gill Oxlev Martin Whiteside Jonathan Edmunds Р Keith Pearson Р Р Tim Williams Chas Fellows Р Simon Pickering Ρ **Tom Williams** Р Colin Fryer Р Gary Powell** Ρ Penny Wride Α Р Nigel Prenter **Debbie Young** Alison Hayward Ρ Р

Officers Present:

**Chair *Vice-Chair

Chief Executive
Director of Development Services
Democratic Services Officer

Accountancy Manager (Acting Section 151 Officer)
Solicitor Advocate and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Director of Tenant & Corporate Services

CL.035 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Braun, Paul Denney, Julie Job, John Jones, Darren Loftus, Philip McAsey and Penny Wride.

P = Present A = Absent

CL.036 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

CL.037 MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve the minutes of the Council held on 19 October 2017 and 25 January 2018.

CL.038 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

CL.039 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were none.

CL.040 RECOMMENDATION FROM AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 6 FEBRUARY 2018

<u>Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/19</u>

Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy, Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee outlined the report which had been debated and agreed at the above meeting. He suggested adding an additional paragraph 5. to the decision box, "5. To give the Section 151 Officer delegated authority to amend Table 1 and other interrelated tables in the Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/19" should the commercial loan outlined in Agenda Item 9 be provided. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Rachel Curley.

Members' questions were answered by officers and the matter was debated. Members unanimously

RESOLVED 1.

- 1. To adopt the prudential indicators and limits for 2018/19 to 2020/21;
- 2. To approve the treasury management strategy 2018/19, and the treasury prudential indicators;
- 3. To approve the investment strategy 2018/19, and the detailed criteria for specified and non-specified investments; and
- 4. To approve the MRP Statement 2018/19;
- 5. To give the Section 151 Officer delegated authority to amend Table 1 and other interrelated tables in the Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/19 (if Agenda Item 9 is agreed).

CL.041 SETTING THE AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX FOR 2018/19

The Leader outlined the above annual report, highlighting an error in paragraph 2. of the decision box, the year should have read "2018/19" and not 2017/18. The report and amendment was seconded by Councillor Martin Whiteside. Members' questions were answered by officers and the matter was debated.

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 a recorded vote was taken, the results of which can be viewed at the following link: Item 7 – Results. Upon the vote the majority of members

- 1. It be noted that the Council has calculated:
 - (a) the Council Tax Base 2018/19 for the whole Council area as 43,539.30 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix A column 2.
- 2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the for the Council's own purposes for 2018/19 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,773,169.
- 3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £77,035,854 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - (b) £64,626,340 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
 - (c) £12,409,514 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) £285.02 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a)) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (Basic Band 'D' including Parish precepts).
 - (e) £3,636,345 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix A).
 - (f) £201.50 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates. (Basic Band 'D' excluding Parish/Town Councils).
- 4. That it be noted that for the year 2018/19 Gloucestershire County Council and The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

				Office of the Police and Crime
Valuation	Glouce	stershire C	county	Commissioner for
Bands*		Council		Gloucestershire
		(£)		(£)
	ASC	General	TOTAL	
DisrA**	37.82	646.74	684.56	125.83
Α	45.39	776.08	821.47	150.99
В	52.95	905.44	958.39	176.16
С	60.52	1,034.78	1,095.30	201.32
D	68.08	1,164.13	1,232.21	226.49
E	83.21	1,422.82	1,506.03	276.82
F	98.34	1,681.52	1,779.86	327.15
G	113.47	1,940.21	2,053.68	377.48
Н	136.16	2,328.26	2,464.42	452.98

^{*} Banding proportions are shown in paragraph 25 of the report.

- 5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(d) and 4 above, the Council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2018/19 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Appendix C to this report.
- 6. The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/19 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992. As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/19 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.

CL.042 STONEHOUSE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Chair of Council outlined the above report which indicated where and what type of properties Stonehouse would like to be built in the future. This was seconded by Councillor Chris Brine. Members unanimously

- RESOLVED 1. That the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan is made part of the Development Plan for Stroud District.
 - 2. To delegate to the Director of Development Services, in agreement with the Qualifying Body, the correction of any further minor spelling, grammatical or typographical errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

CL.043 STROUD TOWN CENTRE – PROPERTY INVESTMENT BY THE COUNCIL

The Leader confirmed that following a meeting held on Tuesday, 20 February 2018 all other funding was now in place for this project. The proposed loan would be a unique opportunity for the Council to regenerate this key site in Stroud.

^{**}Band DisrA provides for a discount for disabled people living in a band A property.

The Leader moved an amendment to the decision box, paragraph 2.b) the addition of the following words at the end of the paragraph "nor can the property be sold to a third party without the Council's prior approval", which was seconded by Councillor Martin Whiteside.

Members debated the amendment and it was agreed that this should be a matter for discussion only and the amendment was subsequently withdrawn.

Members were very supportive of the regeneration project and also impressed with the presentation given by Dransfield Properties Ltd. Risks were discussed and members agreed that this opportunity should not be missed and was worth the risk.

During debate several members wished to thank the Chief Executive and officers for being able to bring this project forward. Members unanimously

- RESOLVED 1. To provide a £2 million loan to Stroud Regeneration Ltd on commercial terms for a 5 year period to enable the company to purchase the Merrywalks Centre as part of the Council's continuing efforts to sustain and enhance Stroud town centre for the benefit of Stroud District.
 - 2. The loan offer is subject to specific conditions;
 - a) that Dransfield Properties Ltd, through its subsidiary, Stroud Regeneration Ltd will invest £10m over 5 years in the centre's refurbishment and enhancement
 - b) the loan is secured as a second charge on the property acquired by Stroud Regeneration Ltd and appropriate clauses included in the legal agreement that ensure no additional charges or conditions can be put in place without the Council's prior approval
 - c) the public benefit identified in this report is delivered in respect of the town centre
 - d) completion of due diligence in respect of the Dransfield company arrangement, its financial status and cashflow and the property valuation.
 - 3. That authority is delegated to the Chief Executive, Head of Legal Services and Acting Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Strategy & Resources Committee and Audit & Standards Committee to agree the rate of interest and terms of the commercial loan offered to Stroud Regeneration Ltd.

CL.044 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

A question was received from Councillor Nick Hurst and answered by the Chair of Environment Committee. The question and answer have been published on the Council's website using the following link: Item 10 - Members Questions. The answer to a supplementary question is available on the Council's webcast of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

TO COUNCIL ON 26 APRIL 2018

6a

This is a copy of the Agenda Item 10 report to the Committee on 10 April 2018

Report Title	AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18		
Purpose of Report	The Annual Report summarises the activities of the Audit and Standards Committee during 2017/18 and sets out its plans for the next twelve months.		
	This report provides Council with an independent assurance that the Council has in place adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; internal and external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements that can be relied upon and which contribute to the high corporate governance standards that this Council expects and maintains.		
Decision(s)	That the Audit and Standards Committee:		
	a) RESOLVE to agree the Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/18; and		
	b) RECOMMEND to Council the Annual report is approved.		
Consultation and Feedback	All Members of the Audit and Standards Committee have been consulted on the report content.		
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	There are no further financial implications arising from this report.		
	David Stanley, S151 Officer Tel: 01453 754100 Email: david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk		
	Risk Assessment:		
	Audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework.		
	The Audit and Standards Committee's Annual Report is part of the overall internal control arrangements and risk management process. By		

	examining and evaluating objectively the adequacy of the control environment through the reports it receives the Committee can, in turn, provide assurances to Council on its governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; internal and external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements that inform the Annual Governance Statement.	
Legal Implications	None (Ref: KT/C26.3.18) Karen Trickey, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk	
Report Author	Theresa Mortimer, Head of Audit Risk Assurance Tel: 01453 754319 Email: theresa.mortimer@stroud.gov.uk	
Chair of Committee	Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy Chair of Audit and Standards Committee Tel: 01453 821491 Email: cllr.nigel.studdert-kennedy@stroud.gov.uk	
Options	Consideration has been given to not producing an Annual Report however this has been discounted because recommended practice from both the public and private sectors indicates that an audit committee should report directly to the governing body of the organisation. In the case of a local authority, the full Council.	
Performance Management Follow Up	In accordance with recommended practice the Audit and Standards Committee will continue to present an Annual Report to Council.	
Background Papers/ Appendices	Appendix A – Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018.	
	Relevant public reports presented to the Audit and Standards Committee during 2017/2018 and minutes of those meetings can be found at https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council/meetings/audit-standards-committee .	

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Stroud District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place the proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs.
- 1.2 A sound corporate governance framework involves accountability to service users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which the Council takes decisions and leads and controls its functions to achieve stated objectives and priorities. It thereby provides an opportunity to demonstrate the positive elements of the Council's business and to promote public confidence.
- 1.3 Audit Committees are widely recognised as a core component of effective governance. Their key role is independently overseeing and assessing the internal control environment, comprising governance, risk management and control and advising the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 1.4 In response to the above, the Audit and Standards Committee was established in September 2009 in line with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This guidance recommends that audit committees should prepare an annual report to the full Council, which sets out the Committee's work on how they have discharged their responsibilities.
- 1.5 The Annual Report attached at **Appendix A** details the work and achievements of the Audit and Standards Committee during 2017/18 and sets out its plans for the next twelve months.

Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2017-2018





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Statement from the Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee

Effective corporate governance is a fundamental feature of any successful public sector organisation. The trend for strengthening governance arrangements has resulted in the joint Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives (SOLACE) good practice publication / guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – 2016 Edition'.

Being well managed and well governed are important attributes in helping the council to improve performance and to reduce the risk of failing to achieve our objectives and providing good services to our community.

Audit Committees are widely recognised as a core component of effective governance. Their key role is to independently oversee and assess the internal control environment, comprising governance, risk management and control and advise the council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

In response to the above, the council established an Audit and Standards Committee in September 2009 in line with CIPFA's guidance 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police - 2013 Edition'. The Committee's priorities are to maintain and if and where necessary, improve our governance procedures. We are a major source of providing assurance on the council's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment and reporting on internal and external audit functions and financial and non-financial performance. As Chairman, I also consider training and refresher training a key priority for members in order for us to undertake our roles effectively.

The Committee undertakes a substantial range of activities and works closely with the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and both internal and external auditors, in achieving our aims and objectives. We have developed and implemented a work plan for the year to enable key tasks to be considered, undertaken and delivered and to summarise, through our work plan we have:

- provided independent assurance on the adequacy of the governance, risk management framework and associated control environment;
- provided independent scrutiny of the council's financial and non financial performance to the extent that it affects the council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment: and
- overseen the statutory financial reporting process.

In conclusion, the Committee has continued to make a positive contribution to the council's overall governance and control arrangements, including risk management and is satisfied that the council has maintained an adequate and effective internal control framework through the period covered by this report.

Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee

Background

Stroud District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the council is responsible for putting in place the proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs.

A sound corporate governance framework involves accountability to service users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which the council takes decisions and leads and controls its functions to achieve stated objectives and priorities. It thereby provides an opportunity to demonstrate the positive elements of the council's business and to promote public confidence. Audit Committees are widely recognised as a core component of effective governance.

The Audit and Standards Committee is responsible for overseeing the council's corporate governance, audit and risk management arrangements. The Committee is also responsible for approving the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement. The Committee's specific powers and duties are set out in the council's Constitution.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) issued guidance to local authorities to help ensure that Audit Committees are operating effectively^{1.} The guidance recommends that audit committees should report annually on how they have discharged their responsibilities. The key benefits to the council of operating an effective Audit and Standards Committee are:

- Maintaining public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting;
- Reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit and any other similar review process;
- Providing a focus on financial reporting both during the year and at year end, leading to increased confidence in the objectivity and fairness of the financial governance arrangements operating within the council;
- Assisting the co-ordination of sources of assurance and, in so doing, making management more accountable;
- > Providing additional assurance through a process of independent and objective review, via the Internal Audit function;
- Raising awareness within the council of the need for governance, including ethical governance, internal control and the implementation of audit recommendations; and
- Providing assurance on the adequacy of the council's risk management arrangements, including the risk of fraud and irregularity.

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¹ CIPFA – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police, 2013

Membership and Meetings

The Committee has enjoyed the benefit of a settled membership over the last two years. This has helped to build and retain the expertise within the Committee, which has led to the Committee being able to demonstrate that they are operating within a best practice framework.

There are nine Members of the Audit and Standards Committee namely:

- Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy (Chair)
- Councillor Rachel Curley (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor Martin Baxendale
- Councillor Stephen Davies
- Councillor Colin Fryer
- Councillor Keith Pearson
- Councillor Mark Reeves
- Councillor Tom Williams
- Councillor Penny Wride

During the 2017/18 Civic Year, the Audit and Standards Committee has met on five occasions, in accordance with its Programme of Work:

- > 11th April 2017
- > 4th July 2017
- > 12th September 2017
- 28th November 2017
- 6th February 2018

The Committee is also supported by council officers, principally the Chief Financial Officer (S151 Officer), Monitoring Officer, Head of Audit Risk Assurance (Chief Internal Auditor) and the council's External Auditors (KPMG).

Work Programme

During this period, the Committee has assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's risk management arrangements, control environment and associated counter fraud arrangements through regular reports from officers, the internal auditors (Audit Risk Assurance) and the external auditors (KPMG).

The Committee has sought assurance that action has been taken, or is otherwise planned by management to address any risk related issues that have been identified by the auditors during this period. The Committee has also sought to ensure that effective relationships continue to be maintained between the internal and external auditors and between the auditors and management. The specific work undertaken by the Committee during 2017/2018 is set out below.

Internal Audit Activity

With effect from May 2016, the Internal Audit service is provided by Audit Risk Assurance under a shared service agreement. The Committee has continued to monitor the work of Internal Audit and has:

- been provided with an evaluation of the effectiveness of Internal Audit and has noted that the service complies with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) 2017. The standards require periodic self-assessments and an assessment by an external person every five years. The Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors (CIIA) (the professional body who sets internal audit standards for public bodies) assessment of Audit Risk Assurance concluded that the work of Internal Audit was in compliance with the required professional standards. The Committee therefore takes assurance that the internal audit practices meet the required standards and continued reliance can be placed on the internal audit arrangements operating within the council;
- ➤ contributed towards, received and approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18. The plan ensures that internal audit resources are prioritised towards those systems, processes and areas which are considered to be deemed high risk, or which contribute most to the achievement of the council's corporate objectives;
- monitored the delivery of the annual Internal Audit Plan through regular update reports presented by the Head of Audit Risk Assurance;
- received, considered and monitored the results of internal audits performed and high risk activity identified, in respect of specific areas i.e. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Balances, the Procurement Action Plan, Review of Council Tax and Business Rates Direct Debit payment issues, Multi Services Contract, Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and ICT Business Processes and monitored the progress made by management, during the period, to address identified control weaknesses:
- considered the council's overall counter fraud arrangements and response in the light of updated national guidance Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally – The Local Government Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2016 – 2019 which is supported by CIPFA Counter Fraud Centre and approved the revised Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy, Anti Bribery Policy and Anti Money Laundering Policy 2017-2019, which reflects this updated guidance;
- received updates on the outcomes of special investigations / counter fraud activities undertaken by Internal Audit / Gloucestershire Counter Fraud Unit, along with progress made in the investigation of queries arising as a result of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise; and
- considered the Internal Audit Annual Report of the Head of Audit Risk Assurance, which provided a satisfactory opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control environment. The summarised internal audit activity upon which that opinion was based, provide the Committee with reasonable assurance that there is a generally sound system of internal control in place at the council.

Activity relating to Treasury Management

During the year, the Audit and Standards Committee:

➤ received and approved the quarterly Treasury Management activity reports which monitor treasury activity against the 2017-2018 strategy and recommended to full council for approval amendments to the 2017-2018 strategy. Also considered and recommended to full council the annual report setting out the Treasury Management Strategy, the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/2019. This report also set the council's prudential indicators for 2018/19. Treasury Management is a key area for the Committee to monitor and they continue to consider and recommend to full council for approval amendments to the investment strategy in response to constantly changing market conditions.

External Audit Issues

The External Audit service is provided by KPMG. The Committee has monitored the work of the council's external auditors and has:

- considered and approved the External Audit Plan 2017/18 which sets out external audit's work to be undertaken on the accounting statements and to provide a value for money opinion. It reported on risks they have identified which would receive attention during the audit, the results of interim work, which did not reveal any material weaknesses, and the dates for the completion of the audit.
- considered the External Audit Report 2016/2017 i.e. 'Report to those charged with Governance' in accordance with the requirements of International Standard on Auditing 260 (ISA) which summarises the key findings arising from their audit work in relation to the council's financial statements and work to support the council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (Value for Money (VFM) conclusion). The audit concluded with an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and VFM conclusion;
- considered and approved the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 of the council and received KPMG's audit opinion. The Acting S151 Officer together with the Chairman of the Committee signed a letter of representation on behalf of the Committee and Council to KPMG, to enable the 'unqualified' opinion to be issued;
- considered and accepted the Annual Audit Letter 2016/17. This letter summarises the outcome from audit work at the council during this period;
- received and considered the Annual Report on grant claims and returns 2016/17. This report summarises the results of the work undertaken on the council's 2016/2017 grant claims and returns; and
- received and considered regular external audit progress reports.

Risk Management Activity

During the year the Committee has:

- considered and approved the new Risk Management Policy and associated framework; and
- received regular risk management update reports (including the review of the corporate risk register) and being presented with the actions taken by the council to identify and address corporate risks. The Committee recognised that the corporate risk register required further review and enhancement, which is currently being addressed.

Corporate Governance

In relation to corporate governance the Committee:

- considered and approved the council's 2016/2017 Annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Corporate Governance 2016/2017 which reflects the principles of good governance as per CIPFA / SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016 edition. The Committee also reviewed the progress made by management to address the significant issues identified in the 2016/17 Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan; and
- considered the standards issued during 2016/2017 specifically relating to the review of the council's Member Code of Conduct / ethical framework.

Other

In addition, the Committee:

continued to monitor and accept the achievements against the Procurement Action Plan and considered the actions required to further improve the council's performance and contract management arrangements.

Training

The following training was made available to Members of the Audit and Standards Committee in 2017/18 to support the Committee in discharging its responsibilities:

- Treasury Management (provided by council's treasury advisors all Councillors invited) November 2017;
- Finance Training (open to all councillors) November 2017; and
- Risk Based Internal Audit Planning Workshop January 2018.

Future Work

During 2018/19, the Audit and Standards Committee will continue with the existing aim of being an important source of assurance about the organisation's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial and other performance.

In particular, they will continue to support the work of Internal and External Audit and ensure appropriate responses are given to their recommendations, continue to monitor the implementation of the Procurement Action Plan and the effectiveness of the procurement arrangements operating across the council, the issues identified in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, the multi service contract management arrangements and any actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement action plan 2017/2018, to ensure the council continues to adopt the latest good practice.

In addition, with risk management being a key contributor to good governance the Committee will be seeking assurance from management that risk management continues to operate effectively within the council and they will look to Internal Audit to provide the independent assurance that risk continues to be embedded into the council's key business activities.

Conclusion

The Audit and Standards Committee has had a successful year in providing the council with assurances on the strength of its governance and stewardship arrangements and in challenging those arrangements.

The Committee's work programme is a dynamic programme and will continue to be reviewed to ensure the Committee maximises its contribution to the governance and control framework at the same time managing agendas to ensure that all meetings are focused on the key issues.

Details of all reports as noted within this report can be found at https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council/meetings/audit-standards-committee.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TO COUNCIL ON 26 APRIL 2018

6b

This is a copy of the Agenda Item 11 report to Committee on 12 April 2018

Report Title	Redevelopment of Brimscombe Port, Thrupp
Purpose of Report	To seek approval to additional funding to support the redevelopment of the site.
Decision(s)	The Committee resolves to RECOMMEND to Council that £1.6 m of capital funding be allocated to delivering infrastructure at, and the redevelopment of, Brimscombe Port, Thrupp.
Consultation and Feedback	Public consultation will be undertaken as part of the planning process. Liaison meetings continue with tenants on the site and local residents and the Parish Council.
Financial Implications	The report seeks member approval to make an additional £1.6m of funding available to in part mitigate the funding gap on the Brimscombe Port project. A decision in principle is needed to enable the procurement of a development partner. Without the agreement in principle, it is highly unlikely that a development agreement could be reached. There are a number of financial issues members should consider as part of their decision. The Council could choose not to allocate any further funding to the project.
	funding to the project. Members need to consider the total level of support that is being provided to the Brimscombe Port project. The Council has already spent £1m, with a £2m loan from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) also provided. This loan is subject to a funding agreement that does have financial implications to the Council. The funding agreement includes a number of milestone dates and outcomes that trigger a payment to the HCA (or a reduction in the loan amount repayable). In the event that the outcomes cannot be delivered, the Council can hand back the site to the HCA (subject to final transfer from SVCC).

Financial Implications Continued/...

Therefore, members may want to consider the total amount of Council funding being committed at each stage of the project and the likelihood of the project delivering the required outcomes.

Should members decide that the additional £1.6m be allocated to the, it is assumed that this will be funded by external borrowing. At the time of writing, the finance team are working through the Capital Programme outturn for 2017/18 and the impact this has on the available capital resources. In addition, the decision by Council to provide a £2m commercial loan to support the Merrywalks shopping centre will also be taken into account in determining the optimum use of resources to finance the capital programme.

External borrowing will give rise to a revenue cost of financing and will need to be budgeted for within the Council's medium term financial plan. At this stage, it is not possible to assess the revenue costs with certainty, as the level of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) required will need to be considered alongside the wider funding position of the project including the HCA loan. Should the funding agreement be renegotiated in light of the current delivery timetable, this will impact on the level of MRP charged.

It is also worth noting that the request for additional funding is being considered outside of the annual budget setting process.

David Stanley – Accountancy Manager (Section 151 Officer)

Tel: 01453 754100

Email: david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk

Legal Implications

Essential legal steps to achieving the recommended outcome will involve a significant re-negotiation of the current funding agreement with the HCA and the acquisition of the site from SVCC on appropriate terms. Securing a Development Partner will involve quite complex legal documentation and resource input. Procurement and State Aid issues will need to be considered.

Alan Carr - Solicitor Tel 01453 754357

Email alan.carr@stroud.gov.uk

Stroud District Council 26 April 2018

Agenda Item 6b

Report Author	Alison Fisk – Head of Property Services		
	Tel: 01453 754430		
	Email: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk		
Options The Council could choose not to allocate			
	funding to the project and effectively wind it up,		
	having secured planning permission for the		
	infrastructure works and then seek other sources of		
	funding if/as it becomes available.		
Performance	Update reports are to be brought to Investment and		
Management Follow	Development Panel and Committee on a regular		
Up	basis as part of the capital project monitoring report.		
Background Papers/	Appendix A Site Plan		
Appendices	Appendix B Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones		

1. Background

- 1.1 Initially Brimscombe Port was part of the Cotswold Canal Regeneration project, the original aim of which was to reinstate the canals from Stonehouse 'Ocean' to Brimscombe Port. This project is now in its final stages, with a bid recently submitted in November to the Heritage Lottery Fund for further funding to reinstate from Stonehouse to Saul.
- 1.2 The Port was acquired in 2009 (see Appendix A) as part of the original project, from British Waterways by the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), the expectation at that time was that it would deliver both a redeveloped Port and provide funding for other sections of canal. Stroud Valleys Canal Company (SVCC) was set up by 4 key partners, including the council, to hold the property.
- 1.3 After the property crash in 2009, subsequent marketing proved the site to be unviable (£3.5m to £5m funding gap in Galliford Try's bid), the Canal project was scaled back to finish at Bowbridge and prospects of the Port being redeveloped without considerable public funding were negligible.
- 1.4 In December 2014, the council took on the management of the site on behalf of SVCC.
- 1.5 In 2015 the Council appointed Savills to revalue the site (this showed a similar funding requirement), at the same time the HCA (who were SWRDA's successors in respect of the agreements relating to the Port) approached the council, offering to help bridge the funding gap. The bid was successful and secured a £2m loan from the HCA, plus the use of any surplus income from rental income from the property. In December 2015 the Council, amongst other related decisions, agreed to contribute £1m of capital towards the redevelopment of the Port including the delivery of infrastructure.

- 1.6 The council is the accountable body for the loan agreement and liable for repayment of the total investment of £9.6m in the site. Whilst it currently manages the site on behalf of SVCC the intention and a condition of the HCA funding is that the freehold will transfer to SDC.
- 1.7 There has been a necessary shift from seeing Brimscombe Port as delivering the canal infrastructure to a standalone project. There is a growing need to deliver housing here (min 150 dwellings local plan and HCA required output), but the canal cut and basin are required as an integral part of flood alleviation on the site.
- 1.8 Since 2015, the council has progressed the redevelopment of the site and some key achievements have been;
 - the appointment of Atkins who are delivering the design for the infrastructure on the site
 - The purchase of the Ship Inn pub which stands at an important location on the site, and which will be impacted when a new bridge is constructed.
 - Ground investigations have now been completed, an ecological survey of the whole site carried out and an archaeological report provided, which all aid with the derisking of the site.
 - Discussions have been undertaken with all affected landowner's
 - Improved management of and lettings on the site to maximise surplus income for use in the redevelopment.

2 Appraisals/Funding Gap

- 2.1 Recent valuations of the site have updated Savills' appraisal and are based on current building costs, property values and Atkins estimates for infrastructure costs. They also have to make a number of key assumptions on a number of variables;
 - Level of affordable housing
 - Water content
 - Community Centre site land value and building cost
 - Method/ process of delivery (i.e. amount of control SDC requires over outcomes and straight market disposal/ joint venture)
 - Inflation on build costs
 - Property values
- 2.2 The project team has produced a number of scenarios changing these variables, which all impact on the value of the scheme and show different levels of funding requirement. Ultimately, the test of whether the site is viable is to market it and seek a development partner.

2.3 Atkins' cost estimates also correlate with those used in the recent appraisals and the infrastructure costs for the site are as follows:

Table 1

Infrastructure Costs	
Whole Site	£
Comprising 3 elements :	
Port only - canal cut, basin and access road	3.9m
Brimscombe Hill works – road and new bridge, canal and river crossing	2.45m
Brimscombe Mill works: Canal cut from the Ship Inn to Gough's Orchard	0.75m
Total	7.1m

2.4 Current funding secured by SDC towards this project is as follows:

Table 2

Current Funding	
	£
SDC Capital programme	(£1m spent or committed to project incl. purchase of the Ship Inn
HCA loan	2m
HCA assigned income from site	0.5m
Total unspent	2.5m

2.5 The Project has now reached a significant point at which the anticipated funding gap needs to be reduced and/or met before the procurement of a developer can progress. Recent bids to the LEP's Growth Deal funding and Homes England's Housing Infrastructure fund have unfortunately been unsuccessful, albeit with some positive feedback.

3 Re-scoping the project

- 3.1 An important outcome of Atkins' work is that their initial flood modelling demonstrates that, if the Port elements of the infrastructure (canal cut and basin, new access road) are constructed, this (along with raising the level of the site) is sufficient to deliver the main outcomes of the redevelopment i.e.:
 - 178 new homes apartments and houses
 - Canal basin and cut
 - Community enterprise centre

- 424 sq. m employment, 429 sq. m retail and A3 uses, enterprise centre with 100sq m of business space, homeworking, 121 sq. m workshop/gym
- Translates into 50 jobs and 10 business starts
- Scale of development lends itself to apprenticeships at different levels – requirement included in the development agreement
- 26 boat moorings
- 3.2 It is possible, therefore, subject to the Environment Agency approving the final flood modelling, to continue with the redevelopment of the Port and deliver these outputs, by obtaining planning permission for all of the infrastructure, including the road and bridge works, but at this stage to fund the infrastructure for the Port only. This will substantially de-risk the site for developers the principle behind all the work done to date, but there is currently insufficient funding to meet these costs.

Table 3

Port only infrastructure funding	£	£
Infrastructure costs	3.9m	
Inflation and contingency	0.2m	
Total		4.1m
Less HCA funding		2.5m
Funding requirement		1.6m

- 3.3 As there is little prospect of securing more funding from the main public funding bodies (the LEP, Homes England and HLF), the project is, therefore, at a critical point and the council needs to decide whether it wishes to commit more funding to the project or effectively wind it up.
- 3.4 If no more funding is available the project team would aim to secure full planning permission for the infrastructure works and outline permission for the site, but could not go any further (i.e.to procure a developer) and so no further work would be undertaken and the site would remain undeveloped. There is a risk that Homes England would withdraw its £2m loan towards the project.
- 3.5 However, Homes England has confirmed that it is willing to amend the current funding agreement to reflect a re-scoped project and this along with additional council funding could still deliver the redevelopment of the Port to include homes, jobs canal and basin, recreating a dramatic waterside setting. The project would stop short of constructing a new bridge and canal river crossing, which would require a minimum of a further £2.2m of public funding.

4 Programme

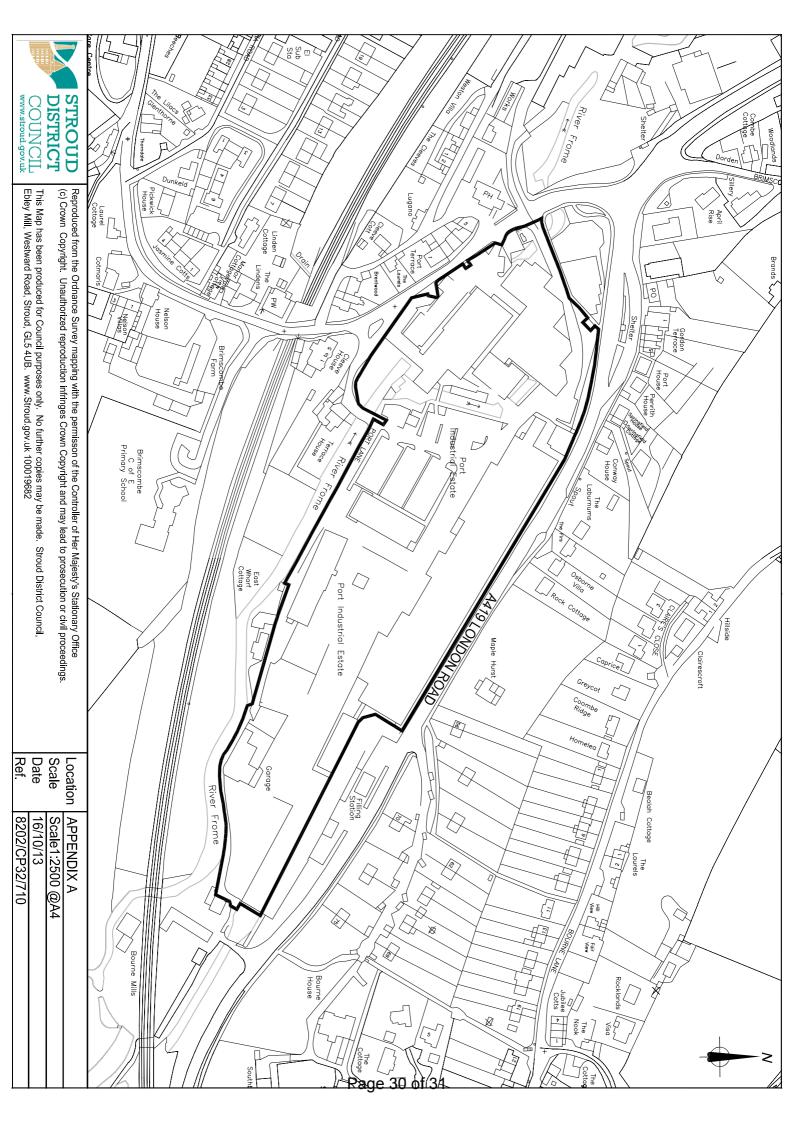
- 4.1 The Highways Authority is in receipt of the proposed infrastructure plans for their approval and the Environment Agency has commenced its modelling to validate the work that Atkins has done. The current programme (see Appendix B) is for these approvals to be received and the detailed drawings prepared by the end of May 2018. This will then enable the planning application to be prepared for the infrastructure for the whole site with the submission of the application due to made in June 2018. This remains subject to third parties providing their approvals within the agreed timescales.
- 4.2The procedure for the procurement of a development partner is now being considered by the Project Board and advice being sought, but if funding is secured an OJEU process could start in the summer. The intention is to procure a development partner with the Council paying for the infrastructure.
- 4.3 The transfer of the freehold interest in the site from SVCC is a condition of the current loan agreement with Homes England and will remain so in any amended agreement. It provides both security to the Council for the loan and, in having control of the site, a simplified, more efficient and less costly process in delivering the redevelopment. SVCC has yet to agree final terms but it is not recommended that the council commits any of the £2m loan or further significant expenditure until this has been secured.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 This site simply cannot be regenerated without public funding because of the significantly high abnormal infrastructure costs it bears. Inflation on building costs will continue to increase the funding gap unless property values increase dramatically and the chances of redeveloping the site will diminish with time.
- 5.2 In the short term, redevelopment will bring back water to the Port with a canal basin as its centre piece, improving the setting of the historic Port Mill and other listed buildings on the site, which sits in the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area. The cultural and heritage benefits of regenerating the site are significant.
- 5.3 It is believed that redeveloping the Port will help trigger the regeneration of other sites along the valley, the 'string of pearls' which is a priority for the District and is reflected in the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. Officers have already been approached by the owners of sites near the Port, with it acting as a catalyst for further waterfront development along the canal, delivering more houses and jobs

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- 5.4 Redeveloping the Port will also deliver much needed homes, employment and retail space and associated economic benefits on the site. It is, therefore, recommended that the Council commits a further £1.6m towards the infrastructure costs to enable a development partner to be sought, subject to the redrafting of the funding agreement with Homes England and the transfer of the freehold interest in the site from SVCC to the council.
- 5.5 Allocating the capital funds does not commit the council to commencing the development, but enables it to progress the project and procure bids for the site which it can then consider.



March 2018

	Activity	Date	Status
a)	Interim LA review of engineering options	29 August 2017	Completed
b)	SWDRP Workshop (Peer Review)	8 September 2017	Completed
c)	Submission of HIF bid	21 September 2017	Completed
d)	Information Evening for all Councillors	12 October 2017	Completed
e)	Project Board meeting	25 October 2017	Completed
f)	Process to appoint developer/development partner including consideration of different procurement proposals, legal structures, OJEU etc	Oct 2017 – Dec 2018	In progress
g)	Submission of LEP bid	10 November 2017	Completed
h)	Project Board meeting	6 December 2017	Completed
i)	Announcement of HIF bid (unsuccessful)	1 February 2018	Completed
j)	Budget costs from Atkins	14 February 2018	Completed
k)	Project Board meeting	19 Feb 2018	Completed
l)	Announcement of LEP bid	20 February 2018	Completed
m)	Decision on whether to include infrastructure in main developer agreement or Council to construct separately	April 2018	
n)	Strategy and Resources Committee – allocate funding approval	12 April 2018	
	NB remaining programme subject to E	nvironment Agency approv	al
0)	Sign off to engineering design from EA	May 2018	
p)	Public consultation on design of infrastructure	May – Mid June 2018	
q)	Public consultation on Development Brief	May – Mid June 2018	
r)	Decision to proceed with selection of partner/developer	June 2018	
s)	Submit planning application for all infrastructure	June 2018	
t)	Planning approval for infrastructure across all phases	Sept 2018	
u)	Start of possible OJEU process for selection of a developer/ partner dependent upon funding	June 2018	
v)	Earliest date for vacant possession of buildings on the port	Jan 2019	
w)	Preparation of planning application for residential development	Dec 2018 – June2019	
x)	Planning approval for residential	Sept 2019	
y)	Construction mobilisation and completion of residential development	Nov 2019 to Nov 2021	