

**STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO**

**14 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**11**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY OUTCOMES</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To inform the Committee of the outcomes from the District Council's Environment Strategy 2007-2027.
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>The Committee resolves to:</b> <b>a) Recognise the achievements made by the District Council in implementing the strategy.</b> <b>b) Agree that work on revising the Strategy is commenced and that an updated version is brought back to the Environment Committee for approval.</b>
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	As detailed in the report
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. David Stanley – Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754100 Email: <a href="mailto:david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk">david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	No significant legal implications to report on the current report which seeks authority to undertake a wholesale review of the Strategy. (Ref:rcd31/8) K Trickey, Legal Services Manager Tel: 01453 754369 Email: karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk
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<b>Options</b>	The Council can chose not to have an Environment Strategy and not to invest in any initiatives that are not part of its statutory function.
<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	As detailed in the report
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	Environment Strategy 2007-2027 <a href="#">Link</a>  The original report agreeing the adoption of the strategy <a href="#">Link</a>

## Background

1. During 2005 it became clear that the Council needed to make a step change in its performance if it was going to respond successfully to public demands for more action on the environment, in particular reducing waste to landfill, tackling climate change and improving the quality of public spaces.
2. During 2006 the Council undertook an extensive programme of consultation, stimulating the debate through the use of an Environment 'Green' Paper. The 2006 annual budget survey was also used to test the priorities of local people. What came through very strongly was that Environment was the top priority for local people; scoring higher than affordable housing and community safety. The 2006 and 2007 household budget surveys revealed that 69% and 68% of local people respectively thought that the environment was important or very important.
3. The complementary survey of companies showed 78% in 2006 and 83% in 2007 of business people felt the same way. The Green Paper consultation results showed that waste and recycling and climate change response dominated the concerns of local people.
4. In the 2007 budget surveys people were also asked whether they were satisfied that the Council was improving the local environment. 63% (85% 2016) of business people and 75% (78% 2016) of householders agreed that this was the case.
5. The results of the consultations were used to develop a new 20-year Environment Strategy. The Council adopted this in February 2007. (see hyperlink in the background papers section). We focused on those things that would help us 'live within environmental limits'.
  - Sustainable consumption and production – *'More for Less'*
  - Climate Change and Energy – *'Confronting our greatest threat'*
  - Protecting our Natural Resources and Enhancing the Environment - *'Clean, Green and Safe'*
  - Creating Sustainable Communities – *'From local to global'*
  - Keeping the Council and the Local Community Focused on Environmental Limits – *'Let's not forget how important the issue is'*
6. The Council's 4-year Corporate Delivery Plan and Medium Term Financial Plans were also aligned with the Strategy. In the 2006/07 budget round an additional £1.5m was made available over the medium term to support the delivery of our Environment Strategy; £700,000 on climate change response, £525,000 on waste and recycling and £225,000 on public spaces.

## **Where we are today**

7. The strategy is now over 10 years old and is in need of updating. This is not as a result of the strategy being out of date or superseded by national or international events, but is more to do with the actions or aspirations that were set out in the strategy largely having been met.
8. Appendix 1 sets out the original targets from the strategy and provides a case by case commentary of what was achieved. There has been some refocusing at a national level that has made reporting on some elements impossible but in the main the achievements have been significant.
9. The legacy of the strategy is significant with areas of note being the Council's approach to waste and recycling and in its continued commitment to energy conservation in domestic properties through the Warm and Well Partnership, which was given a significant boost by the groundbreaking 'Target 2050 Initiative'. The investment in the Strategy has been returned several times over by bringing in external funding for domestic energy installations alone.

## **Moving forward**

10. Recognising that we are now in a different place both nationally and locally and a 20 year strategy with actions may be too inflexible to respond to both opportunities and threats. It is proposed that the Council's approach is to split the Strategy between the longer term principles along similar lines as set out in paragraph 5, but under those principles we set out annual actions as part of the Corporate Delivery Plan.
11. In order to recognise and report on outcomes and achievements from business as usual activities, periodic reports can be presented to Environment Committee.
12. A Task and Finish Group has already been established and with the support of officers the intention is to draft a new strategy to include a refresh of the five areas of focus. It is proposed that a draft report is presented at February 2018 Environment Committee.

**Environment Strategy Outputs/Outcomes**

The summary of the outputs set out below should be read in conjunction with the Environment Strategy 2007-2027. The formatting follows that set out in the original document.

**Priority 1 - Sustainable Consumption & Production - 'More for less'**

1. Playing our part in influencing consumption patterns, in particular by making sure that citizens and consumers have access to appropriate advice. The initial emphasis will be on energy efficiency / micro generation and waste /recycling.	
Original 2007	Current position
during 2007 we will work with SWEA to establish a 'one stop shop' for advice on energy efficiency and micro generation	The advice line was set up as part of the 'Warm and Well' service with funding from District and the County Councils. The advice is now more targeted to those at risk of fuel poverty or cold related illnesses.
to undertake a marketing campaign aimed at better communicating what can be recycled in the district and increasing the numbers of householders who classify themselves as 'committed recyclers'	There was positive progression in terms of communicating what can be recycled but ultimately improvement was held back until the new waste collection service could be launched. This has resulted in a significant increase in recycling rates.
2. Establishing a new waste strategy, with increased emphasis on reducing waste at source and making use of it as a resource	
Original 2007	Current position
participate in the development of the Gloucestershire Joint Municipal Waste Strategy, which will set the overall direction for waste management in the district through to 2020	SDC participated in the development of the JMWS, but it is difficult to determine if it had any definable positive outcomes for the District.
test new waste collection systems during 2007 and consider options to roll this out across the entire district.	The 'Stanley's' trial clearly demonstrated the potential collection rates achievable for a food waste collection system. This and other options fed in to the scheme design that is now in place. The new waste services have resulted in a significant increase in landfill diversion.
help and support the business and education communities in the development of commercial waste recycling initiatives	SDC have supported the commercial and education communities through its input into waste recycling schemes that are currently provided by local recycling collectors and processors. Prior to the council's involvement, businesses were unable to attract commercial waste recycling companies to Stroud
3. A new commitment to sustainable procurement, where our aim will be to become a centre of recognised good practice	
Original 2007	Current position
review all our contracts by May 2007, identifying those with the most significant environmental impacts and identify the outcomes	This was carried out as a single action but since that time the environmental information required to support tenders and the scoring used to assess bids has moved on significantly.

## Priority 2 - Climate Change and Energy - 'confronting our greatest threat'

1. Putting climate change at the heart of our policy making and operations	
Original 2007	Current position
sign the Nottingham Declaration during 2007	Signed but now has been superseded by Climate Local. SDC became carbon neutral in 2015.
2. Establishing a climate change delivery plan that starts the process of moving towards a low carbon economy and adapting to climate change	
Original 2007	Current position
invest £400k up to 2010 to establish a 'one stop shop' for advice on energy efficiency and micro generation and developing the long term infrastructure (inc exemplars)	Done as part of the Target 2050 initiative. Link to Energy remains an active list of Gloucestershire installers.
increase the numbers of h/holders achieving the 40% house to 10% by 2020 and 100% by 2035	While laudable at the time, the removal of fiscal incentives and legislative tools rendered the target unachievable even if it could be measured!
introduce supplementary planning advice during 2008 to incorporate renewable energy production	Completed but soon made obsolete by legislative change that made 'Merton' type rules unlawful.
expect our partner RSLs to deliver high environmental standards for all new homes	RSL (RPs) standards are usually in excess of private providers.
require all new housing developments to be carbon neutral by 2016 in accordance with proposed part L of building regs and encourage early compliance	Following years of debate, Part L of the Building Regs was never implemented to achieve zero carbon. Also Councils were restricted from requiring standards that exceeded national regulations as demonstrated through the Local Plan examination process.
invest £300k up to 2009 in helping at least 20 local small businesses and 10 community buildings to reduce their CO2 emissions	Complete as part of the '2050 Initiative'. Output reports were published at the time.
ensure robust enforcement of Integrated Pollution Control and Prevention Control Regime to control emissions of GHG and other pollutants	Ongoing as part of the work of the Environmental Protection Service.
complete during 2007 a £200k Strategic Flood Assessment Model of the River Frome catchment	Complete and now evolved further with updated modelling as part of the Stroud Valleys Initiative.
work with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust during 2007 to understand and plan for impacts of climate change on the district's natural environment	The Council adopted the 'Nature Map' produced by the GWT in order to provide opportunity for biodiversity to move in response to longer term climate change by avoiding habitat fragmentation and isolation. The Council continues to work with the natural environment stakeholders and the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) to monitor change and mitigation. SDC has worked closely with the LNP, GWT & other agencies on the development of an emerging 'green infrastructure strategy' in 2017.
<p>reduce total carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to reduce domestic sector (non transport) CO2 by 20% by 2010</li> <li>• to reduce domestic sector (non</li> </ul>	Local and Regional CO2 Emissions Estimates for 2005-2012

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transport)CO2 by 30% by 2020</li> <li>to reduce domestic sector (non transport) CO2 by 60% by 2035</li> </ul>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Industry and Commercial</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Transport</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2005	2.8	2.7	4.1	9.6
	2006	2.9	2.7	4.3	9.9
	2007	2.8	2.6	4.3	9.7
	2008	2.7	2.5	4.1	9.5
	2009	2.4	2.3	4.0	8.7
	2010	2.5	2.5	3.9	8.9
	2011	2.4	2.1	3.7	8.3
	2012	2.3	2.4	3.7	8.4
the installation of on an average 1.5MW of renewable energy generating capacity per annum up until 2020 (total: 22MW)	As at 31/03/16 10.293 MW of renewable technology in the Stroud district*  *www. Renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk				
To reduce CO2 emissions from SDC's direct operations by a minimum of 3% per annum	Direct emissions as at March 2016 = CO2e = 2619 tonnes compared with 2007/08 = CO2 3581 tonnes				
To max the amount of advice given and the number of energy efficiency and renewable generation measures installed in domestic, public and community buildings as a result of Council interventions	Between 2001-2016, 11084 measures were installed improving 6352 properties				

### Priority 3 - Protecting our natural resources and enhancing the environment - 'clean, green and safe'

Building on our successful Green Spaces Strategy we will establish a new plan for delivering public and natural spaces	
Original 2007	Current position
appoint a 10th Neighbourhood warden by May 2007 and provide district wide coverage (12) by 2008	Completed but now at 8
during 2007 and 2008 to work with parish council and other agencies to identify the most important public and natural spaces in the district including road and streets and ensure that these are being appropriately managed (eg supporting community calls for 20mph zones and safer walking routes to school)	From 2007 Stroud District Council has worked with Communities as well as Town and Parish Councils to produce and adopt 11 Design Statements and 3 Neighbourhood Development Plans where important public and natural spaces have been identified. In 2012 the Council undertook a review of protected open spaces as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. In 2017 the Council is preparing a Green Infrastructure Strategy that refers to the concept of a strategic network of high quality green spaces in both urban and rural locations. These locations pass through the built environment and connect it to the wider surrounding rural area. These areas offer environmental and quality of life benefits. Stroud District Council has a limited role in respect of highway operation and control.

	<p>Nevertheless the Council has acted as an advocate for local communities. The Council has worked in partnership with Highways England and the Gloucestershire Highway Authority to plan for future growth in the District. Since 2009 the Road Safety Partnership have recommended the introduction of 20mph limits within built up areas and around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high. School Safety Zone Guidance was also introduced in 2013. The Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (2015-31) sets the long-term transport strategy for Gloucestershire up to 2031. It aims to influence how and when people choose to travel so that individual travel decisions do not cumulatively impact on the desirability of Gloucestershire as a place to live, work and invest. It supports the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan and Development Plans to maximise the opportunity for highway infrastructure investment within the county.</p>
<p>ensure that by 2009 all council property is being managed to maximise biodiversity</p>	<p>This objective was not achievable across all green spaces that we manage. However, we manage our Parks and selected open spaces in a sensitive manner to increase the diversity of flora and fauna within those sites. The use of chemicals is restricted and leaving grass cuttings in situ feeds and improves soil structure. Biodiversity in Stratford park is also monitored regularly and an annual review undertaken. These reports have shown year on year increases in species numbers. Green Flag Award achieved year on year. The cemeteries that we are responsible are also managed to maximise the opportunity for acknowledged Biodiversity interests to occupy these sites. We protect important natural Limestone grassland on Selsley Common, through sensitive management including appropriately timed grazing by cattle to prevent scrub invasion and species loss. We manage our Woodlands in line with the Council's Tree policy and in Partnership with Town and Parish Councils. The Council has supported the creation of Community Orchards at Cam for example.</p>
<p>during 2007/08 establish a baseline of the proximity of urban 'wildlife friendly' green space and corridors to local neighbourhoods</p>	<p>A proximity baseline was not established as this need was overtaken by Stroud District (since 2007) establishing a Service Level Agreement with the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records. This is a unique source of information about our county's wildlife and natural environment including rural and urban wildlife friendly space. GCER work with local recorders and wildlife groups to collate their sightings, bring</p>

	<p>together all the available information and build a database of over a million biological records. These can be used to comply with environmental legislation and policies. This information has been used in determining planning applications and providing information to support Parish Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Design Statements. In 2017 the Council is preparing a Green Infrastructure Strategy that refers to the concept of a strategic network of high quality green spaces in both urban and rural locations. These locations pass through the built environment and connect it to the wider surrounding rural area. These areas offer environmental and quality of life benefits.</p>
<p>make sure that maximising biodiversity is a key aspect of the Canal Area Action Plan which will be completed during 2007</p>	<p>The Canal Area Action Plan was never taken forward, but maximising biodiversity has remained a key aspect of the Canal Project. We have eliminated Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed from canal land, and greatly reduced Himalayan Balsam.</p> <p>A reed fringe has been maintained where possible, whilst new structures on the canalised river section all contain fish and eel passes.</p> <p>New wetland habitat has been provided and native deciduous trees planted. Over 100 nesting boxes have been provided along the canal corridor and bat bricks provided in a restored bridge.</p> <p>Opening up the canal has itself created well over 1 km of new open water habitat, where previously the channel had been completely filled in and was thus dry.</p>
<p>for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce crime by 15% by 2008 as measured against the 2003/04 figures</p>	<p>Ultimately our objectives are aimed at reducing crime and fear of crime throughout Stroud District. In the last 5 years (up to 2016), there have been 33% less recorded crimes than in previous 5 years.</p>
<p>for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce the fear of crime by 5% by 2008 as measured against the 2003/04</p>	<p>Ultimately our objectives are aimed at reducing crime and fear of crime throughout Stroud District. In the last 5 years (up to 2016), there have been 33% less recorded crimes than in previous 5 years.</p>
<p>for every community to have identified and agreed management plans for their most important public and green spaces by 2010</p>	<p>This objective has not been achievable for all communities but where there has been new Housing development we have supported and identified opportunities for maximising green infrastructure and ensuring plans are in place for future management. Towns and Parishes are encouraged to include outdoor play and green spaces in their Parish Plans/NDPs. Management plans are in place for Stratford park, the districts main destination park.</p>
<p>general satisfaction with the quality of public and green spaces to be increasing annually until 2012</p>	<p>As part of broader council services, customer satisfaction levels have remained high.</p>



to achieve national top quartile performance for the proportion of relevant land and highways (%) that are assessed as having: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. combined deposits of litter and detritus</li> <li>2. from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible and</li> <li>3. from which unacceptable levels of fly posting are visible</li> </ol>	The requirement on local authorities to gather information through a tightly regulated inspection regime and report on the results through a national database ceased to be applied several years ago. SDC had performed well against each of the categories at the time, bringing it in line with standards across Gloucestershire. The segmented data had since been used to drive improvements.
to achieve national top quartile performance for the percentage of residents expressing satisfaction with standards of cleanliness	This indicator has not been recorded since the Place Survey in 2008 when 62% of residents were satisfied
district wide coverage of neighbourhood wardens (12 in total) by 2008	Completed but now 8 wardens
by 2008 70% of abandoned vehicles are to be removed within 24 hours from the point at which the council is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	Over 70% of vehicles are collected where this criteria is met.

#### **Priority 4 - Creating sustainable communities - 'from local to global'**

1. Placing the achievement of sustainable communities at the heart of our Local Development Framework	
Original 2007	Current position
to progress the council's Core Planning Strategy in line with timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme with the intention of incorporating policies which clearly reflect the climate change agenda by August 2008	Local Plan was adopted in November 2015 New LDS is emerging in 2017.
to work with partners to try and deliver the Stroud Transport interchange and to deliver the canal corridor that acts as a 'green' transport route with suitable provision for cyclists and walkers	The Transport Interchange project failed to get the engagement/agreement of the bus operators due to concerns regarding the amount of dead mileage and ultimately the funding provision from GCC was reallocated.  Working with the Canal Trust, the canal towpath between Stroud and Stonehouse is almost complete allowing access to a 'green route'
to support community led proposals for improving environmental sustainability where there is widespread public demand and endorsement ( eg support of the Bisley Community Composting Scheme)	NDPs have come in to existence since the strategy was produced and can provide a focus for such community priorities notwithstanding that it is not a land use/spatial matter.  Delivery Policy ES1 of the Stroud District Local Plan seeks sustainable construction and design techniques. The Council adopted checklists and guidance as SPD to accompany the Policy in 2017. This was a response in part to public consultation and demand.
review our Regeneration Strategy during 2007/08 to ensure that it continues to enable us to invest in and support the development of the local economy, particularly the provision of goods and services by local business	This Strategy was not renewed; however regeneration projects and proposals form part of the Adopted Stroud District Local Plan. E.g. Delivery Policy EI2 and Allocation SA5 at Sharpness. Also other corporate document have a strong regeneration theme such as the Corporate Delivery plan, Jobs and Growth Strategy and the procurement strategy

to review and revise our 'Green' Travel Plan during 2007 including taking forward other transport related actions identified in this strategy (see Priorities 1 and 2)	A review has been undertaken by the Energy Savings Trust and a review of current arrangements is taking place.
District wide coverage of Town and Parish Plans that contribute to the evidence base for new Local Development Documents	In 2004 the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act reformed the planning system to produce a Local Development Framework comprising a range of planning documents of which Local Development Documents formed part. The original Act has been amended in 2015 to refer to Local Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework (which replaced Planning Policy Statements). Nevertheless there are 11 adopted community or Parish Design Statements. There are currently 4 adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans and another 15 emerging NDPs. All have contributed to the District Council's current evidence base and place making proposals for the adopted Local Plan and the future Local Plan Review. As such, they have informed the Adopted Local Plan district wide policy cover.
To deliver the core strategy in accordance with the timetable set out in our Local Development Scheme	Completed

**Priority 5 - Keeping the Council and local community focused on environmental limits - 'let's not forget how important this issue is'**

1. Making sure that consideration of environmental limits is built into everything that we do and that we continue to understand what the demands of local people are	
Original 2007	Current position
During 2007 establish an independent Climate Change Panel to advise the Council on the issue and evaluate its performance	Complete. The panel met over a two year period and reported on three themes, food, transport and housing. The reports were well received and assisted in the development of subsequent work stream and policy.
maintain our existing Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) registration and use the requirement to produce an annual Environmental Statement to report progress against our strategy and delivery plans	Complete and ongoing
to continue to train and develop elected members and staff so that they are able to deliver continuous improvement in the Council's environmental performance	Part of the induction programme for staff but currently not for members
work with the Local Strategic Partnership to develop a vision of an environmentally sustainable district, embed this within the Sustainable Community Strategy and use the Local Development Framework and Local Area Agreement process to deliver key aspects	Complete
produce a bi-annual State of the Environment Report based on the Audit Commission's nationally agreed basket of quality of life indicators	The indicators have been removed
all new land use planning documents will have Strategic Environmental Assessment applied and overtime all existing and new policies (not just overtly environmental ones) will be subject to rigorous environmental evaluation	Local Plan adopted following SEA methodology.

use our annual budget survey of households and businesses to test levels of satisfaction with our environmental performance and environmental quality within the district	Continuing in 2016 74% of residents and 84% of Businesses were satisfied that SDC was working to improve the environment
carrying out another 'Green Paper' consultation exercise and adopting a revised Environmental Strategy for the council during 2010/11	Environment Committee Working Group set up to review it in 2017