

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

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO**

**14 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**7**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>CAPITAL PROJECT MONITORING</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To inform the Committee of progress on capital projects within its remit and to recommend decisions on three projects to members.
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>The Committee resolves to note the project updates within the report.</b>
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Details are contained within the body of the report.
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	<p>Council approved the Capital budget proposals totalling £20.6m at their meeting in February 2017. This committee has oversight and responsibility for the capital projects outlined in the report.</p> <p>This report sets out some proposed changes to profiling of the Multi-Service vehicle replacement programme with an additional £84k required this financial year over and above the £250k allocated. Adjustments will be made to future year's allocations and may necessitate a further decision once the outcome from the efficiency work with Ubico has concluded. Strategy and Resources committee will formally consider the re-profiled capital budget at their meeting in October 2017.</p> <p>The Capital programme assumed a funding position based on the budget profiles set out in the February 2017 MTFP. If projects are delayed or are not able to achieve the desired outcomes and do not progress, then the capital budget would remain unspent and not reallocated to additional projects without consideration by the council as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process. Any change in expenditure outside of the agreed budget must be reported separately.</p> <p>David Stanley – Accountancy Manager (s151 Officer) Tel 01453 754100 Email <a href="mailto:david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk">david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	Where funding is provided by way of a grant it will need to be secured by a grant agreement, this will ensure it is used for the purposes intended by SDC and allow appropriate provisions for clawback/termination if it is not.

<b>Legal Implications Cont'd/...</b>	<p>This report is for information purposes only. There are no specific decisions required. Legal advice on each capital project will be provided as appropriate and required. Any strategic risks pertinent to the programmes should be referred to in the Strategic Risk Register. (Ref: r30.8c31.8d31.8)</p> <p>Craig Hallett, Solicitor &amp; Deputy Monitoring Officer  Tel: 01453 754364  Email: <a href="mailto:craig.hallett@stroud.gov.uk">craig.hallett@stroud.gov.uk</a></p>
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<b>Options</b>	<p>The report is for information only. Any decision to re define projects outside of the scope of the capital programme would need to be recommended to Strategy and Resources Committee.</p>
<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	<p>Update reports are to be supplied to this committee on a regular basis.</p>
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	<p>None</p>

## Introduction

1. The following report provides an executive summary of each of the Capital Projects within the remit of the Environment Committee.
2. The purpose of this report is both to advise the Committee of progress with the capital projects and to recommend decisions to members. Members will see that the two projects agreed at the last meeting to be discontinued, Ebley Hydro and the Stroud Valleys Initiative, have been removed from the update. The financial consequences of this change are covered in the budget update report.

## Stroud District Cycling & Walking Plan

3. The Council has allocated a sum of £300,000 to a Stroud District Cycling and Walking Plan and Committee agreed the scope of the Plan at the last meeting (29/6/17). A number of meetings have been held since

Committee to progress various elements of the Plan and the proposed routes.

4. An Expression of Interest to the RDPE Growth Programme, Rural Tourism Infrastructure fund has been endorsed by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to move to a full application. Following a workshop, hosted by the RPA, in July, work continues on developing the full bid, which relates to the Dursley and Uley Greenway.
5. A scoping meeting has been held with Gloucestershire County Council officers to discuss the Plan and potential GCC input and support for implementation. GCC undertook to produce a sectionalised view of the Greenway route, to provide an idea of obstacles/costs etc related to individual sections. Another meeting was convened with the representatives of the Greenway team, Sustrans and GCC to discuss a report Sustrans had produced in relation to part of the Greenway and potential joint working moving forward. The possibility of using Sustrans to 'audit' other routes was also raised.
6. Following dialogue with other GCC officers, SDC are hosting a meeting (31/8/17) with GCC Members and Officers to discuss plans/options for the Nailsworth/Stroud cycle path.
7. Discussions have been held with Stroud Town Council (STC) relating to walking and cycling routes around the town and their plans of STC to support cycling. STC are to bid to the GWR Customer & Communities Improvement Fund to improve cycling parking provision at Stroud station. STC have requested match funding from us to support the bid for up to £10K as it fits well with the Stroud District Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Separately officers have now been approached by Stonehouse Town Council for support for their bid to the same fund.

### **Wallbridge Gateway Site**

8. On 13th October 2016 Strategy and Resources committee resolved: 'That the Head of Asset Management progresses discussions with Stroud Town Council, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and Ecotricity on the design, costs and funding of a landscaping scheme for the land at Wallbridge and implements a scheme in consultation with those parties and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Community Services and Licensing Committee and Environment Committees'
9. A project group is already in place with representatives from the above organisations. At the latest project meeting, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2017, budget contributions were confirmed as Stroud District Council (SDC) - £90K, Stroud Town Council (STC) - £10K, Ecotricity - £90K. While land transfer from GCC to SDC has taken place for land south of the canal, the transfer of land to the north of the canal was delayed pending resolution of issues relating to the stability of the old brewery wall and the costs of required remedial work.

10. While GCC resolved not to fund the repair work they have reached agreement with the Canal Project Team to support the use of volunteers to undertake the refurbishment. This would facilitate the land transfer of this section to the district council.
11. A draft design brief has been produced by STC for comment. The brief has been circulated internally and any amendments will be agreed with partners and relevant Members before release to architectural/design practices/interested parties. This may be done by SDC or Ecotricity as part of their project contribution.

### **Canal Regeneration**

12. The Council has allocated £3m as matched funding towards a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid to be submitted in November. The Council will be the lead partner in this bid, working closely with the Cotswold Canals Trust (CCT). The outcome of this bid is likely to be known in 2018. A successful bid would enable restoration of a 4 mile length of canal West of Stonehouse to Saul Junction; connecting Stroud to the national waterway network.
13. Some volunteer-led work has already been undertaken in advance of the bid – primarily channel clearance west of the A38 at Whitminster, with more planned this winter. CCT has recently opened a new Visitor Centre at Bond's Mill, where overhanging trees will be cut back this winter. Waterway Recovery Group volunteers are currently constructing a new bypass at Dock Lock. A 150m stretch of towpath between Pike Bridge and Dock Lock has been upgraded by visiting teams from Ecotricity and National Grid, together with our own volunteers.
14. Alongside these, several pieces of work have been commissioned which will have the effects of both enhancing the bid and removing perceived risk. These include a heritage assessment, flood risk assessment, economic and social output projections and an outline planning application in respect of the 'missing mile'.

### **Multi-Service Contract – Vehicle Replacement**

15. Council has agreed an annual budget of £250k for the period of four years 2016/17 to 2020/21, for a capital programme of vehicle replacements for services covered by the Multi Service Contract.
16. The Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) produced by Ubico, and agreed by officers in June 2016, is revisited each year to identify necessary changes to the fleet. These changes are determined by operational needs and the remaining useful life and economic cost of maintaining individual vehicles; in an effort to maximise productive use of fleet resources and improve service efficiencies, vehicles that have become surplus to requirements are sold and income reinvested within the fleet; the vehicle fleet currently comprises of an agreed mix of new and used vehicles.

17. Officers have undertaken the first review of the VRP with Ubico. The financing of certain vehicles will be moved from ongoing hire to long term purchases; these changes will result in corresponding revenue savings. A number of vehicles have become surplus to requirements and will be sold; income from sales has been allocated to providing replacements within the fleet. The review outcome has identified a need to pull forward a capital spend of £84k from the budgeted profile (See Table 1 below).

18. Table 1

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Capital Budget</b>	<b>Required expenditure</b>	<b>Variation</b>
2017/18	£250,000	£334,000	£84,000

**Market Town Centres Initiative Fund**

19. The Council has allocated a budget of £50,000pa for 4 years totalling £200,000 to support capital projects within town centres, subject to match funding coming from the host town council. The design of the scheme has not been finalised as we await the recommendations of the ‘Future of Town Centres’ report which is covered separately on the agenda. It covers five towns, Stroud, Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge and it is envisaged that those will be the towns eligible for support from the Market Town Centres Initiative Fund.