

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

5 APRIL 2018

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Report Title	CAPITAL PROJECT MONITORING
Purpose of Report	To inform the Committee of progress on capital projects within its remit.
Decision(s)	The Committee resolves to: Note the project updates within the report.
Consultation and Feedback	Details are contained within the body of the report.
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	<p>This committee has oversight and responsibility for the capital projects outlined in the report.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Capital programme assumed a funding position based on the budget profiles set out in the February 2018 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 2019/20 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 david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Legal Implications	<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.</p> <p>Craig Hallett, Solicitor Tel: 01453 754364 Email: craig.hallett@stroud.gov.uk</p> <p>RC21.3CD22.03</p>

Report Authors	<p>Barry Wyatt, Strategic Head of Development Services Tel 01453 754210 Email: barry.wyatt@stroud.gov.uk</p> <p>Jon Ponterfract, Volunteers Manager Email jon.ponterfract@stroud.gov.uk Tel 01453 754646</p> <p>Mike Hammond Head of Community Services Email Mike Hammond@stroud.gov.uk Tel 01453 754447</p> <p>Gideon Darley, Regeneration Officer (Business) Email gideon.darley@stroud.gov.uk Tel 01453 754301</p>
Options	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.
Performance Management Follow Up	Update reports are to be supplied to this committee on a regular basis.
Background Papers/ Appendices	None

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.

Stroud District Cycling & Walking Plan

3. The Council has allocated a sum of £300,000 to a Stroud District Cycling and Walking Plan and Environment Committee has previously agreed the scope of the Plan.
4. A meeting was held, 17 January 2018, with representatives of the County Council (GCC), officers and Members, to specifically discuss the Nailsworth/Dudbridge Cycle Route. GCC have provided some preliminary costings for the resurfacing of the route and further work will now be undertaken to develop the proposals, including producing a timeline for works and identifying appropriate funding.
5. As discussed at previous Committee meetings and the withdrawal of an application to the RDPE Growth Programme related to the Cam & Dursley Greenway, we undertook to convene a strategic meeting with representatives of GCC to discuss the Stroud District Cycling and Walking Plan and its contingent routes. The aim being to better understand the level of resource and commitment GCC are able to provide, particularly in

light of forthcoming changes to Highways Management, while matching that with the support SDC is providing. A recent meeting was cancelled due to the need for GCC highway officers to focus on highway issues resulting from recent weather evenest. The meeting should now take place on the 28th March.

6. A small amount of funding has been agreed with both Stroud and Stonehouse Town Councils as potential match for their bids to the GWR Customer & Communities Improvement Fund. Both bids relate to improving cycling access/parking/signage at the respective stations.
7. A £1K, match funded, contribution has also been agreed towards the cost of the Wotton, Charfield and Kingswood Greenway Feasibility Study.
8. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) have had their EOI to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) call under the Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency strand endorsed and will now move to full application. The project focuses on improving biodiversity, delivered in three clusters of market towns across the County. In the Stroud cluster the project will take place along the Nailsworth to Stonehouse corridor, using the cycle path as the catalyst to improve biodiversity and green infrastructure along and beside the route. This would include improvements to the cycle path and it is on that basis that support has been offered to the GWT and a meeting with the project lead is due to take place at the end of March.
9. Council agreed on 28th January that the capital budget for the Stroud District Cycling and Walking Plan would be re-profiled reflecting anticipated expenditure plans.

Wallbridge Gateway Site

10. Discussions have continued with Stroud Town Council, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and Ecotricity on the design, costs, funding and implementation of a landscaping scheme for the land at Wallbridge.
11. A design brief has been agreed internally and with partners, but the procurement of a landscape architect was delayed to allow Stroud Town Council to undertake some 'Neighbourhood Consultation' at the Upper Lock Cafe, adjacent to the Wallbridge site, on the 25th January. This was to give an opportunity to those who live or work in the vicinity to raise any concerns or provide suggestions related to the Wallbridge redevelopment and for any feedback from this consultation to be incorporated within the design brief.
12. The procurement is now live, with returns required by the 6th April and an evaluation meeting due to take place on the 11th April.
13. Consideration is still being given to undertaking ground investigations ahead of any appointment but this is unlikely to take place until work on the brewery wall and subsequent site clearance has taken place, expected to be completed soon.

14. Council agreed on 28th January that the capital budget for 'Gateway Site (Wallbridge)' would be re-profiled to reflect timing of expenditure expected in 2018/19 whilst plans are finalised for the scheme.

Canal Regeneration

15. The Council has allocated £3m as matched funding towards a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid which was submitted on the 30th November. The Council is the lead partner in this bid, working closely with the Cotswold Canals Trust (CCT). An assessment visit by the Heritage Lottery Fund trustees took place on the 5th March to assess the bid for £9.8 million. The outcome of this bid is likely to be known on the 24th of April. 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.
16. 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. CCT has opened a new Visitor Centre at Bond's Mill, where overhanging trees have been cut back. Exploratory work was undertaken to assess the level of survival of the remains of Westfield Lock. 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.
17. 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'.
18. Other work outside of the £3m allocation continues at Wallbridge Lower Lock, Bowbridge Ramp, the old Stroud Brewery Wall, and the electrification of Lodgemore Lift Bridge.

Multi-Service Contract – Vehicle Replacement

19. 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.
20. 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.

21. 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 identified a need to pull forward a capital spend of £84k from the budgeted profile.
22. The decision by Strategy and Resources in October 2017 to approve the increased capital was confirmed with Ubico. A further meeting has taken place in respect of the council's Fleet requirements with Ubico. A number of purchase options are currently being considered; the council's preferred option is yet to be finalised.

Market Town Centres Initiative Fund

23. The Council has allocated a budget of £200,000 to support capital projects within town centres, subject to match funding coming from the host town council. The design of the 'offer' has yet to be finalised but the fund is intended to include the five towns, Stroud, Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge, as identified in the 'Future of Town Centres' report. Town Councils are being contacted to gauge interest and outline potential schemes that could be suitable for support.
24. Council agreed on 28th January that the capital budget for the Market Town Centres Initiative Fund would be re-profiled reflecting anticipated expenditure plans.