



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

Tel: (01453) 754 351/754 321

www.stroud.gov.uk

Email: democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

30 September 2020

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

A remote meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee will be held on **THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2020** at **7.00 pm**.

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

This is a remote meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Venue

This meeting will be conducted using Zoom and a separate invitation with the link to access the meeting will be sent to Members, relevant officers and members of the public who have submitted a question.

Public Access

Members of the public, who have not submitted a question, are invited to access the meeting streamed live via Stroud District Council's [YouTube channel](#).

Recording of Proceedings

A recording of the meeting will be published onto the Council's website (www.stroud.gov.uk). The whole of the meeting will be recorded except where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of 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 meetings held on 9 and 30 July 2020.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair of the Committee will answer questions from members of the public, submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS

Noon on Monday, 5 October 2020

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and can be sent by email to

democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

5 IT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PROGRESS

To update the Committee on progress made on the ICT Infrastructure Upgrade Project and note that the residual budget from the project will transfer to the Technology and Digital Workstream of the Modernisation Programme to invest in digital products that deliver the objectives of the programme.

6 STROUD CEMETERY CHAPEL

To seek approval to agree terms for a transfer of Stroud Cemetery Chapel to the Stroud Preservation Trust Ltd.

7 GENERAL FUND OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20

To present to the Strategy and Resources Committee the final outturn position against the General Fund revenue budgets for 2019/20.

8 BUDGET STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2024/25

To set out the assumptions that will be used when preparing the upcoming Medium Term Financial Plan.

9 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC THE FOLLOWING REPORT AT AGENDA ITEM 10 CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION MAY BE PASSED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC DURING CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM:

PROPOSED: That, pursuant to the provisions of Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter detailed at agenda item 10 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

10 COTSWOLD CANALS CONNECTED PROJECT (PHASE 1B) UPDATE

Not for publication due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11 MEMBER/OFFICER REPORTS (To Note)

- a) Performance Monitoring
- b) Investment and Development Panel
- c) Leadership Gloucestershire Update
- d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)
- e) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC)

- f) Brimscombe Port Project Board
- g) Corporate Delivery Plan Progress Update Q1
- h) Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Progress Update Q1
- i) Covid-19 Engagement Board

12 WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the work programme.

13 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

See Agenda Item 4 for deadline for submission.

Members of Strategy and Resources Committee 2020/21

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)

Councillor Martin Whiteside (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Chris Brine

Councillor Nigel Cooper

Councillor Rachel Curley

Councillor Stephen Davies

Councillor Nick Hurst

Councillor Keith Pearson

Councillor Simon Pickering

Councillor Mattie Ross

Councillor Tom Skinner

Councillor Ken Tucker

Councillor Debbie Young



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

Tel: (01453) 754 351/754 321

www.stroud.gov.uk

Email: democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

3

9 July 2020

7.00 pm – 8.30 pm

Remote Meeting

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)	P	Councillor Steve Robinson	P
Councillor Martin Whiteside (Vice-Chair)	P	Councillor Mattie Ross	P
Councillor Nigel Cooper	P	Councillor Tom Skinner	P
Councillor Stephen Davies	P	Councillor Chas Townley	P
Councillor Nick Hurst	P	Councillor Ken Tucker	P
Councillor Keith Pearson	P	Councillor Debbie Young	P
Councillor Simon Pickering	P		
P = Present A = Absent			

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive	Head of Property Services
Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer	Buildings Programmes Manager
Strategic Director of Resources	Corporate Policy and Governance Manager
	Democratic Services and Elections Officer

Other Member(s) in Attendance

Councillor Haydn Jones	Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
------------------------	-----------------------------------

Others in Attendance

Ian Mather, Withycombe Design Services, Consultant Mechanical Engineers

SRC.017

APOLOGIES

There were none.

SRC.018

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

SRC.019

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020 are approved as a correct record.

SRC.020**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

SRC.021**WATER-SOURCE HEAT PUMPS – EBLEY MILL AND BRIMSCOMBE PORT MILL**

The Head of Property Services advised that the report presented the business case for the installation of water-source heat pumps at Brimscombe Port Mill and Ebley Mill, she advised that it was an opportune time to consider the move to renewable energy as the building that housed the existing boilers at Brimscombe Port Mill was due to be demolished as part of the redevelopment. She brought the Committees attention to the feasibility studies included in the Appendices and confirmed that these had been produced by Renewables First who had experience in this type of technology.

The Head of Property Services stated that the timing of these installations was critical in order to be able to take advantage of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) and secure the higher tariff rate by submitting an application ideally by September. She also confirmed that they had employed Withycombe Design Services to review both studies, a representative was also present at the meeting to answer any technical questions.

The Head of Property Services highlighted table 1 and 2 in the report which showed the financial impact that would occur if we were not able to meet the September deadline. She stated that although the investment wouldn't be paid back completely by the RHI tariff the renewable technology would have significant benefits in term of carbon reduction which had been summarised in the environmental implications section of the report. She also ran through the risks associated with the installations at Ebley Mill and Brimscombe Port which were set out in Section 6 of the report. She stated that other viable options were limited and these installations would complement the Councils commitment to CN2030

Councillor Hurst requested that the recommendations a. and b. in the decision box were considered and voted on separately. The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer confirmed that this would be acceptable.

In a response to a question from Councillor Cooper the Head of Property Services confirmed that because the boilers at Brimscombe Port were relatively new their initial thoughts were to relocate them on site however the Council were approached by Renewables First who suggested the option of water-source heat pumps.

Councillor Pearson asked whether there were any risks should there be a major reduction in the water source and whether there would be any effect on staff if the heating systems were being replaced over the winter. The Head of Property Services confirmed that the installations are subject to the Environment Agencies approval and they would take into consideration the risks around a reduction in water source. She also confirmed that ideally the work would be carried out during the summer months however although not a perfect solution staff are now able to work from home and they could do this whilst the installation is completed if needed. Councillor Pearson also raised concerns regarding spending this amount of money at such an uncertain time. The Strategic Director of Resources advised that the vast amount of the money would be funded by Government particularly at Brimscombe Port Mill, this would be a clear investment in the Councils' priority of carbon reduction.

Councillor Davies asked questions regarding the procurement process, the Head of Property Services confirmed that they had brought in Withycombe Design Services to

review and challenge the feasibility studies produced by Renewables First and stated that they would be following the Council's procurement process in terms of tendering for the work.

Councillor Hurst asked a question regarding risks of coolant leaching into the river and damage to the collectors. The Head of Property Services advised that environmental impacts were set out on page 38 and that it is not considered to be a hazardous substance, the representative from Withycombe Design Services also confirmed that an alarm would be built in which would provide an alert of any leakage.

In response to further questions, Officers and the representative from Withycombe Design Services confirmed the following:-

- Ebley Mill would require a replacement heating system even if there were to be a change of use for the building in the future.
- The boilers at Brimscombe Port could potentially be removed and installed elsewhere however this would be an additional cost.
- There is a greater than normal air ingress into both Brimscombe Port Mill and Ebley Mill and this has been considered, furthermore a study was being carried out to look into what could be done to improve the air leakage.
- Further studies were being carried out to look into ways of cooling the buildings particularly at Ebley Mill and the potential costs of this.
- Water-source heat pumps could be used as a learning opportunity by the Council.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Pickering and seconded by Councillor Whiteside.

Members debated the topic at length.

As proposed by Councillor Hurst a vote was taken on recommendation a. separately.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried with 12 votes for and 1 vote against recommendation a. and carried unanimously for recommendations b. and c.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL **To allocate capital funding in 2020/2021 to invest in water source heat pumps as follows;**

a. the sum of £1.05m at Ebley Mill and

b. the sum of £382k at Brimscombe Port Mill and

c. that, in consultation with the Leader, the Head of Property Services is given delegated authority to proceed with the procurement and installation of the heat pumps subject to the receipt of the necessary consents from the Environment Agency and a successful application to the Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.

SRC.022

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORTS

Performance Monitoring

There were no questions.

Investment and Development Panel

The Chair confirmed that a meeting had not taken place.

Leadership Gloucestershire Update

There were no questions.

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)

There were no questions.

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC)

There were no questions.

Brimscombe Port Project Board

Councillor Pearson asked if any progress had been made with the planning application. Councillor Whiteside advised they were dependent on the Environment Agency and Highway responses which had been delayed, but they were hopeful that they would still be on track.

Corporate Delivery Plan Progress Update Quarter 4 and Appendix 1

There were no questions.

SRC.023

WORK PROGRAMME

The Strategic Director of Resources advised that there may need to be an extraordinary Strategy and Resources Committee the week commencing 20 July.

RESOLVED

To note the above updates to the Work Programme.

SRC.024

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were none.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chair



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

Tel: (01453) 754 351/754 321

www.stroud.gov.uk

Email: democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

EXTRAORDINARY STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

3

30 July 2020

7.00 pm – 9.48 pm

Remote Meeting

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)	P	Councillor Simon Pickering	P
Councillor Martin Whiteside (Vice-Chair)	P	Councillor Mattie Ross	P
Councillor Nigel Cooper	P	Councillor Tom Skinner	P
Councillor Rachel Curley	P	Councillor Chas Townley	P
Councillor Stephen Davies	P	Councillor Ken Tucker	P
Councillor Nick Hurst	P	Councillor Debbie Young	P
Councillor Keith Pearson	P		

P = Present A = Absent

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive	Strategic Director of Communities
Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer	Head of Community Services
Accountancy Manager	Democratic Services and Elections Officer

Other Member(s) in Attendance

Councillor Robinson
Councillor Dewey

Others in attendance

David McHendry, Knight, Kavanagh and Page

Councillor Cornell welcomed Councillor Curley to her first meeting. She also outlined the possibility of Members going into exempt session for Agenda Item 4, because the Appendices contained exempt information and outlined the procedure for doing this.

SRC.025

APOLOGIES

There were none.

SRC.026

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

SRC.027**CONTINUATION OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH JOINT COMMITTEE - SEPTEMBER 2020 TO MARCH 2022**

Councillor Cornell asked Committee to consider a request from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee to extend their operation for a period of 18 months from 4 September 2020 and to waive the 12 months' notice period set out in the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) between the partner authorities to enable the Joint Committee to continue.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the committee had been established in 2014 by Inter-Authority Agreement for a term of 5 years until September 2020. The IAA had included a 12 month notice period for ending or extending the committee which had not been enacted in 2019. The extension period of initially 18 months would enable the committee to support the county's economic recovery during the Covid-19 pandemic and the term of the committee could be extended beyond March 2022. The committee is resourced by the business rate pilot fund. All partner organisations are being asked to support this.

In response to Councillor Hurst's question the Chief Executive confirmed that the committee also supported the work of Leadership Gloucestershire and supported the economic growth and recovery of the county.

The report was moved by Councillor Cornell and seconded by Councillor Whiteside.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

- RESOLVED:**
- a. To waive and remove the twelve months' notice period set out in the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) dated 4 September 2014 required to extend the IAA, including removing the need for future notice periods**
 - b. To agree to the GEGJC continuing to operate from September 2020 for a period of eighteen months**
 - c. To delegate authority to the Interim Head of Legal Services to agree and complete the appropriate legal formalities to allow the IAA to be extended for 18 months to enable the GEGJC to continue until March 2022.**

SRC.028**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

On the advice of the Monitoring Officer, Councillor Cornell proposed and it was seconded by Councillor Hurst, that Appendices 1 and 2 of the next agenda item should be considered exempt and if agreed, any questions would be dealt with in closed session. This was because of the potential disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

- RESOLVED**
- That, pursuant to the provisions of Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter detailed in the appendices to agenda item 4 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

Upon the vote the Motion was carried with 12 votes for and 1 vote against.

SRC.029

SUPPORT OF THE LEISURE CONTRACT PROVIDER IN STROUD (SPORT AND LEISURE MANAGEMENT) TO RECOVER FROM THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Councillor Cornell requested that the Committee accept a 'friendly amendment' to the recommendation in the report by adding the words "in consultation with Group Leaders" to the end of paragraph d. of the decision box. Councillor Davies, Leader of the opposition accepted this friendly amendment.

Councillor Davies also moved an amendment to paragraph c. of the decision box by changing the date from September 2020 to April 2021. He said that whilst he had nothing against the real living wage he was concerned that this was public money and that many of the Districts residents had lost their jobs or were on reduced incomes. He said that it would not be unreasonable for there to be a delay of 6 months. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Pearson. The proposed amendment would be debated after the report had been introduced.

The Strategic Director of Communities introduced the above report for consideration after extensive detailed conversations had taken place with the Council's Officers and Sport and Leisure Management (SLM). The Covid-19 pandemic had caused real financial hardship and particular challenges for the leisure sector. SLM approached the Council highlighting its closure on 20 March 2020. Their income against forecast had been reduced by almost 100%; which was reflected across all sectors of the leisure industry. He informed the meeting that the Council had two leisure sites; Stratford Park, Stroud and The Pulse, Dursley. There were different financial structures behind them but they face the same challenges.

The Council had agreed to pay SLM the £78,000.00 management fee in full and forwarded their entire allocation of the additional cost of paying the real living wage in March 2020. The Council had immediately provided support but as the weeks had gone on the depths of the challenge for SLM had affected their delivery of services and their long term position. A lot of work had gone into trying to predict the future and the report was based on the best possible estimates in terms of what the future may look like.

South West Councils and other leisure bodies have been lobbying Government for financial support. Some Government commitment had been given for leisure centres run by local authorities in terms of payments toward lost income. The situation in Stroud was not unique. One of the challenges SLM have to deal with is public confidence due to the pandemic. The Strategic Director Communities said that there were unknowns in that we don't know if people will go back to the gym, or if there will be a local spike of Covid-19. He said that SLM have been as specific as they possibly could be. They originally asked for £250k reflecting the deficit they anticipated for this financial year. However, the recommendation in the report is for less and reflects what Officers believe is an appropriate figure in a really challenging period for the industry. After seeing the published Committee report SLM had sent in the following statement which had been circulated and which the Strategic Director of Communities read out:-

"The next five months are critical in our recovery journey. SLM is committed to protecting jobs and wages at this difficult time. It commits to manage its staff team carefully and in consultation with the District Council. During this time, and depending on service take up and any forthcoming guidance, it may be required to reduce hours of work or re-task employees. It will do this in agreement with of the

Council's delegated lead however no member of staff with a permanent contract will be made redundant in this period."

The Strategic Director of Communities added that the statement did reflect how in normal circumstances any operator would approach the situation and manage their expenditure and their staff according to demand. He said that this was not an unreasonable statement for SLM to make because they needed to be flexible.

Councillor Cornell thanked all of the Officers who had spent a lot of time over the last few months working on this issue leading up to the report. Members were reminded that if they wanted to ask questions on Appendices 1 and 2 of the report the broadcasting of the meeting would stop and the public would be excluded from the meeting.

Councillor Young said that she was concerned that the Council's money could be used to pay for redundancies to staff who were no longer required and asked if we had any guarantees that this would not be the case. In response the Strategic Director of Communities stated that the suggested structure for payment was that the Council would make incremental payments retrospectively, up to a maximum amount each month and that the operation would be scrutinised on an open book basis. Officers needed to ensure that every penny invested into SLM was used for the benefit of the community and this would be closely monitored.

Councillor Skinner asked whether we could ask SLM to agree to no redundancies for a few extra months on top of what they had agreed. In response the Strategic Director of Communities confirmed that usually the period between January and February in the leisure industry is its busiest and they generate most of their income during this time. He could not speak on their behalf but as this would probably be their busiest time they would need all the staff they had.

Councillor Pearson enquired what would happen if we did nothing. In responding the Strategic Director of Communities confirmed that SLM had not said that they would not open the facility if we do nothing. They have a contractual obligation to the Council which requires them to provide a service. At the moment SLM had opened the facility to the most lucrative facilities e.g. the fitness gym and group exercises on a skeleton staff. The Strategic Director of Communities could not say how long the limited service would continue to operate. He said that the contract requires that they need to also provide other fitness e.g. GP prescribed referrals, public health schemes and community benefit.

Councillor Townley asked what the Council is actually getting for its money and what additional services were available, he also asked when the tennis courts and swimming pool would be open and commented that the tennis courts should have been opened some weeks ago.

Confirmation was given by the Strategic Director of Communities that it was Officers intention to get something close to the services required by the contract. It was reasonable for the Council to be understanding of SLM's situation and that some people will not be returning to use the facility. There was a need for the Council to be flexible during this initial period to ensure that a service was provided to the District, but that there were contractual obligations which SLM need to deliver. He went on to say that work was being undertaken with Health and Wellbeing colleagues so that some of the districts' more deprived communities could benefit.

Councillor Hurst asked what does the contract say and what are they offering in addition to those services they are obliged to deliver under the contract. The Strategic Director of

Communities confirmed the level of detail within the report enabled Officers to fine tune service in terms of the detailed level of the agreement.

Councillor Pickering stated that we don't really know what is going to happen; that SLM had opened in good faith. He asked whether there is any indication on take up and any available data from overseas, or idea of what was likely to happen.

In reply the Strategic Director of Communities stated that it was still early days at The Pulse and Stratford Park and that take up of use of the gyms had been low. During the peak times of between 5.00 pm and 7.00 pm at Stratford Park there had been fair use whereas gym attendance at The Pulse had been low. Take up of the gyms had not been as high as expected as people were taking exercise at home or outside. At The Pulse fitness classes were normally at capacity with waiting lists but there had not been the anticipated take up and therefore no waiting lists. It was also the start of the school holidays. SLM would have to meet Covid-19 safety standards, they are professional and it was anticipated that their response would be good. The Head of Community Services had visited Stratford Park and felt that with one or two minor issues being addressed the procedures that were in place would comply with Covid Secure standards.

David McHendry from Knight, Kavanagh and Page informed the meeting that he had seen less than 50% of leisure centres throughout the country opening their doors at the weekend and approximately 23% are not opening for at least another month or until September 2020 and some are looking at up to 6 months after that. It was a slow start back to leisure facilities and there is ongoing challenge across the sector. Sport England were currently supporting 24 local authorities.

Councillor Davies asked whether SLM had carried out any improvements since the contract was extended and where we stood on those in the current situation. In response the Head of Community Services stated that SLM were drawing up a specification for new fitness equipment just before the Covid-19 pandemic and had also been planning some other improvements.

Councillor Young asked what we as a Council could do to encourage SLM to pick up on some activities e.g. the use of the tennis court and how the Council could help them going forward. The Strategic Director of Communities stated that it was critical that caveats were attached to any support given to SLM. This was about working together because SLM is the contractor but was working in our communities and doing activities in our communities. It was necessary to monitor their profit and loss, but also their community outreach. A framework should be put in place with criteria to be aligned with the objectives and actions in the statement of Wellbeing Plan. He said that the Council would need to watch the progress but with a strong and supportive arm around them to make sure they do everything they should be doing. He added that this would be included in any monitoring. The manager of The Pulse would also be giving her support because of her experience and he mentioned the initiatives she had put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic to take classes out into the community.

Councillor Ross stated that she was pleased with the reassurance that the manager of The Pulse would be helping to monitor the situation in the future. She also added that the Health and Wellbeing Officers had gained a lot of experience during lock down and would be able to assist, especially helping disadvantaged people.

The Strategic Director of Communities gave his assurance and confirmed he had worked with the Health and Wellbeing Development Co-ordinator and her team and they would continue to work together on this.

Councillor Skinner asked why had SLM come to us for assistance and not gone to the Government. He said that the company had made profits over the years and believed that that the Government could lend them money. The Strategic Director of Communities stated that as a company, as a whole SLM had a £35m overdraft guarantee from its bank to cover wider company pressures. There had been no Government support in this sector unlike other sectors.

Councillor Cornell stated that there had been inconsistencies. Councils who ran their own leisure centres were offered 75% by the Government to meet their loss of revenue. If the leisure facility was privately run, then there was no financial support. This had been raised with our two MPs and other organisations and we hoped to see some movement on this.

Members moved into closed session to discuss Appendices 1 and 2 and the live recording was paused.

At 8.40 pm the meeting adjourned and was reconvened at 8.52 pm.

Councillor Cornell re-opened the meeting and Members confirmed that they had no further questions.

The Monitoring Officer advised that Councillor Davies' proposed amendment to change the date should be debated first and depending upon the outcome, a vote could be taken on the substantive amendment.

Councillor Davies confirmed his amendment was to change the date in paragraph c. of the decision box from September 2020 to April 2021; delaying the payment of the real living wage. Clearly if the Council saved SLM £35k by making this change we could therefore delay the time when we gave them the loan in this rapidly changing environment. The Government may give assistance in the future. This delay in timing in giving them money would allow us to spread our money a little further. A significant amount of people in the district had either lost their jobs or were on a reduced income because of Covid-19. He posed the question as to whether SLM may make people redundant or change their working hours. This suggestion was a practical way to help in this difficult situation. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Pearson.

No questions were asked and the meeting moved into debate for the proposed amendment.

Councillor Whiteside stated that it did seem important in a time of economic hardship that people get the living wage. It was important that the Council commit to supporting payment of the real living wage. He mentioned that the Council is finding other ways of supporting people in the wider community e.g. Council tax. As such he was of the view that SLM's employees should be supported and stated that he would not be supporting the amendment.

Councillor Curley stated that she felt really uncomfortable with the proposed amendment which would delay the commitment on the delivery of the real living wage until April 2021. It had been delayed by 6 months and so a number of staff had been on furlough receiving 80% of their wage at the lower rate. She was of the view that the Council should not postpone this again until April next year. SLM had already received the funding for 12 months to introduce the real living wage and an agreement by the Council to delay by another 6 months would in affect be giving a cash grant of nearly £36k. The real living wage should be introduced in September 2020.

Councillor Cooper agreed with Councillor Davies, believing that it was sensible to delay this help. We had to bear in mind others are also in hardship, the suggestion that we spread the money more evenly over a longer period was supportable.

Councillor Ross agreed with Councillor Curley that SLM had already had the money up front and it was not morally right to further delay the payment. She was clear that it should be paid, people had suffered through no fault of their own and it was beyond our control and would not support this amendment.

Councillor Hurst stated that money had been paid up front to SLM and there was a bigger picture here.

Councillor Cornell confirmed that she would not support the amendment, the legal national wage was £8.72 and the real living wage which was what they wanted SLM staff to be paid was £9.30. The £9.30 is evidence based on the current cost of living to survive. The Council had given SLM a cash grant to pay the people on the lowest wages and they had not done so yet (this has been by agreement). She was of the view that the Council should support these individuals.

Councillor Davies confirmed he would like to withdraw his amendment as he had not appreciated all of the details until Councillor Curley had spoken.

Councillor Cornell reminded Members that they would now go back to the original resolution, which she had moved with the friendly amendment at paragraph d. (to include "in consultation with Group Leaders"). This had been seconded by Councillor Whiteside.

At the commencement of debate Councillor Pearson made four points. He said that he had been involved with SLM at the beginning of their contract when they had taken over the running of Stratford Park in 2010. He said that he had found them to be a very good company, working well and achieved what they had set out to do, this had also included improving the asset. He said that he had faith in them. He said that he did understand that it was a struggle to get people's confidence to come back. If SLM were not able to trade it would cost the Council more than £170k to bring the service back in house because of Officer time. He said that he had listened to the debate and wondered why a lot of questions had not been asked e.g. why the tennis courts had not been opened and asked what SLM's plans were for the next 6 weeks. He said that he believed the Council had a duty to the public to ensure that the leisure centre was open including the outside activities, he would be supporting giving SLM a grant.

Councillor Skinner suggested giving SLM a grant, with significant conditions attached and enquired why they not applied for a Government loan. He said that he hoped SLM would keep staff until the end of financial year; which could be their busiest time of the year and that he would have liked to have seen more commitment from them. His preference was a mixture of loan / grant because the company had been very profitable for the last 3 years.

Councillor Hurst stated that it was essentially about the relationship with the Council and the contractor. SLM had been a very competent efficient operator and had brought considerable credit to the Council's reputation in the way that the leisure centre had been run. It was clear from some of the questions and answers that SLM go beyond their contractual requirement; that in his mind should encourage support. He agreed with Councillor Skinner about spending tax payers' money but stated that we are in a very fluid situation where the Government may recognise exercise, health and obesity reconsidering its attitude to the private side of this industry. He believed that the Government may support them. He felt that it would be premature to give SLM any money and that a loan rather than a grant would be a better way forward. He said that he supported SLM to a

degree and that the Council might underwrite any investment into the building. He was of the view that in the future business rates are going to be decimated by closures and the Council's income significantly damaged going forward. He stated that he was really torn in making a decision, but on principle he believed that we should be helping them but he needed to hear from other Members.

Councillor Curley stated that everyone was struggling with this difficult decision. She did not underestimate the challenges for the company reopening the leisure centre which is an important facility for the community but that the Council must balance other significant financial pressures. SLM do have a contractual obligation to deliver services and they are not delivering at the moment. Whether Members decide on a grant or loan the Council has to be clear on the conditions attached which is that, as a minimum SLM fulfil their contract. The Council had frontloaded the management fee and the proposed £170k would cover the forecasted operating loss for half of the year. Council tax payers are being asked to pay for the majority of this predicted loss. She agreed with Councillor Skinner that there should be no redundancies until the end of the financial year and that the Council should explore not a grant but a loan in excess of £170k, and think about how that could be structured so that the extra support is provided when it is challenging but SLM should pay this back over the last 2 years of their contract based on their return to profitability. She added that the Council should also look at the criteria for the local community and that if additional Government funding is forthcoming the funding is repaid.

Councillor Whiteside supported Councillor Curley and reiterated that it was important that the Council support health and wellbeing during the summer holidays. It was necessary to encourage people to get back to the leisure centre as soon as possible, especially young people. He was of the view that they had taken the profits and when in deficit should not expect the tax payer to bail them out. There has to be an element of sharing the good and bad times. He supported a loan agreement structured over a reasonable length of time, if this time was not profitable there maybe a write-off opportunity. He would be unhappy if SLM were in profit for the remainder of the contract and a dividend was paid to the shareholders. Any agreement should be based on a loan and sharing a risk and the opportunity of claw back the loan if the Government funds the leisure industry. There must not be any redundancies made until the end of the financial year. He was in favour based on a loan option.

Councillor Davies stated that Committee were delegating decisions to be made by the Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal Services to negotiate and conclude any legal documentation necessary arising from any decision made in consultation with the Group Leaders. If over the coming months, the situation became more difficult a proportion of the monies could be given in a grant and then converted to a loan after 2-3 months. By then, it will be known if there had been a second wave of Covid-19, more information would be available on the usage and whether SLM had implemented the real living wage and made any redundancies.

Councillor Pickering was in favour of supporting SLM with a loan which would be monitored and if the Government paid a grant to the leisure industry the Council could claw this back.

Councillor Young stated that clearly there were still a lot of questions and that the Committee needed to have answers before making a decision, but she was supportive of assisting SLM.

Councillor Skinner stated that his preference would be to give SLM a loan, set up on a monthly basis with them paying no interest in the first year, no redundancies are made until the end of the financial year, and the Company paid no dividend payments.

Councillor Cornell referred to the decision box confirming that the outcomes would be closely monitored.

Councillor Ross could not commend enough the work and time that the Strategic Director of Communities and the team of Officers had put into this report.

Councillor Pearson stated that SLM had a lot of outlets, conditions should only be relevant for them to fulfil their contract in Stroud. Stratford Park is only one of an organisational structure of facilities across the land, it may not be feasible for SLM to agree to not paying out dividends.

Councillor Cooper agreed some help should be provided, and was happy that the Group Leaders would be involved with the consultation.

The Monitoring Officer referred to the exempt appendices and also paragraph 6 of the report. Members needed to make a decision whether to go with the recommendation or offer a loan and suggested amendment to the recommendation box. He said that the Council is offering assistance to SLM, but that the basis of this had to be clear. He said that the arrangement would be based on a monthly open book but that someone needed to propose a loan or to go with the recommendation. If the feeling of the meeting was to go for a loan, then there would need to be an amendment in the decision box.

Councillor Pearson was not happy with a loan, but was more comfortable with a combination of grant and loan to be worked out with SLM with the agreement of Officers and Group Leaders because it gave more flexibility. Councillor Cornell did not personally support the option of a combination of grant and loan. Councillor Pearson stated that after negotiation it may come out as a £10k grant and £160k loan to give flexibility, he was unhappy with a loan.

Councillor Cornell stated that there could be no more negotiations with SLM. Committee had the options in front of them, a combination of a grant and loan was not an option.

Councillor Davies stated it could be simple, if the first £85k was a grant and the second £85k as a loan, subject to a review, we would not be delaying anything. Committee could make a decision of a £85k grant tonight.

Councillor Cornell stated that if we do not have agreement we may need to take a vote on this. Some Members were in favour of a loan and others a combination of a loan and grant. For clarification Members had agreed conditions that they did not want any redundancies until the end of the financial year. Support would be closely monitored. Lobbying would continue for support of the private leisure industry to Government.

Councillor Pickering proposed an amendment to paragraph a. of the decision box by replacing the word 'sum' with the word 'loan'. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Ross.

There were no questions Members moved into debate.

Councillor Hurst believed there should be a grant and loan element. The grant value for the improvements SLM were going to undertake, and also non-contractual elements of what they do at Stratford Park in their contract. He was unhappy about it all being a loan.

Councillor Townley stated that Committee had to make a difficult decision and thought Committee should agree wholly on a loan basis. This was discretionary support and the best way forward.

Councillor Skinner supported the amendment which did not preclude the Council from giving SLM a grant or a loan in the future.

Councillor Ross stated Members should agree with this option. Officers had undertaken a lot of negotiations and supported the amendment.

The Accountancy Manager suggested the following revised wording:-

An amount not in excess of £170,000 is ringfenced from Council reserves to fund a loan to SLM to fund a monthly payment to SLM to assist in the reopening of Stratford Park Leisure Centre, if required.

Both Councillors Pickering and Ross agreed these textual changes.

Councillor Cornell asked Members to vote on the amendment.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was unanimously carried.

Councillor Cornell confirmed that Members would be voting on the amended motion. The Council would do what it could to support SLM. They had already had funds from us and we would be monitoring the situation and a report would come back to this Committee or Community Services and Licensing Committee with an update on how our leisure facilities are faring.

On being put to the vote, the substantive Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED

- a. An amount not in excess of £170,000 is ringfenced from Council reserves to fund a loan to SLM to fund a monthly payment to SLM to assist in the reopening of Stratford Park Leisure Centre, if required.**
- b. Responsibility for the allocation and monitoring of services, outputs and payments to SLM is delegated to the Strategic Director of Communities in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and S151 Officer, the chair of Strategy and Resources Committee and the Chair of Community Services and Licensing Committee. All payments will be contingent on full and open access to operational accounts and service activity being provided.**
- c. The Council is committed to delivering the real living wage. Any allocation to SLM is contingent on this being introduced in September 2020.**
- d. Authority is delegated to the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal Services to negotiate and conclude any legal documentation necessary arising from any decision made in consultation with the Group Leaders.**

Chair

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 OCTOBER 2020

5

Report Title	IT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PROGRESS			
Purpose of Report	To update the Committee on progress made on the ICT Infrastructure Upgrade Project and note that the residual budget from the project will transfer to the Technology and Digital Workstream of the Modernisation Programme to invest in digital products that deliver the objectives of the programme.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to note the report			
Consultation and Feedback	The Infrastructure Upgrade Project has been developed and delivered in partnership with external consultants Foresight Consulting.			
Report Author	Caron Starkey, Strategic Director of Transformation and Change Email: caron.starkey@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	None			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	None			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	No	No	No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The council allocated a significant capital budget of £1.8m to upgrade the organisation's ICT in 2018 following the engagement of SOCITM to identify the technology and digital requirements appropriate for a modern technology environment which would deliver modern citizen service access and delivery expectations and organisational efficiencies.
- 1.2** The Peer Challenge undertaken at the Council in March 2019 identified areas for improvement and highlighted the pressing need to upgrade the ICT infrastructure. The relevant Action Plan item is as follows:
- REC 3 (CRD3) Ensure the integrity of the current ICT system. Review the progress and suitability of current plans, capability and capacity in respect of this, and beyond that to confirm the emerging plans in respect of ICT development and digital delivery fit with longer term transformational plans.
- 1.3** The Corporate Delivery Plan also contains the action:
- CDP5.22 Adopt a clear vision and digital strategy which is fit for purpose to deliver good quality, convenient and efficient services for staff, residents and businesses.

- 1.4** In exploring options to move forward the recommendations from SOCITM it became apparent the existing ICT Infrastructure was ageing, some elements beyond or nearing end of life and it was not sufficiently resilient to support new technologies and the digital ambitions. Foresight Consulting were engaged to provide a high level of technical expertise and capacity to deliver. They undertook a review of the technical environment and identified solutions that could be delivered at pace to protect and enhance the technical operating environment on which the organisation relies for the delivery of critical services to communities.
- 1.5** A costed, within budget, Infrastructure Upgrade Project was instigated and commenced in October 2019. This foundation project to provide a modern technical operating environment has been the focus of the ICT Team for the last year, interrupted momentarily in March/April 2020 when some resources were diverted to support Covid-19 Response activity and enabling the workforce to work from home effectively. There was also a delay of approximately three months of the delivery of some key equipment from manufacturers during the peak of international Covid-19 impact.

2. Infrastructure Upgrade Project - identified requirements

2.1 Foresight Consulting reviewed the technology estate and identified the following:

- The Storage/Compute was end of life, lacked capacity and was beginning to fail and causing outages. It was unable to meet the operating demands of the organisation.
- The analogue telephony provision with its fixed desktop handsets provided minimal integration opportunities and made recovery scenarios difficult following system interruptions.
- Disaster Recovery provision was high risk
- The Network was poor offering little resilience with failing network switches and low capacity WAN links. Regular outages and performance problems were impacting on productivity.
- Fixed desktop devices serviced through a thin client solution which was about to expire. A quick decision was required on whether to continue with thin client or move to a more flexible solution provided by laptop devices offering flexible working.
- Members ICT provision was limited, again based on thin client connectivity, non-standard devices and slow to access for users.
- Compatibility issues between applications, old data bases and servers, not least with the existence of end of life software such as Office 2007.
- The website was hosted on premise limiting options, resilience and integrations for development.

Taken in the round there were too many end to end issues to provide a resilient and reliable environment for the organisation. Alongside the urgent decision on desktop devices there was an immediate need to update the on-premise infrastructure to provide a safe ICT infrastructure for the next five years and enable time to develop a full ICT Strategy to include the transition of the systems and applications to a cloud-based model aligned to contract timings and supplier development plans.

- 2.2** The already allocated capital budget was available to draw down immediately and project plans were put in place quickly for work to commence in November 2019. The project prioritised the immediate risks to data, security and customer access.

3. Infrastructure Upgrade Project - progress to date

- 3.1** Work has continued at pace with the support of Foresight overseeing the project and managing the risks. The IT Team has worked together well and delivered the project objectives despite the additional significant pressures of supporting the organisation in its Covid-19 Response and facilitating the swift deployment of all laptop devices to enable almost all the workforce to work from home during the lockdown period. The project has delivered the following:

- The network is now secure with significantly improved performance
- Storage and servers have been replaced and now offer secure platform for future applications and data storage.
- The desktop has been updated with staff receiving modern laptop devices, always-on remote access, hot desk capability at the office and a modern suite of software programs.
- The new Littlecombe site has been designated as the Disaster Recovery location for ICT services and new infrastructure installed on site. A copy of all data and servers is stored there offering a rapid recovery should the main provision at Ebley Mill fail.
- Out of support applications have mainly been updated to current releases i.e Office 2007, Server 2008 and SQL 2005 were all in wide use a year ago which presented a very high risk. Now only a few 2008 servers remain on the network and have a plan for update.

- 3.2** It cannot be overstated how much the team has managed to deliver in extraordinary circumstances with the assistance from Foresight Consulting. Stroud District Council now has a secure and resilient technology environment and a sound platform on which to build an ambitious digital community offering across all services.

4. Risk and Issue Mitigation

- 4.1** The old technology created significant risks to the operation of the organisation, as reflected in the corporate risk register. The project was focussed on mitigating those risks. The project elements were assessed to profile the transition to acceptable risk levels. The risk profiles for each element of the technology estate were mapped on a timeline to show the progressive improvement from high risk, improving through to medium risk and fully mitigated to low risk/safe.

- 4.2** All elements excepting Telephony have now moved from high risk. All elements will be fully mitigated and be low risk/safe by February 2020. The Corporate Risk Register will be updated to reflect the new safe and secure ICT infrastructure estate.

5. Infrastructure Upgrade Project – still to complete

- 5.1** The elements of the project still to complete are:

- Telephony – migration to digital from analogue network. This will enable full integration to allow calls to be handled through staff laptops and a smart phone app. This will significantly enhance home working and contact centre arrangements.
- Members ICT – a new solution for improved access to systems. Options for devices tailored to preferred ways of working. Rolling out new software solutions such as Modern.gov for democratic functions, Office 365 (direct cloud access) including Teams and exploring the functionality and content of a Member’s Portal.
- Website – project to be scoped to migrate to cloud hosting. Integration with Contact Centre provision including Customer Relationship Management software
- Greater adoption and roll out of further functionality of Office 365 including Teams, SharePoint and a cloud email platform.
- Comprehensive ICT Strategy for 2021-2026 to be developed by new Head of Technology post.

5.2 As the Infrastructure Upgrade and the oversight from Foresight Consulting comes to a close the remaining elements and the emerging digital plans of the Modernisation Programme will transfer to the Technology and Digital Workstream within the Modernisation Programme. This workstream will be led by the new Head of Technology post which is about to go out for recruitment. This new role is a significant strategic position within the organisation and will provide the expertise and capacity to deliver on the digital ambitions of the modernisation of council operations.

5.3 The residual budget of the Infrastructure Upgrade Project will transfer to the Technology and Digital Workstream to complete the outstanding elements and create the digital design and delivery. The key component of the digital modernisation of the organisation is a Digital Platform Product that will provide the digital backbone of the organisation enabling people, systems and processes to connect and deliver.

6. Infrastructure Upgrade Project – Summary costs as at 31.08.20

Element	Capital cost £	Annual Revenue cost £
Connectivity	301,000	43,000
Storage Area Network	367,000	
Telephony	51,000	10,000
Desktop	357,000	
Infrastructure Software	16,000	71,000
Data Security	10,000	
Spend prior to project	200,000	
Total	1,302,000	124,000

The project has also delivered £199,000 of annual revenue savings as the technology estate has moved over to new solutions and contracts.

7. Next steps – Delivering Digital through a Digital Platform

- 7.1 Stroud District Council is seeking to create significant improvements in its offer to service users and businesses by implementing a digital platform for online services in order to drive transformational change within the Council and improve efficiencies in service delivery to internal and external stakeholders.
- 7.2 As the infrastructure is now upgraded and stable we are in a position to procure and implement a digital platform to meet key strategic outcomes and enable future services to be offered online. This will enable web based service transactions that interact with the Council's back office systems to be self-serve and automated. In this way the Council can make services available at any time, raise customer satisfaction with transactions being completed as a single process and provide customers with regular updates to their requests through automated notifications. The main aims of for the deployment of a digital platform are:
- Improving customer access to services
 - Improving customer satisfaction with services
 - Reducing costs of service delivery
- 7.3 The Council's objectives for a digital platform are:
- **Infrastructure.** Modernising the Council IT infrastructure by improving systems integration and rationalising the applications portfolio.
 - **Web Forms.** Improving the web forms capabilities by analysing and improving the current online processes as well as introducing new ones.
 - **Web Site.** Ensuring effective interoperability between the services hosted on the digital platform and the information/advice services available through the Council's web site.
 - **On line account access.** Allowing service users to view accounts held with the Council via their portal account (for example; council tax, housing rent etc.)
 - **Single sign on.** Providing service users with seamless access to any on line accounts and services that they receive from the council.
 - **Status Tracking.** Enabling service users to view status of enquiries/requests logged through the platform at any time and keeping service users automatically updated about changes to status.
 - **Customer Relationship Management.** Providing Council employees (Contact Centre) with a customer management system to record and track transactions with customers.
 - **Mobile Working.** Enhancing the service offering through better use of technology through mobile working and mobile applications.
 - **Reporting.** Enabling different levels of reporting access to different service users depending upon their needs and responsibilities. Whilst the majority of service users will only need to report the status of requests relating to themselves, others with wider community leadership responsibilities have more sophisticated reporting needs.
- 7.4 The cost of the digital platform product can be funded through the residual Infrastructure Upgrade Project budget. The council has also previously set aside a transformation fund which will fund essential and dependent modernisation activity in the other modernisation programme workstreams which will drive the cultural, procedural and organisational

changes which ensure the adoption and embedding of digital provisions and new ways of working.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Financial Implications

The capital costs of the infrastructure Refresh Programme are included within the existing capital programme as set out in the report. Revenue costs have been funded from savings generated by replacement of infrastructure or services.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

8.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report, however a further report will be necessary to authorise the procurement of a digital platform and to arrange for suitable delegations to carry out the procurement and conclude any consequential documentation.

Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

8.3 Equality Implications

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations made in this report.

8.4 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations made in this report.

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 OCTOBER 2020

6

Report Title	STROUD CEMETERY CHAPEL			
Purpose of Report	To seek approval to agree terms for a transfer of Stroud Cemetery Chapel to the Stroud Preservation Trust Ltd.			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to agree terms for a transfer of Stroud Cemetery Chapel to the Stroud Preservation Trust for £1 subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Detailed feasibility studies b. Public consultation c. A further report to a future meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee d. Compliance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act by securing the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area 			
Consultation and Feedback	<p>Stroud Town Council – informal views on the Trusts proposal have been feedback</p> <p>Saveourspace – included in report</p> <p>Stroud Ward Members - tbc</p> <p>Specialist Conservation Officer and Biodiversity Officers SDC Planning Service</p>			
Report Author	<p>Jill Fallows Property Manager</p> <p>Email: jill.fallows@stroud.gov.uk</p>			
Options	The council could attempt to dispose of the property on the open market			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Site Plan</p> <p>Appendix B – Stroud Preservation Trust - Proposal</p>			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Cemetery Chapel of Rest is a Grade II listed building dating from the mid-19th century located in a prominent position in Stroud Cemetery overlooking the town and countryside (see Appendix A). The chapel was used by Stroud Town Council as a grounds maintenance depot for a number of years until it relocated in 2018. In 2017 the cemetery was transferred to the town council, at that time the district council also agreed to give the

town council first refusal to purchase the chapel at market value before it was sold on the open market as the district council had no use for it. However, after setting up a working group, undertaking a feasibility study and public consultation the town council decided not to purchase the chapel as the costs were too high.

- 1.2 A condition survey was commissioned by SDC in 2016 which identified building maintenance costs in excess of £200,000 over a 5-year period. The main element of repair identified was a new roof. There is a risk that the council will be exposed to significant costs to keep the building in good repair if it retains ownership of the chapel.
- 1.3 The chapel is a surplus asset, the council has no operational use for it and it needs significant money spent on it to maintain, convert or renovate it. The decision to dispose of the chapel on the open market was made by Strategy and Resources Committee in October 2016.
- 1.4 In April 2019 a Public Notice advertising the proposed disposal of the property was run in the media to allow the public to make their views known. This was necessary to comply with Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act as the open tarmac area surrounding the chapel is defined as public open space. This generated a large response, with local people objecting to the disposal, in particular, of the tarmac area surrounding the chapel. The town and district councils hosted a public meeting in May 2019 to discuss the future of the chapel and the local community's concerns regarding public access to the tarmac apron.
- 1.5 The meeting was well attended (41) the consensus of views seemed to be;
 - Public access to the tarmac area, particularly the southern area, with the view, was a priority to be maintained
 - Access for burials and to burial plots must be maintained (notice should be given to plot holders where possible, of the proposal to dispose of this area and the Chapel)
 - The future use of the building was debated—there was no clear community view on what sort of uses (community, commercial, residential etc) were acceptable but there was concern about too many vehicles being able to access this area.
 - There was agreement that a sympathetic use (bearing in mind it is located in a cemetery and close to plots where recent burials have taken place) should be found to avoid the Chapel deteriorating and that this use needed to be financially sustainable
 - The community wanted some time to consider whether there could be a community proposal to take on the building and bring it back into use

There were some strong views expressed that a residential use wasn't acceptable, but officers advice was not to close off any options at this stage, - indeed the community itself may need to consider all options if it wishes to make a successful bid for the property.

- 1.6 The district council offered the community time to come up with a proposal. The council's main concern is to bring the listed chapel back into a suitable use as soon as possible to

secure its future. The chapel itself is not on the Assets of Community Value Register because it does not have public access.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Stroud Preservation Trust, formally set up in 1982, is a Registered Charity whose core purpose is “to preserve for the benefit of the townspeople of Stroud... and of the nation at large ... buildings of particular beauty or historical architectural or constructional interest”. Members of the Trust attended the public meeting in May and have since confirmed it is interested in raising the necessary funds to carry out a more detailed feasibility plan. Initial costings have shown that there is a significant conservation deficit for the building and the Trust has therefore asked the council to consider a community asset transfer at £1. A conservation deficit is a situation which applies to historic buildings where the cost of converting it to a new use is greater than the value it would have on completion of the works. The Trust’s proposal is set out in Appendix B. Further information regarding the Trust can be found on its website <http://www.stroudpreservationtrust.org.uk/>
- 2.2 If the council proceeds this would be a disposal at less than best consideration. (See legal implications below). An up to date valuation has been commissioned as part of this process. The market value of the building as at 31st July 2020 was £175,000. The market value of the building based on the special assumption that the use of the premises is restricted to non-profit making provision of cultural and community facilities for public benefit is £50,000.
- 2.3 If the district council does decide to transfer at less than best consideration it would have to ensure that key terms and restrictions are imposed to preserve the future of the building, secure the provision of community facilities for public benefit on the premises and to protect existing public access and use of the tarmac apron and be satisfied that the disposal will help the promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.
- 2.4 The Trust has done some preliminary work on future options. Their preferred option, at this stage, is to convert the northern chapel to residential and the southern chapel into short term serviced offices with a multi-use space below including toilets and kitchen for community use, the sale of the residential unit helping to fund the renovation costs. This option would enable the majority of the tarmac apron to be open and accessible to the public and provide community space. Any proposals will be subject to planning, detailed feasibility studies and public consultation.
- 2.5 Members of the local community set up an informal group ‘Saveourspace’, which has been contacted regarding this proposal. It is aware that the SPT is actively involved and hope they will be able to communicate more effectively with the community than they have been able to. It advised that the community is interested and keen to get involved. Public consultation on the Trust’s plans will be a fundamental part of the next stage.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 This is a surplus, vacant, listed building which needs a significant amount of money to be spent on it to maintain it, convert or renovate it. Building maintenance costs in excess of

£200,000 were identified in 2016 and the Trust has estimated renovation costs at between £700,000 and £900,000 as set out in their proposal at Appendix B. The decision to dispose of the asset on the open market was made by Strategy & Resources Committee in October 2016.

- 3.2 There is an opportunity to work with a local, well thought of and experienced Trust to bring this landmark listed building back into use and secure an element of community use.
- 3.3 The SPT needs to have some reasonable certainty that the council is willing to transfer the chapel to them for £1 before committing any further expenditure and time on feasibility studies, consultants and public consultation and in order to begin to raise funds and apply for grants.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended that the council agrees, in principle, to transfer the Cemetery Chapel for £1 to the Stroud Preservation Trust Ltd subject to further feasibility studies, public consultation and a further report to a future meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers

- As set out in the report the estimated costs to bring this asset back into use are significant and likely to be in excess of market value.
- The Council therefore has little financial or operational value to be derived from the asset. It is therefore possible to consider a transfer at less than best consideration. However, there are strict criteria which must be satisfied around that as set out elsewhere in the report and the legal implications.
- There are no expected capital receipts from the asset included in the current Medium Term Financial Plan

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal Implications

The general power of disposal of property by local authorities is set out in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. This gives a local authority the power to dispose of land held by it in any manner it wishes provided that it achieves the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained. Case law has decided that in order to achieve best consideration, the consideration which a local authority receives must have an economic or monetary value.

- 4.2.1 There is no particular process to be followed but there does need to be evidence to show that best consideration has been assessed and is being achieved, for example, through independent valuations.
- 4.2.2 It is possible for a local authority to dispose of land for less than best consideration with the consent of the Secretary of State. However, as is the case here, specific consent is

not required for the disposal of any interest in land where the undervalue is less than £2m and where the authority considers will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area (see *Circular 06/03: Disposal of land for less than best consideration, Local Government Act 1972: Draft General Disposal Consent 2003* (2003 Consent))

- 4.2.3 Whilst, this proposed disposal will be within the General Disposal Consent, for completeness, it is useful to set out what can constitute best consideration. The overriding consideration when answering this question is the commercial value of the disposition to the local authority and it is reasonable to conclude that this can include cost avoidance in terms of maintenance and repairing requirements.
- 4.2.4 In determining "best consideration reasonably obtainable", the only consideration that can be taken into account is that which has commercial or monetary value to the local authority. The terms on which the land is disposed are material to the assessment of the consideration.
- 4.2.5 When considering the best price that can reasonably be obtained, a local authority may have regard to ethical as well as commercial considerations. However, although such considerations may be a factor in deciding to sell at a certain price, they must be in balance.

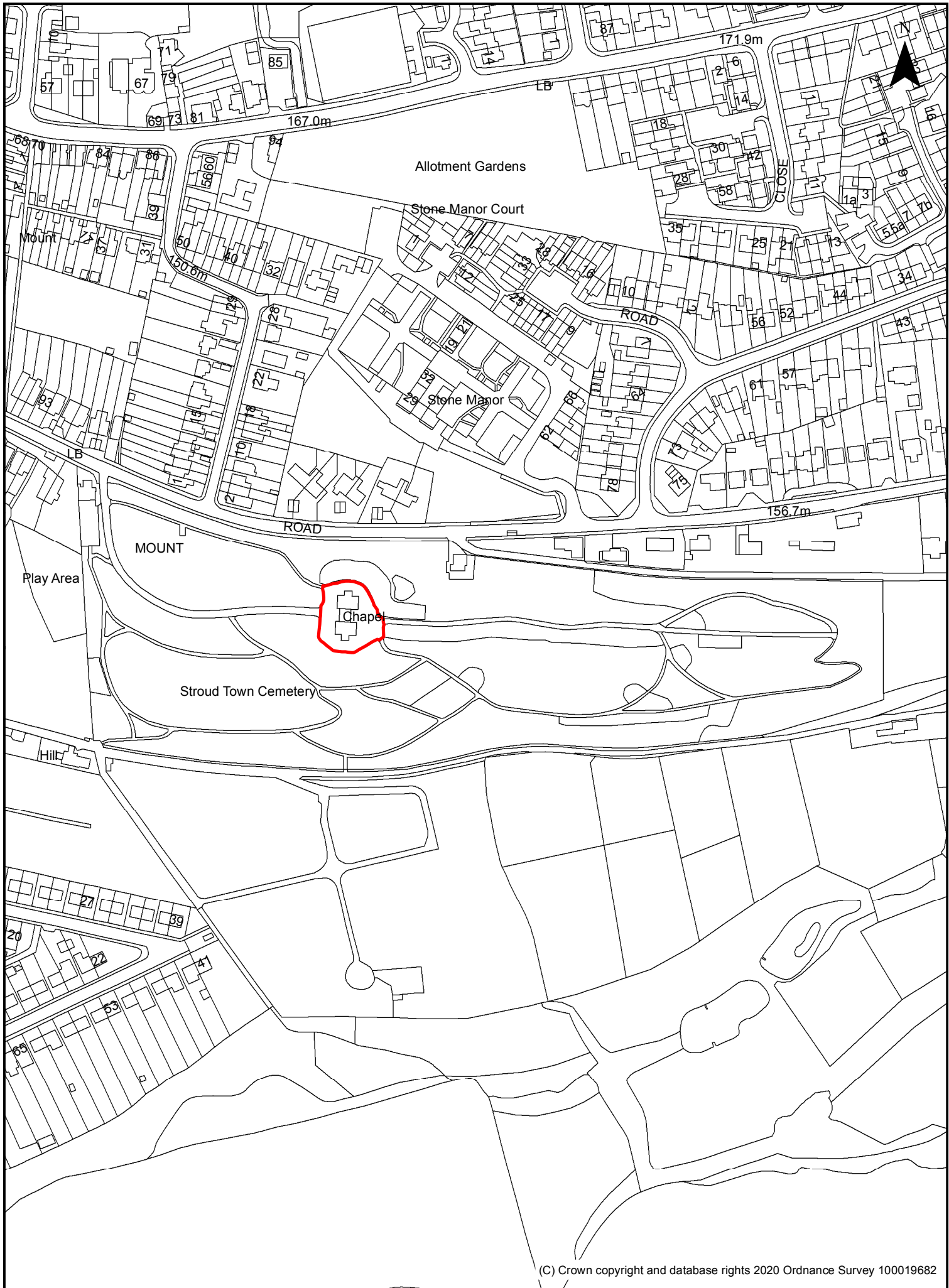
Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

4.3 **Equality Implications**

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision; the Trust's proposal would provide public access to part of the chapel and maintain access around it, if it proceeds.

4.4 **Environmental Implications**

Implications will need to be addressed as part of any listed building and planning applications. There are bat species present in the Chapel roof and further surveys will need to be undertaken and mitigation measures agreed if the project proceeds.



(C) Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100019682



6 Castle Villas, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2HP
sptrust30@gmail.com
www.stroudpreservationtrust.org.uk

**Proposal for The Chapel of Rest, Bisley Road Cemetery, GL5 1HQ.
For meeting with Stroud District Council, 17th December 2019.**

Ownership and leading up to this point

The Chapel of Rest at Bisley Road Cemetery, consecrated on September 1st 1856 is now an empty Grade 2 listed building sitting in its surrounding tarmac apron and currently owned by Stroud District Council. It has been unused since the Town Council Green team moved to a different depot. Surrounding the Chapel is the lovely laid out old cemetery with fine trees and an abundance of wildlife, now owned by Stroud Town Council and run as a nature reserve.



This is certainly a lovely and iconic building, seen from across the valleys as a focal point of Stroud and one that is deeply appreciated by the local residents. It is of fine quality ashlar stone with pitched (mostly) stone roofs and a central three storey tower surmounted by a broach spire. There are two chapels, north and south and decorated tracery windows, now fully blocked in.

Trustees from Stroud Preservation Trust since May of this year and the first community meeting have been closely involved and active in thinking through the feasibility of a building project that would benefit the building, use the Trust's expertise and work for the community.

We have met several times with community members at both formal and informal meetings; we have talked with Stroud Town Council about the issues and their original feasibility study. We have gathered information from STC and SDC (for which thanks), visited the site several times and worked on financial options and possibilities.

There is still much to do but we want to make the case for Stroud Preservation Trust acquiring the Chapel of Rest as an asset transfer so that we can offer the best quality, long term option for this lovely building.

What the Chapel of Rest would gain from an organisation like Stroud Preservation Trust:-

Firstly the 8 Trustees are well placed to address the issues of this building that will, inevitably, have a considerable conservation deficit. They have a wealth of experience between them:

Anne Mackintosh is a founder member and was project manager for several of the early projects. She is also an astute financial organiser and legal negotiator.

Camilla Hale has extensive experience in fundraising and recently raised £125k for Lansdown Hall; was closely involved in Stroud Town's Neighbourhood Development Plan and chairs the

South West Heritage Trust Network of Preservation Trusts. She is also a Stroud Town Councillor and well networked with local groups.

Steve Hurrell managed all the services and preparation for the Goods Shed and as a trust we raised funds, renovated the Goods shed building and transferred the Network Rail lease to Stroud Valleys Artspace.

Chris Gill is a retired Chartered Surveyor and has put together the potential costings for the Chapel looking at all the roof evidence and previous estimates from the Quattro feasibility study.

Rachel Russell led the Local Heritage Asset list for Stroud and has worked for English Heritage.

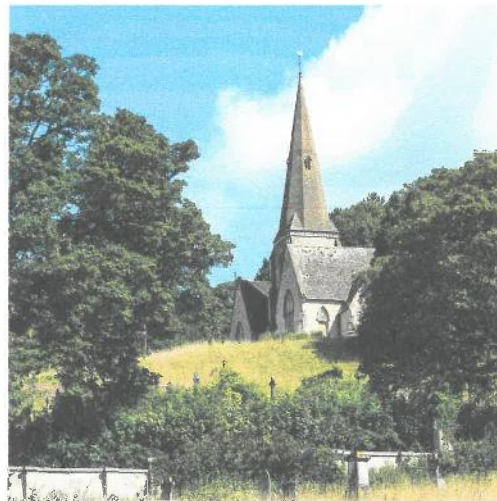
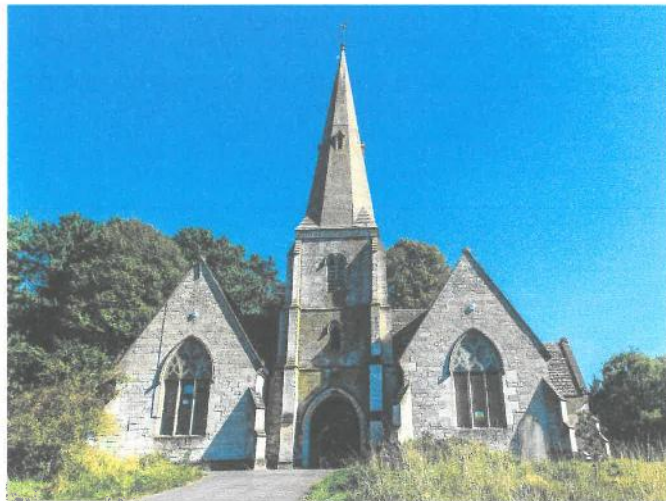
Hugh Barton is Emeritus Professor of Planning, health and Sustainability for the West of England University and was the principle author of Stroud Town's NDP.

Jon Lowe specialises in historic value assessments. He is a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeology and has been advising on sites ranging from Westminster Abbey to Battersea Power Station.

Andy Davy is a RIBA chartered architect and Local Authority Building Control partner. He has worked a great deal in the historic building sector and has a commitment to best energy values in all his projects.

As a team we are well placed to move this project forward, with the support of Stroud District Council. We have an excellent track record of previous projects. We have a real commitment to quality renovation build while preserving the essence of the building itself, its context and its community engagement. The conservation deficit on this building is high. If it is to be brought into contemporary use with a focus on community and quality Stroud Preservation Trust with its ability to raise grants and donations is the organisation to take on this building.

Stroud Preservation Trust also has strong links with community organisations with whom we could work closely to provide an integrated and well thought through community space. Because of the natural surroundings, views and southern aspect of the community 'face' we are particularly interested to work with well being organisations such as Compassionate Stroud, conservation cafe's, social prescribing groups and environmental programme.



Cost estimates

Bruton Knowles estimated costs of renovation and conversion in May 2016, and Adams Fletcher made a further set of estimates in February 2017. We have used the latter as the basis for our upper estimate of costs, supplemented where apparently incomplete by Bruton Knowles figures. There is no allowance for inflation or funding costs. The lower estimate is one we have prepared this year, with new minimum necessary building cost estimates prepared by our professional surveyor trustee. We have made identical assumptions for both lower and higher cost estimates in relation to preliminaries, contingencies, fees, and interior conversion and services. In order to make our own estimates for conversion and services a detailed design feasibility study would be necessary.

The cost of interior conversion made by Adams Fletcher (and used in both estimates) is based on the plan drawn up by Quattro Architects date January 2017. The design assumes that the northern chapel is converted to a spacious two-bedroom house, with first floor living space; and the southern chapel is converted into multi-use space on two floors for office, exhibition and teaching potential. Clearly if more complex uses were desired – for example two apartments in the north chapel - then costs would probably be higher.

Building works costs (to nearest thousand pounds)	SPT minimum estimates (K)	Adams Fletcher estimates (K)
Roofs, total	110	177
Windows, doors and external walls	49	74
Drainage	12	11
Interior floors and wall damp management	15	11
Interior conversion to new uses	185	185
Services	49	49
<i>Building costs total (a)</i>	420	507

Preliminaries - scaffolding, etc	46	56
Contingency	47	56
Developers profit	0	62
Professional fees	70	84
VAT	117	141
<i>Total work</i>	700	906
Stated purchase price	150	150
<i>Grand total (excluding funding costs)</i>	850	1,056

Future use and potential income

We have done preliminary work on future options, consulting residential estate agents and investigating office rentals. We have assumed future users could benefit from limited parking and patio space at the north end of the tarmac area. Our preferred option would be rather similar to the Quattro scheme, with the northern chapel converted to the two-bedroom house, and the southern chapel converted into short-term let serviced offices on the first floor, and a multi-use space below, including loos and kitchen, which would be available for rent by office workers or community groups, and would be suitable for exhibitions and educational activities connected with the unique cultural and biodiversity heritage of Stroud's cemetery. An alternative would be to develop the north chapel as two apartments, and the south chapel as apartment upstairs and multi-use space downstairs. We do not think an apartment on the ground floor in the south chapel would be appropriate as it would be surrounded by very public circulation, play and social space and this is a building invested in by the local community and community use is an important part of anything that we plan.

Initial very tentative income estimates from these two options are:

1. Sale of two-bed house - £350K; capital value of 8 short-let serviced office spaces (allowing for some vacancy, interest payment at 10% and cost of servicing) - £72K. Modest income from letting the multi-use space assumed to be invested for long-term maintenance of the spire. TOTAL VALUE: £422K

2. Sale of three apartments - £600K; Multi use space as option 1. TOTAL VALUE £600K

On top of the development costs there are also several areas of professional need as part of the feasibility studies that will require funding (and there are limited but some potential grant bodies that might help with this). These studies include services of all kinds, tracing them, analysing their capacity and asking for implementation plans and costs covering – sewage, water, electrics, bats, internet, phone landline, cleaning, damp and optional ideas for restoration of the windows.

Other considerations for our actions would be also to consult with STC for any terms and conditions from their cemetery ownership point of view. Visit other chapels of rest run by trusts like ours. Contact potential users to assess interest in flats as a rental option.

Conclusion

There is a great deal still to do and for a Trust like ours with the need for fundraising it will take an estimated two to two and a half years to complete – but what a boost for the area, what an asset for the local community and what a triumph for everyone involved to deliver this potentially wonderful project.

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 OCTOBER 2020

7

Report Title	GENERAL FUND OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20			
Purpose of Report	To present to the Strategy and Resources Committee the final outturn position against the General Fund revenue budgets for 2019/20			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the General Fund Revenue Outturn position for 2019/20, as shown in Table 1. b) note the Housing Revenue Account outturn position for 2019/20, as shown in Table 4 c) to note the transfers to and from earmarked reserves for the year, as detailed in Sections 5 and 8 and Appendix E d) to note the Capital Programme outturn position for 2019/20, as shown in Table 10 e) approve slippage of the Capital Programme budget into 2020/21, as shown in Table 10 and Appendix H 			
Consultation and Feedback	Budget holders have been consulted about the budget issues in their service areas. The feedback has been incorporated into to the report to explain difference between budgets and actual income and expenditure.			
Report Authors	<p>Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</p> <p>Adele Rudkin, Accountant Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk</p> <p>Graham Bailey, Principal Accountant Email: graham.bailey@stroud.gov.uk</p>			
Options	None			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Strategy and Resources Committee Revenue Detail</p> <p>Appendix B – Community Services and Licensing Committee Revenue Detail</p> <p>Appendix C – Housing Committee (General Fund) Revenue Detail</p> <p>Appendix D – Environment Committee Revenue Detail</p> <p>Appendix E – Earmarked Reserve Detail</p> <p>Appendix F – Housing Revenue Account Revenue Detail</p> <p>Appendix G – Capital Outturn Detail</p> <p>Appendix H – Capital Budget 2020/21</p> <p>Appendix I – Capital Financing</p>			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the final outturn position for the 2019/20 financial year and considers changes to balances and reserves.
- 1.2 This report is to provide members with a more detailed view of the performance against the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget and Capital Programmes for 2019/20.
- 1.3 **Due to the volume of information contained in the report, it would be helpful where members have questions on matters of detail that they could be referred to the report author or the appropriate service manager before the meeting.**

2. Summary

- 2.1 The **General Fund** has an **underspend of £0.973m**, as set out in Section 3. £0.542m of this underspend relates to the gain from being part of the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool. This has been allocated to a number of reserves for future use, including a new Covid-19 Recovery Reserve. A full breakdown of the allocation can be found in Section 4.
- 2.2 The **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)** has a net **underspend of £0.994m**, as set out in Section 7. This predominantly relates to additional income over budget. This balance will transfer to HRA general reserves.
- 2.3 There is total **Capital expenditure of £12.888m**, giving net underspend of £2.158m. It is proposed that £1.551m is carried forward and added to the 2020/21 Capital Programme budget.
- 2.4 Although only significantly affecting the very end of the financial year, Covid-19 has already had a major impact. The financial cost during 2019/20 is estimated at £0.100m across the General Fund (£0.080m loss of income and £0.020m additional cost). It has also materially impacted on the delivery of the capital programme in 2019/20, particularly within the HRA.
- 2.5 This impact is expected to be substantial within 2020/21, with the cost of response and recovery during the pandemic, as well as lost service income across both the General Fund and HRA. Recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates will also likely be affected, reducing the funding available to support services in future years. The timing of some capital programmes will need to be reviewed in line with deliverability under new operating guidance.
- 2.6 The financial impact will be closely monitored.

3. General Fund Revenue Outturn 2019/20

- 3.1 The revised General Fund Service Revenue budget for 2019/20, as approved by Council in February 2020 was £15.358m. The final outturn position for the year is £15.498m, with additional net transfers from earmarked reserves of £0.542m. This gives a net revenue underspend of £0.436m.
- 3.2 There is also additional funding income of £0.537m, predominantly due to the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool, giving a total **underspend of £0.973m**.
- 3.3 This is a strong outturn position, allowing an additional £0.973m to be added to reserves, increasing the financial resilience of the Council.

3.4 Table 1 shows a breakdown of the outturn position, by Committee.

Table 1 – General Fund Outturn Summary

	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Actual (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
GENERAL FUND					
Community Services and Licensing	3,334	3,154	2,945	41	(168)
Environment	5,425	5,696	5,085	412	(200)
Housing General Fund	538	710	559	167	16
Strategy and Resources	6,480	7,358	8,476	(1,196)	(78)
SSC Income from HRA	(1,285)	(1,560)	(1,567)		(7)
Net Revenue Expenditure	14,492	15,358	15,498	(576)	(436)
Funding from Govt Grants/Council Tax	(15,068)	(15,168)	(15,740)	35	(537)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	576	(189)	(731)	542	(0)
Total General Fund	0	0	(973)	0	(973)

3.5 The underspend of (£973k) for the year is made up of items relating to the Service Committees as well as specific additional income sources and cost savings. This is after a net transfer of £542k from earmarked reserves (including from the capital reserve which is used to finance the capital programme). It should be noted that these are predominantly one-off variances and are not expected to continue into 2020/21, with the exception of Covid-19 related costs and loss of income.

3.6 A summarised table of the significant variances is shown below.

Table 2 – Summary of Significant In-Year Variances

	Variance (under)/ overspend £k
Service Committees	
Salary savings across services	(340)
The Pulse	124
Ubico	(196)
Development Control income	163
Building Control	(167)
Recycling, Food Waste and Garden Waste income	(244)
Covid-19 - additional cost (Ebley Mill and Ubico)	20
Covid-19 - loss of income (car parking, The Pulse, Museum in the Park and fees and charges)	80
Other variances across services (net)	21
Total Service Committee	(539)
Central Costs and Income	
Business Rates Pool	(542)
Bad Debt Provision	325
Investment Income	(44)
Minimum Revenue Provision	(89)
Unused savings (Work Force Plan pension)	(77)
Other small central savings	(7)
Total Central Costs/Income	(434)
Total Underspend	(973)

3.7 Further detail on the year end variances can be found, by Committee, in the appendices.

4. Allocation of General Fund Underspend

4.1 The significant underspend allows funding to be put in reserves to cover future costs.

4.2 The Section 151 Officer has allocated the funding as set out below.

Table 3 – allocation of General Fund underspend

Reserve	Allocation to Reserve £k
Covid-19 Recovery Reserve	442
Community Response Grants	50
Climate Change Reserve	75
Investment Risk Reserve	210
Repairs and Replacement Reserve	50
Business Rates Safety Net	146
Total Allocation	973

4.3 Details of these reserves:

4.4 Covid-19 Recovery Reserve - £442k

This new reserve will be held for the allocation of funding towards recovery workstreams. This is funded from the additional business rates pool income over and above the anticipated level of £100k in the base budget.

4.5 Community Response Grants - £50k

The decision was made to make a fund of £100k available for grant payments to organisations providing assistance to vulnerable residents as a result of Covid-19. These grants are funded equally by Gloucestershire County Council Stroud District Council. Although the original officer decision anticipated the District share being funded from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve, the strong outturn position allows an amount of £50k to be put aside from the 2019/20 underspend to cover the Stroud District Council share of the grants. This will be held in the Covid-19 Recovery Reserve.

4.6 Climate Change Reserve - £75k

Council have approved the capital cost of water source heat pumps being installed at Ebley Mill and Brimscombe Mill. The ongoing cost associated with these is £15k per year. This funding would support those costs for the first five years of operation.

4.7 Investment Risk Reserve - £210k

The value of our new higher risk investments had fallen at year end, although there has been some recovery recently. These funds do not impact on the General Fund until 2023 however an increase in the Investment Risk Reserve will prudently maintain a reserve to reflect the fall in value.

4.8 Repairs and Maintenance Reserve - £50k

As part of buying the new fleet of electric vehicles it was stated that it is important to put aside sums to pay for their eventual replacement. £50k is to be transferred to the reserve for that purpose.

4.9 Business Rates Safety Net - £146k

As part of the MTFP we maintain a safety net reserve to protect the Council from fluctuations in the level of Business Rates funding. This has primarily been used to mitigate against changes in the way the scheme operates but also protects us from falls in actual income. With the outlook for the economy so uncertain it seems appropriate to transfer the balance of £146k into this reserve.

5. General Fund Earmarked Reserve Movements

5.1 The following section sets out the impact of the outturn on the earmarked reserves held by the Council. These are held for specific purposes and are in addition to the General Fund balance. The normal operation of Council business includes movements on earmarked reserves including spending existing reserves or placing new funding aside for use in future years.

5.2 General Fund earmarked reserves have increased from £17.951m at 1 April 2019 to £18.193m at 31 March 2020. The in year movement of £0.242m is made up of budgeted transfers to or from reserves (including those approved during the year), transfers included in the year end position, the planned use of the capital reserve to finance the capital programme, and the allocation of the General Fund underspend to reserves for future use. A summary of these movements is included in the below table.

Table 4 – Movements to/(from) earmarked reserves during 2019/20

Reserve	Budgeted Transfers £k	Capital Financing £k	Year End Transfers £k	Underspend Allocation £k	Total Reserve Movements £k
Capital Reserve		(1,160)			(1,160)
Carry Forwards	(423)		420		(3)
Local Plan Reserve			(19)		(19)
Climate Change Reserve				75	75
Business Rates Safety Net	400			146	546
Building Control Shared Service Reserve			(102)		(102)
Neighbourhood Planning Grant Reserve	(36)		3		(33)
MTFP Equalisation Reserve	176		0		176
CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Reserve			347		347
Brexit Reserve			35		35
Street Cleaning Reserve			(8)		(8)
Business Rates Pilot Reserve	(307)				(307)
Repairs & Replacements Reserve			(58)	50	(8)
Investment Risk Reserve				210	210
Covid- 19 Recovery Reserve				492	492
Total	(189)	(1,160)	618	973	242

5.3 A full breakdown of the earmarked reserves can be found in Appendix E.

5.4 Included within the earmarked reserves is the Carry Forward Reserve, used where services need to transfer external funding or budget for specific projects from one year to the next. The reversals from 2018/19 and amounts carried forward from 2019/20 are shown in the table below. The net movement represents the £3k included in the net reserves transfers.

Table 5 – Movement on Carry Forward Reserve

Service Area	Detail	2018/19 Carry Forwards (£'000)	2019/20 Carry Forwards (£'000)
Community Safety	External funding for work with young people	(12)	15
Youth Services	External funding and 19/20 underspends	(5)	19
Public Spaces	External funding for park improvements	(19)	19
Cultural Services - Community Health & Wellbeing	Funding linked to Health and Equalities projects	(36)	20
Carbon Management		(6)	0
Health & Wellbeing	Land drainage, Joint Flood Aleviation partnership, Rural Suds and Glos Better Business for All partnership	(170)	176
Housing Strategy	Community Housing Fund and Custom Build grant funding	(170)	167
Human Resources	Apprentice funding	(5)	4
Total		(423)	419

6. General Fund General Reserves

- 6.1 The General Fund balance has been maintained with no change at £2.169 million.
- 6.2 There are no budgeted transfers to or from General Fund unearmarked balances in 2020/21.

7. Housing Revenue Account

- 7.1 The HRA is a self financing account for the Council's landlord function, which must be budgeted to break even (net of transfers to/from HRA reserves).
- 7.2 The revenue outturn position of the HRA shows a **net underspend of £0.994m** (4.4% of gross expenditure budget). This underspend will be transferred to HRA General Reserves, along with a budgeted transfer of £0.050m.
- 7.3 A summary of the HRA position follows in Table 6.

Table 6 – Summary of HRA Outturn Position

Housing Committee	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Amount (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Total Income	(22,325)	(22,325)	(23,111)	0	(786)
Total Expenditure	9,948	10,061	10,049	(52)	(63)
Support Service Charges from the GF	1,560	1,560	1,567	0	7
Total Other Costs and Income	12,501	12,501	12,188	168	(145)
Total Expenditure/Income	123	236	(874)	116	(994)
Transfers to/from HRA Earmarked reserves	(226)	(286)	(170)	(116)	0
Transfers to/from General Reserves	103	50	50	0	0
Total Housing Revenue Account	0	0	(994)	0	(994)

- 7.4 The outturn variance of (£994k) includes transfers to and from earmarked reserves. Further detail can be found on these transfers in Section 8 and Appendix E.

7.5 Below is a summary of the key variances within the HRA outturn position.

Table 7 – Summary of HRA key variances

Area	Variance (under)/overspend £k
Rental Income and Charges	(856)
Provision for bad debt	69
Salary underspends	(246)
Repairs and Maintenance	182
Investment Income	(152)
Other variances (net)	8
Total Underspend	(994)

7.6 Further detail on the HRA outturn position and variances can be found in Appendix F.

8. Housing Revenue Account Earmarked Reserves

8.1 These are held for specific purposes and are in addition to the HRA general reserves. The normal operation of Council business includes movements on earmarked reserves including spending existing reserves or placing new funding aside for use in future years.

8.2 HRA earmarked reserves have decreased from £4.094m at 1 April 2019 to £3.365m at 31 March 2020. The in year movement of -£0.170m is made up of budgeted transfers to Sheltered Modernisation fund, planned use of the Sheltered Modernisation fund and the use of a carry forward from 2018/19 and shown in the below table.

Table 8 – Movements to/(from) HRA earmarked reserves during 2019/20

Reserve	Budgeted Transfers £k	Year End Transfers (incl Capital Financing) £k	Underspend Allocation £k	Total Reserve Movements £k
Sheltered Modernisation	(226)	116		(110)
Carry Forwards	(60)			(60)
Total	(286)	116	0	(170)

8.3 The year end transfers are due a variation to the use of the Sheltered Modernisation fund compared to budget. This means that less was used than was budgeted and the difference remains in the reserve to use in the future.

8.4 The carry forward reserve was held for Fire Risk Assessments, and was transferred in year to the repairs and maintenance budget.

8.5 A full breakdown of earmarked reserves can be found in appendix E.

9. Housing Revenue Account General Reserves

- 9.1 The opening balance of HRA general reserves at 1 April 2019 was £3,386k. The base budget included a transfer of £103k to reserves, but this was reduced to £50k in April 2019.
- 9.2 The revenue underspend of £994k increases the total transfer to HRA general reserves to £1,044k, giving a balance of £4,430k at 31 March 2020.

Table 9 – HRA General Reserves

	2019/20 £k	2020/21 £k
Opening balance	3,386	4,430
Budgeted transfer to/(from) general reserves – Council Feb 2020	50	181
Revenue underspend 2019/20	994	
Closing balance	4,430	4,611

- 9.3 It should be noted that the budgeted transfer to HRA general reserves in 2020/21 will be revised during the year as budgets will need to be realigned in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

10. Capital Programme

- 10.1 The 2019/20 Capital Programme of £18.769m was approved by Council in January 2019. This has been revised to a total of £15.046m during the year.
- 10.2 The revised General Fund capital programme is £5.036m, against which there is spend of £4.719m, an underspend of (£317k).
- 10.3 The full capital outturn position is included in Table 10, below, and the funding schedule of the capital programme can be found in Appendix I.
- 10.4 The ICT Investment plan is fully underway, with spend of £749k in 2019/20. This has included the replacement of citrix terminals with laptops which greatly supported a very quick move to home working in response to Covid-19. Improvements have also been made to the storage network and servers, with further improvements planned for 2020/21.
- 10.5 The additional expenditure within Housing General Fund predominately relates to additional grant payments to a Housing Association (funded from a central government grant) and additional projects being funded from the Gloucestershire County Council funded Better Care Fund. These are all fully funded projects and therefore the additional spend does not represent an overspend that will affect the overall financial position.
- 10.6 There are also some areas of slippage in the capital programme, including the externally funded Warm Homes project, Brimscombe Port and the Canal regeneration. Vehicle acquisition on the Multi Service Contract has also been delayed due to procurement specification. It is proposed that the remaining funding from 2019/20 be carried forward in 2020/21 to continue to fund these capital programmes. The total slippage request is £950k.
- 10.7 The revised HRA capital programme totals £10.010m, with spend of £8.169m, an underspend of (£1.841m).

- 10.8 There is a total underspend of £1,252k across Major Works on dwellings and other capital spend. The capital programmes were affected by the lockdown due to Covid-19, and the IT budget has slipped into 2020/21. There is also additional spend on the new depot at Littlecombe. The 2020/21 Major Works programme will need to be completely rewritten due to Covid-19 and it is therefore suggested that no budget is slipped into 2020/21 at this time.
- 10.9 The New Build programme is £421k underspend in total. There is a £224k underspend on the new Independent Living units at Tanners Piece, a property has been purchased for £143k, and there is some slippage on the development schemes has been increased due to Covid-19.
- 10.10 The Sheltered Modernisation programme has capital underspends of £168k, but the overall programme remains largely on target, with some slippage due to Covid-19.

Table 10 – Capital Summary

Capital Scheme	Latest Budget (£'000)	Outturn (£'000)	Variation (£'000)	Carry forward (£'000)
Environment				
Canal 1A	0	76	76	0
Canal 1B (Development)	1,068	683	(385)	385
Market Town Centres	113	63	(50)	50
MSC - Vehicles	684	574	(110)	110
Stroud District Cycling & Walking	100	96	(4)	4
Total Environment	1,965	1,492	(473)	549
Housing General Fund				
Affordable Housing - Support to Registered Providers	39	473	434	39
Better Care Funded Projects	0	163	163	0
CCG Health through Warmth Grants	200	173	(27)	27
Disabled Facilities Grants	330	263	(67)	0
Healthy Home Loans	0	11	11	0
Park Homes Project	76	86	10	0
Warm Homes Fund	853	670	(183)	183
Total Housing General Fund	1,498	1,839	341	249
Strategy and Resources				
Avon Mutual	50	50	0	0
Brimmscombe Port Redevelopment	242	99	(143)	143
Ebley Mill Works	98	109	11	0
Electric Vehicles	257	245	(12)	12
ICT Investment Plan	746	749	3	(3)
Littlecombe Business Units, Dursley	54	40	(14)	0
MSCP Resurfacing	120	91	(29)	0
Subscription Rooms	6	5	(1)	0
Total Strategy and Resources	1,573	1,388	(185)	152
Total General Fund	5,036	4,719	(317)	950
Housing Revenue Account				
Major Works	7,756	6,504	(1,252)	175
New Homes	1,640	1,219	(421)	258
Sheltered Housing Modernisation	614	446	(168)	168
Total Housing Revenue Account	10,010	8,169	(1,841)	601
Total Capital Expenditure	15,046	12,888	(2,158)	1,551

11. IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Financial Implications

The whole report is financial in nature, reporting the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital position for 2019/20.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager

Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk

11.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

11.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

11.4 Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE REVENUE DETAIL

Table 1 Strategy & Resources Outturn Detail

Strategy & Resources Committee	Para Refs	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Actual (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Car Parks		(653)	(618)	(528)	0	90
Commercial Properties		(71)	(64)	(112)	0	(48)
Communications		137	137	136	0	(1)
Corporate Business Services		201	201	143	0	(57)
Corporate Expenditure & Income		2,539	1,193	2,456	(1,160)	103
Corporate Services (Legal)		476	476	467	0	(8)
Democratic Representation & Management		506	696	714	0	18
Director (Corporate Services)		48	48	52	0	4
Facilities Management		442	441	548	(40)	67
Financial Services		721	721	670	0	(51)
Head of Finance		83	27	16	0	(12)
Human Resources		407	411	358	4	(49)
Information & Communication Technology		1,604	1,604	1,457	0	(147)
Other Operating Income & Expenditure		0	0	0	0	0
Other Properties		(540)	(533)	(580)	0	(47)
Pension Lump Sum		0	1,883	1,883	0	(0)
Property Services		470	379	366	0	(14)
Senior Leadership Team		112	357	430	0	73
Strategy and Resources TOTAL		6,480	7,358	8,476	(1,196)	(78)

1.1 Car Parks - £90k unachieved income

(Mike Hammond xtn 4447, mike.hammond@stroud.gov.uk)

Members will recall that an income shortfall has been forecast in the subsequent Budget Monitoring Reports for this Committee, due to underperforming revenue streams. This trend has continued throughout the last quarter with the situation worsening across the parking estate. In summary, fewer people were using the car parks in Stroud operated by SDC. We believe there are a number of contributory factors to this, including a greater utilisation of free on street parking.

1.2 Commercial Properties - (£48k) underspend

(Alison Fisk xtn 4430, alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk)

Members will recall that the Council's head lease of Phase 4 of the industrial units at Oldends Lane, Stonehouse expired on the 6 December 2019. The Dilapidation costs at the end of the lease have been settled. This is the final phase of units to be handed back.

Lettings, sales and interest in the Littlecombe Units increased substantially pre-Covid 19. There are now five units occupied, three are sold subject to contract, and the last unit is under offer. It is not clear whether all those sold subject to contract will now complete, but there has been renewed interest in the units recently and it is anticipated that new deals can be achieved if necessary. There is a loss of rental income in the budget of £30k due to units being sold rather than let and as more of the units are expected to be sold this will further impact on the revenue budget, which assumes lettings. The sale of the units and subsequent repayment of debt will create a saving within the Minimum Revenue Provision

budget. This variance also includes the rental income from Ubico regarding Gossington Depot.

1.3 Corporate Business Services – (£57k) underspend
(Andrew Cummings, xtn 4115, andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk)

This underspend is due to a salary vacancy within the service.

1.4 Corporate Expenditure & Income – £103k overspend
(Lucy Clothier xtn 4343, lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk)

A central provision for the non payment of all general fund service income of £325k. This is higher than in previous years due to the expected impact of Covid-19 leaving residents and businesses less able to pay outstanding invoices in some cases.

This has been partially offset by additional investment income of £44k, unused savings of £77k largely due to Work Force Plan pension savings that have been taken from 2020/21, and a lower Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) of £89k. This is an amount put aside to repay borrowing, which in 2019/20 is lower than budgeted as the sale of two industrial units at Littlecombe has allowed the associated borrowing to be 'repaid' from the capital receipts from the sale.

1.5 Facilities Management – £67k overspend
(Mike Hammond xtn 4447, mike.hammond@stroud.gov.uk)

The income shortfall has arisen due to a tenant within Ebley Mill exercising their right to use the break clause within their contract, the premises were vacated in January 2020. Additional Income has been taken into consideration with the letting of the New Block vacant office space from October 2019.

An overspend has been forecast on Ebley Mill expenditure, predominately around Business Rates and internal refurbishment within the Mill. £40k has been set aside from the Repairs and Replacement Reserve to fund part of this overspend.

1.6 Financial Services – (£51k) underspend
(Lucy Clothier, xtn 4343, lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk)

This underspend is generally attributable to an in-year salary saving within the service. The Principal Accountant has been seconded to the Accountancy Managers role on an interim basis. The backfill arrangements that have been put into place have led to a saving.

1.7 Human Resources – (£49k) underspend
(Lucy Powell xtn 4286, lucy.powell@stroud.gov.uk)

This variance is directly related around events that have not been able to run this year that are supported by this budget. For the future we will consider how to use this funding to support jobs and skills growth within the District in line with Council priorities

1.8 ICT – (£147k) underspend

(Sean Ditchburn xtn 4256, sean.ditchburn@stroud.gov.uk)

A (£127k) underspend on salaries is forecast, this is attributable to two senior ICT posts not being recruited to this financial year. The service will be fully reviewed by the Director of Transformation.

Additional expenditure has been incurred on Foresight consulting. In addition, Civica issued a number of large credit notes in 19/20, this is a direct result of a drive to streamline the contract, and also fall in line with our Financial year.

1.9 Other Properties (£47k) underspend

(Alison Fisk xtn 4430, alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk)

As previously reported additional rental income along with further meeting room bookings have been received in regard of the Old Town Hall. Corporate maintenance spend is forecasting an underspend due to works previously identified that have been put on hold. This will be part of the wider property review for 2020. There are also additional minor underspends across the service.

1.10 Senior Leadership Team – £73k overspend

(Kathy O'Leary xtn 4780, kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk)

This variance incorporates recruitment costs as well as salaries associated with the new senior management structure. The net variance can be funded from other in year underspends including the vacant Head of Finance post.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE REVENUE DETAIL

	Para Refs	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Actual (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Community Services and Licensing						
Community Safety		208	220	124	15	(81)
Cultural Services - Arts and Culture		700	640	657	0	17
Cultural Services - Community Health & Wellbeing		169	205	170	20	(15)
Cultural Services - Management		0	0	0	0	0
Cultural Services - Sports Centres		(170)	(153)	33	(32)	154
Customer Services		387	387	321	0	(66)
Director (Customer Services)		135	23	12	0	(10)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations		337	337	338	0	0
Licensing		(62)	(62)	(66)	0	(4)
Public Spaces		1,286	1,323	1,238	19	(66)
Revenues and Benefits		244	129	32	0	(97)
Youth Services		101	106	85	19	(1)
Community Services and Licensing TOTAL		3,334	3,154	2,945	41	(168)

1.1 Community Safety – (£81k) underspend

(Mike Hammond xtn 4447, mike.hammond@stroud.gov.uk)

This underspend is made up of several variances across the service:

Car Park Enforcement – (£44k) additional income

The Car Park Enforcement Team went through a period of stabilisation in 2019/20, with the usual transient staff replaced with a settled and committed team. This resulted in a full complement of staff being present for most of the financial year; in turn leading to more consistent patrols and an increase in Penalty Charge Notice income.

In addition, there are a number of small underspends across the service including Careline (£16k), Neighbourhood Wardens (£8k) and Stroud & Dursley CCTV (£5k).

1.2 Cultural Services - Sports Centres – £154k overspend

(Angela Gillingham 01453 540995, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

£63k of this variance is related to salaries. Two team members on maternity leave, one on re-allocation of duties and an employee who was on long term sick along with severance pay has had a significant impact on the budget. As reported throughout the year the failure of CHP (Combined Heat and Power) increased our electricity costs and we have also seen a rise in water usage this year. The additional spend in marketing is a direct attribute to the new website which was created to improve service and access to both new and existing customers as previously reported. Income was realised against budget but due to the early closure of the centre on 17th March 2020 an estimated £30,000 was lost in income. We were due to excel this year's income target but the early closure and subsequent refunds reduced our full income potential.

1.3 Customer Services - (£66k) underspend

(Shobhan Sen xtn 4700, shobhan.sen@stroud.gov.uk)

As reported in previously in 2019/20, this underspend is directly attributable to salaries. Within the service there are two vacant STR3 Customer Service Advisor posts. As part of the Council's transformation and change programme, Customer Services are in the process of collaborating with service units across the Council to deliver services more efficiently and in a more customer-focussed way, from first point of contact to resolution. It is anticipated that these vacancies are likely to be filled in the FY 2020-21, to provide additional capacity.

1.4 Public Spaces – (£66k) underspend

(Mike Hammond xtn 4447, mike.hammond@stroud.gov.uk)

The most significant variance is in Public Conveniences (£27k). This is due to a saving on the cleaning contract through Ubico and more efficient electricity bills received against budget. Stratford Park is reporting a general underspend of (£14k) and additional small savings across the rest of the service.

1.5 Revenues and Benefits– (£97k) underspend/additional income

(Simon Killen xtn 4013, simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk)

Housing Benefit subsidy and recovery of overpayments are partially unpredictable, and this variance represents a small percentage of the total benefit payments (over £20m). Within this there are also salary savings of £31k.

HOUSING COMMITTEE (GENERAL FUND) REVENUE DETAIL

Table 1 – Housing GF Outturn Detail

Strategy & Resources Committee	Para Refs	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Actual (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Housing Advice		247	247	286	0	39
Housing Strategy		138	309	134	167	(8)
Private Sector Housing		154	154	139	0	(15)
Housing General Fund TOTAL		538	710	559	167	16

1.1 Housing Advice – £39k overspend

(Phil Bishop, Phillip.bishop@stroud.gov.uk)

Spend on Temporary Accommodation and Bed and Breakfast continues to be high, and although much of this can be covered through Housing Benefit, the generally higher costs of temporary accommodation mean that the full cost can not be recovered. The net cost of temporary accommodation (including bed and breakfast) for 2019/20 is £145k, an overspend of £74k against budget. This has been partially offset by salary savings across the service of £37k.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REVENUE DETAIL

Table 1 – Environment Committee Outturn Detail

Environment Committee	Para Refs	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Actual (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Canal		6	32	297	0	265
Carbon Management		71	135	140	0	5
Development Control		41	130	210	0	80
Director (Development Services)		119	78	122	0	44
Economic Development		91	102	(210)	347	35
Health & Wellbeing		780	951	713	176	(62)
Land Charges & Street Naming		(51)	(42)	(47)	0	(4)
Planning Strategy/Local Plan		309	374	399	(15)	11
Statutory Building Control		92	(29)	(94)	(102)	(167)
Waste & Recycling: Other		20	20	6	0	(14)
Waste and Recycling: MSC		3,947	3,947	3,548	6	(393)
Environment TOTAL		5,425	5,696	5,085	412	(200)

1.1 Canal - £265k overspend

(Dave Marshall xtn 4646, dave.marshall@stroud.gov.uk)

Although showing as an overspend against budget, this cost is fully funded within the Canal Phase 1B programme, with these costs funded from the agreed council contribution of £3m. Further detail on the project is included within the Capital programme detail in Appendix G.

1.2 Development Control – £80k overspend

(Geraldine LeCointe xtn 4233, geraldine.lecointe@stroud.gov.uk)

As previously reported to members an overspend of £80k has been identified. Application fee income is currently down in comparison with this time of year over the last 3 years but interrogation of these historic statistics also shows how there is no predictable pattern to income month on month or year on year.

The service has also taken a cautionary approach because of the as yet unknown impact of Brexit on the development sector.

The service has been reviewed and a new structure was put in place in June 2019. The new structure should allow us to improve the fee income from the pre-application service we provide however two key posts are currently vacant which has hampered our ability to implement these changes. It is also worth noting that the service can only seek to recoup its costs in providing a pre-application advice service.

1.3 Director (Development Services) - £44k overspend

(Kathy O'Leary xtn 4780, kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk)

This overspend is directly related to redundancy costs associated with the re-structure of the Senior Leadership team that was approved by Strategy and Resources in July 2019.

1.4 Economic Development – £35k overspend (Pippa Stroud xtn 4099, pippa.stroud@stroud.gov.uk)

In 2018 business rates support, in the form of a discount against business rates, was offered to a business who were relocating within the District. This relocation is now complete and as the support was offered in 2018 it creates an overspend in the 2019/20 financial year.

1.5 Health & Wellbeing – (£62k) underspend/additional income (Jon Beckett xtn 4443, jon.beckett@stroud.gov.uk)

A salary underspend of (£30k) has been identified. A number of in-year vacancies have been identified (including Business Support roles and Health and Safety Officer), which have now been recruited to. There has also been a reduction in hours with the service which has contributed to this saving. Any changes to establishment have been identified as part of the budget setting process.

There a number of projects within Land Drainage which encompass external funding over several financial years. They comprise of (£80k) (external funding from the County Council) to fund land drainage enforcement work. No suitable funding projects were identified in 2019/20 but several flood incidents did occur early 2020 where these monies will be able to be potentially allocated in 2020/21. (£36k) income surplus has been forecast on flood prevention projects and S106 monies for flood prevention work and is a combination of funding from the Environment Agency. This has been allocated towards on-going schemes in the new financial year. The Rural SuDS Project budget (£52k underspend) is the funding we receive from the EA to mainly pay for the project officer who is to remain in post until March 2021.

1.6 Statutory Building Control – (£167k) underspend (Paul Bowley xtn 4250, paul.bowley@stroud.gov.uk)

Gloucestershire Building Control Partnership is a shared service with Gloucester City Council and hosted by Stroud. The service is provided under the auspices of the Building Act 1984, an element of the service is in competition with the private sector. The shared service was established on the 1st July 2015 and has resulted in an increase in income due to receiving applications from both Stroud and Gloucester areas.

The savings in Building Control in the main, relate to an unfilled Area Building Control Surveyor post which remains vacant. Other in year savings against budget within the service have also been achieved. A review of the financial position by the shared service board and audit has concluded that any previous year's surplus cannot be re-invested into the service and that the service must meet the overriding objective of balancing income with expenditure over a 3 to 5 year period. Building Control charges are set to be increased by 9.5% in 2020/21 and a review of costs ahead of the 2021/22 budget is planned in order to mitigate any future deficit.

The year end position includes a transfer from the Building Control reserve in line with the purpose of the reserve.

1.7 Waste & Recycling – (£393k underspend)

(Mike Hammond xtn 4447, mike.hammond@stroud.gov.uk)

A more favourable outturn variance compared to the Q3 forecast has been achieved.

As reflected in the recent report presented to Environment Committee the market for mixed paper collapsed in late 2019. Whilst we expected a large reduction in our contractual price mechanism, the key market price held firm in January 2020, resulting in better returns than we expected (£160k) favourable variance. Whilst SDC has been insulated from this within the existing contract, it will end shortly, exposing us fully to current market conditions. This is now very likely to impact the budgetary position in 2020/21.

The UBICO contract final spend was (£195k) under the original budget of £5.873m across all Committees. This saving has been generated across all services within the Multi Service Contract. Whilst this is an extremely positive outcome, we will continue working very closely with Ubico to work on a more robust approach to their budget monitoring process, so any variances will be identified earlier. This will then lead to a more streamlined budget setting process for future years.

Garden Waste has achieved improved revenue levels due to the scheduled price increase tariff. This has allowed the investment in scheme expansion and record subscriber numbers by March 2020. Additional underspends within the service have contributed towards the favourable variance.

Alongside this the final reimbursement for recycling credits was higher than anticipated at Q3.

In this financial year incentive and recycling credit payments made via the County Council remain relatively unchanged. Members will recall that GCC previously proposed changes to the food waste incentive payments they make to SDC and other districts. Following a notice period the new payment mechanism is due to be introduced in July 2020. The financial impact is large, with revenue levels expected to decrease by circa. £225k per annum.

EARMARKED RESERVES DETAIL

Reserve	Opening Balance (after reserves review) £k	Transfers from reserve £k	Transfers to reserve £k	Closing Balance £k
General Fund Earmarked Reserves				
Capital Reserve	5,417	(1,160)	0	4,257
Legal Counsel Reserve	50	0	0	50
Carry Forward Reserve	423	(423)	420	420
Opportunity Land Purchase Reserve	250	0	0	250
Planning Appeal Costs Reserve	100	0	0	100
Redundancy Reserve	250	0	0	250
Local Plan Reserve	50	(19)	0	31
Climate Change	200	0	75	275
Waste Management	600	0	0	600
Business Rates Ret- Safety net	1,346	0	546	1,892
Welfare Reform Reserve	30	0	0	30
Building Control Shared Service Reserve	224	(102)	0	122
Neighbourhood Planning Grant Reserve	47	(33)	0	14
Culture, Arts and Leisure Reserve	130	0	0	130
MTFP Equalisation Reserve	6,547	0	176	6,724
Homelessness Prevention Reserve	98	0	0	98
CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Reserve	218	0	347	565
Brexit Reserve	18	0	35	53
Street Cleaning Reserve	20	(8)	0	12
Business Rates Pilot Reserve	897	(307)	0	590
Transformation Reserve	678	0	0	678
Repairs & Replacements Reserve	260	(72)	64	252
Investment Risk Reserve	100	0	210	310
Covid- 19 Recovery Reserve	0	0	492	492
Total General Fund Earmarked Reserves	17,951	(2,123)	2,365	18,193
HRA Earmarked Reserves				
HRA Carry Forwards	60	(60)	0	0
Sheltered Modernisation	2,514	(1,110)	1,000	2,405
Estate Redevelopment	1,170			1,170
Staffing	250			250
HRA General Contingency	100			100
Total HRA Earmarked Reserves	4,094	(1,170)	1,000	3,925
Total Earmarked Reserves	22,046	(3,292)	3,365	22,118

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DETAIL

	Para Ref	2019/20 Original Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Revised Budget (£'000)	2019/20 Amount (£'000)	2019/20 Reserve Transfer (£'000)	2019/20 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Housing Committee						
Dwelling Rents and service charges	1.1	(21,855)	(21,855)	(22,493)	0	(638)
Other charges and income	1.1	(551)	(551)	(768)	0	(217)
Provision for Bad Debt	1.2	80	80	149	0	69
Total Income		(22,325)	(22,325)	(23,111)	0	(786)
Supervision and Management	1.3	4,203	4,256	4,004	0	(251)
Repairs and Maintenance	1.4	3,733	3,793	3,975	0	182
Sheltered Housing Service	1.5	1,083	1,083	987	0	(96)
Other Expenditure	1.6	460	460	561	0	102
Sheltered Housing Modernisation	1.7	470	470	522	(52)	0
Total Expenditure		9,948	10,061	10,049	(52)	(63)
Support Service Charges from the GF		1,560	1,560	1,567	0	7
Revenue Funding of Capital Programme (Depn & RCCO)		6,687	6,687	6,519	168	0
Provision for repaying debt		900	900	900	0	0
Interest Payable/Receivable	1.8	3,354	3,354	3,202	0	(152)
Total Other Costs and Income		12,501	12,501	12,188	168	(145)
Total Housing Revenue Account		123	236	(874)	116	(994)
Transfers to/from HRA Earmarked reserves		(226)	(286)	(170)	(116)	0
Transfers to/from General Reserves		103	50	50	0	0
Total Transfers to/from reserves		(123)	(236)	(120)	(116)	0

1.1 Income – (£855k) additional income

As previously reported additional rental income has been received when compared to budget, in part because of prudent budgeting of dwelling numbers included in the new build programme and sheltered modernisation programme.

There is also an increased level of lease income representing the work by Tenant Services of providing some housing for temporary accommodation in the district.

Garage rents are expected to be higher than budgeted, but will continue to reduce in line with the approval to review the use of all garage sites.

Leaseholder charges are also higher, with a number of major works being completed in blocks containing leaseholders. Leaseholders are charged a share of the cost of works, based on the provision in their lease. For example, if a leaseholder is in a block of four flats, they would usually be expected to pay one quarter of the total cost for the block. Leaseholders are consulted under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act. This income will offset the cost of the works which was largely completed in 2018/19.

1.2 Provision for Bad Debt – £69k overspend

A provision is put aside in order to reflect the likelihood that some outstanding debts across rents and other charges will not be received. A provision of £149k has been made in 2019/20. This is higher than was forecast at Quarter 3 budget monitoring due to the expected impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

1.3 Supervision and Management – (£251k) underspend

Significant salary savings have been made, predominantly in Contract Services (£209k). This is largely due to posts being held vacant pending the implantation of the in house repairs and maintenance service from April 2020.

The Development Team has also seen salary savings (£37k) due to vacant posts.

This area also includes the set up costs for the in house service starting April 2020. Further detail on these costs are included in the HRA Outturn Information Paper.

1.4 Repairs and maintenance - £182k overspend

Maintenance spend is £182k overspent overall, but this does include some large variances within the service.

An overspend in general maintenance of £436k relates to responsive repairs. This area will be transferred to the in house repairs and maintenance service from April 2020. This is a demand led service and as in previous years this area of work has had both positive and negative variances. Additional spend was incurred for the installation of heat detectors following a change in legislation, £100k of electrical of associated remedial works, and £100k for structural works to balconies.

Void works are £194k overspent. £50k of this relates to Council Tax on void properties. This demand led service, and again as in previous years variances have been both positive and negative. The condition of some properties has necessitated additional spend due to the condition they have been return in.

Planned maintenance spend is £329k less than budget largely due to a lower than anticipated cost for asbestos works, and uncompleted works on the North contract (Mi-Space).

Gas in house provider is £118k underspent. This is due to a small underspend in salaries due to a vacant apprentice post, as well as slippage in a contractor delivering (non urgent) servicing to renewable heating systems.

1.5 Sheltered Housing Service – (£96k) underspend

As previously reported, there is a reduced staffing cost compared to the budget (-£74k), and significant savings made on services (-£45k). This has however been partially offset by additional costs relating to works and equipment needed to implement the changes to call monitoring as approved by Housing Committee in September 2019.

1.6 Other expenditure - £102k overspend

As previously reported, the cost of grounds maintenance, including fly tipping, is higher than anticipated (£69k overspend). This will continue to be monitored, and the budget has been increased in 2020/21.

Some additional works have undertaken on some trees on HRA land, along with other expenses including a 'dowry' payment made with the transfer of playing fields, have further increased the pressure. This is part of the Council's ongoing Community Asset transfer programme and will generate future savings as the HRA will no longer be paying for the maintenance of the areas.

1.7 Sheltered Housing Modernisation – funded from earmarked reserve

The Sheltered Modernisation Programme includes modernisation works to green and amber schemes, as well as the decanting costs and void costs e.g. council tax for the red schemes. It consists of works to schemes that are part revenue and part capital and the budget is split based on estimates.

This is fully funded from the Sheltered modernisation earmarked reserve, along with a contribution towards the lost service charges that formed part of the original business case.

The expenditure in 2019/20 relates in part to decanting and holding void Glebelands, Cambridge House, and Ringfield Close all 'red' schemes, and to modernisation works at Concord and George Pearce House, both amber schemes.

Overall, across revenue and capital, there is an underspend of £116k. The majority of the underspend is due to savings on the contract value against the original estimates, and also additional savings against the contract value as the projects were subsequently delivered under-budget. This resulted in an overall saving against estimated budgets of 7% for Concord and an anticipated saving of over 10% for George Pearce House. These savings are at least partly due to the relationship that has been established with our partner contractor due to the Dynamic Purchasing System utilised when procuring these services. The works at George Pearce House were all due to be completed in 2019/20 but works had to be suspended due to Covid-19 and were completed in June and hence some spend has fallen into 2020/21.

There is an increase in the decant costs as residents from Glebelands have been rehoused quicker than anticipated and so more of the costs have fallen into 2019/20. There will therefore be less spend in 2020/21 in this area.

As this spend is fully funded from the earmarked reserve, the variance won't affect the bottom line of the HRA revenue position, but instead means that the earmarked reserve will close £116k higher than budgeted.

This will be used for future modernisation costs including the slippage on George Pearce House. Further information on the Sheltered Modernisation earmarked reserve can be found in Section 8 of the main report.

A full breakdown of the Sheltered Modernisation budget (including the financing of the capital expenditure through Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)) is contained within the below table.

Table 2 – Sheltered Modernisation Summary

	Budget £k	Outturn £k	Variance £k
Project costs eg newsletter	5	2	(3)
Decanting and empty property costs in red schemes	202	223	21
Contribution towards lost service charges (part of business case)	141	141	0
Modernisation works:			
Revenue	263	297	34
Capital (included in Revenue Funding of Capital Programme as RCCO)	614	446	(168)
Total – Transfer from EMR	1,225	1,109	(116)

1.8 Interest payable/receivable – (£152k) additional income

Investment income has been much higher than budget in this financial year. This is unlikely to continue into 2020/21 as interest rates are again much lower.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME DETAIL

1.1 Community Buildings Investment

The Kingshill House Trust continues to be keen to take on the freehold interest of Kingshill House (Community Buildings Investment). Draft terms for a transfer have now been agreed with Kingshill House Trust. A report will be taken to a future meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee to approve, in principle, the terms for a transfer now that they have been agreed. The anticipated date of transfer is 20/21, subject to the full impact of Covid 19 on the Trust.

1.2 Stratford Park Lido

Following completion of the business case, the project team were looking at the opportunity to submit bids for other community funding streams ahead of the bid to the HLF, unfortunately many funders have withdrawn general funding programmes with the start of Covid 19. The business case has been supplied as per the agreement with Tricolor, including a short recommendation paper. They will draft our Project Enquiry Form to the National Lottery Heritage Fund or another chosen provider when the funds re-open as part of the current agreement.

1.3 Canal

Work on the Development Stage of 'Cotswold Canals Connected' continues towards the target of submitting a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May/June 2020. This project will cover restoration of the canal between Stonehouse and Saul Junction, connecting the already restored five mile length of canal to the national waterway network and making Stroud and Stonehouse canal towns once again.

The overall canal programme is currently forecast on target, with the underspend in capital costs offset by the salary costs in revenue (Appendix D). The variance in the 2019/20 capital programme relates to a change in profiling of the budget. The Council's contribution is expected to remain at £0.44m for the development stage, bringing the total spend to £0.8m at the end of this financial year, leaving £2.2m remaining from the £3.0m funding commitment. Any overall variance would affect the Council's in year contribution, with the total expenditure remaining at £3.0m for the Phase 1B project, plus £0.16m committed for interim costs pending the HLF bid, as included in the 2020/21 base budget.

1.4 Market Town Centres Initiative Fund.

The Distribution of Market Towns Funding was agreed at the January 2019 Strategy and Resources Committee. In order to be able to distribute the funds to the relevant Town Councils, written confirmation has been sought that they will spend the funds as agreed. There are a number of outstanding replies from the Town Councils and funds cannot be released until this confirmation is received. Reminders have been sent out in anticipation of this, and it is proposed to re-profile the remaining budget into next financial year.

1.5 Multi- Service Contract – Vehicles

Further procurement will be required to finalise specifications in order to future proof vehicles for the changes in service delivery. Ubico Fleet Management are undertaking an active procurement process in line with Councils five year Capital Programme. The vehicles will be procured once the specification have been agreed in 2020/21.

1.6 Stroud District Cycling and Walking Plan

The Nailsworth/Dudbridge route is now complete except for a small section near Woodchester which presented a logistical challenge at the time. The contractor will be returning to complete this late summer/autumn.

The Dursley-Cam greenway group have commenced a consultation on the reclassifying of a section of footpath to become part of the cycleway, with a view to spending an allocated £50k from the cycling and walking budget on this section.

The Kingswood-Wotton-Charfield greenway group have appointed Sustrans to carry out the design phase for this route. £10k of the cycling and walking budget has been allocated for this piece of work.

1.7 Wallbridge Gateway

Ecotricity withdrew their application to match fund on this project last financial year. SDC and Stroud Town Council are seeking designs for a scheme within the budget, this budget has now been re-profiled to 2020/21.

1.8 Avon Mutual

The share purchase in the co-operative bank is now complete and a share certificate has been received. Avon Mutual continue to update on their progress and an update will be given to this committee when their banking licence is issued.

1.9 Brimscombe Port Redevelopment

This underspend is due to the fact that the procurement of a partner for the redevelopment has not commenced and therefore the associated consultant costs have not been spent as anticipated. Due to the coronavirus, the design fees to move the car park for the Nelson Trust along with some additional engineering fees have not gone ahead. These costs will now be incurred in 2020/21.

1.10 Ebley Mill Works

Works are certified as practically complete, final progress payments have been paid to the contractors. (Contract retention is due for release, subject to final inspection in July 2020).

1.11 Electric Vehicle Acquisition

The electric vehicle purchase has been completed. Charge points for the use of the fleet vehicles have been installed. There are 6 points located at Ebley Mill and a further 7 at Brunel Mall. The project with the County Council and LEP to install charging points for public use throughout the District were due to completed by the end of the financial, this has been delayed due to the impact of Covid 19.

1.12 ICT Investment Plan

The ICT Investment Plan is underway and on target against budget. This includes the replacement of the laptop Citrix terminals and the Storage Network (SAN). The server host and infrastructure programme will also start to get underway, which incorporates a new disaster recovery solution.

1.13 Littlecombe Business units, Dursley

Works are complete with the final retention payment due on expiry of the defects liability period.

1.14 MSCP Re-surfacing

The resurfacing works at the Multi Storey Car Park are have been certified as essentially complete. Final payments have been released to contractors, with release of retention subject to final inspection in June 2020.

1.15 HRA Major Works

All programmes were stopped during March, due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The underspend of £1,297k relates to slippage across all schemes, although some have been affected more than others. Some schemes, such as replacement of Doors and Windows have been particularly hit as much of the work was due to be delivered during March.

There has also been some slippage due to the failure of one contractor, and another not meeting standard expectations and so work stopping.

There was additional spend in year on fitting out a unit at Littlecombe Business Units for use as a depot for Property Care, the in house repairs and maintenance service.

Slippage has only been proposed on the purchase of a new IT system. The major works budget will need to be completely reviewed for 2020/21 in order to establish a revised programme in light of Covid-19.

1.16 New Build and Development Programme

The successful completion of 11 Independent Living units at Tanners Piece came in at £224k under budget, and an additional property was purchased on the open market.

Current schemes underway, including Southbank which is currently under construction, and other schemes which are in earlier phases, have been impacted by Covid-19 and there will be slippage across the new build programme.

1.17 Sheltered Modernisation

The Sheltered Modernisation programme is a combination of revenue and capital works. A full breakdown of the programme can be found in Appendix F, paragraph 1.7.

Further detail on the Housing Revenue Account Capital programme can be found in the HRA Outturn Information Paper (July 2020)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 (REVISED) – 2024/25

Capital Scheme	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Community Services & Licensing					
Community Building Investment	117	-	-	-	-
Stratford Park Lido	30	170	-	-	-
Total Community Services & Licensing	147	170	-	-	-
Environment					
Canal Phase 1B (Delivery)	3,702	9,921	3,733	992	-
Market Town Centres Initiative Fund	100	-	-	-	-
MSC - Vehicles	822	492	166	2,976	-
Stroud District Cycling & Walking Plan	204	-	-	-	-
Wallbridge	100	-	-	-	-
Total Environment	4,928	10,413	3,899	3,968	-
Housing General Fund					
Affordable Housing - Support to Registered Providers	39	-	-	-	-
CCG Health through Warmth Grants	227	-	-	-	-
Disabled Facilities Grants	330	330	330	330	330
Temporary Accommodation	500	-	-	-	-
Warm Homes Fund	1,183	-	-	-	-
Total Housing General Fund	2,279	330	330	330	330
Strategy and Resources					
Brimscombe Port Redevelopment	309	100	3,651	-	-
Electric Vehicles	12	-	-	-	-
ICT Investment Plan	497	400	-	-	-
Total Strategy and Resources	818	500	3,651	-	-
Total General Fund	8,172	11,413	7,880	4,298	330
Housing Revenue Account					
Major Works	6,089	5,154	4,585	4,445	4,548
Other HRA Capital programmes	175	-	-	-	-
New Build Programme	11,944	8,416	4,995	-	-
Sheltered Modernisation	643	438	584	843	882
Total Housing Revenue Account	18,851	14,008	10,164	5,288	5,430
Total Capital Programme	27,023	25,421	18,044	9,586	5,760

CAPITAL FINANCING

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1. Capital Expenditure						
Community Services	-	147	170	-	-	-
Environment	1,492	4,928	10,413	3,899	3,968	-
Housing General Fund	1,839	2,279	330	330	330	330
Housing Revenue Account	8,169	18,851	14,008	10,164	5,288	5,430
Strategy and Resources	1,388	818	500	3,651	-	-
Estimated Expenditure	12,888	27,023	25,421	18,044	9,586	5,760
Financed by:						
Borrowing HRA	-	6,045	6,132	4,753	-	-
HE Grant	-	135	173	98	-	-
HRA Usable capital receipts (3)	1,219	5,764	1,380	144	-	-
Revenue funded	6,950	6,907	6,323	5,169	5,288	5,430
HRA Financing Total	8,169	18,851	14,008	10,164	5,288	5,430
Borrowing GF	654	1,322	492	4,166	2,976	-
Capital grants (5)	1,797	1,740	330	330	330	330
Capital reserve (4)	1,160	1,597	919	1,151	-	-
External funding	760	3,462	9,672	2,233	992	-
General Fund usable capital receipts (2)	41	39	-	-	-	-
Revenue funded	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reserves	307	12	-	-	-	-
General Fund Financing Total	4,719	8,172	11,413	7,880	4,298	330
Total Financing	12,888	27,023	25,421	18,044	9,586	5,760
2. General Fund Usable Capital Receipts						
Brought forward 1 April	514	502	463	463	463	463
add: received in year	29	-	-	-	-	-
less: applied as above	(41)	(39)	-	-	-	-
Carried forward 31 March	502	463	463	463	463	463
3. HRA Usable Capital Receipts						
Brought forward 1 April	8,670	10,110	4,346	2,966	2,822	2,822
add: received in year	2,659	-	-	-	-	-
less: applied as above	(1,219)	(5,764)	(1,380)	(144)	-	-
Carried forward 31 March	10,110	4,346	2,966	2,822	2,822	2,822
4. Capital Reserve						
Brought forward 1 April	5,418	4,258	2,661	1,742	591	591
add: received in year	-	-	-	-	-	-
less: applied as above	(1,160)	(1,597)	(919)	(1,151)	-	-
Carried forward 31 March	4,258	2,661	1,742	591	591	591
5. Capital Grants						
Bettercare	163	-	-	-	-	-
Disabled Facilities Grant due	349	330	330	330	330	330
Health through Warmth	173	227	-	-	-	-
Warm Homes Fund	670	1,183	-	-	-	-
Capital grants	1,355	1,740	330	330	330	330

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

8 OCTOBER 2020

8

Report Title	BUDGET STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2024/25			
Purpose of Report	To set out the assumptions that will be used when preparing the upcoming Medium-Term Financial Plan			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RECOMMENDS to Council to:</p> <p>a. Approve the Budget Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25 as set out in this report and appendices</p> <p>b. Continue with the Business Rates pooling agreement, subject to the recommendation of the Section151 Officer Group</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	Formal budget consultation is currently taking place in the form of a telephone survey of local council tax and business rate payers			
Report Authors	Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	To review assumptions made in funding. To challenge long term cost projections.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Draft Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25</p> <p>Appendix B – Current assumptions on budget changes</p> <p>Appendix C – Most recent forecast of impacts of Covid-19 upon 2020/21</p>			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report set outs the current assumptions on funding available throughout the period 2021/22 to 2024/25, and initial estimates on the level of cost pressures and savings that the Council may expect. That information forms the basis for the detailed budget setting process now taking place throughout the Authority. Officers are reviewing all expenditure and income budgets to determine appropriate levels and identify savings where possible.

- 1.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced considerable risk and uncertainty into the budget setting process and will be a key feature of both this report and the work over the next few months. Response and recovery have brought both reduced income levels and increased costs. This budget strategy will seek to place the Council in a strong financial position to support the recovery of the District.
- 1.3 The Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets for 2021/22, including the budget proposals of the administration, will be presented to full Council at their meeting on 25 February 2021. Proposed budgets will have first been reviewed by service committees.
- 1.4 This strategy represents the first stage of the budget setting process for 2021/22 and many of the figures involved will be subject to significant review in the coming months before final Council budget approval. It is likely that the developing financial position around Covid-19 will mean that there is greater variation than in previous years. They are, however, based upon the most up to date assumptions at the current stage which have been used to prepare a draft Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as shown at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The transition period as part of the UK's departure from the EU ends on December 31st, 2020. In 2019 the Council carried out comprehensive risk assessments relating to Brexit and these will be re-evaluated if necessary, in the coming months. At the current time no adjustments have been made in the budget strategy for these items. A reserve of £53k is held to help with any costs which may arise in the short term.
- 1.6 There have also been no adjustments for possible impacts of future devolution proposals as the anticipated white paper has not been published at this point.

2. General Fund Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan

Funding Projections

- 2.1 The current financial year represents a period of a one-year financial settlement from Central Government with no clarity over the position after 2020/21. Council noted this uncertainty when agreeing the current MTFP in February 2020.
- 2.2 In July 2020 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a Government Spending Review to set Government Department's budgets up until 2024/25. There was no overall spending envelope as part of the announcement, but the Chancellor confirmed that, in total across government, budgets would rise in real terms as part of the spending review. There has been no statement about what this would mean for allocations of funding for local government.
- 2.3 The "Fair Funding Review", the process by which the total envelope of local government funding is to be redistributed across the Country was due to be implemented in 2021, having been delayed from its original 2020 date. It was announced in April 2020 that, as a result of the Covid pandemic, it has again been delayed and there is as yet no further date for implementation.

New Homes Bonus

- 2.4 New Homes Bonus (NHB) has been a declining source of funding for the Council for some years having reduced from £3.2m in 2016/17 to only £1.3m in 2020/21. This reduction is expected to reduce until the point at which the grant is eliminated.
- 2.5 NHB rewards housing growth in a particular year by giving an agreed annual amount for the following four years and it had been assumed in previous budgets that no further housing growth would be rewarded after 2017/18.
- 2.6 The one-year settlement for 2020/21 did ultimately reward the housing growth for 2018/19 and Stroud benefited by growth being higher than expected. In a change to previous allocations it was announced that the 2018/19 growth would be rewarded with grant for one year only. This was a change from the previous four year grant, which in turn had previously been six years.
- 2.7 There have been no further announcements on New Homes Bonus and so this budget strategy assumes that the scheme will continue as currently known with no further allocations to be made. It is of course possible that an additional year of growth may be rewarded but as there is no clear indication of this it would not be appropriate to include within the strategy. The table below sets out the amounts of New Homes Bonus within the MTFP.

Table 1 – NHB Forecast 2021/22 to 2024/25 (MTFP assumption)

Year of Reward	2020/21 (£'000)	2021/22 (£'000)	2022/23 (£'000)	2023/24 (£'000)	2024/25 (£'000)
2015/16	238				
2016/17	337	337			
2017/18	218	218	218		
2018/19	538				
TOTAL NHB	1,331	555	218	0	0

Business Rates

- 2.8 Business rates are collected by the District Council and apportioned between the District Council, County Council and central government. It has long been planned that in 2021 the rates system, and the baseline which authorities may retain, would be “reset”. This is intended to remove growth from authorities which have seen increased rates collected in recent years, to redistribute to those authorities which have seen falls. The reset had been expected to take place in 2021 and this Budget Strategy assumes

that this will still take place meaning that business rates income in the MTFP falls from £4.13m in 2020/21 to £2.8m in 2021/22. This is in line with the existing MTFP.

- 2.9 Although the government has announced there will be a comprehensive spending review this year there has been no detailed announcement on this re-distribution of business rate growth. In April the Secretary of State committed to working with the sector on plans for dealing with accumulated business rate growth.
- 2.10 The uncertainty means that it is certainly a possibility for the permitted level of retained business rates to continue at close to the 2020/21 level in the 2021/22 year. At this stage for reasons of prudence no change to the MTFP has been made on these grounds but the position will be clearer by the time Council agrees the final budget.
- 2.11 It is likely that the downturn in the economy will lead to a fall in the level of business rates collected by the authority. As the MTFP assumes that all growth above baseline will be removed no further adjustment for collected rates is necessary. This is because, in budgetary terms only, removal of growth through a change in the retention system or a reduction in rates collected has the same impact.
- 2.12 It is common for Central Government to issue a technical consultation early in the summer on the principles that make up the local government settlement including rates retention. At the time of writing this has not taken place as the pandemic has necessarily changed the process in the current year.
- 2.13 The uncertainty around the reset of growth, and levels of income mean that a decision needs to be made about the continuation of the Business Rates Pool. Put simply if the growth is redistributed from Gloucestershire then the benefit of pooling will reduce and the risk exposure to the pool is greater. Central Government wrote to Stroud as the pool lead on September 16th asking for a decision by October 23rd as to whether pooling will continue. Section 151 Officers across the County are discussing the benefits and risks to pooling. This includes the use of external experts to provide modelled scenarios.
- 2.14 If the Section 151 Officers Group is satisfied with the risks of pooling, they will recommend to their authorities to proceed. It is recommended that Council agree to continue with pooling, subject to the decision of Section 151 Officers.

Council Tax

- 2.15 For the current financial year the Council was limited to, and applied, a Council Tax increase of £5 for a Band D property. There have been no announcements as to potential limits in future years and so a limit of £5 has been assumed for each year of this Strategy.
- 2.16 The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have an impact on the Council Tax base in future years. This could relate to;

- An increase in taxpayers claiming local Council Tax support
- A potential decrease in collection rates
- Lower housing growth in future as a result of an economic downturn

- 2.17 In-year monitoring does reflect that the first two points are becoming apparent in the current year. In particular the level of Council Tax support being awarded has increased by £921k in the 12 months to August 2020 and the level of arrears have increased by £635k in the same period (Only 11% of these sums have a financial impact upon to SDC).
- 2.18 Changes in the level of Council Tax support may result in an in-year deficit on collected Council Tax against expected levels. Under normal circumstances this would be deducted from the Council budget in the following year. It has been announced that any in-year deficits in relation to Covid-19 may be spread over three years and the budget will be prepared on this basis.
- 2.19 The annual budget assumption used in previous years was a growth in Council Tax base of 1.5%. In light of the uncertainty at this stage a growth level of 0% has been used as an assumption for 2021/22 and 1% for the following year before returning to 1.5% for all subsequent years. This change in assumptions removes £778k of Council Tax income in total over the life of the four-year plan. The final tax base will be known when the budget is set in February 2021 and more accurate figures can then be use

3. Budget Assumptions

Pay and Price Inflation

- 3.1 Inflation linked increases will be added to budgets for spend with external partners. At the time of writing the CPI inflation rate in the UK is 0.2%. This Budget Strategy and Draft MTFP plans to allow for annual inflationary increases of 1% on contract sums but this will be updated to reflect the September CPI during the budget setting process. The biggest contractual partner for General Fund budgets is Ubico and discussions are about to begin on the level of budget for next year.
- 3.2 Inflation will not be included on budgets which are not related to salaries or contracts. It is anticipated that efficiencies will be used to maintain expenditure within existing budgets. This approach represents a small but significant way that the Council can achieve some real terms savings in expenditure.
- 3.3 The local government pay award has recently been agreed for 2020/21 at 2.75% for all pay levels. The budget for this year assumed an increase of 2.5%, itself an increase from the 2% used the year before. The small additional increase of 0.25% represents additional cost of £24k per annum to the General Fund and £14k per annum to the HRA. These costs have been added into the MTFP.
- 3.4 As with many other factors there is no indication as to the level of pay award from 2021 onwards. Although inflation in the wider economy currently remains low it seems reasonable to assume that the pay award will be at least 2.75% again as a result of the high prominence that local government has played in responding to the pandemic. This budget strategy assumes a 2.75% increase for the first year of the plan, reverting to 2.5% for the remainder.

Local Government Pension Scheme

- 3.5 This financial year is the first year of three years in which the local government actuary has determined that the level of contribution into the Gloucestershire Pension Fund should be reduced. This will continue into 2021/22 and 2022/23. After that point the MTFP assumes that the level of pension contribution will remain stable with no further fluctuation after that point. There will be a further actuarial valuation at the end of this period to determine the level of future contributions.
- 3.6 The previous MTFP assumed that the Council would benefit from a saving by making a lump sum payment of three years upfront contributions. This payment was due to be made on April 1st 2020. At that point there was considerable uncertainty around the cashflow of the Council. There was doubt as to whether funding for the newly announced business rates grants would be received in advance of the payments being made to businesses. As a result, a decision was made to keep the funds and not make the advance payment to protect cashflow. This impacts upon the MTFP by not realising the saving and the MTFP has been adjusted accordingly.

Interest Rates & Investment Income

- 3.7 As part of their pandemic response the Bank of England have reduced the base rate to 0.1%. It seems unlikely that there will be any increase in this during the upcoming financial year. The existing MTFP assumes that interest rates will be at 0.75% and therefore the decrease will necessitate a reduction in the assumed level of income received from Treasury investments. This has been estimated at £50k per annum in the draft MTFP.
- 3.8 All existing Council borrowing is at fixed rates and therefore the reduction in interest rates does not lead to a lowering of cost. It will perhaps offer opportunities to lower the cost of future capital investment such as new build housing.
- 3.9 At the time of writing the Council has made three investments totalling £9 million in pooled funds in accordance with the new investment approach in the Treasury Management Strategy. These have achieved higher rates than the traditional investments although they too are likely to have yields reduced due to the downturn in the economy. At the time of writing the fluctuations in capital values are fully covered by the investment risk reserve.

Fees & Charges

- 3.10 The budget approved in February 2020 included for the first time a comprehensive fees and charges policy and a list of all Council fees and charges. This transparent approach allows the Council to make clear decisions as to both the reason for charging and level of charging raised. This approach also brought additional income into the MTFP of £126k per annum. The upcoming budget process will again include consideration of fees and charges.
- 3.11 The approach for the current year was to increase all charges by 2.5% unless charges are set by statute or if such an increase would cause an excessive surplus would be raised.

- 3.12 The primary driver of the Council's costs is staffing and therefore there is considerable logic in linking the planned fees and charges increase to the assumed level of pay increase at 2.75%. However, it is recognised that inflation in the wider economy is low and that fees and charges increases should be kept as affordable as possible. Therefore, all fees and charges, including car parking, will increase by 2% subject to the usual restrictions around charges set by statute and the desire not to make an excessive surplus. This is estimated to allow for income growth of £80k per annum.
- 3.13 The level of income to be received next year is highly likely to be very significantly impacted by lower levels of demand as the economy begins to recover from the pandemic. The exact level of this will be very hard to determine as demand is uncertain at this stage and there may be future Covid related restrictions which have an impact on income in 2021/22.
- 3.14 The budget setting process will analyse income streams across the Council and try to determine an estimated level of income adjustment. This strategy seeks to manage this through a central income fall pot to be funded through the equalisation reserve as in 2020/21. For the purposes of this strategy this overall fall in income has been estimated at £1m. This assumes no further income support from the government which would obviously reduce this figure if any is forthcoming.

Table 2 – Assumptions included within the Strategy

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Band D Council Tax Increase	£5	£5	£5	£5
Tax Base Increase	0%	1%	1.5%	1.5%
Contract Inflation	1%	1.5%	2%	2%
Pay Inflation	2.75%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Fees and Charges Growth	2%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

Borrowing and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 3.15 The General Fund requirement for borrowing to fund past capital works currently stands at £14.647 million (decreased from 15.726 million the year before). This creates a need for a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to repay that borrowing. This was budgeted at £1.035 million in 2020/21. The current capital programme, as reported to this committee in the outturn report, includes £8.956 million of borrowing for General Fund capital purposes, with the largest uses being the Canal, Brimscombe Port and Ubico Fleet vehicles.
- 3.16 The current budget strategy allows for increases of MRP in line with the borrowing included in the capital programme. The budget setting process will further review the

level or provision required over the life of the MTFP. Where possible the capital reserve will be used instead of borrowing to limit MRP exposure.

- 3.17 This strategy does not consider the detail of the capital programme which will be included within the full budget report.

Longer Term Budget Adjustments

- 3.18 The following paragraphs set out those items in the draft MTFP which represent significant changes to the budgets which have previously been approved by Council. Expected changes to the budget are all shown in Appendix B.

- 3.19 The Councils' recovery strategy has become one of the key pieces of Council policy and is driving a number of workstreams and actions. The recovery strategy was approved by full Council and the governance structure includes a recovery board. As part of the Budget Strategy process a summary of all available General Fund revenue budgets and reserves has been consolidated and will be considered by the recovery board at their meetings. The recovery board will track actual and committed spend against these funds work progresses and updates to Strategy and Resources Committee will be presented as part of the budget monitoring process.

- 3.20 The appointment of the Strategic Director for Change and Transformation has allowed the Council to begin to develop a modernisation plan to reshape how the Council serves its resident and businesses in a more efficient manner. A key element of the programme is to close the gap in the MTFP. It is therefore appropriate that the budget strategy includes targeted savings from the plan. At this early stage a prudent savings delivery of £1 million delivered in stages over the course of the four future years of the plan.

4. General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan

Use of Reserves

- 4.1 The report to Strategy and Resources Committee in June 2020 set out the approach to use Council reserves to fund the Covid shortfalls and this is to continue in the budget strategy.
- 4.2 The current net impact of the Covid 19 pandemic is £3.741 million to the General Fund as shown in Appendix C. This represents the updated and most recently reported version of the figures taken to S&R in June. The recovery works included within that figure and the £50k for community grants are funded from specific earmarked sums put aside in 2019/20 for those purposes. Therefore, the net draw on reserves is £3.319 million.
- 4.3 A very significant proportion of that figure is met from government grant. There are already confirmed allocations to SDC of £1.386 million. In addition to that grant, the government has committed to reimbursing local authorities for 75% of their lost income

(after a 5% deductible). Authorities must make the first estimate of their sum to be reclaimed at the end of September, so a final figure is not available at the time of writing. For the purposes of the draft MTFP a sum of £1.2 million has been estimated and added to the known allocation to produce estimated Covid funding in 2020/21 of £2.586 million.

- 4.4 The balance of General Fund earmarked reserves, excluding the capital reserve, at the end of 2019/20 was 13.935 million (2018/19 £12.53 million), including the £6.72 million General Fund equalisation reserve. This is in addition to the General Fund balance of £2.169 million which this Strategy recommends be held at that level.
- 4.5 This Budget Strategy continues the policy of using the equalisation reserve to give time to make major savings decisions as required. It is this approach which allows the modernisation savings to be phased over the life of the plan.
- 4.6 As part of producing this Strategy the allocation of reserves has been reviewed by the S151 Officer as shown in the outturn report. The level and allocation of reserves is currently deemed to be sufficient.
- 4.7 The table below shows the current forecast of General Fund equalisation Reserve over the life of the draft MTFP.

Table 3 – Forecast level of General Fund equalisation reserve

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Estimated Surplus / (Deficit)	(1,454)	(680)	(865)	(1,020)
GF equalisation reserve				
Opening	6,687	5,233	4,553	3,688
Change	(1,449)	(670)	(840)	(990)
Closing	5,238	4,568	3,728	2,738

5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 5.1 HRA balances and reserves at the end of 2019/20 were relatively robust at £4.430 million in general reserves and £3.925 million in earmarked reserves. In common with the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) faces financial pressures over the medium-term plan period.

- 5.2 The proposed Budget and Rent Setting 2021/22 Report will be presented to Housing Committee in December, followed by Strategy and Resources Committee in January 2021.
- 5.3 2021/22 is the second year of permissible rent increases following the four-year rent reduction set out in the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. Based on national rent guidance, rents are assumed to increase by Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% for a further three years after 2021/22.
- 5.4 CPI had been included in the MTFP and 30 year position at an assumed rate of 2%, in line with the Bank of England target rates. The inflationary uplift for rents is set using September CPI, which will not be available until 21 October 2020. CPI rates have been affected by Covid-19, and the rate for August 2020 is 0.2%, the lowest annual rate increase since 2015. Should this inflation rate continue into September, the reduction in rental income for 2021/22, compared to the MTFP, is £397k. Over a 30 year period, a one year reduction to 0.2% (and then returning to CPI of 2%), gives a total reduction in income of £16m. This level of income reduction is not supportable within the HRA, and savings would need to be found over the longer term to maintain a balanced position.
- 5.5 Rent arrears have increased from £295k in early April, to £342k during September, an increase of 16%. Income Management Officers are supporting tenants, but it is expected that rent collection will be lower than budgeted due to the pandemic.
- 5.6 There are also other significant pressures for the HRA over the medium to long term. The Carbon Neutral 2030 commitment will have a significant impact on both major works needed on existing stock and the build costs for the development programme. This additional cost will not be fully known for this budget setting round, but should be factored in when considering the position of the HRA. A low estimate of £10k spend per property on average would give a total spend in the region of £50m over 10 years to 2030. This is not currently included within the MTFP or 30 year position as it is not yet funded.
- 5.7 The total borrowing incurred for the HRA is £103.004m. All the external debt is at fixed rates and so there will be no fluctuations in interest payments for current borrowing over the medium term. There may be opportunities to re-schedule the debt to take advantage of lower rates and this will be kept under review. Of the borrowing, £5.287 million is internally borrowed, utilising HRA balances over the short term. This will continue to be reviewed as balances reduce, in line with the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 5.8 The HRA MTFP currently includes an annual contribution towards repaying borrowing. This base amount will increase by inflation each year, with additional amounts added to reflect any new borrowing for the new build programme.

5.9 As detailed above there are significant risks and substantial financial challenges for the HRA over the medium and long term. These will need to be addressed, but as the full financial impact of these is not yet known in order for a full review to take place, it is not currently anticipated that a deficit will be included over the MTFP period. In view of this it is not expected that Members will be presented with a detailed savings plan for 2021/22.

5.10 Members should continue to be mindful that this position does not include the full retrofitting works on properties that are needed in order to meet our CN2030 obligations, and so a savings plan will become necessary in future years in order to implement this. The savings needed could be further compounded by a reduction in rental income, caused by low inflation levels.

6. RISKS

6.1 All of the figures in this report are estimates and there is a clear risk that final outcomes will differ. The budget monitoring process will review things as the year progresses.

6.2 If the long-term impact on budgets of the pandemic is greater than anticipated a further revision of the MTFP will be required including measures to bring Council expenditure in line with the funding available.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial Implications

The whole report is of a financial nature.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

7.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations made in this report

Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

7.3 Equality Implications

An EqIA is not required because no changes to service levels are proposed

7.4 Environmental Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the budget strategy. The Council has identified funding to support its CN2030 Action Plan.

Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 - 2024/25

	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
<u>Budget</u>				
Opening Budget	14,592	14,746	14,666	14,702
<u>Recurring Changes</u>				
Pay Increases	256	280	260	260
Additional Pay Award	24			
Fees and Charges Growth	(126)	(80)	(100)	(100)
Pensions Changes	(194)	(206)	(206)	0
Contract Increases	143	100	150	200
Revised Budget	14,695	14,840	14,770	15,062
Proposed Budget Adjustments	51	(174)	(68)	(218)
Revised Budget	14,746	14,666	14,702	14,844
<u>Funding</u>				
Council Tax	9,573	9,798	10,124	10,506
Collection Fund Deficit	(11)			
Business Rates (incl grants)	4,136	2,845	2,902	2,960
Other Grant	75	38	38	38
New Homes Bonus	1,331	555	218	0
Covid Grant Support	2,586	0	0	0
Total Funding	17,690	13,236	13,282	13,504
Surplus / (Deficit) before Reserves Movements	2,944	(1,430)	(1,420)	(1,340)
Reserves Movements				
Business Rates Reserve		(800)	(600)	(500)
Waste and Recycling Reserve	(181)	(181)	(150)	
Building Control Reserve	(159)			
Estimated Surplus / (Deficit)	3,284	(449)	(670)	(840)
<u>GF Equalisation Reserve</u>				
Opening	6,722	6,687	5,238	4,568
Change	3,284	(449)	(670)	(840)
Covid Shortfall	(3,319)	(1,000)		
Closing	6,687	5,238	4,568	3,728

MTFP Changes

	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Pressures				
Pressure on existing services				
Additional Recycling Round	55		150	
Food Waste Income (GCC)	181			
Play areas	45			
Stratford park - loss of car park income	10			
Housing Advice & Temporary Accommodation	76			
Drainage Board Levy increase	7	7	7	7
Land charges income	40			
Property Services	106			
Spend consolidation	50			
Homelessness Grant		125		
MRP - new capital spend	54	130		
Interest costs on new borrowing		30	30	30
Fall in investment income		50		
Total Pressure	769	342	187	37
Savings				
Removal of One off budget items				
Canal	161	(161)		
Community Building	50	(50)		
Brownfield sites	100	(100)		
Planned Savings				
Modernisation Program		(200)	(250)	(250)
Kingshill House		(5)	(5)	(5)
Total Saving	(718)	(516)	(255)	(255)
Net Changes	51	(174)	(68)	(218)

Covid-19 Financial Impact Estimate 2020/21 (as reported to MHCLG August 2020)

Service Area	Impact £k	Reason
General Fund		
Additional Expenditure		
Homelessness	216	Additional costs continuing, with rough sleepers shared countywide
Ubico	135	Additional agency and PPE through year and flytipping
Cornhill Market	1	One off clean
Stratford Park - SLM	36	Estimate of initial support, not including a loan
Buildings eg Ebley Mill and PPE	50	Compliance works to council owned buildings and PPE for staff
The Pulse	48	Additional staffing (due to cohorts) and cleaning costs. Also an app to allow online booking
Public Conveniences	26	Additional cleaning costs
Revs and Bens software	18	Software required for grants scheme
IT	15	Additional equipment
Community Grants	50	Match funding County pot
Covid-19 letters	28	One-off item
Recovery	372	Allocation in reserves £442k less some allocate to housing for purposes of government return. Note: this doesn't affect the available funding, only the reporting to MHCLG
Total Additional Expenditure	995	
Loss of income		
Car Park income	535	Parking charges to resume end July, but with reduced use throughout the year
The Pulse	820	Open from July, but at reduced capacity
Museum in the Park	60	Open from July, but with lower commercial opportunities
Planning	560	Applications are coming in, but lower fee levels
Building Control	150	25% reduction over the year
Bulky Waste	0	No reduction now expected
Garden Waste	10	Additional rounds to go ahead, but prorated income over lost months
Land Charges	58	Lower level of property transactions expected
Licensing	38	Phased recovery expected
Market	6	Phased recovery expected
Environmental Health	21	Phased recovery with social distancing affecting service
Property rental income	110	Some tenants may seek rental reductions as well as deferrals
Investment Income	263	Reduction in the bank of England Base Rate will see reduced returns all year
Enforcement income	115	Reduced income expected
Total Loss of Income	2,746	
Total General Fund	3,741	

Service Area	Impact £k	Reason
HRA		
Additional Expenditure		
Repairs and Maintenance	200	Costs related to catch up for backlog of repairs and additional PPE
Tenancy Management	40	Additional staff potentially required
Sheltered Housing	5	PPE and cleaning equipment
Other Expenditure	32	Rubbish clearance and cleaning equipment
Revaluation of stock	10	Change in house prices mean an additional valuation is needed
Total Additional Expenditure	287	
Loss of income		
Rents and Service Charges	240	Assumptions around increased voids and rent loss against budget has been reduced
Non dwelling rents (shops)	30	Relates only to commercial properties within the HRA
Other income	20	Loss of income from recharges and leaseholder service charges
Investment income	51	Reduction in investment returns as per the General Fund
Total Loss of Income	341	
Total HRA	628	

Performance Monitoring Report: S&R Committee

DATE OF MEETING	18 September 2020
ATTENDEES	Members: Keith Pearson, Nigel Cooper Officers: Andrew Cummings

PERFORMANCE UPDATE *(please give a brief progress update on the following areas)*

CDP PRIORITIES <i>(see Excelsis)</i>	<p>CDP 1 – Continue to allocate funds from the business rates pilot fund in line with the agreed principles</p> <p>SDC have been involved with two other authorities in the region on sourcing due diligence work related to the Community bank. This work will help inform recovery plans. The funding from the business rates pilot is available to the recovery board, in line with the original principles on its use agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee.</p>
	<p>CDP 1.3 – Progress and deliver the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port by securing planning permission and being ready to seek a development partner</p> <p>A meeting has been held with GCC Highways and some minor amendments to the road layout are to be made by Atkins and further details provided. A response is still awaited from the EA, expected this week A meeting has been requested with Natural England to address their comments Homes England Amendments to the Project definition and key milestones in the Loan agreement have been agreed with Homes England</p>
	<p>CDP 1.4 – Submit a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by April 2020 to restore the canal link between Stonehouse and Saul.</p> <p>Complete - The Bid was submitted on 1st June and the CDP objective is thus complete. It was delayed from April with Lottery's agreement due to COVID.</p> <p>The bid is the subject of an October report to Strategy and Resources Committee.</p>

CDP 1.6 – Create a strategic approach to building more effective partnerships with parish and town councils.

The immediate response to the Covid pandemic put on hold the consultation exercises which were planned with Parish and Town Councils. However, throughout the pandemic SDC has worked with a number of Parish and Town Councils on a variety of projects, including High Street Recovery. The Council's new Policy and Governance Team will now be considering how to take these relationships forward and build on them in a constructive manner.

CDP 1.7 – Adopt a clear vision and digital strategy which is fit for purpose to deliver good quality, convenient and efficient services for staff, residents and local businesses.

The Infrastructure Renewal Project has made significant progress over the summer with a number of key projects delivered

- All services have been migrated to the new primary servers at Ebley Mill.
- The full Disaster Recovery backup server and storage have been installed and tested at the Property Care service's depot on the Littlecombe Business Park
- Purchase orders have been raised for a new digital telephony system

A project plan for the development of members' IT has been agreed by SLT. The first stage of this will involve workshops with a group of member volunteers to shape the future ICT provision. The deadline for this project is the May 2021 elections.

CDP 5.2 - Explore the opportunities for income generation to help achieve financial self-sufficiency

Work proceeded at the expected pace during 2019/20 with the completion of the fees and charges policy and the introduction of a number of additional income streams into the budget. Work has been effectively paused during the Covid-19 pandemic. The focus for financial sustainability is to create a budget strategy which protects the financial position of the Council at this difficult time. The overall aim of financial self-sufficiency has been included as one of the key strategic principles of the modernisation programme.

	<p>CDP 5.3 – Work collaboratively through partnerships and external stakeholders to achieve greater influence to deliver the Council’s objectives.</p> <p>Significant progress has been made in the One Legal Transfer and this is now expected to complete on October 1st. During the Covid pandemic the Council has worked in partnership with many organisations on critical response and recovery tasks.</p>
PROJECTS / CAPITAL PROGRAMME (if not covered in CDP)	The major capital projects for the Committee are the Canal and Brimscombe Port which are included in the actions above.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES (see Excelsis where applicable)	<p>None available at this point.</p> <p>Performance indicators need to be reviewed as part of future service planning in the next Corporate Delivery Plan.</p>
---	--

RISKS (see Excelsis)	<p>CCR 1 Budget Savings 9/16</p> <p>A balanced budget was agreed in February 2020. This risk is being constantly reviewed throughout the year in light of the impacts of Covid on the Council’s finances. The Budget Strategy to this committee has been produced with full consideration of pandemic impacts.</p> <p>CCR 4 Business Continuity 16/16</p> <p>This risk is now due to be reviewed after the significant disaster recovery improvements and proven ability to work remotely during the pandemic.</p> <p>CCR10 Inability to recruit specialist staff 4/16 – (previous 16/16)</p> <p>A procurement exercise has been carried out to commission organisational development specialists. Part of their role will be to review Council HR policies and the overall people strategy.</p> <p>CCR 16 Inadequate telephony and IT infrastructure 16/16 – See CDP action 1.7</p> <p>CCR20 – Brexit 16/16</p> <p>The UK is now in transitional arrangements having left the EU in January.</p>
-----------------------------	--

	<p>The transitional period ends in December 2020 and central government has been clear that this will not be extended. This is likely to lead to an increase in no deal preparations as we move through 2020.</p> <p>No specific risks have been recorded re Covid-19 response but SLT are meeting weekly to consider response.</p> <p>Covid-19 pandemic 16/16</p> <p>The pandemic is being actively managed as an ongoing risk. It has significant impacts, short and long-term on service delivery and financial position.</p> <p>Response management and monitoring systems have been in place since March and will be continuing indefinitely. Some mechanisms of response have been scaled back or stopped over the summer but will be reinstated if required.</p>
RELEVANT FINANCE ISSUES	The budget strategy for the Council is being considered at this committee.
ANY OTHER ISSUES CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING (eg staffing / resources)	
FOLLOW UP (any issues for consideration at the next meeting)	

ANY ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANT CONCERN TO BE REPORTED TO AUDIT AND STANDARDS	
ANY ACTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE	
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Nigel Cooper and Keith Pearson
DATE OF REPORT	18/09/2020



STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Brimscombe Port Project Board
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	4 September 2020
BRIEF REPORT:	
1.1	The purpose of this Member/ Officer Report is to update members on the current position and programme for the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port.
1.2	The last update was dated 8 June 2020. This update is to inform members of the progress made in the last 4 months.
1.3	Planning – The planning application for the phase 1 infrastructure and the demolition of the existing buildings together with the listed building application for the demolition of the modern extensions to Port Mill and the Port House is still delayed due to hold ups with responses from third party consultees. The Environmental Statement has been finalised and has been out for consultation. A letter has been received from Natural England, a meeting held and agreement over what further information is required to satisfy their concerns regarding migratory fish. The Environment Agency (EA) has still to provide its response to us and has struggled to respond due to the COVID 19 crisis, which has seriously affected their response times on projects such as Brimscombe Port. A recent meeting has been held with the new highways manager and some minor changes are being made to deal with his concerns. As soon as all of the relevant information has been supplied then a report will be prepared for the next available Development Control committee. It is not anticipated that this will be until November 2020.
1.4	Transfer of Brimscombe Port and Funding Agreement with Homes England – The transfer of the Port from Stroud Valleys Canal Company (SVCC) to the Council took place on the 1 April 2020.
1.5	The changes to the milestones for the funding agreement with Homes England have been agreed and approved by the Homes England Project Executive on 9 September 2020.
1.6	Procurement - The key documents for the tender process for the selection of a developer for the redevelopment of the Port have now been agreed by Strategy and Resources.



STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

- 1.7 Strategy and Resources approved the process for the procurement of a contractor for the infrastructure for phase 1 on a design and build basis at its meeting on the 17 December 2019 and this will commence once planning permission has been secured.
- 1.8 Due to the delays with responses from third parties for the planning application, the date for a report to be presented to Strategy and Resources Committee to seek formal approval to the procurement process for the selection of a developer partner has moved to December at the earliest.
- 1.9 **Project Board** - Along with the standing items of risk register, budget and programme, at its meeting of the Project Board on the 4th September, the Corporate Communications Manager presented to members a draft Communication Strategy. This sets out the objectives, audiences and aspirations and will be finalised with key dates for publicity. It was agreed that the key message is to focus back on the original reason that the council became involved with the site, which was to restore the port and the canal. The tenants have always been aware that their presence on site was a temporary arrangement. The delivery of new homes is important but a secondary message. The strategy is to focus on short term 'change' concerns and the longer term 'outcome' concerns.
- 1.10 **Tenancy Management** - Current tenants at the Business Park and the Industrial Estate are kept informed of any changes in dates through the regular tenant liaison meetings. The aim is to enable them to stay as long as possible but also to enable notice to be served at the appropriate time to give the Council vacant possession to demolish the properties when required.
- 1.11 The Council is being encouraged to submit a Land Release Fund (LRF) bid for the infrastructure works, which may enable the Council to consider carrying out the infrastructure works ahead of securing a developer partner if the market conditions delayed the commencement of the procurement process or to have additional funds to meet any shortfall on the viability when the site is marketed. The bids will be considered on the 4th November 2020.

FUTURE MEETINGS	Late October 2020 - TBA
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Leonie Lockwood
DATE	30 September 2020

**CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS QUARTER 1 2020/21
(UNCOMPLETED ACTIONS ROLLED FORWARD FROM 2019/20)**

1. BACKGROUND AND FOREWORD

- 1.1** The Corporate Delivery Plan incorporating Key Actions for 2019/20 was agreed at full Council on 16 May 2019 following a number of officer and member workshops.
- 1.2** With the remote meeting protocol in place this report has been provided as an information sheet rather than as a report for the Committee. It has been prepared to show progress as at the end of Quarter 1 2020/21 for those actions which were not completed during 2019/20 due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Fourteen actions have been rolled forward to 2020/21.
- 1.3** The postponement of the 2020 elections to May 2021 and the coronavirus pandemic has led to a reassessment of priorities, with the Council now working on a 1-year external Recovery Plan and a 2-year internal Modernisation Plan. These will gradually develop into a longer term renewal strategy which will form the basis for a new Corporate Plan in 2021.

2. PROGRESS ON THE KEY ACTIONS FOR 2019/20 ROLLED FORWARD TO 2020/21

- 2.1** Below, under each of the 5 Corporate Delivery Plan priorities, are the headlines of the progress made for each of the remaining 14 CDP Key Actions as at the end of the first quarter 2020/21.

ECONOMY: Help create a sustainable and vibrant economy that works for all

CDP1.1 Continue to allocate funds from the business rates pilot fund in line with the agreed principles: Supporting Local Businesses; Improving the Council's long-term financial position; Local Wealth Building; Supporting a Zero Carbon District; Reducing inequality.

- SDC has been involved with two other authorities in the region on sourcing due diligence work related to the Community bank. This work will help inform recovery plans. The funding from the business rates pilot is available to the recovery board, in line with the original principles on its use agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

**Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk**

CDP1.3 Progress and deliver the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port by securing planning permission and being ready to seek a development partner.

- Environmental Statement now submitted for the planning application for the infrastructure, but delays still being experienced with receiving responses from third party consultees, i.e. highways and the EA. Covid-19 has severely impacted on their response times and the application cannot be determined without them.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Provide affordable, energy efficient homes for our diverse and changing population

CDP2.5 Contribute to our identified local housing need, by building new council homes through:

- a) **submitting planning applications for 56 units on 6 sites.**
- b) **agreeing an approach to purchase more land.**

- Planning applications have been submitted on 5 sites and 4 have been granted planning permission. An application has not yet been submitted for Queens Drive due to legal issues associated with the access to the site that need to be resolved first. A Strategy for New Council Homes and Action Plan is to be presented to Housing Committee on the 22 September setting out our approach for the delivery of new homes and the purchase of land.

CDP2.8 Provide high quality, safe temporary accommodation for homeless single people and families within the district.

- Salvation Army estates staff were furloughed in March, resulting in a six-month delay in progress.

ENVIRONMENT: Help the community minimise its carbon footprint, adapt to the changing climate and continue to improve recycling rates

CDP3.11 Implement the revised Environment Strategy and develop an action plan with partners to incorporate our commitment to being a Carbon Neutral district by 2030 (CN2030).

- There has been activity to progress the Environment Strategy via the development of new projects and partnerships that seek to lower carbon emissions and raise community engagement. These activities, the early

**Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk**

achievements and a wider context of council work has been thoroughly researched and reviewed to deliver the 'Limiting, Adapting, Responding and Recovering Strategy to 2030' and its accompanying masterplan. This is currently undergoing internal review and includes action to bring together the diverse work streams from across directorates that could more visibly contribute to the agenda if they worked together more.

CDP3.12 Work with partners to implement the next phase of the cycling and walking strategy, focussing on routes between Dudbridge-Nailsworth; Dursley-Cam-Uley; Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield.

- Dudbridge-Nailsworth: Resurfacing of the track is all but complete with some further works and finishing off to still be carried out by GCC and the resurfacing contractor. SDC has completed all contributions to this project. Dursley-Cam-Uley: SDC has earmarked £50k to carry out works on a section of footpath CDU14 to make it suitable for cycling and re-designate it as a bridleway. The local cycling group have started a public consultation on this proposal, after which we will work with GCC to implement the proposal. Negotiations are ongoing to finalise the northern section of the route through the North East Cam development following a proposal from the developer. A finalised design for the route between Dursley and Uley also needs to be established. Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield: Following a tender process, Sustrans have been commissioned to carry out the design phase of a feasibility study. SDC is contributing £10k for this piece of work. Stroud-Chalford: No further spending following a £600 contribution towards creating promotional material for the route to present to the public. We will continue to engage with the group leading the project and potentially make contributions to additional work as the project progresses.

CDP3.13 In our role as statutory waste collection authority, support community groups to phase out single use plastics; whilst also reducing its use across council services.

- SDC has supported the work that Chloe Turner, from Stroud District Action on Plastic (SDAP), has been undertaking. This has included answering technical questions and conducting joint presentations. Most recently Chloe announced that Surfers Against Sewage had deemed Stroud District a Plastic Free Community status (<https://www.sas.org.uk/plastic-free-communities/>) - a great achievement.

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

CDP3.14 In Partnership with Stroud Town Council and Friends of the Lido submit a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund for additional funding to refurbish Stratford Park Lido.

- The preparation work has been undertaken by the consultants regarding submission of a bid. However due to Covid-19 this work by the consultants has been completed, but not followed up. They have recommended that we find alternative funding before a submission is made to HLF.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING: Promote the health and well-being of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda

CDP4.17 Make a decision extending the contract for the provision of leisure centre services at Stratford Park and consider options for future provision.

- Just before lockdown this went to CS&L Committee and the decision was taken to extend SLM's contract for a further 3 years.

CDP4.18 Agree a long term investment and management plan for Stratford Park with partners and contractors

- The Strategic Director of Communities will be submitting a report to the CS&L Committee with a tender document for the use of consultants to undertake the Stratford Park review.

DELIVERY: Provide value for money to our taxpayers and high quality services to our customers

CDP5.21 Create a strategic approach to building more effective partnerships with parish and town councils.

- The immediate response to the Covid pandemic put on hold the consultation exercises which were planned with Parish and Town Councils. However, throughout the pandemic SDC has worked with a number of Parish and Town Councils on a variety of projects, including High Street Recovery. The Council's new Policy and Governance Team will now be considering how to take these relationships forward and build on them in a constructive manner.

**Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk**

CDP5.22 Adopt a clear vision and digital strategy which is fit for purpose to deliver good quality, convenient and efficient services for staff, residents and local businesses.

- Work has been delayed by the pandemic but a vision and digital strategy is now in draft and initial modernisation discussions held with Group Leaders and Strategy & Resources members.

CDP5.23 Explore the opportunities for income generation to help achieve financial self-sufficiency.

- Work proceeded at the expected pace during 2019/20 with the completion of the fees and charges policy and the introduction of a number of additional income streams into the budget. Work has been effectively paused during the Covid-19 pandemic. The focus for financial sustainability is to create a budget strategy which protects the financial position of the Council at this difficult time. The overall aim of financial self-sufficiency has been included as one of the key strategic principles of the modernisation programme.

CDP5.24 Work collaboratively through partnerships and external stakeholders to achieve greater influence to deliver the Council's objectives.

- Significant progress has been made in the One Legal Transfer and this is now expected to complete on October 1st. During the Covid pandemic the Council has worked in partnership with many organisations on critical response and recovery tasks.

2.2 In summary, the majority of the remaining 14 projects are back on track despite the enforced delays due to the pandemic. Ongoing progress will be reported to this committee, with a Q2 update scheduled for the December meeting.

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS QUARTER 1 2020/21

1. BACKGROUND AND FOREWORD

- 1.1** The Local Government Association (LGA) offers all local authorities the opportunity to participate in a Corporate Peer Challenge every 4 years or so as part of its sector-led improvement programme.
- 1.2** The Council's Corporate Peer Challenge took place between 26 and 29 March 2019. It was conducted by a team of elected members and senior officers from other local authorities together with LGA advisors.
- 1.3** The Peer Challenge team reviewed the Council's self-assessment, key documents. They conducted site visits, interviews and workshops with a wide selection of staff, members, stakeholders and partners, meeting with 107 people and holding 47 meetings during their stay.
- 1.4** The Council received the Peer Challenge team's feedback report in May 2019 and reported it to Council on 16 May 2019. The report set out eight recommendations in respect of areas for development and improvement.
- 1.5** An Action Plan was developed in respect of the 8 recommendations, including timescales and organisational leads. These are recorded on our performance management system – Excelsis.
- 1.6** Three of the recommendations were completed during 2019/20, namely the restructure of the senior leadership team (CRD1); adoption of the Corporate Delivery Plan to May 2020 (CRD2) and regular meetings are now held between Senior Officers and Members both on a formal and informal basis. Officers and members are also involved in strategic conversations with partners from other authorities (CRD5). The remaining actions have been rolled forward to 2020/21.

2. PROGRESS ON THE ACTION PLAN

- 2.1** A summary of progress made in Quarter 1 2020/21 is set out below.

REC 3 (CRD3) Ensure the integrity of the current IT system. Review the progress and suitability of current plans, capability and capacity in respect of this, and beyond that to confirm the emerging plans in respect of ICT development and digital delivery fit with longer term transformational plans.

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

- Excellent progress has been made on replacing and updating the Council's servers, storage and disaster recovery infrastructure in line with the costed delivery plan. Delivery was delayed slightly by the pandemic and the need to speed up the rollout of laptops to all staff to enable home working and the need to facilitate online meetings. Infrastructure work is largely due for completion in August 2020, providing a strong basis from which the Council can develop a new digital platform for service delivery, CRM and improve telephony.

REC 4 (CRD4) Work with all key stakeholders over the next year to develop a clear vision and priorities for the council aligned to our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), to be agreed in the next iteration of the Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) and once approved ensure this is communicated effectively to residents, businesses and other partners.

- As a result of the pandemic the Council has developed a substantial recovery plan highlighting the work area on which it must prioritise to help lead the District in strategic recovery. This will involve significant consultation with partners and others. This has recovery strategy, has become a significant addition to the Corporate Delivery Plan and represents the Council's key priorities at this time. The CDP revision timetable was for development and publication after the election in May 2020. With the timetable for the new administration being necessarily delayed until 2021 the CDP process will follow accordingly.

REC 6 (CRD6) Establish effective workforce planning and performance management arrangements so that the Council has a committed and engaged staff group with clarity in terms of the expectations of them and sufficient capacity to deliver its plans. The Council should:

- **Review is future staffing arrangements, ensuring strategic fit and the development of a 'one council' ethos**
- **Develop core transformation plans and ensure sufficient capacity to enable effective delivery and monitoring. This includes consideration of ICT provision.**
- **Establish appropriate pay and reward arrangements for staff**
- **Ensure consistent compliance with, and outcomes arising from, core HR policies are delivered eg appraisals**
- **Ensure consistent oversight, management and compliance with key performance management practices.**
 - The Council has recently completed procurement of specialist organisational development support. This is to help the Council develop a number of key projects including

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

- People Strategy
- Behaviours and Values
- Review of HR Policies
- Productivity Management
- Pay Review

SLT are due to consider an action plan for this work which will be provided to the support partners.

REC 7 (CRD7) Building on its relatively strong financial position, review how its investment and commercial plans could be enhanced. A key focus of this will be to help deliver the Council's priorities as well as sustain its financial viability into the medium term.

- The Council continues to actively manage its investment portfolio and has achieved higher returns through the use of pooled investment funds. At Q1 2020/21 the average return on those funds was 2.5% as opposed to 0.4% in the traditional Treasury Management portfolio. The risk of capital loss has been mitigated through the creation of an investment risk reserve. Investment plans continue to be monitored to protect security, liquidity and yield. The ability to generate additional yield will be very limited in the current investment conditions.

REC 8 (CRD8) Consider reviewing governance arrangements to ensure better decision making in order to deliver its revised priorities and plans. As part of this the Council should:

- **Look to develop better collaboration at an early stage in producing policy or service options, taking account of expertise available from members where appropriate, together with ensuring that operational, financial and legal implications of options are effectively understood**
 - **Seek to build greater political consensus before decision making reports come to members, with greater opportunity for testing and rigour.**
- The Corporate Policy and Governance Team is now in place and recruitment is underway to fill all of the vacant posts. A structure chart with details of the new posts will be available on the Hub.
 - Following a motion to Council on 16 July, a report on proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct for members and the arrangements under which allegations can be investigated is to be reviewed by the Audit & Standards Committee in August, before recommendation at a future Council meeting.

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

- The new report template has ensured that the operational, financial and legal implications are clearly set out and understood. Reports are considered at an early stage by members to ensure earlier input.

2.2 In summary, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in having to postpone the local council election until May 2021, has delayed the implementation of some of the recommendations. It has also inevitably led to a reassessment of priorities, with the Council now working on a 1-year external Recovery Plan and a 2-year internal Modernisation Plan. These will gradually develop into a longer term renewal strategy which will form the basis for a new Corporate Plan in 2021.

Eka Nowakowska, Policy & Performance Officer
Ext: 4288
Email: eka.nowakowska@stroud.gov.uk

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 OCTOBER 2020

12

WORK PROGRAMME

Date of meeting	Matter to be considered	Reporting Member/Officer
10.12.20	Member\Officer reports to be circulated prior to Committee: a) Performance Monitoring b) Investment and Development Panel c) Leadership Gloucestershire Update d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) e) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) f) Recovery Strategic Board g) Covid 19 Engagement Board Work Programme Kingshill House Brimscombe Port Redevelopment Q2 Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Update Q2 Corporate Delivery Plan Update Q2 Budget Monitoring Report	Councillors Cooper & Pearson Chair Chief Executive Chair & Chief Executive Chair & Chief Executive Councillor Pickering Strategic Director of Place Committee Property Manager Head of Property Services Policy and Performance Officer Policy and Performance Officer Strategic Director of Resources
28.01.21	Member\Officer reports to be circulated prior to Committee: a) Investment and Development Panel b) Leadership Gloucestershire Update c) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) e) Recovery Strategic Board f) Covid 19 Engagement Board Work Programme Q3 Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Update Q3 Corporate Delivery Plan Update Budget Setting 2021/22 CIL Strategic Funding Recommendations The 2030 Strategy - Limiting, Adapting, Responding and Recovering in a Changing Climate	Chair Chief Executive Chair & Chief Executive Councillor Pickering Strategic Director of Place Committee Policy and Performance Officer Policy and Performance Officer Strategic Director of Resources Housing Strategy and CIL Manager Strategic Director of Place

Date of meeting	Matter to be considered	Reporting Member/Officer
04.03.21	Member\Officer reports to be circulated prior to Committee: a) Performance Monitoring b) Investment and Development Panel c) Leadership Gloucestershire Update d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) e) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) f) Recovery Strategic Board g) Covid 19 Engagement Board	Councillors Cooper & Pearson Chair Chief Executive Chair & Chief Executive Councillor Pickering Strategic Director of Place
	Work Programme	Committee
	Q3 Budget Monitoring Report	Strategic Director of Resources
22.04.21	Member\Officer reports to be circulated prior to Committee: a) Investment and Development Panel b) Leadership Gloucestershire Update c) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) e) Recovery Strategic Board f) Covid 19 Engagement Board	Chair Chief Executive Chair & Chief Executive Councillor Pickering Strategic Director of Place
	Work Programme	Committee
	Q4 Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Update	Policy and Performance Officer
	Q4 Corporate Delivery Plan Update	Policy and Performance Officer

Information Sheets

Ref/Date	Topic	Author(s)
SR-2020/21-001 18/06/2020	Corporate Delivery Plan Progress Quarter 4	Policy and Performance Officer
SR-2020/21-002 24/07/20	Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Quarter 4 2019/20	Policy and Performance Officer

Items for Future Meetings

- Procurement Annual Update – Principal Procurement Officer
- The Changing Future of Play Areas – Head of Housing Services, Community Services Manager
- Review of the Council Tax Hardship Scheme Covid-19 and Discretionary Housing Benefit – Head of Revenue and Benefits
- Asset Review
- Support of the Leisure Contract Provider in Stroud (Sport and Leisure Management) to Recover from the Impact of Covid-19