



Public Document Pack STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB
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Wednesday, 9 June 2021

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Environment Committee will be held on **THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud at **7.00 pm**

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

Please Note: Public access to this meeting is available, the meeting is being held in the Council Chamber at Stroud District Council.

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

Due to current Covid-19 regulations a maximum of 6 members of public will be permitted in the Council Chamber at any one time, if you would like to attend this meeting please contact democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk.

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
To receive apologies of absence.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
To receive declarations of interest.
3. **MINUTES (Pages 3 - 10)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2021.
4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (Pages 11 - 12)**
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, 14 June 2021

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. **PROCESSING A STROUD DISTRICT CYCLING AND WALKING STRATEGY**
(Pages 13 - 16)

To inform Councillors of progress regarding cycling and walking initiatives within the District and present the emerging Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Plan (LCWIP).

6. **APPOINTMENTS**

- (a) Performance Monitoring Representatives for Civic Year 2021-22
- (b) Outside bodies (Pages 17 - 18)

7. **MEMBER REPORTS**

- (a) Performance Monitoring_(Pages 19 - 22)

8. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

See Agenda Item 4 for deadlines for submission.

Members of Environment Committee

Councillor Chloe Turner (Chair)

Councillor Natalie Bennett
Councillor Martin Brown
Councillor Christopher Evans
Councillor George James
Councillor Haydn Jones
Councillor Norman Kay

Councillor Robin Layfield (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Dave Mossman
Councillor Ashley Smith
Councillor Haydn Sutton
Councillor Brian Tipper
Councillor Tricia Watson



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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

20 April 2021

7.00pm – 22.54pm

Remote Meeting

Minutes

3

Membership

| | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|
| Councillor Simon Pickering (Chair) | P | Councillor Haydn Jones | P |
| Councillor George James (Vice-Chair) | P | Councillor Norman Kay | P |
| Councillor Chas Townley | P | Councillor Skeena Rathor | P |
| Councillor Paul Denney | P | Councillor Haydn Sutton | P |
| Councillor Trevor Hall | P | Councillor Jessica Tomblin | P |
| Councillor Nick Hurst | P | Councillor Tim Williams | P |

P = Present A = Absent

Officers in Attendance

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Chief Executive | 2030 Strategy Manager |
| Strategic Director of Place | Interim Planning Strategy Manager |
| Monitoring Officer | Principal Planning Officer |
| Head of Community Services | Senior Community Services Officer |
| Community Services Manager | Democratic Services & Elections Officer |
| Head of Planning Strategy | |

Other Member(s) in Attendance

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Councillor Doina Cornell (Leader) | Councillor John Jones |
| Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy | Councillor Gordon Craig |
| Councillor Dave Mossman | Councillor Lindsey Green |
| Councillor Stephen Davies | Councillor Chris Brine |

The Chair confirmed that Councillor Trevor Hall had resigned from the committee and will be replaced by Councillor Steven Lydon. In accordance with usual practice this would be reported to the next meeting of Council for information.

The Chair indicated that this was his last meeting after nine years as Chair of the committee, and thanked all Councillors and Officers who had helped him over the last 30 years. A number of Councillors thanked Councillor Pickering for his leadership over many years, and the depth of knowledge, skills and experience he had contributed.

EC.046

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

EC.047 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

EC.048 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED **That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2021 are approved.**

EC.049 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were two public questions. The first from Dr David Thombs and the second from Mr Andy Davis, who both joined the meeting to ask their questions. Answers were delivered by the Chair. Supplementary questions were also raised and answered (Refer to [Item 4 and the Recording of the Meeting](#)).

EC.050 **TREE STRATEGY**

Dr Gareth Parry, Director for Nature's Recovery, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust had sent apologies and the 2030 Strategy Manager delivered presentation slides on his behalf, which gave a broad overview of the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy.

The 2030 Strategy Manager then introduced the report which gave a high-level overview of why tree planting should be undertaken in order to mitigate emissions, adapt to climate change by promoting shade and soil stability, help to manage floods through reduced water run-off, and improve habitats. It was a complex consideration to ensure that the right tree was in the right place for the right reasons. The Local Nature Partnership's (LNP) Strategy was in line with the Council's 2030 Strategy principles to work in partnership with experts, to engage expertise and address the natural environment theme in a 'nature knows no boundaries' approach. The report recommended adopting the LNP's Gloucestershire Tree Strategy as an efficient and expedient way of starting action planning and delivery and illustrated how the action linked to the Council's current practice and approach. It proposed some early considerations that could frame the next steps. Five action areas of Influence, Invest, Identify, Improve and Interact were suggested as a basis for the Stroud District local action plan. It was recommended that a local action plan be developed without delay in order to continue with the Council's 2030 progress.

Councillor Kay asked how quickly the local action plan could be developed and whether it would be available for the committee at its next meeting. The 2030 Manager explained that the process was likely to take a little longer. The 2030 Strategy governance systems would be used to work with the 2030 Recovery Board to gain initial input, and would then be presented to the Environment Committee. Councillor Kay highlighted the importance of involving Parish Councils in any action plan produced and reiterated the need for the plan to be produced as soon as possible.

Councillor Rathor raised a number of questions including how local people, and especially young people, could be involved in this work; how plans could be developed so the people of Stroud had more investment in and ownership of them, and what more could be done when faced with the reality of a future catastrophe. The 2030 Strategy Manager emphasised that whilst there was a lot to be done, the Council has already achieved a great deal and had the ability to achieve more as was evident in the 2030 Strategy. A large amount of tree planting had already taken place in partnership with the Environment Agency, and a new development was planned with Salmon Springs. This development was a good example of engaging people in this work with the aim of the site becoming a training ground for

community volunteers to upskill. Attention was drawn to the Youth Council's commitment in the Strategy and their keenness to engage other young people in a proactive manner. The Strategy was comprehensive, and not just a Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy, but a climate and ecological emergency response, which went far beyond what many other Councils were pursuing.

Councillor Williams noted that there were instances in the district where land had been bought and trees felled by those who wished to use them for fuel. He questioned what the Council could do to protect these areas, including particularly sensitive areas which provided habitats for rare species. He also asked what the landowner's position would be in relation to control, ownership and maintenance of trees. The Chair explained that the Council had tree protection orders which could be used to protect trees and private woodland was controlled by the Forestry Commission. He confirmed that issues relating to ownership of trees would be dependent on the legal agreement with the landowner.

In response to a question from Councillor Hurst regarding how a balance was achieved between the loss of land for food production against the planting of trees, the Chair confirmed that the Council did not have any direct planning control over this although it was likely that most farmers would continue to grow food. Councillor Townley also raised a concern about the need to balance the planting of trees alongside encouraging more sustainable use of land for agriculture, and asked whether a more proactive approach was needed to encourage better utilisation of existing woodland. Members were informed that the 2030 Strategy considered issues relating to food and farming, including economic development, and a Food Strategy would also be developed.

Councillor Jones asked whether encouragement would be given to farmers to plant more fruit trees given the impact of climate change on some other types of tree. The 2030 Strategy Manager confirmed that this was a relevant consideration, particularly in relation to the need for local food supply chains, and planting of fruit trees was planned.

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

Councillor Kay proposed an amendment to change b) in the decision box to the following: 'b) Agree that a local action plan be developed and monitored in combination with 2030 governance processes by the end of October 2021.'

Councillor Jones seconded the amendment proposed by Councillor Kay.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried with 10 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention.

The substantive Motion including the amendment was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

- a) To endorse the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy as the basis for Stroud District delivery of greater tree cover, and**
- b) To agree that a local action plan be developed and monitored in combination with 2030 Strategy governance processes by the end of October 2021.**

EC.051**RECYCLING – DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE FUTURE**

The Community Services Manager introduced the report which outlined what improvements could be made to insulate the Council from global recycling markets. He detailed the two main problems with the current recycling system. Paper and cardboard were collected by a box containment method which produced wet recyclate, affecting quality and generating additional costs. One option was the introduction of a wheelie bin containment method for this recyclate to keep it dry. The introduction of wheelie bins would need stringent modelling, as while there would be an expectation of this option that residents would recycle more, the consequence could be increased demand on fleet personnel and vehicles. The Community Services Manager explained that each of the proposals in the report were complex and whilst some rudimentary costs were provided, each would require comprehensive modelling. He noted that an alternative option was to introduce a larger tipping bay. This would allow for the rotation of paper and cardboard on site so it would be sent for processing in a dry state. This was not possible at present as the recyclate had to be moved daily due to space constraints.

The Community Services Manager detailed the third option for Dry Mixed Recycling. At present this recycling was sorted through a material recovery facility so the aim would be for the Council to take responsibility for the sorting rather than being reliant on a third party. He explained that whilst indicative costs were set out in the report, there was a need to look at future Government policy following the current consultation, particularly in relation to the deposit return scheme and extended producer responsibility.

Councillor Lydon asked what the possibilities were of aligning the collection and disposal of waste across all districts in the county to achieve important economies of scale. The Community Services Manager indicated that county wide discussions took place through the Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership. However, whilst it may be possible to standardise what can be collected, the methods of collection were difficult to align due to geographical differences and local priorities.

Councillor Hurst asked whether consideration had been given to using wet cardboard in a different way, mixing it with the composting system rather than drying it out for sale. The Community Services Manager explained that at present mixed loads of paper and cardboard were sorted by the processor so there was no way of separating cardboard.

Councillor Townley suggested that having an additional wheelie bin would be a real disadvantage for those people with limited space, and questioned whether local collection points could be used more widely. The Community Services Manager agreed that this was an option and that any proposal to introduce a wheelie bin scheme would require consultation with residents and appraisal of wider implications.

The Chair moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor James. On being put to the vote the Motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

- a) To note the report contents;**
- b) To instruct officers in consultation with the Chair, to continue exploring opportunities to work with neighbouring authorities, and**
- c) To bring a further report to Committee when there is greater clarity on the Government policy, in particular on the deposit return scheme (DRS) and extended producer responsibility (EPR).**

EC.052**PRE-SUBMISSION DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN**

The Chair reminded Members that the guidance from the Local Government Association was clear, that the planning process should continue during the pre-election period. Government expected all Local Planning Authorities to update Local Plans at least every five years, and since the Council adopted the current Local Plan in 2015, parts of it were now out of date. Government had urged all Local Authorities to continue with plan reviews despite the ongoing pandemic, and wished to see up-to-date Local Plans by 2023.

The Head of Planning Strategy introduced the report. The draft Local Plan was the product of four years' work including taking account of extensive public consultation. It sought to manage the development needs of the District for the next 20 years whilst delivering on the commitment for the district to become carbon neutral by 2030, adapting to the impact of climate change, and providing resilience for the future. The Local Plan's biggest contribution to the district's CN2030 commitment was to reduce the need for travel by private car and the development strategy's design took this into account. The aims of the development strategy were outlined including:

- to concentrate housing growth at the main centres of population
- to support the regeneration of the canal corridor through the Stroud valleys and at Berkeley/Sharpness
- to maximise the use of previously developed land
- to focus strategic employment at accessible locations within the Rail/A38/M5 corridor.

Whilst the strategy was based on concentrated development it included an element of dispersal to meet the needs of rural communities, by providing lesser levels of development in smaller towns and larger villages and allowing small scale development on the edge of smaller villages to support social sustainability. It prioritised the conservation and enhancement of the Cotswolds AONB, whilst supporting limited housing development to meet needs arising from within the AONB.

The Head of Planning Strategy detailed that the Council needed to comply with an increased minimum housing requirement set by government of 630 houses per year for the next 20 years. The range of housing sites within the Plan would give the Council the greatest ability to meet the challenging national requirement. The Local Plan sought to identify sufficient employment land to meet the job requirements of the local population and to reduce some of the current out-commuting. Requirements for the local economy would need to be reviewed once the longer-term impact of Covid 19 and Brexit became apparent. Sites for allocation had been rigorously assessed using the results of the Council's Strategic Assessment of Land Availability work, transport and infrastructure work and Sustainability Appraisal. Sites had been selected which performed relatively well through the assessment process and which could deliver the Local Plan development strategy. Gloucester City had identified a shortfall of c.6000 dwellings to meet future housing needs. To meet the Council's legal duty to cooperate requirements, a site at Whaddon had been safeguarded as the most appropriate site to help with addressing the shortfall, although it was expected that other neighbouring authorities would also assist.

The Head of Planning Strategy outlined the key policies and proposals which aimed to meet the strategic objectives of the Plan, and guide and manage development proposals, including those for new housing, for securing enhancements for local open space and indoor sports facilities, amended retail policies and additional support for the restoration of the canal corridors. Following approval of the Draft Local Plan, officers would finalise the content of the Plan and undertake a six-week period of public consultation commencing at the end of May. The results of the consultation, the Pre-submission Plan, and accompanying evidence would then be submitted for examination by an independent, Government-appointed

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Inspector by September 2021. It was hoped the Council would be able to adopt the Plan by the end of 2022, thereby meeting the requirement for all Local Authorities to have an up-to-date Local Plan by 2023.

Councillor Lydon asked what constraints the Council had in developing a Local Plan which best met the needs of Stroud, and what progress had been made on a county-wide agreement of joint working. The Head of Planning Strategy answered that there was a wealth of national legislation which set out the framework for Local Plans and which provided a range of constraints. Whilst the government set minimum housing requirements, the Council had the power to decide how to distribute that growth. A statement of common ground was being prepared between the six districts and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to provide a longer timeframe to work together on strategic planning matters.

Councillor Townley queried, as the Council had adopted the policy of Independent Living, whether it was appropriate to refer to sheltered housing within the Plan and the Head of Planning Strategy agreed to review this. Councillor Townley asked how the proportions of affordable housing and of accessible housing had been derived in the Plan, and asked for clarification on whether houses could be built on sites adjacent to defined settlement boundaries. The Head of Planning Strategy confirmed that the Council had worked with neighbouring authorities to carry out a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) that had rigorously looked at the evidence that justified the proportion of development that should be affordable and the proportion of homes that need to be adaptable and accessible. The results of this assessment were reflected in the Local Plan, and planning applications would be appraised to ensure the housing mix reflected the evidence in the LHNA. The current Local Plan had very rigid policies relating to settlement limits and more flexibility was now provided for smaller settlements that did not have opportunities within the settlement boundaries for additional market or affordable housing. Proposals for development outside the settlement limits had to be included in a neighbourhood development plan or supported by the relevant parish council to ensure that genuine local support exists.

Councillor Jones asked a range of questions of clarification relating to:

- the policy which related to building adjacent to the settlement boundary
- the reinstatement of the railway at Sharpness
- how the proposed development at Sharpness links with South Gloucestershire development work
- biodiversity issues associated with the PS37 Wisloe site
- access from the PS37 site to Cam and Dursley railway station
- agricultural land classification

The Head of Planning Strategy explained that the new policy supporting sustainable rural communities referred specifically to 'adjoining settlement limits' whilst the affordable housing policy on rural exception sites, which had been made more flexible, referred to 'close to' settlement development limits. A bid has been submitted to the Department for Transport for reinstating the railway line at Sharpness and, if successful, would allow for the development of a strong business case for the reinstatement. The plan was for a development of 2,400 homes at Sharpness by 2040, based on the local impact assessments, and if the site was allocated it would be revisited in the next review of the Local Plan to ensure any increase above 2,400 could be accommodated. A significant amount of traffic modelling had been completed with Highways England, GCC and South Gloucestershire Council to ensure the Sharpness and other developments would not have an adverse impact on the M5 Junction 14 which would require enhancement. Impacts on biodiversity had been assessed at Wisloe through the Sustainability Appraisal and no significant issues had been identified. Natural England were satisfied that everything could be mitigated adequately, although more detailed ecological work would be required prior to

examination. The Head of Planning Strategy emphasised that whilst there was a dispute between the site promoters of PS37 and a local action group relating to the 1983 Agricultural Land Classification, the quality of agricultural land did not override other planning issues, and all factors had to be balanced whilst looking at the overall impact on the area. Whilst it was a constraint, all constraints had to be reviewed collectively and Natural England had clarified this in correspondence, which included a range of mitigation measures for the site. The Head of Planning Strategy expressed agreement that direct access from the Wisloe site to the railway station was fundamental to maximising the sustainable opportunities of the site, and confirmed that income from developers and other funding streams would be used to enhance sustainable forms of access.

Councillor Hurst suggested that it would be helpful to provide a definition of 'sustainability' in relation to its use in the Local Plan and asked for clarification on what means there were within the Plan to dictate to developers how houses would be constructed, and how the requirements for heating systems within the Plan would be enforced. The Head of Planning Strategy explained that 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework and national guidance. In the Local Plan it was defined as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The Local Plan aimed to balance the social, environmental and economic objectives of sustainability through a series of policies supporting social need, economic need and environmental limits. Requirements for construction of houses were defined in a number of policies including ES1, which related to sustainable construction and required developments to include a higher standard of construction beyond building regulations, including delivery of net zero carbon emissions. It was confirmed that these policy requirements and the heating supply requirements set out in DES3 would have to be discussed with the Inspector as they were in advance of what was required under current building regulations and national policy.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution (Section 3: Paragraph 6) a vote was taken for the meeting to continue past 10.00pm. This was agreed unanimously and the meeting continued.

Councillor Tomblin asked how the number of houses on the PS24 site had been increased from 700 to 900. The Head of Planning Strategy confirmed that additional parcels of land had been added to the site since 2019, and 700 houses would have led to a very low density which would not have met the national policy requirements for efficient use of land. In addition, 900 houses ensured that resources including a new primary school would be provided, to ensure the development was viable and delivering required infrastructure. Councillor Tomblin asked why Cam was referred to as a town in the Plan when it is a village and the Head of Planning Strategy agreed to amend this.

Councillor Craig raised safety and adverse publicity issues relating to the storage of ammonium nitrate in Sharpness Docks. The Head of Planning Strategy confirmed that planning decisions were based on evidence. The government set and monitored safety criteria through its standards, and the Health and Safety Executive controlled, monitored and inspected the storage of ammonium nitrate in Sharpness Docks. There was no evidence that standards of safety and regulation had been contravened and the new settlement did not breach the outer consultation zone apart from a small area on the shoreline which was not proposed for development.

The Chair moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Lydon.

Councillor Haydn Jones proposed an amendment for the following underlined additions to the decision box:

Agenda Item 3

2020/21

- a) The draft Local Plan (appendix A) is amended to remove site PS37 (Wisloe) and request Officers issue additional late papers before Full Council to include appropriate replacement site policy wording. The plan should then be approved for publication in accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and subsequently to be submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
- b) The public consultation reports (appendices B and C) are approved for publication, and
- c) The Head of Planning Strategy is delegated authority to make consequential changes to accommodate removal of PS37 and minor map, textual and formatting changes to the draft document before publication.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Hurst and then debated. On being put to the vote, with five votes for and six votes against, the amendment fell and was not carried.

The substantive Motion was then debated further. Councillor Rathor had left the meeting and was not part of voting relating to this Motion. On being put to the vote, it was carried with 6 votes for and 5 votes against.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- a) **The draft Local Plan (appendix A) is approved for publication in accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and subsequently to be submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;**
- b) **The public consultation reports (appendices B and C) are approved for publication, and**
- c) **The Head of Planning Strategy is delegated authority to make minor map, textual and formatting changes to the draft document before publication.**

EC.053

MEMBER REPORTS

a) **Planning Review Panel**

The report had been circulated. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy indicated that despite considering the new Local Plan in great detail, it was not possible for the Panel to achieve unanimous support for it. He conveyed thanks to all past and present Members of PRP and all Officers involved for their work on the new Local Plan over many years.

b) **Stroud Regeneration Committee**

The report had been circulated to Committee Members. There were no questions.

c) **Performance Monitoring Q3**

The report had been circulated to Committee Members. There were no questions.

EC.054

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were none.

The meeting ended at 10.54pm.

Chair



Members of the Public's Questions to Environment Committee

Question from Anthony Baker

When ever the weather is dry I find people are lighting bonfires that are terribly smoky and pollute the atmosphere to the extent that it sometimes difficult to avoid. I live in Lower Randwick (top of Cashes Green). From my garden I can see parts of Rodborough, Selsley, and Ruscombe and there is nearly always a bonfire somewhere, its so unnecessary I have a garden bin collected fortnightly and a compost bin in the garden anything else I take to the local tip (which is rare) when we talk about global warming and polluting the atmosphere I believe we should start at home first and consider our neighbours. Garden waste which is often wet leaves/grass etc causes the most smoke and when we all like to dry our washing on the line instead of using the tumble drier its only fair that ban such bonfires should be considered. Many people and children have health conditions which are affected by this type of pollution.

1. Could the Environment Committee please consider a ban on domestic bonfires

Reply

The Committee acknowledges Mr Baker's question and thanks the Environmental Protection Manager for his specialist advice which informs our considered response.

The current legislative landscape is robust and allows a proportionate response to the issue of smoke from bonfires. This view is shared across the country and we are not aware of any authorities that have sought to ban bonfires, other than on designated, discrete public areas to reduce the risk of moorland or woodland fires. In addition, there would be considerable difficulties in enforcement of a ban and potential resource implications, given that officers cannot currently provide 24-hour cover. Additionally, defining bonfires would be difficult, given the prevalence of fire pits, chimineas , metal incinerator bins, barbecues, etc.

Rather than a ban on bonfires, a better approach is to educate and encourage people to change their behaviour, in line with our 2030 vision, and use alternative disposal methods, for example via recycling centres, green waste collection services and composting, reducing potential nuisance and air pollution. The council is proactive in encouraging people to give up bonfires and there is extensive detail on the SDC website that Parish Councils could also adopt and promote, including information on how to report pollution from a bonfire.

The council is also proactive in dealing with smoke nuisance. Those who create unreasonable disturbance by having frequent or particularly smoky fires will be subject to enforcement action.

Question from Alick Miskin

Potential cyclists see roads as too dangerous to cycle on, given traffic speed and volume. Latest survey data shows half of UK residents won't return to public transport and car journeys are now up on pre-Covid levels. Stroud's separated bike paths are all based on old railway tracks or the towpath and none go where commuting cyclists now need them - to secondary schools, rail stations, workplaces or supermarkets. It's impossible to commute safely from Stroud to Gloucester, Cheltenham, Cam/Dursley, Bussage or Chalford and even Nailsworth requires flights of steps, precipitous inclines and 'cyclists dismount' signs. And with ever more 'road-locked' houses (e.g. 111 on the Daniels site, 55 off Dudbridge Hill) traffic pollution and carbon output will climb further. Light segregation (as proposed for Cainscross Road) is dangerous and doesn't comply with LTN1/20. It's a mess.

1. With electric bikes now flattening our hills, why can't SDC adopt a really bold approach to properly separated cycle infrastructure? And at least address some easy wins like signage and connectivity to encourage leisure cycling (try using NCR45 from Cherington to Stonehouse and on to Gloucester)?

Reply

Stroud District Council recognises the importance of cycling and walking throughout the district and the role it will have to play in the Council's aim to become carbon neutral by 2030. We are committed to working with Gloucestershire County Council to provide a coherent and safe cycling and walking network within the district and support the recently adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plans goal to deliver more sustainable transport options. Further to this, we believe that the emerging Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Plan (LCWIP) and further LCWIPS for other parts of the district, which are being discussed on the agenda today, will provide a focus for future investment, and present a deliverable solution to walking and cycling in the district.

Funding will always be the main challenge in providing a cycling and walking network, and although the District Council has committed a further £200k to our cycling and walking budget, on top of the £300k which has been allocated over the past 3 years, it is recognised that there is only so much that can be achieved with this amount. The programme of LCWIPs embarked on by the County Council will provide a solid investment programme going forward, enabling us to tap into wider sources of investment which should help to deliver significant improvements to the network over the next few years.

Whilst segregated solutions will always be preferred, the feasibility of such solutions will always have to be weighed up against a number of factors such as cost, potential number of users, other road users and physical constraints. As highlighted by the question, this may result in the simple solution of improved signage which we will work with the County Council to deliver.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

17 JUNE 2021

5

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Report Title | PROGRESSING A STROUD DISTRICT CYCLING AND WALKING STRATEGY |
| Purpose of Report | To inform councillors of progress regarding cycling and walking initiatives within the District and present the emerging Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Plan (LCWIP) |
| Decision(s) | <p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) support the emerging Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as the first phase of a District Cycling and Walking Strategy; b) work with Gloucestershire County Council in the production of further LCWIP documents for the District; c) continue to support the funding of walking and cycling infrastructure projects identified in the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan, and d) delegate authority to the Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer in consultation with the Head of Planning Strategy, Director of Place and the Chair of the Environment Committee to allocate funding to projects which are consistent with the above plans. |
| Consultation and Feedback | <p>The Stroud LCWIP has been subject to a period of stakeholder involvement. Stakeholders, including SDC officers and councillors were able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make recommendations for routes and comment on the draft network identified; • Highlight key issues experienced on the existing networks; • Identify improvement needed to serve local needs |
| Report Author | <p>Simon Maher, Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer Tel: 01453 754339 Email: simon.maher@stroud.gov.uk</p> |
| Options | <p>Option 1 - Utilise the Stroud LCWIP and future LCWIPs for the District as the focus for future investment in the walking and cycling network.</p> <p>Option 2 – Consider projects for the improvement of the walking and cycling network on a more ad hoc basis.</p> <p>It is recommended that option 1 is adopted, as the LCWIPs are being developed to implement the strategic priorities set out within the approved Local Transport Plan and are subject to input from the District Council from an early stage.</p> |

Agenda Item 5

| | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|----------|---------------|
| Background Papers | N/A | | | |
| Appendices | N/A | | | |
| Implications (further details at the end of the report) | Financial | Legal | Equality | Environmental |
| | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

1. Background

- 1.1 The scope of a Cycling and Walking Strategy for the Stroud District was agreed at Environment Committee in June 2017 with the aim of directing an allocated £300,000 Cycling and Walking budget towards identified cycling projects through match funding and opportunities identified with other partners and stakeholders.
- 1.2 Since 2017 funding from the Cycling and Walking budget has been allocated on an ad hoc basis, focussing on projects identified in the scoping document and on identified deliverable projects.
- 1.3 This initial budget has been all but allocated to projects throughout the district (see section 2) however a further allocation of £200k was agreed at Full Council on 25th February 2021 following a request from Environment Committee in Autumn 2020.
- 1.4 Following the Department of Transport's launch of the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Strategy (CWIS) and guidance on the production of local cycling and walking infrastructure plans, Gloucestershire County Council has embarked on a series of LCWIPs for the county, including the Stroud LCWIP which is subject to presentation at the committee meeting. These are further ratified by the recently adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2041.
- 1.5 The Stroud LCWIP will be the first of several such documents for the District, each focussing on a specific area and identifying cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment. The next LCWIP within the district will look at the area around Cam and Dursley, with Wotton - Kingswood to follow.

2. Current Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Investments in the District

- 2.1 *Nailsworth to Dudbridge Cycleway*: Working with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and Gloucestershire County Council, a programme of works to resurface the majority of the route and carry out bridge repairs as well as make biodiversity improvements is nearing completion. The Cycling and Walking budget has contributed approximately £140k to the project with further funding coming from CIL funding, GCC, Gloucestershire Health Services, and ERDF European funding.
- 2.2 *Cam- Dursley Greenway*: Steered by the Cam Dursley Greenway group, and working with GCC, the District Council has committed £50k toward physical works along the route, plus another £25k match funded with £25k of CIL funding to make cycle friendly highway improvements along the route.

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- 2.3 *Wotton-Kingswood- Charfield Greenway*: Led by the WKC Greenway group, the District Council has committed £18k towards a detailed feasibility study being carried out by Sustrans. Once complete it is envisaged that the study will present a deliverable project.
- 2.4 *Cainscross*: £25k from the Cycling and Walking budget match funded to £25k from CIL funding has been allocated to highway improvements along Cainscross Road to be carried out by Gloucestershire County Council.
- 2.5 *Frampton on Severn*: £10k from the Cycling and Walking budget match funded to £10k from CIL funding has been allocated towards improvements to footpaths and pedestrian links in Frampton.

3. Overview of Stroud LCWIP

- 3.1 Gloucestershire County Council commenced work on a programme of LCWIP documents in 2018 with the intention of producing a plan for each of the county's main towns. The purpose of the LCWIP process is to assist local authorities to:
 - identify cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment in the short, medium and long term;
 - ensure that consideration is given to cycling and walking within both local planning and transport policies and strategies; and
 - make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure.
- 3.2 The key outputs of the LCWIP are:
 - a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development;
 - a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment; and
 - a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network.
- 3.3 The network of routes identified in the LCWIP have been selected through the use of various tools and analysis as well as a period of online stakeholder involvement to which the District Council provided feedback.
- 3.4 Stakeholder input and the actions and responses to this input will be summarised in the Stroud LCWIP. These responses have fully taken into account the feedback provided, for example the inclusion of Stonehouse to Hardwicke as a primary route, and the acknowledgement that the route from Chalford to Stroud is best served by a dedicated cycleway along the A419, with the parallel route along the canal providing a pedestrian route or alternative leisure route.
- 3.5 The routes also complement those identified in the adopted Stroud District Local Plan and the emerging Pre-Submission Stroud Local Plan Delivery Policy E113 which look to protect and support walking and cycling routes within the District.

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4. CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 The Stroud LCWIP only covers part of the District, however, in terms of potential to increase active travel and contribute to a modal shift in transport by removing barriers to cycling and walking, investment in the cycling and walking infrastructure of this area has the potential to reach a large section of the population and link some of the major settlements and employment centres within the District.
- 4.2 Support for the Stroud LCWIP as a key document in driving future cycling and walking infrastructure investment will not hinder any ongoing or future initiatives in other parts of the District. Indeed, it is envisaged that existing initiatives will form a key element in informing future LCWIP documents for other areas of the District.
- 4.3 By supporting the Stroud LCWIP and the production of further LCWIPs for other parts of the District, and through our continued work with relevant stakeholders, the District Council will be taking a strategic and comprehensive approach to delivering a sustainable cycling and walking network throughout the District.
- 4.4 An important aspect of the Stroud LCWIP document is that it provides deliverable solutions to providing a cycling and walking network, which in turn provides a good basis on which to bid for further funding to help implement the schemes.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as it is informing Members of the progression of the Strategy and to support outlined future projects. The additional budget was dealt with by full Council (Para 1.3) on 25th February 2021.

Adele Rudkin, Accountant, Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications although the approval of the Stroud LCWIP will support the delivery of the Government's Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Policy, the Gloucestershire Local Transport plan (2020 – 2041) and will aid compliance with the Council's decision making framework.

One Legal, Tel: 01684 272691, Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

5.3 Equality Implications

An EqIA is not required because this report is not recommending specific delivery action however the strategy will have positive impacts on equality by providing improved active travel options for local communities.

5.4 Environmental Implications

A focussed strategy for providing active travel options will encourage a shift away from car use, particularly for short journeys, and thus a reduction in emissions associated with those journeys.

**STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

17 JUNE 2021

8b

Appointment of Outside Bodies for 2021/22

| Organisation | Nominations for 2021/22 Will be available at Committee |
|--|--|
| Berkeley Nuclear Stakeholders | |
| Cotswold AONB | |
| Lower Severn Drainage Board | |
| Minchinhampton & Rodborough Commons Advisory Committee | |
| Stroud Regeneration Committee | |
| Stroud Valleys Project Board | |
| Rural SUDS Steering Group | |

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Performance Monitoring Report Q4: Environment Committee

| | |
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| DATE OF MEETING | 17 June 2021 |
| ATTENDEES | Members: to be appointed at the June 2021 meeting Officers: Brendan Cleere |
| PERFORMANCE UPDATE (<i>please give a brief progress update on the following areas</i>) | |
| CDP PRIORITIES (see <i>Excelsis</i>) | <p><i>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).</i></p> <p>The 2030 Strategy and Master plan was adopted by Full Council on 18th March 2021. The strategy includes within its 75 commitments a number relating to council own estates and social housing energy programmes, in combination these constitute a Carbon Neutral master plan for the Council. The remaining 75 commitments focus on what it takes to achieve a carbon neutral, resilient and ecologically diverse district where carbon neutral activity and progress is to be achieved in balance with ecological restoration, social justice and inclusion. Overall the Master Plan requires the ongoing development of a number of strategies and action plans (CN action plans being one, tree, food and economic strategies being other examples but not a comprehensive list).</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Following requests from GCC for CIL funding, further match funding has been allocated from the cycling and walking budget to progress several routes as outlined in the route summaries below.</p> <p>Dudbridge-Nailsworth: Following allocation of £116k from CIL and £40k from the cycling and walking budget (total £156k) works to Newman Henders bridge have been completed. Further track improvement works to be completed from this allocation are under way or due to commence during Q1 2021.</p> |

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| <p>CDP PRIORITIES (see <i>Excelsis</i>)</p> | <p>Dursley-Cam-Uley: Sections of track requiring highways design work have been agreed. This is to be funded through £25k from CIL and £25k from the cycling and walking budget (total £50k). Work has commenced which should be completed Q1 2021, with any remaining funding going towards implementation. Formal public consultation on work to footpath CDU14 to make it suitable for cycling and re-designate it is yet to commence. The £50k allocated from the cycling and walking budget to complete these works remains in place.</p> <p>Cainscross segregated cycleway: Following an allocation of £25k from CIL and £25k from the cycling and walking budget (total £50k) for the upgrading of 1.25km of existing advisory cycle lanes to provide light segregation between Lansdown and Cainscross Roundabout, work has yet to commence but has an estimated start of Q2 2021.</p> <p>Frampton Cycle Path: Detailed design work is yet to commence following an allocation of £10k from CIL and £10k from the cycling and walking budget (total £20k) to implement a safe link from the canal to the village in association with the completion of the canal restoration work.</p> <p>Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield: Sustrans are nearing completion of the design phase for this project. SDC has committed a further £10k on top of £8k already allocated to complete this work.</p> <p>Stroud-Chalford: Meetings with the local parishes leading this project are due to be held to coordinate this route with the proposed redevelopment of Brimscombe Port.</p> <p>Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP): A draft Stroud LCWIP produced by GCC focusing on Stroud town centre, Stonehouse, and with links to Nailsworth, Chalford, and Hardwicke via Standish is to be presented to Environment Committee in June 2021 with a view to adopting the plan as a focus for future cycling and walking infrastructure investment. Further LCWIPs for Cam and Dursley and Wotton are to be produced through 2021/22.</p> |
| <p>PROJECTS / CAPITAL PROGRAMME (if not covered in CDP)</p> | <p>Assess air quality within the District in line with the requirements of Defra and prepare an annual report on air quality in the District</p> <p>Monitoring of NO₂ across the district using passive detectors was successfully completed for the year 2020/21. Bias-adjusted levels of NO₂ for 2020 demonstrate that all sites comfortably comply with the Air Quality Objective.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring of particulates at two sites on behalf of the Javelin Park Community Liaison Group recommenced in early 2021 and has continued thereafter. Levels measured to date comfortably meet Air Quality Objectives.</p> |

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| <p>PROJECTS / CAPITAL PROGRAMME <i>(if not covered in CDP)</i></p> | <p><i>Establish a working group and governance structure for the development of work plans to deliver the 2030 Carbon Neutral commitment.</i></p> <p>The timeline for successful completion of this task has always been inextricably linked to adoption of 2030 Strategy and Plan and the scheduled completion date should therefore be reconsidered. The 2030 Strategy and Master Plan was adopted March 2021 and with it an agreed overall approach to community governance which is currently being pulled together. There are in fact 2 strands of activity to be simultaneously evolved to fulfil this action comprehensively: Community governance and; council activity coordination. A 2030 Community Action Officer has recently been recruited to join the team this Summer to help take plans forward for community governance by the Core Group defined in the strategy. Council Coordination plans are being refined by 2030 Manager in consultation with Managers, Heads of Service and Directors and in the interim a number of officer groups are working informally on key priority areas of Built Environment (retrofit group); Mobility (EV Infrastructure group); Natural Environment (Salmon Springs/Tree strategy group). The 2030 Manager is across these groups and their activity and this gives a test bed for how more formal approaches might work. An Environmental Performance Officer, also recruited to commence early summer will support 2030 Strategy coordination and monitoring, helping to establish ISO14001; master plan monitoring and carbon accounting for the council estate.</p> <p><i>Deliver and secure the long term sustainability of the rural SuDS project in partnership with the EA, working closely with land owners and communities using innovative land and flood management techniques.</i></p> <p>Funding secured from Severn Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee through the Environment Agency to fund revenue and capital for the next 6 years of the project. Project Officer confirmed in post on a permanent contract with SDC. Project officer will continue to deliver projects on the ground.</p> <p><i>Manage the delivery of the 'Warm Homes Fund' project</i></p> <p>6 gas central heating systems and 1 air source heat pump system installed this quarter. Delivery has been slow due to the further Covid lockdown rules and the anxiety by the largely older vulnerable clients to allow access to their homes at this time. This has been recognised by the funders and the project deadline has been extended for a further 12 months to the 31st May 2022. The full Warm & Well Q4 and year-end report is available on the website.</p> |
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| PERFORMANCE MEASURES (see <i>Excelsis</i> where applicable) | | | | | | |
|---|--------|------|------|-------|-------|---|
| Indicator | Target | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| Percentage of MAJOR planning applications determined within 13 weeks. This also takes into account Planning Performance Agreements which allow for longer than 13 weeks but will be counted positively. | 60 | 88 | 100 | 100 | 88 | 😊 |
| Percentage of MINOR applications determined within 8 weeks. | 70 | 96 | 95 | 94 | 96 | 😊 |
| Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks | 70 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 95 | 😊 |
| Residual household waste per household. (kgs) | 63 | 77 | 75 | 78.2 | 76.3* | 😞 |
| Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting | 60 | 60.5 | 60.9 | 58.11 | 57.83 | 😞 |

* The number of kgs per household remains increased compared to previous years, due to the number of residents working from home. This has prompted an increase of waste into the residual stream that would normally be disposed of via commercial collections.

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| RISKS (see <i>Excelsis</i>) | <p>CCR9 WASTE MANAGEMENT: Cost of providing waste and recycling services to the district currently constitutes around a third of the organisation's budget. As such any budgetary implication is of significant consequence to the MTFP.</p> <p>Risk Score - 6</p> <p>Further consultations on proposed changes to waste legislation are open and SDC will respond alongside partners within the Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership. It seems more likely that local authorities will be mandated to collect garden waste for free, which could have a major financial impact. Government have said that this would be fully funded but it is unclear how this would be calculated. There are other potential changes which will be impactful too, such as a deposit return scheme that will at the very least, alter the composition of kerbside recycling.</p> |
| FOLLOW UP | None at the time of writing |

| ANY ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANT CONCERN TO BE REPORTED TO AUDIT AND STANDARDS | |
|--|---|
| None | |
| ANY ACTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE | |
| None | |
| REPORT SUBMITTED BY | Brendan Cleere (with input from relevant lead officers) |
| DATE OF REPORT | 28/05/2021 |