



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

09 September 2021

7.00 pm - 9.20 pm

Council Chamber

### Minutes

#### **Membership**

##### **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

\*= Absent

#### **Officers in Attendance**

Strategic Director of Place  
Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer  
Accountant

The Head of Planning Strategy  
Senior Policy and Governance Officer  
Democratic Services and Elections Officer

#### **EC.9**      **Apologies**

There were none.

#### **EC.10**      **Declaration of Interests**

There were none.

#### **EC.11**      **Minutes**

**RESOLVED**      **That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 are approved as a correct record**

#### **EC.12**      **Public Question Time**

There were none.

### **EC.13**      **Draft Council Plan**

The Chair introduced the report that outlines the Draft Council Plan for 2021-2026. The Draft Council Plan was developed in consultation with the Alliance Leadership Team, Alliance Members, Strategic Leadership Team, Leadership and Management Team, Council Officers and the Stroud District Youth Council. The plan sets out 3 principle themes; Environment and Climate Change, Economy and Regeneration and Community Resilience and Wellbeing with 5-6 objectives set alongside the themes. The final tier of the plan set out 74 identified projects alongside the respective lead Officers.

Councillor Sutton raised a question regarding Health and Social Infrastructure and no provision for individuals with mental health issues. The Chair advised the Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy incorporates mental health. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer confirmed there was provision under the Health and Wellbeing Plan also.

Councillor Watson asked the concept and term 'doughnut economy' be included within the respective objectives of the plan.

Councillor Haydn Jones questioned how ER5 relating to the Local Plan links in with Environment and Climate Change. The Strategic Director of Place referred to page 2 of the plan which outlines a Venn diagram on how the 3 principle themes interrelate.

Councillor Kay asked whether the Rive Frome past Horsley is included under EC2.2 regarding the Natural Flood Management project. The Chair confirmed it was all catchments into Stroud.

Councillor Brown raised a question on EC4.3 regarding working with partners on electric vehicle charging points and if a District Plan would be produced considering transport is a Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) remit. The Chair advised GCC issued a press release that electric charging points will be included as part of the Stroud Parking Review.

The report was proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Layfield.

Councillor Mossman proposed an amendment to delay the vote by 4 weeks and hold an extraordinary meeting to allow political parties time to consider and provided feedback considering the extreme importance of the plan.

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Mossman and seconded by Councillor Haydn Jones.

The Chair reassured Members that the Leader and Deputy Leader confirmed comments can be made outside of Committee for consideration.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion received 5 votes for, 6 against and 2 abstentions.

There was no further debate on the original motion and on being put to the vote, the motion received 8 votes for, 0 against and 5 abstentions.

**RESOLVED To Strategy & Resources Committee that the draft Council Plan is agreed and recommended to Council.**

**EC.14 Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground**

The Head of Planning Strategy presented the Draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) advising that all the Gloucestershire local authorities were committed to developing a better coordinated approach to long term spatial planning in Gloucestershire. The statement includes 34 high level agreement dealing with environmental issues and land use matters with potential for a Gloucestershire Spatial Development Strategy and Action Plan to follow. The Statement is part of the duty to cooperate and evidence to support the Local Plan. Any major or future iterations will be reported to Committee for approval.

Councillor Mossman expressed concerns about potential 'land grabbing' by adjoining local authorities and referred to the safeguarded site at Whaddon. The Head of Planning Strategy referred to the Council's agreed position as set out in the Draft Local Plan and confirmed that that position would be reinforced at examination.

A number of questions were raised by members regarding the future status of the SoCG and the scope for extending to include other neighbouring authorities. The Head of Planning Strategy explained that the legal status of the SoCG was in demonstrating the duty to cooperate between authorities but there was a wider value in terms of joint working for the purposes of strategic planning and securing long term investment in Gloucestershire. This SoCG is one of a number of other SoCG currently being prepared with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies to support the Local Plan.

The Chair proposed a friendly amendment to include 'Vice Chair' after 'Chair' and before 'Environment Committee' under part b of the decision.

The amendment was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Smith.

Councillor Haydn Jones expressed his concerns that South Gloucestershire were not included within the Gloucestershire comprehensive document. The Head of Planning Strategy explained that a separate SoCG was currently being drafted with South Gloucestershire Council.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion was carried unanimously.

- RESOLVED**
- a. approve the Draft Statement of Common Ground set out in Appendix A; and**
  - b. delegate to the Head of Planning Strategy, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Environment Committee, the authority to approve minor amendments to the Draft Statement of Common Ground in the event that the final draft version is different to the version set out in Appendix A.**

**EC.15**      **Budget Monitoring Report Q1 2021/22**

The Accountant presented the Budget Monitoring Report for Q1 2021/22 to Committee and advised an additional column had been added to table 1 of the report for Covid-19 pressures against the respective budgets.

Councillor Brown questioned if the result of the variance on the Canal Budget was due to uncompleted projects. The Accountant confirmed and advised the underspend would be added to the following financial year budget.

Councillor Kay commented that he would be requesting at Strategy and Resources for a small budget to be allocated for the work the Equality Working Group is undertaking. Councillor Kay also commented on the salary overspend within Development Control explaining retention of staff is a result of insufficient pay between public and private sector.

The report was proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Brown

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

**RESOLVED      To Note the outturn forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget and the Capital Programme for this Committee.**

**EC.16**      **Stroud District Cycling and Walking Strategy - Establishing a Task and Finish Group**

The Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer presented the report on establishing a Cycling and Walking Task & Finish Group following the Committee's approval on the Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan on the 17 June 2021.

The Chair proposed a friendly amendment to the membership on Appendix A to add 'Vice Chair of Environment Committee' as the first bullet point and amend the beginning of the second bullet point to 'in addition to'.

Councillor James commented whether the addition of Vice Chair was necessary as the group would consist of one member of each political party and potentially risk becoming political. The Chair advised the group would be politically neutral and adding the Vice Chair would be to chair and help steer the group.

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Layfield and seconded by Councillor Smith.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion received 11 votes for, 1 against and 1 abstention.

Councillor James questioned how Committee would know if the group was a success. The Chair advised it would be a combination of the distribution of the budget, establishing a point of contact to help communities with projects and assisting Gloucestershire County Council on projects to access funding.

Councillor Watson commented that the strategy also included walking and there are several issues preventing rural and town walking which also need addressing and not just a larger focus not just cycling.

Councillor Kay questioned why no equality implications were listed in the report and advised cycling and walking groups who specialise in the needs of individuals with disabilities needed to be consulted and included as part of the group. The Head of Planning Strategy advised equality implications were assessed and the recommendations/outcomes of the group would be subject to equality implications based on whether disability equality needs were met in their decisions. Councillor Kay advised the membership should include a representative who has a disability in walking and cycling and would be satisfied with the Chair and Vice Chairs oversight to ensure this was included.

The report was proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Mossman.

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

- RESOLVED**
- a. **to set up a Cycling and Walking Task & Finish Group;**
  - b. **to approve the draft Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix A.**

### **Appointments**

#### **EC.17      Performance Monitoring Representative for Civic Year 2021-22**

Councillor James was appointed as the second Performance Monitoring representative for 2021-22 alongside Councillor Natalie Bennett.

#### **EC.18      Lower Severn Drainage Board**

Councillor John Jones was reappointed as the representative to the Lower Severn Drainage Board.

#### **EC.19      Stroud Valleys Project Board**

Councillor Brown was appointed as the representative for the Stroud Valleys Project Board.

### **Member Reports**

#### **EC.20      Planning Review Panel**

The Panel has not yet been established with a report due to go to Decembers Committee to re-establish the Planning Review Panel. The Chair advised Member to contact the Strategic Director of Place if with were interested in assisting with the Terms of Reference.

**EC.21**      **Stroud Regeneration Committee**

Councillor Layfield provided a verbal update which included an offer from Stroud Rotary Club to assist with improving the Stroud area, the draft consultation on street spaces and the potential for a shared Tourism Officer operating outside of Stroud District Council for the Towns across the District.

**EC.22**      **Performance Monitoring**

A report was circulated prior to Committee and the Strategic Director of Place informed Committee an updated version of the report was emailed to Committee Members after the publication of the Committee papers to include the performance information on Q1.

Councillor Kay requested a report on assessing the air quality to be added to the next Committee due to it being a national concern. The Strategic Director of Place confirmed a briefing will take place on the 4 November for all Members and he would liaise with the Head of Environmental Health and would advise the Chair and Councillor Kay after this discussion on whether there was a decision for Committee to discuss. Comments and debate from members around Javelin Parks monitoring equipment, particulates, quality of clean air and EA definition of 'safe emissions' from incinerators were also mentioned under the topic of air quality.

Councillor Kay asked when work on the Frampton Cycle Path was due to commence. The Strategic Director of Place advised he would check progress with the Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer and provide a response outside of Committee.

**EC.23**      **Work Programme**

Councillor Haydn Jones requested if Members could be involved with the construction of the Severn Estuary Recreation and Mitigation Strategy and working with neighbouring authorities such as the Forest of Dean and South Gloucestershire Council.

Councillor Mossman requested a commitment that a member from each of the political parties is included with the writing of Terms of Reference for the Planning Review Panel.

Councillor Brown advised the Cycling and Walking Strategy Task and Finish Group outcomes needed to be added to the March Committee.

**EC.24**      **Member Questions**

There were none.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Chair