



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

25 November 2021

7.00 - 9.57 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)

Councillor Chris Brine
Councillor Gordon Craig
Councillor Stephen Davies
Councillor Nicholas Housden
Councillor Martin Percy
Councillor Nick Hurst*

*= Absent

Councillor Catherine Braun (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Keith Pearson
Councillor Steve Robinson
Councillor Mattie Ross
Councillor Ken Tucker
Councillor Chloe Turner

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive
Strategic Director of Resources
Interim Strategic Director of Transformation
and Change
Monitoring Officer
Head of Planning Strategy

Senior Economic Development Specialist
Senior Policy and Governance Manager
Property Manager
Policy and Projects Officer
Senior Democratic Services & Elections
Officer

SRC.039 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hurst

SRC.040 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

SRC.041 Minutes

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meetings held on 30 September 2021 were approved as a correct record.

SRC.042 Public Question Time

There were none.

SRC.043 Fit for the Future Programme Update

The Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change provided a verbal update on the Fit for the Future Programme. It was confirmed that a mission statement had been created for the team which aligned with the wider council strategy, any suggested improvements that were in line with the intent of the mission statement could go ahead. There were four workstreams:

- Community Connection being led by the Head of Community Services
- Service Delivery being led by the Corporate Policy and Governance Manager
- People and Organisational Development being led by the Human Resources Manager
- Technology and Digital being led by the Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change.

An update on current progress was provided and it was confirmed that a further presentation would be provided for Members to demonstrate the Digital Platform once the contract had been completed.

Councillor Davies asked whether Covid had had any impact on the SILO culture and whether the back-end of IT services would also be improved. The Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change confirmed that improvements would be seen with use of the Digital Platform as some business would be contracted end to end using the platform. It was also confirmed that they were working hard to break down any SILO working and that they had deliberately chosen a collegiate approach to help with this.

Councillor Braun asked for further clarification on timescales, the Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change advised that the first services would be delivered in the first quarter and would be used as a pilot and that they were working on producing the plan at the beginning of 2022.

In response to a question from Councillor Craig the Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change advised that one of their aspirations was to use self-service technology but only for those people who wished to use it, they would not exclude people who did not want to or were not able to use technology.

Councillor Pearson asked whether we could work in conjunction with the County Council, the Chief Executive confirmed that she had recently attended a meeting with the County Council where they explored joined up services.

The Chair, Councillor Cornell, asked for an update on the progress with the Digital Platform. The Interim Strategic Director of Transformation and Change stated that they were in the middle of negotiations with the vendor and would hope to have the contract prepared within the next couple of weeks.

RESOLVED To note the Fit for the Future Programme Update.

SRC.044 Property Update

The Property Manager drew the Members attention to the map included at Appendix 2 which showed examples of Stroud District Council Assets and the full list of Assets which was published on the website and was a requirement of the Local Government Transparency Code. It was advised that a map would also be produced for Members that showed Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council owned properties. The Property Manager informed the Committee that Appendix 1 provided an update on the Asset Reviews and that Covid had led to significant delays to the reviews of public conveniences and the proposed transfer of Kingshill House.

Councillor Craig asked whether playing fields were being offered to the appropriate Parish Councils, it was confirmed that when a lease came up for review the Parish Council would be contacted however they would be happy to be contacted directly by Parish Councils at any time to discuss this.

Councillor Braun asked whether planning permission was sought for all surplus garage and small sites before the Council sold them. The Property Manager advised that a mixed approach was followed with consideration given as to what was appropriate for each individual site.

Proposed by Councillor Ross and Seconded by Councillor Brine.

Councillor Braun stated that she was pleased to see Paragraph 2.2 in the report which indicated their hope to greater align the Asset Management Strategy with the CN2030 aims.

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

**RESOLVED That the current Corporate Asset Management Strategy
is carried forward and reviewed in 2022.**

SRC.045 Performance Management Framework Review

The Senior Policy and Governance Officer advised that most of the information had been available previously but had been in multiple places and this had now been brought together into the framework. It was also confirmed that they were currently reviewing systems used for performance management and would be going out for procurement in 2022. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer stated that an updated performance monitoring template would be brought to the next Committee for review and would include a RAG status, it was further advised that training for Committee Performance Monitors would be carried out.

In response to questions from Councillor Percy regarding Risk Management the Strategic Director of Resources confirmed that there was a report being taken to Audit and Standards Committee in November that set out the current risk management approach and the results from the review from the Internal Audit on the risk management process.

Councillor Braun asked whether service commitments would be tracked and monitored by the Performance Monitors. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer advised that

performance monitoring would usually only cover the objectives in the council plan and therefore service commitments wouldn't necessarily be reported in the normal performance monitoring report received by Committees.

Councillor Cornell asked whether this could come back to be reviewed in a years' time so that they could understand what has worked well and look at any changes required. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer confirmed that she would be happy for the Committee to review the framework once it had been embedded.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and Seconded by Councillor Turner.

Councillor Davies stated that Committees have a responsibility to ensure the Key Performance Indicators for the Council Plan were set appropriately to help ensure that the performance monitoring process could be carried out.

Councillor Braun welcomed the report and expressed her support towards a new performance management system which would help to re-engage Officers and Members in the performance management process.

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

RESOLVED To approve the Performance Management Framework.

SRC.046 Revised Social Value Policy

The Policy and Projects Officer presented the policy and advised that it had been revised following the implementation of the Social Value Portal (SVP). Key points were highlighted including:

- The Public Sector (Social Value) Act 2012 sets out public sector organisations responsibilities to consider social value in service contracts which means that local authorities must consider economic, social and environmental wellbeing in connection with public services contracts.
- The SVP would allow the Council to report financial and non-financial data, and measure social value by contract, project, service area, directorate, and the Council as a whole.
- The reports that could be pulled out of the Portal would be used to demonstrate how much social value was being delivered and this would be reported back to committees.
- They were working with the Council's Senior Economic Development Specialist to ensure it linked with the emerging Economic Development Strategy and would ensure that all of the Council documentation referred to prosperity rather than growth.

Councillor Cornell asked for clarification regarding the TOMs, it was confirmed that when a supplier bids for a contract they can select which TOMs related to them, they would need to reach a 10% added social value on top of the contract.

In response to questions from Councillor Davies the Policy and Projects Officer advised that they would be able to provide an example report and that the supplier would pay

0.2% of the contract value. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer also confirmed that she could run a report to advise how many contracts there currently were over £75k.

In response to a question from Councillor Pearson examples were provided of adding social value including the employment of local residents from more disadvantaged areas. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer confirmed that it had to be proportionate and relevant to the subject of the procurement and therefore there was still flexibility. The Chair advised that this was a legal obligation and the SVP would help to prove what measures were being taken.

Councillor Turner advised that the environmental and equality implications in the report should have included some positive implications.

Councillor Craig asked whether the framework would put local companies off from bidding. The Senior Policy and Governance Officer confirmed that the threshold had been set quite high at £75k and that they did not want to create a too onerous process for local businesses. The Policy and Projects Officer further confirmed that a suite of recourses would be provided to suppliers and that they would be able to work closely with them if they needed help.

Councillor Percy asked whether they would evaluate and assess how the policy is going. The Policy and Projects Officer confirmed that Officers would be able to pull off reports, an annual corporate report could also be produced which would help them to review progress and supplier feedback would be requested. It was further confirmed that they were in conversation with other local authorities regarding progress with the portal.

Proposed by Councillor Brine and Seconded by Councillor Braun.

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

RESOLVED To approve the revised Social Value Policy.

SRC.047 Economic Development Strategy

The Senior Economic Development Specialist introduced the strategy and highlighted key points including:

- There was a high amount of small and medium businesses in the Stroud District but relatively low salaries compared to neighbouring authorities.
- There was an ageing workforce and a need to look at how to retain young people and the skilled workforce

The economic objectives of the strategy were identified as:

- Improve skills and opportunities and reduce inequalities
- Reduce carbon and ecological impacts
- Boost our market towns and rural vitality
- Support advanced and connected work spaces and communities
- Support inward investment into the local economy

The six key priority areas were identified as:

- The green economy
- Retail and hospitality
- Tourism and the visitor economy
- The arts and culture
- Agriculture, agritech and rural diversification
- Manufacturing and advanced engineering

The Senior Economic Development Specialist confirmed that a public consultation would be carried out on the draft strategy followed by the production of a 10-year action plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Craig it was confirmed that there was a table in the strategy that would identify where the Council would be taking direct responsibility and where it was going to be an enabler/encourager and would work in partnership.

In response to a question from Councillor Braun the Head of Planning Strategy confirmed that the action plan once created would need to be reviewed regularly by the Regeneration and Investment Board and would also need periodic reviews at the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Cornell asked whether the SWOT analysis could be circulated, it was confirmed that this could be shared.

Councillor Turner raised concerns regarding the farming references being technology focused, the Senior Economic Development Specialist advised that they would be willing to meet with Councillor Turner outside the meeting to ensure the correct areas were covered.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and Seconded by Councillor Brine.

Councillor Pearson advised that he was pleased to see tourism in the strategy and that he hoped that the Canal would help us to become a bigger tourist area. Councillor Cornell also confirmed that discussions had been ongoing with the Market Towns and that it had been agreed that a Tourist Officer post would be funded and would work in conjunction with the Market Towns.

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

RESOLVED To approve the Draft Economic Development Strategy set out in Appendix A for a period of public consultation.

SRC.048 Member/Officer Reports (To Note)

a) Performance Monitoring

The report was circulated prior to the Committee.

b) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)

The report was circulated prior to Committee and it was confirmed that it was likely that an extension to the GEGJC would need to be considered.

c) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC)
The report was circulated prior to the Committee.

d) Regeneration and Investment Board
The report was circulated prior to the Committee. The Head of Planning Strategy provided a further update on the Levelling Up Task Force, he confirmed that they had agreed a timetable and key milestones and would be looking to carry out consultation on the bid in February 2022. They had also begun to shortlist some projects and had received feedback on the first round.

e) Brimscombe Port
The report was circulated prior to the Committee and the Chair provided a further update to advise that 32 members of public had attended the Community Drop In Event and that 18 people had signed up to receive updates on the project.

SRC.049 **Member Questions**

There were none.

SRC.050 **Work Programme**

RESOLVED To note the Work Programme.

The meeting closed at 9.57 pm

Chair