



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

1 December 2022

7.00 pm - 8.24 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

* **Councillor Chris Brine (Chair)**

- * Councillor Gordon Craig
- Councillor Kate Crews
- Councillor Jonathan Edmunds
- * Councillor Trevor Hall
- Councillor Julie Job
- * Absent

Councillor Beki Aldam (Vice Chair in Chair)

- * Councillor John Jones
- * Councillor Gill Oxley
- Councillor Nigel Prenter
- Councillor Steve Robinson
- Councillor Ken Tucker

Officers in Attendance

Strategic Director of Communities
Licensing Manager
Accountant

Interim Head of Community Services
Democracy & Information Governance Officer

The Vice-Chair in Chair, Councillor Aldam gave best wishes on behalf of the Committee to the Chair, Councillor Brine and his family. She continued and provided an update on the Cost of Living progress since the last Full Council and explained a plan had been produced which included six main areas (customer enquiries, mapping gaps and Parish and Town Councils, warm spaces, Household Support Fund, Comms and Tenants Resilience). Finally, she referred Committee to the printed handout of the Stroud Arts Festival Limited report in front of them who were also looking for Trustees.

CSLC.019 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brine, Craig, Hall, J Jones and Oxley.

As Councillor Brine had provided his apologies for the meeting, Councillor Aldam proceeded as Vice-Chair in Chair for the meeting.

CSLC.020 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

CSLC.021 Minutes

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.

CSLC.022 Public Question Time

There were none.

CSLC.023 Member Questions

There were none.

CSLC.024 Performance Monitoring Q1

Councillor Robinson asked for an update relating to the Service Level Agreement for Citizens Advice. The Strategic Director of Communities confirmed it had been signed.

CSLC.025 Performance Monitoring Q2

There were no questions relating to Performance Monitoring Q2.

CSLC.026 Community Services and Licensing Committee Budget Monitoring Q1 2022/23

The Accountant advised Committee that the report had been delayed to December Committee from September as a result of the period of National Mourning following Her Majesty the Queens death. The report outlined the outturn budget variants as at the 30 June 2022.

The following answers were provided to questions asked by Members:

- The Accountant would check with the Senior Community Services Officer in relation to the Public Space budget relating to Ash Dieback and would provide a response outside of Committee.
- The Interim Head of Community Services would provide an update outside of Committee to Councillor Robinson related to the Nailsworth public conveniences planned upgrade as referenced in 3.7 of the report.
- A list of all Stroud District Council (SDC) woodlands would be circulated after Committee.
- A readjustment on the forecast related to the Pulse was made between Q1 and Q2 due to utility costs.
- The Accountant would ask the Revenue and Benefit Manager to provide further overview relating to the Housing Benefit subsidy claims for circulation outside of Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson and Seconded by Councillor Prenter.

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.

CSLC.027 Community Services and Licensing Budget Monitoring Report Q2 2022/23

The Accountant introduced the report and advised Committee of the forecast return as of the 30th September 2022 and brought Members attention to paragraph 3.2 relating to the gas and electric costs of the Council, including the sport centres as direct result of the Cost of Living crisis. She continued and advised that SDC are liable for an additional charge over the benchmarked consumption at Stratford Park Leisure Centre.

The below answered were given in response to Councillor Prenter's questions:

- Forecast projection had been done until the end of the year for expected energy usage for the Leisure Centres which the Interim Head of Community Services would circulate.
- Increased costs would be present whilst the energy crisis continued.
- Officers continue to look where cost savings could be made through operational procedures.
- SDC were not receiving any additional Government help for energy usage.

Councillor Edmunds asked on progress on Kingshill House Business Plan. The Accountant advised she would contact the Property Manager if there was any further update and circulate outside of Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Edmunds and Seconded by Councillor Robinson.

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

RESOVLED To note the outturn forecast or the General Fund Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme for this Committee.

CSLC.028 Community Services and Licensing Committee Revenue Estimates - Revised 2022/23 and Original 2023/24

The Accountant introduced the report and highlighted the key variances which included increased energy costs to SDC which included the Leisure Centres and Museum in the Park, any proposed budget adjustments and fees and charges growth of 5% in line with the Budget Strategy for 2023/24 (unless dictated in statue).

Councillor Edmunds queried what progress had been made for securing additional funding for the Lido. The Interim Head of Community Services advised quotes were being obtained relating to the immediate essential work that was required at the Lido which would then allow SDC to apply for additional funding.

Councillor Crews advised the Friends of the Lido continued to ask for longer seasonal hours. The Interim Head of Community Services advised the Task and Finish Group would be reformed in January ahead of the forthcoming season.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson and Seconded by Councillor Edmunds.

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

RECOMMENDED a) **The revised Community Services and Licensing revenue to Strategy and Resources Committee:** b) **The Fees and Charges list as shown at Appendix B is approved.**

CSLC.029 Vehicle Emissions Policy for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles for consultation

The Licensing Manager advised Committee the report aligned with the Council Plan to consider moving from an age condition to emission condition policy for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles. The current policy stated a vehicle could not be more than 5 years old on first licence and could be renewed up to 10 years old with wheelchair accessible, electric and Elite vehicles being exempt from the age policy.

The Task and Finish Group recommended an interim measure policy based on Euro 6 compliance (latest compliance level for vehicle emissions from 2015 car registrations onwards) on renewal of the licence and to remove the current exemption for Elite vehicles. The group recognised there currently was not the Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure in the district, there were higher costs to purchasing electric vehicles and there was limited second hand purchase availability to enforce mandatory electric taxi and private hire vehicles at this current time. The group also recommended new wheelchair accessible vehicles licences be exempt from the 5 year age policy on first licence but must be Euro 6 compliant and there would be no change to any existing wheelchair accessible licenses. The report sought approval for consultation and to report the findings in March 2023.

In response to Councillor Prenter's question, the Licensing Manager confirmed Uber did not operate in Stroud and they would be required to operate using an operator licence or use a neighbouring authorities operating licence to expand into Stroud.

Proposed by Councillor Prenter and Seconded by Councillor Edmunds.

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

- RESOLVED**
- a) **To approve the Interim Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Emissions policy for formal consultation as laid out in paragraph 6.1 of this report.**
 - b) **Approve the timetable for consultation and adoption as laid in paragraph 6.2 of this report.**

CSLC.030 CCTV in Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles

The Licensing Manager advised the report had been produced following a recommendation from the Department of Transport for Licensing Authorities to consult on whether CCTV should be mandatory in Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles. A public consultation was undertaken in the Summer where 63% of respondents agreed CCTV would improve public safety. Several comments raised concerns around privacy for both the passengers and drivers and taxi drivers raised concerns regarding the cost for purchasing CCTV. A question regarding if there 'were local circumstances to make it proportionate to impose mandatory CCTV' was inconclusive with respondents split equally on their responses as 50% 'yes' and 50% 'no'. The reports decision therefore recommended that there was not enough strong local evidence to make CCTV mandatory and to review and reinforce the current optional CCTV policy.

In response to Members questions, the Licensing Manager responded with:

- SDC could review to explore mandatory CCTV in Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles again at any time.
- The Licensing Officers would take on board feedback from Councillor Crews regarding a question on whether the trade would be more or less likely to implement mandatory CCTV if a grant were to be made available.

Proposed by Councillor Tucker and Seconded by Councillor Prenter.

Councillor Tucker commended the report and gave thanks to the Officers involved. He continued and recommended that an annual report is provided to Committee regarding the welfare of Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle drivers.

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

- RESOLVED**
- a) To agree that there is not strong enough local evidence to support mandatory CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles
 - b) Agree to review and enhance the current policy on optional CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles.

CSLC.031 Appointments

- a) Appointment to Know Your Patch

Two nominations were received from Councillor Cornell and Drury-Layfield who were duly appointed.

- b) Appointment to Woodchester Park Mansion

A nomination for the second appointment was received from Councillor Percy who was duly appointed.

CSLC.032 Member/Officer Reports (To Note)

- a) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee. There were no further questions raised.

- b) Police and Crime Panel

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee.

Councillor Robinson advised he spoke with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) as Chair of the Gloucestershire Panel who advised they would appreciate SDC's Community Safety Partnership to draw down on the funding provided to them on rollout of SOLACE in rural areas for an Officer to be responsible for persistent anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Edmunds asked Councillor Robinson regarding funding available for speed watching. Councillor Robinson advised funding was available for Parish and Towns where they do not already have a speed indicator display, however Parish and Towns can apply for free of charge for the '20 is plenty' signs from the Road Safety Partnership at Gloucestershire County Council. He continued and advised the office of the PCC had funding for Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras.

Councillor Tucker informed Committee the formal rollout of the new Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership were meeting on the 2 December and he would provide a report to Committee.

- c) Citizens Advice

There was no update to provide.

- d) Mental Health Champions

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee. There were no further questions raised.

- e) Homestart

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee. There were no further questions raised.

f) Woodchester Park Mansion

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee.

Councillor Edmunds asked for more information relating to the concerns on the bats. Councillor Robinson advised it was linked to the energy cost and there being no funding from Natural England to keep the area heated.

g) Progress update on Stroud Lido

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee. There were no further questions raised.

h) Progress on Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) Information Sheet

The Member report had circulated prior to Committee. There were no further questions raised.

CSLC.033 Work Programme

The Vice-Chair in Chair, Councillor Aldam asked for the Cost of Living Crisis be added as an Officer report for future Committees.

RESOLVED To note the above update to the Work Programme.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm

Chair