



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

09 June 2022

8.55 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)

Councillor Chris Brine
Councillor Gordon Craig
Councillor Trevor Hall
Councillor Nicholas Housden
Councillor Nick Hurst
Councillor Stephen Davies

*= Absent

Councillor Catherine Braun (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Martin Pearcy
Councillor Keith Pearson
Councillor Mattie Ross
Councillor Ken Tucker
Councillor Chloe Turner

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Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive
Strategic Director of Resources
Head of Property Services

Regeneration Delivery Lead
Senior Democratic Services & Elections Officer

SRC.085 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

SRC.086 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Stephen Davies.

SRC.087 Minutes

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meetings held on 7 April were approved as a correct record.

SRC.088 Public Question Time

There were none.

SRC.089 STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL'S BID TO THE GOVERNMENT'S LEVELLING UP FUND (ROUND 2)

The Regeneration Delivery Lead introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

- The paper set out the details of Stroud's bid to Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) which was due by the 6 July 2022.
- The LUF was about infrastructure projects that gave people pride in their local communities including:
 - local transport projects
 - town centre and high street regeneration
 - support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets.
- The bids would also be assessed on their strategic fit, their economic case and deliverability.
- Paragraph 1.5 included additional criteria.
- The three projects in Stroud had strong narrative, were deliverable and were based on key plans, strategies and reports that had not been able to progress due to lack of funding.
- Much stakeholder engagement had been carried out as part of the approval process for the various strategies.
- Match funding of 10% had been secured from our public and private sector partners.
- Paragraph 2.10 highlighted that the bid was currently at £15.9 million. However they would need to ensure that there was sufficient contingency included to allow for the current volatile construction market and general inflationary pressure. It was confirmed that the final amount could change before the final bid was submitted.

In response to a question from Councillor Craig it was confirmed that the council would have the opportunity to put in another bid if the current bid was unsuccessful as the Stroud District has two parliamentary constituencies within it.

In response to questions regarding the match funding it was advised that:

- Stroud Town Council were committed to the bid and were providing both funding and support.
- Approximately £1.9m of funding was being received from, Dransfield properties Ltd, County Council, District Council and Stroud Town Council.

Councillor Ross questioned whether the homes that would be developed on the brownfield land would be affordable, low carbon homes. The Regeneration Delivery Lead confirmed that they would be looking for a mixed tenure scheme and that there would be a proportion of affordable homes.

In response to questions from Councillor Hurst the Regeneration Delivery Lead confirmed that one of the factors used to choose the projects for the bid was the deliverability of the scheme and the narrative between the 3 projects.

Councillor Percy questioned when the results of the bid would be announced and whether the bid could be submitted again if it was unsuccessful. It was confirmed that the result would be announced in the Autumn and that the bid could be resubmitted, or they could look at other opportunities to bid for the funding.

In response to questions from Councillor Housden it was confirmed that:

- Parish and Town Councils were contacted asking for a list of projects that they had within their areas

- The exact number of responses was unknown but could be provided
- The funding round deadlines were very short so projects needed to be ready and deliverable
- No other schemes submitted from other parish or town councils were viable.

Councillor Brine Proposed and Councillor Braun Seconded.

Councillor Braun thanked Officers for all the work that had gone into preparing the bid within the short timescale. She stated that it would have been better if the LUF bid allowed for greater flexibility in terms of the geographic scope however it had been defined in this way to maximise the benefit to the district and help to ensure the benefit reached a large portion of the population. She further stated that she was particularly pleased to see the environmental implications in the report which identified many benefits.

Councillor Pearson offered his support however questioned the views of the residents who did not live in or near Stroud town centre who may think the projects were too Stroud centric but good communication explaining the reasons why the projects were chosen would help.

Councillor Craig confirmed his support for the LUF bid and stated it was great to have funding come into the District however the challenge would be to convince everyone in the District that the Council was going to continue to bid for funding for other areas.

Councillor Hurst stated that he was torn as to what decision to make because of the inclusion of two projects which he did not wish to support.

Councillor Housden advised that there were approximately 5 months to develop projects from other areas of the District not just Stroud and that despite some good projects e.g. cycling provision, he had concerns that the projects weren't covering the district more widely.

Councillor Cornell stated that it would benefit the District in many ways and that they would be considering other projects that had been put forward and would be identifying other sources of funding.

Councillor Brine advised that the short timescales meant that only projects that were deliverable would be able to be accepted for this bid as Officers and Parish and Town Councils would not have had the time to develop projects in time. He also stated that he hoped the bid would be successful.

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

RESOLVED To:

- Approve the final size and scope of the Council's bid to the Levelling Up Fund, as set out in Appendices A and B;**
- Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee, to finalise and submit the bid by the Government deadline of 6 July, 2022 and enter into the grant agreement if successful.**
- Award grants to, and enter into legal agreements with, the delivery partners as set out in Appendix A if the bid is successful.**

SRC.090 **LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN**

The Chief Executive introduced the report and gave a brief history to the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC). It was confirmed that in 2019 they gave 8 recommendations and that they had been invited back to assess the progress of the Council, to look at how they had responded to the pandemic and assess the Council Plan, Fit for the Future programme, and Carbon Neutral 2030 strategy. The feedback report had been conveyed to full Council and an action plan had been created following this.

In response to Councillor Braun, it was confirmed that the Town and Parish Council Charter would likely be taken to full Council to be adopted.

Councillor Percy suggested that education needed to be provided in particular for Parish and Town Councils regarding planning policy and enforcement so that they could better understand the process. The Chief Executive stated that they were aware of the need to provide further information to Parish and Town Councils and that the development team were looking into ways of doing this.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and seconded by Councillor Turner.

Councillor Hurst raised concerns regarding the number of meetings Councillors needed to attend and that it was difficult with other commitments. The Chair, Councillor Cornell, confirmed that the Member Development Working Group would be asked to consider the number and format of meetings.

Councillor Ross advised that they had had the last Voids Task and Finish Group, much progress had been made and they needed to get better at celebrating success which could be helped by a communication strategy to show the work completed on voids and congratulate people for the work done.

Councillor Braun stated that many of the actions appeared to be already part of the Fit for the Future programme and that a lot of the actions had short timescales for delivery. She also highlighted the improvements in housing and the Parish and Town council work.

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

RESOLVED To:

- a. Agree the Action Plan; and**
- b. Note that progress will be reported to future Strategy & Resources Committee meetings.**

SRC.091 **Appointment of Performance Monitors**

Councillor Pearson advised that he had been a performance monitor for Strategy and Resources Committee since it started and that he would now be stepping down from the role.

The Leader, Councillor Cornell, thanked Councillor Pearson for carrying out the role so diligently over the years.

RESOLVED Councillor Gordon Craig and Councillor Nick Housden were appointed as Performance Monitoring Representatives.

SRC.092 Member / Officer Reports (To Note)**a) Performance Management**

Councillor Brine identified the differences between the format of the Community Services and Licensing performance monitoring report and the Strategy and Resources Committee report.

Councillor Cornell asked that a consistency of colours be used throughout the report and asked the committee if there was anything specific they wanted to look at in greater detail.

The Strategic Director of Resources advised that it was the first meeting in which the youth council had been involved and they had spent a long time looking at the report, but they would be able to look at specific items in future meetings and that the Committee would also be able to request that the performance monitors look at certain elements.

b) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)

The report had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting. In response to a question from Councillor Braun it was confirmed that an invite had been sent to various Members and Officers for the decarbonisation of transport workshop.

c) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC)

The report had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

d) Regeneration and Investment Board

The Chief Executive gave a brief update on the Regeneration and Investment Board confirming that the meeting concentrated on the LUF bid and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which also had a tight deadline (1st August).

e) Brimscombe Port Redevelopment

The report had been circulated to Members and photos were displayed to show the recent changes to the site following demolition. The Head of Property Services confirmed that the contract was due to complete on the 17 June and the Public Right of Way would reopen. An all-Members briefing had been planned for the 22 June.

SRC.093 Draft Work Programme

RESOLVED To note the updates to the Work Programme.

SRC.094 Member Questions

There were none.

SRC.095 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by Councillor Cornell and seconded by Councillor Braun

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

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

SRC.096 ACQUISITION OF LAND, STROUD

The Head of Property Services introduced the report and advised that there was an amendment to the decision box to add the words 'agree terms,' in paragraph i after 'Head of Property Services' to allow further flexibility.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried with 8 votes in favour and 3 abstentions.

RECOMMEND That:

TO COUNCIL I. the Council purchases the site shown at Appendix A to this report for the sum set out in paragraph 6.5 and delegates authority to the Head of Property Services to agree terms, take all necessary steps and undertake necessary procedures, including entering into any legal documents for, and associated with, the purchase of the site as may be required to complete the purchase.
II. a budget of £1.535million is added to the Council's Capital Programme for the brownfield site acquisition.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Chair