STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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06 March 2024

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Community Services and Licensing Committee will be held on **THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud at **7.00 pm**

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

Please Note: The meeting is being held in the Council Chamber at Stroud District Council and will be streamed live on the Council's YouTube Channel. A recording of the meeting will be published onto the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded except where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of press and public.

If you wish to attend this meeting, please contact democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk.
This is to ensure adequate seating is available in the Council Chamber.

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
    To receive apologies for absence.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
    To receive declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)**
    To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024.

4. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**
    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 Friday, 08 March 2024.**
>
> 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. **MEMBER QUESTIONS**
   See Agenda Item 4 for deadlines for submission.

6. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Pages 11 - 44)**
   To receive a verbal update on Performance Monitoring Q3.

7. **COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Q3 2023/24 (Pages 45 - 52)**
   To present the 2023/24 forecast outturn position against the revenue budgets and Capital Programme that the Committee is responsible for, in order to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.

8. **SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES GUIDE (Pages 53 - 126)**
   To approve the revised SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide.

9. **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL VCSE PRINCIPLES (Pages 127 - 160)**
   The Voluntary, Community Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) Principles seek to provide the council and its partners in the VCSE with a set of commonly understood good practice guidelines for communication and support. It is designed to strengthen working relationships with a transparent and consistent approach

10. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES (Pages 161 - 176)**
    This report is to present Stroud District Council's Community Engagement Principles to the Committee. It contains details of the consultation process to date and the themes identified from feedback and proposes an approach for implementation.

11. **CULTURAL STRATEGY UPDATE (Pages 177 - 206)**
    This report is to provide an update on work to develop a cultural strategy for Stroud district. It presents details of consultation to date, identified core themes and opportunities. This work will provide the basis for the production of the strategy and delivery action plans later in the year.

12. **MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT (TO NOTE)**
    (a) **Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust) (Pages 207 - 208)**
    (b) **Police and Crime Panel (Pages 209 - 210)**
    (c) **Citizens Advice (Pages 211 - 214)**
    (d) **Mental Health Champions (verbal update)**
    (e) **Cost of Living Information Sheet (Pages 215 - 216)**
    (f) **Salix Carbonisation (Pages 217 - 220)**
    (g) **Proposal to set up a Taxi Task and Finish Group (Pages 221 - 224)**

13. **WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 225 - 228)**
    To consider the work programme.

Members of Community Services and Licensing Committee

Councillor Beki Aldam (Chair)
Councillor Paula Baker
Councillor Kate Crews
Councillor Katrina Davis
Councillor Jonathan Edmunds
Councillor Julie Job

Councillor Trevor Hall (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Jones
Councillor Gill Oxley
Councillor Nigel Prenter
Councillor Steve Robinson
Councillor Ken Tucker

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 18 January 2024

7.00 - 7.50 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Beki Aldam (Chair)   **Councillor Trevor Hall (Vice-Chair)**

Councillor Paula Baker   Councillor John Jones

Councillor Kate Crews   Councillor Gill Oxley

*Councillor Katrina Davis   Councillor Nigel Prenter

*Councillor Jonathan Edmunds   Councillor Steve Robinson

*Councillor Julie Job   Councillor Ken Tucker

*Absent

Officers in Attendance

Strategic Director of Communities   Interim Community Safety Lead

Head of Community Services   Democratic Services & Elections Officer

CSLC.090   Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davis, Edmunds and Job.

CSLC.091   Declaration of Interests

There were none.

CSLC.092   Minutes

RESOLVED   That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

CSLC.093   Public Questions

There were none.

CSLC.094   Member Questions

There were none.

2023/24

CSLC.095   Cultural Strategy Update

The Strategic Director of Communities introduced the report and gave a brief overview of the key points and a timeline of the steps that had been taken to get to this point. He then informed the committee of the next planned steps for the strategy which included:

- First draft to be received in January 2024
- First meeting of the Members Panel on 23 January 2024
- All Member Workshop on 19 February 2024
- Arts organisations and members panel workshop on 1 March 2024
- Consultation feedback period
- Update to Committee on the 14 March
- Final strategy to be drafted April – June 2024
- Final Strategy put forward for recommendation at Community Services and Licensing Committee (27 June) and Strategy and Resources Committee (11 July)
- Final decision whether to adopt the Strategy to be made at Full Council on 18 July.
- If approved, publication of the document due to take place on the 6 September 2024.

The Chair, Councillor Aldam, thanked Members of the committee who were assisting on the members panel and stated that she was looking forward to seeing the strategy progress.

CSLC.096   Member/Officer Report (To Note)

a)   Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)

The Member report was circulated prior to Committee, there were no further questions raised.

b)   Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Tucker commended the reduction with the response times however stated that at a recent meeting of Wotton-Under-Edge Parish Council they had been informed that only 10% of calls to the police were achieved within the suggested timeframe within the Parish.

c)   Citizens Advice

The Member report was circulated prior to Committee, there were no further questions raised.

d)   Woodchester Mansion

Councillor Robinson stated that the trustees of Woodchester Mansion welcomed a visit from Stroud District Councillor and would look to arrange a visit in the springtime.

e)   Cost of Living Information Sheet

The Member report was circulated prior to Committee, there were no further questions raised.

f)   Leisure Services Project Update

The Chair, Councillor Aldam, invited the Head of Community Servies to provide a brief update on the Leisure Services Project.

The Head of Community Services informed the committee of the following updates:
- They had appointed the former Manager of the Pusle as the Interim Leisure Services Manager to deliver the project.
- The newly procured leisure management system was due to be installed first at the Pulse in April. It be built to specification for both the Pulse and Stratford Park Leisure Centre (SPLC) ready for the installation in SPLC in November.
- Branding and equipment procurement was underway for both sites and procurement for a marketing partner for SPLC was due to commence next week.
- Assessment of the IT infrastructure at SPLC had taken place and the IT team were working on a plan to connect them to the systems.
- The Human Resources (HR) team had met with the current management of SLM to draft a consultation timeline for the members of staff who would be transferring across to the Council.
- The condition survey results had been received.
- The communications team had drafted a communications plan which would be used to keep relevant parties updated on the progress of the project.
- Work on the specification document had commenced which would outline all of the services, training requirements and health and safety protocols.

Councillor Crews commend the appointment of the Interim Leisure Services Manager.

Councillor Prenter asked when the results of the condition survey would be shared with Members. The Head of Community Servies explained that they were working on transferring the information from the survey into a readable format which would then be shared with Members.

Councillor Prenter further questioned when they would be looking to request further funding, if required. The Head of Community Services explained that there was a meeting of the Leisure Oversite Board in February which would be discussing the options.

The following answers were given in response to Councillor Robinson:
- The Interim Leisure Services Manager would be responsible for both the Pulse and SPLC
- They were hoping to transfer all of the current operational staff from SPLC to the Council.
- Consultation with unions and the current operational staff had not yet taken place but formed part of the timeline that HR had created.

Councillor Baker queried the effects of the transfer on the annual membership fee. The Head of Community Services explained that the direct debit customers would be transferred to the Council and negotiations would take place with SLM regarding any customers who had paid upfront.

Councillor Tucker asked why the appointment was interim. The Head of Community Services explained that they had advertised the permanent role twice without successful appointment therefore an interim role had been secured for 12 months in order to bring the service in house. A permanent role would be recruited afterwards.

CSLC.097   Work Programme

Councillor Prenter questioned when the remit of performance management would be amended to include the Youth Council. The Head of Community Services explained that it needed to form part of the Council Plan. The Strategic Director of Communities stated that the earliest it would be looked at would be Summer 2024 as it had been refreshed last year.

Councillor Tucker questioned the date of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Director of Public Health information evening as it was scheduled on the work programme for January. The Head of Community Services agreed to look into this outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED To note the above update to the Work Programme.

CSLC.098   Serious Violence Duty

The Interim Principal Community Services Officer introduced the report and highlighted the following main points:
- This Serious Violence Statutory Duty commenced on 31st January 2023 as part of Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.
- This required local authorities to consider the implication on crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour in all their day-to-day activities regardless of department.
- An amendment to Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act further required local authorities to include a statutory duty regarding serious violence.
- The Serious Violence Framework has adopted the world health organisation's definition of serious violence which can be found at paragraph 1.3 of the report.
- These duties have been brought in as a direct response to an 84% increase of serious violence from 2014-2020 within England and Wales.
- Local authorities can work together and across boundaries as part of this duty.
- There will also be a requirement to understand the causes of service crime which is detailed in paragraph 1.11 of the report.
- There was also an introduction of the serious violence homicide review, further details of which can be found at paragraph 1.13.
- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has taken responsibility to complete the Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) and develop the strategy before the 31 January 2024 as required by Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.
- There was a funding pot available for serious violence which the council can make an application for. There were currently 2 applications pending.
- The success of this duty will be measured via the options listed in paragraph 2.8 of the report.

Councillor Baker questioned whether funding would be available to cover or contribute to the costs of holding homicide reviews including Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR). The Head of Community agreed to take Councillor Bakers question to the board and get back to her outside of the meeting.

In response to Councillor Baker, it was confirmed that the appendix mentioned on page 50 formed part of the national initiative for Modern Slavery and could be located online.

Councillor Tucker queried the cause for the increase in recorded crimes and whether it was related to a change in police reporting and less crimes not being reported. The Interim Principal Community Services Officer explained that over the last 10 years police have been actively encouraging people to report crimes which would cause the figures to

increase however he reminded Councillors that the 84% increase he quoted earlier was a national figure and not just related to the district.

Councillor Jones proposed and Councillor Baker seconded.

Councillor Robinson highlighted that he was appointed as the Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Jones stated that this was a very important issue and needed to be addressed.

The Chair, Councillor Aldam commend Officers for the report.

After being put to a vote, the Motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED To adopt the Serious Violence Duty.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Chair

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Performance Monitoring Report
Community Services & Licensing Committee
Q3 2023/24

Date of CS&L meeting	14 March 2024
Date of Performance Monitoring meeting	15 February 2024
In attendance	**Members:** Cllr Nigel Prenter, Cllr Julie Job **Youth Council Members:** Cate James-Hodges, Alyssa Pearce **Officers:** Ange Gillingham, Emma Keating-Clark, Hannah Drew, Liz Shellam, Sarah Clark, Hannah Barton
S&R Ideagen dashboards	Main CS&L dashboard CS&L Performance Indicator dashboard
Items on CS&L agenda relevant to the Council Plan	
Risks	Strategic Risk Register presented to Audits & Standards Committee

Council Plan Actions Traffic Light Status		
	Red (Overdue)	0
	Amber (Overdue Milestone/s)	0
	Green (On Target)	18
	Cancelled	0
	Completed	6

Any issues of concern to be reported to Community Services & Licensing Committee

Any actions or recommendations for Community Services & Licensing Committee
It is recommended that the Performance Indicator *CW1.5g – Number of foodbank parcels* is deleted as we only measure number of foodbank referrals which is already measured under CW1.5a.

Report submitted by	**Cllr. Nigel Prenter**
Date of report	**17 February 2024.**

CW1.1	Develop a framework for working with the community and voluntary and social enterprise sector including the network of community hubs	66%	
Performance Monitor Comments	**As well as the three main hubs, smaller hubs are being developed but this is a work in progress and a longer-term project. While volunteers for food hubs are more forthcoming, it is proving more difficult to attract volunteers for other areas.**		
Assigned To	Ange Gillingham; Emma Keating Clark		
Latest Note	Q3 2023/24: The framework is being developed based on learning for the ICS / VCSE MOU and the Stroud District Community Hubs Theory of Change. The framework will be considered at CS&L Committee in March 2024.		
Sub Action	CW1.1.1 Work with partners to develop and agree the framework	80%	Q3 2023/24: Framework is being developed with learning from ICS / VCSE MOU and Stroud District Community Hubs Theory of Change.
	CW1.1.2 Work with partners to build resilience within the Hub network	70%	Q3 2023/24: The Hubs network now has 3 Local Area Facilitators supporting local developing Hubs and a District Facilitation group of key partners who have committed to supporting the needs of the Hubs. This work is being guided by the Community Hubs Theory of Change.
	CW1.1.3 Work with the VCS sector on attracting future volunteers	50%	Q3 2023/24: The second Stroud Food Forum in Autumn 2023 focussed on the challenges and opportunities for VCSE volunteer recruitment and management. The session was well attended with good practice sharing including how to use a locally produced Volunteer Handbook.
Performance Indicator Linked	CW1.1 10 well managed Hubs across the District serving the local community by the end of 2024		Q3 2023/24: 11 well managed Hubs Cost of Living budget has enabled 3 Hubs support roles in the district, known as Local Area Facilitators these are GL11 Community, The Keepers and Stroud Town Council. These roles are supporting the development of new Hubs in their outlying neighbourhoods. A plan is being developing by the Community Hubs Network to resource future LAF roles to cover the rest of the district.

CW1.2	Act to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people in the district through delivery of a new 3 year Health and Wellbeing Plan	56%		
Performance Monitor Comments	**Two surgeries in Wotton are referring pre-frail adults into classes to prevent them becoming more frail. Vaping is an emerging health issue affecting children as young as ten. There is a lot of vaping in schools and a bigger piece of work, including youth voice, will take place as part of a youth strategy.**			
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham; Emma Keating Clark			
Sub Action	CW1.2.1 Support the delivery of Stroud and Berkeley Vale Integrated Locality Partnership priorities	80%	Q3 2023/24: SDC is working in partnership with the ILP on their two priority working groups. Progress has been made for prioritising older adults with mild frailty for the Older People's Working Group and a development event is being planned for providers in Early Years and Children and Young People in January 2024 for the CYP Working Group.	

Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Update the current plan with a stronger focus on Cost of Living measures to support the health of residents	Yes	31-Mar-2025 (Completed 06-Nov-23)	
	Develop a partnership approach to tackle the rising issue of vaping amongst young people	No	31-Mar-2025	Q3 2023/24: A discussion took place at the December CSP where our children and young person's officer has been doing some work with county partners on this issue and working with trading standards. Trading standards are unable to search for evidence of young people being supplied with Vapes without being tipped off and working from an information-based scenario. Fire and Rescue and our SDC officer are going to connect to share information on the issue. Vaping is both a health and community safety issue as irresponsible disposal of vapes can cause fires.
	Develop a Health and Wellbeing Plan targeted at children and young people from 2024-26	No	31-Mar-2025	Q3 2023/24: 50 health partners and front-line providers have signed up for our networking and planning event in January. We will share EY and CYP data and gather

			insight about front line challenges to work on as a partnership.
Performance Indicator Linked	CW1.2a Number of physical health initiatives developed	Q3 2023/24: 17	• NEW Class - Choose2move Maintaining Mobility • Choose2move Dance, Tai Chi, Maintaining Mobility, Yoga & Pilates • Strength & Balance x 6 • Cardiac Rehab x 2 • Respiratory Rehab x 2 • Mummy & Me
	CW1.2b Number of mental health initiatives developed	Q3 2023/24: 5	The following initiatives have been developed by SDC and facilitated in partnership. • Active Stroud - Cookstars and School of Larks • ED transformation = December - early help and community deliverable online meeting • Newly recruited schools for the reading well work = Cam Everlands, Gastrells, Rodborough and the Shrubberies, also Marling and Stroud high which takes overall engagement to just over 30 schools - primary, secondary and colleges • Teacher reading group in partnership with chelt literature festival took place in October, November and January. 12 schools engaged and actively recruiting more

CW1.3	Ensure residents continue to receive the advice they need, by continuing our work in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau and developing a new Service Level Agreement	100%
Performance Monitor Comments	**100% completed. Awaiting a report back.**	
Assigned To	Keith Gerrard	
Performance	*This PI is to monitor trends only, there is no target to*	2022: 541	2023 data is expected by April

Indicator Linked	*minimise/maximise:* CW1.5b Number of referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau for Cost of Living	*2023 data still to be released by Citizens Advice Bureau*	2024.

CW1.4	Work to reduce the impacts and causes of anti-social behaviour by developing a district wide policy in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership	20%
Performance Monitor Comments	**A lot of work is going on. There are two officer groups. One is looking at ASB policy and using a whole-Council approach, how it receives and deals with issues in a universal way. The other is part of Fit for the Future and is looking at reporting and managing and is currently collecting data. This comes from a wide variety of areas including Environment, Housing, customer Services and Community Services. It is not effective as each area has only one piece of the puzzle and it takes a long time. Incorporating the recommendations of the Autumn 2023 Ombudsman's approach and putting the victim at the centre will require training and behavioural change. Youth consultation has begun and it will all come to CS&L by September. SDYC asked about prevention. Enforcement is key to building confidence in communities. If people know that ASB is not acceptable, that they are supported and action will be taken, it will encourage others to report, put value and pride back into communities and encourage people to look out for each other. A part of this is restorative justice and community payback. There are no quick fixes.**	
Assigned To	Tony Dix; Ange Gillingham; Andy Kefford	
Latest Note	Q3 2023/24: A new timeline has been created in order to move this work forward to develop. The plan is scheduled for adoption in Autum 2024.The following issues are being prioritised: 1. A one council process approach to ASB 2. A change in culture - put the alleged victim at the centre of how we approach ASB 3. Capture existing data in order to fully understand the nature of ASB across the district before preventative measures can be fully explored.	

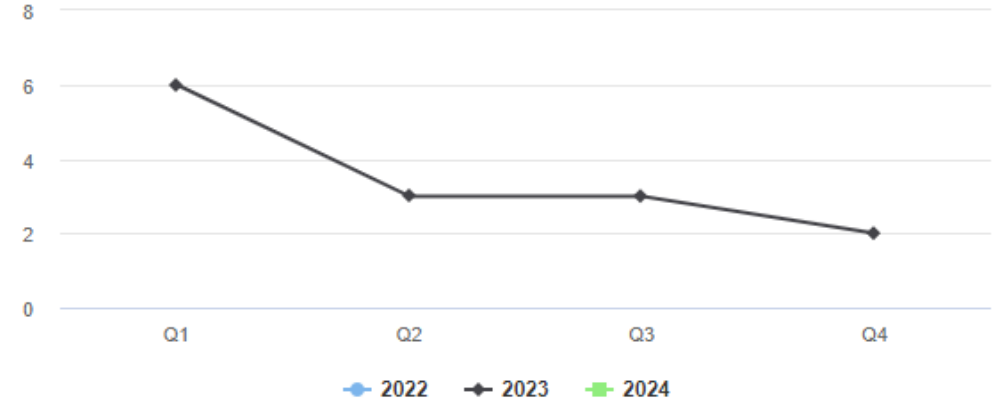| Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Agreed work outcomes with OPCC	Yes	31-Jan-2024	Q3 2023/24: Framework on Serious violence is being launched by the OPCC 31st January. CS&L have adopted the new framework. The CSP will report back to the home office on a monthly basis on the work the CSP is doing to tackle the 4 priorities under this framework.

	Draft a ASB policy that will be in line with the Council and the OPCC priorities.	Yes	30-Sep-2024	Q3 2023/24: A new timeline has been drafted to show the completion of the policy for September 2024. The internal system is still in the investigation stage with evidence being gathered by services to show: • Types of ASB • How it is reported to the council • Who currently deals with the varying types of ASB This information will help us design the system.
	Youth consultation on ASB plan	No	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: Youth consultation has not taken place but has been rescheduled for February/march using the school network, existing youth providers and the youth council.
	Develop a training plan for council officers and community partners to tackle ASB	No	30-Sep-2024	Q3 2023/24: Identified a wider need for enforcement training amongst officers who work in the communities. Holistic ASB training has taken place in Stroud during April 2023.
	Adopt and Implement ASB policy following consultation and committee approval	No	30-Sep-2024	Q3 2023/24: A new timeline has been developed to enable officers to consult and develop a strong, sustainable one council strategy. The draft policy was reviewed in line with ASB Ombudsman report which has enabled officers to review the approach and fully understand the issues we have. A rewrite of the policy taking a victim centric approach is being developed and will be presented to council committees in the Autumn of 2024.
	Develop a system utilising Liberty Create on holding ASB information which is accessible to all officers who handle ASB	No	31-Mar-2025	Q3 2023/24: A working group has been set up across the council to develop the understanding of what is needed to record and handle ASB. This work runs to the end of Q4 and will be evaluated to help shape the new system. Until this time there will be limited data to share in the KPI's.
	Through the CSP conduct community engagement and develop appropriate action plan which serves the district	No	31-Mar-2026	ASB is priority one for the CSP. A sub group has been set up to map out and work on issues across the district. This work links directly with one council approach.
	Monitoring of Community Safety Plan	No	31-Mar-2026	The CSP plan is currently in draft form and has been shared with

				CSP partners. We are setting up 5 sub groups with ASB being priority one. Consultations have taken place with members on ASB and this is being widened across the district to young people in September. The deadline date is being changed to reflect the new approach to tackling ASB.
	Design appropriate response method using preset templates and reporting forms to ensure all officers are working together	No	1/7/2024	Once the data gathering has finished we will be able to design the template.
	Review of council ASB processes and design a One Council approach	No	1/32025	Officer working group working in parallel with designing a central report system. Creating a new system is complex which is reflected in the end date.
Performance Indicator Linked	*Once the district-wide policy has been developed and first milestones have been completed, the below PIs will start collecting data:*			
	CW1.4a Number of reported anti-social behaviour instances	Q3 2023/24: 90 *Data did not start being collected for this PI until 7 August 2023*		
	CW1.4b Resolved anti-social behaviour instances	*We are currently collating the data across the Council to monitor this PI. The data will not be available until the end of quarter 4 and the PIs will be updated at this point.* *The graph below shows the number of medium and high level anti-social behaviour cases which have been successfully completed in partnership with SOLACE.*		
	CW1.4c Number of anti-social behaviour cases that have gone to court and been dealt with successfully	Q4 (Oct-Dec) 2023: 2		

Annual Trend Chart

CW1.5	Work with strategic and operational partners to improve food resilience, access and equity including support for those affected by the cost of living		80%	
Performance Monitor Comments	**The most shocking data is the doubling of foodbank referrals. There are 13 food pantries providing more affordable food, some very informal and only open once a week, others (such as GL11) very sophisticated and providing paid membership and a certain amount of food. Two key County issues are why the take-up of pre-school vouchers (Healthy Start) and free school meals is so low, though take-up in the latter is higher in primary than in secondary schools.**			
Assigned To	Emma Keating Clark			
Sub Action	CW1.5.1 Support the delivery of the Feeding Gloucestershire Action Plan	70%	Q3 2023/24: At the end of 2023 Feeding Gloucestershire staff helped to secure a Bronze Award for Gloucestershire as a Sustainable Food Place. Feeding Gloucestershire are also in the process of becoming a CIO which will enable future funding applications to take place. An SDC officer is on the board of the CIO and we are supporting the project work of Feeding Gloucestershire	
	CW1.5.2 Support the development of Stroud Food Forum (District arm of Feeding Gloucestershire) to deliver better food resilience, access and equity	70%	Q3 2023/24: The third Stroud Food Forum will be held in February 2024 in partnership with relevant VCSE partners and Community Hubs.	
Performance Indicator Linked	CW1.5a Number of referrals to foodbanks	2023: 8,757 (5,252 adult and 3,505 children)		
	CW1.5b Number of referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau for Cost of Living	2022: 541 *2023 data still to be released by Citizens Advice Bureau*		
	CW1.5c Number of evictions due to financial difficulty	Q3 2023/24: 18		Evictions: • 12 private households • 2 households (social) • 4 households (Supported) Principle reasons due to rent arrears.
	CW1.5d Number of free food vouchers disseminated	*The data for the number of vouchers distributed since 2019 needs to be compiled. At the moment this data is held in different places as the Household Support Fund moved between teams. This will be done for quarter 4.*		
	CW1.5e Number of children on free school meals	Q3 2023/24: 429		Winter holidays are a one week

	or fed through HAF		period of provision
	CW1.5f Number of families in temporary accommodation	Q3 2023/24: 35	
	CW1.5g Number of foodbank parcels	It is recommended that the Performance Indicator *CW1.5g – Number of foodbank parcels* is deleted as we only measure number of foodbank referrals which is already measured under CW1.5a.	

CW3.1	Develop Community Engagement Principles that set out how we identify and engage with our communities in a positive and consistent manner, informed by the views of our communities			33%
Performance Monitor Comments	**This work will come to CS&L in March. At the moment there are no performance indicators for this area.**			
Assigned To	Sarah Clark; Keith Gerrard			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Develop Community Engagement Principles	Yes		
	Research external good practice	Yes		
	Consult on Principles with Members and officers	No	06-Mar-2024	Update of 17th Jan 2024: • LMT consultation until 19th January. • ALT on 6th March • CSL on 6th March • Member workshop tbc
	Embed community engagement principles across the organisation	No	31-Mar-2024	Update of 17th Jan 2024: Implementation plan will follow once the principles have been adopted
	Finalise and sign off Principles	No	31-Mar-2024	CS&L committee on 14th March 2024
	Report on results of community engagement	No	31-Mar-2024	
Performance Indicator Linked	CW3.1a Number of community engagement activities undertaken	*This PI will begin being measured from 1 April 2024, following the publishing of the Community Engagement Principles.*		

	CW3.1b Improved feedback from community through annual satisfaction ratings	

CW3.2	Improve customer service for residents by procuring a Digital Platform that provides for centralised first contact ensuring an easier access to services and that provides additional support for those with complex needs.	100% Completed and replaced with action 3.2a
Assigned To	Adrian Blick; Liz Shellam	

CW3.2a	Improve customer service for residents by developing the Digital Platform to provide centralised customer contact to ensure easy access to services via all contact channels with additional support provided for those who need us the most	43%
Performance Monitor Comments	**The focus is on resolving issues at the first point of contract, focusing on customers who need the most support and training regarding how to deal with more difficult conversations. At the moment progress is limited by having only one developer, but an additional person or two is possible over the next quarter which would increase activity in this area. The aim is to get average response times within 60 seconds. 95% of all residents now deal with garden waste online. In the future it is hoped to develop chatbox or live chat but this is still down the line.**	
Assigned To	Adrian Blick; Liz Shellam	
Sub Action	CW3.2.1 Design and develop a centralised Customer Contact Centre that consolidates all customer interactions through one multi skilled team, providing a choice of contact channels focusing on resolving queries at the first point of contact and ensuring support is	45% **Key Achievements for Q3** **Election calls centralised on 12 November 2023.** Preparation included training of all Customer Contact Officers (CCO), Elections web pages reviewed and FAQs updated. Ongoing operational performance meetings scheduled bi-monthly. **Customer Contact management form launched on 12th December 2023.** Any contact made via Customer Contact Centre (CCC) will be recorded and managed via Liberty Create. This will allow us to capture all reasons for contact, outcome and escalation routes. **Developed our first iteration of our web assistant**. We are on track to go live on 1st February 2024 and we will be launching with a simple guided experience

			to help residents navigate our website and also promote self-service options in three key service areas: Waste & recycling, Council Tax and Elections. We'll be approaching this as a pilot to help us understand if our residents will use this functionality and we will seek feedback to assist with improving and developing it further. **Ongoing training for CCO's.** Training completed in this period has included Advance Customer Service training focussing on dealing with and managing difficult customers scenarios both face to face and telephone contact. **Next steps for Q4** • Prepare for next service area contact to be centralised - service to be confirmed. • Embed Customer Contact management form and enhance based on feedback • Data gathering - insight from why our customers are contacting us, feedback to services areas and potential opportunities to channel shift. • Web assistant development based on feedback.
	CW3.2.2 Review and reengineer our processes to streamline and improve experience of customers accessing our services	41%	41% of our customer facing processes are either in mapping, approved or implemented. The latest maps that have been approved and are due to be implemented are: • Property Services Section 156 and 157 • Planning (pre-app) • ICT - Service Desk • Elections - applying for a postal vote • Health and Safety Inspection visits • Museum Volunteer Recruitment Planned work for the next period includes some internal processes namely: • Payroll
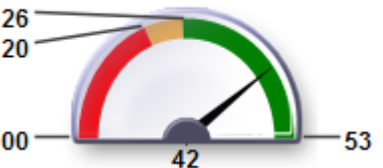
		• Debt Recovery • Antisocial Behaviour
Performance Indicator Linked	CW3.2a Average telephone response time	 **December 2023: 0h 00m 31s** Garden Waste (GW) service for 2024 launched on 18 December 2023. 13,500 emails sent to residents inviting them to renew their GW subscription resulting in an increase in calls and av. response time.

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	CW3.2b Positive customer satisfaction rates measured through Annual Satisfaction Survey	**Trend Chart** The data for this PI is taken from the Annual Satisfaction Survey with residents. The percentage of customer satisfaction is taken from the response to the question 'Overall, I am satisfied with the way SDC runs things' and is the sum of those who responded 'strongly agree' or 'agree'. The 2023 result was 69%.
	CW3.2c Number of complaints received under 'Delay in Communication' or 'Poor Communication' categories	Q3 2023/24: 7
	CW3.2d Number of processes reengineered	Q3 2023/24: 17

Trend Chart

CW3.3	Work with Town and Parish Councils to develop, agree and implement a new strategic approach for partnership working between district, towns and parishes including specific support for rural communities.	100% Completed. Ongoing performance will be measured with the PIs outlined below
Performance Monitor Comments	**Two more councils have signed up to the charter, making a total of 42/52.**	
Assigned To	Hannah Barton; Hannah Emery	
Performance Indicator Linked	CW3.3a No. of Town and Parish Councils signed up to the Charter	Q4 2023 result
	The following PI will not include data until the conclusion of the annual survey with Parish and Town Councils (survey closes 15 February 2024): CW3.3b 50% satisfaction with Charter measured through annual survey with Parish and Town Councils	

CW4.1	Continue work to ensure that our leisure and wellbeing services are fit for the future by completing the Leisure Review options appraisal as well as supporting the recovery of the leisure centres from the pandemic.	100% Completed and replaced with action CW4.1a
Assigned To	Ange Gillingham	

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CW4.1a	Deliver high quality leisure services through directly managed provision at Stratford Park Leisure Centre and The Pulse	50%

Performance Monitor Comments	**There is only 8 months until the Leisure Centre is taken in-house on 1 November. There is a lot of procurement going on and work on branding. To make sure it runs efficiently good practice from the Pulse and SLM is being used to make sure staff are really clear about expectations (e.g. pricing, products, maintenance, good housekeeping) through ongoing monthly training. There has been a noticeable drop in standards by SLM (e.g. over cleanliness) and SDC are looking at the contract and possible financial penalties.**
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham

Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Procure a new Leisure Management System	Yes	30-Apr-2024	An officer group is assessing the Leisure Management System bids. A contract will be awarded in January.
	Recruit a Leisure Services Manager	Yes	30-Apr-2024	This post is currently going through the recruitment process.
	Develop a plan which brings the current contract to an end and defines the start of the service	Yes	31-Dec-2024	The plan is in place.
	Write a service delivery specification for the new service	No	31-Aug-2024	SDC staff with support from Leisure Consultants will be writing the service specification which will include how the service is monitored and reported. This will include but not limited to the following service standards: • Monitoring finances • Usage figures including Membership and lesson sales • Pricing policy including any concession schemes. • Hour of opening • Planned and preventative maintenance • Health and Safety • Recruitment including staff structure. • Staff training and induction

				• Customer satisfaction • Good Housekeeping • Programme (standard) • Programme (Health Specific and outreach) A members workshop is being planned to review the specification in quarter 4.
	Rebrand the service	No	31-Aug-2024	We are currently marking the tenders and will appoint ready to start in March.
	TUPE current SPLC team into the council	No	31-Oct-2024	Meetings have taken place between SDC HR and SLM HR team. A plan is place for all the key stages of the TUPE transfer.
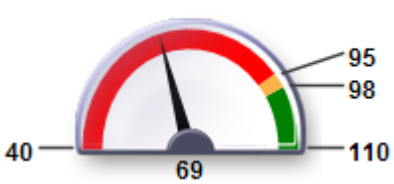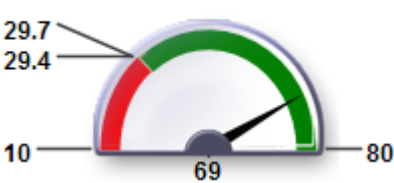
CW4.2	Working with partners, increase the number, accessibility, and quality of playing pitches, play areas and outside spaces within the district.			0%
Performance Monitor Comments	**Archway had some issues with drainage so their proposed 3G pitch is still going through Planning. Until it is built no other application will be considered by the Football Foundation.**			
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Review the current Playing Pitch Strategy in line with the Local Plan refresh	No	31-Dec-2024	Q3 2023/2024: An officer meeting took place to review the playing pitch strategy with a focus on Hunts Grove community building and play areas. The outcome is to invite the Football Foundation and Sport England to a meeting in quarter 4 to review the community development plans against the available finances for this area.
	Support sports clubs with funding applications to improve their playing pitches and changing facilities (dependent on the application)	No	31-Mar-2026	Q3 2023/2024: Archway School 3G is going through a 2nd stage of planning for approval. The school is feeding back to the council 1/4ly on the progress of their development. See above re Hunts Grove progress.
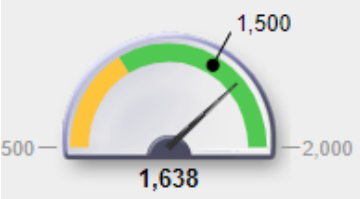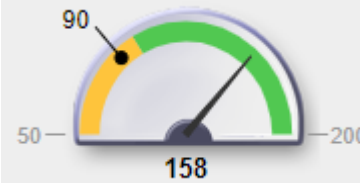
Performance Indicator Linked	CW4.2a Number of 3G pitches	2023/24 result Rednock and Wotton Community Sports Foundation. Archway is still awaiting planning permission	
	CW4.2b Number of clubs benefitting from Pitch Preparation Fund	2023/24: 6	The following clubs have successfully accessed Grass Pitch Maintenance Funding so far this year. • Wick Saturday FC = £15,730 • Minchinhampton FC = £3,630 • Berkeley Town = £20,480 • Sharpness FC = £11.520 • Hardwicke FC = £12,800 • Wotton Community Sports Foundation = £23,468

CW4.3	Increase physical activity and sports participation through our Healthy Lifestyles Scheme and in partnership with the Gloucestershire We Can Move programme.	28%		
Performance Monitor Comments	**A system whereby GPs will be able to refer by simply clicking a button should be in place by the end of the year. For most services people can self-refer. An example of the activities include schools being asked to think about who would benefit from Circus skills (e.g. those with dexterity issues).**			
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham; Angharad Lewis			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Complete a gap analysis in partnership with health partners to produce a demographic breakdown of long term conditions in the districts	No	31-Aug-2024	Q3 2023/24: As part of the Frailty, Dementia and Carers Workstream with the ILP we are currently conducting a deep dive on frailty data across the district. The data will highlight where mildly and pre frail patients are and enable us to target Strength and balance classes in those areas.

	Work in partnership with local organisations to deliver Active Stroud - Get Active, Get Creative, Get Outside for children and young people	No	31-Oct-2024	Q3 2023/24: We are currently working in St Matthews school delivering Cookstars sessions and in Cashes Green delivering Circus Skills with school of larks. Once these cohort have been completed we will be producing a case study to share with other schools about the pilot.
	Refer All to link with Leisure Management System	No	31-Mar-2025	Q3 2023/24: The new leisure management system XN Leisure has now been procured and will link directly to Refer-all. Once the system in live we will be able to start this process. We are continuing to work with Active Gloucestershire on the clinical integration.
	Continue to develop Active Tots & Active Kidz trampolining & gymnastics at Stratford Park Leisure Centre	No	31-Mar-2026	Q3 2023/24: Active Tots sessions are continuing at Stratford Park Leisure Centre. During this Quarter we have had 150 attendances.
	Develop the range of Choose2move classes across the district using data and insight to inform their locations	No	31-Mar-2026	Q3 2023/24: Following on from the funding from GOGA both the Choose2move Dance and Yoga are now an established part of the Healthy Lifestyles Programme.
Performance Indicator Linked	CW4.3a Increase the number of referrals to the Healthy Lifestyle Scheme received each year	Q3 2023/24 result 		
	CW4.3b Increase the number of participants who complete the 12-week Healthy Lifestyles programme	Q3 2023/24 result 		
	CW4.3c Number of participants who attend Healthy Lifestyles Classes	Q3 2023/24 result		

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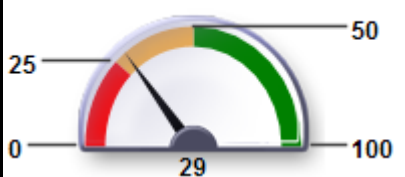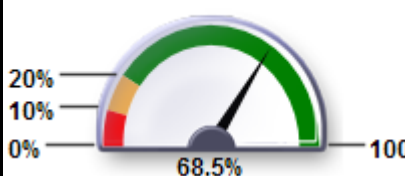
		1,638	
	CW4.3d Number of children attending Active Tots/Kidz gymnastics and trampolining Sessions	**Q3 2023/24 result** 158	

CW4.4	Complete a conditions survey and review the development implications of longer term development for Stratford Park Lido			16%
Performance Monitor Comments	**The Lido conditions survey shows that £700,000 of work needs to be done. £200,000 in reserves are earmarked but it costs £100,000 just to keep it running so there is a £500,000 shortfall. A paper will be produced later this year. SDC are exploring a Heritage lottery bid which could include the Museum, Stratford Park and the Lido.**			
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Complete conditions survey	Yes	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: Costs have now been received against the report and officers are working through the report to priorities the work required.
	Support Friends of the Lido to gain charitable status	Yes	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: No further progress has been made on this milestone at present but the Friends have started work on gaining charity status. Meetings continue with this group 1/4ly.
	Write an achievable development plan for Stroud Lido based on the findings of the Leisure Strategy and 2019 Stroud Lido business case	No	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: The survey has now been conducted and a detailed report was received in December 2023. Officers are now working through the report to understand required investment.
	Develop a priority development plan including grant sources to develop the facility	No	31-Dec-2024	Q3 2023/24: The survey has now been conducted and a detailed report was received in December 2023. Officers are now working through the report to understand required investment.
	Heritage Lottery Fund Bid for Stratford Park Lido submitted by target date – amount determined by the action plan	No	31-Dec-2024	Q3 2023/24: The condition survey has now been received with costs. Officers are now working through the report to priorities what work needs to be completed.

CW4.5	Develop a Culture Strategy for the District			25%
Performance Monitor Comments	**64 Million Artists are presenting a draft strategy in late February 2024. SDYC aske to be able to go and were given permission.**			
Assigned To	Keith Gerrard			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Fact finding and initial community consultation complete	Yes	24-Oct-2023	
	Consultation on draft Culture Strategy	No		Q3 2023/24: A draft strategy (first draft) has been produced and shared with members of the Members Panel. It will go forward to wider, member, partner and stakeholder consultation during Q4
	Culture Strategy approved and published	No		
	Develop Action Plan based on Culture Strategy	No		

CW4.6	Implement the Museum in the Park's free-to-join Supporter Scheme to provide residents with exciting opportunities to engage with the museum and extend community reach to new audiences ensuring the museum remains at the heart of the wider community.	100% Completed. Performance will be measured moving forwards using the PIs below.
Performance Monitor Comments	**No additional comments.**	
Assigned To	Kevin Ward	
Performance Indicator Linked	MiP05 Museum Members	Q3 2023/24 result 29
	MiP06 Average Open rate of museum member newsletter	Q3 2023/24 result 68.5%

CW5.1	Deliver our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25, through engaging with communities, showing leadership and championing equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do.			66%
Performance Monitor Comments	**No additional comments.**			
Assigned To	Hannah Emery; Elaine Gordon			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Review the EQIA process and consult with EDIE WG on refreshed impact assessment	Yes	01-Jan-2024	Q3 2023/24: Refreshed EQIA has been drafted and two consultations have taken place with the EDIE WG. Next steps are to consult with LMT and provide training to services
	2023/24 Annual report on progress of ED&I Action Plan presented to Council	No	31-Jul-2024	
Performance Indicator Linked	CW5.1a Number of EDIE events held	2023/4: 2 Unreflected Reflections and Neurodiversity Event. The EDIE working group have also supported the Black History Month event, and the Holocaust Memorial Day Event as well as several simulspec walks in town centres around the district.		
	CW5.1b Number of EQIAs published	Q3 2023/24: The EDIE working group are reviewing the current process for EQIAs and to further develop and embed this process across the Council with the aim to make the EQIA process more robust. The aim is also to promote the use of EQIAs earlier in any process or project and not just part of decision making reports at Council and Committee meetings		

CW5.2	Adopt effective and transparent policies to reduce inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage in line with Section 1 of the Equality Act, the socio-economic duty, as an effective framework for tackling local poverty and economic inequality.			0%
Performance Monitor Comments	**No additional comments.**			
Assigned To	Sarah Turner			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Implement the TIDE (Talent, Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation) assessment recommendations	No	31-Dec-2024	Q3 2023/24: The new Procurement Strategy was approved by S&R in November this included a suite of performance indicators including the TIDE assessment recommendations.
	Monitor the EDIE policies of our key suppliers	No	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: The new Procurement Strategy was approved by S&R in November this included a suite of performance indicators the monitoring of suppliers relating to EDIE actions.
	Socio-economic disadvantage included in EIAs to ensure Strategic decisions taken by the Council help tackle local poverty and economic inequality.	No	31-Mar-2024	Q3 2023/24: The new Procurement Strategy was approved by S&R in November this included a suite of performance indicators including socio-economic factors.

CW5.3	Devise and implement a delivery plan to reduce health inequalities, in collaboration with partners from across all sectors to support those most affected by the Cost-of-Living crisis	50%	
Performance Monitor Comments	**No additional comments.**		
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Emma Keating Clark		
Latest Note	Q3 2023/24: SDC continue to work with front line partners to deliver a Cost of Living Crisis response, including Citizens Advice, Foodbank (and their Fuel Bank), P3, Furniture Bank, Home Start, Clean Slate, Feeding Gloucestershire, the network of Community Hubs, and partners with schools, young people and families.		

Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Conduct engagement activity with local communities and delivery partners	Yes		Front line community organisations and delivery partners are feeding into the development and implementation of the Household Support Funding delivery plan for 2023/24.
	Develop delivery plan with key partners	Yes		A Household Support Funding delivery plan for 2023/24 has been agreed with partners to support those affected by the Cost of Living Crisis.
	Review current health inequality data using health data and local insight	No		Q3 2023/24: The first Early Year and Children and Young People's Networking forum for Stroud District was held on Tuesday 30th January with over 60 attendees. Health data was shared and insight into front challenges and themes were gathered.

CW5.4	Promote initiatives which improve skills, celebrate diversity in the workplace and offer equal access to well paid jobs and economic opportunities for everyone			60%
Performance Monitor Comments	**No additional comments except to say that a Jobs Fair is a great idea.**			
Assigned To	Amy Beckett			
Latest Note	Continue to work closely with SGSC and the growth hub to ensure courses and opportunities are promoted across the district. SDC currently supporting the job centre by hosting careers fairs at Ebley Mill.			
Sub Action	CW5.4.1 Work with education providers to support businesses to take up sector specific training opportunities	20%		
	CW5.4.2 Work with social enterprises and charities to encourage residents to access training and job opportunities	45%		
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Deliver or facilitate a Jobs Fair	No	31-Oct-2024	Q3 2023/24: Currently looking at options to deliver a Jobs Fair that will support out of work residents and residents wish to upskill. Engaging with stakeholders who deliver upskilling courses and further education courses to identify the best time to deliver the jobs fair.
Performance Indicator Linked	CW5.4a Unemployment figures	Q2 2022/23: 1,400		
	CW5.4b NEET figures	Q3 2023/24: 1.18		
	CW5.4c Number of businesses accessing Growth Hub intervention and support	*We are waiting on this data from a partner organisation.*		

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CW5.5	Work with partners to support older people to stay in their homes for longer			25%
Performance Monitor Comments	**There is funding to replace all Careline devices. Old devices will continue to work until December 2025. New devices are being rolled out once procurement has taken place. SDC will start the roll out to replace 1300 Carelines from September. There is also a drive to increase the number of users by making them more accessible and easier to obtain by an online self-serve system.**			
Assigned To	Hannah Drew; Ange Gillingham; Emma Keating Clark			
Sub Action	CW5.5.1 Support the delivery of the ILP workstream - Frailty, Dementia and Carers	50%	The ILP Frailty working group is progressing with plans to contact patients classed as mildly frail and work with them on advice and signposting to SDC physical activities that will support them.	

Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Performance measure to be determined in first period and will be informed through dialogue with adult social care/Integrated Care System.	No	31-Mar-2024	
	Contribute to Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance	No	31-Mar-2025	Q3 2023/24: Had a meeting with Publica who have a dementia officer. Looking to create links for Stroud as we do not have a Dementia Friendly Alliance for Stroud as yet. Making links with Nailsworth Dementia Alliance.
	Work with partners to establish Stroud Dementia Action Alliance	No	31-Mar-2025	
	Develop the Careline service by creating a business plan which extends the delivery and accessibility of the service across the district	No	30-Sep-2024	Q3 2023/24: A project team has been created to work on this project. Due to the digital switch over in December 2025 all of the existing Careline units will be replaced. Procurement has started using a framework and the preferred supplier will be appointed in quarter 4.

				The role out of the new units will start in Quarter 2 on the 2024/2025 financial year.
Performance Indicator Linked	*These PIs will not start collecting data until 1 September 2024 as procurement for a new Careline will be completed by June 2024, and the transition to digital will be rolled out following this from July 2024 over a 12 month period:*			
	CW5.5a Increase Careline units in place by 25 per annum	To be included once the new system is in place		
	CW5.5b Percentage of Carelines transitioned to digital	To be included once the new system is in place.		

Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report – Community Services & Licensing
Quarter 3 2023/24

CW5.6	Support our Armed Forces Champion and provide help as needed to former members of the armed services who need extra support and continue to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant across the local area.	100%
Performance Monitor Comments	**Completed.**	
Assigned To	Michelle Elliott	
Performance Indicator Linked	CW5.6a Housing and accommodation support provided to former members of the Armed Forces in line with our Armed Forces Covenant commitment and received as part of the work program of the armed forces covenant group	

EC4.4	Develop initiatives to encourage an increase in the percentage of Low, Ultra Low Emission and Euro 6 compliant taxi and private hire vehicles			50%
Performance Monitor Comments	**The data is self-explanatory. SDYC asked if synthetic biofuel is being promoted because lithium is a limited resource. As some vehicles already use vegetable oil, SDC officer said they would look into this.**			
Assigned To	Rachel Andrew			
Milestones	Milestone Description	Completion Y/N	Milestone Due Date	Latest Milestone Note
	Deliver initiatives to encourage an increase of EV, ULEV and Euro 6 compliant taxi and private hire vehicles	Yes	31-Dec-2023	
	Review of existing license holders' compliance with Taxi and Private Hire policies	No	01-Apr-2025	Q3 2023/2024: As at 31 December 2023 - 151 licensed vehicles of which 38 are not Euro 6 compliant - 6 of the 38 are wheelchair accessible vehicles. There are 2 electric vehicles. The number of non-compliant vehicles will continue to drop as the older vehicles come up for renewal

Performance Indicator Linked	EC4.4 Increase the % of taxi and private hire vehicles that are Euro 6 standard or EV from 50% (2021) to 75% by 2023	

ER1.4	Support local high streets to increase footfall and achieve a sustainable visitor economy through delivering and enabling promotional campaigns, markets, cultural and leisure events, growing the night-time economy and by improving sustainable access to	25%
Performance Monitor Comments	**Nothing to add.**	
Assigned To	Amy Beckett	
Latest Note	Q3 2023/24: Working with town and parish councils to understand current needs of support to increase footfall into each market town and improve visitor spend and time. Tourism officer working in partnership with Visit England and the Cotswold Tourism partnership to promote the area, with a current focus on tourism week, March 2024.	
Sub Action	ER1.4.1 Work with partners to consider ways to support improvements to the night time economy, creating a positive impact on footfall and spend in Market Towns	0%
	ER1.4.2 Develop a work programme for our Tourism Officer with a partnership steering group to include promotion of a programme of arts and culture events	50%
Performance Indicator Linked	ER1.1e Town Centre vacancy rates	
	ER1.1f Town Centre footfall rates	
	ER1.1g Tourist spend in the district	
	ER1.3a Employment in towns	
	ER1.3b Number of day and overnight visitors	

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	ER1.4 % increase in expenditure by tourists in the district based on 2019/20 data Direct Visitor spend (£149,610,000)	

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Community Services and Licensing Budget Monitoring Report Q3 2023/24
Purpose of Report	To present the 2023/24 forecast outturn position against the revenue budgets and Capital Programme that the Committee is responsible for, in order to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES to note the outturn forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget and the Capital Programme for this Committee.**
Consultation and Feedback	Budget holders have been consulted about the budget issues in their service areas. The feedback has been incorporated into the report to explain difference between budgets and forecast income and expenditure.
Report Author	Adele Rudkin, Accountant Tel: 01453 754109 Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk
Options	None
Background Papers	None
Appendices	Committee Budget Breakdown

Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1   Background

1.1   This report provides the third monitoring position statement for the financial year 2023/24. The purpose of this report is to notify members of any known, significant variations to budgets for the current financial year, highlight any key issues and to inform members of any action to be taken if required.

1.2   **Due to the volume of information contained in the report, it would be helpful where members have questions on matters of detail if they could be referred to the report author or the appropriate service manager before the meeting.**

2.   Summary

2.1   The monitoring position for the Committee as at 31 December 2023 shows a **projected net revenue underspend of (£216k)** against the latest budget.

2.2 The Capital programme is showing a forecast spend of £5.489m against a revised budget of £5.557m.

2.3 Table 2 shows the capital spend and projected outturn for the Community Services & Licensing Committee for 2023/24.

3. Revenue Budget Position

3.1 Council approved the General Fund Revenue budget for 2023/24 in February 2023 including budget proposals of the administration.

3.2 The latest budget for Community Services and Licensing Committee, taking into account the adjustments for carry forwards, is £5.030m (Original Budget was £4.400m) This considers any MTFP adjustments, carry forwards and re-profiling of corporate maintenance budgets, as well as the2023/24 pay award (£1,925 or 3.88%).

3.3 The outturn position is mainly attributable to those items outlined in Table 1, with an explanation of the significant variations that have arisen (a significant variation is defined as being +/- £20,000 on each reporting line).

3.4 Appendix A provides a more detailed breakdown on the Committee's budget.

Table 1 – Community Services and Licensing Revenue budgets 2023/24

Community Services Committee	Para Refs	2023/24 Original Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Community Safety	3.5	160	200	(206)	398	(8)
Cultural Services - Arts and Culture	3.6	493	500	491	(13)	(22)
Cultural Services - Community Health & Wellbeing	3.7	176	553	698	(150)	(5)
Cultural Services - Sports Centres	3.8	372	370	88	(19)	(300)
Customer Services	3.9	438	447	509	(63)	(0)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	3.10	350	360	439	(80)	(1)
Licensing	3.11	(20)	(20)	(33)	16	3
Public Spaces	3.12	1,496	1,669	1,588	91	10
Revenues and Benefits	3.13	816	832	940	0	108
Youth Services	3.14	118	120	57	63	(0)
Community Services and Licensing TOTAL		**4,400**	**5,030**	**4,571**	**244**	**(216)**

Table contains roundings.

3.5 **Community Safety - £398k reserve transfer**
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

Careline - £350k reserve transfer

Members will recall funding of £350k (GCC) has been awarded to implement a new Careline system in 2024/25 and this funding will be held in reserves until next financial year.

Neighbourhood Wardens – £48k salary saving/reserve transfer
The Community Services re-structure is now complete. The salary saving is due to in-year vacancies which have now all been filled apart from one Community Warden post currently

in the process of being recruited to. This amount has been factored into the overall corporate vacancy saving figure reported to Strategy & Resources Committee.

3.6 Cultural Services – Arts & Culture – (£22k) underspend
Kevin Ward, kevin.ward@stroud.gov.uk

A detailed exercise was undertaken at budget setting to reflect the national cost-of-living crisis for utility prices for the 2023/24 budget. In April 2023 a new Utilities contract was signed with a notable reduction in rates for both gas and electric, initiating a favorable forecast variance for the rest of this financial year.
Air source heat pumps are being installed at several sites including the Museum in the Park due to finished by the end of the financial year.

3.7 Cultural Services – Community Health & Wellbeing – (£150k) reserve transfer
 (Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

Funding received last financial year from the Integrated Locality Partnership & Integrated Care Board, is to support the delivery on their two priorities; Children and Young People's Mental Health & Dementia, Frailty and Carers. The funding has been used to increase staff hours to support the delivery of the Health & Wellbeing Plan and Physical Activity Action Plan 2022-2025. Examples of what this funding has achieved is the creation of a group called Connect-Ed for young people diagnosed with disordered eating in Dursley, reading well book collections into primary and secondary schools in Stroud District and setting up choose2move Dance and Yoga classes for residents who don't feel confident to attend mainstream classes. Any unspent funding is proposed to be carried forward to 2024/25 to support the delivery of two priorities, Children and Young People's Mental Health & Dementia, Frailty and Carers.

3.8 Cultural Services – Sports Centres – (£300k) underspend/additional income
(Darren Young 01453 540995, darren.young@stroud.gov.uk)
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

The main variance is made up of two parts, firstly the proposed additional income of (£141k) and forecast savings of (£197k) on the Utilities contract at The Pulse.
A noticeable upward trend on pool-based activities has led to a projected favourable variance which does not seem to be affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
A detailed exercise was undertaken at budget setting to reflect the national cost-of-living crisis for utility prices for the 2023/24 budget. In April 2023 a new Utilities contract was procured with a notable reduction in rates for both gas and electric, initiating a favourable forecast variance for the rest of this financial year.
The Pulse has also been successful in bidding for £165k grant funding from the Swimming Pool Support Fund, central government funding. The funding has been made available to support the heating, maintenance and running costs which have increased significantly in recent months/years.
Community run Wotton Pool was also successful in receiving £10k in grant funding. Stratford Park Leisure Centre was not eligible for this fund.

The 40k transfer from reserves is attributable to the new Leisure review/set up costs for which funding was put aside from the 2022/23 outturn position.

The Pulse and Stratford Park Leisure Centre (along with the Museum in the Park) are having air source heat pumps installed this financial year to decarbonise the heating and hot water systems, as included in the capital programme. This forecast allows for small periods of closure to allow this to happen. It is expected that there will be an overspend on the project of £178k (paragraph 4.2). The in year revenue underspends for the leisure centres means that this capital overspend of £178k can be funded through a revenue contribution to capital within the service.

3.9 **Customer Services – £63k reserve transfer**
(Liz Shellam, ten 4234, liz.shellam@stroud.gov.uk)

Members will recall that two fixed term contract posts (2 years) were agreed at budget setting last financial year to be funded from reserves. Additionally, as part of the agreed Contact Centre Vision, two new posts have been created to allow us to centralise customer contact. The budget has been reviewed as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

3.10 **Grants to Voluntary Organisations – £80k reserve transfer**
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

This funding from the Projects Reserve was agreed to resource activity that is supporting Stroud residents in the cost-of-living crisis. Small voluntary community hubs are leading the response in their neighbourhoods, additional support and guidance will be provided to them by more experienced organisations in their locality. This will be provided by GL11 Community Hub, The Keepers Community Hub and Stroud Town Council's Community Development team. This extra resource will be overseen by a newly formed partnership of organisations who have an investment in the Community Hubs network and by the SDC Cost of Living Working Group.

3.11 **Licensing - £16k reserve transfer**
(Rachel Andrew xtn 4401, rachel.andrew@stroud.gov.uk)

This reserve transfer is directly linked to COMF monies proposed to be carried forward to 2024/25 to fund supporting commercial business, licensed premises, and the event sector, to bounce back safely post pandemic.

3.12 **Public Space Service – £91k reserve transfer**
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

This is an in-year salary saving (£91k) due to a re-structure within the Community services team, all vacancies have now been recruited to. This amount has been factored into the overall corporate vacancy saving figure reported to Strategy & Resources Committee.

3.13 **Revenues & Benefits – £108k unachieved income/underspends**
(Simon Killen 01453 754013, simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk)

Additional budget was actioned as part the budget setting process for 2023/24 for the shortfall on housing benefit subsidy claims. However, a significant variance of £221k has been forecast, which relates to supported and temporary accommodation. There is a higher rent allowable in supported accommodation, where the cost of housing is significantly higher than the amount allowable under housing benefit, this cannot all be claimed back through housing benefit subsidy and part of the cost is borne by the local authority. This will continue to be monitored and the situation is subject to change throughout the year as housing benefit claims change and are difficult to predict.

Unbudgeted grant income from DWP has been received supporting the Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative. Concentrated work to undertake activity related to HB Full Case Reviews, Housing Benefit Matching Service referrals, Self-Employed Earnings Reviews and the correct recording of case information on IT systems.

3.14 Youth Services – £63k reserve transfer
(Angela Gillingham xtn 4452, angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)

This transfer is in relation to in-year staff vacancies within the team. Recruitment is underway with a view to appointing over the next few months. This amount has been factored into the overall corporate vacancy saving figure reported to Strategy & Resources Committee.

4. Capital

Table 2 below shows the 2023/24 Capital Programme for this Committee.

Table 2 – Capital Outturn forecast

Community Services Capital Schemes	Para Refs	2023/24 Original Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Community Buildings Investment	4.1	100	0	0	0
Decarbonisation SPLC/MIP/The Pulse	4.2	5,400	5,356	5,489	133
Stratford Park Lido	4.3	0	201	0	(201)
Stratford Park Tennis Courts		128	0	0	0
Community Services Capital Schemes TOTAL		**5,628**	**5,557**	**5,489**	**(68)**

4.1 Community Buildings Investment
Terms for a new lease to Kingshill House Ltd were approved by Strategy & Resources Committee on 23 November 2023. Under the terms of the new lease the council will take responsibility for the roof and structure of the building. This change will place a greater obligation on the council to meet repair costs and these must be included within appropriate budgets. The existing £100k earmarked in the capital budget will be used to carry out priority works and investigations in 2024/25 to continue to protect the structure and fabric of the building. As freeholder owner of this listed building the responsibility to maintain Kingshill House would fall to the district council if terms for a new lease weren't agreed.

4.2 Decarbonisation – Sports Centres
Members will recall that Salix funding was secured (https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/) to de-carbonise the three sites (The Pulse, Stratford Park Leisure Centre and the Museum in the Park). The project is progressing and remains on programme and will be completed by 31st March 2024 in line with the requirements of the funding agreement. The total grant sum is £4,690,518 with the council contributing the requisite sum of £700k. Preliminary works started in 2022/23 with the mainstay of the project completed in this financial year. The forecast final spend is £178k overspend (3.3%) on the total project. £133k is estimated this financial year this is attributable to unforeseen costs of the transformer replacement and associated contractor costs at Stratford Park. The risks of additional costs from the Distribution Network Operator (National Grid) were set out at the beginning of the project. The overspend has been minimised as far as possible by amendments to the scope of the works (in particular at the Museum in the Park: ventilation and building works). Spend of £45k in 2024/5 is forecast for works associated with the DNO at SPLC. The total additional

cost of £178k could be funded from the expected underspend in Sports Centres as set out in paragraph 3.8.

4.3 **Stratford Park Lido**
The conditions survey has now been completed on the lido and will be looking at the next steps now to progress the project as repairs involved bringing it to an operational level will exceed the allocated budget. A paper will be brought back to members later this year in relation to the repair work and any additional funding that would be required. It is proposed that the unspent budget from 2023/24 is slipped into 2024/25.

5.   IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

This report is of a financial nature and any financial implications are included in the report.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager
Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

One Legal
Email: onelegal@legalservices.org.uk

5.3 Equality Implications

 There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision

5.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Appendix A

Community Services Committee	Para Refs	2023/24 Original Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Revised Budget (£'000)	2023/24 Forecast Outturn (£'000)	2023/24 Reserve Transfers (£'000)	2023/24 Outturn Variance (£'000)
Careline Services		(125)	(125)	(493)	350	(18)
Community Safety		9	42	42	0	0
Neighbourhood Wardens		258	264	219	48	2
Stroud and Dursley CCTV		19	19	27	0	8
Community Safety	3.5	**160**	**200**	**(206)**	**398**	**(8)**
Cultural Strategy		0	0	13	(13)	0
Museum in the Park		489	496	476	0	(20)
Subscription Rooms		4	4	2	0	(2)
Cultural Services - Arts and Culture	3.6	**493**	**500**	**491**	**(13)**	**(22)**
Community Health & Wellbeing		176	553	698	(150)	(5)
Cultural Services - Community Health & Wellbeing	3.7	**176**	**553**	**698**	**(150)**	**(5)**
Stratford Park Leisure Centre		337	322	437	22	138
The Pulse		35	48	(349)	(40)	(438)
Cultural Services - Sports Centres	3.8	**372**	**370**	**88**	**(19)**	**(300)**
Customer Service Centre		438	447	509	(63)	(0)
Customer Services	3.9	**438**	**447**	**509**	**(63)**	**(0)**
Grants to Voluntary Organisations		350	360	439	(80)	(1)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	3.10	**350**	**360**	**439**	**(80)**	**(1)**
Licensing		(20)	(20)	(33)	16	3
Licensing	3.11	**(20)**	**(20)**	**(33)**	**16**	**3**
Amenity Areas		197	197	221	0	23
Cemeteries		31	33	35	0	2
Commons and Woodlands		15	15	18	0	4
Grassed Areas Contribution to HRA		220	220	220	0	0
Public Conveniences		253	254	246	0	(8)
Public Space Service		567	570	479	91	0
Stratford Park		208	375	365	0	(10)
Street Naming Maintenance		5	5	5	0	0
Public Spaces	3.12	**1,496**	**1,669**	**1,588**	**91**	**10**
Business Rate Collection		(96)	(95)	(107)	0	(12)
Council Tax Collection		267	273	276	0	4
Council Tax Support Administration		128	130	94	0	(37)
Creditors		99	101	101	0	(0)
Housing Benefit Administration		146	151	83	0	(68)
Rent Allowances and Rebates		272	272	493	0	221
Revenues and Benefits	3.13	**816**	**832**	**940**	**0**	**108**
Hear by Right / Youth Services		118	120	57	63	(0)
Youth Services	3.14	**118**	**120**	**57**	**63**	**(0)**
Community Services and Licensing TOTAL		**4,400**	**5,030**	**4,571**	**244**	**(216)**

The outturn variances on the above table reflect reserve movements as outlined in Table 1, table contains roundings.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide			
Purpose of Report	To approve the revised SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide			
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES to approve the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide.**			
Consultation and Feedback	The revised SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide has been compiled through the work of the cross-services Corporate Safeguarding Group.			
Report Author	Steve Miles, Senior Youth Officer Email: steve.miles@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	It is a statutory requirement for each local authority to have a safeguarding policy and procedures guide.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Appendix 3 – Audit Risk Assurance Report 2023 Appendix 4 – GSCP Section 11 Audit Report 2022-23			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	Yes	No

1. Introduction / Background

1.1 Stroud District Council (SDC) has a legal duty of care to protect all children, young people and adults, who come into contact with our services. Subsequently, we need to ensure that people are supported to gain good access to support services, remain well and thrive.

This duty is in-line with the Childrens Act (2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018), the Care Act (2014) and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2014), Mental Health Capacity Act (2005), and Deprivation of Liberty Standards (2007).

1.2 SDC are required to have a relevant policy that meets our responsibilities with regards to safeguarding. We are also required to state our operating and practice procedures in accordance with the policy and good safeguarding practice standards.

1.3 The previous safeguarding policy guidance stated that a review of the policy and procedures should be carried out an annual basis – this report is a culmination of the review work that began in June 2023.

2.   Main Points

2.1   In April 2023, a new cross-services Corporate Safeguarding Group (Appendix 1, Section 4.0) was created and includes staff from all community and customer facing services, plus our Human Resource service. Most staff in this group act as Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officers (see 2.4 of this report).

The group support the strategic and operational work regarding the Council's statutory responsibilities in the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. It has a Terms of Reference and is accountable to the Councils Strategic Leadership Team. The group is Chaired by the Strategic Director of Communities, who is also the Council's Strategic Safeguarding Lead.

Through the work of this group, the new safeguarding policy and procedures guide document (Appendix 1) has been produced.

2.2   The new safeguarding policy and procedures guide document features a move to the standardised format of all Council policies; that of being in one document and in accordance with the Council's Policy Development and Review Framework.

It lays out the Council's legal duties and the safeguarding arrangements in Gloucestershire. The latter are primarily determined by our respective partnerships with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (GSCP) and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB).

2.3   The Council's role and responsibilities (Appendix 1, Section 3.0) include that relative to staff and elected members for safeguarding children, young people and adults.

Whilst coming to the latter stages of developing this new policy and procedures guide, the Statutory Guidance titled Working Together to Safeguard Children, was revised by UK Government. This is now subject to assessment by the GSCP with full implementation of new arrangements across the partnership required within 12 months (Appendix 1, Section 3.2.1).

2.4   All partner agencies of the GSCP, are required to complete an annual self-assessment audit, to meet statutory requirements outlined in Section 11 of the Childrens Act 2004 (Appendix 1, Section 3.2.1-part c).

GSCP manage the audit process and partners are required to present their report against the respective Section 11 standards framework – each report is subsequently scrutinised by a panel of young people working alongside the GSCP appointed Independent Scrutineer and their Safeguarding Managers. The theme for this year was 'commissioning'.

Some members of Stroud District Youth Council were panellists for the third year in succession. Such active involvement has inspired them to develop a strong interest in safeguarding matters – their manifesto statement titled: *'Youth Rights, Youth Voice, and Safeguarding'* (www.stroudyouthvoice.co.uk/manifesto) is a powerful message to all GSCP partners to ensure that continued progression on policy and procedure development remains vital for the protection of children and young people.

Recommendations are subsequently made to GSCP partners, and these feature in their annual report which is made public and submitted to UK Government. The recommendations from the 2022/23 report that apply to SDC (Appendix 4), have been acknowledged by our Corporate Safeguarding Group.

2.5 We are required to have designated safeguarding lead officers, who are defined by us as follows: Strategic Safeguarding Lead; Operational Safeguarding Lead; Operational Safeguarding Support. The respective officers in these roles, also represent the Council on the GSCP and the GSAB (Appendix 1, Section 3.4).

2.6 To help ensure we carry out our procedural duties, we have Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officers, who are responsible for supporting staff who identify safeguarding concerns and / or incidents (Appendix 1, Section 3.6) and ensure the reporting and referral processes are completed.

The policy and procedures guide features a breakdown of the responsibilities for the following: Strategic Leadership Team; Service Managers; Human Resource Service; all Staff; and all Elected Members. Such responsibilities include that of completing training at the designated level and within the stipulated time frame for their role.

2.7 Acknowledgement is given in the policy and procedures guide, to others affected by the policy and procedures. This includes the formal procurement and commissioning of services including grant giving, as well as contractors, partners, volunteers, apprentices, and those gaining work experience, plus workers under the age of 18 (Appendix 1, Section 3.8).

2.8 Safeguarding Training (Appendix 1, Section 5.0) has been a significant area of development for this new policy and procedures guide. Clarifying our training needs for staff, elected members, voluntary and community sector partners, taxi and private hire drivers, has been an important aspect of the work.

Whilst the monitoring of staff and elected member training is managed by our Human Resources service, the Corporate Safeguarding Group acknowledge that more work is needed to ensure we meet the required standards, as safeguarding practices evolve – a point that was highlighted in our Section 11 audit report (see 2.6 of this report). We are due to invite the GSCP to do a peer review of our training programme during Quarter 1 of 2024/25.

2.9 Our safeguarding practices are laid out in the document (Appendix 1, Section 6.0). As part of our safer recruitment requirements, all staff job descriptions now feature a statement reflecting safeguarding responsibilities (Appendix 1, Section 6.1.2).

The supervision and support for staff, including access to information, advice and guidance is very important – in addition to the new policy and procedures guide, the Hub and Members Hub will feature a revised look, including refreshed easy to follow guidance.

Safeguarding concerns and incidents are managed in accordance with the SDC Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Act 2018. Data held will be used and concur with, that passed on to the Gloucestershire Childrens Help Desk and Referral Portal and the Gloucestershire Adult Helpdesk and Referral Portal, through their respective referral procedures. SDC is a data processor in respect of these procedures. Respective data is controlled by the GSCP and GSAB and managed in accordance with respective agreements with these bodies – these can be found via the following links:

https://gloucestershirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/information-sharing

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/vftpj3xi/gsab-information-sharing-guidance-may-2023.pdf

2.10 Following the correct safeguarding procedures are vitally important to ensure a best possible outcome in the protection of children, young people, and adults. We have laid out and defined in the guide document (Appendix 1, Section 7.0) the statutory requirements, explaining those relating to emergencies, internal and external procedures.

Working with partners through the safeguarding arrangements for Gloucestershire during the referral processes are an ever-important part of our role as a Council. We have stated the differences between the reporting process and the referral process – it is vitally important that all staff and elected members understand and follow these, including the use of correct terminology.

2.11 We have detailed our pre and post referral involvement with other agencies (Appendix 1, Section 8.0). The work that staff are required to be involved with, is often bespoke to the circumstances of individual safeguarding matters. A range of examples are featured in the guide document, but this is not an exhaustive list.

2.12 This policy and procedures guide acknowledges and relates to, other policies and procedures within the Council and that of statutory partners.

Included in the document (Appendix 1, Section 10 and Section 13) we have made reference to general information, advice and guidance on safeguarding, as well as supporting references to the knowledge gained through safeguarding training.

3.13 Whilst developing this policy and procedures guide, we have acknowledged the Council's internal audit of safeguarding, as directed by the Audit Standards Committee (Appendix 3).

We have made efforts to address more urgent matters highlighted in the audit report – these include the following: The production of this new Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide and the Corporate Safeguarding Group has introduced an Action and Decision-Making Log to record and monitor the actions and decisions of the group.

However, we accept further work is required to ensure that we comply with audit recommendations. Full consideration of the internal audit report is scheduled to take place at the next Corporate Safeguarding Group Meeting on 28 March 2024. A Management Update is scheduled to be presented to the Audit and Standards Committee on 16 April 2024.

3. Conclusion

3.1 In response to statutory requirements, our own in-house arrangements and through the establishment of a Corporate Safeguarding Group, the work in relation to the decision-making process of this Committee, we believe will have achieved the following:

- Reformatted our safeguarding policy and brought the policy and procedures together in one document.

- Met recommendations highlighted in recent Section 11 audits and begun our response to the recommendations from our internal audit.

- Brought greater clarification on our procedures for reporting and referring concerns and incidents.

- Clarified the training requirements for staff and elected members.

3.2 We do, however, acknowledge that safeguarding policy and procedures in the wider context, require updating regularly. For this, we need to review annually and make respective changes to our own policy and procedures. We also need to address the outcomes from the Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023 statutory guidance once they are agreed by the GSCP. We will continue to address the recommendations from our internal audit, which we've already begun. We will also react accordingly to recommendations that come from the pending peer review of our training programme.

4.   Implications

4.1 **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report as the decision is to approve the safeguarding policy and procedures.

Adele Rudkin, Accountant
Tel: 01453 754109   Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 **Legal Implications**

The legal obligations in relation to safeguarding adults and children are included within this report and various statutory guidance has been referred to. There are no further legal implications in relation to safeguarding duties but data sharing, retention of information and other information sharing practices must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Iona Moseley, Lawyer
Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

4.3 **Equality Implications**

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and no equality implications arise.

If an EIA has been completed, please ensure that it has been signed, and sent policy@stroud.gov.uk **and attached as an appendix to the report.**

4.4 **Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide

March 2024

All Services

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Document Responsibility

Name	Document title	Service
Keith Gerrard – SDC Strategic Safeguarding Lead	Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide	Community Services

Document Version Control

Date	Version	Issued by	Summary of changes
February 2024	Version Number: 5	Steve Miles	Draft – Post CSG Meeting (25.01.24) Amendments
February 2024	Version Number 6	Steve Miles	Post SLT Meeting (09.02.24) & Additional Information
February 2024	Version Number 7	Steve Miles	Legal & Financial Implications (23.02.24)
March 2024	Version Number 8	Steve Miles	Draft to Community Services & Licensing Committee (14.03.24)

Policy Review

Updating frequency	Review date	Person responsible	Service
Annually	March 2025	Strategic Safeguarding Lead – Keith Gerrard	Communities Directorate

Document Review and Approvals

Name	Action	Date
Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG)	Version 4 Reviewed	25/01/2024

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and scope

This Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide is intended to ensure that Stroud District Council (SDC), are aware of their legal obligations in meeting its responsibilities to safeguarding children, young people, and adults with a consistent approach across the organisation.

This policy and procedures guide applies to SDC staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.

1.2 Terms and definitions

In this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide:

Stroud District Council (SDC): References to SDC include staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors delivering services on the Council's behalf.

Safeguarding means: Protecting peoples' physical health, mental wellbeing, and human rights.

Procedures means: Our methods, processes, and practices in relation to our safeguarding responsibilities as previously defined above.

Child, Young Person, or Young People means: "Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that they have reached 16 years of age; are living independently or in further education; are a member of the armed forces; in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Acts and this policy" (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 statutory guidance, and based on the Children Act, 2004).

Adult means: Anyone aged 18 or over.

Vulnerable Adult: An adult is deemed as vulnerable if they:

• Have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).

• Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

• As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

• Lacks capacity in order to promote their rights as laid down in the Mental Health Capacity Act (2005) and Deprivation of Liberty Standards (2007).

Domestic Abuse: All types of domestic abuse are safeguarding matters and therefore are integral in the application of this policy. Identifying and responding properly to domestic abuse issues is therefore supported by SDC related training (Section 5.6) and policies (Section 12.0). Definitions can be found in these documents.

2.0 LEGAL DUTIES AND SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

2.1 Primary Legal Duties:

SDC has a legal duty of care to protect all children, young people and adults, who come into contact with our services. Subsequently, we need to ensure that people are supported to gain good access to support services, remain well and thrive.

This duty is in-line with the Childrens Act (2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018), the Care Act (2014) and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2014), Mental Health Capacity Act (2005), and Deprivation of Liberty Standards (2007).

We do not have legal duties with specific regards to asylum seekers.

2.2 Safeguarding Arrangements in Gloucestershire:

SDC are partners of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (GSCP) and are subsequently required to undertake responsibilities in accordance with their role in this Partnership. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/

SDC are partners of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Board (GSAB) and are subsequently required to undertake responsibilities in accordance with this Board. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gsab/

Our internal procedures should complement that of the GSCP and the GSAB in which to meet our responsibilities.

2.3 Additional Legislation and Safeguarding Directives:

For additional legislation and safeguarding directives, please see section 13.1 Appendix A*

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 SDC (its staff and elected members) has a statutory responsibility and duty of care to cooperate, communicate and report issues relating to safeguarding to the appropriate internal person(s), other authorities and partner agencies.

3.1.2 The cooperation, communication and reporting are to be consistent and timely across all service areas. Safeguarding is not a practice or service that operates in isolation and is to be embedded within the whole organisation culture through these functions.

3.2 Safeguarding Children and Young People

3.2.1 SDC have a duty under the Children Act (2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018*) and as a partner of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP), to ensure the following:

a) They safeguard, protect and / or empower children and young people when carrying out their functions.

b) Identify children and young people who may be at risk and subsequently alert the appropriate services.

c) Comply with the requirements laid out in Section 11 (Childrens Act 2004) in meeting the Reportable Standards defined by the GSCP Audit Framework – see section 13.2 Appendix B

*The Statutory Guidance was revised by UK Government in December 2023 and is subject to assessment by the GSCP, with full implementation of new arrangements across the partnership due within 12 months.

3.3 Safeguarding Adults

3.3.1 SDC have a duty under the Care Act (2014) and Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2014) and Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB) to ensure the following:

a) We identify and subsequently alert the appropriate services, adults who:

- May have care and support needs.

- Are experiencing or are at risk of abuse and / or neglect.

- Are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

- Lack capacity in order to promote their rights as laid down in the Mental Health Capacity Act (2005) and Deprivation of Liberty Standards (2007).

b) We comply with the requirements laid out by the GSAB with regards to their Reportable Standards.

3.4 SDC Designated Safeguarding Lead Officers

3.4.1 SDC has designated safeguarding lead officers, who are responsible for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults in need of care and support. They are:

Strategic Safeguarding Lead: *Strategic Director of Communities*

Operational Safeguarding Lead: *Senior Youth Officer*

Operational Safeguarding Support: *Senior Community Services Officer*

Their role is also to support staff and provide information, advice, and guidance to aid implementation of the SDC Policy and Procedures.

3.4.2 In the event of allegation concerns arising in relation to a member of SDC staff, or a volunteer, the Head of Human Resources will also be notified / involved.

3.5 Representing SDC on GSCP and GSAB

SDC is represented on the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Board (GSAB) and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partnership (GSCP) by the following officers in accordance with their respective lead roles:

GSAB: *Strategic Director of Communities (Senior Youth Officer to deputise if necessary)*

GSCP: *Senior Youth Officer and Senior Community Services Officer*

3.6 SDC Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officers

3.6.1 Each service area has nominated service reporting lead officers, who are responsible for supporting staff with safeguarding concerns and / or incidents that occur.

3.6.2 Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officers are also responsible for reporting concerns and / or incidents through the relevant internal processes and referrals through the external processes. The following services have respective officers to carry out this role:

Service Area
Community Services
Customer Contact Centre
Environmental Health Service
Housing / Tenant Services
Housing Strategy & Housing Advice Services
Human Resources
Museum in the Park
Leisure Facilities (Pulse & Stratford Park Leisure Centre)
Revenue and Benefits Service

3.6.3 Staff or volunteers in services not listed above, should speak to their line manager in the first instance. Elected Members should speak to a Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officer in the first instance.

3.6.4 A list of Service Safeguarding Report Lead Officers feature on the Hub and Members Hub.

3.7 Whole Organisation Responsibilities

3.7.1 SDC Strategic Leadership Team will ensure that:

a) The Council meets its legal obligations.

b) Where applicable, the safeguarding of children, young people and adults in need of care and support is considered in strategies, and service plans.

c) The best safeguarding practices are embedded and maintained across all services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.

d) All safeguarding matters are expedited in a timely manner and treated seriously.

e) Staff and elected members are supported on all aspects of safeguarding and ensure that procedures are adhered to.

f) Ensure that safeguarding training at Level 1 and 2 is mandatory across the authority and that Level 3 training is undertaken by those staff who are part of the Strategic

Leadership Team, Leadership Management Team, are Designated Safeguarding Leads (Strategic and Operational), Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads and other staff with defined roles according to their job descriptions – a defined list is held by SDC Human Resources.

3.7.2 SDC Service Managers will ensure that:

a) The safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to across the organisation.
b) Staff complete and implement the appropriate safeguarding training.
c) Staff handling safeguarding issues are fully supported and follow the procedures.
d) They take responsibility for the quality of safeguarding children, young people and adults in need of care and support in their service area.
e) All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults in need of care and support, are subject to the Disclosure and Barring Service checks appropriate to their role and legislative requirements - a defined list is held by SDC Human Resources.

3.7.3 SDC Human Resource Service will ensure that:

a) The relevant policies and procedures are in place for Safer Recruitment, Disclosure and Barring Service checks and Disciplinary Procedures.
b) Managers and elected members are supported in the use of these policies and procedures directly and indirectly associated with safeguarding.
c) Provide support with the pre-employment checks (including through the Disclosure and Barring Service).
d) Work with SDC Corporate Safeguarding Group to ensure the following:
   - All staff complete safeguarding training at Level 1 and Level 2 via the SDC eLearning portal as part of their induction and on a 2-year cyclical basis. Bespoke training to these levels will be delivered to casual staff and those undertaking work experience placements.
   - All staff who are part of the Strategic Leadership Team, Leadership Management Team, Designated Safeguarding Leads (Strategic and Operational), Service Safeguarding Reporting Lead Officers, and other staff with defined roles according to their job descriptions should complete Level 3 training. All staff subsequently complete the relevant courses on a 2-year cyclical basis.
   - A training programme for all staff, elected members and volunteers evolves with the requirements of safeguarding policy, guidance and practice.

3.7.4 SDC Staff will:

a) Treat all safeguarding matters seriously and be aware of all relevant policies.

b) Report concerns and / or incidents as per the reporting procedure. This includes completing the report form available on the SDC HUB and submitting it to the Operational Safeguarding Lead and Operational Safeguarding Support Officers via email: safeguarding@stroud.gov.uk

c) Complete safeguarding level 1 and level 2 training on induction and subsequently, refresher training at both levels on a 2-year cyclical basis.

d) Staff who are part of the Strategic Leadership Team, Leadership Management Team, Designated Safeguarding Leads (Strategic and Operational) Service Safeguarding Reporting Lead Officers, and other staff with defined roles according to their job descriptions should complete Level 3 training. All staff subsequently complete the relevant courses on a 2-year cyclical basis.

3.7.5 Elected Members should always:

a) Report their concerns about a child or adult's welfare or someone else's behaviour with regards to a child or adult, by following the procedures and completing a report forms available on the SDC HUB.

b) Adopt good practice in terms of safeguarding at all times when carrying out their council duties.

c) Seek support or raise concerns with the SDC Designated Safeguarding Leads when necessary.

d) Complete safeguarding level 1 and level 2 training on induction at the beginning of each four-year elected term or following a By-election, with 6 months of the respective election.

Elected members are uniquely placed to support the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults in need of care and support within their community. They can also provide input to ensure that the council is fulfilling its corporate responsibility.

3.8 Others affected by this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide (including Contract Procurement and Commissioning):

In addition to employees and elected members of SDC, this guide applies to the procurement of services, properties and the following people, agencies, or organisations:

3.8.1 Procurement of Services and Grant Giving

All contracts and grants awarded with external agencies for the provision of goods and services must make specific reference to safeguarding and the duties imposed on staff, elected members and volunteers. Steps must be taken to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and adults is commensurate with the type of service being provided on behalf of, or in partnership with the Council. These steps should be carried out at the commissioning and contract initiation stage for each contract and the beginning of all volunteering placements.

3.8.2 Contractors

SDC will ensure that:

a) All contractors providing services directly related to children, young people and adults have safeguarding policy and practices which are in line with and complement to the council's requirements related to safeguarding.

b) Contractors providing a service to the council (such as maintenance work at a council property) will be made aware of the council's procedures and policies. Council staff will ensure that relevant safeguarding practices are adopted by the contractor. This assurance should be carried out at the commissioning and contract initiation stage.

3.8.3 Partners

All partners working with SDC must demonstrate regard to safeguarding.

For joint projects, partner agencies will be required to pass a copy of their safeguarding policy to SDC to ensure that it aligns with the SDC's safeguarding requirements - or alternatively, where no such policy exists, the partner will be required to adopt this policy for the duration of the project.

Taxi drivers licensed by SDC must attend specific safeguarding training in accordance with that stated in section 5.4 of this document.

3.8.4 Volunteers

Any volunteers operating either as individuals, or as part of a larger organisation on behalf of SDC working with children, young people and / or adults (including those delivering regular recorded sessions) will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check. They will be made aware of the SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as part of their overall induction.

3.8.5 Modern Apprentices, Work Experience and Workers under the age of 18

a) Staff will need to be aware that the above duty will apply to their interaction with work experience and modern apprentice workers (under the age of 18). Such workers are still deemed as children under this policy and the law, whilst also themselves being responsible under the duty imposed by Section 11 of the Children Act (2004).

b) It will be necessary to consider the impact of this in all risk assessments carried out in relation to such members of staff, in line with the SDC Risk Management Policy and Strategy.

c) If a work experience placement involves working with a member of staff off site or working with a member of staff on their own for longer than half a day, the students' parents or guardians should be informed prior to the work experience placement. In addition, when the student goes off-site the employee must advise a Senior Officer where they are going, the reason for the visit and how long the visit will take.

4.0 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING GROUP

SDC have a dedicated Corporate Safeguarding Group. The purpose and function of the group is outlined in its Terms of Reference, and includes:

a) Having operational oversight of the SDC safeguarding policy and procedures guide and other matters regarding safeguarding.

b) Being chaired by the Strategic Safeguarding Lead and co-facilitated by the Operational Safeguarding Lead.

c) Reporting to the SDC Strategic Leadership Team.

d) Meeting at least 4 times a year on a quarterly basis.

e) A group membership involving the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officers and the Service Safeguarding Reporting Lead Officers, plus other officers representing various services.

5.0 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

5.1 Staff Mandatory Training

5.1.1 Induction Training

All staff must complete safeguarding training at Level 1 and Level 2 via the SDC eLearning portal as part of their induction. Managers are responsible for assuring all staff complete safeguarding training as part of their induction. Bespoke training to these levels, will be provided for casual staff and those undertaking work experience placements not having access to the SDC eLearning portal.

5.1.2 Additional Higher-Level Training

All staff who are part of the Strategic Leadership Team, Leadership Management Team, Designated Safeguarding Leads (Strategic and Operational) Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads and other staff with defined roles according to their job descriptions, should complete additional higher-level training at Level 3 – this is available on the SDC eLearning portal.

5.1.3 Refresher Training

All staff are required to subsequently complete the relevant safeguarding training courses at Levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively according to their role, on a 2-year cyclical basis. An automated reminder will be generated by the SDC eLearning portal for all staff with regards to refresher training at Levels 1 and 2. A bespoke reminder will be provided by the SDC HR Service regarding Level 3.

5.2 Elected Member Mandatory Training

Elected members must complete safeguarding training at level 1 and level 2 via the SDC eLearning portal as part of their induction. This should be done at the beginning of each four-year elected term or following a By-election, within 6 months of the respective election.

5.3 Voluntary and Community Sector Partner Training

Voluntary and community sector partners will be offered safeguarding training at Level 1 and Level 2 via the SDC eLearning portal. This will be facilitated on an ad-hoc basis.

5.4 Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training

Safeguarding training for taxi and private hire drivers will be facilitated through Cheltenham Borough Council. All new drivers should take this training prior to being issued a licence.

In accordance with the SDC Taxi and Private Hire Policy all taxi and private hire drivers must complete the respective safeguarding training course every 3 years.

5.5 Prevent Training

Due to the relationship between safeguarding legislation and practices, and that of Prevent (the UK Government led counter terrorism strategy and programme), training on Prevent will be accessible via a link to the respective UK Government Home Office training course. The link will be situated at the end of the safeguarding training courses on the SDC eLearning portal.

5.6 Domestic Abuse Training

Due to the relationship between safeguarding legislation and practices, and that of domestic abuse, the relevant Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service training is accessible via a specific link to their programme. The link will be situated at the end of adult safeguarding training courses on the SDC eLearning portal.

5.7 Monitoring of Staff and Elected Member Training

The participation in safeguarding training by staff and elected members will be monitored via data collected from the SDC eLearning portal by the Human Resource Service.

The data will be presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Group by the Human Resource Service for scrutiny and safeguarding management purposes on a 6 monthly basis.

Managers are responsible for assuring all staff complete safeguarding training as part of their induction.

5.8 Types of Harm or Abuse

A list of various types of harm or abuse to support training received, can be found in section 13.3 Appendix C

6.0 SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES

6.1 Safer Recruitment:

SDC operates safer recruitment principles that are followed for all staff appointments.

Polices are in place for Safer Recruitment and Section 2.7.2 of the Employee Handbook covers the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, which all staff must adhere to.

6.1.1 Recruitment Process and Disclosure Barring Service checks

SDC Human Resources (HR) Service is responsible for managing the staff recruitment process - this includes carrying out pre-employment checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for roles where it is deemed necessary.

Staff DBS checks are recorded on our new HR management system, which features a reminder function automatically activated at 3-year intervals regarding each member of staff.

Reference to SDC's commitment to Safer Recruitment features in the promotion of all vacancies – the statement is:

'*Our organisation is committed to safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults, young people, and children. Safe recruitment practices are applied to all job vacancies.'*

6.1.2 Job Descriptions

All Job Descriptions feature a statement with regards to safeguarding responsibilities – the statement is:

'*To undertake all appropriate duties required to meet the Council's safeguarding obligations according to the Care Act 2014, the Children's Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 statutory guidance.'*

6.2 Supervision and Support for Staff

Safeguarding should be a standard topic on agendas, as part of staff supervision meetings and service team meetings. Sufficient time should be made available to discuss general safeguarding concerns and enable staff to discuss policy, training, and practice matters.

Staff should feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their role. This includes having access to members of the Corporate Safeguarding Group for information, advice or guidance.

6.3 Access to Safeguarding Information, Advice, and Guidance

Staff and elected members should have access to safeguarding information, advice, and guidance, including documents relating to SDC's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide. This information will be accessed via the SDC HUB.

The continued professional development of staff and elected members should ensure that they have knowledge, skills and expertise to carry out their duties according to SDC's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide.**6.4 Safeguarding Allegations against a Member of Staff or Volunteer:**

SDC takes any allegations or complaints about the conduct of staff and volunteers very seriously in respect of their contact with children, young people and adults in need of care and support.

All allegations or complaints received by SDC will be investigated fully, and where applicable, action may be taken internally against the member of staff or volunteer, via the SDC disciplinary procedure. If deemed necessary, the member of staff or volunteer may be suspended whilst the investigation takes place. The decision to suspend lies ultimately with Strategic Leadership Team and Human Resources Service.

SDC will involve and take advice from the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) team employed by Gloucestershire County Council.

Information on allegation management and the LADO team can be found via: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/lado-allegations/

6.5 Support for Staff and Volunteers during Allegation Process:

Support will be provided for any member of staff or volunteer who may be subject to an allegation as indicated in the SDC Employee Handbook section 2.7.2 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

SDC assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith (without malicious intent) reports his or her concerns about a colleague's practice, or the possibility that a child, young person or adult may be being abused or bullied.

The person who receives information concerning a suspected case of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer should make a full record of what has been said, as soon as possible and pass the information on to their Line Manager or Head of Service.

6.6 Management of Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents Data

All data obtained (from SDC staff, volunteers and elected members) through reporting procedures with regards to safeguarding concerns and incidents, are to be held on one secure internal database. The database will comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The data held, regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults, will be used and concur with, that passed on to the Gloucestershire Childrens Help Desk and Referral Portal and the Gloucestershire Adult Helpdesk and Referral Portal, through their respective referral procedures.

The responsibility of managing the database for all safeguarding concerns and incidents is held by the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

6.7 Internal Safeguarding Report Forms

To enable staff, volunteers, and elected members to follow correct procedures in the reporting of safeguarding concerns and incidents, a set of official internal reporting forms are available as templates, via the SDC HUB.

The report form templates are formatted to obtain information that is important to the effective management of data, regarding safeguarding concerns and incidents, regardless of whether the concern or incident is referred through the respective referral procedures for children, young people and adults.

The format of each form typically includes the following:

- Identifying whether it's a concern or incident.
- Details of the Person Filling in the form.
- Details of the adult or child being reported.
- Details of the concern or incident.
- A case log.
- Additional Information.

Competed report forms are held as confidential documents electronically and password protected, alongside the internal database on a corresponding file.

6.8 Access to Safeguarding documents

All SDC safeguarding documents relating to policy, procedures, report templates and information, advice and guidance, will be accessible via the Safeguarding page situated on the SDC HUB. The link is: https://hub.stroud.gov.uk/resources/safeguarding

7.0 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

7.1 Introduction to Procedures

7.1.1 All SDC staff and elected members have a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and adults in need of care and support and to follow the safeguarding procedures in a timely manner.

7.1.2 It is not the responsibility of SDC staff and elected members to investigate whether abuse is taking or has taken place. This is the duty of the Gloucestershire Childrens Help Desk (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and Gloucestershire Adult Helpdesk including Community Social Work Team, respectively.

7.1.3 All staff and elected members are required to work with the SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers or Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads, to determine whether the reported concern or incident meets the criteria for referral to the appropriate agencies.

7.1.4 The threshold for referral to the appropriate agencies, should be determined on a 'case by case' basis and reflective of knowledge and experience, through training and practice and with the support of SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers or Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads.

7.1.5 It is vital that any decision not to refer a concern or incident to the appropriate agencies, is taken with great consideration. Any level of doubt about doing so, should result in contacting the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Helpdesk (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), or the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Helpdesk to obtain advice and assistance.

7.2 Statutory Procedures

Through the statutory arrangements for safeguarding children, young people, and adults in Gloucestershire, as described in sections 2 and 3, there are a series of statutory procedures that SDC should follow. These include internal reporting and making external referrals – specific reference to this can be found in section 7.2.4.

7.2.1 Emergency Procedure

As referenced in section 7.1, all staff or elected members have safeguarding responsibilities. This includes, in an emergency whereby a child, young person or adult is of immediate risk of harm, the Police should be contacted via the 999-emergency number.

Subsequently, depending on the context of the case the Internal and / External Procedures (7.2.2 and 7.2.3) should be followed (all staff and elected members should be appropriately trained to make this judgement – see section 5.1 and 5.2).

7.2.2 Internal Procedures

a) Internal procedures include the reporting of all safeguarding concerns and incidents, to SDC Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads or in their absence, the SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers, using the Internal Safeguarding Report Forms, as stated in section 6.6.

b) The SDC Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads and the SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers are required to follow the internal reporting procedure – this includes determining if the reported concern or incident should be referred to the appropriate external agencies (see section 7.1).

7.2.3 External Procedures

a) All staff and elected members have the responsibility to comply with external procedures for safeguarding. These procedures are based upon the responsibility of SDC and its staff and elected members, as outlined in section 3.

b) External procedures predominantly involve the referral process for safeguarding concerns and incidents. The referral processes are designed by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board, respectively.

c) Any referral will be determined by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Helpdesk (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), or the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Helpdesk, respectively.

d) All referral enquires should be made by the SDC Service Safeguarding Reporting Leads or in their absence, the SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers, using the Internal Safeguarding Report Forms, as stated in section 8.6, as the reference point for the enquiry.

It is the responsibility of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Helpdesk (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), or the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Helpdesk to make further enquiries, decisions and take any necessary action on all matters regarding safeguarding concerns or incidents.

However, any concern or incident may require SDC to help obtain further information about the respective concern or incident, as part of our statutory responsibilities to working with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership and Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Board.

7.2.4 Reporting Process

Reference to our emergency, internal and external procedures are outlined in Section 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 above. More details on the respective reporting processes are as follows:

a) If you have a concern about the welfare or actions of a child, young person or adult, you are required to:

- Ensure that you maintain confidentiality.
- Gain permission from the child, young person or adult where possible, to share your concern with a professional.
- Inform your Line Manager and / or your Service Safeguarding Reporting Lead immediately.
- Submitting the report form within 5 days, to the Operational Safeguarding Lead and Operational Safeguarding Support via email: safeguarding@stroud.gov.uk

b) If an incident of abuse had occurred that affects the immediate safety of a child, young person or adult, you are required to:

- Ensure that you maintain confidentiality.
- Gain permission from the child, young person or adult where possible, to share your concern with a professional.
- Follow the Emergency Procedure detailed in 7.1.1
- Inform your Line Manager and / or your Service Safeguarding Reporting Lead immediately
- Submitting the report form within 5 days, to the Operational Safeguarding Lead and Operational Safeguarding Support via email: safeguarding@stroud.gov.uk

7.2.5 Referral Processes

Reference to our emergency, internal and external procedures are outlined in Section 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 above. More details on the respective referral processes are as follows:

a) Referrals to Gloucestershire Childrens Help Desk (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and Referral Portal.

Gloucestershire Childrens Help Desk (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) includes a Community Social Work Team member who is available to discuss matters of concern relating to children and families prior to making a referral and to give advice on 01452 426565 or email a summary to: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

The helpdesk can offer support to reflect on your concerns, explore what needs to happen next, and complete a follow-up conversation with you at a later time and date to ensure that you feel confident in completing the agreed actions, as well as any support you may require around this.

All referrals need to be made via a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) via a portal: https://children.gloucestershire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home

For safeguarding concerns or incidents relating to child criminal exploitation or child sexual exploitation, a screening tool should be used and submitted, alongside that of a MARF. This screening tool is available via: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/professional-resources/child-criminal-sexual-exploitation/

Some referrals may also need to include the submission of a Police Intelligence Form. This is available via: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/traded-services-for-educational-settings/safeguarding-in-education/police-information/

b) Referrals to Gloucestershire Adult Helpdesk and Referral Portal.

Gloucestershire Adult Helpdesk includes a Community Social Work Team member who is available to discuss matters of concern relating to adults and families prior to making a referral and to give advice on 01452 426868 or email them a summary socialcare.enq@gloucestershire.gov.uk

All referrals need to be made via the Gloucestershire County Council Adult Social Care Portal: https://adultsocialcareportal.gloucestershire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home

Registration in advance, is required to be made in which to access and use the portal.

A response to the referral is given by the portal to the person making the referral – this response will outline the details of the referral, which must subsequently be forwarded to the

SDC Operational Safeguarding Lead and Operational Safeguarding Support via email: safeguarding@stroud.gov.uk

8.0 PRE AND POST REFERRAL MULTI-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Through our statutory responsibilities, SDC Services are required to be involved in pre and post referral multi-agency work on safeguarding matters.

Pre-referral work may include the following:

- Community Response Network Meetings – facilitated by GCC Early Help Team
- Missing and Child Exploitation Locality Group Meetings – facilitated by the Missing and Child Exploitation Team (Public Protection Bureau)

Post-referral work will be determined by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Helpdesk (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), or the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult Helpdesk.

This may include the following:

- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)
- Case Conferences involving Housing and Tenancy matters.

Records of this work, including data relating to safeguarding concerns and incidents, should be held on secure and confidential files alongside previously record information about cases. This information should be passed to the SDC Designated Safeguarding Officers.

9.0 ESCALATION POLICY / HEALTHY CHALLENGE

If you as an SDC employee, disagree with any safeguarding decisions made / taken by related organisations, you can challenge and seek resolution.

Please discuss the matter with your line manager, the SDC Strategic Safeguarding Lead and the SDC Operational Safeguarding Lead. Then follow the respective escalation policies for the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (GSCP) and Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB), which can be found on their websites.

GSCP Escalation Policy:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2124436/escalation-policy-july-2021-v13-approved.pdf

GSAB Escalation Policy:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2112431/gsab-escalation-protocol-jan-2022.pdf

10.0 GENERAL INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON SAFEGUARDING

As general guidance on safeguarding matters, the following information and advice should be taken into consideration during your practice.

10.1 Listening and Responding to Children and Adults in need of Care and Support

As adults with trust and influence, SDC employees and Elected Members are in a powerful position to recognise and receive information/disclosure about abuse or need for care and

support. However, it is not their responsibility to decide if a child, young person or adult in need of care and support is being abused.

All SDC employees have a role to act on their concerns in-line with the SDC safeguarding policy, guide, flow charts and forms situated on the SDC Hub.

If a child/young person or adult in need of care and support tells a member of staff about potential or alleged abuse, all employees are to please ensure that they say and /or do the following:

• Remain calm.

• Listen carefully to what the child/young person or adult has to say (without making any judgement).

• Try not to ask interrogative questions, but if you have to, make sure they are open-ended to clarify understanding and not to probe or investigate.

• Do encourage the child/young person or adult to talk.

• Do not give an opinion or offer advice.

• Be honest with them about what you can and cannot do.

• Tell them that you are not able to keep what they have told you secret.

• For children/young people tell them that you will try to find them the help they need.

• For adults in need of care and support, ensure that you ask if they would like you to seek help and subsequently gain their permission (in line with Making Safeguarding Personal, The Care Act, MCA and DoLs principles), please visit https://www.local.gov.uk/msp-toolkit

• When the child/young person or adult has finished talking, make a detailed note of what they have said, using only their words. Then follow the relevant checklist and forms completion, as detailed on the SDC Hub.

• **Do not** contact or confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible.

• Re-assure the child / young person / adult in need of care and support that they have done the right thing.

• Maintain confidentiality and ensure that you inform only your Line Manager at this stage.

10.2 Maintain Confidentiality

It is extremely important that any allegations are not discussed (unless absolutely necessary) as any breaches could be damaging to the child or adult with care and support needs and to any investigation which may follow. Any information given is also subject to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR and confidentiality and security of information must be maintained at all times. SDC's policy can be accessed via this link:

https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/about-the-council/access-to-information/privacy-notice-and-cookie-policy/safeguarding

Any requests for information from members of the public (including parents, guardians or carers) or the media should be directed to the SDC Strategic Safeguarding Lead and Data Protection Officer.

10.3 Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the employee should follow the same safeguarding procedure as detailed in the SDC Safeguarding page on the SDC Hub.

11.0 REVIEW OF SAFEGAURDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The effectiveness and content of this policy will be reviewed by the SDC Corporate Safeguarding Group on an annual basis.

The next review is scheduled for: March 2025

12.0 RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

12.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a statutory duty on first tier councils (county and unitary councils) to prepare a domestic abuse strategy. Gloucestershire County Council has prepared a Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2110605/gcc-domestic-abuse-strategy.pdf

SDC plays an important role in the delivery of the countywide Domestic Abuse Strategy, working in a multi-agency partnership with the Gloucestershire County Council and others including the Police, the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) and Stroud Beresford Women's Refuge. SDC has the following Domestic Abuse policies:

SDC Domestic Abuse Policy for Employees:

https://hub.stroud.gov.uk/media/471262/256-domestic-abuse-policy-2024.docx

SDC Domestic Abuse Policy for SDC Housing Services (Tenants and Leaseholders)

https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2345192/domestic-abuse-policy.pdf

12.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children is the UK Government statutory guidance on multi-agency working to help protect and promote the welfare of children. Access to the latest version can be found via this link:

https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/

13.0 APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A - Additional Legislation and Safeguarding Directives:

There are several specific legislative acts and / or government directives that constitute abuse which could affect both children, young people and adults, as follows:

13.1.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person will have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common. Additionally, involvement in exploitative relationships are being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

More information and guidance can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners

13.1.2 Modern Slavery

There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. It involves people being forced to work through mental or physical threat, owned or controlled by an 'employer' usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse, dehumanised and being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.

More information and guidance on the **Modern Slavery Act 2015** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery-bill

13.1.3 Forced Marriage

In a forced marriage you are coerced into marrying someone against your will. You may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis. It is not the same as an arranged marriage where you have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.

More information and guidance on **Forced Marriage** and the **Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014**, as amended by the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022, can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage

13.1.4 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.

More information and guidance on the **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack

13.1.5 Honour Based Violence (HBV)

HBV is abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours (including crimes), mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community, or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.

It is a form of domestic abuse which relates to a victim who does not abide by the 'rules' of an honour code. This will have been set at the discretion of relatives or community; the victims are punished for bringing shame on the family or community.

13.1.6 Cyber Crime

Cybercrime is defined as criminal activity carried out by means of computers or the internet. Criminals are increasingly exploiting the speed, convenience and anonymity of the internet to commit a diverse range of criminal activities without physical or virtual boarders. These crimes can cause serious harm and pose significant threats to victims worldwide.

More information and guidance on the **Cyber Crime** and the **Data Protection Act 2018** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cyber-laws-updated-to-boost-uks-resilience-against-online-attacks

13.1.7 Stalking

The Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) defines "stalking" as an offence. However, there is no legal definition, but examples include: following or spying on a person or forcing contact with the victim through any means including social media. Any of these examples carried out repeatedly or persistently can cause significant alarm or distress.

More information and guidance on the **Stalking** and the **Stalking Protection Act 2019** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/management-information-stalking-protection-orders/review-of-stalking-protection-orders-accessible-version

13.1.8 Prevent

Prevent is a government strategy which aims to raise awareness and resilience to radicalisation. It recognises that children and vulnerable adults can be susceptible to extremist views and coerced into criminal behaviour.

More information and guidance on **Prevent** and the **Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales

13.1.9 Human Trafficking

Takes place when a victim is moved from one place to another for the purpose of exploitation, this could be through sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced criminality or organ harvesting. The trafficker is able to control and exploit through violence, coercion or deception.

More information and guidance on Human Trafficking and the **Modern Slavery Act 2015** can be found via:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/human-trafficking-migrant-health-guide

13.2 Appendix B – GSCP Section 11 Audit Framework Reportable Standards

Indicators exist under the following standard titles:

- Standard 1 – Leadership and Accountability
- Standard 2 - Staff Safe Recruitment, Induction, Training and Development.
- Standard 3 - Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Standard 4 - Understanding and communicating with and for Children and Young People.

13.3 Appendix C - Types of Harm and / or Abuse

The safeguarding of children, young people and adults, who may be in need of care and support encompasses the following types of harm and/or abuse:

13.3.1 Children & Young People

A child and/or young person may be at risk of abuse in many ways, as detailed by the following:

TYPE	DEFINITION	SIGNS
Emotional	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional Development. Can also include cyber bulling	Conveying to children that they are worthless or inadequate; imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, serious bullying, exploitation, isolation, segregation
Sexual	Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening, including use of images through social media or other IT.	Inappropriate sexual behaviour, use of language, fear of adults, recoiling from physical contact.
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological	Inadequate food, clothing or shelter. Inadequate access to

	needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development	appropriate medical care or treatment, isolation, truanting, lateness
Physical	May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Also includes bullying and cyber bullying	Unexplained bruising, burns, fractures, weight gain or loss, repeat illness.
Domestic Violence	An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit, detachment.
Child Criminal Exploitation	Child criminal exploitation (CCE) takes a variety of forms but ultimately it is the grooming and exploitation of children into criminal activity. Across each form that CCE takes, the current reality is that children who are coerced into criminal activity are often treated as perpetrators by statutory agencies rather than as victims of exploitation. This is in part because safeguarding partners are working to different understandings of what constitutes criminal exploitation. Recently, CCE has become strongly associated with one specific model known as 'county lines', but it can also include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs (often forced to insert drugs in their vagina or anus in a practice known as 'plugging') or money across the country, forced to commit financial fraud, forced to shoplift or pickpocket www.childrenssociety.org.uk	The signs for child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation, can be similar to those regarding emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Additional signs may include: self-harm, someone having a much older boyfriend or girlfriend, association with a known criminal gang, substance misuse, social isolation, disengagement from education, repeated sexual transmitted infections, being estranged from their family, sense of urgency to respond to a caller on a mobile device, having more than one mobile device, missing from home or care placement

These are just some examples and reference to training programme information, advice and guidance should also be taken.

Other information can be accessed via the CCE / CSE GSCP link in section 7.2.5 a) |
| Child Sexual Exploitation | An individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person (under 18 or under 24 for those with special educational needs), into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and / or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. | |

	(Independence Enquiry Child Sexual Abuse)	
Modern Slavery	The trafficking of people, forced labour, servitude, and slavery. Children (under 18) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported, received or harboured for the purpose of exploitation.	There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. It involves people being forced to work through mental or physical threat, owned or controlled by an 'employer' usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse, dehumanised and being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.
Forced Marriage	In a forced marriage you are coerced into marrying someone against your will.	You may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis. It is not the same as an arranged marriage where you have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	FGM is a collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.	Before its happened: Someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad, a special occasion or ceremony taking place for a girl, when she becomes a woman, a family arranges a long holiday overseas, a girl has a long absence from school, girl goes missing or plans to run away. Might have taken place:

Appendix A

		Difficulty walking, spending longer in a bathroom, appearing quiet, anxious or depressed, acting differently after an absence from school or college, reluctance to go to a GP Surgery or have routine medical examinations. www.nspcc.org.uk

13.2.2 Adults, including those who may be in need of Care and Support (Vulnerable Adults)

A vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse in many ways, as detailed in the following:

TYPE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Physical	Physical The non-accidental use of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit, unexplained burns, unexplained fractures.	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit, unexplained burns, unexplained fractures.
Domestic Abuse	An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit.
Sexual	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.	Incontinence, difficulty/discomfort in walking, excessive washing, sexually transmitted diseases, bruising/bleeding in genital areas, bruising, urinary infections.

Emotional / Psychological	Acts or behaviour which impinge on the emotional health of, or which causes distress or anguish to individuals.	Disturbed sleep, anxiety, confusion, extreme submissiveness or dependency, sharp changes in behaviour, loss of confidence or appetite.
Neglect and Acts of Omission	Ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs which result in a situation or environment detrimental to the individual	Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs (incl. dressing), failure to provide access to appropriate health care, withholding medication, adequate nutrition and heating
Financial and Material Abuse (including scams)	Unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of an adult at risk. Scamming and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, unexplained withdrawals of money from accounts, personal possessions going missing, unusual interest by a friend/relative/neighbour in financial matters
Discriminatory	When values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies mainstream opportunities to some groups or individuals. This includes discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment.	Inciting others to commit abusive acts, lack of effective communication, bullying.
Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking / Illegal Working	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced and compulsory labour and domestic servitude	Poverty, isolation, drug and alcohol misuse
Institutional/ Organisational	Where the culture of the organisations places the emphasis on the running of the establishment above the needs and care of the person	Lack of care plans, contact with the outside world not encouraged, no flexibility or lack of choice

Appendix A

Self-neglect	Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding	A deterioration in physical appearance, lack of grooming, rapid weight gain/loss
Honour Based Violence	HBV is abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours, including crimes.	Mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.
Forced Marriage	A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. www.gov.uk	In a forced marriage you are coerced into marrying someone against your will. You may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis. It is not the same as an arranged marriage where you have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.
Female Genital Mutilation FGM)	FGM is a collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.	Before its happened: Someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad, a special occasion or ceremony taking place for a girl, when she becomes a woman, a family arranges a long holiday overseas, a girl has a long absence from school, girl goes missing or plans to run away. Might have taken place: Difficulty walking, spending longer in a bathroom, appearing quiet, anxious or depressed, acting differently after an absence from school or college, reluctance to go to a GP Surgery or have routine medical examinations. www.nspcc.org.uk

Cyber Crime	Cybercrime is defined as criminal activity carried out by means of computers or the internet.	Criminals are increasingly exploiting the speed, convenience and anonymity of the internet to commit a diverse range of criminal activities without physical or virtual boarders. These crimes can cause serious harm and pose significant threats to victims worldwide.
Stalking	The Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) defines "stalking" as an offence.	However, there is no legal definition, but examples include: following or spying on a person or forcing contact with the victim through any means including social media. Any of these examples carried out repeatedly or persistently can cause significant alarm or distress.

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Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

> **By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:**
>
> **The Equality Act 2010 states that:**
>
> *A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –*
>
> *(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;*
> *(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
> *(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*
>
> **The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9**
>
> **Stroud District Equality data can be found at:**
> **https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/**
>
> **Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.**
>
> **Guidance available on the HUB**

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Steve Miles	**Telephone:** N/A
	E-Mail: steve.miles@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Community Services	**Date of Assessment:** 23/02/2024

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide

Is this new or an existing one?

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The policy and procedures guide ensures that Stroud District Council (SDC), are aware of their legal obligations in meeting its responsibilities to safeguarding children, young people, and adults with a consistent approach across the organisation. The policy and procedures guide applies to SDC staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.

1

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

Yes – Legislation and those directives given by UK Government. Details are defined in the policy and procedures guide.

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

Children, Young People, and Adults who come into contact with SDC staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors, and partners through delivery of any SDC services. They will be protected from harm and supported to gain good access to support services, remain well and thrive.

6. What outcomes are expected?

SDC has a legal duty of care to protect all children, young people and adults, who come into contact with our services. Subsequently, we need to ensure that people are supported to gain good access to support services, remain well and thrive. Through good safeguarding practices and the following of procedures, particularly with regards to safeguarding concerns and incidents, people will receive as good an outcome as possible, if they are subject to a safeguarding matter.

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment?: (eg Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

Knowledge already known and research carried out (to formulate the policy and procedures guide), regarding the legal duties of SDC and the safeguarding arrangements in Gloucestershire.

SDC have safeguarding duties in-line with the Childrens Act (2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (*2018), the Care Act (2014) and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2014), Mental Health Capacity Act (2005), and Deprivation of Liberty Standards (2007).

*The Statutory Guidance was revised by UK Government in December 2023 and is subject to assessment by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership, with full implementation of new arrangements across the partnership due within 12 months.

8. Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees

The revised SDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Guide has been compiled through the work of the cross-services Corporate Safeguarding Group.

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9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to children and young people aged, 0 to 17 and adults aged 18 and over. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide clearly states its relation to people of all ages.
Disability	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to people with disabilities. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable those with disabilities to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Gender Re-assignment	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to people that are experiencing (or have experienced) gender re-assignment. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable those experiencing (or have experienced) gender re-assignment to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Pregnancy & Maternity	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to people who are pregnant or experiencing maternity. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable those who are pregnant or experiencing maternity, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Race	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to all people regardless of their racial identity or origin. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable all people regardless of their racial identity or origin, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Religion – Belief	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to all people regardless of their religion or belief.

	The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable all people regardless of their religion or belief, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Sex	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to all people regardless of their sex or gender. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable all people regardless of their sex or gender, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Sexual Orientation	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to all people regardless of their sexual orientation. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable all people regardless of their sexual orientation, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	The safeguarding policy and procedures guide relates to all people regardless of their marital status. The impact on their welfare is positive, in that the guide details procedures that will enable all people regardless of their marital status, to be protected through the robust practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf.
Rural considerations: Ie Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Whilst the safeguarding policy and procedures guide does not consider any specific rural factors regarding equality, the practices of staff, elected members, volunteers, contractors and partners delivering services on the Council's behalf, should do so. By their nature and in response to other relevant Council policies and strategies, services are designed and delivered with rural considerations akin to the Stroud district.

10. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?

Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	Lead officer	Resource	Timescale

Declaration
I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function * (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment

Completed by: Steve Miles	**Date:** 23/02/2024
Role: Senior Youth Officer & Operational Safeguarding Lead	
Countersigned by Director: K G	**Date: 05.03.24**

Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to policy@stroud.gov.uk

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Official - Financial

Agenda Item 8

Audit Risk Assurance

Protect

Safeguarding Framework
Appendix C

SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

FINAL REPORT

December 2023

CONTENTS

1.   Introduction

1.1   An audit on Safeguarding was included as part of the Internal Audit 2023-24 plan. We have reviewed the procedures and controls in place regarding the Council's arrangements in respect of safeguarding for vulnerable children and adults.

1.2   The reporting aspect of this document is broken down into the following sections:

- **Executive Summary:** This summarises both the good practice and the main issues arising from this review;

- **Audit Opinion:** This summarises the overall assurance level that can be given for the service area reviewed based on findings from Audit testing;

- **Control Objectives:** This details the key control areas tested for the service area under review and the assurance level determined for each area; and

- **Management Action Plan:** This details the recommendations that address the management issues identified by the review, together with the risk priority levels, agreed actions, officer(s) responsible and timescale(s) for implementation.

1.3   Internal Audit advice and recommendations are given without prejudice. We reserve the right to review and make further recommendations on relevant policies, procedures, risks, controls, and operations later.

1.4   This report will be submitted to the Audit and Standards Committee scheduled for the 30th of January 2024 in the public part of the meeting. Transcript

1.5   This Internal Audit review has been undertaken in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the CIPFA Local Government Application Note (LGAN).

2.   Executive Summary

2.1   Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, or neglect. The Council has a statutory responsibility and a duty of care under the Childrens Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014. It refers issues relating to Safeguarding to the Gloucestershire County Council Social Care Service and other partner agencies.

2.2   The main findings from this audit are highlighted below:

2.3   There is a Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) with cross-departmental representation of senior officers and Terms of Reference put in place in July 2023. Its purpose is to support the strategic and operational matters in the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults. We confirmed that the CSG has started regular meetings and notes are taken.

2.4   Both the Safeguarding Policy and Guide are available on the Council's website and intranet and included in the Strategies and Policies Register. The guide has provided details on practices and procedures as well as escalation processes**.**

2.5   Levels 1 and 2 Safeguarding training for Children and Adults are mandatory for all staff in an e-learning module and is included in the starters' induction programme. Refresher training is required every two years.

2.6   Processes for raising, investigating, recording and referral to the appropriate agencies are provided for in the Safeguarding Guide and included in the training module. An online portal has recently been put in place (August 2023) for reporting safeguarding concerns. Guidance notes for using the online portal have also been provided.

2.7   We established that recruitment adverts included**: '**Our organisation is committed to safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults, young people, and children. Safer recruitment practices are applied to all job vacancies.**'**

2.8   There is no risk management process in place for safeguarding. Potential risks associated with safeguarding processes have not been captured nor managed.

2.9   The current Safeguarding Policy has not been developed in line with the Council's Policy Development and Review Framework (PDRF). This outlines the process for development, monitoring and formal review of policies at Stroud District Council (SDC). The policy currently is not version controlled nor has a document owner assigned. There is no summary of changes, responsibility for document review and approval and frequency of updates. We understand a review process is currently on-going.

2.10   The Council's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy was last reviewed in July 2017 with no evidence that it reflects current practices. Furthermore, the document is not in line with the Council Policy template.

2.11   There is no monitoring mechanism in place to provide assurance that a key partner (UBICO) whose staff have regular face to face contacts with the public is meeting SDC's safeguarding expectations.

2.12   Housing Services use a questionnaire to determine whether its contractors require DBS checks. However, there is no monitoring process in place to provide assurance that the contractor is meeting these requirements including when renewals are required.

2.13   Safeguarding briefings are provided to the Community and Licensing Committee on request. The last such update was in June 2023 and provided a summary of activities from 2021 to 2023 as well as updates on referrals and multi-agency work. More regular updates incorporating statistics of cases reported and handled as well as originating sources of cases, would improve the reporting.

2.14   In some cases, reports recording safeguarding concerns were not fully completed with no formal process for capturing feedback from the respective agencies.

2.15   Although Safeguarding Adults and Children Levels 1 and 2 training are mandatory for all staff, we noted seven other safeguarding training courses available to staff. There is currently no defined process to demonstrate who should be undertaking the various safeguarding training courses. There is currently a risk that inadequate safeguarding training is being rolled out where the requirements are not aligned to the duties pertaining to the roles.

3.   Audit Opinion

3.1   Our opinion is based on the documentation examined and the evaluation and sample testing of the system and processes in place. We conclude that overall, the existing procedures and controls provide an Acceptable Assurance level in meeting the control objectives for the area under review.

3.2   We have identified areas where improvements can be made to enhance the existing control environment. Internal Audit observations and recommendations should be taken into context within the overall conclusion.

4.   Control Objectives

Control Objective	Assurance Level			
	Substantial	**Acceptable**	**Limited**	**No**
Oversight Arrangements				
1. The Council has identified the legislative requirements that it must conform to, in order to meet its Safeguarding duties.	✓			
2. A framework for management and oversight of its conformance to meet its Safeguarding duties has been adopted and is subject to periodic review.		✓		
Policy and Guide				
3. The Council has an effective Safeguarding policy, framework, and escalation process.		✓		
Roles and Responsibilities				
4. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and include adequate oversight arrangements.		✓		

Control Objective		Assurance Level			
		Substantial	**Acceptable**	**Limited**	**No**
	Disclosure and Barring checks				
5.	Safer Recruitment, DBS Policy or similar has been developed and approved and is subject to periodic review.		✓		
6.	Process in place for identifying staff requiring DBS checks.		✓		
7.	Safeguarding arrangements for partners and relevant third parties are aligned with the standards of the Council.		✓		
8.	DBS checks where relevant are undertaken, captured and follow up actions are completed as required.		✓		
	Training				
9.	All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults complete Safeguarding training modules, and subsequent refresher sessions.	✓			
10.	Non-completion of training is monitored and escalated.		✓		
11.	There is a process for identifying all those requiring training including volunteers.			✓	
	Safeguarding Concerns				
12.	Safeguarding concerns are adequately recorded, investigated, followed-up, and reporting is timely.		✓		
	Risk Management				
13.	The risks of the area are captured in a risk register, include mitigating controls, and are regularly monitored by management.			✓	

Table Explanation

4.1   An assessment of the assurance level that can be relied upon for each of the control objectives reviewed is summarised in the table above. The following criteria are used:

       i.   Substantial assurance – all key controls are in place and working effectively with no exceptions or reservations. The Authority has a low exposure to business risk;

      ii.   Acceptable assurance – all key controls are in place and working but there are some reservations in connection with the operational effectiveness of some key controls. The authority has a medium to low exposure to business risk;

     iii.   Limited assurance – not all key controls are in place or are working effectively. The Authority has a high to medium exposure to business risk;

     iv.   No assurance – no key controls are in place or no key controls are working effectively. The Authority has a high exposure to business risk.

4.2   Where a recommendation is a high-risk priority, then the control objective to which it relates, will not be allocated more than a limited assurance level. This will not necessarily impact on the conclusion regarding the overall assurance level for the service area under review.

4.3   If the assurance level is 'Limited' or 'No' this does not automatically confirm there is a high-risk recommendation but where allocated the reason is given below the table.

5.   **Acknowledgement**

5.1   The Auditor would like to thank all of the staff involved for their help and co-operation during the audit.

6.   **Report Issue**

6.1   This report will be issued to:

- Strategic Director of Communities
- Strategic Director of Policy and Resources
- Head of Community Services
- Head of Human Resources
- Strategic Head of Housing Services
- Senior Policy and Governance Officer
- Information Governance Officer
- Community Services Manager
- Senior Youth Officer
- Community Engagement Manager

7. Summary of Recommendations Made by Priority

7.1 Recommendations arising from this review have been prioritised as:

High Priority: 2
Medium Priority: 10
Low Priority: 2
Rejected: 0

8. Audit Limitations

8.1 The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the audit from sample testing undertaken, examination of documents and discussion with staff. The responsibility for a sound system of internal controls and for managing risks, including for fraud and corruption, rests with management.

8.2 The work of Internal Audit should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses that may exist or all the improvements that might be made. It may not identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity should there be any. However, audit procedures have been designed to give a reasonable probability of discovery of any material irregularities.

Management Action Plan

9.

Risk   For audit purposes risk is the chance of error, financial loss or fraud remaining undetected if effective controls are not in place or require improvement. Internal Audit prioritises review recommendations as:

High Risk   Action that is considered necessary to ensure that the Council is not exposed to serious levels of risk. This includes breaches of legislation, statutory duty, Council policies and procedures or to the potential for financial loss or fraud. Controls are either not in place or are ineffective.

Medium Risk   Action that is considered necessary to ensure exposure to high risk is prevented. Existing controls need improving.

Low Risk   Action that is considered desirable and should result in enhanced control or better value for money.

Priority levels for recommendations reflect the relative risk to the Council, when considering the overall control environment and financial implications in relation to the potential for fraud or loss.

Recommendation Monitoring

Action Owners should enter all accepted recommendations into the Council's Performance Management System. As management actions are progressed, the system should be updated to reflect the status. Completion dates for the agreed actions should be regularly monitored to ensure that these remain on target. Where slippage occurs, a revised target date should be agreed with the relevant Strategic Director.

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
1	We established from our discussions with the Head of Community Services and Operational Lead for Safeguarding that there are currently no risk management processes in place for safeguarding or	Inappropriate management of the associated risks. Inadequate controls may not be identified and corrected.	High	Management should put a risk management process in place for the administration of safeguarding concerns and issues. This should involve working with relevant departments to completely capture all	A risk management process for the administration of safeguarding concerns will be developed and put in place.	Angela Gillingham

Head of Community Services

31 March 2024 |

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Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	mitigating controls to manage associated risks.			risks associated with safeguarding. Mitigating controls should be put in place with assigned owners and subject to regularly review to ensure they are fit for purpose.		
2	Levels 1 and 2 Safeguarding training for Children and Adults is mandatory for all staff with requirement for refresher every two years. It is an e-learning module and is included in the starters' induction. We also noted from HR records that there are seven other safeguarding modules. There is, however, no defined process or criteria for determining which roles should be undertaking the various safeguarding courses.	There is currently a risk that inadequate safeguarding training is being rolled out where the requirements are not aligned to the duties pertaining to the roles.	High	Safeguarding training courses should be aligned to the respective roles in ensuring that there is a defined process in determining the requirements for each role. This could be part of the on-going Job Evaluation Project.	Defined process to be put in place to align job roles and safeguarding training requirements to provide the requisite training. Training requirements regarding mandatory and refreshers will be restated in the revised policy and guide.	Lucy Powell Head of Human Resources 31 March 2024
3	The Council has a Safeguard Policy and Guide on its website and	The Safeguarding Policy and Guide may not reflect current	Medium	The Safeguard Policy should be developed in line with the Council	The CSG is currently working on a revised Safeguard Policy to	Steve Miles

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	intranet and available to all staff. The guide has provided details on practices and procedures as well as escalation process. Both the guide and Policy were updated in March 2022 with review dates scheduled for June 2023. Vulnerable adult and child flow charts are in place to provide for procedures to follow where concerns are raised. We established from our review that the Safeguarding Policy is included in the Council's Strategies and Polices Register. SDC has a Policy Development and Review Framework (PDRF) which outlines the process for development, monitoring and formal review of policies. The	practices and not meet management's expectations.		Policy Development and Review Framework (PDRF). Safeguard Policy and Guide should be reviewed regularly in line with its own procedures to reflect current practices and provide accurate information.	reflect current practices. The draft policy will be shared with the CSG prior to approval by members. The revised Safeguard Policy will be in line with the Council Policy Development and Review Framework (PDRF).	Senior Youth Officer 30 April 2024

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Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	Safeguarding Policy is currently not in line with the template suggested by the PDRF including document version control, document owner, summary of changes, responsibility for document review and approval and frequency of updates. There have been changes to the Strategic Leads for safeguarding, but this has not been reflected in the Guide. Internal Audit understand the Policy is currently being reviewed.					
4	We reviewed the contractual arrangements with a key partner and established that they have provided SDC with their policy on Safeguarding Children and Adults with Care and Support Needs. The third party partner's staff have	Limited controls in place posing risk of non-compliance with safeguarding requirements in respect of the use of key third party partners.	Medium	In contractual arrangements with key partners with potential contacts with children and vulnerable adults, there should be a monitoring process in place to ensure key safeguarding	Spot checks of the third party partner's records to be undertaken periodically to provide assurance that safeguarding requirements are being met.	Michael Towson Community Services Manager 31 January 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	regular face to face interactions with the public. However, there is no monitoring mechanism in place to ensure that Council's requirements in respect of safeguarding are being met and in line with the expected standards.			requirements are being met.		
5	The Council has a DBS Policy in place setting out the approach that it will take when recruiting people to work with children and or vulnerable adults. The DBS Policy was last reviewed in July 2017 with no evidence that it has been subject to regular review to reflect current practices. Furthermore, the document is not in line with the Council Policy template, with no version control, document ownership not assigned, and review dates not provided.	The DBS policy may be out of date and not reflect current regulatory requirements nor practices.	Medium	The DBS Policy should be subject to regular review to demonstrate that it reflects current practices and should be developed in line with the Council's Policy Framework template.	The DBS Policy to be reviewed and will be developed in line with the Council's Policy Framework template.	Lucy Powell Head of Human Resources 31 March 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
6	Housing Services uses a questionnaire to determine whether its contractors require DBS checks. However, there is no monitoring process in place to provide assurance that the contractors identified are meeting these requirements.	Non-compliance with DBS requirements could occur.	Medium	Where applicable, DBS certification for contractors engaged by Housing Services could be subject to periodic monitoring considering renewal periods.	Spot checks to be undertaken to ensure that DBS certification for contractors engaged by Housing Services are current	Tara Skidmore Head of Assets & Investment (Council Housing) 31 January 2024
7	The Safeguarding Guide requires volunteers working with children, young people, and adults (and delivering regular recorded sessions) to undertake DBS checks. We selected the arrangement at the Canal Restoration Project for review and noted that, DBS certification may be required for volunteers regularly engaged and have front line duties. Their DBS accreditation may be inspected but no records are maintained to	Potential risk that non-compliance with DBS checks could occur if inspections are not evidenced for volunteers.	Medium	Records should be maintained to evidence checks have been undertaken of relevant volunteers DBS accreditations.	Records will be maintained to evidence DBS checks undertaken for volunteers.	Sarah Burgess Community Engagement Manager 31 January 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	evidence such checks have been undertaken.					
8	SDC is a partner organisation in the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children and Adult Partnerships. Within SDC, there is the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) with cross-departmental representation and Terms of Reference (TOR), put in place in July 2023. The TOR was approved by the group at the last meeting on 13 July 2023 and is to be agreed by the SLT later. The CSG met in April and May 2023 and notes maintained. Our review showed the absence of action plan for agreed actions, responsibilities for such actions and proposed implementation dates to assist the monitoring and following up processes.	The absence of action plans and ownerships for agreed actions within CSG minutes would not ensure they are followed up to satisfactory conclusions.	Medium	Minutes of meetings of the Corporate Safeguarding Group should contain action plans to adequately record agreed actions, responsibility for those actions and when they are required to be implemented. This will ensure actions are appropriately monitored and followed up at subsequent meetings.	An excel based Action Log is being introduced and to be agreed by the CSG to evidence actions taken, assigned action owners and proposed implementation dates. In addition, the CSG Terms of reference will be presented to the SLT for approval.	Steve Miles

Senior Youth Officer

31 January 2024 |

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
9	Safeguarding briefings are provided to the Community and Licensing Committee on request. We reviewed the last such update for June 2023 which provided a summary of activities from 2021 to 2023 as well as updates on referrals and multi-agency work. The current arrangement is undertaken on request with no defined periods for reporting. The reports did not provide statistics of cases handled and reported, areas within the council where cases originated in order to enhance members scrutiny.	Infrequent or incomplete reporting to the Community and Licensing Committing on safeguarding activities would not ensure appropriate oversight arrangement.	Medium	Oversight of safeguarding activities by the Community and Licensing Committee should involve defined periods for reporting with information on statistics, source and size of cases handled to enhance the scrutiny process.	Currently briefings are provided to the Community and Licensing Committee on request. Management to explore whether regular reporting on safeguarding to members will be useful. This is to be discussed by the CSG and dialogue to be held with SLT and if required to be included in procedures.	Steve Miles Senior Youth Officer 30 April 2024
10	Processes for raising, investigating, recording and referral to the appropriate agencies are provided for in the Safeguarding Guide and	There is a potential risk that records pertaining to safeguard incidents and concerns are not completely captured which could have adverse	Medium	The oversight arrangements concerning safeguard incidents and concerns should ensure that all the required information is completely captured	The forms examined by Internal Audit were internal reports which had been labelled as 'Referral Forms'. Management will clarify and correct this	Steve Miles Senior Youth Officer 30 April 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	included in the training module. A spread sheet is maintained to record all such cases including outcomes and referencing. We selected eight incidents and concerns raised between 10/07/23 and 04/08/23 and confirmed that in all cases supporting documentation was maintained. There were two cases from the sample of eight examined, where the reports have not recorded the actions taken or outcomes although these were reflected in the summary spread sheet. In both cases the Case Log section on the reports have not been completed. In one case, the report has not been signed by the responsible officer**.**	consequences in the event of further incidents and concerns with associated legal considerations.		on the associated reports. Feedback from concerns and incidents referred to relevant agencies should be appropriately captured. This could be incorporated in the procedures.	misunderstanding in the development of the revised policy and guide. This is to ensure that safeguarding concerns or incidents need to be reported internally and (if thresholds are met), sent as a referral to the respective agency. The language used by staff (verbal and written) is important and can be corrected if necessary, via training and familiarisation of our revised policy and guide.	

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Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	Furthermore, there is no formal nor defined process for capturing feedback or outcomes from the agencies to whom the cases have been reported.					
11	Regulatory requirements relating to the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding has been provided for in the Guide and on the Council's intranet but not in the Policy document. There is currently an on-going review of the Policy.	Limited staff awareness of safeguarding legal requirements.	Low	In the review of the Safeguarding Policy, the regulatory requirements pertaining to the framework could be included to enhance staff awareness.	The regulatory requirements pertaining to safeguarding framework to be included in the revised Safeguard Policy	Steve Miles Senior Youth Officer 30 April 2024
12	The safeguarding Guide sets out roles and responsibilities. Safeguarding Leads have been provided on the concerns and incidents reporting forms with cross departmental representation. We selected a sample from the museum to confirm that safeguarding responsibilities are	Roles and responsibilities for safeguarding are not well defined in all cases and information not communicated in the policy nor guide to create adequate awareness	Medium	Management could include safeguarding responsibilities in the job description for all identifiable key safeguarding roles. To create adequate awareness, information on safeguarding reporting leads could be included in the	Standard template to be introduced to capture key safeguarding roles in order to incorporate safeguarding responsibilities in job descriptions. Safeguarding reporting leads to be included in the revised policy.	Lucy Powell Head of Human Resources 31 March 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	included in the job description for Deputy Safeguard Lead (Learning & Access Officer) but not in that of the Safeguard Lead. We also examined job descriptions for an Executive Assistant and Casual Lifeguard to confirm DBS and Safeguarding responsibilities are included. Information on reporting leads for safeguarding have not been provided for in the Safeguard policy nor guide to provide appropriate awareness to staff.			Safeguarding Guide and Policy.		
13	We reviewed a sample of 20 staff where DBS checks were required and noted that HR maintains records of all DBS checks undertaken but not all have been captured in their records. There were	There is a potential risk that roles requiring DBS checks may not be identified, captured, and complied.	Medium	HR could review the records maintained in conjunction with relevant departments in ensuring that roles where DBS checks are required are completely and accurately captured. Appropriate records	DBS records to be reviewed to ensure they are accurate and complete.	Lucy Powell Head of Human Resources 31 January 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	missing records from the sample, which we could only verify through renewal notices issued**.** We noted four cases from the sample of 20 where DBS checks have not been undertaken although the roles have key safeguarding responsibilities. These related to Senior Community Services Officer, Senior Housing Advice Officer, and Senior Recovery Officer roles. We were advised that HR contacted managers earlier this year to establish which job roles required a DBS check and this is being used as a guide for new starters and renewals.			should then be maintained on completion of checks.		
14	In addition to the Corporate Policy, the Museum in the Park has its own specific Safeguard Guidance document which is	Inadequate instructions on the safeguarding arrangements in respect of work experience students.	Low	The Safeguard Guide should provide staff with specific instructions on the use of work experience students.	Instructions regarding the use of work experience students to be discussed at CSG and included in the	Steve Miles Senior Youth Officer 30 April 2024

Ref	Observation	Risk / Opportunity	Priority Level	Recommendation	Managers Comments	Action by Date
	consistent with the Policy. Amongst others, this provides instructions on the use of front of the house staff or services and work experience students. This could be relevant for other sectors of the Council such as the Canal Restoration Project.				revised policy and guide.	

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REPORT OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE SECTION 11 AUDIT

2022

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Report of the Gloucestershire Section 11 Audit 2022

Contents

1

1. INTRODUCTION

Overview and Purpose

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, places a duty on a range of organisations and agencies, to ensure that their functions are discharged in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. Each year the GSCP requires all relevant organisations to assess how they are meeting their statutory responsibilities and to provide assurance that they continue to comply with four key standards.

- Leadership and accountability.
- Staff safe recruitment, induction, and workforce development.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Listening to children and young people.

The 'Section 11 Audit' is an annual self-assessment process, with organisations providing the outcome of their analysis to an audit panel. This process is completed for two reasons:

a) To update the safeguarding partnership as to how organisations are complying with their statutory responsibilities and to alert the executive to any issues of concern.

b) To identify best practice and to support organisations to continually improve the way in which they promote the welfare of children and young people.

The audit does not seek to measure the effectiveness of partnership safeguarding activity or procedures, which are matters assessed through other measures. This report summarises the outcomes of the November 2022 audit.

Methodology

In 2022, a new methodology was agreed by the safeguarding partnership, involving a four stage process led by the independent scrutineer. It is intended that this will be fully implemented for the November 2023 audit, when each organisation will be asked to:

a) Update on the outcome of recommendations from the previous annual audit.

b) Provide an overview of any recent organisational inspection, including details of any recommendations that are relevant to how duties under the Children Act are discharged.

c) Complete a written self-assessment as to compliance with the four key standards.

d) Consider attendance at a question and answer audit panel, to examine how organisations seek and listen to the views of families, children, and young people. The panel will be led by young people[1] and facilitated by the independent scrutineer.

During a phased implementation of this process, the November 2022 audit was restricted to the submission of a written self-assessment and attendance at the question and answer panel.

Responses and Outcome

Written responses were received from all organisations asked to participate in the audit[2]. All assessed themselves as complying with their statutory responsibilities, providing evidence as to how this had been achieved. Each organisation highlighted best practice that could be shared across the partnership and also outlined areas where future development would improve the services provided. The written submissions are held by the GSCP business unit.

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[1] Supported by members of the Stroud District Youth Council.
[2] Full list attached at Appendix A.

A number of organisations also volunteered to meet with the audit panel, led by members[3] of the Stroud District Youth Council (SDYC), to discuss how the views of families and young people may be effectively sought and considered. Both the SDYC and the GSCP are grateful to those who attended the panel session and for their valuable contributions.

About this Report

All organisations participating in the Section 11 Audit assessed themselves as complying with their statutory responsibilities and having analysed the information presented, the audit panel agreed with this assessment. During the audit good practice was identified, in addition to areas for improvement. The purpose of this report is therefore:

1. To inform the GSCP Executive that all agencies have met the minimum standards in relation to the duties imposed upon them by the Children Act.

2. To highlight examples of best practice to be considered by all organisations.

3. To highlight areas of concern which should be considered by the Executive.

The information contained within the report is purposely anonymised, with the detailed analysis and the evidence underpinning it held by the GSCP business unit.

2. ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICE

A bullet point summary of good practice is provided below, framed within the four key standards. All organisations are invited to consider these examples and consider how they may be incorporated into their own procedures. Should anyone require further information, the GSCP business unit and the independent scrutineer would be pleased to help.

Standard 1: Leadership and Accountability

- Organisations and local councils[4] (District and Borough) have an identified senior lead for safeguarding. At Senior Leadership Team meetings, safeguarding is a standing agenda item.

- Leaders and managers receive a higher level of safeguarding training, to ensure that policies are implemented effectively and staff are supported.

- Leadership teams widely promote an understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), supported by a staff training program to develop a child first culture.

- The introduction of a trauma informed culture to working with children and young people.

- Tewksbury Council working with the local housing partnership, to review and improve the housing offer to care leavers.

- Where external agencies are contracted to provide relevant goods and services, they must have systems in place to comply with safeguarding responsibilities. This must meet the standards of the commissioning organisation and providers must make references to this during the tendering process.

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[3] The members who kindly supported the audit are detailed at Appendix B.
[4] Term 'local council' used within this report to describe the district and borough councils in Gloucestershire.

- Any voluntary sector group that receives a financial grant must comply with the commissioning organisation's safeguarding policies.

Standard 2: Staff Safe Recruitment, Induction, and Workforce Development

- Safeguarding training is included within the induction programme for all new staff, supported by guidance in a 'new starters' handbook. This includes specific training on the child neglect toolkit, modern day slavery, and domestic abuse.

- New staff are provided a mentor, who has an enhanced awareness of safeguarding.

- Level 2 safeguarding training is mandatory for all public facing staff.

- Staff within the human resources department have completed the safer recruitment training.

- Group supervision and training sessions are offered with the support of Microsoft Teams to enable staff attendance.

- A monthly safeguarding newsletter is distributed across the organisation, with themed safeguarding practice areas.

- Engagement with the multi-agency training offer, provided by the GSCP.

Standard 3: Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

- The development of new integrated safeguarding policies for people of all ages, to coordinate the safeguarding work of adults and children.

- Developing an understanding and preparing for the introduction of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS). This will replace the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) and will apply to young people from 16yrs of age.

- The GCSP escalation policy (resolving professional differences) has been circulated to all staff, with guidance in its use.

Standard 4: Listening to Children and Young People

- The SDYC has proven to be an excellent way of engaging with young people and ensuring that Stroud District Council has a child and young person focus. As described by the council representative attending the Q&A panel - "Everything that we do involves young people, they are statutory partners". The work of the SDYC has been recognised nationally as best practice, receiving an award from the British Youth Council in 2020.

- Organisations using the Hear by Right Standards[5], to develop best practice for youth participation. This supports organisations to plan, develop, and evaluate their practices and provision.

- Use of the Gloucestershire Young Ambassadors to support the development of new working practices and to help ensure that services and provisions consider the needs of children and young people.

- Use of the Gloucestershire Young Ambassadors to mentor senior leaders and to encourage their involvement in the development of new initiatives.

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[5] https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1605103/item-5-appendix-d-hear-by-right-introduction-nya.pd

- Using children, young people, and families in the development of services and to participate in quality audits to improve current practice.

- Cheltenham Borough Council's use of the No Child Left Behind Campaign[6], a programme that seeks to break down the barriers that poverty creates to an equal access to education.

- Cheltenham Borough Council's partnership with the University of Gloucestershire for an evidenced based approach to solving problems that affect young people. For example, the rise in eating disorders; and young person satisfaction rates with their schools.

- Cheltenham Borough Council's partnership with schools, to seek the views of young people whilst designing new services. An excellent initiative that includes the provision of resources to schools enabling this engagement, elected members going into schools, and inviting young people to present their findings at council meetings.

- Local councils ensuring that providers conduct effective consultation for the services they are commissioned to provide. This includes a requirement that findings from consultations are shared with the local councils.

Recommendation 1:	*Each organisation should consider the best practice outlined within this report and consider how it may be used to further improve their services. A summary of action taken and its impact will be requested during the 2023 Section 11 Audit.*

3. AREAS OF CONCERN AND FOR DEVELOPMENT

The audit identified three issues that should be considered by the safeguarding partnership.

A. Local councils – In particular a widely held view that they do not provide services to children or young people and therefore do not have a requirement to engage with them to identify and consider needs.

B. Gloucestershire Constabulary – The findings of the 2021-2022 PEEL Inspection, a matter that the partnership is aware of and that the constabulary is actively addressing. This requires monitoring and where necessary supportive challenge from partners.

C. Gloucestershire County Council's compliance outside of Childrens Social Care (CSC). Currently the authority is visible and compliant if measured against CSC. The author cannot comment on the rest of the authority's departments with a duty under S11 of the children Act.

A) Local Councils (District and Borough Councils)

Whilst the audit panel found some excellent examples of how local councils are able to engage with children and young people, this was not consistent across Gloucestershire. Out of the six local councils, only two had a culture of considering the needs of children and young people.

The other four local councils articulated a view that they only provided services to adults and did not have a requirement to engage with children and young people. To their credit, two of these councils accepted that they needed to do more and would like to learn from the best practice developed in other areas. The remaining two councils declined to accept that they had any responsibility to children

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[6] https://nochildleftbehind.org.uk/about

or young people. This view was in contrast to the two districts who saw young people as statutory partners and it is a view that caused the audit panel concern.

It is recommended that the GSP and local councils develop a vision as to how the needs and views of children and young people should be considered. Once this vision has been agreed, then the GSCP Districts Sub-group would be an excellent forum to share best practice and support councils to improve the efficacy of services provided to children and young people.

Recommendation 2:	*It is recommended that the GSCP and the district and borough councils develop a vision as to how the needs and views of children and young people should be consistently considered within the County.*

B) Gloucestershire Constabulary

The HMICFRS 2021-2022 PEEL Inspection considered the effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy of the Constabulary. The inspection report outlined a number of findings that may impact the constabulary's ability to protect children and manage dangerous offenders.

The GSCP is fully sighted on these issues and the Constabulary has an improvement plan in place. It is recommended that the GSCP keeps track on the progress of this improvement plan and how this delivers positive outcomes for children and young people.

Recommendation 3:	*The GSCP should track progress of the constabulary's response to the 2021-2022 HMICFRS PEEL Inspection and where appropriate provide supportive challenge.*

C) Gloucestershire County Council

GCC compliance with S11 resides primarily with GCC Children Social Care and Commissioning. Where GCC engage with the S11 process there is clear evidence of compliance, as would be expected. However, Working Together 2018 and the Children Act 2004 under section 11 names the authority as a whole as a safeguarding partner.

GCC Adult Social Care do submit a S11 report, but as with some of the districts they too have commented that they do not work with children. Their engagement, whilst welcome, would benefit from engaging with the Independent Scrutineer (I.S.) and attending the Panel Day to develop a broader recognition of their Children Act 2004 S11 duties.

However, the totality of GCC is not represented and is not visible to the GSCP through the S11 process. Any part of the authority that comes into contact with children, and or adults responsible for children, are required to consider their safeguarding duties starting with S11 of the Children Act 2004. The Education Department, Libraries and Registration Service, and Integrated Transport etc. are not visible through this process at all. There would be benefit in including all GCC departments in this process.

Recommendation 4:	*The GSCP should seek assurances that GCC as a whole is included in future S11 submissions and ask the Authority to work with the GSCP Business Unit and Independent Scrutineer to determine how this can be addressed in 2023.*

4. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Concluding Comments

The audit panel would like to thank all organisations for their engagement with the audit process and for the information provided. I would particularly like to thank those who gave their valuable time to meet with the audit panel led by the Stroud Youth Council. During the audit a great deal of best practice was identified and I look forward to seeing how organisations use this learning to continually improve services provided to children, young people, and their families.

Preparation for the 2023 Audit

During the 2023 Section 11 audit, organisations will be asked to provide specific information as outlined earlier in this report. To support preparation for that audit it would be helpful for the safeguarding partnership to complete the following as soon as possible:

a) Write to all organisations informing them of the 2023 process and the timetable. Including the need to provide details of recent organisational inspections and a written self-assessment.

b) Produce and distribute the question set for the 2023 written assessment, so that organisations can consider the safeguarding standards during organisational planning. It is recommended that the current four key standards are retained, with a specific question asking what organisational improvement has taken place and how the best practice outlined in this report has been considered. This will help to show impact of the section 11 audit process.

c) Agree a date for the Section 11 Panel to meet organisations and encourage participation with the panel led by young people.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1:	*Each organisation should consider the best practice outlined within this report and consider how it may be used to further improve their services. A summary of action taken and its impact will be requested during the 2023 Section 11 Audit.*
Recommendation 2:	*It is recommended that the GSCP and the district and borough councils develop a vision as to how the needs and views of children and young people should be consistently considered within the County.*
Recommendation 3:	*The GSCP should track progress of the constabulary's response to the 2021-2022 HMICFRS PEEL Inspection and where appropriate provide supportive challenge.*
Recommendation 4:	*The GSCP should seek assurances that GCC as a whole is included in future S11 submissions and ask the Authority to work with the GSCP Business Unit and Independent Scrutineer to determine how this can be addressed in 2023.*

APPENDIX A – PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

Agency	Comment
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCAS)	Provided a National Response
Cheltenham Borough Council	
Cotswold and Forest of Dean District Councils	Presented by the Publica Group[7]
Gloucester City Council	
Gloucestershire Children's Social Care	
Gloucestershire Constabulary	
Gloucestershire County Council Adult Social Care	Did not attend the Panel Day
Gloucestershire County Council Commissioning.	
Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust	
Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	
Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board	
Gloucestershire Youth Support Team	
Probation Service	Provided a National Response
Stroud District Council	
Tewkesbury Borough Council	

APPENDIX B – STROUD DISTRICT YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cate James-Hodges	Member of SDYC
Alyssa Pearce	Member of SDYC
Megan Land	Member of SDYC
Brandon Watkins	Member of SDYC
Steve Miles	Supporting the SDYC Members

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[7] Publica is a not-for-profit Teckal company owned by Cotswold, Forest of Dean, and West Oxfordshire District Councils and Cheltenham Borough Council. The four shareholder councils share skills and resources, to improve the delivery of services to local communities, residents and businesses.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Stroud District Council VCSE Principles
Purpose of Report	The Voluntary, Community Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) Principles seek to provide the council and its partners in the VCSE with a set of commonly understood good practice guidelines for communication and support. It is designed to strengthen working relationships with a transparent and consistent approach.
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES to adopt the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Principles.**
Consultation and Feedback	• SLT and CS&L Chair • FFF Community Engagement Workstream Lead • VCSE leaders/ partners • Integrated Care System partners • VCSE and statutory org members of Know Your Patch Network
Report Author	Emma Keating Clark, Community Health & Wellbeing Manager Email: emma.keatingclark@stroud.gov.uk
Options	If the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) Principles are not adopted, working practices will remain as they are. VCSE Partners will continue to experience different approaches to partnership working from different parts of the Council.
Background Papers	None
Appendices	Appendix A: GL11 Community Hub Annual Report 2023/24 Appendix B: Stroud District Community Husb Theory of Change Appendix C: Gloucestershire ICS/VCSE MOU Appendix D: Overview of VCSE input to Council Plan Action. Appendix E: Equality Impact Assessment.

Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. Introduction

1.1 The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) principles were developed in response to the increasing importance of the VCSE to the work of the statutory sector. The current Stroud District Council Plan relies on partnerships with the VCSE for many of our objectives (Appendix D). In acknowledgement of the growing importance of good partnership working with the VCSE post-COVID, Stroud District Council worked with the rest of Integrated Care System (ICS) and the VCS Alliance in Gloucestershire to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the ICS and VCSE (Appendix C, p3). Learning from VCSE leaders in our District and the ICS MOU has formed the basis for these SDC principles.

1.2 This report outlines why and how Stroud District Council should partner with the VCSE. The VCSE is critical in supporting community wellbeing. Its value as a partner to statutory agencies cannot be underestimated (Appendix A, p4 and Appendix B, p3).

1.3 Appendix A, p4 and Appendix B p.3 highlights some key learning from Stroud and Gloucestershire about how much the VCSE does for wellbeing.

1.4 Section 3 in Appendix D outlines how this learning could be applied to the way we work in partnership with VCSE organisations to achieve our joint aims. This includes illustrating how much of our current Council Plans relies on the involvement of the VCSE.

2. Why does SDC needs a set of VCSE Principles?

2.1 The model where all community needs are met by the Local Authority is long gone. It is unsustainable, it disempowers communities and does not recognise the wisdom and strength of local people.

2.2 Building connections between local people and growing neighbourhood organisations who know and care about their people creates safer, stronger places to live with better long term health outcomes.

2.3 There are services and activities that should sit with the statutory sector and there are services and activities that are more successfully held within the VCSE. The most effective approach is for both sectors to work in partnership with good dialogue and sharing of skills and knowledge. As the Local Authority is traditionally perceived as the partner holding most of the 'power', these VCSE Principles are our transparent commitment to being a good partner.

3. What is the VCSE?

3.1 The VCSE includes organisations whose main object is not financial profit to investors or shareholders. They are organisations who exist to support community members, either in a particular place like a local Community Hub, a target group of people like Home Start who work with families under the age of 5 or a specific field of interest like The Long Table who focus on food for community.

3.2 In the Stroud District, some of our VCSE organisations are run purely by volunteers but most have a small number of paid staff who then recruit and manage a team of volunteers. Only a few of our VCSE partners have large teams of paid staff.

3.3 Most of Stroud's VCSE organisations are funded by short to mid-term project funding with a small amount of commissioned work by statutory partners like the National Health Service (NHS) or the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

3.4 Stroud District Council currently supports the VCSE through the Community Wellbeing grant scheme or though Government funding schemes like the Household Support Fund. Some Parish and Town Councils support their local VCSE organisations through grant funding or by supporting them with practical help and resources from their Council officers and elected members.

3.5 Our Social Enterprise partners operate a business model that receives payment for services or goods like food but re-invests their profit back into their community objectives. The Social Enterprise model is a slightly newer approach and some of our VCSE partners are trialing aspects of the model in their work.

3.6 Constitutionally, some community organisations will start very informally, as groups of people with a shared interest in making some kind of change. As their work develops, they will look to adopt a more formal structure that will require Trustees or Directors. More experienced statutory and VCSE partners are essential as trusted advisors in this process, something that SDC already supports. Our VCSE Principles aim to build on that work.

4. Consultation

4.1 Since 2017, Stroud District Council has been co-hosting the Know Your Patch (KYP) Networking forum to enable better joint working between the VCSE and Statutory sectors in the district. There are over 300 organisations on the mailing list and the monthly forum has attendees of between 30 and 80 people. KYP members have discussed what they find

challenging when working with the statutory sector and what would help them to function more easily as equal partners. The insight from KYP members has informed the VCSE principles in this report.

4.2 The Community Hubs Development Project is a partnership of leading Stroud VCSE organisations working together to improve support for developing Community Hubs and to increase partnership working between the Hubs and the statutory sector.

4.3 Members include Creative Sustainability CIC, GL11 Community Hub, The Keepers Community Hub, Feeding Gloucestershire, Hot Spots, Stroud Town Council and Stroud District Council.

4.4 This partnership has developed the Community Hubs Theory of Change which focuses on how experienced and well-resourced partners can help to improve VCSE strength and capacity for better partnership working. As a result, the learning from the Hubs Theory of Change has been essential to the development of the SDC VCSE Principles.

5. What is the difference between the SDC VCSE Principles and the SDC Community Engagement Principles?

5.1 This VCSE Principles are being considered in parallel to SDC's Community Engagement Principles. See 5.4 These two pieces of work are complementary but have key differences and targets.

5.2 The VCSE Principles seek to provide the council and its partners in the VCSE with a set of commonly understood good practice guidelines for communication and support. It is designed to strengthen working relationship with a transparent and consistent approach.

5.3 The Community Engagement Principles are a toolkit for the council's officers and members across all their work with communities and individuals, supporting an asset based approach underpinned by consistency, respect, and reliability applicable in the many and varied interactions which the council has with is communities of place and interest.

5.4   Comparison of VCSE and Community Engagement Principles

	What is it?	**What does it involve?**	**Who is it for?**
VCSE Principles	How SDC commits to work in partnership with VCSE organisations and people who represent those organisations.	Frequent and open dialogue with our VCSE partners. Review of policies and processes that impact on our VCSE partners. Review of SDC service areas that interact with VCSE partners. Clarify how different SDC officers work with the VCSE.	Organisations working in Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise sectors who deliver services or activities in the Stroud District.
Community Engagement Principles	Principles to support individuals in the planning and delivery of different types of engagement, including the methods and techniques that can be used to effectively involve local people in decisions that affect their lives	Identifying engagement opportunities and challenges across council services, building a toolkit of resources, good practice, and learning. Review of SDC strategies, policies and procedures that relate to community engagement. Collaborating with SDC service areas to implement and embed the framework, and to evaluate the impact it is having.	People who live in, work in, or visit Stroud District.

6.   Local Learning informing the VCSE Principles

6.1   These VCSE Principles are based on key pieces of local learning which are outlined in (Appendix A, p4, Appendix B, p3 and Appendix C, p3)

6.2   In summary the outcomes include:

6.3   How the VCSE influences long term wellbeing. GL11's Annual Report 2023/2024 references NHS statistics, stating that 16% of health depends on clinical care while 84% depends on other factors. GL11's Report illustrates how they impact on the 84% as a VCSE organisation. (Appendix A, p4).

6.4   The VCSE sector cannot work in isolation to support long term wellbeing. It can only do this in partnership with the statutory sector. However, the VCSE needs capacity to build working relationships with statutory partners. For example, SDC Housing Officers offering drop in advice at a community café, Citizens Advice working at outreach Foodbank sessions in rural VCSE venues, Social Prescribers taking referrals from VCSE organisations to help clients access support.

6.5   The Stroud District Community Hubs Theory of Change has explored how a partnership approach can support the VCSE to build capacity. (Appendix B, p3**.)** The Community Hubs Theory of Change is a partnership action plan for how to bring about long term system change between the VCSE and statutory sectors. Although the Stroud District Community Hubs are only one element of our VCSE sector, the principles from the Theory of Change research can be applied to our more general VCSE Principles.

7.   What the VCSE wants from the Statutory sector

7.1   As part of formation of the new Integrated Care System (ICS), the Gloucestershire ICS and Gloucestershire VCS Alliance carried out an extensive piece of research with the VCSE in Gloucestershire, including many Stroud organisations.

7.2   Stroud District Council were part of this consultation and as part of the ICS have committed to following their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with our VCSE partners. For full MOU see Appendix C.

7.3   The MOU agreed shared values and principles for how all partners should work together and with individuals and communities.

7.3.1   *Working togther*

When the statutory sector works with the VCSE sector, we all agree to:

- Collaboration

- Equity

- Integrity

7.3.2   *Working with Individuals and Communities.*

When the statutory sector works or the VCSE sector, works with individuals and communities, we all agree to be:

- Impactful

- Community Focused

- Person -centred

- Creative

7.3.3   The MOU also made specific joint commitments in response to concerns that came out of the research. These include:

- Sharing opportunities and risks

- Listening to each other as 'critical friends'

- Hold spaces for debate and challenge through formal and informal channels

- Being as transparent as possible about how decisions are made

- Developing engagement stuctures so the VCSE has a voice on the issues that matter to them and their communities. These should be impactful, proportionate and fair.

7.4   The principles of the ICS MOU have directly informed the 11 Stroud District principles recoomended in Section 8.

8.   Recommendation

8.1   Out of 83 actions in Stroud District council plan 2021 -2026, 53 rely on some sort of VCSE support. In order to support future partnership working between Stroud District Council and the VCSE, this report recommends that the Council adopts the 11 proposed SDC VCSE Principles below. For the full list of which Council Plan actions have input from the VCSE, see Appendix D.

8.2   The proposed Stroud District Council VCSE Principles:

1 We identify which SDC service areas work with VCSE partners and ensure that the 11 VCSE principles applied across the Council.

2 We use our time and resources to hold spaces for open and informative dialogue with VCSE partners through regular forums.

3 We seek VCSE partners and their representatives to form working groups with us on priority issues including Community Safety and Cost of Living.

4 When a new priority is identified, we seek to bring relevant VCSE partners together to share data, insight and develop joint working with us.

5 We will actively listen to our partners without judgement and prejudice valuing community knowledge and local insight.

6 We champion the work of our VCSE partners in the networks that we have access to, including ICS commissioning groups and SDC decision making bodies.

7 We invest in our VCSE partners with the project funding we receive from Government, commissioners and our SDC grant schemes.

8 We research potential investment in funding tools that will support VCSE organisations like a Crowd Funding platform.

9 We review our contracting processes to ensure they are accessible for less experienced organisations and the documentation and monitoring is proportionate for the level of funding being given.

10 We invite open dialogue and respectfully hear what out VCSE partners have to say as 'critical friends' to us.

11 We use constructive feedback from our VCSE partners to inform future policy and practice.

9. Implications

9.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications within this report as it recommends to adopt the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Principles. Any future funding identified from these principles will have to be brought back to this Committee.

Adele Rudkin, Accountant
Tel: 01453 754109   Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk

9.2 Legal Implications

Whilst there are no direct legal implications from this report, there may be when exercising the principles. The Council must always consider the requirements of the Subsidy Control

Act 2022 when giving grants or financial assistance. One Legal can assist with the subsidy assessment and produce appropriate grant agreements.

Any procurements for the award of contracts for supplies, services and works must comply with the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules. Also, the council will need to ensure that the passing on of any funding received by central government or other third parties is permitted by the funding body. The use of that funding is governed by an appropriate grant agreement between the Council and the ultimate recipient because the Council will remain responsible for the delivery of the funding objectives.

One Legal   Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

9.3   Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

9.4   Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Annual Report 2022-23

GL11 community hub

Our vision is:

a connected **kind** & can-do

COMMUNITY

in GL11 and surrounding areas.

We achieve this by:

Creating a safe and supportive community space;

enabling friendship

bravery

learning

and growth.

Working with communities

and partners to achieve

equal access to good quality services for everyone in Gloucestershire.

Our values

LOOK FOR STRENGTHS

HAVE FUN... ...AND BE BRAVE

ACT AS IF IT'S POSSIBLE

IM

BE KIND

LISTEN

A message from our CEO

I am delighted to share our Annual Report for 2022/23 with you.

While we have all been relieved to see the levels of Covid infection reducing in 2022, we are now managing the after-effects on the mental and physical health of our community, so our counselling and health coaching projects are busier than ever.

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis has also brought challenges which we have quickly responded to: GL11's new Cost-of-Living Day offers comprehensive benefits, housing, debt support and advice.

Despite the many challenges, our team of staff and volunteers were here for our community: providing a safe and supportive community space to come and be warm, feel welcome, learn and grow.

As ever, all these achievements have been made possible entirely through our strong relationships with all our partners and funders across councils, public health, the NHS and in our local community.

As we prepare for the next year, we know that our most powerful and effective resource in achieving our goals is the commitment and generosity of our wonderful supporters: thank you for being one of them!

Indigo Redfern, GL11's CEO

GL11 Highlights

#WarmGL11

In the Autumn of 2022, we launched #WarmGL11 to support our community from the looming cost-of-living crisis.

We took a joined-up approach to the crisis, with nine local partners providing our community with access to a warm space, low-cost food, support and advice and a welcoming place every day of the week.

#WarmGL11 continues to support local people with weekly sessions in the Cafe at GL11.

Cafe relaunch

After many unpredictable months following the pandemic, we were ready to re-open our cafe more fully.

In January, we recruited a new, full-time chef and trained existing volunteers to support the new opening hours.

Our cafe is now open for hot food, five days a week; serving more than 220 portions of food each week, including healthy and exciting vegan options.

Pain study success

We were delighted to be approached by NHS Gloucestershire to work alongside them.

Our network of connections positioned us perfectly to capture the community's viewpoint to gather feedback from people living with chronic pain.

Through our conversations we were quickly able to collect very specific data to advise both the NHS, and a wider network of UK partners, about chronic pain and its direct impact on individuals.

MBE for Covid-19 work

In December 2022, our CEO, Indigo Redfern was awarded an MBE.

The Honour recognised Indigo's role in leading GL11's award-winning services to the local community over the last 20 years, and particularly its fast-paced response to COVID, which is now used as a national example of best practice. Upon receipt of the award, Indigo said,
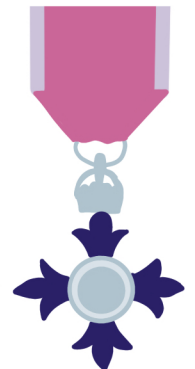
> I am delighted to accept this MBE on behalf of all the volunteers, trustees, staff past and present at GL11, and our generous funders, who this honour is really for.

From patient to person

Denise* was referred by her GP to the GL11 Counselling Service in 2023.

Her mental health was preventing her from working.

In her first counselling session Denise talked about historic experiences of childhood abuse and the recent death of her mother.

Her childhood trauma was negatively impacting her emotions and her bereavement was making it even worse.

Denise worked with her GL11 counsellor to set some goals for six sessions of counselling.

They agreed to work on coping strategies to help Denise better manage her anxiety and low mood.

They also created space in her counselling sessions to explore her complex feelings around the loss of her mother and how these were impacting her.

Together with her GL11 counsellor, Denise explored the patterns of when she felt low or anxious and what triggered these feelings.

She discussed the death of her mother including the difficult and conflicting emotions that had surfaced with this grief.

The counsellor helped Denise to identify patterns in her relationships and how she could set healthier boundaries with other people.

The counselling sessions also supported Denise to understand the importance of self-care and compassion.

Denise is now managing her mental health more effectively

She uses the strategies that she learnt in her sessions, such as journalling, grounding techniques and creative activities.

She feels more resilient and more self-aware.
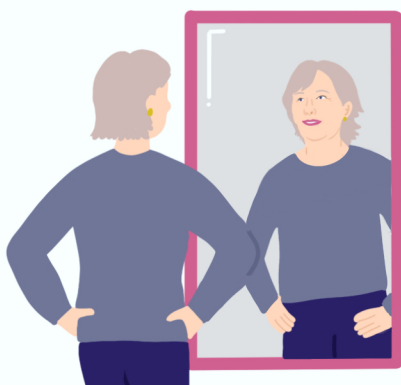
Her counsellor has been in touch with GL11's volunteering coordinator who will help Denise explore opportunities as a stepping stone to getting back into employment.

Denise is now focused on her future and hopeful about returning to work.

* Name and appearance changed to protect client confidentiality.

Working together

The NHS Adult Social Care, Children and Families, Housing and Benefits services are all struggling to keep up with demand and many people are not getting any services at all.

The challenge:

Social, economic and physical factors significantly influence behavioural health outcomes*.

- Socioeconomic factors **47%**
- Health behaviours **34%**
- Physical environment **3%**
- Clinical care **16%**
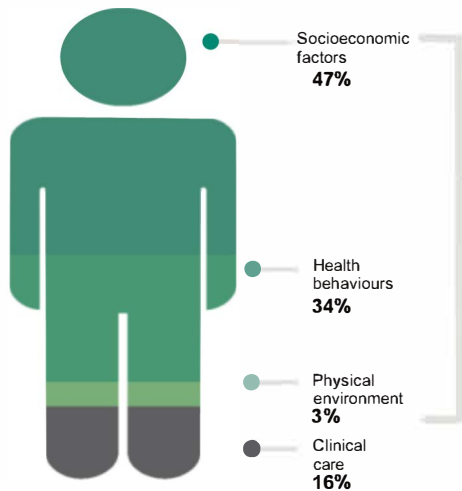
*Source: Gloucestershire NHS Strategy Dec 22.
(NHS One Gloucester Integrated Care Strategy)

84% of the factors that influence a person's total health are found outside clinical care*.

GL11 is helping by focusing on:
- ✔ Isolation
- ✔ Poverty
- ✔ Healthy behaviours
- ✔ Physical environment

...to help meet the needs of our community.

GL11's activities:

47% Isolation & poverty
- Social groups
- Friendship groups
- Buddies/befriending
- Volunteering
- Community cafe
- Training partners across Gloucestershire
- Supporting small hubs

- Money advice
- Community pantry
- Food bank
- Warm GL11
- Employment support

34% Healthy behaviours
- Parenting + nutrition
- Walking group
- Yoga
- Creative activities
- Counselling + health coaching

3% Physical environment
- Care and repair service.

16% GP care
- Links with GPs and social prescribers.

Our impact

Here is a snapshot of how our work has made a difference to people in our community during 2022/23.

Isolation

*over 20 different social and accessible activities every week

* over 200 hours of peer group support for people with Long COVID

* we served 892 community meals a month

...and our volunteers gave around 1,600 hours of their time.

"This is my happy place. It is welcoming, chatty, laughing and helpful."

92% of people feel more engaged with the community.

94% of our participants say they have made friends at GL11.

Poverty

* 581 baskets of groceries enjoyed by our Community Pantry shoppers

* 104 food hampers delivered to local families in the festive season

* 8 Foodbank requests fulfilled every week

* #WarmGL11 hubs hosted weekly - serving hot meals and providing debt, benefit and housing advice, digital support.

"I live on my own and am struggling to make ends meet. There is a really good choice here, so I come every week.
It helps me a lot."

Healthy behaviours

*42 referrals to our one-to-one health coaching sessions

*129 counselling sessions delivered to local people every month

*over 300 parents and carers supported each week with emotional wellbeing, nutrition and parenting skills.
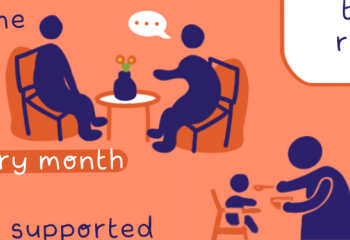
"I enjoy my sessions, having someone to talk to has been really beneficial."

86% of people said that coming to GL11 has helped them feel better able to tackle life's challenges and plan for the future.

Physical environment

We set up Care and Repair handyperson service to help people over 65, or those living with a disability, stay independent and remain in their homes for longer.

"The sliding door you fixed will help me get around much better in my wheelchair."

93% of our participants said they had seen an improvement in their well-being - leading to better mental and physical health.:

Together for our community

As part of our warm hubs initiative, one of our volunteers visited the Chantry Centre to share our cost of living leaflets.

She told local parents about the advice and information they could access at the GL11 Community Hub.

That Wednesday, our weekly Cost of Living Support day was brimming with parents, grandparents and small children.

The GL11 team rallied around to make sure there was enough staff available to sit and talk to each guest.

Toys were provided and a safe space was created for the children to play in whilst their grownups talked to the support workers.

Lots of families enjoyed our £1 meals; some of them stayed and ate both lunch and dinner!

Several parents used the community pantry and others spoke with our money advice service.

One mother spoke to GL11's housing advice service as her family was living in a two-bedroom flat that was damp and full of mould.
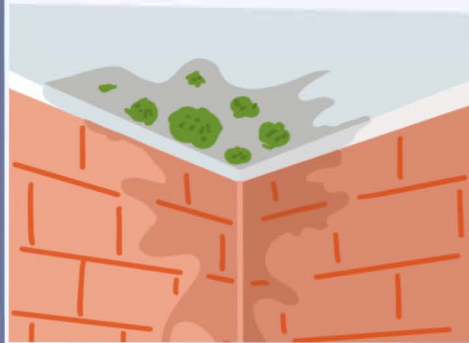
After one conversation she told us she felt like a huge weight had been lifted from her shoulders.

With the Mother's permission, GL11's housing advisor got in touch with the environmental health team at the local council - they started the process of getting the property condemned.

In just a few months the family were given a two bedroom house.

GL11 staff supported the family right up to the point of moving, including helping them apply for a furniture grant from Barnwood Trust for their new home.

Money matters

Statement of financial activities
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Income from:				
Donations	697,975	4,085	702,060	512,293
Charitable activities:				
Wellbeing		6,456	6,456	3,690
Families and youth projects		2,601	2,601	1,503
Room hire		3,328	3,328	3,559
Cafe and pantry		14,407	14,407	7,131
Investments		3,908	3,908	1,219
Other income		21,164	21,164	17,747
Total income	697,975	55,949	753,924	547,142
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	4,412	24,881	29,293	36,011
Charitable activities:				
Wellbeing	242,176	8,138	250,314	100,104
Families and youth projects	62,889	298	63,187	50,780
Employment support	74,565	1,686	76,251	64,224
Cafe and pantry	54,489	1,387	55,876	19,576
Outreach	13,954	314	14,268	
Mental health	110,025	4,724	114,749	
UK shared prosperity fund (UKSPF)	42,123		42,123	
Covid 19 response				284,691
Total expenditure	604,633	41,428	646,061	555,386
Net income/(expenditure)	93,342	14,521	107,863	-8,244
Transfers between funds				
Net movement in funds	93,342	14,521	107,863	-8,244
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	246,562	183,193	429,755	437,999
Total funds carried forward	339,904	197,714	537,618	429,755

Grants of more than £5,000:

Active Gloucestershire	8,286
Berkeley Vale Primary Care Network	66,190
Barnwood Trust	70,000
Big Lottery Fund	99,945
Enovert Community	30,000
Employment Skills Hub Outreach	9,200
GEM project	23,050
Gloucestershire CC Digihub	10,200
Gloucestershire County Council	57,395
Gloucestershire Gateway Trust	10,000
Magnox Ltd	9,999
National Benevolent Charity	5,000
Peter Lang Childrens Trust	35,005
Severn Wye Energy	5,294
Stroud District Council	34,333
The John Horseman Trust	5,000
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	13,719
The National Lottery	9,905
UKSPF	33,581
VCSE Alliance	60,000
Western Power Distribution Foundation	9,980

GL11 expenditure trends
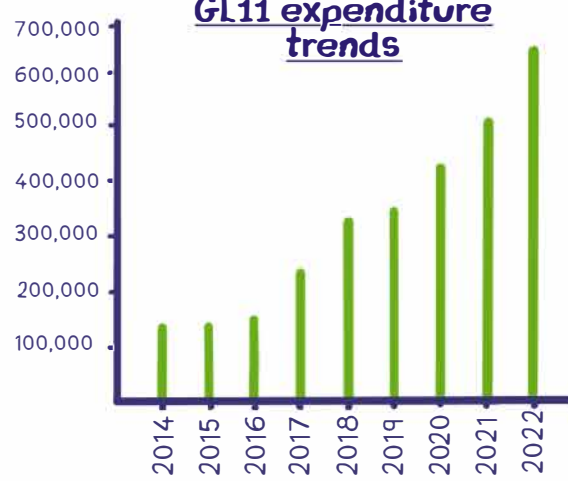
We would like to say a GINORMOUS thank you to each and every one of our donors and partners.

The future

While continuing to provide a safe and supportive community space, GL11 is now working with key partners to improve the quality and access of services, to benefit our whole community...

1. GL11 Community Incubator Unit

1. Activities Public meetings
2. Community action group
3. Community based solutions
4. Practical solutions agreed with NHS/public sector
5. Pilot projects
6. Successful community solutions
7. Systems change

Blossoming community

GL11 Community Incubator Unit

Learn

Trial

Tweak

2. Chronic pain project

GL11 will continue to work with the NHS in relation to the treatment of chronic pain.

In 2023-4, we will create a community action group consisting of people with lived experience of chronic pain.

We will ensure that these voices and experiences are instrumental in informing the implementation of the changes recommended in the report.

3. Supporting new community hubs

GL11 has secured funding to support grassroots development of ten new community hubs across the Stroud district.

90% of the £275,000 we have secured will go directly to the hubs, where local people decide local priorities.

We will use the remaining 10% of the funding to provide training and support to the hubs as well as gathering data on their impact.

How you can help

Volunteer

Drop in for a chat about volunteering opportunities. Regardless of your ability or experience, we can find the right role for you.

Donate

Giving is not just about donations; its about making a difference.

Every act of kindness, no matter its size, is always appreciated.

Become a friend

Join our Friends of GL11 family today by donating just £2, or more, a month to help keep GL11 open to all.

We only get by with a little help from our Friends!

Scan the QR code to sign up now or visit bit.ly/GL11Friends

Take part

We have a huge selection of activities for you to get involved in.

No matter what your age, gender or interests. Visit our website to see what's on.

![Community Hubs logo](community hubs)

Theory of Change

A strategic model for supporting Stroud District's Community Hubs

creative sustainability

A strategic model for Stroud District's Community Hubs has the potential to create an inclusive and resilient district-wide network that is fit for both current purpose and perma-crisis, and an uncertain future with sudden shocks and unknown challenges.

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns from March 2020 spurred a remarkable response from local communities to find immediate and innovative ways to support one another and tackle the challenges they faced. Local organisations, neighbours and community leaders galvanised to form mutual aid groups, community hubs and street to street care initiatives emerged overnight, challenging the concept of reliance on the public sector and redefining the role of community in the 21st century. Recognising the urgent need for a strategic approach that would sustain a stretched community sector and leave nobody behind, Creative Sustainability began to explore what a resilient system for Stroud District looks like.

Using our five community development principles - user-led, asset based, inclusive, real world and ongoing – we have been working with many and multi-sector partners to design and establish the underpinning support needed for a well-resourced and connected system of hubs, so they can meet the many different needs and purposes of their communities as they see fit. With better health and well-being for all people and communities at the heart, the system can support climate adaptation, food resilience programmes, address the cost-of-living crisis, and foster stronger, more cohesive neighbourhoods. Hubs can support the day to day needs and wants of marginalised and isolated people, refugees and asylum seekers, disabled and older people, families and young people. The system generates local jobs, opportunities and investment in places that most need it, by default.

This theory of change is the accumulation of four years of pre and post covid learning at Creative Sustainability, bringing together the collective knowledge and learning of many people and organisations. It describes what resilience looks like for communities in the Stroud District and what we need to do to get there. Funders, community leaders, public and community sector organisations can use this model to engage in discussions and devise approaches that support our Stroud District communities in these uncertain times.

Theory of Change

community hubs

creative sustainability

Mission

Community Sector Strength
A connected, resilient and collaborative community sector in Stroud District, ready and able to respond to the needs of people and communities

Partnership Working
Best practice collaboration between public and community sectors to support shared aims for people and communities

Community Health and Wellbeing
Inclusive, resilient communities that can support mental, emotional and physical health and well-being for everyone

Objectives

1. More skilled, confident and resilient community leaders, volunteers and staff

2. Increased financial support and confidence to plan, commit and develop hubs where they are most needed

3. A more sustainable network that includes everyone across the district equitably

4. Greater shared understanding of functions, practice and models of community and public sector organisations

5. Raised understanding of the community hubs model as critical element in meeting local authority strategic plans and Integrated Care Partnership ambitions

6. Increased understanding of the whole community sector, and communities within it - both place-based and with common unity

7. Every community hub is a safe, welcoming and healthy place to be

8. Seamless provision across place and common unity, to ensure everyone is included and can access the support they need

9. Resilient community leaders, volunteers and staff who are willing and able to support their communities

10. Everyone has places that welcome them, that suits their particular need for common unity

11. People and communities have access to the support that they need in their local place or in a specialist hub

Activities

Governance support, advice and training: structures and constitutions, policy, finance, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), leadership and management, recruitment and Human Resources (HR)

Health and safety support, advice and training for volunteers and staff

Peer group support and facilitation, paid time and expenses for meetings and workshops

Resource library - model policies and procedures, evaluation frameworks and tools, signposting and referral resources

Crowdfunding platform for emergency funding allocation and equitable distribution of generic funding

Support, advice and training for small bids and crowd-funding for individual hubs

Bid writing for the whole system, including trusts and foundations and tenders for district wide commissioning

Thirty local hubs are developed across the district to serve their geographical community, are asset-based and community-led, with many models, and supporting hyper-local action when needed

Five district area facilitators support, guide and advocate for hubs in their area, facilitate them, share resources, capacity and information

District-wide operational capacity to generate resources and information, map provision and identify gaps, facilitate area coordinators and specialist hubs and supporting roles

Five specialist hubs develop according to existing strengths, to focus on marginalised and minoritised communities and to share best practice across the network

8 asset-based roles develop to support the network with food resilience, governance, safeguarding and health and safety, volunteers, finance, evaluation, partnerships, health and wellbeing

Bi-annual cross-sector partnership workshops to explore principles, practice and processes for best practice collaboration, and memorandum of understanding (MoU) drawn up

Stroud District Council joins Locality, shares good practice with neighbouring local authorities on 'Keep it Local' and commissioning the community sector, asset transfer, contracts, sustainable funding and burden of risk

Communications workshops to establish communications strategy and content for platforms, press and partners

Network representatives form oversight group, meeting to oversee objectives, report and advocate for the network

Regular presentations and workshops with public sector stakeholders to communicate opportunities and threats, affect policy decisions and funding priorities. To include the Integrated Care Partnership, Local Strategic Partnership, and all Councils

Formal association with hubs by their elected members, with board representation or equivalent

District and area facilitators work with the network to identify key barriers to successful collaboration with the public sector, and work with the steering group to establish how to support community sector to overcome them

Area facilitators work with hubs to identify their needs for support and training across all areas using a self-assessment tool twice a year

Expert roles work across the network to provide support where it is needed, with clear materials and plans

Ongoing mapping of the whole district by geography to evaluate existing provision, identify gaps and explore asset-based community development opportunities

Ongoing mapping of specific provision and themes for specific communities, with ongoing evaluation of needs and gaps in the district

Area facilitators provide peer to peer support sessions and 1:1 when needed

Area facilitators flow information and resources through from the expert and coordination roles as and when needed by community hubs

Community leaders, staff and volunteers have access to rolling training, self-care resources, guidance and advice that supports them to fulfil their roles with confidence

Rolling training programme of minimum health and safety, inclusion and safeguarding for all hubs

Specialist hub leaders hold open days and networking meetings to show inclusion in action

Resources are readily available to hubs with training to use them confidently, for signposting people to agencies, specific support or other hubs with specialist provision, or for emergency care

Area facilitators support with advice, connections and co-planning sessions, to host external agencies and expertise that can give people specific support they need

creative sustainability

Creative Sustainability is a community Interest Company based in Stroud Gloucestershire.

Our Mission...

...to create inclusive, resilient communities that can support mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing for everyone.

Community – people with Common Unity – experiential, geographical, social, cultural, systemic.

We are a Values-led Organisation...

• **INCLUSION:** ensuring inclusion of marginalised people, supporting their autonomy, raising expectations and access to opportunities for work, leisure, belonging and health

• **SUSTAINABILITY:** developing knowledge and understanding of social, climate and natural environment issues, strengthening resilience of people and our local communities

• **EMPOWERMENT:** advocating for people and communities, facilitating them to become more enabled, empowered and have a confident voice in their local and global community.

**Fromehall Mill
Lodgemore Lane
Stroud
Glos
GL5 3EH**

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What Three Words//invent.headlight.ready

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

The Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector in Gloucestershire
and the public sector partner organisations in One Gloucestershire

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
VCS
ALLIANCE
AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTORS

One
Gloucestershire
Transforming Care, Transforming Communities

BY WORKING TOGETHER WE WANT GLOUCESTERSHIRE TO BE A BETTER AND HEALTHIER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK.

Gloucestershire is an ambitious county with a rich tapestry of assets and resources. We also have some challenges! To achieve our vision and address our wicked problems, such as prevailing health inequalities, we need to work together, in equal partnership, between the ICS public sector and the VCSE sector. We have a positive history of partnership working to build on, but the establishment of a new Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care System, opens opportunities for more dynamic relationships between the sectors.

The VCSE sector brings specialist expertise and fresh perspectives to public service delivery and is particularly well placed to support people with complex and multiple needs. It has a long track record in promoting engagement and finding creative ways to improve outcomes for groups with the poorest health, making it an essential partner in combating the inverse care law[1] and addressing health inequalities.

1 https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/articles/inverse-care-law

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this MoU is to commit to new ways of working between the sectors. It establishes the framework for the culture within which we will work, by centring on our shared vision and values and putting people in our communities at the heart of everything we do. It builds on our partnership working and dynamic relationships, committing resources, energy and passion to integrated working to achieve our collective aims and objectives as equal partners. This is an adaptable and flexible framework that nurtures integration through living our values and promotes a culture that responds to learning.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The VCSE and Public Sector in Gloucestershire both have valuable assets and strengths that will help us achieve our shared goals in the county. Importantly, we agree on shared values that underpin our commitments to the way in which we behave and work, stated below. This work has been supported by a process that remains ongoing, whereby the sectors have facilitated conversations to understand our similarities and differences. Building relationships remains key to recognising shared goals, having difficult conversations when required and taking opportunities when they arise.

This agreement has been developed through a programme of engagement events held with members of the VCSE sector and the ICS. Events have been held separately and jointly and have demonstrated a high degree of synergy in our values, principles and purpose. On this basis we have committed to developing a closer cross-sector approach to working as strategic partners in health and social care.

SCOPE

This MoU is signed by One Gloucestershire Integrated Care System Executives that include:

- Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (to become Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board)
- Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Gloucestershire County Council

When we talk about the VCSE in Gloucestershire, we mean voluntary organisations, community groups, the community work of faith groups, and those social enterprises where profits will be reinvested in their social purpose. This MoU is signed on behalf of the VCSE sector by Gloucestershire VCS Alliance.

This is a live document and the scope could evolve over time to include other organisations with an interest, such as District Councils.

OUR SHARED VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

WORKING TOGETHER

The values and principles that underpin the relationship between the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector and the Integrated Care System Public Sector partners are:

Collaboration
We will take a whole system approach to addressing the health and care needs of the population of Gloucestershire. This includes building a mutual understanding of our different approaches and ways of working, co-designing services where appropriate, tackling problems together and sharing responsibility, risk and resources.

Equity
We recognise that we approach our shared purpose from different organisational starting points and are committed to developing a new model of shared strategic decision making, planning and evaluating, in which everyone's expertise is valued. We will work together to remove barriers to inclusion.

Integrity
We will build trust and act with honesty and transparency. We will be solution-focused in our approach to difficult conversations; we will listen to and respect each other's views; we will be fair in how we share opportunities and recompense organisations.

WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

As partners, we are committed to working together to address health inequalities and enable local people to live healthier, more independent lives by delivering services that are:

Impactful
We will develop and deliver services that make a measurable, lasting, positive difference to individuals and communities.

Community-focused
We will work with local groups and communities of interest to design services that are informed by diverse voices and perspectives, built on the assets of communities and meet their needs.

Person-centred
We will take a person-centred approach to service delivery, that builds on people's strengths, including their diversity, enables them to exercise choice and control and promotes self-care and independence.

Creative
We will encourage innovation and learn from our experiences to inform continuous improvement.

JOINT COMMITMENTS

For the next 12 months we commit to the undertakings described in this document. We will hold each other to account, live our values and regularly review our working relationship.

We will collaborate to maximise on the opportunities and share the risks to achieve the best possible outcomes for individuals, communities and our organisations.

We see each other as critical friends. We will invest time in learning about each other's sector, developing mutual understanding and assimilating our learning into our behaviours and practice.

We will hold spaces to have difficult conversations when required, committed to being open to ideas, debate, challenge and discussion, through formal and informal channels.

To ensure we work in a trusting relationship we commit to being as transparent as we can be, whilst recognising that there are times this is constrained. Transparency by the ICS about where and how decisions are made is key for the VCSE sector to have equality, equity and parity of power in influencing decision making. Transparency by VCSE sector organisations about their characteristics, successes and challenges is key to citizens gaining the greatest possible benefit from services.

We will develop engagement structures that enable VCSE organisations to have a voice on issues that matter to them and the communities they work with. This will be done in a way that is proportionate, impactful, and fair.

VCSE SECTOR COMMITMENTS

We will prioritise areas of our strategic engagement with the ICS based on VCSE capacity and a mutual agreement concerning where we add most value.

We will appoint representatives who have a mandate to be a voice for the VCSE sector. They will be appointed on the basis of a commitment to maintaining their impartiality, reflecting a diversity of perspectives, clearly articulating our collective messages and being transparent about the limitations of their reach. They will openly share information and opportunities with the VCSE sector.

We will work collectively to take a strategic lead and define our priorities based on local intelligence.

We will collaborate within the VCSE sector to work strategically with the ICS; this includes building relationships and cohesion within the sector, exploring opportunities for joint working and sharing information and resources.

We will participate in service design, strategic planning and prioritisation including undertaking commissioned work to support the ICS to involve local communities and communities of interest in the planning and design of services.

We will create volunteering opportunities, strengthening community cohesion and resilience by enabling local people to contribute their skills and time.

ICS COMMITMENTS

When a need for representation is identified (by either party), we will recognise, respect, and work with the pathways that will be established for engagement with the VCSE.

We recognise the difference between VCSE representation and VCSE participation and will recruit to boards and working groups with this difference in mind.

We will welcome input from the VCSE sector to ensure senior ICS system leaders are informed about what is important to the sector and communities. We are committed to an ongoing dialogue with the VCSE sector and respect them as an equal strategic partner.

We value infrastructure for the VCSE sector and support this where we can, including funding it where relevant and appropriate, with agreements that are meaningful to both sectors.

We commit to appropriate and proportionate commissioning processes for the VCSE sector. This includes frameworks and grant funding and consideration for length of contracts/grants. We understand the need for timely payment of invoices. We also recognise the importance of full cost recovery and are committed to commission on this basis.

We will work to understand how we can better utilise the intelligence and data that the VCSE sector holds to inform decision making and we will share data with the sector where we can.

We recognise that the VCSE is an equal partner that sometimes has a different perspective. We respect the sector's right to challenge and campaign without this impacting on the funding relationship with the ICS.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:

- A model for VCSE engagement will be designed and developed and we commit to co-designing a policy of reimbursement that will support this model.

- A social value policy will be co-developed, with a framework for how to effectively implement this across the ICS. Alongside this there will be a review of commissioning processes to ensure we are utilising the most appropriate and effective practices at our disposal.

- It is critical that large numbers of staff and volunteers, at all levels of accountability and responsibility, understand our commitments, what that means for them and why it is important we are working in this way. We also want to gather further ideas and hear from more people to inform our first review of this MoU. To achieve this spread and scale of knowledge exchange we will run a virtual roadshow. This will begin with senior leaders and continue as a rolling programme. A toolkit will also be developed by both sectors alongside this work that will bring this MoU to life.

- We will create new opportunities for cross sector thinking and interactions. This includes opening up existing training opportunities for both sectors where possible and hosting Open Space and World Café style events. This should help build relationships, as well as share perspectives that will include opportunities for shared decision making.

- As the board and governance structures of both the VCSE and ICS are developed and embedded over the coming 12 months, we will work together to identify the most effective ways to provide strategic influence.

- We will continue to promote, support and engage with Know Your Patch events.

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

It is important we hold a strategic and longer-term direction of travel based on the values and commitments specified in this agreement. We will review this MoU in 12 months' time, utilising case studies of where it has and has not been a success. It will then be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is still relevant for both sectors and supports partnership working.

INTERDEPENDENCIES

It is important to note this MoU does not stand alone and has interdependencies with other work being carried out, such as:

- The ICS strategy on working with people and communities

- Terms of Reference for individual Boards within the ICS and VCSE sector

**Signed on behalf of the VCSE Sector by
Matt Lennard, Chief Officer of the VCS Alliance.**

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE
VCS
ALLIANCE**
AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTORS

**Signed on behalf of the ICS by Dame Gill Morgan,
Chair of NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board.**

**One
Gloucestershire**
Transforming Care, Transforming Communities

SDC Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Principles

How the VCSE input to our current Council Plan

Of the 83 actions in the 2021-26 Stroud District Council Plan, 53 rely on some kind of input from VCSE organisations ⭐

CW1	Community resilience: Support communities to help each other and build resilience through a network of community hubs and other community-led networks, with mental and physical health and wellbeing at its heart	⭐ CW1.1	Develop a framework for working with the community and voluntary and social enterprise sector including the network of community hubs
		⭐ CW1.2	Act to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people in the district through delivery of a new 3 year Health and Wellbeing Plan
		⭐ CW1.3	Ensure residents continue to receive the advice they need, by continuing our work in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau and developing a new Service Level Agreement
		⭐ CW1.4	Work to reduce the impacts and causes of anti-social behaviour by developing a district wide policy in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership
		⭐ CW1.5	Work with strategic and operational partners to improve food resilience, access and equity including support for those affected by the cost of living

CW2	Affordable homes: Build affordable, energy efficient homes and deliver high quality services for all tenants by investing in the renovation of existing council homes and meet a range of housing needs for those who experience disadvantage and creating a culture of tenant engagement and empowerment	⭐ CW2.1a	Deliver new affordable homes across the District, through planning policy and work with partners including community-led housing groups and housing associations
		CW2.1b	Design, build and deliver new affordable homes across the District via our own New Homes Programme which will deliver EPC-A rated properties
		CW2.2	Invest £30m over the next 5 years to maintain, invest and repair our council homes ensuring they are good quality, safe, fit for purpose places where tenants can live well
		⭐ CW2.3	Prioritise the prevention of homelessness and invest in temporary accommodation and specialist support, including working with partners to develop the specialist housing and support
		⭐ CW2.4	Implement robust engagement principles to ensure structured and consistent mechanisms for tenants to be involved in decision making affecting their homes and the places they live
		CW2.5	Continue to invest and deliver the programme to modernise our Independent Living homes for older people
		CW2.5a	Provide high quality, fit for purpose Independent Living Provision in line with the 2023-2027 Independent Living Strategy
		⭐ CW2.6	Co-ordinate accommodation and support services for migrants arriving in the district and link to other statutory and voluntary services to support the health and wellbeing of migrant households
		CW2.7	Ensure our council homes meet legislative and regulatory compliance standards

CW3	Strengthen local democracy: By developing a culture of community engagement to enable greater involvement of residents, council tenants, communities and businesses in decisions on council services and priorities	⭐ CW3.1	Develop Community Engagement Principles that set out how we identify and engage with our communities in a positive and consistent manner, informed by the views of our communities
		CW3.2	Improve customer service for residents by procuring a Digital Platform that provides for centralised first contact ensuring an easier access to services and that provides additional support for those with complex needs
		⭐ CW3.2a	Improve customer service for residents by developing the Digital Platform to provide centralised customer contact to ensure easy access to services via all contact channels with additional support provided for those who need us the most
		⭐ CW3.3	Work with Town and Parish Councils to develop, agree and implement a new strategic approach for partnership working between district, towns and parishes including specific support for rural communities
		⭐ CW3.4	Promote and encourage the registration of community assets so communities have more control and ownership of local buildings, land and community shops as well as protecting publicly owned land and assets

CW4	Leisure and Culture Services: Adopt a long term investment plan for leisure services and facilities across the district to ensure everyone has access to good quality leisure opportunities that meet their needs	CW4.1	Continue wo... and wellbein... by completin... appraisal as... of the leisure...
		CW4.1a	Deliver high quality leisure services through directly managed provision at Stratford Park Leisure Centre and The Pulse
		⭐ CW4.2	Working with partners, increase the number, accessibility, and quality of playing pitches, play areas and outside spaces within the district
		⭐ CW4.3	Increase physical activity and sports participation through our Healthy Lifestyles Scheme in partnership with the Gloucestershire We Can Move programme
		CW4.4	Complete a conditions survey and review the development implications of longer term development for Stratford Park Lido
		⭐ CW4.5	Develop a Culture Strategy for the District
		⭐ CW4.6	Implement the Museum in the Park's free-to-join Supporter Scheme to provide residents with exciting opportunities to engage with the museum and extend community reach to new audiences ensuring the museum remains at the heart of the wider community

CW5	Equality Diversity & Inclusion: Embed equality, diversity and inclusion as a priority across the Council and the District with targeted support for those who experience the most disadvantage in our communities	⭐ CW5.1	Deliver our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25, through engaging with communities, showing leadership and championing equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do
		⭐ CW5.2	Adopt effective and transparent policies to reduce inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage in line with Section 1 of the Equality Act, the socio-economic duty, as an effective framework for tackling local poverty and economic inequality
		⭐ CW5.3	Devise and implement a delivery plan to reduce health inequalities, in collaboration with partners from across all sectors to support those most affected by the Cost-of-Living crisis
		CW5.4	Promote initiatives which improve skills, celebrate diversity in the workplace and offer equal access to well paid jobs and economic opportunities for everyone
		⭐ CW5.5	Work with partners to support older people to stay in their homes for longer
		⭐ CW5.6	Support our Armed Forces Champion and provide help as needed to former members of the armed services who need extra support and continue to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant across the local area

SDC Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Principles

How the VCSE input to our current Council Plan

Of the 83 actions in the 2021-26 Stroud District Council Plan, 53 rely on some kind of input from VCSE organisations.

EC2	Biodiversity: Work with local communities and partners to protect and enhance the district's green infrastructure and biodiversity providing accessible environments that people can enjoy and which positively contribute to their good health and well-being	★ EC2.1	Work with partners to boost biodiversity by developing the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and delivering its objectives through a district-wide Local Nature Recovery Action Plan, working with stakeholders
		★ EC2.2	Deliver the natural flood management project (Stroud Rural SUDS) for the Frome Valley in Stroud in partnership with the Environment Agency, working closely with landowners and communities using innovative flood management techniques
		★ EC2.3	Develop and establish an action plan to increase our tree canopy, woodland and forestry in line with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership Tree Strategy ambition for 20% canopy cover across the County by 2030
		★ EC2.4	Work with partners to protect and enhance green spaces in residential neighbourhoods and town centres, promote 'No Mow May' and adopt best practice for road verges to encourage wildflowers and reduce pesticide use
		EC2.5	Use, promote and support the Building with Nature standards for Local Plan sites and key regeneration sites across the district

EC5	Circular economy: Develop the foundations of a sustainable circular economy for the district by minimising consumption, reducing the quantity of resources sent to incineration and applying the waste hierarchy: prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and as a last resort disposal	★ EC5.1	Further reduce the quantity of resources discarded as waste and minimise its environmental impact
		EC5.2	Work with our partner Ubico to identify joint opportunities for carbon reduction projects in household collection and management of public spaces
		★ EC5.3	Support the phasing out of single use plastics in the district and encourage and support local initiatives to 'reduce, repair and recycle'
		★ EC5.4	Continue to increase recycling rates across the district

EC4	Mobility / transport: Support development of an integrated active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport network and development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure working with county and regional partners	★ EC4.1	Support a shift towards active modes of travel by working with the County Council and parish councils to increase use of an enhanced strategic and local walking and cycling network.
		★ EC4.2	In partnership with the County Council, encourage the expansion and improvement of public transport and links to walking and cycling routes – to include bus services and railway stations and services, and bids for new facilities that benefit residents of the District
		★ EC4.3	Working with partners, expand the network of Electric Vehicle charging points and increase support for low carbon transport, and a reduction in private car use and explore measures to reduce air pollution such as no-idling zones
		EC4.4	Develop initiatives to encourage an increase in the percentage of Low, Ultra Low Emission and Euro 6 compliant taxi and private hire vehicles (CN2030 M8)

EC6	Renewable energy: Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable sources in the district and work on decarbonising existing networks	★ EC6.1	Continue to increase renewable generation in the district and to decarbonise existing networks, and support community-owned renewable energy schemes
		EC6.2	Deliver the water source heat pump projects at Ebley and Brimscombe Port Mills
		EC6.2a	Deliver the decarbonisation projects at Stratford Park Leisure Centre, Museum in the Park and The Pulse, utilising Salix funding
		EC6.3	Increase the proportion of Council and partner fleet vehicles powered by zero or low carbon technologies
		EC6.4	Deliver key low carbon exemplar projects

SDC Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Principles

How the VCSE input to our current Council Plan

Of the 83 actions in the 2021-26 Stroud District Council Plan, 53 rely on some kind of input from VCSE organisations.

Economic recovery: Support our high streets and businesses to enable recovery of the local economy from the impacts of COVID-19 and building foundations for a sustainable and inclusive local economy

ER1.1 — Develop and implement and inclusive sustainable 'Economic Development Strategy' including supporting market towns and secotrs most impacted by the pandemic

ER1.1a — Implement an inclusive and sustainable 'Economic Development Strategy' to support a thriving and resilient economy for our businesses, communities and visitors

ER1.2 — Support high street and other businesses to increase their digital and virtual visibility, through promotion, training, new applications and facilitating the acceleration of highspeed broadband

ER1.3 — Support local high streets through the 'Think Local, Shop Local' campaign and local initiatives to increase footfall such as markets, events and community-led initiatives

ER1.4 — Support local high streets to increase footfall and achieve a sustainable visitor economy through delivering and enabling promotional campaigns, markets, cultural and leisure events, growing the night-time economy and by improving sustainable access to local centres from our rural hinterlands

ER2 Regeneration: Deliver key regeneration sites across the district, especially brownfield sites and longterm empty properties, for local jobs, homes, community facilities and green spaces

ER2.1 — Develop Brimscombe Port as a key strategic site to support a thriving community, in line with project milestones which include securing a development partner and delivering infrastructure works

ER2.2 — Deliver Phase 1b of the Canal Project (Cotswold Canals Connected), incorporating land acquisition, planning application for the 'missing mile', Ocean Bridge works, environment and community programmes in line with National Lottery Heritage Fund bid

ER2.3 — Progress 'hard to develop' brownfield sites and long-term empty commercial properties across the district, delivering quality local jobs and homes, while preserving and enhancing biodiversity

ER2.4 — Support the development of a diverse local economy of social enterprises, cooperatives and small businesses by supporting them to find well connected commercial space available for expansion and by exploring the use of land for low cost sites and start-ups

ER3 Investment: Promote the Stroud district to attract investment in key infrastructure and high quality jobs with a focus on environmental technologies, engineering and manufacturing and creative industries

ER3.1 — Attract investment by setting out the offer of Stroud District in a new 'Place Prospectus' to showcase the district's achievements and future priorities

ER3.2 — Promote prosperity and visitors to the district's waterways, by developin a Canal Strategy, which links to heritage and biodiversity objectives

ER3.2a — Promote prosperity and visitors to the district's waterways, by delivering physical enhancements and stronger links with our communities, aligned with heritage and biodiversity objectives

ER3.3 — Work to secure external funding for priority projects, by establishing a task force to review bid options and developing a bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund and other funding opportunities

ER3.4 — Work with partners to support the bid to the UK Atomic Authority to secure the first prototype commerical fusion plant and associated research and innovation partk at Oldbury & Berkeley

ER3.4a — Work with partners including Western Gateway and neighbouring local authorities to promote Severn Edge (Oldbury and Berkeley sites) to be a green energy hub, at the forefront of a renewable energy revolution that delivers an affordable zero carbon future for everyone

ER4 Support for businesses: Champion local businesses of all types and sizes that lead on environmental and social good practice and support them to grow, keeping wealth in the district, strengthening local supply chains and offering rewarding local jobs

ER4.1 — Work with business networks and trade unions to recognise and promote access to living wage employers who lead on social and environmental good practice

ER4.2 — Increase the financial resilience of the district by exploring additional options for community funding

ER4.3 — Review the Procurement Strategy and develop initiatives to increase spend on low carbon, sustainable and ethical goods and services to create stronger supply chains within the local economy

ER4.4 — Work with partners to support the development of skills and training for all ages, including the unemployed, young people and apprentices, and across key sectors including the low carbon sector and visitor economy

ER5 Strategic Planning: Adopt the new Stroud District Local Plan

ER5.1 — Progress the Local Plan through public examination and secure its adoption

ER5.2 — Support the delivery of strategic site allocations contained within the local plan and the key infrastructure required to support it

ER5.3 — Work with parish councils to encourage local communities to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders, thereby increasing community planning activities

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Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Emma Keating Clark	Telephone:
	E-Mail: emma.keating.clark@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Fit for the Future	Date of Assessment: 05.03.24

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Principles

Is this new or an existing one? New

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The aim is to provide the council with a set of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) principles that can be applied to all our engagement and consultation work and opportunities. The objectives of the Principles are to promote consistency, equality and inclusion, accountability, effective feedback and measuring the impact of our work for and with communities. This will help improve the quality and value of our interactions with communities.

1

Appendix E

The key objectives are as follows:

- Support an asset-based approach to CVSE development.
- Improve consistency, quality and value of our interactions with voluntary sector, communities and social enterprises.
- Promote consistency, equality and inclusion, accountability, and the importance of effective feedback to communities.
- Provide a way to continually improve our engagement practices and to measure the impact of our work for and with communities.
- Align with other more specific engagement strategies and polices used by the council.

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

No

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

This initiative will potentially benefit all citizens and communities as the council builds its skills, knowledge and experience to practice more effective VCSE engagement. Organisations which are currently missed in support and engagement opportunities like consultations should benefit if the council is better able to identify and work with seldom heard groups or people who do not regularly engage with the council.

Placing more power in the hands of CVSE helps to create and sustain strong and resilient communities.

6. What outcomes are expected?

The council will have a set of guiding community engagement principles which align with all our other engagement and consultation type strategies and practices. Officers will be better supported to work in an ABCD way, through the guidance and through collaborating to build a good practice toolkit of community engagement methods, models and techniques.

Governance and reporting arrangements will help the council engage consistently, transparently and inclusively with communities and better enable the sharing of feedback.

Other outcomes relate to increasing the skills and knowledge of the council, and improved sharing of insight and information across council services from our work with communities.

Longer term outcomes are the internal culture change associated with effective community engagement and community outcomes related to tackling health inequalities, supporting resilience and cohesive communities, and addressing the wider determinants of health.

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment? (e.g. Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

2

The importance of effective and consistent VCSE engagement is well documented, for example by the Local Government Association New Conversations Guide to Community Development.

8. Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees

Elected Members (Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees), Alliance Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team, Leadership and Management Team, Youth Council, Community Connections Workstream team, and council services such as Community Development, Housing Services (tenant engagement), Communications, Policy and Governance, Museum in the Park, Planning Strategy and Development Management, and Customer Access. The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Working Group were also consulted on the Principles. Community leaders and the VCSE are being consulted on the second draft.

9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a **negative** or **positive** way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	The district has a population of circa 121,103 people which are broken down into the following age categories: Aged 0-4 – 5,643 Aged 5-19 – 20,200 Aged 20-64 – 67,030 Aged 65+ - 28,230 All age groups should benefit from the Principles because the council will be more effective at providing inclusive and accessible forms of engagement so that everyone can have a voice (if they want to).
Disability	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Principles and officers will gain skills in adapting engagement events and consultation so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved. The Principles should lead to a culture where voices that have been traditionally silenced are able to be heard.
Gender Re-assignment	Positive: the Principles aim to improve the way the council engages with all communities (not just geographical) and to allow people to have a voice and participate in the way that works best for them. Accessibility and confidentiality will help to create safety.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Neutral
Race	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Principles and officers will gain skills in adapting engagement events and consultation so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved.

3

Appendix E

	The Principles should lead to a culture where people who have not traditionally been heard will be able to amplify their voices.
Religion – Belief	Positive – the Principles will enable engagement with VCSE in a way that respects religion and beliefs and empowers people to feel they can be involved, not marginalised.
Sex	Positive – the Principles will support equality between voices of people of different sexes without giving more weight or value to one sex.
Sexual Orientation	Positive – people should feel more able to become involved in engagement events and opportunities and to be heard openly or in confidence.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	Neutral
Rural considerations: Ie Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	None specifically associated with this report; however, accessibility of engagement events and consultations will be considered as part of the embedding process.

10. **If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?**

   Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	**Lead officer**	**Resource**	**Timescale**

Declaration
I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function * (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed by:	**Date:**
Role: Community Connections Workstream Lead	
Countersigned by Director:	**Date: 05.03.24**

Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to policy@stroud.gov.uk

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Community Engagement Principles
Purpose of Report	This report is to present Stroud District Council's Community Engagement Principles to the Committee. It contains details of the consultation process to date and the themes identified from feedback and proposes an approach for implementation.
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES to:** a) **Adopt the Community Engagement Principles as part of the council's engagement practices, to link with the other engagement-type strategies, policies and practices used by the council.** b) **Agree the approach to implementation outlined in this report.** c) **Review the Community Engagement Principles after 12-18 months, to consider insights and learning gained from the implementation process.**
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation has taken place with: • LMT and the Community Connections Workstream (through an online survey followed by some meetings in person with more involved service areas) • ALT and SLT • The Leader, and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees (where possible) • The Youth Council • EDIE Working Group • Council services with a particular focus on engagement e.g. Community Development, Tenant Services, Corporate Policy & Governance, Customer Access and Communications. • 3M Artists A selection of community voices and VCSE organisations have also been asked for their feedback (if they feel able to provide some). Feedback has been gathered from 35 consultees or service areas so far and is summarised by main themes in Section 2 below.
Report Author	Sarah Clark, Head of Environmental Health Email: sarah.clark@stroud.gov.uk

Options	Option 1: Do nothing – have no community engagement principles to guide the council's interactions with communities. Option 2: Produce an in-depth community engagement strategy over the three-year time period originally indicated by the Council Plan. This was not regarded as a suitable option because of the length of time to develop a full strategy, and the feasibility of producing this within the Fit for the Future programme resource. In addition, research into the types of community engagement strategies that have been implemented by other organisations indicates that they do not always appear to lend themselves to easy application by practitioners. Option 3: Produce a set of community engagement principles which are feasible to apply, embed, communicate and monitor. Option 3 is the recommended option and the report is set out on this basis.
Background Papers	None
Appendices	Appendix A – Draft Community Engagement Principles Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	Yes	No

1. Introduction

1.1 There is a commitment in the Council Plan (CW3.1) and the Fit for the Future modernisation programme to develop a strategic approach to guide how we engage with communities – for example, informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering.

1.2 In Spring 2023 it was agreed by the Alliance Leadership Team and the Senior Leadership Team that an overarching set of Principles would be more pragmatic than an intensive strategy that might take some years to develop and which might be more difficult to apply consistently across the Council.

1.3 The draft Community Engagement Principles (Appendix A) have been developed through the Community Connections Workstream of the Fit for Future modernisation programme, based on research of good practice.

1.4 These Principles are important to guide the council's engagement work and opportunities across all service areas, so that there is a consistent approach, and the impact of effective community engagement can be evaluated and celebrated.

1.5 Applying the Principles as 'One Council' will help us live an Asset Based approach to Community Development and help make it a more positive experience for communities to engage with us and will help the council reflect on what it has learned.

1.6 The 10 Principles are reproduced below for ease of reference:

1. **Involvement:** we will work with community stakeholders to identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, diversity and equality.

2. **Support:** we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

3. **Planning:** we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.

4. **Methods:** we will implement and use methods of engagement that are effective.

5. **Working Together:** We will implement and use clear procedures that enable people to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

6. **Sharing Information:** we will ensure that necessary information is communicated with the participants of community engagement, in line with Data Protection legislation.

7. **Working with Others:** we will collaborate with energy, respect and effectiveness with others with an interest in the engagement like stakeholders, statutory partners and third parties.

8. **Improvement:** we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of our people so that they can engage with communities more effectively.

9. **Feedback:** we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.

10. **Monitoring and Evaluation**: we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes, and we will use our learning to improve our engagement.

2. Consultation approach

2.1 A Survey Monkey consultation was launched to gather the views of LMT and Community Connections Workstream members between 18th December 2023 and 19th January 2024 (with time extension given to a number of colleagues).

2.2 This was supported by 1-2-1 meetings with the Leader, Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees (subject to their availability) up until 5th March 2024.

2.3 The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (EDIE) Working Group considered the Principles at its January 2024 meeting, as did the Youth Council in February 2024. Both groups have provided feedback.

2.4 A Member Information Evening has been scheduled for 5th March with a focus on the Community Engagement Principles, and also the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Principles.

2.5 This consultation period culminates in the Alliance Leadership Team meeting of 6th March.

2.6 A sample of community voices and VCSE groups have been asked for feedback on the Principles via email and deeper conversations will take place if the Principles are approved, in which will feed in to the first evaluation and review process. This will include the CN2030 Community Engagement Board.

3. Themes and opportunities identified during the consultation process

3.1 There was general agreement that the Community Engagement Principles **are needed, appropriate and concise** with some suggestions on how they might be improved such as amended wording or added clarification (e.g. explaining that Principle 8 relates to SDC looking to improve on previous engagement). Another suggestion was to reduce the number of Principles.

3.2 In summary, respondents liked the clarity; simplicity; good emphasis on feedback, monitoring and evaluation; encouragement of inclusivity, accountability and proper planning.

3.3 **Alignment:** consultees referenced the need to align the community engagement principles as an overarching framework linked to each of the engagement-type strategies and policies used by the council. e.g. engaging with young people or tenants; working with Town and Parish Councils or facilitating consultations.

3.4 **Application:** a key theme was 'how will the Principles be applied and used?' which suggests the need for a robust implementation plan.

    3.4.1 The guidelines could be too prescriptive or too flexible without appropriate implementation and governance.

    3.4.2 They may be useful to apply to regulatory services who do not regularly undertake proactive engagement, as long as thought is given to the fit with legislative requirements.

    3.4.3 We need to identify engagement opportunities and work together as one council to have a truly effective community engagement framework.

    3.4.4 Governance arrangements needed so we know the Principles are applied consistently and can evaluate their impact.

    3.4.5 Majority felt that the practical tips and advice should be provided in a separate toolkit (perhaps on a mini site), and case studies and good practice could be added to this as the Principles are embedded and used.

3.5 **Guidance on hard to identify and seldom heard groups** was requested by some consultees. This can be developed through the implementation phase – for example, conversations with the VCSE, sharing good practice and case studies, and reviewing the effectiveness of different methods.

3.6 **Empowering and decision making:** the Principles could be strengthened to reference feeding back to communities after formal decisions have been made and involving communities in the whole decision-making process from start to end.

3.7 **Further consultation is needed with the VCSE and directly with communities**, to listen to their opinions on the Principles and collaborate on testing them.

3.8 **Time, resource and skills -** the council should make sufficient time available and prioritised to do community engagement well. However, some consultees were concerned about the resource capacity in their service and felt the Principles might raise expectations that would be hard to meet without additional resource. Upskilling and training our staff

was another consideration, as was the potential financial implications of placing decisions in the hands of communities.

3.9 **Data protection** legislation will need to be followed depending on the information shared with people participating in the type of engagement.

3.10 **Communication:** how to launch, brand and communicate the Principles to communities as well as staff and partners. E.g. shop window or statement of commitment felt to be better approach than a list of principles. It could be hard to remember 10 principles but they could be turned into an infographic or image. Communicating information from engagement and consultation exercise to each other within SDC as well as communities will be important.

4.   Proposal to address feedback:

4.1 Feedback received during consultation has helped to shape the Principles and will inform their implementation and review. This is outlined below.

4.2 **Alignment:** Map alignment of the Principles with other strategies and policies and ensure there is a process to increase alignment and governance. The proposal is to organise a District Council officer Leadership Management Team (LMT) workshop to identify the engagement opportunities across council services along with the methods and strategies currently deployed, identify good practice, and complete a register/map of how these could be aligned.

4.3 As strategies and polices are reviewed, there would be an expectation for them to reference the community engagement principles and to include accountability for them in their governance arrangements.

4.4 Present the Community Engagement Principles and the VCSE Principles at the District Council Elected Member Information Evening on 5th March, Alliance Leadership Team on 6th March in preparation for the Committee meeting on 14th March.

4.5 **Implementation:** Co-create an implementation plan with Members, LMT and service representatives, to address specific points raised through the consultation process and to incorporate any further suggestions. The EDIE Working Group would be a valuable critical friend to this process. An implementation plan will help us navigate the journey to fully embed the principles into our culture and DNA.

4.6 Considerations for implementation plan (from consultation feedback)

   a. Application
   b. Governance
   c. Skills and training
   d. Community involvement and feedback
   e. Relationship with other engagement strategies and policies
   f. Identifying and sharing good practice
   g. Performance management
   h. Resource and financial implications
   i. Communications
   j. Procedure for review and updating.

5.   Alignment with VCSE Principles

5.1   The VCSE Principles are being considered in parallel to SDC's Community Engagement Principles. These two pieces of work are complementary but have key differences.

5.2   The VCSE Framework seeks to provide the council and its partners in the VCSE with a set of commonly understood good practice guidelines for communication and support. It is designed to strengthen working relationship with a transparent and consistent approach.

5.3   The Community Engagement Principles are a toolkit for the council's officers and members across all their work with communities and individuals. The support an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach underpinned by consistency, respect and reliability, applicable in the many and varied interactions which the council has with its communities of place and interest.

6.   Alignment with Cultural Strategy

6.1   The Cultural Strategy is about embedding a cultural of creativity across the district and council and the Community Engagement Principles are about embedding a culture of effective engagement.

6.2   Both the Cultural Strategy and the Principles require an exercise of 'what opportunities are out there' and 'which ones should be prioritised for investment?' They also both build on the strengths and assets already present in communities.

6.3   Culture and arts can be a good 'way in' to effective community engagement.

7.   Conclusion

7.1   In conclusion, an intensive consultation first phase has been completed and the draft Community Engagement Principles in Appendix A have been updated to address key points. If the Principles are approved by Committee, deeper conversations with community leaders and VCSE organisations will take place as the Principles are implemented and embedded.

7.2   The Principles align with the council's values and behaviours, and specifically with Making a Difference – placing the people in our communities at the heart of everything we do.

7.3   The main themes from the consultation so far have been considered and will be addressed through an implementation plan if the Principles are approved.

7.4   The Principles should be used to guide the approach to collaborating on an implementation plan, including working with LMT and service representatives as well as continuing to research good practice.

7.5   Effective application of the Community Engagement Principles will help the council and communities with thorny questions such as 'how do we find and collaborate with volunteers on the canal project?', 'how can we work more effectively with communities to prevent ASB?', 'how can we increase community participation in planning and licensing consultations?' 'how can we work together to achieve more through the community hub model? 'how can we collaborate with communities to tackle health inequalities like air pollution?'

7.6   It is suggested that the Principles are evaluated and reviewed in 12-18 months' time following a period of implementation and learning.

8. Implications

8.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications within this report.

Adele Rudkin, Accountant

Tel: 01453 754109   Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk

8.2 Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.
One Legal Tel: 01684 272691   Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

8.3 Equality Implications

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and no adverse equality implications arise.

8.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Appendix A: DRAFT Community Engagement Principles

Stroud District Council

Contents

1.   Aim

The purpose of these Principles is to support Stroud District Council staff in the planning and delivery of different types of engagement, including the methods and techniques that can be used to effectively involve local people in decisions that affect their lives. The council has some really positive experience of good community engagement practice, which this guidance aims to build on.

2.   What do we mean by community engagement?

A 'community' can be a group of people who share a common place (people in a geographical area), a common interest (people who share a particular interest or experience) or a common identity (demographic characteristics such as age). It is important to remember that individuals often belong to more than one community (source: West Lothian council).

Community Engagement covers a whole range of activities that encourage and enable individuals and communities to be involved, at the level they want, in what is going on in their area. This ranges from simply giving the community information, to working in partnership with the community in developing services in their local area.

3. Why good community engagement is important

By grasping what people need and what they can do for themselves, we can work better with communities and be more efficient. By bringing people in on decision-making, councils are more likely to get decisions right, manage expectations and improve relationships with residents. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been even more important to work closer with our communities and to support them engaging and connecting with each other.

By using these Principles, we will be better able to Make a Difference by placing the people in our communities at the heart of everything we do (this is one of the council's values and behaviours).

4. How the VCSE Principles complement the Community Engagement Principles

These two sets of principles are complementary but have key differences and targets. The VCSE Framework aims to provide the council and its partners in the VCSE with a set of commonly understood good practice guidelines for communication and support. It is designed to strengthen working relationship with a transparent and consistent approach.

The Community Engagement Principles are a toolkit for the council's officers and members across all their work with communities and individuals. The support an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach underpinned by consistency, respect and reliability, applicable in the many and varied interactions which the council has with its communities of place and interest.

5. Key principles of community engagement

These Principles are important to guide the council's engagement work and opportunities across all service areas, so that there is a consistent approach, and the impact of effective community engagement can be evaluated and celebrated.

Applying the Principles as 'One Council' will help us live an Asset Based approach to Community Development and help make it a more positive experience for communities to engage with us and will help the council reflect on what it has learned.

1. INVOLVEMENT: we will work with community stakeholders to identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, diversity and equality

 2. SUPPORT: we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement

 3. PLANNING: we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken

4. METHODS: we will implement and use methods of engagement that are effective

5. WORKING TOGETHER: We will implement and use clear procedures that enable people to work with one another effectively and efficiently

 6. SHARING INFORMATION: we will ensure that necessary information is communicated with the participants of community engagement, in line with Data Protection legislation.

 7. WORKING WITH OTHERS: we will collaborate with energy, respect and effectiveness with others with an interest in the engagement like stakeholders, statutory partners and third parties.

8. IMPROVEMENT: we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of our people so that they can engage with communities more effectively

9. FEEDBACK: we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION: we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes, and we will use our learning to improve our engagement.

6. Considerations for community engagement

1. Scope of the engagement

What is actually open to change, and have you made that clear to the community and/or public? Which of the following levels of engagement are you aiming to achieve?

• inform: provide information to the public or feedback after formal decisions have been made

• consult: ask for feedback from them and feed back to them

• involve: work with them to answer a pre-set question

• collaborate: define the question together and share each aspect of decision-making

• empower: communities are involved in decision making from beginning to end

2. Purpose

Be clear on the purpose of the engagement. What are you trying to achieve with the community? What do you intend to do with the results or outcome?

3. Outcomes

What specific outcomes, linked to the purpose, are you looking for? And how about secondary outcomes, like increasing mutual understanding or developing contacts that might be useful later?

4. Outputs

What should the engagement process produce? e.g., a report to communicate a decision and the process leading to it.

5. Participants

Who needs to be involved to make the answers to the above possible and how do we identify who is 'missing'? e.g. use a stakeholder map.

6. Budget

How much money is available and who will be involved in deciding how it is spent?

7. Timescales

When do you hope to achieve the outcomes by? Are there any other time constraints?

8. Organisational response

When and how will the relevant decision-makers review the results of the engagement process and respond, and provide feedback to the community?

9. Monitoring and evaluation

What information would it be useful to collect about the project (e.g., performance against desired outcomes, successes, learnings etc)? How are you going to go about it?

10. Learning and improvement

How will you identify and record good practice and lessons learned? Do you have ideas about how the learning might benefit other service areas or communities?

Appendix A

7. Links to other engagement strategies and policies

1. Community engagement methods – mini site to be developed including case studies and good practice examples (in development)
2. Performance management framework.
3. Communications and Engagement Strategy
4. Tenant Engagement Strategy https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1874703/tenant-engagement-strategy-april-2022.pdf
5. Hear by Right accreditation
6. 2030 Strategy and Masterplan https://stroud.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s607/Item%209%20-%20Appendix%20B%20-%20The%202030%20Strategy%20Master%20Plan.pdf
7. Consultation strategy (in development)
8. Asset based community development policy (to be developed)
9. Statement of Community Involvement https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/statement-of-community-involvement
10. Town and parish council charter https://hub.stroud.gov.uk/resources/parish-and-town-councils
11. VCSE Principles
12. Cultural Strategy
13. Youth Engagement Strategy

Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at:
https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

Guidance available on the HUB

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Sarah Clark	Telephone: 07976 878721
	E-Mail: sarah.clark@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Fit for the Future	Date of Assessment: 22/02/2024

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Community Engagement Principles

Is this new or an existing one? New

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The aim is to provide the council with a set of community engagement principles that can be applied to all our engagement and consultation work and opportunities. The objectives of the Principles are to promote consistency, equality and inclusion, accountability, effective feedback and measuring the impact of our work for and with communities. This will help improve the quality and value of our interactions with communities.

The key objectives are as follows:

- Support an asset-based approach to community development.

- Improve consistency, quality and value of our interactions with communities.

- Promote consistency, equality and inclusion, accountability, and the importance of effective feedback to communities.

- Provide a way to continually improve our engagement practices and to measure the impact of our work for and with communities.

- Align with other more specific engagement strategies and polices used by the council.

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

No

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

This initiative will potentially benefit all citizens and communities as the council builds its skills, knowledge and experience to practice more effective community engagement. People who are currently missed in engagement opportunities like consultations should benefit if the council is better able to identify and work with seldom heard groups or people who do not regularly engage with the council.

Placing more power in the hands of communities helps to create and sustain strong and resilient communities.

6. What outcomes are expected?

The council will have a set of guiding community engagement principles which align with all our other engagement and consultation type strategies and practices. Officers will be better supported to work in an ABCD way, through the guidance and through collaborating to build a good practice toolkit of community engagement methods, models and techniques.

Governance and reporting arrangements will help the council engage consistently, transparently and inclusively with communities and better enable the sharing of feedback.

Other outcomes relate to increasing the skills and knowledge of the council, and improved sharing of insight and information across council services from our work with communities.

Longer term outcomes are the internal culture change associated with effective community engagement and community outcomes related to tackling health inequalities, supporting resilience and cohesive communities, and addressing the wider determinants of health.

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment? (e.g. Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

The importance of effective and consistent community engagement is well documented, for example by the Local Government Association New Conversations Guide to Community Development.

There is a wealth of health literature which reports the benefits of community engagement. For example, the British Medical Journal state it leads to 'better health outcomes, more equitable delivery of services and enhanced community empowerment, ownership, and accountability'. BMJ 2023;381:e072638

8. **Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees**

Elected Members (Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees), Alliance Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team, Leadership and Management Team, Youth Council, Community Connections Workstream team, and council services such as Community Development, Housing Services (tenant engagement), Communications, Policy and Governance, Museum in the Park, Planning Strategy and Development Management, and Customer Access. The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Working Group were also consulted on the Principles. Community leaders and the VCSE are being consulted on the second draft.

9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	The district has a population of circa 121,103 people which are broken down into the following age categories: Aged 0-4 – 5,643 Aged 5-19 – 20,200 Aged 20-64 – 67,030 Aged 65+ - 28,230 All age groups should benefit from the Community Engagement Principles because the council will be more effective at providing inclusive and accessible forms of engagement so that everyone can have a voice (if they want to).
Disability	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Principles and officers will gain skills in adapting engagement events and consultation so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved. The Principles should lead to a culture where voices that have been traditionally silenced are able to be heard.
Gender Re-assignment	Positive: the Principles aim to improve the way the council engages with all communities (not just geographical) and to allow people to have a voice and participate in the way that works best for them. Accessibility and

Appendix B

	confidentiality will help to create safety.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Neutral
Race	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Principles and officers will gain skills in adapting engagement events and consultation so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved. The Principles should lead to a culture where people who have not traditionally been heard will be able to amplify their voices.
Religion – Belief	Positive – the Principles will enable engagement with communities in a way that respects religion and beliefs and empowers people to feel they can be involved, not marginalised.
Sex	Positive – the Principles will support equality between voices of people of different sexes without giving more weight or value to one sex.
Sexual Orientation	Positive – people should feel more able to become involved in engagement events and opportunities and to be heard openly or in confidence.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	Neutral
Rural considerations: Ie Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	None specifically associated with this report; however, accessibility of engagement events and consultations will be considered as part of the embedding process.

10. **If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?**

   Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	**Lead officer**	**Resource**	**Timescale**

Declaration
I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function * (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed by: Sarah Clark	**Date: 23/02/24**
Role: Community Connections Workstream Lead	
Countersigned by Director: *K G*	**Date: 05.03.2024**

Date for Review: <u>Please forward an electronic copy to policy@stroud.gov.uk</u>

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Cultural Strategy update
Purpose of Report	This report is to provide an update on work to develop a cultural strategy for Stroud district. It presents details of consultation to date, identified core themes and opportunities. This work will provide the basis for the production of the strategy and delivery action plans later in the year.
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES to:** 1) **Note the contents of the report;** 2) **Delegate responsibility to the Strategic Director of Communities in consultation with the Chair of Community Services and Licensing Committee to progress this work to produce a final strategy with delivery proposals and resource implications and report back to Committee in due course.**
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation has taken place with: • Elected members including through two all members briefing workshops and a cross party members panel which has met three times, • Cultural and voluntary sector organisations from across all parts of the districts through a number of consultation workshops and one to one meetings, • Approximately 150 individual residents in one to one and small groups sessions and through a community panel, which has met three times.
Report Author	Keith Gerrard, Strategic Director of Communities Email: keith.gerrard@stroud.gov.uk
Options	An option to not provide this update was considered and discounted
Background Papers	No background papers
Appendices	Appendix A - Cultural Strategy Framework Document Appendix B – Cultural Strategy Timeline Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

1.1 The Stroud Council Plan makes a commitment for the production of a Cultural Strategy for the Stroud District. This report provides an update on work to date and the emerging issues presented in the Framework Report at Appendix 1.

1.2 It is intended that the themes, issues and opportunities identified in the Framework Report will form the basis of the Cultural Strategy and inform the co-production of a delivery action plan, which will be brought forward for consideration in summer 2024.

1.3 In December 2021 specialist arts consultants, 64 Million Artists, were commissioned to undertake research and consultation to support the development of a cultural strategy for the Stroud District.

1.4 In commissioning this work the district council was clear that it was looking for a community-led cultural strategy that will build on the whole district's heritage and sense of local identity. The cultural strategy would seek to harness existing strengths and create a blueprint or route map which would help create a place where people feel confident and able to engage with cultural activities. It asked for consultants to help identify a strategy which would strengthen communities, inspire personal achievement, create happiness, a sense of well-being and facilitate community cohesion and local economic activity.

1.5 The procurement brief noted that the Council was looking for expert input to help produce a strategy which would act as catalyst for the district to harnesses the creativity of its diverse communities and generate more opportunities for people to connect, create and communicate. There was a particular emphasis on the opportunity to capitalise on Stroud's unique heritage, character and landscape. The Council was explicit that the final strategy should unlock ways for creativity to contribute to a greener, healthier, and more prosperous district for the generations to come. It should contribute to and enhance other work which the Council and its partners are doing and articulate a vision which will use culture to transform the district, making it more attractive to live, work, visit and invest in.

The brief identified seven outputs:

1. Drive growth in culture and creativity, making the case for investment.

2. Innovate and showcase cultural excellence

3. Reach out across the district, strengthen and celebrate links and relationships

4. Maximise the social benefits of investment in culture

5. Demonstrate the legacy of cultural activity, taking an evidence-based approach

6. Foster connectivity, capacity and collectiveness to deliver cultural activity

7. Embed environmental sustainability.

1.6 *Who are 64 Million Artists?*

The procured consultancy, 64 Million Artists, is one of the leaders in providing advice to the public and voluntary sector in the UK around Everyday Creativity. It is an organisation which believes that through creativity we can make positive change in our lives and the world around us. It has previously worked nationally on research and policy with Arts Council Wales, Arts Council England, King's College London and University College London and has led co-created community projects with Coventry and Hull as UK Cities of Culture and with Rotherham as the UK Children's Capital of Culture.

2.   Main Points

2.1   *The Approach*

Since its commission, the research, consultation and production of the Framework Report has sought to engage with stakeholders, partners, those whose voices are not always heard, as well as alignment and connection with other work by the district, town and parish councils. The consultant's adopted the following steps.

- Understanding the challenges of the area (and SDC's related challenges)

- Formulate and develop a partnership approach.

- Asset mapping and literature review (including SDC, town & parish council and partners' strategies).

- Consultation & engagement.

- <u>Develop a vision, priorities and themes. (This is the stage we are at now)</u>

- Action plan development.

2.2   *Consultation and Engagement*

2.3   Throughout the consultation process, there has been a close working relationship between the Chair of Community Services and Licensing Committee, council officers, and the consultants. This has particularly referenced the Council's ongoing work in communities supporting health and wellbeing and investing in sustainable neighbourhoods through community grants. It has particularly noted work with community hubs, and with partners such as the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board, The Stroud and Berkeley Vale Integrated Locality Partnership Integrated Care System and The Stroud District Community Safety Panel. Drawing on the cultural sector's expertise to achieve the 2030 strategy has been identified as critical and the work the Council's 2030 team has helped inform the work and shape emerging opportunities.

2.4   The consultant process has also noted and cross-referenced work which is underway to identify Community Engagement and Community and Voluntary Sector Principles for the district council.

2.5   Since its commission, 64 Million Artists has undertaken one to one and group meetings with cultural and arts organisations across the district, including Prema, Stroud Valleys Artspace, The Sub Rooms, Hawkwood College, Create Gloucestershire, Good on Paper and established community based organisations including The Door in Dursley, The Door in Stonehouse, All Pulling Together Stonehouse, The Painswick Centre, Three Storeys Nailsworth, Cam and Dursley Creatives, Stroud Town Council.

2.6   These community based voluntary sector organisations also facilitated over 150 individual resident meetings one to one and in small groups and tried to reflect the geographical spread of the district.

2.7   Two Elected Member Briefing Workshops were held on 24 October 2023 and 19 February 2024. Two open community and stakeholder events were held at Stroud Brewery 6 June 2023 and two cultural organisations workshop events were held at The Museum in the Park on 27 November 2023 and 1 March 2024.

2.8   In addition, three Community Panel meetings, involving 10 independent individuals from across the district, representing a broad range of ages and experiences, have taken place.

3.   Emerging Issues and Opportunities

3.1 Building on the requirements of the procurement brief, the consultation process outlined above has identified a series of emerging issues and opportunities, these are summarised below and detailed in the Framework Report at Appendix A:

- Creativity and climate – Working across generations and communities to be creative in tackling climate change.

- Communicating and connecting – creating a culture of advocacy - a cross cutting view to value culture's contribution

- Economy and regeneration - Fostering an eco-system which is supporting the creative/cultural sector to help them become better networked and connected in the broadest sense.

- Future Generations – Ensuring equal access to creative activity, co-creating youth led activities and enabling young people to become good ancestors.

- Community and Wellbeing – Maximizing the districts strong identity with creative health and there is the potential for creativity to connect to issues of loneliness, social isolation, an ageing population and adolescent mental health.

- Heritage and Place – Building on the district's heritage alongside commitments such as the canal restoration project linking communities together and magnifying the role of culture as a key driver for the cohesion, ownership and involvement.

3.2 Under all issues is Stroud's distinctive geography, its nature, its farmland and its history. Within this, it is to also recognise the challenges this presents including transport, environmental impacts, hidden deprivation and access issues. Geographic reach and ownership by all of the district and joining up what we already do with a sense of purpose and inclusivity has been identified as essential in the final strategy. This needs to be a strategy which encourages confidence, a senses of fulfilment, belonging and, in this, fosters happiness and empowerment. We should not be shy from being proud.

4.   Next steps

4.1 The Framework Report is intended to inform ongoing consultation and the co-production of a delivery action plan in collaboration with community stakeholders and arts and cultural organisations. It is anticipated that the strategy will be brought forward for consideration for adoption and launch during summer 2024.

4.2 The timeline graphic at Appendix B illustrates an indicative timeline, which is subject to change but is helpful to explain potential approvals and sequencing.

5.   Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct implications in this report as it provides an update on work to develop a cultural strategy for Stroud district and to outline the basis to produce the strategy and delivery action plans later in the year. Any potential costs associated with future funding (p15, appendix 1) would have to be brought back to this Committee in a separate report.

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5.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications as result of this report. One Legal will be able to provide legal advice and assistance where appropriate to support delivery of the strategy, particularly regarding funding agreements and joint working arrangements.

One Legal Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

5.3 Equality Implications

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

5.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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Appendix A

FRAMEWORK REPORT

Consultant's Report

STROUD - A DISTRICT OF CREATIVITY

1

STROUD - A DISTRICT OF CREATIVITY

This Framework Consultants Report sets the context for the creation of a cultural strategy for Stroud district. It is an update and identifies core themes and opportunities. It is intended to provide a basis for the production of the strategy and delivery action plans

A cultural strategy for Stroud District Council created by communities.

THE AIM OF THIS STRATEGY

A district that harnesses the creativity of its diverse communities and generates more opportunities for people to connect, create and communicate. Capitalising on Stroud's unique heritage, character and landscape, this strategy will unlock ways for creativity to contribute to a greener, healthier and more prosperous district for the generations to come.

THE DISTRICT

Situated in the South of Gloucestershire, Stroud district is home to some 115,000 people in towns, villages and hamlets. It is bordered by the River Severn with historic canals and mills showcasing its unique industrial rural heritage. Its hills and woodland areas are popular with tourists and visitors, and it has a rich cultural heritage; it has long been the home of artists, writers and activists.

WHAT THIS DOCUMENT IS FOR

This strategy sets out key challenges and opportunities that the District Council can act upon over the next few years to build on Stroud district's vibrant culture. It outlines how working across traditional agendas, creativity can support regeneration, sustainability and health and wellbeing. It is designed to initiate action leading to with a series of recommendations, some specific and others more aspirational but the overall aim is to create a platform for the council to transform attitudes and ambition around creativity and culture from 2024 into the future.

WHAT WE DID

Over 12 months from December 2022, the national champion for everyday creativity, 64 Million Artists, worked with citizens from across the district to understand the value they placed on culture and creativity, where they saw opportunities and what their hopes and worries were for the district in the future. These conversations, creative encounters and collaborations grew a sense that culture was central to people's lives and their sense of wellbeing and belonging. These conversations, with people across the district, will form the basis for these recommendations and ideas for future action. Everything in this strategy has been generated and created by the people of the district - 64 Million Artists have coalesced these ideas and hopes into several themes and prioritised suggestions according to what we heard people needed the most.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

A particular focus in speaking to people across the district was to hear from people who feel excluded from culture. These perspectives are particularly important because culture has the power to challenge historic oppression and marginalisation. The approach herein aims to consider throughout how culture and creativity can be agents for change to improve the lives of everyone in the community and help generate more equitable ways of living together.

2

INTRODUCTION

Stroud district has a vibrant, joyful and dynamic cultural and creative scene, including excellent cultural organisations, festivals and craftspeople, alongside a huge and involved community of volunteers. It is home to international creative businesses, world renowned artists, and is a beacon of creativity. Its rich literary and artistic history along with its living heritage of making and creating means it has a reach and reputation internationally - it punches above its weight as an area of culture and the arts.

Culture has long contributed to the district's vision of itself. It is quirky, independent and knows its own mind. It revels in the beauty of its history and landscape but it is gritty and sometimes impatient to try new things. Artists have helped build an identity for the district - whether they grew up here like Laurie Lee or Adjoa Andoh or located here like Sade or Damien Hirst. People from across the district are proud of it and proud to come from here. They enjoy coming together at events and festivals, at gigs and exhibitions, online and
in person.

The district is unique. On the edge of the Cotswolds, it is pretty but not picture postcard with an industrial heritage unlike other parts of Southern England. It is quickly connected to Bristol, Cheltenham, Swindon and London but parts of it are deeply rural and quiet. It has long bred activists and changemakers from William Tyndale to the founders of Extinction Rebellion. It is also forward looking with a young population and business sector quickly embracing the potential of new technologies.

While Stroud has a national and even international profile, it could do more. There is a sense of a potential not quite fulfilled, that more could be done to celebrate, shout and advocate for the district as a whole and what it has, and can, achieve. Too many of its cultural highlights are undervalued, obscured or unknown. Too many potential creative citizens are unable to find fellow travellers, explore their creativity or connect with what's on offer. Some residents don't see themselves in the culture that is made visible and feel the culture of the district is not for them.

Opportunity across the district is uneven, inequalities that exist in employment, health and education are often emphasised further in access to culture and creativity. National (cost of living) and global (climate) crises are affecting the district and its residents acutely. The next decade will be one of huge change for the district with massive population shifts, digital opportunities and a revolution in the future of work existing alongside climate changes that will directly affect the district through flooding and the need to change the way we live, work and travel.

While this strategy cannot solve these issues, it aims to draw on the potential of culture and creativity to bring Stroud's peoples together, to instill optimism, build hope, and generate community. It will specifically point to the ways in which culture can contribute to improving the health and prosperity of the district's residents, as well as the ways in which creativity can offer approaches to climate and the wellbeing of future generations of the district.

3

Appendix A

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE

By celebrating the value of culture, creativity and the creative industries, Stroud District Council will seek to harness the incredible power of culture to build community resilience and wellbeing; make positive individual, local and district-wide impacts on the environment and climate; and tackle economic and social inequality across the district. Growing awareness of what is happening in the district's cultural and heritage sector will build civic pride, enhance people's sense of belonging and burnish the area's reputation nationally and internationally.

Small, co-ordinated changes along with modest investment over a 3–5-year period will build on the district's existing strong cultural offer to attract inward investment and boost tourism and employment. Tapping into the arts and heritage sector's existing environmental activism will embed a spirit of hope in citizens and in their willingness to tackle global challenges. At the heart of this will be our attempts to set an example by proactively valuing culture and what it has to offer, encouraging others to do the same and enabling all citizens to explore their creativity.

4

WHAT WE WILL DO

The Council will take the same approach to culture and creativity as it is taking to carbon and climate.

- To always… …act as an example in the community.
- To be an enabler and encourager of positive action.
- Through its services, policies and projects to do everything in its power to collaboratively achieve a creative, resilient, inclusive and, equality driven district.

It will achieve this by emphasising the impact creativity can have in a district that thrives on its:

- Invention
- Innovation
- Independence
- Industry
- Disruption

5

CELEBRATING, ENCOURAGING

In order to embed the potential of culture and creativity across the Council's agenda, a strengths-based approach will be necessary. There is already a brilliant, imaginative and impressive network of cultural organisations, artists, musicians, crafters, writers, thinkers who are making great culture in the district. They need to be celebrated, showcased, highlighted and valued.

There is also a huge audience for this culture, people who want to dance, sing, laugh, play, eat and be entertained. More can be done to bring these people together with the culture on their doorstep. The Council can also blur the lines between audience and provider by encouraging people to be adventurous, trying new things, seeing other cultures and ways of being, inventing new stories and unearthing hidden ones.

This role of cultural cheerleader needs some resource in order to be credible and to bring the many different players working in creativity and culture together. Some of this process has begun through the development of this strategy. The next stage is to build on this and to join the dots, creating a role within the council with real power and influence to act as an agent for change and an internal advocate for culture and creativity. In the same way that everyone who works for and with the council is empowered to promote 2030 carbon neutral, so should a mindset of exploring and exploiting creativity be adopted across the council. Leadership will be key.

This leadership role for the council can be ably supported by organisations working across the district to create cultural opportunities for the people of the district. These organisations can be supported to widen their delivery - bringing the excellence of their cultural offer to new geographies and communities who are currently limited in their capability to access arts and culture.

The wider pool of volunteers exploring their own creativity and creating opportunities for others should be celebrated and bolstered. One approach to this will be to measure and capture the wider impact of culture in the district - looking at numbers of people contributing to the vibrancy of the district. Volunteering contributes economically and as a boost to health and community cohesion. Capturing and celebrating this will help articulate the special qualities of the district.

It is these special qualities which have (particularly in recent years) drawn creatives to the district. The honeypot effect of Stroud's buoyant creative scene has the potential to create a virtuous cycle bringing people and businesses into the district, growing opportunities and magnifying impact. Alongside creating a district in which young people wish to remain in, to live, work and play.

As Stroud grows and changes, its creative history should be celebrated and lauded. As well as the prestigious and well known artists and histories, undertold stories should be shared. The story of Stroud as a leader in creative health, of creativity in activism, of diverse communities sharing their creativity and culture needs to be shouted from the hilltops.

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1. CREATIVITY AND CLIMATE

The Council has an active and ambitious plan to take climate action. Founded on its mission as enabler, exemplar and encourager the plan is detailed, wide ranging and focused. It fails to capitalise on what creativity and culture might add to its approach which is to ground this work in hope, belief and aspiration for the future. Without creativity, action on climate is liable to become mired in a sense of what will be lost rather than what will be gained. Organisations like Hawkwood College are already part of a national conversation about climate activism and the role of culture in tackling these challenges. Arts and creativity can help spearhead broad behaviour change - one of the biggest challenges in tackling the climate crisis. There are creative ways to achieve all sorts of climate action outcomes.

There is the potential for the Council to use a creative approach to stimulating conversations at a family, business and community level to help deliver on its 2030 strategy. Beyond this, the Council can rightly celebrate its successes in achieving its climate goals and, again, culture can be an effective partner with the council to celebrate and communicate these achievements. Framing this approach in hope and a focus on future generations will likely embed new opportunities for the cultural sector to generate fresh thinking and action on climate change.

The potential for old and new technologies to help people be more creative and act sustainably is huge. By embracing new digital technologies, the Council can support online cultural activity and sustainable in-person activity (active travel, renewable generators, drone displays replacing fireworks). At the same time, sharing tools, premises and makerspaces will offer new ways of reducing the carbon footprint of individuals and organisations. The Council can lead the way in innovating towards sustainability.

And nowhere is this more in demand than across the Stroud District. The area's long history of social action has bubbled forth around the need to take drastic and immediate action on climate change and for planet preservation. Ensuring that everyone understands the perspectives of other people, communities and eco-systems is essential if climate activists are to succeed. Art and creativity is the key to building this understanding and framing the most difficult of conversations in ways that make it possible for people to engage. The Council should be proud of its citizens' passion to save the planet and should unite with storytellers to enable, encourage and set an example.

Opportunities

1. An audit of activity to examine opportunities for new/old technologies to create environmental benefits in cultural provision (festivals, events, etc.)
2. Drawing on the cultural sector's expertise to achieve the 2030 strategy - challenging myths and suspicions with hope and realistic actions - a small climate fund for public awareness building
3. Work with communities to develop artistic responses to help tackle the district's transport challenges - including public transport and encouraging active travel through creative initiatives

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Appendix A

2. COMMUNICATING, CONNECTING

Crucial to growing the district's cultural and creative future is the means to tell people about what is going on. Investing in what the creative community is already doing to share ideas and promote activity will quickly yield results. At present, communication about cultural opportunities across the district is patchy and unequally distributed. While the Council should not set up its own cultural communications work, it should support developing localised offers to make them district wide.

Further to this, the council can support the creative/cultural sector to take its existing offer and link it authentically to the needs of the community by forging connections with the community hubs. The Council needs to foster an eco-system of a connected, integrated (and celebrated) cultural community which is embedded in its community and not existing alongside or only in relation to certain parts of the community. The Council could trial support for individual creativity champions to activate and build connections across and within communities through creative activities.

Better communication of cultural opportunities would encourage micro-tourism and foster civic pride. Helping people to explore the wealth of opportunity on their own doorsteps and growing audience and market for local artists, makers and producers. This would foster a more sustainable and durable approach to culture in the district, creating new and younger audiences and potentially fostering dialogue that ensures that the culture that happens locally is made by, with and for local people.

Opportunities

1. Identify a cultural advocate to provide a cross cutting view to add to value culture's contribution
2. Support for existing communications channels (e.g. investment in Good on Paper to expand its operation to have broader and deeper district wide reach and an online platform with detailed 'what's on' information)
3. Enable an audit of cultural value across the district (e.g. partner with a research partner such as The Centre for Cultural Value to establish baseline measures of culture's impact on economy, health, criminal justice, etc.)

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3. ECONOMY AND REGENERATION

The cultural and creative sector within Stroud's district is a core part of the eco-system that defines the place. People and businesses move to the district because of what is there already, its reputation, its nightlife, its food, its character. These are all defined and determined by the creatives who live here already. As discussed above, an audit of cultural value would help quantify this and identify opportunities for growth. Beyond this, though, the Council can foster a culture of cross-sector collaboration, encouraging businesses that are not defined as part of culture to consider themselves creative, to challenge themselves to work in new ways and try new things.

The process of researching and creating this strategy has initiated new conversations, networking and ambitions within and beyond the district's cultural sector. As already embedded in the Council's Economic DevelopmentStrategy, supporting the creative/cultural sector will help it become better networked and connected - so that they avoid duplication and find shared ways to work together (e.g. joint bids for funding). There is already evidence of the cultural sector sharing resources - volunteering, fundraising and equipment, more is possible. New and hitherto unimagined projects and partnerships might emerge through a generous approach to creating networking and community building activities with the cultural sector.

A number of small, practical measures would help ease red tape and make delivering creative activity easier. Whether this is help with the costs of planning, road closures, costs for hiring parks, or in putting on events. Consistently, the community feels the Council does not currently 'get' culture and its value; while individual officers and elected members may champion the value of culture, there is not a collective, organizational instinct that recognizes culture's wider value. As a consequence the Council is, itself, seen as a block to unleashing the district's creativity – seeing challenge where there might well be opportunity. Training for staff and a process of internal advocacy would help the Council build an approach that makes it a valid, genuine and plausible fellow traveller in igniting the district's creative flame. Accompanying this with profile boosting action on the high street and with business partners will generate rich rewards.

Opportunities

1. Bring together the creative sector for meaningful networking opportunities to explore collaboration around fundraising, volunteering. Offering creative organisations opportunities to lead 'training' or ideas workshops for Council staff and members to build understanding of cultural value)

2. Connect cultural organisations to business opportunities, taking the cultural organisations' lead around high street regeneration, nighttime economy, licensing and events.

3. Explore co-working opportunities with hospitality and tourism to target events and activities to increase inward investment.

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4. FUTURE GENERATIONS

There has been a national degrading of access to culture for young people both in and out of school. This is creating a generation of culturally disenfranchised children where only those with family wealth or family connections experience the benefits to their health, learning and future careers that cultural engagement can generate. What is more, young people don't know what they are missing - if they don't see it. As a consequence, many young people are not in a position to advocate for improved access to culture and the arts. Coupled with a reduction in available opportunities for young people to participate in culture, even young people keen to get involved struggle to find routes to express their creativity.

The Council should, , draw attention to reanimating youth provision to embed creativity, particularly in parts of the district with the most limited access to other cultural opportunities. By helping to embed creativity in youth clubs and other out of school provision, the Council can help build a level of cultural articulacy in young people across the district which will help ensure the district - and all its citizens can benefit from imagining, dreaming and advocating for a bright future. Creativity breeds confidence and a consciousness of the perspectives of others. It generates an appetite for risk and for vulnerability which will be vital in a rapidly changing society. Most pertinently, it builds a meaningful sense of civic rights and community connection which will have benefits in schools and across society.

As this takes hold, a greater range of young people will build skills and enthusiasm for shaping the district's cultural offer. This should take the form of young people being given the keys to the castle and enabled to put on their own events, defining content, building new forms of dialogue and sharing hitherto underground stories to help everyone hear diverse perspectives. This could take the form of an annual event or a fund for young producers. New and emerging artforms can be explored so that agency and the power of production shifts to the next generation.

Further, training and opportunities can be developed that will help young people see their futures in the district. Increasing creative opportunities for young people could be developed in partnership with colleges and cultural institutions but also with new and
untapped partners in digital technology industries, gaming, design, manufacturing and invention. A focus on young voices will not only benefit this generation of young people but the generations of the future. By exemplifying the concept of being a good ancestor, the Council and its partners will foster a culture of innovation that is future focused and takes into consideration the planet and the heritage we will leave to future generations.

Opportunities
1. A partnership programme to support the cultural sector and creative industries partners to offer apprenticeships, training, mentoring to create a co-ordinated pathway for young people to launch creative careers
2. Reanimate youth provision through creativity by supporting creatives to be embedded youth clubs, schools, after school provision and colleges
3. Co-create youth led activity - diversifying decision-making, providing a ring-fence resource for a youth led festival or other celebration

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5. COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING

The district is nationally renowned for its work in creative health. Dursley was one of the first places to successfully develop arts on prescription - a forerunner of the now national move towards social prescribing. With a track record going back 20 years, Artlift is well established as a nationally significant leader in social prescribing and arts and mental health. Along with CreateGloucestershire and other work across the district, there is the opportunity to build on this history and continue to attract national acclaim for this important work in connecting creativity with health and wellbeing. As the evidence base continues to grow for the role of culture in supporting the health of individuals and communities, this practice will only spread, and the Council can play a significant role in supporting and shaping this to the benefit of all its citizens.

The landscape of the district with its pattern of national paths, historic parks and leisure spaces, lends itself to drawing people outside. Already there is a wealth of creativity on display in festivals in summer and winter encouraging people to get outside and to get involved. While the district Council already draws on the FiveWays toWellbeing to support residents' mental health, there is room to be more explicit about the ways that culture can connect and contribute to this agenda through joining with cultural sector partners to encourage creativity and curiosity for all. Partnerships with sport and leisure can also draw people to explore creativity and try cultural activities they may have felt weren't for them.

There is evidence that a sense of belonging to a place and a community has a positive impact on individual and community wellbeing - and the arts and culture can play a key role in supporting the District Council to foster this sense of place. Crucial to this will be the way in which people and groups who do not typically see themselves represented and reflected in the stories that are shared start to hear and see them and people like them being given platforms to explore creativity. Through actively collaborating with historically marginalised groups, the Council can utilise creativity as a tool to bring communities together through shared storytelling in a range of forms.

By magnifying the role of culture as a tool for the council to achieve its aims to tackle loneliness, social isolation, the needs of an ageing population and contemporary challenges in adolescent mental health, there is the potential for culture to make a significant contribution to everyone in the district living healthy and happier lives. Other local, regional, national public and charitable bodies share this agenda, and these relationships should be fostered and developed.

Opportunities
1. Professional artists can be supported to work with community hubs, schools and hospitals (e.g. a small creative health grants scheme for artists to support community activity)
2. Partnerships with bodies like the community response network, ICS, the police, Age UK, should be convened with the cultural sector to develop new activity and relationship
3. The council should actively enable intergenerational cultural practice to build community cohesion focused on the concept of the wellbeing of future generations and the role of the good ancestor.

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Appendix A

6. HERITAGE AND PLACE

Stroud district is visibly a place of the past and the present. Many churches, castles, canals and cottages have a beauty, grandeur and awe that can inspire everyone and needs to be preserved and protected. Alongside this, stories and histories of the past (both uplifting and heartrending) have the means to teach us about the present and learn for the future. Many of these stories are not well known and in shining a light on them, the Council will help to tell a story about a district and its people that is optimistic, inclusive and ambitious. The significant current work in reimagining the Sharpness-Brimscombe canal presents a great opportunity to shout about how heritage can connect communities today. The Museum in the Park and Stratford Park itself are much loved and valued jewels in the district's crown but more could be done to connect and highlight the many brilliant groups and communities which are conserving and capturing the history of a unique place.

The district's story - and its future - has been and will continue to be shaped by its landscape and developing new ways of interacting with this offers a simple way to help people learn about and love their home. Through reinterpreting landscape names and places, the Council can also unearth hidden stories and address the difficult and even shameful histories that are also an important part of Stroud's story. Artists are skilled at bringing stories to life with nuance and care to help everyone understand where we have come from and where we might go.

While the district has a fascinating history, the present and future will require new infrastructure and growth. This development is an opportunity to centralise the value of culture and heritage and by committing new developments to invest in culture, the Council can secure funds to deliver on its cultural and creative ambitions. Adopting creative approaches to planning and development could bring widespread benefits to the whole community.

National policy moves (such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund's new strategy) are strengthening the connection between culture, creativity and heritage. By building on the Council's existing heritage strategy but weaving in the contribution of artists and creatives and actively supporting the sharing of stories that have been marginalised, Stroud's heritage can be brought to life for residents and visitors to the district now and in the future.

See appendix XX and YY for further reflection and ambitions for The Museum in the Park and Stratford Park specifically.

Opportunities
1. Nature trails - across hills, woods, parks and canals, heritage - connection to nature and equality of access with robust efforts to market these to the widest possible audience
2. Understanding what is already happening in the district - supporting the wide range of community and individual efforts to capture and share the district's history. There is potential for partnerships with Town Councils to support 'outreach' from cultural hotspots (e.g. Stroud town) to other parts of the district
3. Major bid to NLHF - co-ordinated bid to celebrate history, heritage and greener futures

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Opportunities for action are brought together here - both the headline ones from the document above - as well as some of the more specific **ideas** which have emerged from the consultation process.

- An audit of activity to examine opportunities for new/old technologies to create environmental benefits in cultural provision (festivals, events, etc.).

- Drawing on the cultural sector's expertise to achieve the 2030 strategy - challenging myths and suspicions with hope and realistic actions - a small climate fund for public awareness building.

- Work with communities to develop artistic responses to help tackle the district's transport challenges - including public transport and encouraging active travel through creative initiatives

- Identify a cultural advocate to work within the council and provide a cross cutting view to value culture's contribution (e.g. a fixed term role as an Agent for Creativity to activate the council around this agenda, securing adjustments to job descriptions and recruitment processes to embed culture in roles across the Council).

- Support for existing communications channels (e.g. investment in Good on Paper to expand its operation to have broader and deeper district wide reach and an online platform with detailed 'what's on' information).

- Enable an audit of cultural value across the district (e.g. partner with a research partner such as The Centre for Cultural Value to establish baseline measures of culture's impact on economy, health, criminal justice, etc.

- Bring together the creative sector for meaningful networking opportunities to explore collaboration around fundraising, volunteering. Offering creative organisations opportunities to lead 'training' or ideas workshops for Council staff and members to build understanding of cultural value).

- Connect cultural organisations to business opportunities, taking the cultural organisations' lead around high street regeneration, nighttime economy, licensing and events.

- Explore co-working opportunities with hospitality and tourism to target events and activities to increase inward investment.

- A partnership programme to support the cultural sector and creative industries partners to offer apprenticeships, training, mentoring to create a co-ordinated pathway for young people to launch creative careers.

- Reanimate youth provision through creativity by supporting creatives to be embedded in youth clubs, schools, after school provision and colleges.

- Co-create youth led activity - diversifying decision-making, providing a ring-fenced resource for a youth led festival or other celebration.

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- Professional artists should be supported to work with community hubs, schools and hospitals (e.g. a small creative health grants scheme for artists to support community activity).
- Partnerships with bodies like the community response network, ICS, the police, Age UK, should be convened with the cultural sector to develop new activity and relationship.
- The council could actively develop intergenerational cultural practice to build community cohesion focused on the concept of the wellbeing of future generations and the role of the good ancestor.
- Support for nature trails - across hills, woods, parks and canals, heritage - connection to nature and equality of access with robust efforts to market these to the widest possible audience.
- Understanding what is already happening in the district - supporting the wide range of community and individual efforts to capture and share the district's history. There is potential for partnerships with Town Councils to support 'outreach' from cultural hotspots (e.g. Stroud town) to other parts of the district.
- Major bid to NLHF - co-ordinated bid to celebrate history, heritage and greener futures.

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CONCLUSION AND ACTION

The Council should consider itself as a catalyst for change. Smart investment in culture and creativity can deliver on wider Council priorities (Economy, climate, young people, health and wellbeing etc.) Relatively modest input from the Council is likely to leverage support from other sources: private and individual donors and sponsors (not least potentially wealthy creatives based in the district); funders like Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund; earned income through public engagement and participation in cultural activity.

An initial period of 2 years support for culture and creativity could kick start this strategy, demonstrate commitment to the cultural sector and leverage external match funding (and beyond). Key targets within 2 years could include:
1. significant inward investment (e.g. grants from ACE, NLHF, etc.);
2. partnerships with health (ICS), criminal justice, etc. where funds are allocated to cultural social prescribing and other initiatives to build infrastructure;
3. partnerships with Town and Parish Councils that generate support in kind for distributive cultural activity (where cultural organisations are supported to extend their activity to parts of the district with lower cultural opportunities)

Demonstrable increases in cultural engagement, especially by young people should be measured through this period. Dialogue with cultural organisations should be recorded and actions (on both sides) measured and tracked.

Relationships should be developed with potential donors (high net worth individuals with an interest/involvement in arts and culture), with potential supporters and allies (Barnwood Trust, Gloucestershire County Council, Power to Change); and with the wider community – a dialogue about what citizens value across the district, what brings joy and pride in their lives, what they want to treasure and foster.

Commercial opportunities should be tested and initiated. These could include sponsorships, promotions, cross-sector working and requirements on match funding.

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SDC Cultural Strategy Roadmap –

1

Dec 2022 - Feb 2023

Understanding the district
- Partnerships
- Networks
- Relationships

2

March - June 2023

Outreach - Engagement and Consultation
Young people,
Community groups
Schools

3

June - Sep 2023

All member workshop
Stakeholder events
Community Hubs

4

September - December 2023

Developing ideas and opportunities
Members Panel Mtgs
Arts organisations' workshop

5

Next steps....

SDC Cultural Strategy Roadmap

6

January - draft 1

Preliminary draft

7

23 January -

Members panel Themes

Opportunities
Challenges
Timescales

8

19 February All Member Workshop

Shaping the future
Our role as local leaders

9

1 March Arts Organisations and Members Panel Workshop

Building on strengthens
Structures and Support

10

W/C 4 March - Consultation feedback

11

From 7 March - Wider stakeholder/ partner consultation

Various – (once papers for CS&L are published)

12

14 March - CS&L Update Report

Committee Decision - to - Note and provide feedback and comment on the update report

SDC Cultural Strategy Roadmap

June- Final Strategy document and Action plan

Completed Strategy Vision and Delivery Plan
–

11 July*
- S&R Final report

Committee Decision to - Approve and recommend adoption by Council

6 September* - Design and presentation

Full document designed and 'published' for CS&L 26 September

13

14

15

16

17

18

April /May Co-Production of Recommendations & Delivery Plan

Timelines and Key action illustrative case studies

27 June* - CS&L Final Report

Committee Decision to - Approve and recommend approval by S&R

18 July* - Council Final Report

Council Decision to Adopt the Strategy

*Pending adoption of draft civic calendar

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Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at:
https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

Guidance available on the HUB

1. **Persons responsible for this assessment:**

Name(s): Keith Gerrard	Telephone: 07955 988871
	E-Mail: keith.gerrard@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Fit for the Future	Date of Assessment: 05/03/2024

2. **Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:**

Cultural Strategy Update

Is this new or an existing one? New

3. **Briefly describe its aims and objectives**

The aim is to produce strategic framework which supports cultural, creative and arts activity in the district. This report is sets out a framework for progress ahead of the Strategy being presented to Community Services and Licensing Committee at a later date.

The final strategy should unlock ways for creativity to contribute to a greener, healthier, and more prosperous district for the generations to come. It should contribute to and enhance other work which the Council and its partners are doing and articulate a vision which will use culture

1

to transform the district, making it more attractive to live, work, visit and invest in

The brief identified seven outputs:

1. Drive growth in culture and creativity, making the case for investment.

2. Innovate and showcase cultural excellence

3. Reach out across the district, strengthen and celebrate links and relationships

4. Maximise the social benefits of investment in culture

5. Demonstrate the legacy of cultural activity, taking an evidence-based approach

6. Foster connectivity, capacity and collectiveness to deliver cultural activity

7. Embed environmental sustainability

4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)

No

5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?

This initiative will potentially benefit all citizens and communities as the council builds its skills, knowledge and experience. Ther will be particular opportunity for voluntary and community sectors groups to be supported to grow and achieve sustainability.

6. What outcomes are expected?

In commissioning this work the district council was clear that it was looking for a community-led cultural strategy that will build on the whole district's heritage and sense of local identity.

The cultural strategy would seek to harness existing strengths and create a blueprint or route map which would help create a place where people feel confident and able to engage with cultural activities.

The strategy should strengthen communities, inspire personal achievement, create happiness, a sense of well-being and facilitate community cohesion and local economic activity.

7. What evidence has been used for this assessment? (e.g. Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

The framework report, the consultation process and the assessment of Equality Impact has been shaped and informed by the work of 64 Million Artists. 64 Million artists is one of the leaders in providing advice to the public and voluntary sector in the UK around Everyday Creativity. It is an organisation which believes that through creativity we can make positive change in our lives and the world around us. It has previously worked nationally on research and policy with Arts Council Wales, Arts Council England, King's College London and University College London and has led co-created community projects with Coventry and Hull as UK Cities of Culture and with Rotherham as the UK Children's Capital of Culture. They have drawn on this experience here

The importance of effective and consistent community engagement is well documented, for example by the Local Government Association New Conversations Guide to Community Development.

8. **Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees**

Consultation has taken place with:

- Elected members including through two all members briefing workshops and a cross party members panel which has met three times,

- Cultural and voluntary sector organisations from across all parts of the districts through a number of consultation workshops and one to one meetings,

- Collaboration events and opportunities for members, officers and arts organisations to work together. Including Stroud Brewery 6 June 2023 and Museum in the Park on 1 March 2024

Approximately 150 individual residents in one to one and small groups sessions and through a community panel, which has met three times.

9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?
(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;
Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;
Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	The district has a population of circa 121,103 people which are broken down into the following age categories: Aged 0-4 – 5,643 Aged 5-19 – 20,200 Aged 20-64 – 67,030 Aged 65+ - 28,230 All age groups should benefit from the Cultural Strategy because access to cultural activity is being enabled, and promoted so that everyone can be involved.
Disability	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Strategy organisations and individuals will gain skills in adapting opportunity and so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved. The Strategy should lead to a culture where people that have been traditionally not involved can be supported to take part.
Gender Re-assignment	Positive: the strategy aim to improve the way the council engages with all communities (not just geographical) and to allow people to have a voice and participate in the way that works best for them. Accessibility and confidentiality will help to create safety.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Neutral
Race	Positive: accessibility, inclusion and equality will be promoted by the Strategy and officers will gain skills in adapting engagement events and consultation so that they are truly accessible to the communities involved.
Religion – Belief	Positive – the Strategy will enable engagement with communities in a way that respects religion and beliefs and empowers people to feel they can be involved, not marginalised.
Sex	Positive – the Strategy will support equality between voices of people of different sexes without giving more weight or value to one sex.

Appendix C

Sexual Orientation	Positive – people should feel more able to become involved and engaged cultural activities and to be heard openly or in confidence.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	Neutral
Rural considerations: Ie Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Recognising and addressing rural considerations and geographic isolation is specifically referenced in the framework document with this report; however, accessibility of cultural activities and consultations will be considered as part of the embedding process.

10. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?

Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.

Action(s):	Lead officer	Resource	Timescale

Declaration
I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function * (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed by: Keith Gerrard	Date: 05.03.24
Role: Strategic Director of Communities	
Countersigned by Director:	Date: 05.03.24
K-G	

Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to policy@stroud.gov.uk

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	5th February 2024

BRIEF REPORT

This report covers the period October-December 2023 as presented at the February meeting.

To the end of December, the museum welcomed nearly 38,000 visitors (up 9% on the year before) and had just under 69,000 user engagements (this includes enquiries, outreach, website visits but excludes social media). The museum closed earlier than normal in December and opened later in January to accommodate works for the Salix funded decarbonisation project. The museum's own deep clean has worked around these as best they could. The museum re-open with a special snowdrop weekend on Saturday 27th January 2024.

Collections Management System Replacement Project: Initial meeting with preferred supplier. Whilst contract being prepared and finalised there will be a concurrent process of supplying data for review as this will inform the software and services part of the contract. A review of the museum's data analysis and mapping to be held in January.
The effective management of the collections held in perpetuity for the community relies on an important tool – a collections management system. The current Access Database was developed in the early 1990s and is not fit for purpose – particularly in the sharing of collections information. The project is funded thanks to a generous private bequest to the Cowle Trust. This is the next step in the museum's development, following the successful museum's free-to-join membership.

Acquisitions: During the period the museum has received 20 offers of objects or groups of objects. The museum has accepted 11 of these. Items include a 1980s McLaren stroller; a collection of bearings and associated documents from the Hoffmann's factory, Stonehouse; a model of the living quarters of Painswick Post Office, which connects to the Post Office model in our existing collections. Contents of the latter to be displayed until end of March.

Mould: Conservators have collected for treatment the previously reported objects affected by mould at one of the stores. Further mould affected objects were found at a second collections store during the deep clean. Staff will be analysing environmental data and cleaning what they can safely and seeking expert input.

Security Assessment: The museum received an Arts Council England Security Assessment. The report concluded that the museum has good physical, technical and procedural controls. The museum is due to submit a State of the Environment report by the end of January.

Public Programme
Exhibition highlights have included: Woodcarvings by Natasha Houseago (8 October – 5 November) - a varied collection of carvings included sculptures made from fallen or felled trees from the surrounding park grounds, connecting the indoor gallery with the outdoor park setting. 'The Activist Alphabet' by Christine Felce (11 November - 3 December) - a series of 26 print-based works and poems by local artist Christine Felce. The project started during the 2020 Lockdown and arose out of her concern about the impact of climate change and social injustice.

The museum has continued to offer a mix of high quality, welcoming and enjoyable activities and events for different audiences and age groups. A highlight has to be the chocolate impact testing event held during the October half term.

Learning – Work Experience: Having reviewed the previous work experience offer, the museum has relaunched their Work Experience Opportunities during December and have advertised opportunities for Year 10 students during two separate weeks during summer 2024.

Evaluation: An informative presentation was given by the museum's learning officer of the results from the museum's 'motivation' short survey. The analysis will help to inform the Museum's Forward Plan (2024-2029) development.

Volunteering
To date, this financial year volunteer hours are 2,756 (just under 2FTE), the vast majority in the walled garden. This is valuable contribution, and which is being successfully developed by the museum's volunteer co-ordinator, though this is a temporary post. Thanks to this post the museum has managed to review and relaunch the volunteer programme and has begun to take on new volunteers.

De-carbonisation
All the radiators throughout the museum have been replaced along with plant in the basement. Due to the hard work in preparing for this no collections were put at risk. It was not possible to complete works in the modern extension and these are being re-designed and planned accordingly.

Courtyard Furniture
To help support the museum's income generation and visitor offer the Cowle Trust generously agreed to pay for new outdoor courtyard furniture. The existing furniture, which needs replacement, was previously funded by the Friends of the Museum in 2009.

Visit www.museuminthepark.org.uk/membership to sign-up to the free-to-join membership to get museum insights and news.

Next meeting 29th April 2024.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Nick Hurst
DATE	20th February 2024

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Police and Crime Panel
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	6th February 2024
BRIEF REPORT	

Following a motion passed by Gloucester County council members, representatives from other councils from the county were invite to attend the meeting.

Proposed Gloucestershire Police Precept 2024/35

The Commissioner inviting the Chief Constable to provide a rundown of the achievements of the last year, which included getting out of 'Engaged status, increase in officers, much improved 999 response rates and improvement in 101 responses in recent months. Compliance rates have improved to the level that Gloucestershire now has the highest compliance level in the country. Crime solving rate improved to 14% and there were over 10,000 arrests last year He also outlined the many challenges the police continue to have and the level of scrutiny they continue to be placed under from multiple reviews and audits.

The Gloucestershire Constabulary have prepared a budget of £158.3M, a budget increase of £8.6% on 22/23 budget, this requires a rise in the precept of £13/year for a band D household. This is net of a small contribution from reserves of £0.5M and savings needing to be achieved of £2.5m in the year, which are yet to be all identified.

The Medium financial planning (to 27/28) is based on a 3% budget uplift for each year, however a large saving is identified in 25/6 of £5.2M. The 24/5 Capital of £17.9m will largely be financing through borrowing £11.7m and £5m from reserves. In 2024/5 the main areas of capital expenditure will be in the investment in the new records management system £4.4m, Business Cases in development £5.5m, and ongoing replacement of the vehicles fleet £2.5m.

A number of questions were raised on the budget particularly around the use of reserves and where the savings will come from. It was agreed that the CFO will provide an update to a future panel. The budget was approved.

Perceptions of Crime Survey 2023:

1,847 residents contributed to the survey, 52% agreed or strongly agreed that anti-social behaviour was being dealt with by councils and police. 46% of residents had witnessed some form of anti-social behaviour in the last 12mths. Most residents feel safe in their local area at night, but only 60% in another area.

But residents' top areas they wish the police and other agencies do more was anti-social behaviour, dangerous driving and speeding, followed by drug use and burglary.

There were differences in how residents from different councils areas perceive crime.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Martin Pearcy
DATE	11th February 2024

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Citizens Advice

BRIEF REPORT

Statistics for both Stroud and Cotswold Districts – 1 April 2023 to 1 March 2024

Clients advised: 3,161
Number of issues: 14,442

The top five issue areas were:
1. Benefits and tax credits (includes disability benefits, pension credit and council tax support)
2. Debt
3. Charitable support and foodbanks
4. Housing
5. Universal credit

Relationships and families was an extremely close sixth.

Personal Independence remains by far the biggest benefits enquiry area. Council tax arrears is the biggest debt enquiry area followed by fuel debts.

In terms of client demographics:
- All age brackets from 15-19 to 100-104 have been advised
- 62% of clients described themselves as female; 38% as male
- 59% of clients described themselves as disabled or as having a long term health condition
- 94% of clients describe their ethnicity as white.

In terms of outcomes:
Between 1 April 2023 and 1 March 2024 we have achieved an outcome gain of £1,259,194 for clients; written off £372,043 worth of debt and secured reimbursements of £37,410.

Benefits project information
A significant part of the income gain is as a result of our benefits appeal successes. Whilst this work is funded largely by projects (ie not core funding), it may well be of interest to members.
At 13 February 2024, we had completed 34 appeals during this year, with a success rate of 97% (one borderline case was not successful and we were not able to take this to the Upper Tribunal).

Out of these 34 appeals 28 were for Personal Independence Payment; 3 were for Universal Credit, 1 for Employment Support Allowance, 1 for Attendance Allowance, 1 for Child Disability Living Allowance.

Total amount of back payments received by our 33 successful clients from 1.4.23 to 13.2.24 = £221,808.01. Average back payment per client £6,721.45

Total amount of **annual** income increases for our 33 successful clients from 1.4.23 to 13.2.24 = £201,505.20. Average annual income gain per client £6,106.21

We have had a small amount of funding from a GCC Thriving Communities Project to trial a project working with families who have a child or children with a disability or long term health condition. Our benefits caseworker/supervisor has had a very high level of interest from lots of organisations. The team on the project have visited The Shrubberies School and are now working with 7 families there and have very recently conducted an information session with families at Allsorts.

Cost of Living

We saw a significant number of clients in January and February who needed foodbank and fuel voucher support. The graph below shows the anticipated rise in the number of clients who will need crisis support during 2024.

Crisis | Charitable support & foodbanks & Localised social welfare
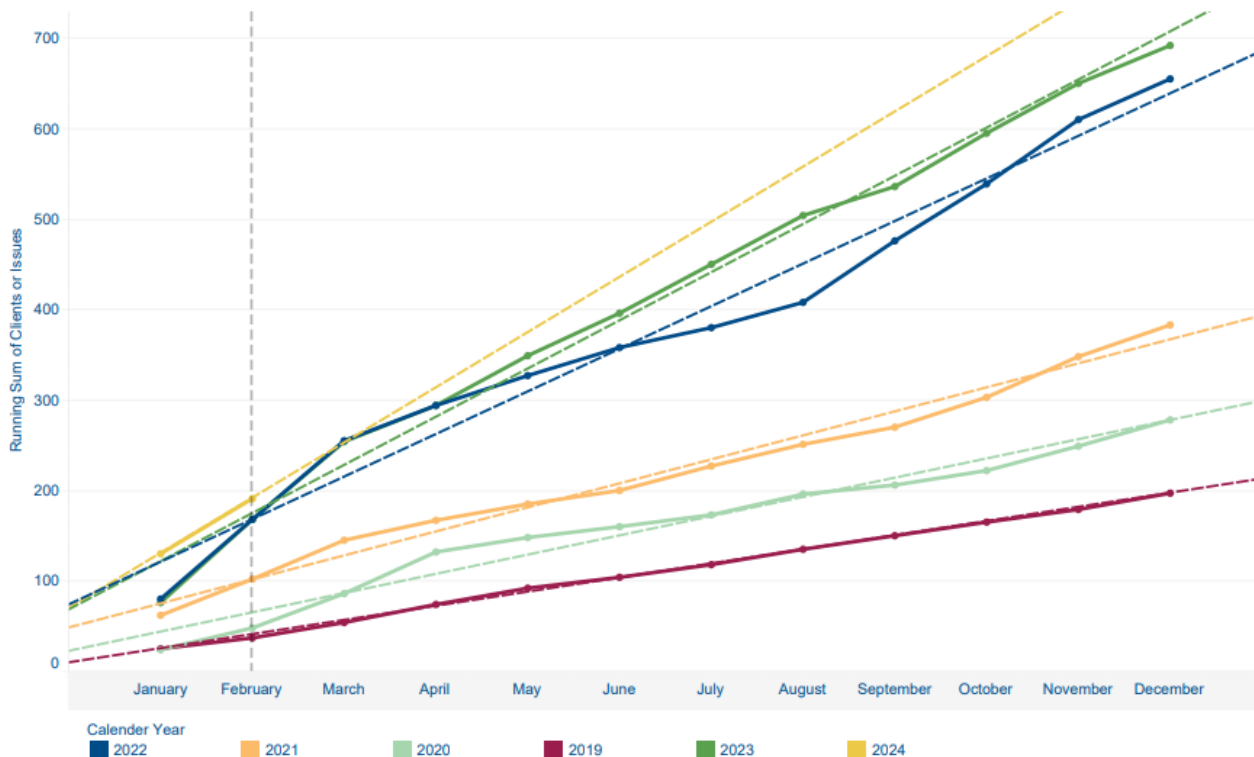
Figures for crisis support represent the number of people Citizens Advice helps with either referrals to food banks' or other charitable support (covers any emergency financial support or support in kind people need to make ends meet) and localised social welfare

The graph below shows the changes in the number of clients who have come to Citizens Advice, either for fuel vouchers and those who are unable to pay their energy bills.

Fuel CoL issues

Legend:
- F Unable to / struggling to pay energy bills
- I Fuel Voucher
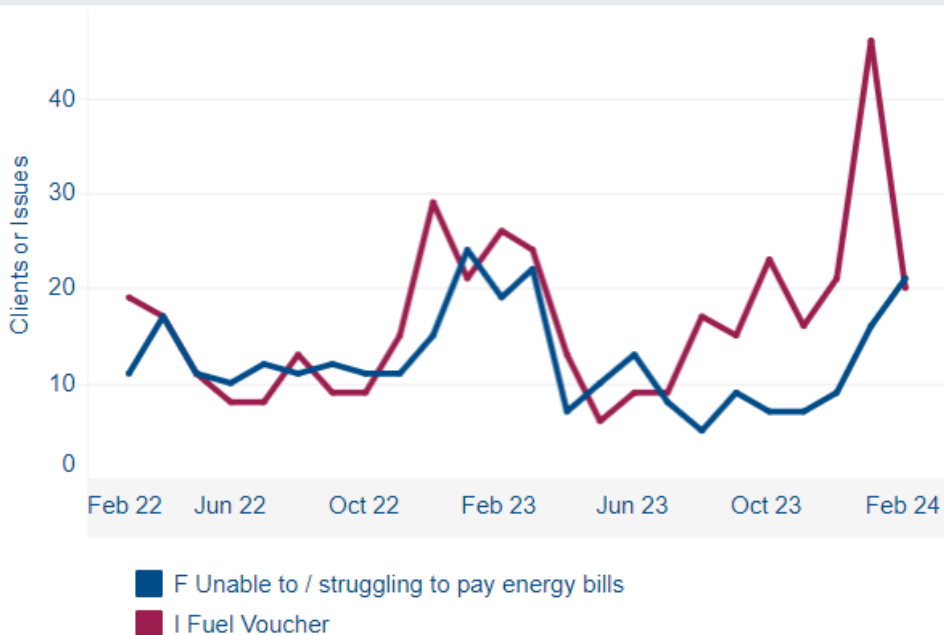
Staff and Volunteer numbers

We have four new trainee advisers who have just completed supervised interviews and are now on the rota. This cohort started in the Autumn of 2023.

We have a cohort of seven trainees starting adviser training on 13 March. We have recruited two admin volunteers but are continuing to advertise for more.

We have two paid advisers who will become trainee supervisor in the Autumn of 2024 – this is a new "Grow Your Own" programme for us as a result of having difficulties recruiting supervisors who are able to work in person in the District. Their progression will enable us to manage more frontline volunteer advisers.

We are interviewing a call handler candidate in March – this role will enable us to increase the numbers of clients that can be dealt with on the phone.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Gary Luff
DATE	4 March 2024

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Community Services & Licensing Committee
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.11)
6 March 2024

<u>Cost of Living Meeting Notes - 16th February 2024</u>

1. **SDC Housing Advice Insight**
   Julian White shared data and insight into the front line work of the Housing Advice team.

   Julian's presentation highlighted the dual pressures of cost of living, high rental prices and lack of affordable housing in the district. As a result, the Cost of Living group has asked that Julian work with Pippa Stroud and Emma Keating Clark to provide a briefing paper about current Housing challenges for Stroud District
   .

Applicants on Housing Register

Apr-20	Apr-21	Apr-22	Apr-23
2687	3427	3614	3966
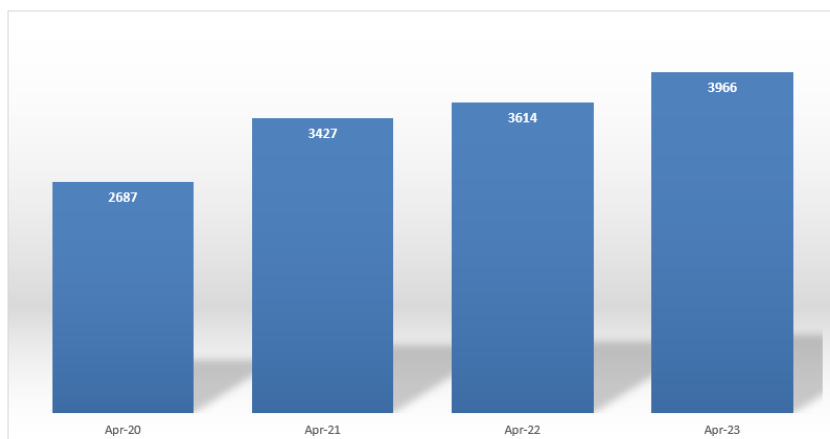
Number of social lets per year

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (estimate)
375	530	525	406

Emma Keating Clark, Community Health & Wellbeing Manager Email:
emma.keating.clark@stroud.gov.uk

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Community Services & Licensing Committee
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.11)
6 March 2024
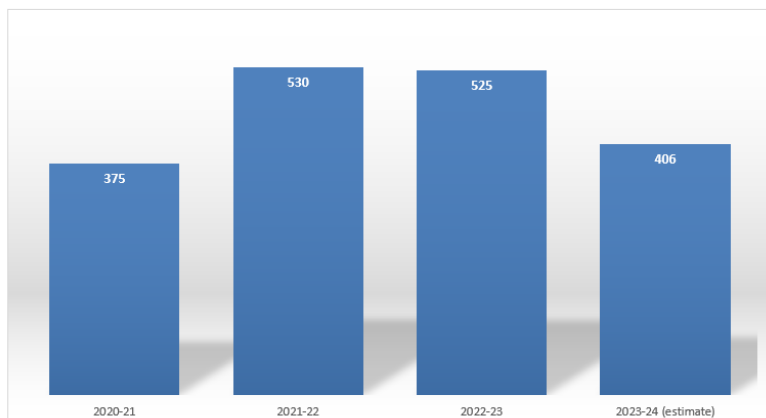
Use of Temporary Accommodation (by placement)
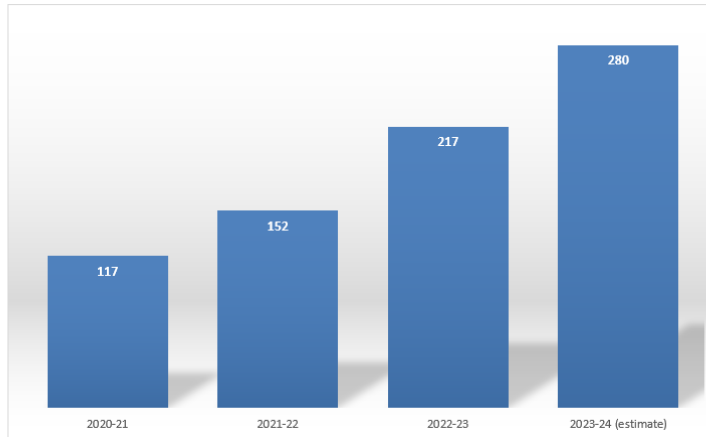
2. Cost of Living Group for next Civic Year

The next meeting in March is the last in this civic year. The Cost of Living Group will consider how they wish to proceed in the new civic year**.**

3. Action Log

a. Review of support required by Citizens Advice
   Ange and Emma to meet with Elizabeth Hall, CEO of CA to discuss their annual spend, the ongoing challenge of demand and the potential to resource an additional fixed-term role at the CA.
b. Health Inequalities Strategy
   Emma to consider aspects of Money Education and Advice when developing the new Health Inequalities Strategy.
c. Stroud District Foodbank Data and Poverty Campaign
   Amanda Strover, CEO Foodbank will share further district data and information about their poverty campaign when she has completed their Annual Report.
d. Pippa Stroud and Julian White to work with Emma Keating Clark on a briefing paper about current Housing challenges for Stroud District.

4. Next Meeting

The next Cost of Living Working Group is scheduled for Friday 15th March 24, 10:00-11:00, online and will focus on how the Cost of Living is impacting on the work of the Community Hubs.

Community Hubs	On Teams 15-Mar

Emma Keating Clark, Community Health & Wellbeing Manager Email:
emma.keating.clark@stroud.gov.uk

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

BRIEF REPORT:
Decarbonisation of Stratford Park Leisure Centre, the Museum in the Park, Stroud and The Pulse, Dursley.

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1. **Introduction**
   1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on the current position and progress with the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at Stratford Park Leisure Centre and the Museum in the Park, Stroud and The Pulse, Dursley; following Council's decision to accept the Salix Grant and provide match funding to deliver the project at its meeting on 16 February 2023.

   1.1. The project supports the council's 2030 Strategy and its commitment to be an exemplar in investing in its own property and changing its policies and practices to achieve carbon neutrality.

   1.2. This proposal is also in accordance with the adopted Council Plan and specifically seeks to support the delivery of objectives EC1.5; Explore and progress additional projects for carbon reduction, complements the One Public Estate project; retrofitting of public buildings (EC3.2) and (CW4.1)helping to make our Leisure provision fit for the future.

2. **Progress**
   2.1. Since the last update in November the contractor has progressed with the installation. The shutdown periods at SPLC have been completed as expect to date. The works at the museum are progressing well, however some further works within the reception and galleries will be required beyond the January shutdown period.

   2.2. The statutory consents required with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) are in progress or received and National Grid have assessed capacities at all the sites. Since the last update, National Grid have confirmed their cost for the works at Stratford Park and it is anticipated that the transformer replacement will be conducted in May 2024. The programme has been adjusted to ensure that the DNO works would not affect the progress of the heat pump installation, except for the commissioning process.

   2.3. Key plant equipment has now been delivered to site.

   2.4. A further shutdown is expected for the DNO related works, which will be communicated to customers once this has been agreed. This will affect SPLC, MITP, the bowls club

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

and Bar Bar Nursery – The exact extent of the shutdown is not currently known, although it is likely to be two weeks duration.

2.5. The project remains on target to complete well within the Salix deadline of 31 March 2024. However the final commissioning at SPLC will fall outside the deadline until we have received notification from National Grid. Salix has been made aware of this.

3. Budget

3.1. There is a forecast overspend of £170k which is mainly attributable to the unforeseen cost of the transformer replacement and associated contractor costs at Stratford Park and is being reported as part of the capital programme budget monitoring. The risks of additional costs from the DNO were set out at the beginning of the project and are outside of the council's control. The overspend itself has been minimised by amendments to the scope of the works (especially at MITP: ventilation and building works).

4. Main Risks

4.1. <u>Delays in gaining DNO approval for connection upgrades.</u> The upgrade at the Pulse is booked in and will be completed within the programme. The upgrade necessary to SPLC has been agreed and materials have been ordered (due for delivery end March), with the installation date TBC.

4.2. <u>Costs for SPLC DNO costs exceed budget.</u> The cost impact is being mitigated by reducing costs elsewhere, with several measures scaled back to provide a considerable cost saving but without major impact to the overall scheme.

4.3. <u>Delays in programme leading to an extended closure of the facilities</u>. The planned closures are shorter than was anticipated. Good contract management and a communications strategy are helping to mitigate this risk. Partial closures at SPLC have reduced impact to users. However a further full shutdown will be required for the transformer replacement.

5. Salix Grant

5.1. Monthly monitoring reports continue to be submitted to Salix as required under the grant conditions and payments are being drawn down successfully.

5.2. Salix are being kept up to date with site progress and the key risks associated with the project.

![Stroud District Council logo] STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

6. Next Steps

6.1. Progressing works including the DNO works at The Pulse and commissioning of equipment and snagging, arranging the transformer upgrade and associated works at SPLC are the next key milestones.

7. Key Milestones:

Delivery Milestone	Provisional Completion Date	Actual completion date
Project Approval (Council)	16/02/2023	16/02/2023
Pre-Design Stage	27/02/2023	27/02/2023
Tender documents finalised	13/03/2023	13/03/2023
Out to tender	20/03/2023	17/03/2023
Tenders complete	05/05/2023	24/05/2023
Orders placed	~~22/05/2023~~ 01/07/2023	01/07/2023
Work in progress on site	~~29/05/2023~~ 10/07/2023	11/07/2023
The Pulse works completed on site	~~15/02/2024~~ 11/03/2024	
SPLC: works completed on site (excluding DNO works)	~~19/01/2024~~ 26/03/24	
MiP: works completed on site	26/01/24	
Key: Completed		

8. Comms

8.1. Staff at each site have been being kept informed by their managers and Everyone Active, through their regular contractor meetings. Everyone Active staff are attending Project meetings and weekly progress meetings. Cotswold Energy have agreed to issue joint comms and further messages which to date have consisted of banners on site, with further plans for fencing signage and the creation of promotional videos on completion of the project.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Edward White, Project Manager New Homes and Regeneration
DATE	26/2/2024

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
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Community Services and Licensing Committee
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.12)
6 March 2024

Proposal to set up Taxi Task and Finish Group

We are seeking to set up a Task and Finish Group made up of 3 Members of Community Services and Licensing Committee and supported by Licensing Officers.

The purpose of the Task and Finish Group is to engage and consult with the taxi and private hire trade on the two matters detailed below in this information sheet. The group will then put forward recommendations to Community Services and Licensing Committee at its meeting in June 2024.

We shall shortly be entering the pre-election period prior to the elections in May. However, our day-to-day Council business needs to continue, and it would not be fair on the taxi and private hire trade for these matters to be put on hold until after the elections. Our regulatory work is politically neutral so should not impact on the pre-election period, however, it is recommended that the group is politically balanced where possible.

The work to be done by the Group needs to start as soon as possible in March so there is time to have discussions with the taxi trade and for the Group to agree its main recommendations prior to any changes in Committee membership that may happen after the elections. A draft Terms of Reference will be written up and agree by the Group at its first meeting.

a. Review of Taxi Fares

Taxi legislation allows the Council to set a table of fares which shows the rates for time, distance and other charges in connection with hiring a hackney carriage. The table of fares are the rates to which Stroud District Council licensed taxis must set their meters and it's the maximum they can charge their customer for journeys in the district.

The Community Services and Licensing Committee has agreed previously to look at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) every March. A CPI of higher than 2.5% will trigger a review of the taxi fares to consider if they should be increased. Where a review is triggered a Task and Finish Group is set up who will meet with representatives of the taxi trade and ask them to put forward a proposal, agree a draft proposed increase, consult with all taxi licence holders and then report back to Committee with a recommendation. The CPI is currently showing as 4% which triggers a review of Taxi Fares for 2024.

b. Review of Impact on Stroud District Council's Vehicle Age Policy by Operators that subcontract out of District

Rachel Andrew Licensing Manager
Ext: 4440
Email: rachel.andrew@stroud.gov.uk

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
www.stroud.gov.uk

Community Services and Licensing Committee
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.12)
6 March 2024

A number of our taxi licence holders have contacted us recently and asked that we review our vehicle age policy on first licensing a vehicle.

Their concern is that, increasingly, some Stroud licensed private hire operators, are subcontracting part or all of their work to Tewkesbury licensed operators. The trade fear that our district could eventually be swamped with Tewkesbury licensed vehicles and drivers. This is not illegal. Under taxi law the operator, driver and vehicle licences must all be issued by the same authority. But the law also allows operators to subcontract to another operator licensed anywhere in the country. Stroud licence holders understand that there must be free competition, but their frustration is that Tewkesbury Borough Council has a less restrictive vehicle age policy on first licensing than we do in Stroud District and so feel it's not a level playing field as Tewkesbury licensed businesses can use older, cheaper vehicles.

Our current policy is that a vehicle must be 5 years old or less when first licensed. Tewkesbury Borough Council's vehicle policy is that vehicles can be any age on first licensing provided they are Euro 6 compliant.

We reviewed our vehicle policy in 2022/2023 with an aim of improving emissions and removing licensed vehicles that were not Euro 6 compliant or EV. The outcome of that review was that we removed the previous vehicle age policy for renewal, (which stated that a vehicle must be no more than 10 years old), to a new policy that a vehicle licence can be renewed provided the vehicle is Euro 6 compliant or EV. However, we retained our age policy of not less than 5 years old for first licensing a vehicle as it was felt this would maintain a good standard of vehicle.

Due to the strength of feeling from the trade it is felt that a Task and Finish Group should engage with the licence holders as soon as possible to consider their concern and make a recommendation to Committee as to whether or not any action is needed.

Rachel Andrew Licensing Manager
Ext: 4440
Email: rachel.andrew@stroud.gov.uk

Appendix A
Taxi Task and Finish Group 2024 - Terms of Reference

To be agreed and adopted at the first meeting.

Purpose and introduction

The Taxi Task and Finish Group will act as a cross party and non-decision making advisory body to the Community Service and Licensing Committee.

The purpose of the Task and Finish Group is to engage and consult with the taxi and private hire trade on the functions below. The group will then put forward recommendations to Community Services and Licensing Committee at its meeting in June 2024.

Functions

The Taxi Task and Finish Group will carry out the following functions:

1. Review Stroud District Council's Table of Taxi Fares

   - Meet with representatives of the taxi trade and invite them to put forward a proposed taxi fare increase for 2024
   - Agree a draft proposed increase
   - Consult with all taxi licence holders.
   - Report to Committee in June 2024 with a recommendation

2. Review Stroud District Council's Vehicle age policy on first licensing vehicles

   - Meet with representatives of the taxi trade to understand their concerns about Stroud licensed operators subcontracting work to Tewkesbury Borough Council operators which have a less restrictive age policy on first licensing.
   - Agree whether Stroud District Councils current policy needs any amendments
   - Report to Committee in June 2024 with a recommendation

Membership

The Taxi Task and Finish Group will comprise the following members:

   - To be agreed at Community Services and Licensing Committee in March 2024

Officers on the Taxi Task and Finish Group will comprise:

- Rachel Andrew – Licensing Manager
- Sophia Rice – Senior Licensing Officer

Governance and Links

Parent Committee: Community Services and Licensing Committee

Lead authority: Stroud District Council

Input from Stroud District Council taxi and private hire licence holders

Confidentiality

The Taxi Task and Finish Group's meetings will be confidential, and all papers and minutes will be treated as exempt from publication unless there is agreement from a majority of the Taxi Task and Finish Group members to do so.

Meeting Frequency and Papers

- The Group will meet as required to enable the group to discuss and agree its recommendations to Community Services and Licensing Committee. It is anticipated that there will be at least three meetings before June 2024

- An agenda and supporting papers will be issued in a timely manner by the Licensing Officers, ideally one week in advance of the meeting.

- The meetings will be held will be held online using Teams unless it is felt a face to face meeting is beneficial

Administration

The Task and Finish Group will be supported by the Licensing Officers who will circulate the agenda and supporting papers and take the notes and actions points of each meeting.

Review Date

These Terms of Reference were approved and adopted on XXXX

Review Date: XXXX

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2024-25

Date of meeting	Matter to be considered (i.e. insert report/project title)	Notes (e.g. lead member & officer)
27.06.2024	Performance Monitoring Q4	TBC
	Draft Gambling Act Statement of Principles – Approval for Consultation	Licensing Manager
	Increase in Taxi Fares – Agreement of recommendation by Task and Finish Group	Licensing Manager
	Taxi age and emissions policy review – agreement of recommendation by Task and Finish Group	Licensing Manager
	Play area Report	Communities Development Manager
	Leisure Services Update	Leisure Services Manager
	Cultural Strategy	Strategic Director of Communities.
	Play Area Report	TBC
	Appointments a) Performance Monitoring Representatives b) Outside Bodies	Committee
	Member/Officer Reports: a) Gloucestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee b) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust) c) Police and Crime Panel d) Citizens Advice e) Mental Health Champions Annual Report f) Cost of Living Information Sheet g) Salix Project Update Information Sheet	Councillor TBC Councillor TBC Councillor TBC Councillor TBC Councillors TBC Community Health & Wellbeing Manager Head of Property Services
	Work Programme	Chair/Strategic Director of Communities/Committee
26.09.2024	Performance Monitoring Q1	TBC
	Budget Monitoring Q1	Accountant
	Concession Pricing Scheme for Leisure	Leisure Services Manager
	Adoption of Gambling Act Statement of Principles.	Licensing Manager
	Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	Community Safety Manager
	Stratford Park Action Plan	TBC
	Member/Officer Reports: a) Gloucestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee b) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust) c) Police and Crime Panel d) Citizens Advice	Councillor TBC Councillor TBC Councillor TBC

	e) Mental Health Champions	Councillor TBC
	f) Homestart	Councillors TBC
	g) Cost of Living Information Sheet	Councillor TBC
		Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	h) Salix Project Update Information Sheet	Head of Property Services
	i) Abandoned Vehicles Information Sheet	Senior Community Services Officer
	Work Programme	Chair/Strategic Director of Communities/Committee
12.12.2024	Performance Monitoring Q2	TBC
	Budget Monitoring Q2	Accountant
	Crowdfunding Update	Head of Community Services
	Stratford Park Lido	Leisure Services Manager
	Community Services and Licensing Revenue Estimates – Revised 2024/25 and Original 2024/25	Accountant
	Member/Officer Reports:	
	a) Gloucestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Councillor TBC
	b) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)	Councillor TBC
	c) Police and Crime Panel	Councillor TBC
	d) Citizens Advice	Councillor TBC
	e) Mental Health Champions	Councillors TBC
	f) Cost of Living Information Sheet	Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	g) Salix Project Update Information Sheet	Head of Property Services
	h) Safeguarding Information Sheet	Senior Youth Officer
	Work Programme	Chair/Strategic Director of Communities/Committee
30.01.2025	Health and Inequalities Strategy	Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	Youth Strategy 2025-2028	Youth Strategy and Safeguarding Manager
	Member/Officer Reports:	
	a) Gloucestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Councillor TBC
	b) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)	Councillor TBC
	c) Police and Crime Panel	Councillor TBC
	d) Citizens Advice	Councillor TBC
	e) Mental Health Champions	Councillors TBC
	f) Homestart	Councillor TBC
	g) Cost of Living Information Sheet	Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	h) Salix Project Update Information Sheet	Head of Property Services
	Work Programme	Chair/Strategic Director of Communities/Committee
13.03.2025	Performance Monitoring Q3	TBC
	Budget Monitoring Q3	Accountant
	Member/Officer Reports:	
	a) Gloucestershire Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Councillor TBC

	b) Museum in the Park (Cowle Trust)	
	c) Police and Crime Panel	Councillor TBC
	d) Citizens Advice	Councillor TBC
	e) Mental Health Champions Annual Report	Councillor TBC
	f) Cost of Living Information Sheet	Councillors TBC
		Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	g) Salix Project Update Information Sheet	Head of Property Services
	h) Community Grant Allocations Information Sheet	Community Health & Wellbeing Manager
	Work Programme	Chair/Strategic Director of Communities/Committee

For future meetings:

Youth Work Strategy 2024 to 2028 - TBC

Statutory Prevent Duty - TBC

Potential future Informal Information Evenings	
Date	**Topic**
January 2025	Police and Crime Commissioner and Director of Public Health (inc community hubs) 6pm – 7pm
March 2025	Youth Service and Health & Wellbeing (Children) 6pm – 7.30pm

Published Members' Information Sheets		
Date sent (& ref no)	**Topic**	**Notes (eg responsible officer)**

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