



# Public Document Pack STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

Telephone 01453 766321

[www.stroud.gov.uk](http://www.stroud.gov.uk)

Email: [democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk)

## COUNCIL

To all Members of Stroud District Council

Wednesday, 6 December 2023

You are hereby summoned to attend Meeting of **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud on **THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023** 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](mailto: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 - 16)**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
To receive announcements from the Chair of Council, Leader of Council or Chief Executive.
5. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**  
The Chair of the relevant Committee will answer questions from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures laid out in Section 3, Paragraph 8, of the Constitution.

**Deadline for Receipt of Questions  
Noon on Friday, 8 December 2023**

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](mailto:Democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk)

6. **MEMBER QUESTIONS**

See Agenda Item 5 deadlines for submissions.

7. **MOTION ON COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE FRANCHISE - PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR STEVE HYND AND SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR GEORGE JAMES (Pages 17 - 22)**

The Council commits to:

- Ask the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting that the franchise for local elections be extended in England and Northern Ireland to all qualifying foreign nationals in line with eligibility criteria in Scotland and Wales. This would ensure a UK-wide and fair approach so that all our residents who are also our council tax payers are enfranchised. The letter should emphasise the Stroud District Council's support for such measures.
- Continue collaborative work with voluntary sector organisations in our local authority area to reach residents about current voter eligibility rules and how to vote.
- Follow the legislative process to implement the Elections Act and develop a process to ensure that the implementation of the Elections Act, including the removal of some EU citizens from the register, does not wrongfully remove eligible voters from the register.
- Continue promoting voter registration and photo ID requirements to residents at citizenship ceremonies, events, and other communication channels.

8. **RECOMMENDATION FROM STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**Strategy and Resources Committee - 23 November 2023**

The Chair of this Committee will present this item.

8a **COMMUNITY FUNDING (CROWDFUNDING) (Pages 23 - 30)**

The Committee resolves to agree the proposition and the next steps required for implementation.

8b **EXTENSION OF BERKELEY CAR PARK (Pages 31 - 44)**

To consider a proposal allowing for the extension of the SDC Car Park at Marybrook Street Berkeley.

9. **RECOMMENDATION FROM HOUSING COMMITTEE**  
**Housing Committee - 6 December 2023**

The Chair of this Committee will present this item.

9a **SAFE AND LEGAL ROUTES TO THE UK (Pages 45 - 80)**

The Government is asking Local Authorities to pledge how many migrant households, arriving in the UK via safe and legal routes, can be housed by each Local Authority in 2025. The aggregate figure will then be used by Government to cap the number of migrants allowed to enter the UK.

10. **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICT, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2023 (Pages 81 - 110)**

To consider the final recommendations for the polling districts and places arrangements in the district following public consultation and changes as a result of the Community Governance Review.

11. **UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION (Pages 111 - 114)**

This report brings forward proposed amendments to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Working Group.

This page is intentionally left blank



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB

Tel: (01453) 754 351/754 321

www.stroud.gov.uk

Email: democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

## COUNCIL

Thursday, 26 October 2023

7.00 - 10.11 pm

Council Chamber

### Minutes

#### Membership

##### **Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)**

Councillor Beki Aldam  
 Councillor Paula Baker  
 Councillor Martin Baxendale  
 Councillor Natalie Bennett  
 Councillor Catherine Braun  
 Councillor Chris Brine  
 Councillor Martin Brown  
 \* Councillor Gordon Craig  
 \* Councillor Kate Crews  
 Councillor Laurie Davies  
 \* Councillor Stephen Davies  
 \* Councillor Katrina Davis  
 Councillor Jonathan Edmunds  
 Councillor Christopher Evans  
 Councillor Helen Fenton  
 Councillor Colin Fryer  
 \* Councillor Victoria Gray  
 Councillor Lindsey Green  
 Councillor Trevor Hall  
 Councillor Jessie Hoskin  
 Councillor Nicholas Housden  
 \* Councillor Nick Hurst  
 Councillor Steve Hynd  
 Councillor George James  
 \* Councillor Julie Job  
 \* Absent

##### **\* Councillor Norman Kay (Vice-Chair)**

Councillor Christopher Jockel  
 Councillor John Jones  
 Councillor Haydn Jones  
 Councillor Robin Layfield  
 Councillor Gary Luff  
 Councillor Jenny Miles  
 \* Councillor Dave Mossman  
 Councillor Gill Oxley  
 \* Councillor Loraine Patrick  
 \* Councillor Martin Percy  
 Councillor Keith Pearson  
 \* Councillor Nigel Prenter  
 Councillor Steve Robinson  
 Councillor Mattie Ross  
 Councillor Mark Ryder  
 Councillor Lucas Schoemaker  
 Councillor Ashley Smith  
 Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy  
 Councillor Haydn Sutton  
 Councillor Brian Tipper  
 Councillor Ken Tucker  
 Councillor Chloe Turner  
 Councillor Tricia Watson  
 Councillor Rich Wilsher

#### Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive  
 Corporate Director (Monitoring Officer)

Democratic Services & Elections Manager  
 Corporate Policy and Governance  
 Manager

**CL.028**      **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Craig, Crews, Trina Davis, Stephen Davies, Gray, Job, Miles, Patrick, Pearcy, Hurst, Kay, Mossman and Prenter.

**CL.029**      **Declaration of Interests**

There were none.

**CL.030**      **Minutes**

**RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2023 were approved as a correct record.**

**CL.031**      **Announcements**

The Chair paid tribute to Jim White, Chair of the Cotswold Canals Trust, who had sadly passed away. Councillors Pearson, Green, Braun and Layfield were invited to say a few words in remembrance of Jim White and offered their heartfelt condolences to his family.

The Chair invited Councillors to join her in a brief moment of reflection for those who had tragically lost their lives and lost loved ones due to the recent events in Israel and Palestine.

The Leader provided a brief update on the Local Plan and advised that they had received a further letter from the planning inspectors which did not answer their initial request for a pause to allow further work but did ask for the Council to answer further questions and undertake work on a joint action plan with National Highways, Gloucestershire County Council and South Gloucestershire Council. She confirmed that they had further meetings arranged with Gloucestershire County Council tomorrow and South Gloucestershire Council on Monday and with officers at National Highways and neighbouring councils to work together on finding solutions.

**CL.032**      **Public Question Time**

Public questions were submitted. They were answered by the Chair of Environment Committee, Councillor Chloe Turner. Supplementary questions were also answered. (Refer to the [recording of the meeting](#) and [Agenda Item 5](#)).

**CL.033**      **Member Questions**

Member questions were submitted, they were asked by Councillors Evans, Patrick and Green. (Refer to the [recording of the meeting](#) and [Agenda Item 6](#)).

**CL.034**      **Motion on Inclusion of Swift Bricks in New Buildings to Protect Wildlife - Proposed by Councillor Lindsey Green and Seconded by Councillor Haydn Jones**

Councillor Green introduced the Motion and advised that the numbers of Common Swifts were in decline in the UK with the numbers falling by 57% as recorded by the British Trust of Ornithology. She confirmed that Swift Bricks were hollow rectangular boxes made of breathable material, they would not compromise insulation, would be inexpensive and needed minimal maintenance. She stated that this would be a natural next step due to the

2023/24

Councils commitment following an agreed Motion to increase biodiversity and champion nature. Councillor Green confirmed that she wished to make an amendment to the Motion as laid out in red below:

Council resolves:

- To require ~~species specific enhancements such as all new building to have swift boxes/bricks as a condition on all suitable properties~~
- To require ~~any~~ renovation works to ~~incorporate species specific enhancements such as~~ include swift boxes/bricks as a condition on all suitable properties
- To actively promote species specific habitat guidance (to include swifts) with developers and to display it prominently on an appropriate area of our website.
- That this Council should investigate the possibility of subsidising such fitting where required, for example through an appropriate reduction in Community Infrastructure Levy charge.
- ~~To implement swift bricks into our own~~ Noting that our draft Local Plan is at examination and therefore not currently open for amendment, to add explicit reference to our requirements for species specific enhancements such as swift boxes/bricks into our own Local Plan at an appropriate moment in the Local Plan process.

The seconder agreed to the amendment.

In response to a question from Councillor James about the meaning of 'opt out' in this context, Councillor Green advised that she would like swift bricks to be considered on all applications and that clear evidence would need to be provided to confirm that a swift brick was not needed before the application could proceed without one.

Councillor Baxendale proposed an amendment to Councillor Green's amended Motion as laid out in blue below:

- To ~~continue to~~ require species specific enhancements such as swift boxes/bricks as a condition on all suitable properties.
- To ~~require renovation works to incorporate species specific enhancements such as swift houses/bricks as a condition on all suitable properties~~ complete the species specific habitat guidance (to include swifts) that is being drafted, actively promote the guidance with developers and to display it prominently on an appropriate area of our website, and
- Noting that ~~with our draft Local Plan is currently under~~ Examination and ~~therefore not currently open for amendment,~~ it is not currently possible to amend the Plan, to add explicit reference to our current requirements for species specific enhancements such as swift boxes/bricks into our own Local Plan at an appropriate moment in the Local Plan process.
- Council also invites Members to engage with Stroud Swift Group and other swift groups across the district, and to promote their excellent work in the raising of awareness and protection of this increasingly threatened bird in their local Ward.

Councillor Brown seconded the proposed amendment by Councillor Baxendale.

Councillor Brown confirmed that he strongly supported the intent of the original motion as a bird watcher however they wanted to make an amendment to ensure it was in line with current policy.

Councillor Lindsey Green raised concerns that the amendment did not reference renovation works that required planning permission. Councillor Baxendale did not agree to making any further amendments.

Councillor Turner clarified that they wouldn't consider the additional reference to renovation works because it would already be covered in the first bullet point under 'suitable properties'.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy asked whether the meeting could be adjourned so that both parties could discuss the amendments further and come back with an agreed amended motion.

Councillor Haydn Jones confirmed that following Councillor Turners clarification he and Councillor Green would be able to agree to the amended motion. Debate continued on the substantive motion.

Councillor Baxendale stated that Swift's were an iconic species which were in massive decline and therefore a range of action was needed.

Councillor Aldam echoed points raised by Councillor Baxendale and highlighted the work of Gill Stacey who was a local Swift champion.

Councillor Housden asked for clarity from the Monitoring Officer about whether the Council would be open to Legal Challenge. The Chair advised that the Corporate Director (Monitoring Officer) had viewed the proposed amendments prior to Council and was happy for them to proceed.

Councillor Braun highlighted the work that had been undertaken in Wotton-under-Edge by Mark Pascoe and a team of volunteers with regards to Swifts and the creation of the blue plaques put up on known Swift sites.

Councillor Turner confirmed that the amendments had been produced in close consultation with the Development Management team to ensure that it reflected current practice and thanked Cllr Green for bringing the Motion to Council.

Councillor Haydn Jones hoped that something good would be achieved as an outcome to the Motion.

Councillor Green advised that she was not an expert in Swifts but was trying to learn more, her intention with the Motion was to help draw attention to the problem.

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

**RESOLVED**

- **To continue to require species specific enhancements such as swift boxes/bricks as a condition on all suitable properties.**
- **To complete the species specific habitat guidance (to include swifts) that is being drafted, actively promote the guidance with developers and to display it prominently on an appropriate area of our website, and**
- **Noting that with our Local Plan under Examination, it is not currently possible to amend the Plan, to add explicit reference to our current requirements for species specific enhancements**



2023/24

such as swift boxes/bricks into our own Local Plan at an appropriate moment in the Local Plan process.

- Council also invites Members to engage with Stroud Swift Group and other swift groups across the district, and to promote their excellent work in the raising of awareness and protection of this increasingly threatened bird in their local Ward.

**CL.035**      **Motion on the Stroud Local Plan - Proposed by Councillor Haydn Jones and Seconded by Councillor Chris Evans**

Councillor Haydn Jones presented the Motion and advised that he had submitted the Motion due to the recent correspondence with the planning inspectors. He stated that Council had not debated the topic for over 2 and a half years and that many current Councillors would not have been elected at that point in time. Councillor Haydn Jones confirmed that he wanted Council to take the inspector's advice and withdraw the plan at this stage so that they could have a look again and address any issues. Councillor Haydn Jones highlighted a small amendment that he wished to make to the Motion as outlined in red below:

Council resolves that:

- All Party leaders or their nominees should be included **and advised concurrently** in the decision-making process to resolve ~~this issue~~ **future direction of the Local Plan**.
- Any modifications to the plan should be subject to full public consultation, the results published, described and reflected where appropriate in the plan.
- A change of fundamental strategy to address identified challenges, including site selection, should be explored with key stakeholders.
- Resolution to areas of highlighted concern raised by inspectors should be subject to proper independent analysis discrete from site promoter evidence.
- The 5 year land supply should be updated and made public on a 6 monthly basis in line with current practice.
- Every effort should be made to work with all partners involved including National Highways and the County Council.

The seconder agreed to the amendment.

Councillor Jones highlighted examples of further issues with the process undertaken for the Local Plan, the testing of independent information and the process required to address the major infrastructure issues.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy asked for confirmation whether Leaders were advised concurrently. The Chief Executive confirmed that it was unfortunate that the letter was received on the 4 August 2023 when most Councillors are away and the usual meetings do not take place. There was 1 day between the administration of the Council being notified and all councillors receiving the information. She confirmed that she does always try to ensure that Group Leaders are notified of things at similar times.

Councillor Ryder asked what options Councillor Haydn Jones thinks the Council has if the plan were to be withdrawn. Councillor Haydn Jones advised that he believed that there were lots of opportunities to do things differently. He advised that there was support for more widespread dispersal which would help local and regional developers rather than national developers. He expressed a wish to reconsider other sites that hadn't been

included in the plan and to identify where there was capacity and infrastructure for development.

Councillor Watson asked if she supported the Motion would she be supporting the withdrawal of the plan. Councillor Haydn Jones confirmed that it was not the case but instead that he wanted to get everybody together to think about options.

Councillor Turner proposed an amendment as laid out in red below:

Council resolves that:

- ~~All Party leaders or their nominees should be included and advised concurrently in the decision making process to resolve future direction of the local plan~~ **support appropriate actions by the Council to address the Inspectors' concerns and to achieve a sound Local Plan for our communities.**
- ~~Any modifications to the plan should be subject to full public consultation, the results published, described and reflected where appropriate in the plan.~~
- ~~A change of fundamental strategy to address identified challenges, including site selection, should be explored with key stakeholders.~~
- ~~Resolution to areas of highlighted concern raised by inspectors should be subject to proper independent analysis discrete from site promoter evidence.~~
- The 5 year land supply should be updated and made public on a monthly basis **in line with previous practice as part of measures to maintain control of development and the co-ordination of development with essential infrastructure.**
- Every effort should be made to work with all partners involved including National Highways and ~~the County Council~~ **the Local Transport Authorities: Gloucestershire County Council and South Gloucestershire Council.**

Councillor Turner confirmed that the Officers had clearly set out the parameters in which they needed to operate and advised that there were not any decisions that needed to be made by the Council currently. She stated that if the inspectors did ask for the withdrawal of the plan all Councillors would then be involved in any decision making following this. She hoped that the council could continue to show the inspectors that we had a sound plan and that we could move to adoption. Councillor Braun seconded the proposed amendment.

Councillor Haydn Jones confirmed they would be unable to accept the amendment as a friendly amendment.

Councillor Housden stated that it was a shame that the original motion submitted wasn't to withdraw the Local Plan so that they could debate in the Chamber and agree to withdraw it. He advised that he would be unable to vote for the amendment.

Councillor Miles confirmed that she would be voting in favour of the amendment, she believed that they needed to work with Officers and the inspector to see if they could find a way forward and see the process through.

Councillor Aldam drew Members attention to the first point in the resolution which aimed to achieve a sound local plan for local communities and stated that this was important for Councillors to remember.

Councillor Pearson raised concerns regarding timescales and advised that he supported the original Motion.

2023/24

Councillor Brine advised that he didn't believe that the Local Plan should be withdrawn and stated that it was too premature to discuss a Motion as they had to go through the process.

Councillor Green confirmed that she would not be supporting the amendment as she wanted to ensure that all Councillors would be able to have their say.

Councillor Evans advised that he would not be able to support the Motion as he believed it completely changed the original motion. He stated that they did not just want housing estates but communities and wanted to deliver a plan that would work for the people.

Councillor Jones stated that he understood that there was no perfect site and that the Local Plan was about compromise. He also raised concerns with the 5 year land supply and the possibility of speculative development.

In response to a comment from Councillor Pearson, Councillor Turner asked the Chief Executive to confirm what was meant by a scheme sponsor. The Chief Executive confirmed that a scheme sponsor was usually the Highway Authority or National Highways. Gloucestershire County Council had agreed to be the sponsor for improvements to Junction 12 and in the case of Junction 14, they would be looking to South Gloucestershire Council or the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) as it was the Strategic Transport Authority for the area.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried with 26 votes in favour and 12 against.

Councillor Ryder advised that he could not support the Motion now it had been amended. He stated that he agreed with the themes raised by the original Motion including a lack of voice and raised concerns that the Local Plan was on the wrong path.

Councillor Schoemaker stated that he didn't believe there was sufficient infrastructure anywhere in the Stroud district for a large amount of housing and they therefore needed to work with the inspectors and make the best of any outcome.

Councillor Brine requested that the Motion to be put to the vote. This was seconded by Councillor Ross. On being put to the vote the request was carried and the proposer and seconder were invited to speak.

Councillor Braun welcomed the debate on the Motion and stated that there was a risk that if the Council changed direction at that point, speculative development would come forward. She advised that it was important that they continued with the plan to secure a sound local plan so that they would continue to have control over development and be able to support their communities.

Councillor Turner stated that she had full confidence in the Officers and did not believe that public consultation had been insufficient. She confirmed that the issues raised by the inspector had raised specific, largely transport based concerns which they were seeking to address.

After being put to a vote, the Motion was carried with 26 votes in favour, 11 against and 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED That**

- **All Party leaders should support appropriate actions by the Council to address the Inspectors' concerns and to achieve a sound Local Plan for our communities.**
- **The 5 year land supply should be updated and made public on a monthly basis in line with previous practice as part of measures to maintain control of development and the co-ordination of development with essential infrastructure.**
- **Every effort should be made to work with all partners involved including National Highways and the Local Transport Authorities: Gloucestershire County Council and South Gloucestershire Council.**

**CL.036 Annual Report of The Chair of The Audit and Standards Committee for 2022-23**

The Chair of Audit and Standards Committee, Councillor Studdert-Kennedy, introduced the report and drew Members attention to page 34 and the following key points:

- Oversight of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control framework throughout 2022-23 had continued.
- The work programme had been continually reviewed.
- The Committee would continue to support the work of the internal and external audit, monitor actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement and monitor actions arising from Risk Management.

Proposed by Councillor Studdert-Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Pearson.

Councillor Braun thanked the Chair of Audit and Standards Committee and the Committee Members for their work over the past year.

Councillor Jockel echoed Councillor Brauns comments and as a new member of the Committee was impressed with the competence and the informed nature of debate, he commended the work of the committee which had been outlined in the report.

Councillor Pearson thanked Councillor Studdert-Kennedy for his excellent chairing of the committee.

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

**RESOLVED To approve the Annual Report 2022-23 as recommended by Audit and Standards Committee.****CL.037 Electric Vehicle Charge Point Rollout Project - SDC Car Parks**

The Chair of Environment Committee, Councillor Turner, offered thanks to the Officers who had been involved in the project and gave a brief timeline of events. She confirmed that in March 2023 a strategy for the rollout of Electric Vehicle charging points had been agreed by Environment Committee and that the report being considered by Full Council had been recommended by both Environment Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee. She noted that it had taken time to reach this point in the project due to the aspiration to use the same provider as Gloucestershire County Council so that residents would benefit from using the same technology across the County. The Chair of Environment Committee highlighted the planned provision in table 1 at section 4.6 which included information about the 8 sites identified for charging points.

2023/24

In response to questions from Councillor Green, Councillor Turner confirmed that expansion would still be considered at sites where passive supply had not been included in this rollout. She further confirmed that she would provide further detail outside of the meeting regarding the timelines for additional funding referred to in section 5.2.

Councillor Miles asked whether Cainscross carpark was considered as a location. Councillor Turner advised that there was a comprehensive consultation with Parishes regarding the need for charging point and that a business case that met the criteria set may not have been put forward by Cainscross. Councillor Turner also confirmed that an app needed to be used for payment of the 7kw chargers and understood that this could be a frustration for many. She advised that because the scheme would be used throughout Gloucestershire there would be reassurance for residents that they would be able to use the same app across the County. It was hoped that the 22kw chargers would be able to be used on a tap and go basis.

Councillor Robinson asked whether the inclusion of passive supply would allow further introduction of rapid charging. Councillor Turner advised that she believed this would be done on a case by case basis and was largely down to grid availability however she would confirm outside of the meeting if faster chargers could be installed using the passive supply.

In response to a question from Councillor Schoemaker, Councillor Turner confirmed that this rollout was considered to be phase 1 and that they would be looking for more opportunities in the future to rollout further electric vehicle charging points.

Councillor Turner confirmed to Councillor Studdert Kennedy that she would request a briefing note for Members to provide further information about the charging points and the charging speeds.

Councillor Luff asked how they planned to ensure that rollout of charging points was sped up to meet demand. Councillor Turner confirmed that one of the reasons they agreed to go ahead with Connected Curve and partnered with the County Council was so that they could make use of economies of scale and increase the provision as quickly as possible. She advised that they were doing everything they could to move forward with the project quickly but would be open to any ideas on how to progress faster.

The Chair, Councillor Cornell, asked for confirmation of timescales for the rollout. Councillor Turner confirmed that they hoped to see the charging points in place before the end of the year.

Proposed by Councillor Turner and seconded by Councillor Layfield.

Councillor Layfield welcomed the report and advised that the grid capacity and topography of the district was an issue but urged Councillors to support the recommendation as it would help to ensure that the market towns became a more viable destination for those with Electric Vehicles.

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

**RESOLVED To add £196k to the 2023/24 Capital Programme for the rollout of electric vehicle chargepoints in car parks as recommended by Environment Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee.**

**CL.038**      **Council Plan 2021-2026 Refresh**

The Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Braun, introduced the report and confirmed that the Council Plan, which had been approved in October 2021, set the overall strategic objectives, priorities and key actions of the Council. The refreshed Council Plan had been recommended to Council by all the service Committees with no amendments proposed. Councillor Braun highlighted section 2.2 of the report which contained detail about the actions that had already been taken to achieve the objectives outlined in the Council Plan. There were no changes to the priorities or the 16 objectives that underpinned them, the majority of adjustments had been made to the actions, milestones and performance indicators which had been highlighted in Appendix A.

Councillor Green asked whether where end dates had been changed whether it would be reported as overdue and expressed concern that if they allowed further changes to sub actions and milestones as suggested in section 3.8 they could be at risk of watering down the outcomes. Councillor Braun advised that they hoped there would be flexibility when opportunities arose which would lead to an adjustment of any sub actions and that they would rely on performance monitors and committee members to review and suggest further changes. Councillor Braun confirmed that the original end dates would continue to be recorded in the Performance Management System Ideagen, however they would track future progress against the adjusted end date.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and seconded by Councillor Bennett.

Councillor Tucker advised that since the previous Community Services and Licensing Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee Meetings, he had attended meetings with officers to discuss concerns raised and was now happy to support the recommendations.

Councillor Robinson confirmed that the Labour Group would be supporting the refreshed Council Plan as the original plan had been shaped by the Labour Group and they were happy to see it progressing.

Councillor Aldam thanked the Corporate Policy and Governance Manager for working tirelessly on the refresh of the Council Plan which had also been shared with the Youth Council and advised that she was pleased to see that the Cost of Living Crisis was now reflected within the Council Plan.

Councillor Bennett was pleased to see the progress made over the last 2 years and hoped that Councillors would be able to support the refreshed plan.

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

**RESOLVED**      **To adopt the refreshed Council Plan 2021 - 2026.**

**CL.039**      **LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND AND HRA ACQUISITIONS BUDGET**

The Chair of Housing Committee, Councillor Ross, introduced the report which was a good news story for the Council and had received unanimous support at Housing and Strategy and Resources Committee. She confirmed that the Council had been proactive in bidding for the Local Authority Housing Fund for the purchase of accommodation for people fleeing conflict and had been successful in both rounds. Houses purchased would eventually

2023/24

become part of the Councils housing stock. She congratulated the Officers involved for their work in finding and acquiring suitable houses with such speed.

In response to Councillor Baker, Councillor Ross advised that she would come back to her with further information about whether the properties purchased had to be used for people fleeing conflict or whether alternative properties from the Councils housing stock could be used.

In response to an earlier question from Councillor Green, the Strategic Director of Resources advised that the purchase of a further property had been completed that week.

Proposed by Councillor Ross and seconded by Councillor Schoemaker.

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

**RESOLVED To increase the HRA Property Acquisitions capital budget 2023/24 to £6.72m, as set out in this report and as recommended by Housing Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee.**

The Chair asked members if they wished to continue the meeting given that the time was approaching 10pm and in accordance with the Councils' Constitution section 3 paragraph 6, members would need to vote in order to continue the meeting.

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

**RESOLVED To continue the meeting beyond 10pm.**

**CL.040 Budget Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28**

The Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Braun, introduced the Budget Strategy which set out the approach that would be used to set the budget for 2024/25 and the four-year Medium-Term Financial plan. She confirmed that the Strategy represented a strong financial position for the Council with a balanced budget and no reductions in services anticipated over each of the next two financial years however, the position for 2026 onwards was more uncertain due to the lack of information about the future local government funding position.

Councillor Braun highlighted the following key points:

- The strategy assumed a Council Tax rise of 2.99% for a Band D property from next April.
- No changes would be proposed as part of the local Council Tax support scheme.
- The change in local government funding, expected to result in large reductions in District Councils, is now anticipated in 2026/27.
- Inflation for September had been confirmed at 6.7% therefore, in line with the current Budget Strategy of rent rises, a rise of 7.7% would be considered as part of the budget setting process at Housing Committee.
- There was great uncertainty about the level of local government pay as the pay award for the current year had not yet been agreed. An increase of 5.6 % has been assumed in the Strategy which was in line with estimated increases in this current year.
- The level of CPI inflation remained high at 6.7%.

- The final list of fees and charges would be brought forward to Council in February however it was expected that car parking charges would increase by an average of 5% (lower than inflation).
- The Budget Strategy set out that the District Council could set a balanced budget without drawing on General Balances for the next two financial years.

Councillor Robinson asked for further information regarding Kingshill House, Councillor Braun confirmed that a report was expected at Strategy and Resources Committee in November to consider a long term lease for the property.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and seconded by Councillor Bennett.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy advised that the Council still carried £97m worth of debt and although he agreed that the Council was in a strong position compared to others they needed to think sooner about future impacts.

Councillor Ross advised that they were in a good position and still able to provide support to residents in need however there would be some difficult decisions that they would need to reach regarding the Housing Revenue Account.

Councillor Braun thanked Councillors for the comments and expressed concerns regarding the uncertainties of local government finance.

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

**RESOLVED To approve the Budget Strategy and Draft MTFP 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out in this report and appendices and as recommended by Strategy and Resources Committee.**

#### **CL.041 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND POSITIONS**

The Chair, Councillor Cornell, advised that the political balance had been recalculated following the change of Group Membership for Councillor Hoskin. Appendix A had been published online and included the changes highlighted in red however there was one error for Audit and Standards Committee where Councillor Ashley Smith should not be listed as a member.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and seconded by Councillor Ross.

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

**RESOLVED To approve the changes to committee membership and political balance as set out in the report and appendix.**

Councillor Braun provided an update on Councillor Kay's recovery in hospital following heart surgery. She confirmed that he was doing really well and wished him a very speedy recovery.

The meeting closed at 10.11 pm

Chair



## MOTIONS TO COUNCIL – MOTION TEMPLATE

<b>Date of Council Meeting</b>	14/12/2023
<b>Title of Motion</b>	<b>Council support for the extension of the franchise</b>
<b>Proposer</b>	Cllr Steve Hynd
<b>Seconder</b>	Cllr George James
<b>Recommendation for Council to vote on</b>	<p><b>The Council commits to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting that the franchise for local elections be extended in England and Northern Ireland to all qualifying foreign nationals in line with eligibility criteria in Scotland and Wales. This would ensure a UK-wide and fair approach so that all our residents who are also our council tax payers are enfranchised. The letter should emphasise the Stroud District Council's support for such measures.</li> <li>• Continue collaborative work with voluntary sector organisations in our local authority area to reach residents about current voter eligibility rules and how to vote.</li> <li>• Follow the legislative process to implement the Elections Act and develop a process to ensure that the implementation of the Elections Act, including the removal of some EU citizens from the register, does not wrongfully remove eligible voters from the register.</li> <li>• Continue promoting voter registration and photo ID requirements to residents at citizenship ceremonies, events, and other communication channels.</li> </ul>
<b>Context for the motion (i.e. why is the motion being submitted – what is the proposer aiming to achieve)</b>	<p><b>The Council notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Elections Act is a major piece of national legislation with local implications for the residents of Stroud District, including the use of mandatory photographic voter ID at the polling station and changes to overseas voting and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.</li> <li>• The programme of training provided by the Council for councillors and relevant officers on the changes brought by the Elections Act so that residents can be accurately informed about their current voting rights.</li> <li>• That according to the 2021 census, <a href="#">one in six usual residents of England and Wales were born outside the UK</a>. They live, work, study, make use</li> </ul>

	<p>of public services, and call the UK their home. Many foreign-born residents in Stroud District from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, approximately over 1 million residents across England and Northern Ireland from non-EU and non-Commonwealth countries do not have a right to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.</li> <li>• That all our residents, no matter their nationality, who call Stroud District their home bring significant value to our area adding to the diverse fabric of social and cultural life.</li> <li>• That Stroud District Council has a long established record in supporting and welcoming asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to the District.</li> <li>• That Stroud District Council, in appointing a Migrant Champion, plays a key role in leading local and national discussions about migrant rights and must continue to be an exemplar in it's dealings with issues and migrant rights.</li> <li>• That the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained through the Elections Act.</li> <li>• That <a href="#"><u>the London Assembly passed a motion in support of residence-based voting rights on the 11th of November 2021.</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>The Council expresses concern that</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU citizens who enter the UK from the 1st of January 2021 and are not covered by bilateral voting rights treaties (currently only active with Poland, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Spain) will lose voting and candidacy rights in local elections when the Elections Act is fully implemented. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.</li> <li>• The complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in local elections amongst migrant voters, a group already seen as having disproportionately a lower voter registration rate compared to British voters.</li> <li>• The removal of a significant number of EU citizens from the electoral register will place a resource burden on Councils who must ensure that only those who are no longer entitled to be</li> </ul>
--	---

	registered are removed from the electoral register.
<b>Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the District – please confirm how this criteria is met</b>	This motion asks the council to act within it’s mandate by writing to the Secretary of State to express a view, provide training to staff, and develop a process for the implementation of the Elections Act.
<b>Which Council Plan Priority does the Motion support? (select all that apply)</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community Resilience and Wellbeing – Strengthening and supporting our communities so people feel included and connected</li> <li>2. Economy, Recovery and Regeneration – Supporting a thriving and resilient local economy</li> </ol>	
<b>Does the motion have potential financial or resource implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
No	
<b>Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
No	
<b>Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
N/A	
<b>Are there any equalities impacts associated with the motion? If yes an equalities impact assessment will be required</b>	
Only in the negative sense. That if we fail to extend the franchise to some residents this could have a negative impact on people already often living and working with a second language.	
<b>Does the motion require further background information to enable the Council to make a decision– if yes advise what might be required</b>	
No	

**OFFICER IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Officer Name</b>	Jenna Malpass
<b>Officer Title</b>	Democratic Services & Elections Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	<a href="mailto:Jenna.malpass@stroud.gov.uk">Jenna.malpass@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Has the Council or is the Council doing any work at the current time in relation to this motion or any associated issues? If yes please add details</b>	

The Council has been preparing for the past 2 years for the implementation of the Elections Act 2022, which is the biggest change of electoral legislation in the last 40 years. A number of changes have already been delivered successfully including the implementation of Online Absent Vote Applications and Photographic Voter ID. The legislation is being introduced in parts over a number of years and therefore the work to implement the changes will be ongoing.

The Elections Team has already attended training sessions which have been run by the Association of Electoral Administrators on the Election Act changes and is registered for future courses based on the timescales of the implementation of the different parts of the legislation. Information Briefings have been provided to Members and training for Councillors, prospective candidates and Election Agents is scheduled for early 2024 and thereafter where relevant. Our Electoral Management Software has also implemented necessary changes based on the parts of legislation that have been introduced so far and the team have been trained on the new processes.

The Elections Team is developing a comprehensive engagement and communications plan which includes outreach work to ensure that residents of the Stroud District are aware of changes as a result of the Elections Act. There will be a significant number of communications and awareness raising activities that will take place ahead of Elections in May 2024 and following any key changes as a result of the Elections Act. The changes regarding EU franchise do not come into effect until after the elections in May 2024. A process will be put in place following the publication of legislation and further guidance from the Electoral Commission to ensure that the legislative process is followed.

An additional post was added to the team in 2020 and the team is currently fully resourced. Training will be provided to the wider Corporate Policy & Governance Team to ensure sufficient resource is in place throughout the implementation of the Elections Act and the May 2024 elections.

**Does the motion support any of the priorities set out in the Council Plan?**

1. Community Resilience and Wellbeing – Strengthening and supporting our communities so people feel included and connected.

**Does the motion have potential financial or resource implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be and confirm whether budget is available**

There are no financial or resource implications as a result of the Motion. There are implications as a result of the Elections Act which have been considered in order to ensure there is adequate capacity to successfully deliver the required changes. Grant funding has also been provided as broken down below:

Electoral Integrity Programme – New Burdens Funding

Year	Amount	Allocation
22/23	£7359	Voter ID, Accessibility and Training
23/24	£22000	Postal Proxy, Overseas Electors, Communications and Engagement for the rollout of Voter ID

**Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be**

No

**Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be**

No

**Should an equality impact assessment be completed before the deliberation of this motion?**

No

**Does the motion require further background information to be carried out to enable the Council to make a decision – if so advised what might be required**

No

END

This page is intentionally left blank

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Community Funding (Crowdfunding)</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	The Committee resolves to agree the proposition and the next steps required for implementation.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>Council RESOLVES to agree to include the contract sum of £35k in the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2024/25 as recommended by Strategy and Resources Committee.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Head of Environmental Health, Head of Community Services, SLT including S151 officer			
<b>Report Author</b>	Adrian Blick, Interim Director of Transformation and Change Email: Adrian.Blick@stroud.gov.uk			
<b>Options</b>	1. Approve the proposal 2. Request amendment or Reject the proposal			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A – Lessons Learnt by Cotswold District Council			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 This document sets out a proposal for implementing a community funding proposition which will support a community group/citizen in publicising a project that brings benefit to the wider community. Members of the community, community groups and corporations then fund the project or venture by submitting pledges via an on-line platform which administers and disperses the funds. The council may also choose to co-fund projects that align with its strategy.
- 1.2 A community funding proposition aligns with wider council aspirations including:
- Brings community aspirations to life
  - Aligns with the council's objective of empowering communities to action
  - Builds civic pride and this encourages further initiatives
  - Creates an environment where innovation and collaboration are encouraged
  - Displays community and council commitment to achieving positive outcomes
  - Reduces reliance on Government funding
  - Helps the council determine where to allocate funding, amplifying its impact
  - Strengthens the council's position when seeking additional funding from other sources or when making a case for community initiatives to stakeholders.

- 1.3 Other councils are successfully operating funding campaigns including Cotswold District Council which has been partnering with our chosen vendor and has offered a positive reference (See Appendix A).
- 1.4 Objective ER 4.2 in the Council Plan sets out that we will “Increase the financial resilience of the district by exploring additional options for community funding”. This proposal will help us to complete that objective.

## 2. Main Points

- 2.1 The procurement was conducted using the G-Cloud 13 framework with two vendors offering the service the council requires. The council selected the vendor which specified a pricing structure that offered more pricing certainty as it is based on population size and the District falls well within the banding for the pricing that will apply.
- 2.2 The council proposes a tried and tested model for operating its community funding initiative whereby it partners with the selected vendor (Spacehive) which will work with the community sponsors and the council to ensure the on-going success of this proposition.

## 2.3 Operating Model

- 2.4 The council will fund an SDC-branded microsite which will be managed by Spacehive. The site will be used to:
  - Communicate mission and aims
  - Display all information in one place
  - Curate the community funding opportunities and subsequent projects.
- 2.5 Typically, two funding rounds will be opened each year and the vendor services and SDC responsibilities are as follows:
  - Vendor Account Director will:
    - Help the council decide on a fund strategy (four funds offered by Spacehive with more available at additional cost). For example:
      - One fund covering all opportunities (suggest we adopt this approach year 1 at least)
      - Geo-based funds
      - Opportunity type-based funds
    - Help the council define project criteria and assessment process
    - Design an activation strategy to reach out for community ideas
    - Hold fortnightly calls to develop strategy, report progress and review the success of the funding rounds
    - Provide guidance on messaging, branding, and marketing
    - Advise SDC on how it can pledge intelligently
    - Operate a verification service to ensure projects are viable and feasible
    - Build an ecosystem to back the projects
    - Operate a reporting suite that reports impact of the projects.



- The council and the members will:
  - Decide whether a maximum pledge value (per project) is preferred
  - Operate a process for agreeing what projects the council will co-fund
  - Offer a point of contact for the communities to assist and support where needed
  - Provide communications support to assist the ‘funders’ in building and maintaining interest.

### **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1 This report represents a decision to proceed with a crowdfunding scheme. Should this approval be granted then consideration will need to be given as to how such a scheme would operate in the Stroud District. A number of points for consideration are included in the paragraphs below and a detailed proposal will be brought back to Committee in March 2024.
- 3.2 Agree whether any scope restrictions are necessary - the council/members should consider whether all types of projects are eligible (refer to Appendix A for examples of what Cotswold District Council decided) and whether there should be an overarching financial limit for the projects (e.g., maximum total of £50k can be pledged per project).
- 3.3 Develop the council governance process to determine co-funding decisions – identify who should be the decision makers, specify criteria that determine under what circumstances co-funding will be considered and the process for doing so.
- 3.4 Detail council and member roles and agree those to be involved in terms of decision making roles and general support roles (e.g., publicising projects).
- 3.5 Develop a communication strategy for launch to ensure everyone in the District is aware of this proposition and how it works. Also, consider how the council will help publicise the projects that have been identified, to raise awareness and build interest.
- 3.6 Execute contract with Spacehive to purchase the platform and services.
- 3.7 Configure the microsite to reflect appropriate branding and to ensure it operates as required.
- 3.8 Consider potential for joint working with other councils including Cotswold District Council.

### **4. Funding and other commercials**

- 4.1 The contract with Spacehive has a 3year term, with the possibility of an expansion for an additional year after that. The annual fee is £35k per annum with an additional 5% success fee for each project that is commissioned. The success fee is a variable charge payable only if a community funding project is successful.

For example:

- £20,000 fund - £1k fee.

4.2 Based on Cotswold District Council's experience, where the fees average circa £1k per project, this is proportionate to the effort expended by the vendor.

4.3 There will be an option to terminate for convenience. This means the council can cancel the contract, without material penalties, if the proposition is not working as well as expected.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

5.1 This proposition aligns with our Fit for the Future programme mission as it will empower our communities to identify and sponsor opportunities themselves collaborating with others to develop and implement projects that deliver positive outcomes in our District.

5.2 The potential benefits of this proposition extend beyond the outcomes delivered by the individual projects as it will engender a positive culture change that will build an even more resilient community.

5.3 It is suggested that an additional paper be presented to the March 2024 meeting of this Committee to agree the final governance procedures and proposals for how this Council will consider match funding opportunities.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

The contract with Spacehive has an annual cost of £35k and this will need to be included in the upcoming 2024/25 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

A matchfunding pot of £100k is required at this stage and it is proposed that this is found from Council Reserves. £80k can be funded from the Business Rates Pilot reserve as it meets the agreed definition of Community Wealth Building by empowering local communities to generate resilient funding streams for community projects. £20k will be allocated from the "Lucky Severn Community Fund". This is the general pot of funding which comes to the Council through the Lucky Severn Lottery.

The Council must decide how to budget for the 5% success fee for each project. This could either be through an additional allocation to the revenue budget or from the match funding pot. Final proposals will be included in the follow up report covering scheme detail in March 2024.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

Tel: 01453 754115 Email: [andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk)

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

The Council has powers under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual may do unless prevented from doing so by other legislation – known as the

General Power of Competency. It would be this power that will permit the Council operating this community funding platform.

The use of the G-Cloud framework is compliant with the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Assistance should be sought from One Legal in finalising the contract terms with the chosen supplier.

One Legal

Email: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### 6.3 **Equality Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 6.4 **Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Stroud District Council

### Community Funding (Crowdfunding) Proposition

#### Lessons Learnt by Cotswold District Council (CDC)

A meeting was held with CDC to discuss its experience of community funding.

CDC has operated its scheme for over three years and achieved almost £800k of pledges via 36 projects (a mean of £22k per project) and approaching 3k backers.

It selected Spacehive as its partner and reported positively on its contribution.

Other key points are as summarised below:

- Council match funding typically out of Budget with small amount from its shared prosperity fund and covid recovery funding
- Maximum contribution set at 40% with the higher amounts being allocated where the project is aligned with corporate priorities
- No maximum project fund size
- Scoping: decided to avoid projects that require permissions (e.g., planning) unless pre-achieved
- Scoping: decided not to support schools, despite considerable interest as not aligned with the council's priorities for funding
- Built good relationships by participating in fund raising where requested (i.e., not just a financial contributor)
- Encourage member involvement and sponsorship as this made a positive difference
- Ensure council decision making is timely and agile
- Ensure council Finance department is bought in.

Visit the CDC community funding site at <https://www.spacehive.com/movement/cc>

This page is intentionally left blank

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Extension of Berkeley Car Park</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To consider a proposal allowing for the extension of the SDC Car Park at Marybrook Street Berkeley			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<p><b>Council RESOLVES to</b></p> <p><b>1) Appropriate the SDC Garage Site from the Housing Revenue Account into the General Fund</b></p> <p><b>2) Add to the Capital Budget the required sums for completion of the project to extend the public car park - subject to the grant of planning permission.</b></p> <p><b>3) Delegate Authority to the Strategic Director of Communities to make the appropriate parking orders as required.</b></p>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Consultation has taken place with lead officers, ward members and Berkeley Town Council, who are all supportive of the proposal. Further consultations will take place as part of a planning application and parking order processes.			
<b>Report Author</b>	Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk			
<b>Options</b>	Members may choose not to proceed with the outlined scheme			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A: Plan and photographs and photos showing the location of car park and adjacent garage site Appendix B: Equality Impact Analysis			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Stroud District Council currently operates a car park at Marybrook Street in Berkeley which provides 24 spaces on a free of charge basis with a maximum stay of 23 hours.
- 1.2 Adjacent to the car park is a garage site, held in the Housing Revenue Account, which is earmarked for disposal as part of the Council's ongoing programme.
- 1.3 The Town Council has approached the District Council with a request to extend the existing car park onto the site currently occupied by the garages. This report sets out the details of the project and seeks member approval to proceed with the scheme.

## **2. Details of the Garage Site**

- 2.1 A plan and photographs of the 13 garages and site are shown at Appendix A. The garage site is shown edged red on the attached plan with the adjoining Marybrook Street car park edged in blue.
- 2.2 The site is about approximately 650sqm - 0.16acres in totality and encompasses two separate blocks of garages, one of 7 garages and one of 6 (see red circles on aerial map). The entrance from Lower Berrycroft is shared with the car park, the health centre service access, parking for housing to the north and No 16 Marybrook Street.
- 2.3 The current position is that 8 garages are vacant and 5 are rented on monthly basis.
- 2.4 The council's direction of travel, evidenced in previous Committee decisions, is to dispose of the council's garages stock and manage surplus property with an aim to reduce costs and generate finance to support the HRA. Therefore, every garage site is reviewed on an ongoing basis to establish its potential to support operational use, its value for redevelopment, particularly new council housing, and then for general sale.
- 2.5 This garage site is not suitable for redevelopment essentially because of the vehicular and pedestrian rights that bisect it and the limitations caused by the health centre and council housing accesses.
- 2.6 These garages are not required for operational use and would normally be sold in accordance with the process identified in paragraph 2.7. However, the shortage of local public car parking highlights the increased use value to the Town to be gained by demolishing the garages and using the site to extend the adjoining public car park. This would be a positive use of SDC property. A similar scheme at Nailsworth where the garages behind the Britannia Inn were demolished and the car park extended met with widespread public approval.
- 2.7 If there were no alternative scheme for the garages the remaining monthly hirings would have been ended and the site marketed with uplift conditions to protect a share from any long term development value
- 2.8 There is extensive evidence of the value for garage sites with similar development limitations across the district from other disposals. This provides the relevant evidence for assessing the current market value of these garages to be £112k.

## **3. Extension of the Car Park**

- 3.1 In 2022 Berkeley Town Council first approached SDC with a request to extend the car park at Marybrook Street onto the garage site. Discussions have continued since and a site visit was held in the Summer of 2023 with the senior officers from SDC, Ward Councillors, Berkeley Town Councillors and the Town Clerk.
- 3.2 This project has been taken forward to this stage as it is considered to have a positive benefit to Council Plan objective ER1 (Economic Recovery – Support our High Streets and Businesses) as well as CW3 (Strengthen Local Democracy).
- 3.3 To deliver the scheme will require the appropriation of the site from the HRA into the General Fund, the demolition of the existing garages and then the extension of the car park onto the land currently occupied by the garages.
- 3.4 Detailed studies and surveys have not yet been carried out, but initial estimates suggest that the capacity of the car park could broadly double from its current level should an extension onto the current garage site be completed.



- 3.5 No formal planning pre-app has been submitted at this stage, A formal planning application would be required to cover the change in use from a private residential car park / garages to a public car park. Permission would also need to be sought for the demolition of the existing garages.
- 3.6 Potential considerations for planning mitigation to include cycle parking and works to improve appearance and ecological benefits. Engagement with local residents and the wider community would be a part of plans going forward.
- 3.7 SDC would be responsible for managing the project and would retain ownership of the car park site once the extension was completed.

#### 4. Costs of the Project

- 4.1 At this stage estimates have been made of the costs of completing the works required to extend the car parks. These are shown in the table below along with the cost of transferring the site into the General Fund of £112k.

**Table 1**

<b>Site Cost</b>	<b>£112,000</b>
<b>Demolition Costs</b>	<b>£14,000</b>
<b>Asbestos Surveys</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Surface Patching and Set Out</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Planning mitigations</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>Contingency (10%)</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£145,000</b>

- 4.2 As part of their commitment to the project Berkeley Town Council has agreed a sum from their own resources to contribute. The minutes of their Full Council meeting from October 2022 state that “following a discussion it was resolved to offer £25k towards the re-development costs and to ask SDC if they could retain ownership within their General Fund”.
- 4.3 At the time of writing Stroud District Council is about to open the application window for the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). The District Council has an allocation of £400k under this scheme and bids can be made to the scheme of up to £20k. The Town Council have indicated that they will be looking to bid for the full amount as additional match funding towards the scheme, if successful this would increase their contribution to £45k.

- 4.4 The District Council would be funding the balance of the project after the contribution from the Town Council. This is therefore estimated to be £100k - £120k depending upon the success of the REPF bid.
- 4.5 The site value of £112k would pass into the HRA and be used as part of financing the existing HRA capital programme. As stated earlier in the report the receipts from the sale of garage sites are included within the assumed funding for the HRA.
- 4.6 There are no parking charges in the Marybrook Street Car Park so the cost of the project cannot be recouped through those means.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Members are recommended to approve the project and the appropriate funding to complete the works. This scheme represents an opportunity to support the Town Council and business community of Berkeley by progressing a scheme increasing the capacity of the town's only public car park to support visitors and the visitor economy.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

The cost of the project would be £100k-£120k as set out elsewhere in the report.

This would be funded from the Authority's capital reserve which still has sufficient funding available.

As stated earlier in the report the site value would be transferred into the HRA and used to finance the capital programme. No new capital projects would be created in the HRA to utilise the funding.

A larger car park will likely create a larger ongoing maintenance cost which would have to be met from within existing car parking budgets.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

Tel: 01453 754115 Email: Andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

Under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may appropriate land for any purpose for which the council are authorised by that or any other enactment to acquire land by agreement any land which belongs to the council and is no longer required for the purpose for which it is held immediately before the appropriation. There is an exception for some land held under the HRA, but it will not apply to this land because it is not used for the purpose of housing.

However, any such appropriation of land is subject to the rights of other persons in, over or in respect of the land concerned. It is noted that 5 of the garages are currently rented although the basis of that rental is not specified. Legal advice should be obtained on how to terminate the garage rentals as they will need to be terminated in accordance with the requirements of the documentation.

The current extent of the car park at Marybrook Street is shown on a plan attached to the current Stroud District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2010 (appendix 5.2). The Order will need to be amended by way of substitution of a plan should the car park be extended and those amendments must be made in accordance with

statutory procedures under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, The procedure requires public consultation and publication of the proposed changes.

The change of use from private residential car park/garages to a public car park would require planning permission. This would be progressed and determined under a separate planning process and in accordance with its notification, consultation and publicity requirements.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund is a scheme run by DEFRA as a top-up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. SDC has secured funding to support eligible capital projects. The grant application by the Town Council will need to be determined in accordance with the grant terms and conditions and the eligibility requirements.

One Legal

Email: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **6.3 Equality Implications**

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and is attached. Due regard will be given to the implications identified in it.

### **6.4 Environmental Implications**

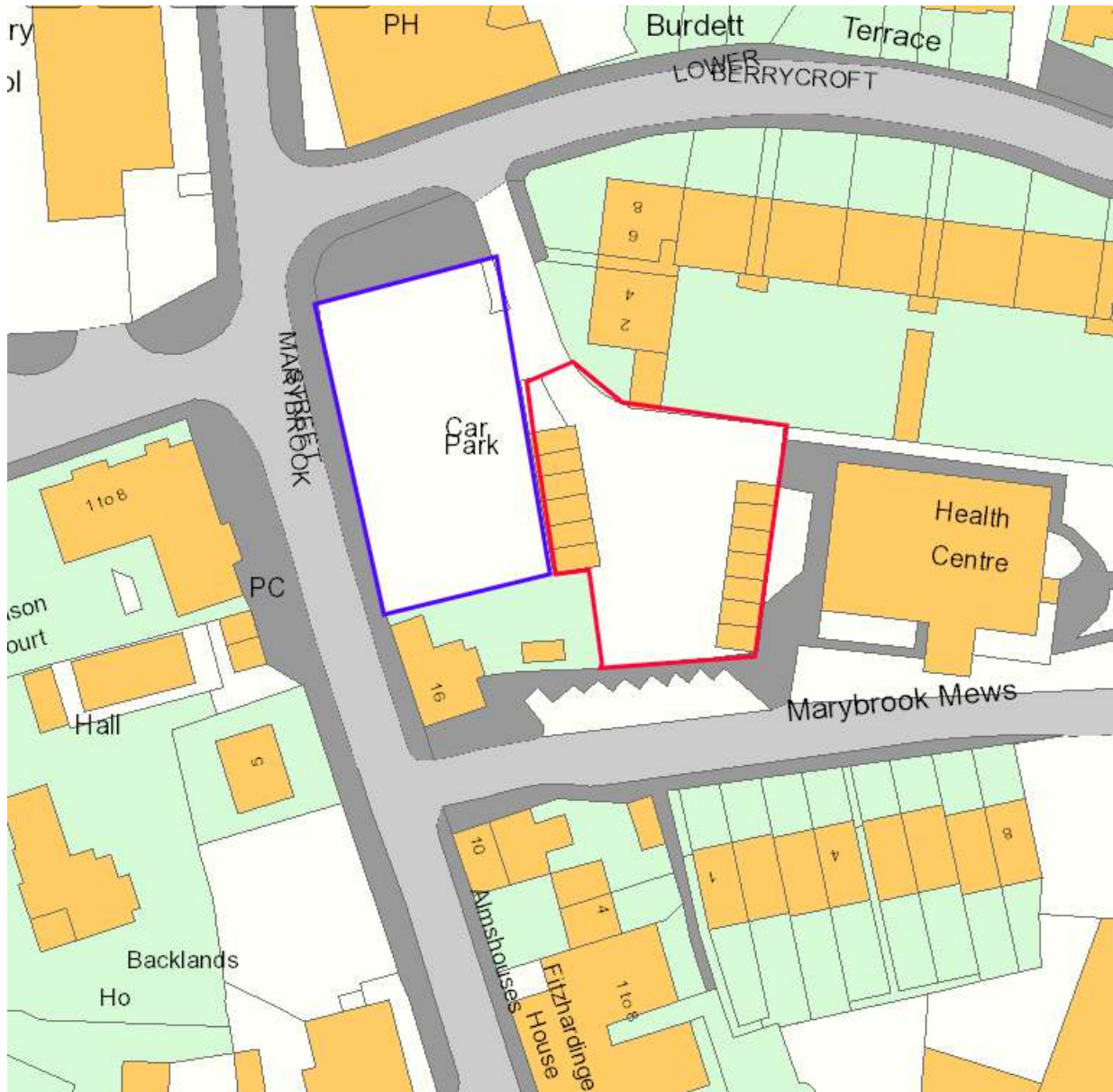
Increasing the number of car parking spaces in the town in order to encourage additional visitors to the town is also likely to lead to increased usage of fossil fuel powered cars.

As partial mitigation the District Council has recently approved funding to install two EV chargers in the Marybrook car park which should encourage EV takeup among both visitors and residents. The planning process will also encourage further mitigations of an environmental nature.

This page is intentionally left blank

### Site and location plan

(garages and site edged red; SDC car park edged blue)



**SDC garages at Lower Berrycroft, adjacent Marybrook Street car park, Berkeley**

**Aerial photograph**

(showing the two separate blocks of garages)





**Marybrook Street car park, entrance to garages to left**



**Entrance to garages (garages to background)**



SDC garages at Lower Berrycroft, adjacent Marybrook Street car park, Berkeley

Views of site and garages





## 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): Andrew Cummings	Telephone: 01453 754115
	E-Mail: Andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Strategic Leadership Team	Date of Assessment: 10/11/2023

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

Extension of Car Park at Marybrook Street, Berkeley

### Is this new or an existing one?

This is a new project but an extension of an existing car park to replace some existing SDC owned garages.

### 3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The project would seek to approximately double the number of car park spaces provided as part of Council off street parking at Berkeley. This would be to replace a site currently occupied by 13 garages.

Appendix B

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

Extension of the car park requires legislative consultation as part of statutory procedures under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

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

Visitors, businesses and residents will benefit from the additional parking. Visitors and residents will be able to find a space easier resulting in businesses benefitting from the increased footfall. It will also reduce the amount of parking on side streets.

**6. What outcomes are expected?**

An increase in the number of parking spaces in the town allowing for greater footfall in the town's businesses and visitor attractions.  
 The Town Council has indicated that the ability of the Towns retail and catering business to grow is currently limited by a lack of parking opportunity in the town.

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

Consultation with the Town Council and Ward Councillors  
 Site Visits

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

Consultation has been carried out with local ward members and the Town Council. Further consultation will be carried out as part of the planning process

**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)
<b>Age</b>	Potential positive impact. Additional safe offstreet parking close to the town centre may benefit both older people who may have limited mobility and those travelling with younger children by both providing a safe place to park and limiting unsafe on-street parking by other motorists in the town centre itself.
<b>Disability</b>	Potential positive impact. Through the creation of additional parking spaces it is possible to include as part of the process a consideration of whether this includes additional disabled parking provision in the extended car park.

<b>Gender Re-assignment</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Race</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Religion – Belief</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Sex</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No impact anticipated
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnerships</b> (part (a) of duty only)	No impact anticipated
<b>Rural considerations:</b> le Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Increased parking in the town is likely to allow greater access for those who live outside of the town centre who are dependent on vehicle travel to access Town Services.

**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.**

<b>Action(s):</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Consideration of Disabled Parking Provision as part of parking plans	Mike Towson	Officer Time	2024

### **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**

<b>Completed by:</b> Andrew Cummings,	<b>Date:</b> 10/11/2023
<b>Role:</b> Strategic Director of Resources	
<b>Countersigned by Head of Service/Director:</b> Kathy O'Leary	<b>Date:</b> 13/11/2023

**Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to [policy@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:policy@stroud.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank

## STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

### COUNCIL

**THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Safe and Legal Routes to the UK</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	The Government is asking Local Authorities to pledge how many migrant households, arriving in the UK via safe and legal routes, can be housed by each Local Authority in 2025. The aggregate figure will then be used by Government to cap the number of migrants allowed to enter the UK.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>Council RESOLVES that a pledge of 2 housing units for migrants arriving via safe and legal routes in 2025 is made to Government with the pledge to be reviewed by the Housing committee during 2024/25 to determine whether it should be increased.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Consultation is being carried out with statutory and voluntary groups involved with refugee and migrant resettlement.			
<b>Report Author</b>	Pippa Stroud, Head of Housing Solutions Email: pippa.stroud@stroud.gov.uk			
<b>Options</b>	A pledge of zero properties could be made, and then revised upwards in due course. However, once made a pledge cannot be revised downwards at a later date.			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None.			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A: Letter from the Minister of State for Immigration Appendix B: Cap on Safe and Legal Routes – Consultation Appendix C: Cap on Safe and Legal Routes FAQs Appendix D: Background data			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 The UK currently operates seven safe and legal routes for migrants to enter the UK. These include resettlement schemes such as the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and Community Sponsorship, as well as bespoke routes for individuals from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Hong Kong and the close family members of refugees. Under the UK's safe and legal routes, eligible individuals access them through an application or referral process made overseas. This means when they arrive in the UK their status is already determined.
- 1.2 The government is continuing to deliver on the Illegal Migrant Act and is giving local authorities an opportunity to influence the cap on safe and legal routes. The Home Office is officially launching consultation to inform the level at which a cap on safe and legal routes is set. Local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales, and the Executive Office in Northern Ireland are being consulted.

- 1.3 The consultation is an opportunity for authorities to assess their capacity to house and support vulnerable people and inform decision making at Government level. “The cap will ensure the UK is able to welcome, accommodate, integrate and support those arriving via these routes in an orderly and appropriate way. This will ensure we do not take more refugees than our public services and communities can cope with.”

## 2. Main Points

- 2.1 The objective of the cap is to ensure the UK can accommodate and support those arriving through safe and legal routes effectively. The introduction of the cap provides an opportunity for a more sustainable and managed approach to migration through humanitarian safe and legal routes. Recognising the pressures placed on local authority capacity to accommodate and effectively integrate those arriving, the cap will place a realistic annual limit on the number of people who can come to the UK each year through safe and legal routes.
- 2.2 As part of the pledge process, councils are being asked to:
  - Engage and consult with other organisations.
  - Evidence reasons for the pledge.
  - State what household types will be accommodated, and whether they will be accommodated under the community sponsorship scheme.
  - State what impact the available Resettlement Tariff and Community Sponsorship Funding has on our ability to resettle refugees.
  - State how existing funding could be maximised to increase delivery of resettlement services locally.
  - State what other public services (such as education and children and adult social care) are impacting on our ability to resettle refugees in the area.
- 2.3 Timescales are tight, and the deadline for response is 15<sup>th</sup> December.
- 2.4 With this in mind, the Gloucestershire Local Authorities are working together to review data & trends and consult with partners.
3. Research and consultation data was not available at the time of writing and as such officers are currently unable to set out a recommendation. It is anticipated that the required data will be received on 30 November, after which it will be considered and evaluated, and a recommendation formulated. The recommendation will then be tabled at the meeting.
  - 3.1 There is some uncertainty as to these proposals pending the outcome of the next General Election, however, it is our understanding that if we make a pledge to accommodate, we could be held to this. There is however an option to increase our pledge in future if we wish to.
  - 3.2 For example, if a district pledges 10 properties in 2025, they will be expected to deliver that. However, if we were to pledge 2 properties in 2025 and were happy to welcome more than 2 households to the district that year, we could increase the pledge for that year. There does not appear to be an option to revise a pledge downwards.
  - 3.3 Given the shortage of housing options in the district, the increasing number of homeless applications and related financial pressures, as well as the risks associated with the ending of host arrangements under Homes for Ukraine and the likelihood of positive asylum

decisions being received as the Prince of Wales Hotel is decommissioned by Home Office, any decision on a pledge needs to be made within this context.

#### **4. Conclusion**

**4.1** Given the demand for housing services and pressures on the team, it may be that the recommendation is to pledge a low number initially and review this when/if it progresses through Parliament.

#### **4.2 Draft Response to Consultation:**

**5. What organisations (including VCS organisations, and community sponsorship groups) in your area have you engaged with while compiling your response and have you included the responses received from these organisations in your local authority consolidated response?**

**5.1** The consultation was held in partnership with Gloucestershire Strategic Migration Partnership, Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (service provider), Gloucestershire ICB, resettlement leads from across refugee and asylum seeker routes in Gloucestershire, Housing Leads, and the County Council. Stroud does not currently have any Community Sponsorship Groups in the district.

**6. What is your capacity to house and support those coming through safe and legal routes under the cap in calendar year 2025?**

**6.1** Stroud District Council is part of the Gloucestershire Strategic Migration Partnership, a multi-agency partnership across the County, which works to ensure that refugees are resettled, supported, and integrated into our community. Gloucestershire has welcomed refugees to the county through routes such as Homes for Ukraine, UK Resettlement Scheme, British Nationals (Overseas) and the Afghan Resettlement Schemes. Having analysed data by district however, it is clear to see that the shortage of rented housing in both the private and social sectors has had a direct effect on the numbers of refugees that we are able to support. In addition to this, the current Streamlined Asylum Process policy has increased demand on housing from asylum seekers who have been given leave to remain but insufficient time to find alternative accommodation.

**7. What evidence can you provide to support this (for example, number of properties that you have available or can procure)?**

**7.1** We have provided data to demonstrate the current demand vs availability for social housing in Stroud district. In addition to this, we have also provided data demonstrating the high level of support we have given to resettlement routes since 2015.

**8. Of the above number, in 2025, how many of the following groups do you anticipate being able to accommodate, and ensure appropriate support is in place for: (Complex cases, single people, large families)**

**8.1** Due to the rurality of Stroud District, we would not anticipate being able to support complex cases or very large families.

**9. Of the above number, how many of these do you expect to come through the community sponsorship scheme in your area?**

**9.1** We do not expect arrivals through Community Sponsorship Schemes.

**10. The Resettlement Tariff and Community Sponsorship Funding provide the local authority with access to central funding for the purpose of supporting refugee integration. What impact has this funding had on your ability to resettle refugees in your area?**

10.1 The resettlement tariff has enabled the County to commission GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) to provide wraparound support to all our arrivals through resettlement schemes. GARAS provide a thorough wrap-around support package that includes integration, access to English language training, employment, and benefits support. GARAS enable resettlement arrivals to become independent and to integrate well into their communities in the UK.

**11. There is no additional funding being introduced with the cap. How could the funding instructions be changed to maximise the existing funding, enabling innovation and increased delivery of services in your area?**

11.1 We suggest that the ring-fencing of Afghan and UKRS funding is removed. This causes a significant barrier to the provision of services that we could otherwise develop, as we are unable to use funding collectively in a way that would benefit all refugees.

**12. What impact do you assess the local provision of public services such as education, social care (adult and children) and healthcare has on your ability to resettle refugees in your area? Why do you assess this to be the case?**

12.1 Whilst we support the resettlement of refugees, this does place a burden upon services such as education, social care, and healthcare. Stroud has thirteen GP practices to cater to a population of 121,529 and the opening of an Asylum Seeker hotel in 2022, increased pressure on all services. Stroud currently has a Home Seeker registration list of 3966 applications, and we were able to offer lets to 525 households in 22-23. There is an additional demand from HFU arrivals needing to leave their host accommodation and the housing demand resulting from this. Where HFU guests decide to remain in the district, this again increases the demand on services.

**13. Implications**

**13.1 Financial Implications**

The shortage of housing in the district alongside the increasing number of homelessness applications mean that a pledge of housing may put some pressure on existing housing advice and homelessness services. It can be expected that at the pledge level being proposed it would be possible to manage this within existing resources.

Lucy Clothier

Tel: 01453 754343 Email: [lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk)

**13.2 Legal Implications**

The Illegal Migration Act places a duty on the Home Office to consult councils on the development of a Cap on the number of entrants to the UK arriving via safe and legal routes for humanitarian purposes. The Government then will lay a Statutory Instrument in Parliament to set the cap in Summer 2024, including both the number and the routes subject to that cap, with the cap expected to be in operation in 2025. The cap will be annual but exemptions can be made in humanitarian emergencies. Responding to the consultation is voluntary but if a response is not received, a 'zero capacity' commitment from that area could form the basis of the total national figure.



One Legal

Tel: 01684 272691 Email: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **13.3 Equality Implications**

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

### **13.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Home Office****Appendix A**  
**Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP**  
**Minister of State for Immigration**2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

Dear colleagues,

You will be aware that the Illegal Migration Act places a duty on the Home Secretary to set a cap on the number of entrants to the UK arriving via safe and legal routes for humanitarian purposes and for this cap to be defined following consultation with local government.

Today the Home Office is officially launching the consultation to inform the level at which the cap on safe and legal routes is set. Home Office officials will have shared this directly with local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales, and the Executive Office in Northern Ireland.

Local authorities are integral to delivering these routes through their role in housing and integration services. It is with thanks to the efforts of local authorities across the UK that we have been able to welcome over half a million people through our safe and legal routes since 2015. They have also borne much of the pressure caused by housing asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute. The largest number in our country's history in any comparable period. However, these have imposed a considerable burden. It is important that we now consult local authorities to assess their capacity to support vulnerable people moving forward and ground the decisions made in Westminster in the realities faced in the communities we represent.

The cap will ensure the UK is able to welcome, accommodate, integrate and support those arriving via these routes in an orderly and appropriate way. This will ensure we do not take more refugees than our public services and communities can cope with.

By determining a realistic and evidenced-based picture on capacity - which we can only do with your support - the UK can continue to operate safe and legal routes and ensure these routes form part of a well-managed migration system. In making commitments through the consultation local authorities must carefully consider their capacity and make detailed, specific commitments. We will expect them to deliver these commitments and so they should not be made lightly. If you simply do not have capacity, it is important that you are honest.

The consultation, which provides the basis upon which the Home Office will propose the cap to be agreed in Parliament, will be open from 20 October 2023 until 15 December 2023. The responses will be reviewed and considered at a national and regional level before a total figure is recommended and debated in Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

**Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP**  
**Minister of State for Immigration**

This page is intentionally left blank



Home Office

# Cap on safe and legal Routes

## Government consultation

This consultation begins on 20 October 2023

This consultation ends on 15 December 2023

## About this consultation

**To:** The consultation is aimed at local authorities

**Duration:** From 20/10/23 to 15/12/23

**Enquiries (including requests for the paper in an alternative format) to:** Refugee Resettlement and Integration Unit  
Email: capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

**How to respond:** Please send your response by midnight on 15 December 2023 to:  
Refugee Resettlement and Integration Unit  
Email: capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

**Additional ways to respond:** Please ensure you submit a response to the inbox above. A series of stakeholder meetings will also be taking place and will be scheduled over the coming weeks.

For further information please use the 'Enquiries' contact details above.'

**Response paper:** A response to this consultation exercise is expected to be published in Summer 2024

# Contents

Foreword	2
Executive Summary	3
The Illegal Migration Act and Resettlement	4
Illegal Migration Act	4
Safe and legal routes	4
What role do local authorities currently play in resettlement?	7
Cap on Safe and Legal Routes	8
What is the cap and what will it do?	8
What funding will be available?	8
What routes does the cap include?	9
Current arrival numbers	9
How does the place-based approach interact with the cap?	10
Consultation on the cap	11
What is the role of this consultation in setting the cap?	11
Who are we seeking responses from?	11
What will follow after this consultation?	12
Questionnaire	13
Instructions for completing the questionnaire	13
For local authorities and/or Devolved Administrations:	14
Contact details and how to respond	15
Complaints or comments	15
Extra copies	15
Publication of response	15
Representative groups	15
Confidentiality	15
Consultation principles	17

## Foreword

The UK has a proud history of providing protection for those who need it through safe and legal routes. Since 2015, we have offered a safe and legal route to the UK for close to half a million people from all over the world via our global routes and our country-specific routes. This includes around 50,000 who have come to the UK on routes open to people from any country in the world, 25,000 on our country-specific routes for Afghanistan and 20,000 from Syria, over 100,000 Hong Kongers, and close to 200,000 from Ukraine.

The Illegal Migration Act places a duty on the Home Secretary to set a cap on the number of entrants to the UK arriving on safe and legal routes for humanitarian purposes, and for the cap to be defined following consultation.

Today, I am officially launching the consultation on the cap on safe and legal routes which includes UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) Pathways 2 and 3 (stage 2), and Community Sponsorship. The consultation is open to local authorities in England, Wales, Scotland and with the Executive Office of Northern Ireland.

The cap seeks to ensure that the UK is able to welcome, accommodate, integrate and support those arriving via these routes. The introduction of the cap on safe and legal routes will allow us to balance our ambition to welcome those in need with the capacity of local authorities in the UK to accommodate and support those arriving on these routes. By determining a clear picture of the capacity - which we can only do with your support - the UK can continue to operate safe and legal routes for protection and ensure these routes form part of a well-managed migration system.

The consultation, which provides the basis by which the Home Office will propose the cap that will be agreed with Parliament, will be open from 20 October 2023 until 15 December 2023. The responses will be reviewed and considered at a national and regional level before a total figure is recommended.



Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP

Secretary of State for the Home Department



# Executive Summary

The Illegal Migration Act places a duty on the Secretary of State for the Home Department to introduce an annual cap on the number of entrants using safe and legal routes to the UK. The cap provides a considered approach to the way the UK's safe and legal routes will function in the coming years.

The cap will be set on an annual basis, to be determined after consultation with representatives of local authorities. It will be amendable for example in the event of humanitarian crises. An annual limit on the number of entrants will ensure the UK accepts through safe and legal routes no more people than can be accommodated and supported effectively.

The Illegal Migration Act requires that before setting the cap, the Home Secretary must consult:

- in England and Wales and Scotland, such representatives of local authorities as the Secretary of State considers appropriate,
- the Executive Office in Northern Ireland, and
- such other persons or bodies as the Home Secretary considers appropriate.

This consultation delivers on this duty, setting out for consultation the overall capacity of local authorities to house and support individuals coming to the UK through the forthcoming cap on safe and legal routes. We recognise the current pressures faced by local authorities. This cap provides the opportunity to move migration through humanitarian safe and legal routes towards a more sustainable and well-managed system.

The consultation is aimed at local authorities who provide housing or support to resettled individuals in the UK. Local authorities should work with relevant bodies who provide wraparound services in compiling their responses, such as Integrated Care Boards, as well as with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations, and Community Sponsorship Groups in their areas.

# The Illegal Migration Act and Resettlement

## Illegal Migration Act

The Illegal Migration Act received Royal Assent on 20 July 2023. The Act changes the law to make it unambiguously clear that, if you enter the UK illegally, you should not be able to remain here. Instead, you will be detained and promptly removed either to your home country or to a safe country where any asylum claim will be considered. You will no longer be able to frustrate removal attempts with late or spurious legal challenges or appeals, and once removed, you will have no right to re-entry, settlement or citizenship.

The Act aims to:

- put a stop to illegal migration into the UK by removing the incentive to make dangerous small boat crossings
- speed up the removal of those with no right to be here - in turn this will free up capacity so that the UK can better support individuals through safe and legal routes
- prevent people who come to the UK through illegal and dangerous journeys from misusing modern slavery safeguards to block their removal
- introduce a cap on the number of people coming to the UK through safe and legal routes each year

Section 60 of this Act places a duty on the government to introduce an annual cap on the number of entrants using safe and legal routes to the UK. The cap will be developed after consultation. It will be amendable in the event of humanitarian crises. It will only apply to future flow and will therefore not apply retrospectively to those already in the UK.

A separate Section (61) places a duty on the Home Secretary to publish, and lay before Parliament, a report on the safe and legal routes by which individuals may enter the UK, and any proposed additional safe and legal routes. This must be done within six months of Royal Assent.

## Safe and legal routes

The UK currently operates seven safe and legal routes. These include resettlement schemes such as the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and Community Sponsorship, as well as bespoke routes for individuals from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Hong Kong and the close family members of refugees.

Under the UK's safe and legal routes, eligible individuals access them through an application or referral process made overseas. This means when they arrive in the UK their status already determined.

### **UK Resettlement Scheme**

The UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) is a global scheme (meaning it is open to all nationalities) with a multi-year commitment to resettle vulnerable refugees in need of protection. It prioritises the resettlement of refugees, including children, in regions of conflict and instability. This route is not application-based. Instead, it is accessible to refugees who have been assessed for resettlement by UNHCR.

**Community Sponsorship Scheme** enables friends and neighbours, charities and faith groups to play a direct role in supporting families resettled to the UK as they restart their lives here. Those identified and brought to the UK through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) are eligible to be supported through Community Sponsorship.

**The Mandate resettlement scheme** resettles refugees recognised by UNHCR as being in need of protection, who have a close family member in the UK who is willing to accommodate them. It is a global scheme and there is currently no annual quota.

**The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)** commenced on 6 January 2022 and will see up to 20,000 at-risk people affected by the events in Afghanistan resettled to the UK. Under the ACRS, eligible individuals are prioritised for resettlement through one of three referral pathways.

- Under Pathway 1, some of those evacuated under Op PITTING, including British Nationals and their families, Afghans who loyally served the UK, campaigners for human rights were the first to be resettled under the ACRS. Those eligible who were called forward or specifically authorised for evacuation during the evacuation but were not able to board flights may also be resettled through ACRS Pathway 1.
- Under Pathway 2, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) refer refugees who have fled Afghanistan to the UK, based on assessments of protection needs and vulnerabilities.
- Under Stage 1 of Pathway 3, a limited number of places are being offered to eligible at-risk British Council contractors, GardaWorld contractors, and Chevening alumni in Afghanistan or the region. This includes their eligible family members. Beyond this first stage, we will continue to work with international partners and NGOs to welcome wider groups of Afghans at risk.

Those referred by UNHCR to the UK for the UKRS, Community Sponsorship, Mandate Resettlement and under Pathway 2 of the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), will be assessed for resettlement by UNHCR using their established process, and in line with their resettlement submission categories, which are based on people's needs and vulnerabilities.

### **Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)**

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), launched on 1 April 2021, offers relocation to eligible Afghan citizens who worked for or with the UK government in Afghanistan in exposed or meaningful roles. The ARAP recognises the service of eligible Afghan citizens and the risks arising to them and their dependent family members due to their work.

### **Ukraine Schemes**

**Cap on Safe and Legal Routes - Consultation**  
Appendix B

Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS) – permits applicants to come to the UK, or extend their existing leave to remain in the UK, using a sponsor who is a family member (using a wide definition of family that includes cousins, aunts, grandparents etc) that is settled in the UK.

Homes for Ukraine Scheme (HFU) - allows Ukrainian nationals and their immediate family members to be sponsored by any eligible UK household which could provide a minimum 6 months' accommodation for the applicants. In August 2022, the Home Office launched the 'Eligible Minors' Extension to HFU - where a parent or legal guardian of a minor (under 18) can identify a UK based sponsor to be approved to host their child in the UK for the period of the visa, without them. The sponsor must commit to accommodating the minor for the full term of their visa or until they are 18 and must be known to the parent or guardian before the war.

Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES) - allows Ukrainians in the UK with lawful status, outside of the HFU and UFS, to extend their leave to remain in the UK. This provides successful applicants with the same length of leave, rights and access to benefits and services as the HFU and UFS.

Applications under the Ukraine schemes are fee free and provide 36 months' permission to remain in the UK. Permission is granted with no restrictions on the right to work, rent and access public funds and services, including healthcare. The Ukraine Schemes are temporary schemes, rather than refugee schemes and they do not lead to permanent settlement.

**Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)**

On 31 January 2021, the UK government launched the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) ((BN(O)) Immigration route in response to China's passing of the National Security Law which significantly impacts the rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong. The route allows BN(O) status holders and their eligible family members to apply to come to the UK to live, study and work on a pathway to citizenship.

On 30 November 2022, the BN(O) route was expanded to enable adult children of BN(O) status holders who were born on or after 1 July 1997 to apply to the route independently of their parents. This ensures this cohort, who were not eligible for BN(O) status and who may not have been able to apply to the route previously, can now choose to make the UK their home.

The BN(O) route is not a refugee resettlement route but is a safe and legal route to the UK for those eligible.

Applicants are required to pay a fee and the immigration health surcharge, and those who have been living in the UK for less than 12 months must show they can adequately maintain and accommodate themselves for six months without access to public funds. All applicants are initially granted with a no recourse to public funds (although once on the route, an applicant can apply to lift their no recourse to public funds restriction at any time, if they meet the requirements.

## **What role do local authorities currently play in resettlement?**

Local authorities play a fundamental role in the resettlement of refugees and those in need, enabling them to rebuild their lives in the UK and to thrive. Depending on the scheme, local authorities welcome, receive, accommodate and integrate those arriving on the UK's formal safe and legal routes.

Local authorities are also responsible for ensuring services, such as education, have the capacity to support those arriving in their communities. They also work with local partners to ensure that new arrivals are signposted to other local services such as healthcare, and have a role in supporting community sponsorship.

# Cap on Safe and Legal Routes

## What is the cap and what will it do?

The cap will provide a considered approach to the way the UK's safe and legal routes will function in the coming years. It will set an annual limit on the number of entrants using safe and legal routes to the UK.

The objective of the cap is to ensure the UK can accommodate and support those arriving through safe and legal routes effectively. The introduction of the cap provides an opportunity for a more sustainable and managed approach to migration through humanitarian safe and legal routes. Recognising the pressures placed on local authority capacity to accommodate and effectively integrate those arriving, the cap will place a realistic annual limit on the number of people who can come to the UK each year through safe and legal routes.

The annual cap will reflect local authority capacity. Local authorities will engage with Community Sponsorship representatives and Third Sector Organisations who provide accommodation in their local areas, and local service providers including Integrated Care Boards. In matters of urgency (such as to allow a national response to an international emergency), the Home Secretary will be able to seek Parliament's approval to change the number without the consultation process. As the cap is annual to reflect the fluctuating nature of capacity, there is scope to change it in future years.

This consultation will run from 20 October 2023 to 15 December 2023. Responses will then be reviewed and further engagement with respondents through a series of regional dialogues to validate responses and determine a capacity estimate. In summer 2024, the government will lay a Statutory Instrument in Parliament to set the cap, including both the number and the routes subject to that cap. We expect the cap will be in operation in 2025.

## What funding will be available?

Funding to support the costs of those arriving through safe and legal routes will continue to be provided through the resettlement tariff, which will not be affected by the introduction of the cap.

The resettlement tariff is provided on a per capita basis to local authorities to help the families they have pledged to resettle and support into life in the UK. It is comprised of a core tariff of £20,520 per person, provided over a period of five years for UKRS arrivals and over three years for ACRS and ARAP; as well as additional tariffs in the first year of up to £4,500 per child to cover education costs, and £850 for adults requiring English language support. An additional tariff of £2,600 is made available to local health bodies to cover healthcare costs in the first year.

In line with the statement of outcomes outlined in the relevant published Funding Instruction, local partners are expected to use this tariff funding to support families' immediate integration needs as they settle into their local communities and work towards self-sufficiency. These services include, but are not limited to, provision of:

- affordable and sustainable accommodation, which is furnished appropriately, meets local authority standards, and is available on a family's arrival and/or relocation to the local authority area.
- casework support, focused on advice and support to assist with registering for mainstream benefits and services, and signposting to other agencies where appropriate.
- a tailored integration support plan for each family or individual for the first year after arrival to facilitate their integration and orientation into their new home/area.
- educational places for children of school age.
- English language training for adult refugees, to facilitate their progress towards the level of proficiency needed to function in their everyday life and work towards self-sufficiency.

ESOL Childcare fund is available, to which local authorities, Community Sponsorship groups and regional coordination bodies may submit proposals for delivering measures aimed at enabling resettled refugees, particularly those with childcare and other caring responsibilities, to participate in ESOL training.

For Community Sponsorship, the current funding arrangements will continue to apply. Local authorities and health partners associated with community sponsorship groups can claim up to £4,500 for children aged 5-18 and £2,250 for children aged 3-4 in education funding. Once registered with a GP, an Integrated Care Board in England, Health Boards in Scotland and Wales or the Department of Health in Northern Ireland, they can claim £2,600 per family member from the Home Office. Sponsor groups can also claim £850 ESOL funding for every adult refugee (aged 19 or over) and may also submit proposals to the discrete ESOL Childcare fund.

## **What routes does the cap include?**

The cap includes the following routes:

- a. Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) pathways 2 and 3 (stage 2)
- b. UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)
- c. Community Sponsorship

It may also include any future schemes introduced by the Home Secretary. Any new route can be developed outside of the cap, based on its individual merits, including emergency pathways. Should a new route be considered suitable for inclusion in the cap, this will be put to Parliament for a decision after a consultation on capacity with local authorities in line with the proposed standard process on determining the cap figure.

## **Current arrival numbers**

Current arrival numbers at a local authority area under current safe and legal routes can be found [here](#).



## How does the place-based approach interact with the cap?

Home Office's place-based approach seeks to ensure where it can a fair and equitable distribution of all protection-based immigration demands across the UK in line with demand and accommodation supply.

The cap will work with the place-based approach to ensure demand across asylum and safe and legal routes under the cap are assessed collectively on a regional and national basis. This means that we will where we can balance the burdens placed on any local area to ensure no single local authority is supporting a disproportionate intake, across all protection-based immigration routes, which include asylum seekers, unaccompanied asylum seeking children (through the national Transfer Scheme) and those coming via the UK's safe and legal routes. There is an expectation that all local authorities play their part to support protection based migrants through the place based approach.

The commitments made under the safe and legal routes cap by a local authority, will be considered in the round, as part of a regions total allocation of all protection-based migrants, under a place-based approach. Alongside the commitment made through the cap, each local authority is expected to meet its agreed allocation of asylum seekers and unaccompanied asylum seeking children under the National Transfer Scheme, contributing to the regions total share.

The cap and the place-based approach will give local authority partners more agency in the decision making around the distribution of protection-based immigration, at a local level.

The HO Place Based team will support Migration policy colleagues through engagement with respondents throughout Spring 2024, where we will consider resettlement pledges alongside other anticipated migration pressures in their totality.

The cap will not introduce any changes to the current accommodation matching process based on local authority pledges, notably used by UKRS.

### Unaccompanied asylum seeking children

Regardless of any commitment to contribute to safe and legal routes through a cap, local authorities are also required to comply with the National Transfer Scheme. All local authorities and Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland are subject to a direction under section 72(3) of the 2016 Immigration Act and are under a mandatory duty to comply with the National Transfer Scheme. This is reflected in the judgment of Mr Justice Chamberlain in ECPAT UK, R (On the Application Of) v Kent County Council & Anor [2023] EWHC 1953 (Admin) (27 July 2023). The rota weightings of the mandated NTS have been calculated to determine a fair allocation of NTS placements to each region by taking account of asylum and children's services pressures on local authorities.



# Consultation on the cap

## What is the role of this consultation in setting the cap?

The Illegal Migration Act requires that before setting the cap, the Home Secretary must consult:

- in England and Wales and Scotland, such representatives of local authorities as the Secretary of State considers appropriate,
- the Executive Office in Northern Ireland, and
- such other persons or bodies as the Home Secretary considers appropriate.

This consultation delivers on this duty, and seeks clarity on the overall capacity of providers to house and support those coming through the cap.

It also aims to:

- ensure the capacity constraints of routes which are not included in the cap are reflected in setting the cap figure.
- consider the impact that existing schemes, and any proposed new schemes have on local authority capacity and to reflect this when defining the scope of the cap.

## Who are we seeking responses from?

In order to get a sense of the capacity of these key stakeholders in resettlement, we are seeking the views of local authorities in England and equivalents in Devolved Administrations.

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations and Community Sponsorship groups play a key role in resettlement, including providing accommodation to resettled individuals.

VCS organisations can source and manage accommodation which would not ordinarily be available through the Private Rental Sector. These organisations may be small scale and operate across a limited area, they play an important role in resettlement and it is helpful to understand their capacity.

Community Sponsorship Groups can participate in the Community Sponsorship Scheme. This is a way for local communities, civil society organisations, charities, and faith groups to be directly involved in helping refugees settle in the UK. Community sponsors provide emotional and practical support to empower families to rebuild their lives in safety, and to become self-sufficient members of their new community. Being a sponsor also benefits the

**Cap on Safe and Legal Routes - Consultation**  
Appendix B

local community through enabling the generosity of local people and creating new bonds between those involved. Sponsor groups are required to provide integration support to the resettled family for one year, and secure suitable and affordable housing for two years.

**For this reason, we are asking local authorities to meaningfully engage with VCS organisations and community sponsorship groups in their areas when considering their responses.**

Integrated Care Boards play a vital role in providing healthcare services for refugees, who may require additional services. For this reason, we strongly recommend that local authorities engage with Integrated Care Boards when considering their responses, to ensure that the capacity of the local NHS system is taken into account.

This is not a public consultation and, as such, the consultation will only be sent to local authorities (and equivalents), inviting them to respond. Any other responses received (i.e. from organisations which are neither local authorities nor their equivalents in the DAs) will not be considered.

## **What will follow after this consultation?**

Once we receive responses, we will continue engaging with stakeholders to review and consolidate feedback and define the cap. As set out in the Illegal Migration Act, the cap will be presented to Parliament for decision before coming into effect.

A consultation response will be published in Summer 2024. We expect the cap to be introduced in 2025.

In future years, we will continue to assess capacity to deliver routes under the cap.

# Questionnaire

## Instructions for completing the questionnaire

We understand that current pressures faced by local authorities across asylum and resettlement services, including such aspects as the impact of Afghan bridging accommodation closure, social housing waiting lists and homelessness presentations. You may wish to consider forecast demographic and population changes and consider their projected impact on housing, homelessness, health and care services and other services in your area.

In your responses, please consider the burdens placed on resources by other delivery pressures including delivery of safe and legal routes outside of the cap, such as the Ukraine Schemes, dispersal and illegal migration.

Responses should be a well-considered figure that is deliverable. The expectation is that local authorities are committing to deliver this figure, and will have to adhere to it if called upon and if needed, and is therefore not a commitment that should be taken lightly. As is current practice, delivery of each local authority's commitment will form part of regular operational reporting and monitoring processes.

As part of the ongoing operation of the cap, we are considering the introduction of annual MoUs and will keep this under review.

We recognise that it may be challenging to provide your capacity commitment for 2025. Given this, please use your current capacity as a benchmark, and consider how this capacity may change in the medium-term.

Please provide a numerical figure, in your answers, either as a proportion of your local population, or as an absolute number.

Your response needs to be a politically agreed commitment, so please seek approval for your responses to ensure this represents a clear consensus within your area, and with local partners. In two tier areas please provide an answer which is agreed by both the district and the county.

**We are asking local authorities to engage with Strategic Migration Partnerships, community groups, and any VCS organisations that deliver accommodation or refugee resettlement services in their areas.**

We would strongly encourage you to consult local VCSE partners based in your areas with knowledge and/or experience of the delivery of safe and legal routes and to include these inputs as part of your responses.

Please note that this consultation is solely considering responses to questions below in relation to capacity regarding the cap on safe and legal routes. Responses related to general migration policies will not be considered.

We would welcome responses to the following questions set out in this consultation paper.

## For local authorities and/or Devolved Administrations:

1. What organisations (including VCS organisations, and community sponsorship groups) in your area have you engaged with while compiling your response and have you included the responses received from these organisations in your local authority consolidated response?
2. What is your capacity to house and support those coming through safe and legal routes under the cap in calendar year 2025?
3. What evidence can you provide to support this (for example, number of properties that you have available or can procure)?
4. Of the above number, in 2025, how many of the following groups do you anticipate being able to accommodate, and ensure appropriate support is in place for:
  - a. Complex cases (such as those with specific medical, mobility or special education needs)
  - b. Single people
  - c. Large families (6+)
5. Of the above number, how many of these do you expect to come through the community sponsorship scheme in your area?
6. The Resettlement Tariff and Community Sponsorship Funding provide the local authority with access to central funding for the purpose of supporting refugee integration. What impact has this funding had on your ability to resettle refugees in your area?
7. There is no additional funding being introduced with the cap. How could the funding instructions be changed to maximise the existing funding, enabling innovation and increased delivery of services in your area?
8. What impact do you assess the local provision of public services such as education, social care (adult and children) and healthcare has on your ability to resettle refugees in your area? Why do you assess this to be the case?

**Thank you for participating in this consultation.**

# Contact details and how to respond

Please send your response by midnight on 15 December 2023 to  
capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

## Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Home Office at the above address.

## Extra copies

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested from  
capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

## Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in Summer 2024.

## Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

## Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Home Office.

Agenda Item 9a

**Cap on Safe and Legal Routes - Consultation**  
Appendix B

The Home Office will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

# Consultation principles

The principles that government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the consultation principles.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>







© Crown copyright 2020

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk).

This page is intentionally left blank

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONSULTATION ON THE CAP ON SAFE AND LEGAL ROUTES**

### **Where should responses be sent?**

Please send your response form to [capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:capconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk)

### **Who should respond to this consultation?**

We are expecting every Local Authority (or equivalent) to respond to this consultation. In two tier areas please provide an answer which is agreed by both the district and the county.

### **Why are you only consulting Local Authorities?**

Local Authorities play an integral role in the delivery of safe and legal routes in providing accommodation and integration services. This is why we are seeking a realistic response on the capacity of local areas to support those arriving through these routes.

### **What about the NGOs and housing associations?**

As part of their response, Local Authorities are asked to engage with community groups and third sector organisations who deliver services in their areas to ensure a realistic commitment which reflects the capacity in each local area. Once the consultation closes there will be a period of consolidation to review and consider the responses.

### **What if we don't respond to this consultation?**

It is important that we can see a complete picture of the UK's capacity through this consultation. Should a response not be received it will be treated as a 'zero capacity' commitment from the area.

### **What happens if we can't respond in time? Will our commitment not count towards the cap?**

It is important your response is sent by the deadline to allow us to continue progressing the setting of the cap. In exceptional circumstances consideration can be given to any Local Authority (or equivalent) if sufficient prior notice has been given and timings have been agreed.

### **Why do you need to know a figure so far into the future? (for 2025)**

There are a number of factors which mean the consultation has to take place now for a future cap. As set out in the Illegal Migration Act, a Statutory Instrument will be laid in Parliament to allow both Houses to debate and approve the cap figure before it is operationalised. The timings for this process, the need to give proper consideration to the consultation responses, and because government and many organisations - like UNHCR - work to different planning timeframes mean that the cap will not commence until 2025.

The cap is annual, and we will review the figures on a yearly basis. We are considering the best way to do this to limit the burden on local authorities. This first consultation will allow us to decide the best approach for future years.

**How are Local Authorities meant to know what capacity they will have to resettle refugees?**

We appreciate that committing to a figure for 2025 is complex and will require careful analysis. Responses will vary by area and will be dependent on local commitments. We suggest that you review your previous and current resettlement capacity, alongside the future commitments you have already made, and carefully consider what is feasible for the future. Once the responses are returned, there will be a period of consolidation to review and consider the responses.

**Which routes will be included in the cap?**

The cap will include the UK Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme Pathway 2 and Pathway 3 stage 2.

While there are some safe and legal routes not included in the cap – the Ukraine schemes, Hong Kong BNO route, Mandate and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy – Local Authorities should consider the impact of these routes on their ability to welcome, house and support those arriving through capped schemes to provide a realistic view of capacity.

**What funding will be available?**

Funding tariffs will continue in their current form, there is no change to the funding associated with the routes included in the cap.

**Will new routes be developed once the cap has been set?**

Any new route can be developed outside of the cap, including emergency pathways, should there be an international crisis that warrants a bespoke UK response.

Should a new route be considered as suitable for inclusion in the cap then this will be put to Parliament for a decision after a consultation on capacity with local authorities and other relevant groups, in line with the proposed standard process on determining the cap figure.

**Will the consultation response be made public?**

A summary of the outcome of the consultation will be published next summer in advance of laying a Statutory Instrument in Parliament. We do not plan to share individual consultation responses.

**What if we cannot make our commitments?**

The purpose of the cap is to have a realistic understanding of each area's capacity to resettle refugees. In order for this to be effective, it is vitally important that you provide a figure that is considered and can be delivered if called upon.

## Safe and Legal Routes to the UK

Data and consultation response

### Background

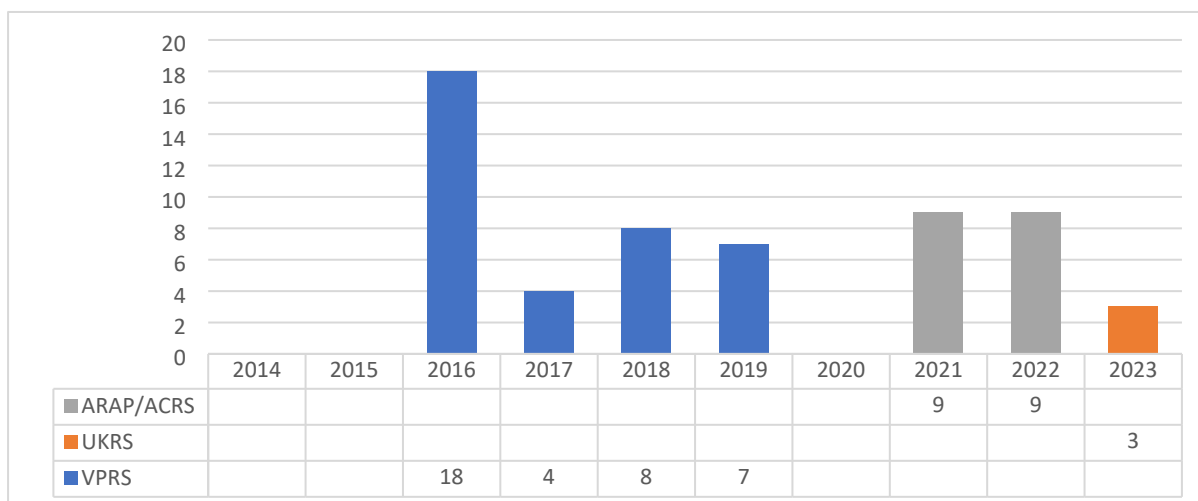
The UK currently operates seven safe and legal routes to refugees. These include resettlement schemes such as the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and Community Sponsorship, as well as bespoke routes for individuals from Afghanistan (ARAP and ACRS), Ukraine (HFU), Hong Kong, and the close family members of refugees. Under the UK’s safe and legal routes, eligible individuals access them through an application or referral process made overseas. This means that when they arrive in the UK their status is already determined.

Previously, the UKRS was known as the VPRS (vulnerable person’s resettlement scheme) which ran from 2015 to 2021 and under which around 20,000 refugees were resettled in the UK.

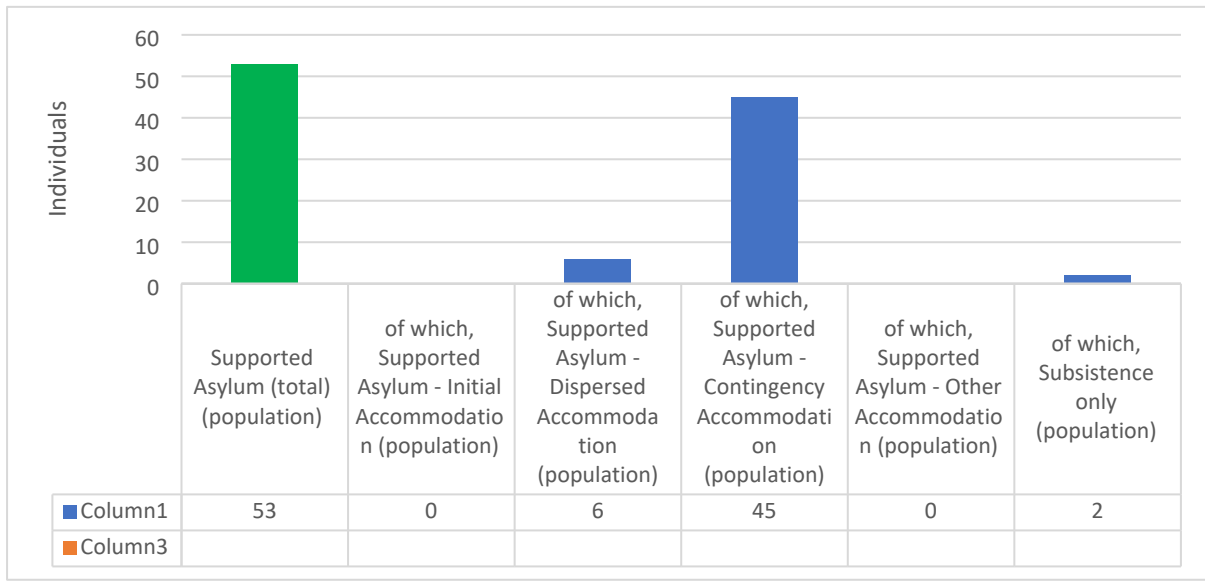
The data below has been compiled by the Gloucestershire International Resettlement Co-Ordinator for the Gloucestershire Strategic Migration Partnership.

### Migration and Resettlement Data

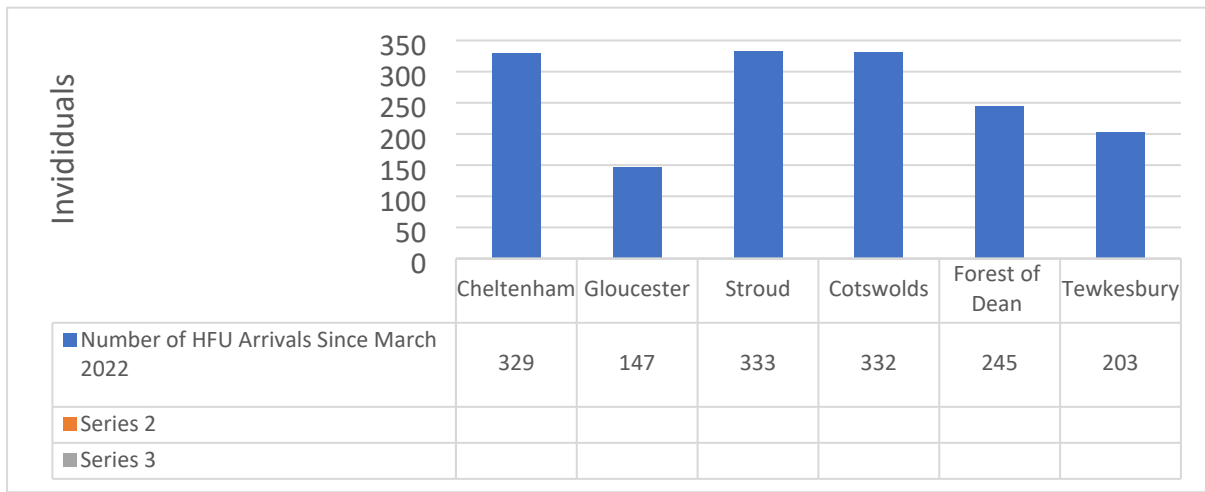
Table 1: Stroud Resettlement Data by Year/by Resettlement Cohort by Individual



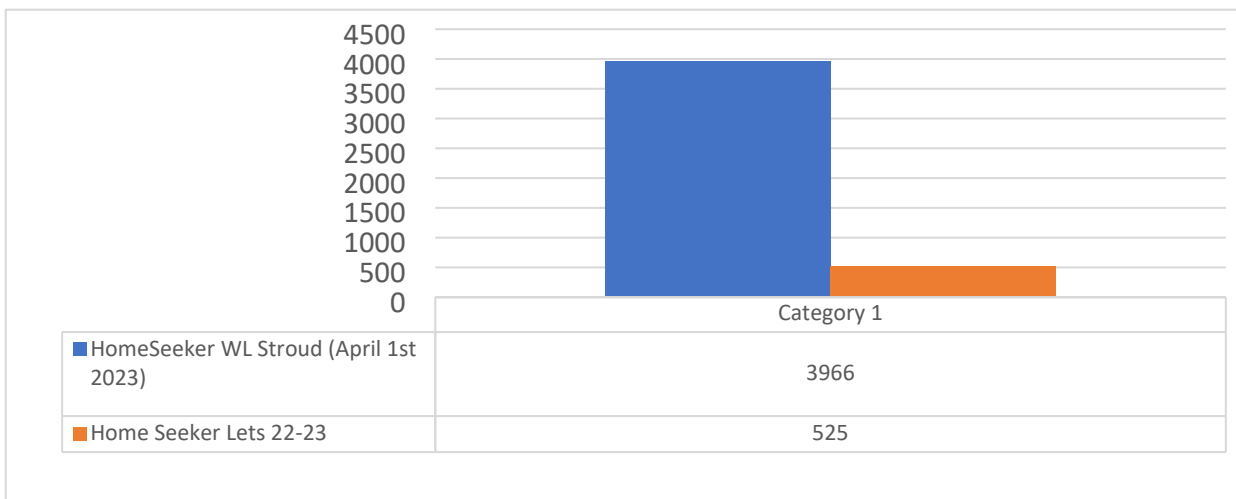
**Table 2: Stroud Asylum Data as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (by individual)**



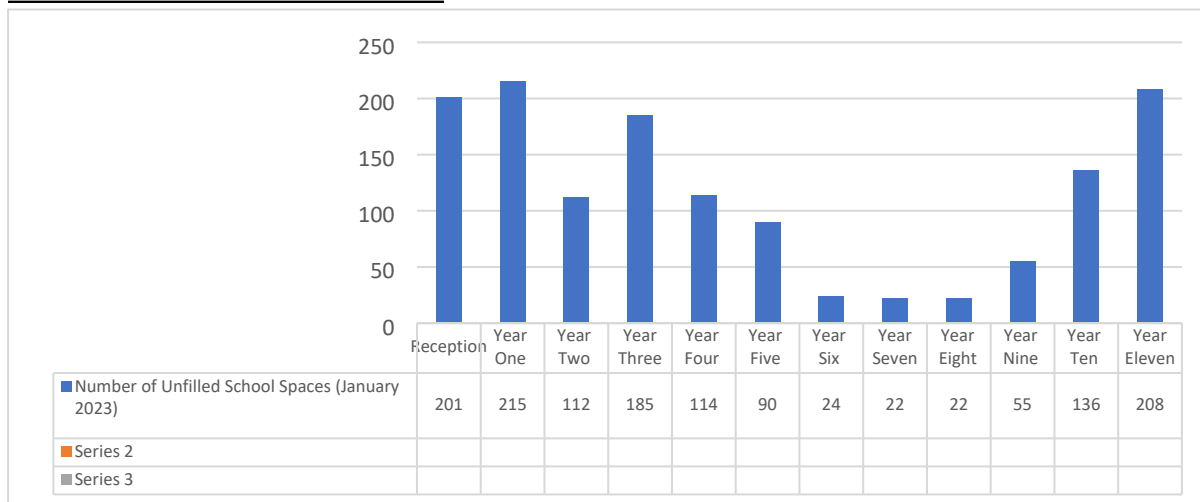
**Table 3: Homes for Ukraine (Gloucestershire)**



**Table 4: Social Housing Demand for Stroud**



**Table 5: Vacant School Places**



**Healthcare data**

There are currently 13 GP practices in the Stroud and Berkley Vale, providing access to a population of 121,529 settled residents.

**Community Sponsorship**

Stroud currently does not host any Community Sponsorship groups.

This page is intentionally left blank



**STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**COUNCIL**  
**THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2023</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To consider the final recommendations for the polling districts and places arrangements in the district following public consultation and changes as a result of the Community Governance Review.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<p><b>The Council RESOLVES to:</b></p> <p>a) <b>Approve the schedule of polling districts and polling places as listed in Appendix B;</b></p> <p>b) <b>Authorise the Corporate Policy and Governance Manager to make necessary amendments to the register of electors; and</b></p> <p>c) <b>Delegate authority to the (Acting) Returning Officer to approve alternative polling places in the event any polling place becomes unavailable or unsuitable.</b></p>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	<p>The review has been undertaken in accordance with the published guidance from the Electoral Commission and section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.</p> <p>An initial consultation took place between Tuesday 25 July 2023 and Sunday 17 September 2023 and a final consultation took place between Tuesday 17 October 2023 and Wednesday 22 November 2023. Both consultation responses are included in Appendix A.</p> <p>For both consultations, Elected Members, County Councillor's, MP's, Parish and Town Councils, Polling Station Premises, Local Political Parties, Community Groups, local disability groups and local residents were invited to comment.</p>			
<b>Report Author</b>	Rebecca Poole, Democracy & Information Governance Officer Email: <a href="mailto:Rebecca.poole@stroud.gov.uk">Rebecca.poole@stroud.gov.uk</a>			
<b>Options</b>	<p>The polling district and polling place review is a statutory obligation on local authorities. The options are as follows:</p> <p>Option 1 – Not to approve the changes;</p> <p>Option 2 – Council to amend any the proposals made; or</p> <p>Option 3 – Adopt the proposed changes. This is the recommended option to ensure that the polling district boundaries are cohesive and coterminous with the changes from the Community Governance Review and to ensure that all electors have reasonable and suitable facilities for voting.</p>			
<b>Background Papers</b>	<a href="#">Community Governance Review Final Recommendations (Item 12)</a> <a href="#">Interim Polling District Review Consultation Document</a> <a href="#">Statutory Polling District Review Consultation Document</a>			
<b>Appendices</b>	<p>Appendix A – Polling District Review Consultation Responses</p> <p>Appendix B – Schedule of Polling Station Places</p> <p>Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p>Appendix D – Map of Great Oldbury Parish</p>			
<b>Implications (further details at end of report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

## 1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

1.1 The Review was undertaken as required under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and the Electoral Administration Act 2013. Under current legislation, Local Authorities are required to review their polling districts and polling places for UK parliamentary constituencies at least once every five years. We are legally required to carry out a review between the 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

1.2 The boundaries for the parliamentary constituencies, county divisions, district ward and parish boundaries are not considered by this review.

1.3 The Acting Returning Officer (ARO) for each constituency which is wholly or partly within its local authority area is required to comment on the existing and proposed arrangements. The North Cotswold and South Cotswold ARO responded to the review, their comments can be found in Appendix A.

### 1.4 Key Definitions

1.4.1 **Polling District** – A geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary Constituency. All electors within the polling district will attend the same voting place (unless a postal vote is in place).

1.4.2 **Polling Place** – The building or area in which a polling station will be provided by the Acting Returning Officer within the polling district (unless special circumstances mean this is not possible) e.g. a village hall.

1.4.3 **Polling Station** - The room or area within the polling place where the process of voting takes place during an election e.g. a room in a village hall.

1.5 The Acting Returning Officer, under the Elections Act 2022, is required to take reasonable steps to ensure accessibility is considered when reviewing polling stations and where necessary, implement processes and have due regard for accessibility to ensure electors are not disenfranchised. Consultation was carried out on the designation of polling districts, polling places and polling stations throughout the Stroud District, in particular to ensure that the stations were accessible to all, including people with accessibility requirements.

1.6 The Council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and designate a polling place for each polling district. The legislative statutes also require:

1.6.1 Each parish is to be its own separate polling district, unless special circumstances apply;

1.6.2 The Council must designate a polling place for each polling district unless the situation of a polling station does not materially affect or impact the convenience of electors;

1.6.3 The polling place must be an area in the district unless special circumstances apply;

1.6.4 The polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station;

1.6.5 Seek to ensure that all electors in the local authority have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable;

1.6.6 Seek to ensure, as far as is reasonable, every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled.

- 1.7 An initial consultation was carried out between Tuesday 25 July 2023 and Sunday 17 September 2023 to ensure the required amendments resulting from the Community Governance Review (CGR) were consulted upon and importantly, appropriate voting facilities are put in place for the new Parish of Great Oldbury.
- 1.8 A further consultation was carried out between Tuesday 17 October and Wednesday 22 November 2023 to review the arrangements of the whole district.
- 1.9 All submissions received from both consultations were reviewed and considered against the legislative guidance.

## 2. PROPOSED AMEMENDMENTS TO THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 Appendix A to the report details the responses received from both consultations.

### 2.2 Berkeley (BVB)

2.2.1 **No change to arrangements:** A consultation response was received regarding the disabled parking and access for Berkeley Town Hall polling station and Canon Park was suggested as an alternative venue. We have investigated the parking arrangements for this station and whilst there is no designated accessible parking bay immediately outside of the polling station, there is accessible on street parking opposite the venue. Additionally, the access to the polling station is via a gradual slope and feedback received from previous elections has not indicated that there are any concerns regarding accessibility of the venue. Furthermore, Berkeley Town Hall is in a more central location to the Polling District compared to Canon Park as the alternative venue referenced in the submission. It is therefore recommended for the polling place to remain as Berkeley Town Hall.

2.2.2 **Creation of a double polling station:** It is proposed that Berkeley Town Hall becomes a double station as two polling districts vote at this polling station (BVB – Berkeley and BVE – Hamfallow Div 1) and there is capacity in the main hall to facilitate this. This change is required because the electorate (2,251) now exceeds the 2,250 electorate requirement to remain as a single station.

### 2.3 Cainscross (Ebley Ward) - CD

2.3.1 **New polling station:** It is proposed that the polling station be changed from Ebley Chapel to Pavilion in the Park. Comments have previously been received from polling station staff and voters on the lack of accessibility of Ebley Chapel and the Pavilion in the Park was subsequently used at the 2021 elections. The Pavilion has good disabled access and positive feedback was received following the 2021 elections. The Pavilion in the Park have confirmed that the venue is available to be used as the polling station for this polling district.

### 2.4 Cam East (Div 2) - CEB

2.4.1 **New polling station:** It is proposed that the polling station be changed from Cam Parish Council Offices to GL11 Community Hub. Feedback received from previous elections indicated that access to the Parish Council Offices was difficult and the space provided for a polling station was too small. Cam Parish Council have agreed that the venue may no longer be suitable due to the increased development in the area and the size of the electorate. The GL11 Community Hub was used in the 2021 elections as more space was needed for social distancing requirements. The GL11 Community Hub is well located within the polling district, has good disabled access and is a suitable size for the number of electors voting at the station. GL11 Community Hub have confirmed that the venue is available to be used as the polling station for this polling district.

## 2.5 Chalford (Hill Ward) – CHC

2.5.1 **New polling station:** It is proposed that the polling station be changed from Chalford Methodist Church to France Lynch Church Rooms. We were made aware at the 2021 election that the Methodist Church would be closing ahead of the May 2024 elections and therefore an alternative venue would be required. Chalford Sports and Social Club was proposed during the first consultation, however feedback suggested that the France Lynch Church Rooms would be a more suitable and centralised location for the electorate of this polling district. A visit to the France Lynch Church Rooms was carried out and it was found that recent works to improve groundwork access, including a ramp for the polling station entrance had been completed. The location of the venue and improved access make it a suitable polling place for Chalford (Hill Ward).

## 2.6 Dursley (Central Ward) – DA

2.6.1 **Creation of a double polling station:** It is proposed that Dursley Methodist Church becomes a double station and subsequently a larger room in the Church will be used to accommodate this. The Gabriel Hale Room has been used in the past, however due to the larger electorate, use of the Main Hall will be requested. This change is required because the electorate (2,470) now exceeds the 2,250 electorate requirement to remain as a single station.

2.6.2 **No change to arrangements:** A consultation response was received regarding the parking relating to the Dursley Methodist Church as a result of the old bank car park which was previously used now being privatised. We have investigated the parking arrangements for this station and whilst there is limited parking directly outside of the venue, there are other parking facilities within walking distance from the station including in Long Street, the Pulse, Sainsburys and Parsonage Street car parks and some on street parking. We have also explored other possible venues within the vicinity including the Chantry Centre and Dursley Tabernacle, whilst both venues would be suitable, the parking arrangements were just as limited. Furthermore, the entrance to both venues from the available parking is via sloped access whereas Dursley Methodist Church has a level access. It is therefore recommended that the polling station remains as Dursley Methodist Church.

## 2.7 Longney – HG

2.7.1 **New polling station:** Submissions received from Longney Parish Council and the polling premises (St Laurence Church) used as a polling station since 2019, advised that the Methodist Chapel which we previously used prior to 2019 was no longer available and instead, the Church or primary school would need to be explored as an alternative venue. St Laurence Church has been successfully used as a polling station since 2019 which included the UK General Parliamentary Election in 2019 and Local Elections in May 2021, and it is therefore proposed that this polling station is formally appointed. The electorate are already familiar with this venue and no comments or concerns have been received regarding the venue.

## 2.8 Standish – HI

2.8.1 **Amendment to polling district boundary:** As a result of the CGR, a new Parish Council for Great Oldbury has been established, this required an amendment to the parish boundary for Standish and therefore a subsequent amendment to the HI polling district is required to ensure these boundaries are coterminous.

## 2.10 Minchinhampton Brimscombe Ward - MBB

**2.10.1 New polling station proposed:** It is proposed that the polling station be changed from Brimscombe Methodist Church to the Holy Trinity Church. We were made aware at the 2021 election that the Methodist Church would be closing ahead of the May 2024 elections and therefore an alternative venue would be needed. We extensively explored venue options within this polling district, however due to its geographical size and locality there were limited options available. Both the Primary School and Burleigh Court were contacted on several occasions, however we were unable to engage with them and they did not respond to our request to explore their venues as polling stations. We were able to visit the Holy Trinity Church and believe that it is a suitable polling venue, we therefore propose that the room on the upper level of the church is used as a polling station as there is better disabled access. We are proposing the upper level of the church as the lower level, whilst the room is larger is down a steep hill decline, located around the back of the church and has no ramped access. The upper level however is flat from the main gate entrance from the road and is much more appropriate in terms of accessibility for disabled electors.

## 2.11 Minchinhampton (Scar Hill) – MEE

**2.11.1 New polling station proposed:** The polling station for this polling district has been changed to 'Box Village Hall' to correct a previous anomaly following a change to the boundary.

## 2.12 Eastington – SE

**2.12.1 Amendment to polling district boundary:** As a result of the CGR, a new Parish Council for Great Oldbury has been established, this required an amendment to the parish boundary of Eastington and a subsequent amendment to the SE polling district is required to ensure these boundaries are coterminous.

## 2.13 Great Oldbury – SF

**2.13.1 New polling district and polling station:** As a result of the CGR, a new Parish Council for Great Oldbury has been established, this has required an amendment to the boundaries of Eastington, Stonehouse and Standish and the subsequent creation of a new polling district named Great Oldbury to ensure the boundaries are coterminous.

**2.13.2** New polling districts also require a polling district reference to be allocated. It is proposed that the polling district reference of SF is used to follow the polling district referencing sequence used throughout the district.

**2.13.3** It is proposed that Great Oldbury Primary School is allocated as the polling station for Great Oldbury as an interim polling station whilst the community building is in development as it is currently the only suitable building within the polling district. Once the community building is complete the polling arrangements for this polling district will be reviewed to identify which venue is the most suitable. The Primary School are in agreement with the venue being used as an interim measure as a result of there being no other appropriate venues or buildings that could be used as a polling station at this current time. Additional equipment and signage will be put in place to ensure the safeguarding of the children at the school and that voting is not impeded.

## 2.14 Whitminster – SG

**2.14.1 Change to polling district reference:** It is recommended that the SF reference previously allocated for Whitminster is used for the new Great Oldbury Polling District. We therefore recommend that the polling district reference for Whitminster is amended to SG because it is the next sequential reference.

## 2.15 Stonehouse (North Ward, Central Ward & South Ward) - STA, STB & STC

**2.15.1 Change of polling district boundaries:** As a result of the CGR a new Parish Council for Great Oldbury has been established, this has required an amendment to the parish boundary of Stonehouse, Central Ward, North Ward and South Ward and a subsequent amendment to the polling districts STA, STB, and STB is required to ensure these boundaries are coterminous. This is listed as appendix D to the report.

**2.15.2 New polling station in STC:** It is proposed that the polling station be changed from Bethel Church to Stonehouse Community Centre. Bethel Church has been successfully used for a number of town council by-elections and the May 2021 elections as prior to the boundary changes, the venue fell within the allocated polling district. With the boundary amendment between Stonehouse (Central Ward, STB) and Stonehouse (South Ward, STC), it is proposed that the polling station for Stonehouse (South Ward) be returned to Stonehouse Community Centre to meet guidance and statue of having a polling station located within the polling station as this polling venue is now located in the amended boundary. We have visited the venue and the disabled access and parking is good for the size of the electorate which would vote at this polling station. We have received concerns regarding both Bethel Church and Stonehouse Community Centre however we believe that concerns can be adequately managed at Stonehouse Community Centre and will look at the use the main hall instead of the lounge which is a larger room capacity and better access and room flow for the electors.

**2.15.3 Change of polling district titles:** The CGR Working Group recommended to change the names of the polling districts in Stonehouse to remove the word 'division' and instead name the polling districts after the Ward. It is therefore recommended to change Stonehouse Div 2 to Stonehouse (North Ward) with a new polling district reference of STA, Stonehouse Div 1 to Stonehouse (Central Ward) with a new polling district reference of STB and Stonehouse Div 3 to Stonehouse (South Ward) with a new polling district reference of STC.

## 2.16 Stonehouse (Ryeford Ward) – STD

**2.16.1 Abolishment of Ryeford Ward polling district:** As a result of the amendments to the warding arrangements approved at the CGR, Ryeford Ward has been abolished and therefore the Ryeford Ward polling district is no longer required as it has been absorbed into Stonehouse (South Ward), excluding a small rectangle of land to the North East of the polling district which has been absorbed into Stonehouse (Central Ward). Subsequent amendments as mentioned above are required to both the STB and STC polling districts to reflect the boundary change from the CGR.

## 3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The review of polling districts and polling stations is a legislative requirement of the Acting Returning Officer to ensure that the electorate of the Stroud District have reasonable and suitable facilities for voting.
- 3.2 The review of polling districts and places must be conducted and completed by the 30 January 2025 as outlined in statutory legislation before the next scheduled UK General Parliamentary Election.
- 3.3 The review took into consideration the requirements and guidance listed within both the legislation and guidance from the Electoral Commission. This includes guidance on the accessibility of the polling station and practical considerations on the useability and location of the polling place.

- 3.4 If the recommendations are approved, the changes will take effect from the February 2024 when the register will be republished and any changes to boundaries and polling stations will be in force for elections on Thursday 2 May 2024.

## **4. IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Financial Implications**

The use of additional polling stations, or the creation of double polling stations does create additional cost. These costs are through the direct cost of the stations themselves as well as additional staffing. The full cost of running the 2024 elections will be included in the budget for consideration by Council in February 2024.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer.

Email: [andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk)

### **4.2 Legal Implications**

Any changes to the polling districts, polling places and polling stations must be made in accordance with the provisions of the Representation of People Act 1983 (as amended), the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and the Equalities Act 2010.

The Council must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. The Council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272262 Email: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto: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 due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

### **4.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

This page is intentionally left blank



**STATUTORY POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW RESPONSES**

**Initial Consultation responses**

Reference	Connection to the Polling District	Polling District(s) commented on	Submission Comments	Any other comments
IPDR/001	Resident / District Councillor	CHC	<p>Chalford Hill is a large ward requiring multiple polling stations. A chunk of the ward used to vote in a very convenient centrally located church hall, which has now been sold with no news on whether or when it might continue as a public hall so an alternative has been suggested. The sports and social club is a good venue with parking, I assume it meets accessibility criteria due to its function, but is at the edge of the village so less than ideal for people to walk to.</p> <p>France Lynch church rooms seems like a suitable slightly more in-village location, albeit without any separate parking, has this been discounted for any reason?</p> <p>We need to keep a watching brief on more central venues such as the former Methodist hall and emerging Old Neighbourhood hub if the community buyout comes to fruition to make it as easy as possible for people to vote. Thankyou</p>	None
IPDR/002	Polling Station Premises / Local Community Group / Church	STA	Alternative polling stations - The Community Centre in Regent Street, Stonehouse.	None
IPDR/003	District Councillor	SG	<p>The polling station for Whitminster is Whitminster Village Hall. It has a separate room for use as a polling station, with adequate access, including disabled, good parking provision, heating arrangements and kitchen facilities.</p> <p>The same applies to the four other polling stations in Severn Ward, which is the Ward I represent on SDC, namely Eastington, Frampton-on-Severn, Arlingham and Fretherne with Saul Great Oldbury is an unknown quantity at present, as it is not yet complete.</p>	None

IPDR/004	Parish Councillor / District Councillor	HI / SE / SF	All current recommendations seem reasonable to me.	None
IPDR/005	Local Community Group / Church	STA	<p>The Polling Station for STA1 (North Stonehouse) had been provided by the Morley Hall (Storehouse Methodist Church) for many years. All elections have run smoothly, especially so when social distancing was required to minimise transmission of infection. Election officers have complemented us on the suitability of the premises and helpful friendly support provided.</p> <p>The advantages of the Morley Hall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location - central to the voting area and within easy walking distance for voters.</li> <li>• Accessibility - disabled car parking, ground floor with no steps, fully accessible toilet facilities.</li> <li>• Space - large area to enable queuing indoors if required.</li> <li>• Facilities - kitchen with microwave and beverage making facilities, equipped to a high standard. New system to heat and cool to ensure comfortable environment. Buildings maintained to a good standard. Risk assessments and action plans in place.</li> <li>• Eco friendly - air source pump heating and cooling system. Eco church silver accreditation. Environmentally friendly products used (such as cleaning materials).</li> <li>• Support - 24/7 telephone support to resolve any property issues.</li> </ul> <p>We believe the Polling Station role is an important part of our community service.</p>	We have enjoyed a long and positive relationship with the SDC Electoral Services for the management of the Morley Hall as a polling station and look forward to this continuing in to the future.
IPDR/006	Polling Station Premises	SG	Suitability of location of current polling station - Central to the area of polling - good parking and in walking distance for a large number of voters.	None
IPDR/007	Parish Council	CHC	<p>Chalford Sports and Social Club is a good venue as an alternative to the former Methodist Hall from an accessibility perspective and with the benefit of a car park. However, this venue is located on the uphill outer edge of the village. In an ideal scenario we would recommend a more central location which is within walking distance for more people.</p> <p>France Lynch Church Rooms are now available again following building works</p>	None

			<p>to improve accessibility. Although limited parking, has this been considered as an option? It is a well used venue, so may not be appropriate to displace a regular Thursday activity schedule should it be booked. However it may be worth consideration.</p> <p>The new owners of the Methodist Hall have suggested continued community use of the hall, but have not yet reopened it; they should be contacted to establish the potential future use as a polling station/target availability dates.</p>	
IPDR/008	District Councillor / County Councillor	MBB	The choice of alternative venue for the Brimscombe ward of Minchinhampton parish seems very sensible, thank you.	None
IPDR/009	Parish Council	MBB	Please note that an ongoing staffing crisis at Minchinhampton Parish Council leaves it unable to respond/deal with things such as the below.	
IPDR/010	Parish Council	STA / STC	<p>Council believes that some of the information in your documents about current polling stations is incorrect. It is recommended that the three ward areas be allocated the following polling station locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North ward - St Josephs</li> <li>• Central ward - Douglas Morley Hall</li> </ul> <p>South ward - Stonehouse Community Centre</p>	None
<b>Second Consultation responses</b>				
SPDR/001	Local Community Group / Polling Station Premises	RWRB	Randwick Village Hall is positioned at the centre of the village of Randwick. There is adequate parking and restricted mobility access is good with a ramp for wheelchair users. The hall is always warm and has adequate lighting, seating and toilet facilities. The hall has been used as a polling station in the past and remains suitable and available subject to booking in advance.	None
SPDR/002	Polling Station Premises / Resident	AWB	<p>Woodchester Village Hall is fully accessible for anyone with mobility issues and needs. The premises are ideally situated within the community and has its own parking area.</p> <p>The premises offer pleasant surroundings for voters and officials alike.</p>	None
SPDR/003	Polling Station Premises / Resident	HG	<p>We use the village church - St Laurence - which is only about 400yds from our home and is very convenient for us.</p> <p>This is the only feasible building that could be used by the community for elections. The primary school across the road has no space to accommodate a</p>	None

			<p>polling station during school hours, and the Methodist chapel that was used previously has now closed and is a private residence.</p> <p>The church is accessible to wheelchair users, with a small ramp at the main entrance. There is a large car park across the road which is shared with the school. Other than at drop off and pick up times there is always space. During these times on road parking is available.</p> <p>The church is currently undergoing a reordering project, removing half the pews and installing an inside toilet which will improve the facilities to both electors and polling officers.</p>	
SPDR/004	Polling Station Premises	BC	Oakridge Village hall has disabled access and parking and is suitable for a polling station.	None
SPDR/005	Polling Station Premises / Fretherne, Saul & Framilode Village Hall & Playing Field	SD	The village hall is in the centre of Saul village. It has a large flat car park next to the hall. There are no steps into the village hall and it has double doors for entry, making it suitable for disabled voters.	None
SPDR/006	Polling Station Premises	TSD	<p>As far as I'm aware Leonard Stanley Village Hall has been used as a polling station for many years and we are very happy for this to continue.</p> <p>There is a large car park and disabled access from the front and side of the building (the latter being the entrance/exit from the kitchen with a large sloping access).</p>	None
SPDR/007	Polling Station Premises	BB	Eastcombe Village Hall has been used as a polling station for many years. It has plenty of parking with automatic lighting on entry and departure after dark, disabled access via a ramp, disabled toilet / baby changing facilities, 2 men's and 2 ladies toilets, kitchen with kettles, crockery and hot water. It is well maintained and very popular for dancing and exercise classes due to a wooden sprung floor.	None
SPDR/008	Polling Station Premises / Parish/Town Councillor	CUA	<p>Coaley Village Hall has been the local voting station for at least 40 years. The only other potential venues would be the pub (Old Fox), the school or the church. None of these has the facilities needed.</p> <p>The village hall is in the centre of the village and has adequate parking facilities. There is disabled access and disabled toilets.</p>	None

SPDR/009	District Councillor / Parish/Town Councillor / Polling Station Premises / Whitminster Village Hall and Playing Field Charity	SG	The Lounge room at Whitminster Village Hall has been used since the hall was refurbished and extended in 2007 as a polling station. It has disabled facilities, including access, adequate parking, kitchen facilities, gas-fired central heating, and is conveniently placed for residents to use.	None
SPDR/0010	Polling Station Premises / The Coopers Edge Trust	PUH / PUI	The Edge Community Centre Coopers Edge GL3 4DY  This is a Community centre all on one level so has disabled access throughout, has separate rooms for voting as well as direct access. Toilets & parking on site as well as being in the centre of the community of coopers edge.  Under the Upton St Leonards ward & Painswick Edge (I think).	None
SPDR/0011	Polling Station Premises / Stinchcombe Village Hall Management Committee	WUEB	The current Polling Station at Stinchcombe Village Hall is in an ideal central location to the Village. The Committee Room used has it's own entrance with ramp if required, toilet and kitchen facilities Heating can be preset and controlled as required. There is a large Car Park on site.	None
SPDR/0012	Parish/Town Clerk	CEB	Cam Parish Council Offices  Disabled access on one level with disabled toilet facilities  Availability on required day to be prioritised, at required times	None
SPDR/0013	Polling Station Premises / Edge Village Hall	PUC	We are very happy that Edge Village Hall remains the polling station for our district. There is one parking space available for disabled voters, otherwise there is a short walk down the farm access road from Edge Lane by the Village Green.	None

	Management Secretary			
SPDR/0014	Parish / Town Clerk	CHC	We are happy to support the use of the France Lynch Church Rooms as the polling station for Hill Ward.	None
SPDR/0015	Morley Hall Community Space / Polling Station Premises / Resident	STA / STAA	<p>The Douglas Morley Hall has been used as a polling station for many years. Key advantages include:</p> <p>It is a local community space well known by the residents of the ward. They know where they are going to to vote.</p> <p>Full access including disabled facilities such as toilets. No stairs or steps. Modern heating system and well-equipped kitchen for use by election staff. Plenty of space, including for queuing indoors if required.</p> <p>Premises telephone support provided throughout period of voting and for prep/closing down.</p> <p>Positive comments about premises from election officers.</p>	None
SPDR/0016	Polling Station Premises	CHC	Perfectly happy with France Lynch church rooms being used as a polling station. Better location than the sports and social club.	None
SPDR/0017	Resident	BVB	I think the Pavilion in Berkeley would be a good place to hold any kind of elections etc. There is parking available for disabled and older people etc. The building is also easily accessible. Currently the Town Hall is used in Salter Street and parking is extremely difficult at best and space on the ground floor is limited to one room with limited capacity.	None
SPDR/0018	Berkeley & Surrounding Area Community Support Group / Resident	BVB / BVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your document Polling District and Polling Place Review 2023 refers to disabled parking, when accessible parking is more appropriate</li> <li>2. Iro Berkeley, it claims "There is disabled parking opposite the venue". This is inaccurate and misleading. The entrance to Berkeley Town Hall is on Salter St, the only public accessible parking bay is about 50m away outside the Berkeley Bakery, the furthest away address on Market Place.</li> <li>3. It's on the street parking that is opposite the venue, and this is likely to change if the advice from GCC Highways to remove it is followed, (resolution of issues with the turning circle from Marybrook St into Salter St)</li> <li>4. An alternative/additional venue could be at Canon Park, which has been used before.</li> </ol>	None

SPDR/0019	Polling Station Premises	CEA	I have not had to vote since moving to my new address, but the current location of the polling station at Cam Cricket Pavilion seems suitable in terms of location and accessibility	None
SPDR/0020	Parish / Town Councillor / Resident	BVB	I'm happy with Berkeley Town Hall as the polling station. It is accessible for disabled voters & centrally located in the town.	None
SPDR/0021	Parish / Town Councillor	AWB	<p>Woodchester Parish Council agrees with the recommendation of Stroud District Council that Woodchester Village Hall should continue to be used as a polling station for the following reasons:</p> <p>A limited number of parking spaces are available in front of the building.</p> <p>The village hall is accessed by a gently sloping permanent ramp allowing easy access for people who are unable to use steps (wheelchair users and other people with limited mobility).</p> <p>Both sets of entrance doors can be opened to allow space for access to a wheelchair or other mobility aid.</p> <p>There are no steps or ledges inside the building and all floors are level.</p> <p>Voting booths are situated within the main hall where there is plenty of space to move around using a wheelchair or other mobility aid.</p> <p>There is a fully accessible toilet with hand washing facilities inside the hall.</p> <p>Lighting is good which is beneficial to people with visual impairment.</p>	None
SPDR/0022	Paganhill Community Group	STFA	The Maypole hall has been used as our local polling station for the last couple of elections. It is generally well run and has some parking and disability access. At the last voting members of each party were on hand as we walked in. It was confusing to be expected to hand in details to people whose party you were voting for. Usually this has been private. A number of people were also confused by this and not prepared.	None

SPDR/0023	Village Hall Committee Member	HE	<p>Haresfield Village hall has been used successfully to host polling stations for many years. The hall is situated in the centre of the village where the majority of homes are located and is easily accessed with parking immediately outside as well as a footpath throughout the village providing stable and secure walking access. The village has no public transport so villagers would need to arrange their own private car/transport to access locations outside the village to vote. In the last two years, the hall has had an active, highly motivated fund-raising committee who have made significant improvements to the flooring, new wall cladding (and insulation), windows, central heating and an upgraded kitchen. This provides a warm, welcoming environment for both voters and officials - the latter of whom may also use the kettle and fridge for refreshments and even the oven for hot food if needed.</p> <p>There is a ramp and grab rail available to improve access for voters with mobility issues.</p> <p>The only other public buildings are the local pub - accessed by many steps and will incur a cost, or the village primary school, which presumably would have to close for the day to enable a polling station.</p>	<p>As the polling station has run successfully from the village hall for as long as any of the villagers can recall, there is a sense that hosting it anywhere else, but particularly outside the village, would result in protests (albeit gentle) and a potentially reduced turn out to vote.</p>
SPDR/0024	Polling Station Premises	HB	<p>My response to the questions asked in your recent email regarding the above review...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How convenient (or not) the location is in relation to where you live; VERY CONVENIENT</li> <li>• If the parking is adequate; MORE THAN ADEQUATE</li> <li>• If there is any accessibility issues for disabled persons and/or persons who use a wheelchair; NO</li> <li>• How suitable overall the polling place or station is for voting. VERY SUITABLE</li> </ul>	None
SPDR/0025	Parish / Town Clerk	KD	<p>Kingswood Parish Council reviewed the consultation details and note there are no changes to the Polling Station and have no further comments to make.</p>	None
SPDR/0026	District Councillor	WUEA / WUEB / WUEC / WUED	<p>From my own perspective, I hear no problems with the Wotton, North Nibley and Stinchcombe arrangements.</p>	None
SPDR/0027	Parish / Town Clerk	HG	<p>I thought I should let you know that Longney and Epney parish can no longer use the chapel which they have used previously, as this is now in private ownership. I am sure it would be possible to use either the school or church.</p>	None



SPDR/0028	Resident / Presiding Officer	SB / SE / SF/ SG	<p>I'd like to give positive feedback on the stations with which I'm most familiar. All are easy to layout and supervise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastington Village Hall - parking adequate: location, access, wheelchair access, staff facilities (Kitchen, toilets) all very good</li> <li>• Whitminster Village Hall - very good on all points, very central</li> <li>• Slimbridge Village Hall - parking and wheelchair access both "adequate", staff facilities very good, location central</li> <li>• Frampton Village Hall - parking not easy and not very central but all other points very good</li> </ul> <p>There is an alternative location in Frampton, Cadbury Hall near the school. It is just as accessible on foot as the village hall, given that Frampton is so linear that no location is truly central. It would benefit from parent-and-child football and has very good parking.</p>	None
SPDR/0029	Polling Station Premises / Resident	TSB / TSC	<p>King's Stanley village hall has been used as the district's local polling station for many years and has excellent relevant facilities:</p> <p>It has plenty of parking, is on level ground, on the bus route, at the centre of the village and has excellent disabled access. Toilets are on the ground floor.</p>	None
SPDR/0030	Parish / Town Clerk	STA / STAA / STB / STC	<p>Stonehouse Town Council SUPPORT the proposed polling stations for Stonehouse North, Central and South wards.</p>	None
SPDR/0031	Parish / Town Clerk	RA / RB / RC / RD / RE / RF / RG / TA	<p>Rodborough Parish Council are happy that no changes are required in Rodborough</p>	None
SPDR/0032	Parish / Town Clerk	DA	<p>Dursley Town Council considered the review at our Planning Committee on 21st November. As well as being the Town Clerk, I have also been the Presiding Officer at the polling station located in the Methodist Church, Castle Street, Dursley and fully support this view:</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED to advise Stroud District Council that parking has been further reduced in the vicinity of the Methodist Church since the last election because of Lloyds Bank closing.</p> <p>The previously available bank carpark located adjacent to the Methodist Church is now in private ownership and is not accessible by the general public - barrier</p>	None

			<p>controlled.</p> <p>The Council would suggest that the Chantry Centre is considered as an alternative venue, with the Council's free carpark in Long Street being situated nearby.</p>	
SPDR/0033	District Councillor / resident	STC	<p>The parking facilities at Stonehouse Community Centre are often full and therefore it will be difficult for electors to find a space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stonehouse Community Centre has 2 entrances which can cause confusion.</li> <li>• There is limited internal space where Tellers could be seated on Polling Day.</li> <li>• Some residents who live next to the Community Centre are not able to vote at that station as this would not be they're allocated polling station, this has caused frustration and confusion in the past.</li> </ul>	None

Final list of polling stations following the Polling District and Polling Place Review

Polling District	Polling District Reference	Current Polling Station
Amberley	AWA	<b>Amberley Inn</b> , Culver Hill, Amberley, GL5 5AF
Woodchester	AWB	<b>Woodchester Village Hall</b> , Church Road, North Woodchester, GL5 5PQ
Bisley (Bisley Ward)	BA	<b>Bisley WI Village Hall</b> , Manor Street, Bisley, GL6 7BH
Bisley (Eastcombe Ward)	BB	<b>Eastcombe Village Hall</b> , Eastcombe, GL6 7DS
Bisley (Oakridge Ward)	BC	<b>Oakridge Village Hall</b> , Oakridge Lynch, Stroud, GL6 7NZ
Alkington	BVA	<b>Stone Cricket Club</b> , Swanley, Berkeley, Glos, GL13 9JL
Berkeley	BVB	<b>Berkeley Town Hall</b> , Salter Street, GL13 9DB (Double Station)
Ham and Stone (Ham Ward)	BVC	<b>Salutation Inn</b> , Ham, Berkeley, GL13 9HQ
Ham and Stone (Stone Ward)	BVD	<b>Stone Village Hall</b> , Lower Stone Lane, Stone, GL13 9LE
Hamfallow (Div 1)	BVE	<b>Berkeley Town Hall</b> , Salter Street, GL13 9DB (Double Station)
Hamfallow (Div 2)	BVF	<b>Sharpness Village Hall</b> , Oldminster Road, GL13 9NA (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Hinton, Sharpness	BVG	<b>Sharpness Village Hall</b> , Oldminster Road, GL13 9NA (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Slimbridge	BVH	<b>Slimbridge Village Hall</b> , St Johns Road, Slimbridge, GL2 7DF
Cainscross (Cainscross Ward)	CA	<b>St Matthews Church Hall</b> , Church Road, Cainscross, GL5 4LH
Cainscross (Cashes Green East Ward)	CB	<b>Cashes Green Community Centre</b> , Queens Drive, Cashes Green, GL5 4NB (Double Station)
Cainscross (Cashes Green West Ward)	CC	<b>Cashes Green Community Centre</b> , Queens Drive, Cashes Green, GL5 4NB (Double Station)
Cainscross (Ebley Ward)	CD	<b>Pavilion in the Park</b> , Victory Park, Cashes Green, GL5 4JE
Randwick (South West Ward)	CE	<b>Randwick Scout Group HQ</b> , Morehall, Cashes Green, GL5 4RY (Double Station)
Cam East (Div 1)	CEA	<b>Cam Cricket Pavilion</b> , Everlands, Upper Cam, GL11 5NL
Cam East (Div 2)	CEB	<b>GL11 Community Hub</b> , Fairmead, Cam Dursley, GL11 5JS
Chalford (Bussage Div 1)	CHA	<b>Bussage Village Hall</b> , Bussage, Stroud, GL6 8AT
Chalford (Bussage Div 2)	CHB	<b>The Parish Centre</b> , Chalford Parish Council, Gerald's Way, GL6 8FJ
Chalford (Hill Ward)	CHC	<b>France Lynch Church Rooms</b> , Lynch Road, Chalford Hill, Stroud, GL6 8LL
Chalford (Valley Ward)	CHD	<b>Chalford Village Hall</b> , London Road, Stroud, GL6 8HN (Double Station)
Thrupp (Bourne Ward)	CHE	<b>Chalford Village Hall</b> , London Road, Stroud, GL6 8HN (Double Station)

Coaley	CUA	<b>Coaley Village Hall</b> , Coaley, GL11 5EG
Nympsfield	CUB	<b>Nympsfield Village Hall</b> , Back Street, Nympsfield, GL10 3UB
Owlpen	CUC	<b>Uley Village Hall</b> , The Street, Uley, GL11 5SJ (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Uley	CUD	<b>Uley Village Hall</b> , The Street, Uley, GL11 5SJ (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Cam West (Div 1)	CWA	<b>Cam Youth Centre</b> , 19A Frederick Thomas Road, Cam, GL11 6LY
Cam West (Div 2)	CWB	<b>Arthur S Winterbotham Memorial Hall</b> , High Street, Cam, GL11 5LE
Dursley (Central Ward)	DA	<b>Dursley Methodist Church (Main Hall)</b> , Castle Street, GL11 4BS (Double Station)
Dursley (Highfields Ward)	DB	<b>Dursley C of E Primary Academy</b> , Highfields, Dursley, GL11 4NZ
Dursley (Kingshill Ward)	DC	<b>St Dominic's Church Hall</b> , Jubilee Road, Dursley, GL11 4GS
Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon	HA	<b>Brookthorpe Village Hall</b> , Stroud Road, Brookthorpe, GL4 0UJ
Elmore	HB	<b>Elmore Village Hall</b> , Elmore, GL2 3NT
Hardwicke	HC	<b>Hardwicke Village Hall</b> , Green Lane, GL2 4QA (Double Station)
Harescombe	HD	<b>Harescombe Village Hall</b> , Harescombe, GL4 0XD
Haresfield	HE	<b>Haresfield Village Hall</b> , Haresfield, GL10 3DZ
Hunts Grove	HF	<b>Hunts Grove Primary Academy</b> , Harrier Way, Hardwicke, Gloucester, GL2 4EP
Longney	HG	<b>Longney Church (St Laurence)</b> , Longney, GL2 3SL
Moreton Valence	HH	<b>St Stephen's Church</b> , Church Lane, GL2 7NB
Standish	HI	<b>St Nicholas Church</b> , Standish, GL10 3EU
Alderley	KA	<b>Hopkins Hall</b> , Jubilee Playing Field, Hillesley, GL12 7RF (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Hillesley and Tresham (Hillesley Ward)	KB	<b>Hopkins Hall</b> , Jubilee Playing Field, Hillesley, GL12 7RF (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Hillesley and Tresham (Tresham Ward)	KC	<b>The Haybarn</b> , Talbot Court Farm, GL12 7RW
Kingswood	KD	<b>Kingswood Village Hall</b> , Wickwar Road, Kingswood, GL12 7RF
Minchinhampton (Box Ward)	MAA	<b>Box Village Hall</b> , Box, Stroud, GL6 9HP (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Minchinhampton (Brimscombe Ward)	MBB	<b>Holy Trinity Church</b> , 4 Spinney Court, Walls Quarry, Brimscombe, Stroud, GL5 2PY
Minchinhampton (North Ward)	MCC	<b>Minchinhampton Scout Hut</b> , 16 Dr. Browns Road, Minchinhampton, GL6 9DG (Double Station)
Minchinhampton (South Ward)	MDD	<b>Minchinhampton Scout Hut</b> , 16 Dr. Browns Road, Minchinhampton, GL6 9DG (Double Station)

Minchinhampton – Scar Hill	MEE	<b>Box Village Hall</b> , Box, Stroud, GL6 9HP (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Horsley	NA	<b>Horsley Village Hall</b> , Horsley, Stroud, GL6 0PT
Nailsworth (Div 1)	NB	<b>Mortimer Room</b> , Old Market, Nailsworth, GL6 0DU (Double Station)
Nailsworth, Forest Green (Div 1)	NC	<b>Arkell Community Centre</b> , Nymphsfield Road, Forest Green, GL6 0ET
Nailsworth, Forest Green (Div 2)	ND	<b>Nailsworth Youth Centre</b> , Northfield Road, GL6 0LZ
Cranham	PUA	<b>Cranham Village Hall</b> , Cranham, GL4 8HP
Miserden	PUB	<b>Miserden Village Hall</b> , Miserden, GL6 7JA
Painswick (Edge Ward)	PUC	<b>Edge Village Hall</b> , The Green, Edge, GL6 6PQ
Painswick (Painswick Ward)	PUD	<b>Painswick Town Hall</b> , Victoria Square, Painswick, GL6 6QA
Painswick (Sheepscombe Ward)	PUE	<b>Sheepscombe Village Hall</b> , Sheepscombe, GL6 7RQ
Painswick (Slad Ward)	PUF	<b>Woolpack Inn</b> , Slad, Stroud, GL6 7QA
Pitchcombe	PUG	<b>Pitchcombe Village Hall</b> , Gloucester Road, Pitchcombe, GL6 6LP
Upton St Leonards (Div 1)	PUH	<b>Upton St Leonards Village Hall</b> , 10 Bondend Road, GL4 8AG
Upton St Leonards (Div 2)	PUI	<b>The Edge Community Centre</b> , Coopers Edge School, GL3 4DY
Randwick (South East Ward)	RWRA	<b>Randwick Scout Group HQ</b> , Morehall, Cashes Green, GL5 4RY (Double Station)
Randwick (Randwick Ward)	RWRB	<b>Randwick Village Hall</b> , Playing Field, Randwick, GL6 6JA
Whiteshill	RWRC	<b>Whiteshill and Ruscombe Village Hall</b> , The Plain, Whiteshill, GL6 6AB
Rodborough (North Ward Div 1)	RA	<b>Rodborough Endowed School</b> , Church Place, Walkley Hill, GL5 3TX (Double Station)
Rodborough (North Ward Div 2)	RB	<b>Stroud Rugby Club</b> , Dudbridge Hill, Stroud, GL5 3HS (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Rodborough (South Ward Div 1)	RC	<b>Gastrells Primary School</b> , Kingscourt Lane, Rodborough, GL5 3PS (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Rodborough (South Ward Div 2)	RD	<b>Rodborough Community Hall</b> , Butterow West, Rodborough, GL5 3TZ (Double Station)
Rodborough (West Ward Div 1)	RE	<b>Rodborough Endowed School</b> , Church Place, Walkley Hill, GL5 3TX (Double Station)
Rodborough (West Ward Div 2)	RF	<b>Stroud Rugby Club</b> , Dudbridge Hill, Stroud, GL5 3HS (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Rodborough (West Ward Div 3)	RG	<b>Gastrells Primary School</b> , Kingscourt Lane, Rodborough, GL5 3PS (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Arlingham	SA	<b>The Victory Hall</b> , High Street, Arlingham, GL2 7JN
Frampton-on-Severn	SB	<b>Frampton on Severn Village Hall</b> , The Street, Frampton on Severn, GL2 7ED
Fretherne-with-Saul (Fretherne Ward)	SC	<b>Saul Memorial Hall</b> , High Street, Saul, GL2 7LW (two polling districts vote at this single station)

Fretherne-with-Saul (Saul Ward)	SD	<b>Saul Memorial Hall</b> , High Street, Saul, GL2 7LW (two polling districts vote at this single station)
Eastington	SE	<b>Eastington Village Hall</b> , Alkerton Road, GL10 3AA
Great Oldbury	SF	<b>Great Oldbury Primary Academy</b> , Veterans Way, Great Oldbury, Stonehouse, GL10 3WH
Whitminster	SG	<b>Whitminster Village Hall</b> , School Lane, GL2 7NT
Stonehouse (North Ward)	STA	<b>St Joseph's Church Hall</b> , Oldends Lane, GL10 2DG (Double Station)
Stonehouse (Central Ward)	STB	<b>The Douglas Morley Hall</b> , Elm Road, Stonehouse, GL10 2NP
Stonehouse (South Ward)	STC	<b>Stonehouse Community Centre</b> , Laburnum Walk, Laburnum Mews, Stonehouse, GL10 2NS
Stroud Central (Div 1)	STCA	<b>St Laurence Church Hall</b> , Church Office, Stroud, GL5 1AP
Stroud Central (Div 2)	STCB	<b>Paganhill Maypole Hall</b> , Stratford Road, Stroud, GL5 4AN (Double Station)
Stroud Central (Div 3)	STCC	<b>The Christian Community Centre</b> , 73 Cainscross Road, Stroud, GL5 4HB
Stroud Farmhill and Paganhill	STFA	<b>Paganhill Maypole Hall</b> , Stratford Road, Stroud, GL5 4AN (Double Station)
Stroud Slade (Div 1)	STSA	<b>Stroud Valley Scouting Centre</b> , Chapel Street, Stroud, GL5 1DU
Stroud Slade (Div 2)	STSB	<b>The Cadet Centre</b> , Bisley Old Road, Stroud, GL5 1NL
Stroud Trinity	STTA	<b>Trinity Rooms</b> , Field Road, Stroud, GL5 2HZ
Stroud Uplands	STUA	<b>Grange View Sheltered Housing</b> , Folly Lane, Uplands, GL5 1GR
Stroud Valley (Div 1)	STVA	<b>All Saints Church</b> , All Saints Road, Stroud, GL5 1TU
Stroud Valley (Div 2)	STVB	<b>The Wesley Rooms</b> , St Albans Church, Parliament Street, GL5 1QH
Rodborough (Butterow Ward)	TA	<b>Rodborough Community Hall</b> , Butterow West, Rodborough, GL5 3TZ (Double Station)
Brimscombe & Thrupp (Div 1)	TB	<b>Brimscombe and Thrupp Social Centre</b> , London Road, Stroud, GL5 2QF (Double Station)
Brimscombe & Thrupp (Div 2)	TC	<b>Brimscombe and Thrupp Social Centre</b> , London Road, Stroud, GL5 2QF (Double Station)
Frocester	TSA	<b>The Frocester George</b> , Peter Street, GL10 3TQ
Kings Stanley (Div 1)	TSB	<b>Kings Stanley Village Hall</b> , Marling Close, Kings Stanley, GL10 3PN
Kings Stanley, Selsley (Div 2)	TSC	<b>Selsley Scout Hall</b> , Selsley, Stroud
Leonard Stanley	TSD	<b>Leonard Stanley Village Hall</b> , Marsh Road, Leonard Stanley, GL10 3NH
North Nibley	WUEA	<b>North Nibley Village Hall</b> , North Nibley, GL11 6DP
Stinchcombe	WUEB	<b>Stinchcombe Village Hall (The Committee Room)</b> , The Street, Stinchcombe, GL11 6AW
Wotton-under-Edge (Wotton-under-Edge Div 1)	WUEC	<b>The Chipping Clubroom</b> , The Chipping, Wotton-under-Edge, GL12 7AD (Double Station)
Wotton-under-Edge (Wotton-under-Edge Div 2)	WUED	<b>The British School</b> , Wortley Road, Wotton-under-Edge, GL12 7JU

## 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): Rebecca Poole	Telephone:01453 754382
	E-Mail: <a href="mailto:Rebecca.poole@stroud.gov.uk">Rebecca.poole@stroud.gov.uk</a>
Service: Corporate Policy & Governance	Date of Assessment: 21/11/2023

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

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023

Is this new or an existing one? New

### 3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

Local Authorities are required to review their polling districts and places every 5 years. The aim and objectives of the review are to ensure that the polling arrangements and polling district boundaries reflect effective local government arrangements, ensure each polling district (unless special circumstances apply) has an allocated polling station and place for residents to cast their vote in, that accessibility of polling stations have been given due regard and to ensure boundaries are aligned following any previous reviews that have taken place (in Stroud's case, the Community Governance Review (CGR) completed in 2023).

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

The review is governed by the statues that are listed and required under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 which require Acting Returning Officers whose constituency is wholly or partly in their electoral area they are responsible for to conduct a review every 5 years. The next statutory review must be undertaken between the 1 October 2023 and 1 January 2025.

There is a statutory requirement to undertake a consultation period to seek the review of residents of the district, community groups and any other person or body which appears to have an interest in the review.

Local authorities must comply with specific legislative requirements relating to the designation of polling districts and places which are listed out under the Representation of the People Act Section 18A. Additionally local authorities must have due regard and follow any guidance from the Electoral Commission in relation to the conducting of polling district and place reviews.

Additionally, there are the new requirements under the Elections Act 2022 which require (Acting) Returning Officers to consider the accessibility requirements for voters.

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

The review of polling district and places is intended to benefit registered electors of the district by ensuring that the polling district boundaries are coterminous following the CGR and that new suitable polling places are appointed for areas where a previous venue can no longer be used or is not suitable..

**6. What outcomes are expected?**

If the recommendations are accepted by Council there will be a number of changes to where electors cast their vote at subsequent elections. Electors will be informed of any changes when poll cards for the next elections are distributed. We also intend to send a Household Notification Letter to every household in the Stroud District in early 2024 to confirm voting arrangements and polling stations.

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

Desk based research was carried out, looking at how Polling District and Place Reviews are carried out by other local authorities. We looked at the style and tone used in their promotional material and the number of responses each consultation received, we also looked at their . consultation documents, fact sheets, website content and communications in detail. All guidance from the Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators was reviewed and we took on recommendations in relation to accessibility. We collect feedback from polling station staff after every election, comments from the May 2021 elections were also factored into the considerations of this review.

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

The (Acting) Returning Officer is required to undertake a consultation and seek representation from any other (Acting) Returning Officer whose constituencies are wholly or partly in their electoral areas, the residents of those constituencies and any group or individual who is identified as having a potential interest in the review. The (Acting) Returning Officer produced a consultation document as part of the review which outlined the proposals for the polling districts, places and stations along with any issues and considerations relating to those polling



stations.

The first consultation took place between Tuesday 25 July 2023 and Sunday 17 September 2023 and the second consultation took place between Tuesday 17 October and Wednesday 22 November 2023. Both consultations were published on the Councils website and consultations page, press releases and direct contact was made with community groups, disability groups, local political parties, polling station premises, MPs, Elected members and Parish/Town Councils to promote the consultation. Information was also included on the Member and Parish/Town Council Hub webpages and press releases and social media posts were published

**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)
<b>Age</b>	<p>Positive.</p> <p>Older voters/voters with a disability – these groups are more likely to have issues relating to mobility, sight and potential disabilities than younger voters, therefore the accessibility requirements of the polling stations are a fundamental consideration when considering any new polling station in terms of its access, location and parking. Additionally polling stations where possible should be situated in accessible and central locations (e.g. avoiding steep hills and narrow doorways) and ideally have either fitted ramp access or access to a ramp for polling day. We have a number of polling stations that we provide a ramp for to ensure access to the polling stations do not disenfranchise any elector.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>Positive.</p> <p>Local authorities have a duty to review the polling districts and places and ensure that they are accessible to all electors and in particular those who have a disability. They also have a requirement under the Elections Act 2022 to take ‘reasonable steps’ to improve the accessibility requirements within a polling station and place to ensure electors are not disenfranchised from voting. The requirement under this act puts responsibility on the local authority and (Acting) Returning Officer to ensure they put reasonable facilities, equipment and steps in place to ensure accessibility has been given due regard for voting.</p> <p>All new polling places and stations have been evaluated regarding accessibility using the Electoral Commissions checklist which include considerations such as level access within and entering/existing the premises, doorway width, parking facilities, suitable lighting within and outside of the premises, locality of the venue in terms of topography of the local area and surroundings and facilities such as chairs being available for seating area for any elector who may require to be seated within the premises. Additionally, each polling station is given at least one disabled polling booth, a device to aid with being able to cast their vote, large print ballot papers, pencil grips and magnifying glasses. All polling station staff will be provided with accessibility training as part of their duties to work at a polling station,</p> <p>As part of the consultation, we consulted with a range of disability and support groups to seek the views and feedback from them in terms of the accessibility arrangements for the polling station across the district.</p>

<p>Appendix C <b>Gender Re-assignment</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Religion – Belief</b></p>	<p>Positive. Under the requirements under the Elections Act relating to Voter Identification. Each polling station must provide a ‘private area’ for an identity check if an elector requests for their documentation to be checked in private. Additionally this private space can also be used for the purposes of removing religious head dresses, hijabs and burkas for the identity check. This identity heck can only be undertaken by a female polling station staff member, therefore gender balance polling station staff has already been considered for the May 2024 elections.</p>
<p><b>Sex</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)</b></p>	<p>Neutral. The Polling District Review and Place will have no specific impact.</p>
<p><b>Rural considerations:</b> ie Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;</p>	<p>Neutral. Stroud district is rural based as a district which means there are some remote areas of the district in which there is no access to services and transport compared to many urban towns and cities. There are different voting options available to electors which comprise of polling station, postal and proxy voting. All voting methods are promoted through our website, social media, Household Notification Letters, poll cards and annual canvass communications to ensure electors are aware of the different voting options available to them.  There are 5 primary schools within the district in which are used as polling stations due to limited or no other venues available to be used as a polling station within the allocated polling districts. All schools are able to remain open during polling day through experienced polling station staff, clear signage and usually use a main hall or side classroom where electors and students are kept completely separate. (Acting) Returning Officers are able to use any publicly funded building as a polling station.  Consideration is given on the locality of polling stations as part of the accessibility requirements and therefore polling places are identified and selected based on these considerations to ensure the venues are located either centrally where possible in the polling district or as close to as many amenities and public access routes as possible.</p>

**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.**

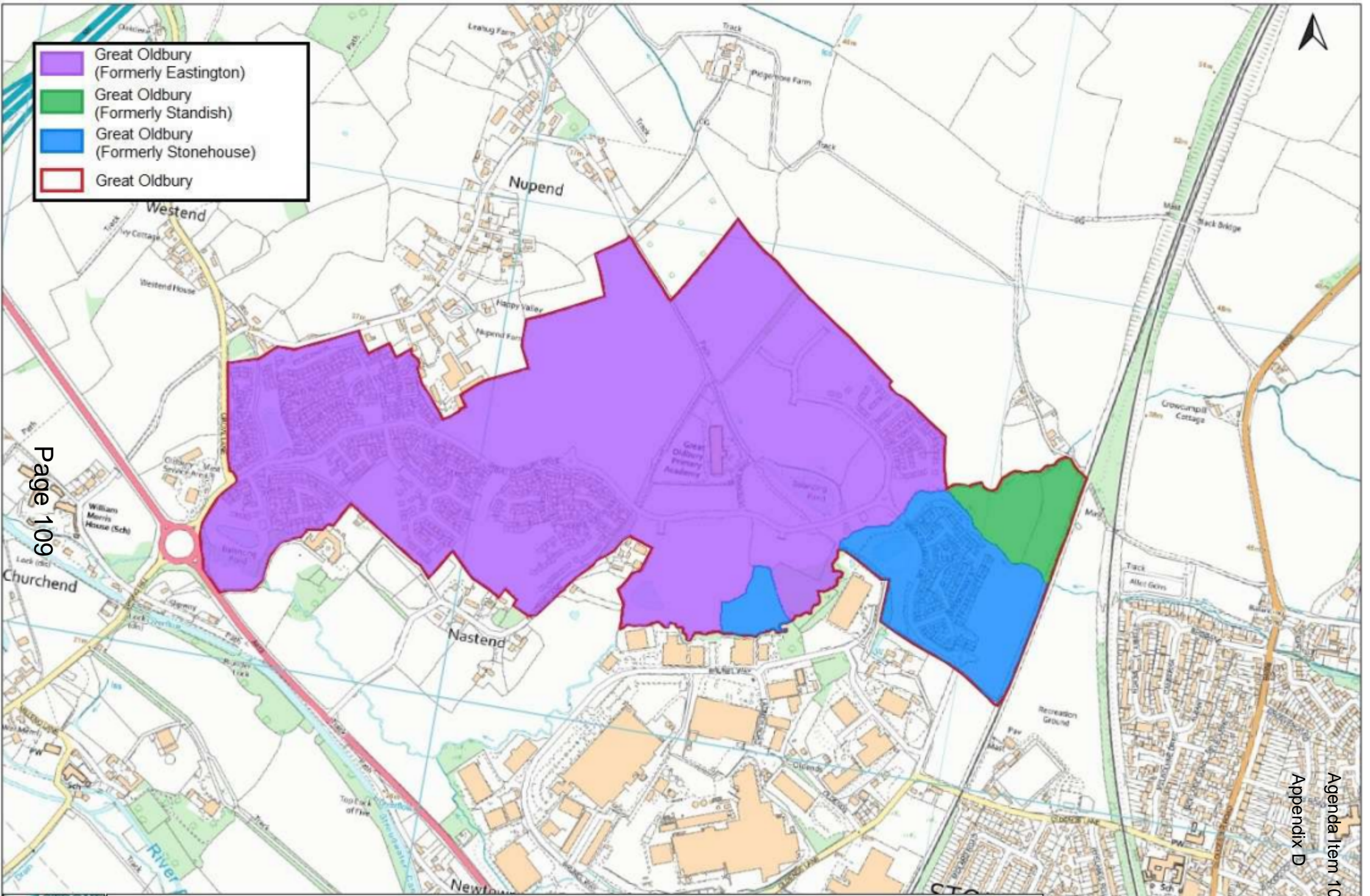
**We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment**

<b>Completed by: Rebecca Poole</b>	<b>Date: 23 November 2023</b>
<b>Role: Democracy &amp; Information Governance Officer</b>	
<b>Countersigned by Head of Service/Director: Hannah Emery, Corporate Policy &amp; Governance Manager</b>	<b>Date: 27 November 2023</b>
	

**Date for Review: Please forward an electronic copy to [policy@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:policy@stroud.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank

- Great Oldbury  
(Formerly Eastington)
- Great Oldbury  
(Formerly Standish)
- Great Oldbury  
(Formerly Stonehouse)
- Great Oldbury



This page is intentionally left blank

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Updates to the Constitution</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	This report brings forward proposed amendments to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Working Group.			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<p><b>Council RESOLVES to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>note the position regarding members attendance and agrees that the wording in paragraph 2.3 of this report is added to Article 2 of the Constitution;</b></li> <li>2. <b>agree to adopt the updated process for the allocation of seats on committees as set out in paragraph 3, with effect from May 2024;</b></li> <li>3. <b>agree that, with effect from May 2024 the number of seats on the Audit and Standards Committee shall increase by two, to a total of 11 members</b></li> <li>4. <b>agree at the Annual General Meeting in May 2024 Council are asked to agree that that Audit and Standards Committee should not be subject to the rules of political proportionality, noting that this will need to be the subject of a nem con vote to become effective.</b></li> </ol>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Constitution Working Group			
<b>Report Author</b>	Claire Hughes, Corporate Director (Monitoring Officer) Email: claire.hughes@stroud.gov.uk			
<b>Options</b>	Council can decide not to approve all or some of the recommendations			
<b>Background Papers</b>	Constitution			
<b>Appendices</b>	None			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	No	No

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Constitution is a live document which requires regular review and revision. As part of its ongoing review the Constitution Working Group (CWG) met on 21 September 2023 to consider proposed changes.
- 1.2 This report sets out the recommendations from the CWG to Council.

### 2. Member Attendance

- 2.1 The CWG received a report from the Monitoring Officer regarding the interpretation of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 which disqualifies Councillors if they fail to



attend a meeting for a continuous period of 6 months unless the authority has agreed to an extension of that period prior to its expiry.

- 2.2 After consideration of the report, the CWG noted that whilst it was difficult to be completely definitive, it would be beneficial for the Constitution to provide some information as to what constitutes attendance for the purposes of section 85.
- 2.3 The CWG therefore recommends that Article 2 (Members of Council) of the Constitution should be updated to include a new 2.7 as follows:

#### **Article 2.7 Attendance**

In accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 a member will automatically be disqualified from being a Councillor if they fail to attend a meeting of the authority for a continuous period of 6 months, unless the authority has agreed to an extension of that period prior to its expiry. The authority considers that the following constitutes attendance for this purpose:

- Attendance at Full Council
- Attendance at a Committee whether as a member of the committee or observer
- Attendance at any working group or task and finish group whether as a member of the committee or observer
- Attendance at member training events
- Attendance at any other events/meetings which the Monitoring Officer, after taken into account all the relevant circumstances, determines as constituting 'attendance' for the purposes of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972

### **3. Political Balance and Allocation of Committee Seats**

- 3.1 The Council must allocate seats on committees so as to give effect to the political balance rules unless there is a decision to the contrary with no member voting against (a nem con vote).
- 3.2 The allocation of seats shall conform to the principles of proportionality contained in sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (except in the case of the statutory Licensing Committee where there is an exemption to the rules). There is a duty to give effect to the following principles, as far as reasonably practicable, in the order shown:
  - a) Not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
  - b) A majority of the seats on a body are allocated to a group if it comprises a majority of the total membership of the authority;
  - c) Subject to (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the total of all seats on ordinary committees as is borne by the number of members of that group to the total membership of the authority; and
  - d) Subject to (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on a body allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the number of seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the total membership of the authority.
- 3.3 For political balance, a group is required to have at least two members in order to be formally constituted as a political group.



- 3.4 The political proportionality rules that apply in allocating seats on Committees etc. set out in Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 apply only to political groups.

Section 15(3) of the Act states as follows:

*“15(3) Where at any time the representation of different political groups on a body to which this section applies falls to be reviewed under this section by any relevant authority or committee of a relevant authority, it shall be the duty of that authority or committee, as soon as practicable after the review, to determine the allocation to the different political groups into which the members of the authority are divided of all the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by that authority or committee.”*

- 3.5 However, where the Council has members who are non-aligned, this section has words inserted/modified by regulation 16 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 to read as follows: *“15(3) Where at any time the representation of different political groups on a body to which this section applies falls to be reviewed under this section by any relevant authority or committee of a relevant authority, it shall be the duty of that authority or committee, as soon as practicable after the review to determine the allocation to each of those groups of such of the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by that authority or committee as bear to the total of all of those seats the same proportion as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.”*
- 3.6 Additionally, where there are non-aligned members, section 16(2A) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 has effect. The Regulations also insert the following:
- “Where appointments fall to be made to seats on a body to which section 15 applies otherwise than in accordance with a determination under that section, it shall be the duty of the authority or the committee, as the case may be, so to exercise their power to make appointments as to secure that the persons appointed to those seats are not members of any political group”*
- 3.7 The implications of these changes to paragraph 15(3) taken with section 16(2A) is that the Council must allocate seats to the political parties in accordance with the four principles set out above (a-d) but that if there are any seats left over, they must then make appointments to the non-aligned groups.
- 3.8 After considering the above the CWG agreed that seat allocations should take account of non-aligned members and that these should be factored into the process for the allocation of committee seats with effect from May 2024.

#### **4. Audit and Standards Committee**

- 4.1 Recently there has been a need to cancel a meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee due to it not being quorate. The CWG therefore considered whether increasing the size of the committee would assist in preventing this occurring again in the future. They also considered the need for the committee to be politically balanced and felt that attendance may be higher if the committee was made of members who had a genuine interest in the subject. The CWG therefore recommend to Council that:

- a) with effect from May 2024 the number of seats on the Audit and Standards Committee is increased from 9 to 11; and
- b) that at the Annual General Meeting in May 2024 Council are asked to agree that that Audit and Standards Committee should not be subject to the rules of political proportionality, noting that this will need to be the subject of a nem con vote to become effective.

## **5. Implications**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this decision.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

Tel: 01453 754115 Email: [andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk)

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

The relevant legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272012 Email: [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.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.