



Public Document Pack STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COUNCIL

To all Members of Stroud District Council

Wednesday, 17 April 2024

You are hereby summoned to attend Meeting of **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud on **THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024** at **7.00 pm**

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

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

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

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
To receive declarations of interest.
3. **MINUTES (Pages 5 - 22)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2024.
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, Friday, 19 April 2024

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and can be sent by email to
Democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

6. **MEMBER QUESTIONS**

See Agenda Item 5 deadlines for submissions.

7. **MOTION ON SUPPORT FOR ZANE'S LAW - PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR BEKI ALDAM AND SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR CHLOE TURNER (Pages 23 - 26)**

The Council therefore RESOLVES to write to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Health, and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to express the Council's request for the funding and resources necessary for the efficient undertaking of the proposed principles of 'Zane's Law'; and to request that these ministers support Baroness Natalie Bennett, by all possible means, in her efforts to advance 'Zane's Law' through the House of Lords.

8. **RECOMMENDATION FROM HOUSING COMMITTEE**
Housing Committee 19 March 2024

The Chair of this Committee will present this item.

8a **SWEDISH TIMBER HOUSES - REDEVELOPMENT SITES (Pages 27 - 58)**

To consider the proposal to allocate the additional budget required.

9. **RECOMMENDATION FROM STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**
Strategy and Resources Committee 7 March 2024

The Chair of this Committee will present this item.

9a **VISITORS CAR PARK EBLEY MILL (Pages 59 - 72)**

To consider a proposed change from a visitors only car park at Ebley Mill to a public (charging) car park in response to requests from local residents and businesses to access the car park.

9b **COTSWOLD CANALS CONNECTED PROJECT UPDATE (Pages 73 - 98)**

To update the Committee on the revised approach to the delivery of the Cotswold Canals Connected project.

10. **M5 JUNCTION 14 FUNDING APPROVAL (Pages 99 - 106)**

This report sets out :

- The background to the pause in the examination of the draft Local Plan
- The Inspectors' concerns over M5 Junction 14
- The work that needs to be undertaken to progress the draft Local Plan (design and costing)
- The funding required to deliver the design and costing as set out in the Joint Action Plan

11. **UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION (Pages 107 - 152)**

This report brings forward to council recommended amendments to sections 2 (meeting of the council) and 4 (scheme of delegation) of the constitution, As approved by the Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 22 February 2024.

12. **GLOUCESTERSHIRE CITY REGION BOARD (Pages 153 - 166)**

To consider the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB), the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership and joint scrutiny arrangements.

13. **COUNTY DEAL AND DEVOLUTION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (Pages 167 - 176)**
To note the emerging County Deal for Gloucestershire and to agree to the Leader of the Council signing the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding with Gloucestershire County Council on behalf of Stroud District Council.
14. **APPOINTMENT OF A MONITORING OFFICER (Pages 177 - 180)**
To appoint a Monitoring Officer.
15. **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES (Pages 181 - 184)**
To advise Members on the arrangements for the redistribution of the responsibilities of the current Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer and to seek support for a process to identify and appoint one Strategic Director as Deputy Chief Executive.
16. **UBICO FIVE YEAR VISION AND BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 (Pages 185 - 208)**
To provide an update on the Ubico Five Year Vision and Business Plan 2024/2025.

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COUNCIL

Thursday, 22 February 2024

7.00 - 10.03 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 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 Martin Brown (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

Accountancy Manager

Strategic Director of Resources

CL.056

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brine, Brown, Laurie Davies, Davis, Gray, Hoskin, Mossman, Patrick, Pearson, Robinson and Tucker.

CL.057 **Declaration of Interests**

There were none.

CL.058 **Minutes**

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024 were approved as a correct record

CL.059 **Announcements**

Councillor Martin Brown was nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of Council.

RESOLVED That Councillor Martin Brown be elected Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2024-25

The Leader provided an update on the local plan examination process. Correspondence with planning inspectors had led to a 10-month pause in the examination, with the first seven months allocated for implementing the Joint Action Plan and the subsequent three months for public consultation. The concerns raised by the inspectors were being addressed collaboratively.

CL.060 **Public Question Time**

There were none.

CL.061 **Member Questions**

There were none.

CL.062 **Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy And Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2024/25**

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

- The capital and treasury management issues which had to be taken into account whilst producing the report were included on page 45, section 1.3
- Table 1 on page 46 included changes to the figures considered by Audit and Standards Committee for the Capital Expenditure 2023/24 and estimates for 2024/25 for Strategy and Resources Committee
- The capital spending plans were included in Table 2 on page 46
- The forecast for the councils need to borrow (Capital Financing Requirement) was set out on Table 6 on page 49
- The Liability Benchmark graph was included in section 2.8
- Table 4 on page 48 showed the expected sharp decrease in available investments between 2022/23 and 2026/27
- Table 5 on page 49 showed the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream
- At the end of 2024/25 there was an estimated internal borrowing position of £30.228m
- The Section 151 Officer would monitor the MTFP forecast and the forecasted changes in interest rates and adjust the strategy where necessary

- The Council would aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity
- Table 12 on page 54 showed the maximum specified investments to ensure that all funds were not kept in the same bank
- The Council maintained an investment risk reserve to provide a sum to protect the Council General Fund against future changes in capital values, the sum stood at £820k and was reviewed on an annual basis

Councillor Schoemaker stated that there appeared to be very little investment in the UK and that most investments had been made overseas, he asked whether this could be changed. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy advised that the Council had a fundamental duty to get the best possible return for the money invested. The Section 151 Officer confirmed that they had to follow guidelines for security, liquidity and yield and there was nothing in the policies that allowed them to consider country of origin to select investments. He advised that the Council did have an ethical investment policy and they had therefore changed a few investments last year due to the ethical investment reviews.

Councillor Turner asked a question in relation to the impact investments section of the ethical policy, she asked if there had been any opportunities for more innovative investments. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy advised that discussions had taken place recently and there were further schemes which would come forward but the return rates were not equal at that time.

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

Councillor Jockel commended the report and the work of the Audit and Standards Committee, he also raised concerns that the ratings of the investments required further evidence. He advised that he had attended a conference for financial investors regarding sustainability recently and they had advised that the accuracy of ratings agencies was $\pm 25\%$ for the same company and they therefore should view them with some scrutiny and healthy scepticism.

Councillor Braun thanked Councillor Studdert-Kennedy, Councillor Percy and the whole of the Audit and Standards Committee for their work.

Councillor Percy thanked the Section 151 Officer, Principal Accountant and the Finance Team for putting together the forecasts. He stated the Council had ambitious plans to retrofit its housing stock which had a large financial requirement. He advised that they were fortunate to have a strong financial position to allow them to finance various schemes and thoroughly supported the paper and the plans it represented.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy echoed thanks to the Finance Team, for putting the report together and continuing to keep a watching brief, and the Audit and Standards Committee.

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

RESOLVED To:

- a) adopt the prudential indicators and limits for 2024/25 to 2026/27;**
- b) approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25, and the treasury prudential indicators;**
- c) approve the Investment Strategy 2024/25, and the detailed criteria for specified and non-specified investments; and**
- d) approve the MRP Statement 2024/25**

**e) approve the Ethical Investment Policy
As recommended by the Audit and Standards Committee**

CL.063 Council Tax Support Scheme

Councillor Bennett, Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, introduced the report which set out the details of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the upcoming year. She advised that the Welfare Reform Act 2012 had abolished Council Tax Benefit from 2013 whilst at the same time councils faced cuts on funding for localised support. Since 2013 the Council had adopted the governments default scheme which ensured no changes or reductions to the level of support provided. She confirmed that there were no major changes proposed in the scheme for the current year and support would still be available for up to 100% of the Council Tax Bill for those who needed it.

Councillor Bennett highlighted to Members the two minor administrative changes which had been included in Section 3 and the commitment from Gloucestershire Local Authorities to consider how a joint scheme could work across the County, any revised scheme would be taken to Strategy and Resources Committee and Council for consideration.

Proposed by Councillor Bennett and seconded by Councillor Layfield.

Councillor Layfield urged Councillors to support the scheme as it ensured that those who faced the greatest financial challenges during the cost-of-living emergency were supported.

Councillor Watson expressed her pride that Stroud District Council was able to continue to provide support through the scheme.

Councillor Turner echoed comments made by Councillor Watson and drew on the positive experience the scheme had had on a local resident.

Councillor Wilsher offered his full support for the scheme and drew Members attention to section 2.3 regarding administrative changes and advised that it was an example of pragmatism overcoming bureaucracy.

Councillor Bennett stated that she was proud to be part of a Council that was able to provide that level of support to people who were in financially difficult situations and thanked the Revenue and Benefits Team for their work.

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

FOR: 39 Votes

Councillors

Beki Aldam
Paula Baker
Martin Baxendale
Natalie Bennett
Catherine Braun
Doina Cornell
Gordon Craig
Kate Crews
Stephen Davies

Lindsey Green
Trevor Hall
Nick Housden
Nick Hurst
Steve Hynd
George James
Julie Job
Haydn Jones
John Jones

Gill Oxley
Martin Percy
Nigel Prenter
Mattie Ross
Mark Ryder
Lucas Schoemaker
Ashley Smith
Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
Haydn Sutton

Jonathan Edmunds
 Christopher Evans
 Helen Fenton
 Colin Fryer

Christopher Jockel
 Robin Layfield
 Gary Luff
 Jenny Miles

Brian Tipper
 Chloe Turner
 Tricia Watson
 Rich Wilsher

AGAINST: 0 Votes

ABSTENTIONS: 0 Votes

RESOLVED To adopt the scheme for 2024/25 as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

CL.064 Council Tax - Second Homes Premium and Empty Homes Premium

Councillor Bennett, Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, presented the report which gave the required one years notice of the intention to introduce additional Council Tax Premiums effective from 1 April 2025. She advised that they were waiting for further guidance from Central Government for both schemes, with specific details on the operation of the Premium, including exemptions. The proposed reduction of the Empty Homes Premium period from two years to one year aligned with the new powers granted by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, and would affect an estimated 152 properties. Additionally, a premium on second homes, addressing loopholes in the current system, was expected to impact 535 properties. For both schemes the final detail would be considered by Strategy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Davies asked whether they had completed any analysis on how much the Council would have to pay for empty properties if the schemes were applied straight away. The Accountancy Manager advised that there were currently 7 properties, including properties that were awaiting development, that were within the 1 to 2 year bracket.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy asked for clarity as to whether the properties described in section 2.7 of the report were included within the total in section 2.5 of the report. Councillor Bennett confirmed that they were separate figures.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith, the Strategic Director of Resources confirmed that there had been a change in the law in 2023 which made it clear when a property being rented out would be liable for business rates, a formula was used which was based on the number of nights the property was available for rent and how many nights it was rented.

The Strategic Director of Resources also confirmed, in response to a question from Councillor Tipper, that if someone was not occupying the home then this would attract a second homes premium, if the property was rented out on a longer term basis then council tax would be payable at the standard rate and if the property was rented on a periodic basis then there would be a business rates arrangement.

Proposed by Councillor Bennett and seconded by Councillor Layfield.

Councillor Watson advised that she was concerned about what discretionary details might emerge from central government but hoped that the council would be able to review the terms to ensure that compassion could be shown throughout the process for families going through bereavement. She confirmed that she would probably support the report on the

understanding that they would review the discretionary criteria and ensure that the Council were not forced to implement an uncomfortable position dictated from a national level.

Councillor Wilsher also hoped that there would be scope for discretion in the scheme in particular for registered providers who may be going through a regeneration scheme which could take more than a year.

Councillor Ross took on board points raised by Councillor Watson and Wilsher regarding discretion but also raised concerns about the number of people on the list for Council housing and wanted to ensure that homes were provided as quickly as possible.

Councillor Layfield stated that people needed homes and that they didn't want empty homes in the district as they should be available for people to live in.

Councillor Bennett stated that they were in the middle of a housing crisis and that the council should do anything it could do to bring houses back into use and help encourage people to do that. She confirmed that the revenue provided as part of the scheme could help ensure that funding was available to support people on the lowest incomes.

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

RESOLVED That it:

- 1. introduces a Premium on second homes from 01 April 2025**
- 2. amends the empty homes premium to apply after one year from 01 April 2025**
- 3. Delegates to the Strategic Director of Resources the ability to make minor changes to the scheme in accordance with regulations and guidance**

As recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Notice to be published in at least one local newspaper within 21 days of the determination.

CL.065 COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR CARE LEAVERS

Councillor Bennett, Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, presented the proposal which sought Council approval to extend the 100% Council Tax discount for care leavers, currently available to 18-21 year olds, until their 25th birthday. The extension would include care leavers not under Gloucestershire County Council's care. She confirmed that the County Council would cover the associated costs, typically borne by SDC as the Billing Authority and that all Gloucestershire Districts were looking to adopt the change.

Proposed by Councillor Bennett and Seconded by Councillor Layfield.

Councillor Layfield was pleased to see the Council working in partnership with other Local Authorities on a joint scheme that offered equity of opportunity for care leavers no matter where they lived in Gloucestershire.

Councillor Davies spoke about the concept used at the County Council that every Councillor was a corporate parent and so they all had a corporate responsibility to do whatever they could to provide support. He advised that he had regularly met with care

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leavers and that they were incredibly impressive individuals. He hoped that all Councillors would support the proposal.

Councillor Turner echoed comments from Councillor Davies and stated that she was shocked to learn that there were over 800 children in care in Gloucestershire and how much worse the outcomes were for care leavers. She was pleased to see all of the different packages of work that were being put in place for care leavers and offered her support for the scheme.

Councillor Jockel stated that as a former residential social worker he had witnessed the lifelong disadvantage that people growing up in care could experience and that they had a moral duty to balance out any disadvantage.

Councillor Bennett stated that they should support the scheme to help give care leavers the best start to their adult life.

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

RESOLVED To adopt the scheme to be effective from 1st April 2024 as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

CL.066 THE FAIR PAY AND SENIOR PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor Braun, Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee introduced the report and advised that the Council was required, under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, to have a pay policy statement for each financial year. She confirmed that the ratio between the highest and lowest paid employees was 1 to 9 and that Government guidance was that the ratio in the public sector should not exceed 1 to 20. A comparison between the lowest staff grade Stroud 1 which included the living wage, and Stroud 12, was a ratio of 1 to 6, which was well within the national guidelines. She clarified that the report detailed the current levels of remuneration for staff, the Council paid spot salaries and there were no bonuses, annual increments, nor performance related payments. She affirmed that in 2022, the Council proactively opted to implement the living wage increase in December 2022 instead of April 2023 for those employees who were on the lowest grade, and that the same principal was followed in 2023 to help support those staff who were at the lower end of the pay scales.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and seconded by Councillor Bennett.

Councillor Bennett stated that it was good to see the Council were well within the guidelines in relation to pay ratios and the report ensured they were open and transparent.

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

RESOLVED That this Statement is approved as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

CL.067 Stroud District Council Capital Strategy

Councillor Braun, the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, presented the report and advised that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Prudential Code required the Council to have a Capital Strategy and that the strategy was reviewed annually. The strategy set out the general principles that the Council followed with the

capital programme, as well as how capital schemes were approved and monitored. She highlighted the amendments to the Capital Strategy to link it to the agreed refreshed Council Plan and the change to the way that the Council must account for leases set out on page 124.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and Seconded by Councillor Schoemaker

Councillor Schoemaker thanked Officers for the strategy and commended it to all Councillors.

Councillor Braun stated that it was a very clearly presented strategy and that it was important to recall the lines of work that they were undertaking in relation to the capital schemes.

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

RESOLVED To approve the Capital Strategy at Appendix A as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

CL.068 General Fund Budget 2024/25, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Plan

Councillor Braun, the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee, introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

Estimates of Major Funding

- Table 3 on page 138 provided an overview of the main funding sources and their relative proportions as estimated over the next 5 financial years.
- A Council Tax increase is proposed of 2.99% for the year.
- The Government core spending power calculations assume that the Council will increase by the maximum amount allowable and therefore that is built into the local funding settlement.
- The Local Council Tax support scheme will continue at 100%
- Council Tax base growth has been 1.6% for the upcoming year but there has also been a further downward change has also been made in the estimated amount of tax collected from 98.5% to 98%.
- For Business Rates, the multiplier for small business has been frozen by Central Government but larger business will see an inflation based rates increase.
- The Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool is again continuing. As with previous years it is not included in the base budget but will be allocated by Strategy and Resources Committee at year end.
- The position on other grants is set out in a table 2 on page 138.

Financial Adjustments

- In terms of inflationary pressures, pay and contracts were the regular items included for increases.
- The pay award for 2023/24 was agreed at £1925 or 3.88% whichever was higher, for most staff.
- The budget included an allowance of 5.6% for the upcoming year
- The single largest contract was Ubico and the report included the detail of those changes.
- Following discussions with Stroud Town Council they were proposing to freeze all parking tariffs in the flexible stay car parks and the free after 3pm proposal would be extended to free after 2pm.

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- Additional savings and pressures on services were detailed in the report and Appendix B.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

- General Fund reserves have fallen slightly in the last couple of years.
- Reserves had been grouped into three categories to make it easier to review; reserves which had been allocated to specific projects within the councils budget, reserves held against specific and known risks and reserves held to mitigate the impact of future funding reform.
- The budget gap at the end of the MTFP now assumed to be £2.5 million even after applying reserve balances.

The Capital Programme

- The major new scheme included in the budget for 2024/25 is the programme for improvements around Stroud Train Station at £200k and will be fully funded from existing capital receipts.

Chief Financial Officers report

- The S151 Officer has confirmed that estimates are robust, and reserves are adequate. It also includes my commentary on major risks.
- The major risk to the Council, and to all District Councils, is the reform of the Local Government finance system and this is expected after the General Election.

In response to questions from Councillor Studdert-Kennedy, Councillor Braun and the Strategic Director of Resources confirmed the following:

- The Goods Shed was being purchased by the Council but ownership would be transferred to Stroud Valley Arts so it would not remain in the Councils ownership, the Council would be contributing a proportion of the purchase price.
- Assurances were provided that the reserves would be robustly monitored and reserves would be allocated to projects cautiously.

Proposed by Councillor Braun and Seconded by Councillor Bennett

Councillor Green advised that she was pleased to see the Market Town Vitality Fund but didn't think that the amount assigned was enough and therefore proposed the amendment to section a. of the decision box as laid out in red below:

- a. To approve the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan as set out in Appendices A-D **and double the funding for the Market Towns Vitality Fund from £200k to £400k. The additional funding to come from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve.**

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Craig.

Councillor Braun welcome Councillor Green's enthusiasm for the Market Town Vitality Funds. She advised that they wanted the fund to be used to respond to some of the challenges that have arisen from the changing nature of the high street and that there may be opportunities for projects that spanned a wider geographic area and therefore the fund could be shared more widely. They would be able to consider additional funds or changes ahead of the budget setting in 2025.

Councillor Davies stated that they should consider increasing the budget for the fund as they hadn't agreed any criteria for use of the fund and therefore additional funds may be needed to deal with requests.

Councillor Turner advised that the amount was modest but has been very positively received as a part of a suite of funding opportunities available to market towns and parishes which included the Community Infrastructure Levy, Rural England Prosperity Fund, Crowdfunding and the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

Councillor Bennett advised that they would have opportunities to look at the fund over the next year to review how it's used and consider the allocated budget in 2025.

Councillor Craig stated that there was a danger that one market town could use the whole of the budget allocated to the fund on one scheme and that additional money would help ensure that the market towns had more opportunities.

Councillor Green understood some of the reasoning behind the comments made but felt that the Council could go the extra mile for the Market Towns.

Councillor Jockel briefly left the meeting during the vote.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost with 14 votes in favour, 23 against and 1 abstention.

Councillor Green proposed a further amendment to section a. of the decision box as laid out in red below:

- a. To approve the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan as set out in Appendices A-D and increase the addition to the Planning and Enforcement Budget from £43k to £250k for the next two years only. This proposal adds extra resource into the planning team until such time as a review of local government finance takes place.

Councillor Green advised that the planning enforcement teams had had a difficult couple of years and were doing an amazing job under tough circumstances. The amendment was proposed to try and provide them with additional support and resource should they need it.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Jones.

Councillor Baxendale advised that they needed to boost the capacity of the enforcement team and that the capacity issues had been down to how difficult it was to recruit experienced enforcement. He confirmed that they had now recruited a Senior Enforcement Officer and had budget for an additional officer. The Planning and Enforcement Team confirmed that the additional officers included in the budget would bring them up to capacity. The team needed to focus on building expertise in the team and this would be an ongoing process.

Councillor Studdert Kennedy suggested that a temporary reserve could be created so that the team could draw on additional resource if needed.

Councillor Watson advised that the Council operated an open inclusive committee system where all Members could take part and take time to consider changes. She stated that last minute amendments like the one proposed risked a knee jerk amendment and undermined the work that the council and councillors did to make sure everything balanced.

Councillor Hurst echoed comments from Councillor Studdert-Kennedy regarding setting up a reserve fund that could be accessed if needed.

Councillor Braun reiterated points raised by Councillor Baxendale and advised that they had listened to the planning and enforcement team to understand if there was any additional support that could be provided whilst creating the budget.

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Councillor Jones advised that planning and enforcement were really important aspects of what residents contact councillors about and they needed to ensure that the team could react quickly to resolve planning / enforcement matters. He suggested that the additional budget proposed could be used to bring in experienced officers to help mentor staff.

Councillor Green stated that she felt passionately about making sure staff felt supported and that this was the main driver for the proposed amendment.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost with 14 votes in favour, 25 against and 0 abstentions.

Councillor Aldam drew Members attention to the productivity plans on page 143 and raised concerns with the funding made available to local government.

Councillor Layfield highlighted the work that was being carried out around Brunel Mall and the step free access to the Station.

Councillor Bennett welcome the budget and stated that despite the additional pressure the Council was facing with more cuts it was brilliant that they had been able to allocate budget to additional areas and projects.

Councillor Braun hoped that everyone would be able to support the budget as Members had supported the Council Plan which had been reflected in the budget.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried with 32 votes in favour, 4 against and 3 abstentions.

FOR: 32 Votes

Councillors

Beki Aldam	Trevor Hall	Nigel Prenter
Paula Baker	Nick Hurst	Mattie Ross
Martin Baxendale	Steve Hynd	Mark Ryder
Natalie Bennett	George James	Lucas Schoemaker
Catherine Braun	Julie Job	Ashley Smith
Doina Cornell	Christopher Jockel	Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
Gordon Craig	Robin Layfield	Haydn Sutton
Kate Crews	Gary Luff	Chloe Turner
Jonathan Edmunds	Jenny Miles	Tricia Watson
Helen Fenton	Gill Oxley	Rich Wilsher
Colin Fryer	Martin Pearcy	

AGAINST: 4 Votes

Councillors

Stephen Davies	John Jones	Lindsey Green
Christopher Evans		

ABSTENTIONS: 3 Votes

Councillors

Nick Housden	Haydn Jones	Brian Tipper
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- RESOLVED**
- To approve the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan as set out in Appendices A-D
 - To increase the council tax by 2.99% (£6.85) to £236.02 at Band D, an increase of approximately 13p per week for the services provided by Stroud District Council;

- c. To note the uncertainty around the impact of changes to future local government funding
- d. To approve the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix E
- e. To approve the planned changes to the reserves as set out in Section 4 of the report and Appendix F
- f. To approve the fees and charges policy and list of Council fees and charges as set out in Appendices G and H

In addition to the recommendations from the Strategy and Resources Committee:

- g. To approve the Council Tax Charges for the District as set out in Appendix I

CL.069 **Housing Revenue Account – Revised 2023/24 And Original 2024/25 and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 – 2027/28**

Councillor Ross, Chair of Housing Committee, presented the report and advised that following on from the position reported in the previous year the financial outlook continued to be challenging. She highlighted the following key points:

- A balanced budget was being proposed for 2024/25.
- Changes to regulation would put additional pressure on the housing service.
- Rents were proposed to increase by Consumer Price Index plus 1%, which was 7.7%. This equated to an average of £102.62 per week which was an increase of £7.34.
- Shared ownership rents would increase in line with the lease agreements which would be between 5.4% and 9.4%, depending on the individual lease.
- Service charges and garage rents were to rise in line with rents.
- Where there were increased costs, Independent Living Service charges and District Heating charges had been limited to overall increases of 10% to protect tenants.
- A decision had been included in the report to charge 105% of formula rent in social housing and up to 80% of the market rents in affordable properties where the property had a SAP rating of A. This would only be for new tenancies.
- Pay inflation had been adjusted in 2023/24 as well as an uplift in 2024/25, in line with the General Fund.
- A summary of changes to the budget was set out in Table 1 on page 279.
- Overall the amount being taken out of HRA general reserves was reducing from £1.814m in 2023/24 to £0.648m in 2024/25.
- The medium-term position set out on page 286 showed that HRA reserves were due to drop to negative values in 2025/26 and therefore changes would need to be made.
- There were options to prevent the reserves dropping into negative values in the short term and there was not a significant concern from Officers about being able to set a balanced budget for 2025/26.
- Options to be considered were:
 - Reviewing capital works including major works such as kitchens and bathrooms as well as the sustainable energy programme
 - Reviewing revenue repairs, cyclical works and the lettable standard
 - Establishing the level of service offered to tenants
 - Reviewing charges for supplementary services where appropriate (*depooling*)
 - Maximising grants and other income, especially for the sustainable energy programme
 - Reviewing the repayment of borrowing

2023/24

- The current 10 year rent agreement would end in March 2025 and the forecast included rents increased at inflation (CPI) only. They expected to hear from government on future rent guidance for April 2025 later in the year.
- The 10 year rent agreement in place was for rent increases of CPI plus 1%. Of the 10 years, only five years had been allowed at CPI plus 1%. 5 years had been lower than this, with a four year period of -1% rent reductions and a rent cap at 7% in 2023/24.
- Had rents raised with inflation over the 10 year rent agreement period rents would be over 8% higher, which would have been over £2 million a year and if rents had risen in line with the full rent guidance of CPI plus 1%, the rents would be over 19% higher, or nearly £5 million per year.
- The sustainable energy works and the new build and acquisition programme were proposed to continue.
- Work had been carried out to prepare for the introduction of the regulator and to strengthen the housing service, which although having a cost would improve the service offered to tenants.
- Housing Committee would receive 2 reports over the next year to update on the position and monthly reports would be provided to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee.

Councillor Ross advised that the current staffing restructure for the Housing team was ongoing and staff had been refocused under the guidance of the Strategic Head of Housing. She thanked the Accountancy Manager and the Section 151 Officer for all the work they had done to produce a balanced budget for that year.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy asked how much it cost for the maintenance of a heat pump per unit. Councillor Ross confirmed that she would be able to provide the cost outside of the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Ross and seconded by Councillor Schoemaker

Councillor Stephen Davies proposed an amendment to section a of the decision as laid out in red below:

- a) The revised HRA revenue budget for 2023/24 and original budget 2024/25 are approved **with the addition of up to £50,000 to be spent on investigating all of the options available including establishing whether there is any benefit in establishing a Housing Association as an alternative**

Councillor Davies proposed that the Council used up to £50k to establish whether there would be any benefits from a Housing Association as an alternative to the current point of view. He advised that the Conservative Group had consistently supported the Councils own housing stock and believed it was a good thing. He confirmed that the amendment was not proposed to push a political point but instead to address concerns that the Council was approaching a cliff in terms of the HRA finances and that the victim of the cliff could be the retrofit programme. He believed that the changes made as a result of the retrofit programme would be essential to tackle the climate emergency which Councillors had all agreed was important. He stated that they were not prejudging the outcome of the report but wanted to explore whether, if the Council moved its housing stock to a housing association, they could reduce the HRA debt. He reiterated that the amendment would provide funding to allow them to look at alternative options and models to help address the issues.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Hurst.

Councillor Hurst advised that he had previously been a director of a Housing Association for approximately 30 years and confirmed that the suggested amendment was not to necessarily look at changing the way things were currently done but could allow them to look at producing something that would sit alongside it e.g. council housing stock and a housing association. He believed that the decision to hold on to the Councils Housing stock, taken many years previously, was the right decision however advised that the housing stock was under challenge from right to buy and the ageing nature of the fabric and the Council therefore needed to take the opportunity to have a look at alternative options. He advised that a housing association would be a separate entity from the council which would allow it to bid for development opportunities.

Councillor Bennett stated that the Council had a Committee system in place and therefore detailed discussion should have gone through Housing Committee before being amended at Council. She raised concerns about what impact a Housing Association would have on tenants.

Councillor Tipper advised that he believed the amendment made sense, he advised that from a business point of view the old stock should be sold and the money used to invest in better assets to serve the public.

Councillor Miles highlighted that when Tenants had been consulted in the past had not been in favour of having their homes sold off. She further advised that the Social Housing Regulator Act would come into place in April and they would be inspected for stock condition and be able to see how they benchmark against other social housing providers, therefore it would be a rash decision to approve the amendment.

Councillor Luff advised that they had no guarantee that they would receive market value for the properties and therefore they may not see the returns that would be needed. He stated that although the amendment was only to explore options this could be very worrying for tenants in the Stroud District.

Councillor Aldam stated that £50k was a large sum of money that could be spent elsewhere especially during the cost of living crisis.

Councillor Wilsher stated that the Housing Committee would have been the correct place to have a full and frank discussion of all options.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy advised that the chamber was the sovereign council and that Members were within their rights to have a full debate at Full Council meetings and decisions were made by Council in the Council Chamber. He advised that the Council paid a lot of interest on the capital it used and considered whether they could explore if there was a way of reducing that whilst maintaining the service.

Councillor Braun advised that owning housing stock allowed the Council to do much more in terms of reaching tenants and engagement and provided many benefits which other options wouldn't provide.

Councillor Davies reinforced that the amendment was not a proposal to move the housing stock to a housing association but to explore available options. He stated that he didn't see a clear plan to address the issues that they were facing with the HRA and wanted to ensure that the retrofit programme was able to continue.

2023/24

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost with 14 votes in favour, 25 against and 0 abstentions.

Councillor Davies stated that the change to the law in April created a greater requirement for performance monitoring at Housing Committee and was glad that it was now making a difference. He thanked council staff for their hard work, and advised that when the law changes they should welcome the feedback.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy drew Members attention to paragraphs 6.13 and 6.14 which included the risks to the Housing Revenue Account, he recommended that all Councillors read it.

Councillor Turner advised that there had been a net loss of 165k social homes over the last 10 years in the UK. The houses that the Council owned in the district were precious and they shouldn't consider leaving their communities in the lurch.

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.

Councillor Schoemaker stated he had full confidence in the officers and that they could make great strides in the coming years.

Councillor Ross advised that they would face the challenges and that the Committee and Officers were aware of the challenges which they had been making plans for for some time. She stated that she was proud that they had retained their housing stock. She believed that everyone should be entitled to a warm and safe home and they had gone a long way to helping lots of people in the Stroud District over the years.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried with 27 votes in favour, 11 votes against and 1 abstention.

FOR: 27 Votes

Councillors

Beki Aldam	Colin Fryer	Martin Percy
Paula Baker	Trevor Hall	Nigel Prenter
Martin Baxendale	Nick Hurst	Mattie Ross
Natalie Bennett	Steve Hynd	Lucas Schoemaker
Catherine Braun	George James	Ashley Smith
Doina Cornell	Christopher Jockel	Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
Kate Crews	Robin Layfield	Chloe Turner
Jonathan Edmunds	Gary Luff	Tricia Watson
Helen Fenton	Jenny Miles	Rich Wilsher

AGAINST: 11 Votes

Councillors

Gordon Craig	John Jones	Haydn Sutton
Stephen Davies	Lindsey Green	Brian Tipper
Christopher Evans	Nick Housden	Gill Oxley
Haydn Jones	Mark Ryder	

ABSTENTIONS: 1 VoteCouncillor

Julie Job

RESOLVED That:

- a. The revised HRA revenue budget for 2023/24 and original budget 2024/25 are approved
- b. The movement to and from HRA balances and capital reserves as detailed in Appendix B and section 9 are approved
- c. That from 1 April 2024:
 - i. Social rents and affordable rents are increased by 7.7%, in line with national rent guidance
 - ii. Garage rents are increased by 7.7%
 - iii. Landlord service charges are increased by 7.7%, except Independent Living Scheme charges and district heating charges which are increased as set out in Appendix A
 - iv. Shared ownership rents are increased as set out in each lease
- d. That the HRA Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2027/28, as detailed in Appendix C, be included in the Council's Capital Programme.
- e. That rents for new tenancies in dwellings with energy ratings of SAP A are charged at 105% of formula rent for social housing or 80% of market rents for Affordable Rented properties, where allowable.

As recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

CL.070 Civic Timetable 2024/25

The Leader, Councillor Braun, advised that consideration had been given to avoid the Gloucestershire School term dates for all meetings in the Civic Timetable.

On being put to the Vote, the Motion was carried with 35 votes in favour and 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED To agree the Civic Timetable for 2024/25**CL.071 Changes to Committee Membership**

The Chair announced the following changes to Committee memberships:

Development Control Committee

Councillor Christopher Evans replaced Councillor Haydn Jones

Audit and Standards Committee

Additional Members:

- Councillor Martin Brown
- Councillor Nick Hurst
- Councillor Ashley Smith

RESOLVED To note the changes to Committee Membership

The meeting closed at 10.03 pm

Chair

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MOTIONS TO COUNCIL – MOTION TEMPLATE

Date of Council Meeting	25 th April 2024
Title of Motion	Support for Zane's Law
Proposer	Cllr Beki Aldam
Seconder	Cllr Chloe Turner
Recommendation for Council to vote on	The Council therefore RESOLVES to write to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Health, and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to express the Council's request for the funding and resources necessary for the efficient undertaking of the proposed principles of 'Zane's Law'; and to request that these ministers support Baroness Natalie Bennett, by all possible means, in her efforts to advance 'Zane's Law' through the House of Lords.
Context for the motion (i.e. why is the motion being submitted – what is the proposer aiming to achieve)	<p>The current UK regulations with regard to toxic waste disposal and the danger to human life, to our environment, and to the planet as a whole, from both historic landfill sites and currently approved landfill sites operating the 'dry tomb' principle, are dangerously inadequate. Especially so, in the face of climate breakdown, with rising sea levels, increased rainfall, and widespread flooding.</p> <p>In 2014, 7-year-old Zane Gbangbola died, and his father was paralysed with a diagnosis of hydrogen cyanide (HCN) poisoning, during catastrophic flooding in the UK. It is understood that flood water passing through a historic landfill site carried HCN into Zane's home, and this was detected there at high levels by the Fire and Rescue Services on the night of the tragedy. This is expected to be the subject of an Independent Panel Inquiry.</p> <p>'Zane's Law' seeks to address the crisis of contaminated land in the UK, reinstating legislative provisions removed by successive governments from the 1990 Environment Protection Act, and recognising the Human Right to a Healthy Environment, approved by the UN General Assembly, in July 2022.</p> <p>Therefore, 'Zane's Law' proposes that the following measures be adopted into legislation by the Government, to prioritise the protection and safety of people and planet, and the human right to a healthy environment. The legislation if passed would likely include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase national government funding and support so that each Local Authority is able keep a full, regularly updated Register of Land that may be contaminated within their boundary. 2. The Environment Agency must keep a full, public 'National Register of Contaminated Land' to be regularly updated by information from Local Authorities. 3. Information contained within the above-mentioned Registers of Land must be available to for enquiries and Local Authorities must have the funding, resources and support to be able to effectively answer enquiries from the General Public. 4. Local Authorities must have the funding, resources and support necessary to inspect any land that may be contaminated and to remediate or enforce remediation of any land which poses significant harm to public safety, or which pollutes controlled waters.

	<p>5. Relevant Local Authorities must be responsible for inspecting previously closed landfill sites and remediating them or enforcing their remediation when they pose a significant risk of harm to people or controlled waters.</p> <p>6. The National Government must take full responsibility for providing the necessary funds, resources and support for Local Authorities to meet these new requirements and to recover costs as appropriate where those responsible for the pollution can be identified, following the ‘polluter pays’ principle.</p> <p>7. National Government must work with relevant professional bodies to address the skills gap in the sector, providing resources and funding to enable Local Authorities to employ those with the correct expertise in contaminated land, so that all of the above can be carried out effectively.</p> <p>These measures are not all in place currently and would require significant investment and full funding from the Government to be implemented. These must take account of other statutory requirements (such as data protection provisions).</p> <p>Stroud District suffers from increasing flooding. In addition, members have experienced complaints from residents about unauthorised waste disposal. The combination of these can be deadly to our residents and another tragedy must be averted.</p>
<p>Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility, or which affect the district – please confirm how this criteria is met</p>	<p>This is taken from the Council’s website: It is a statutory duty under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to identify contaminated land and to ensure its clean up. The Council has produced A Strategy for the Identification of Contaminated Land setting out how it intends to carry out its duties under this legislation.</p> <p>The Council has a duty to regulate a number of industrial processes which could give rise to further land contamination. The Council works closely with various regulatory partners, including the Environment Agency, to prevent new contamination being caused, or to require clean-up by the responsible polluter. https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/environmental-health/pollution-and-nuisance/environmental-protection/contaminated-land</p>
<p>Which Council Plan Priority does the Motion support? (select all that apply) EC5.1 Further reduce the quantity of resources discarded as waste and minimise its environmental impact This is also relevant to EC2.2 in that it relates to flooding, and CW1.2 in that it relates to the health and wellbeing of our residents</p>	
<p>Does the motion have potential financial or resource implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be: No, other than the time to compose and send the letter</p>	
<p>Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be: No</p>	
<p>Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be: The passing of this motion fits in with our 2030 pledge, of “protecting our environment”</p>	
<p>Are there any equalities impacts associated with the motion? If yes an equalities impact assessment will be required. No</p>	
<p>Does the motion require further background information to enable the Council to make a decision– if yes advise what might be required: This motion was recently unanimously passed by Lewes Council, with Zane’s father present at the meeting: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-68298957</p>	

END

OFFICER IMPLICATIONS

Officer Name	David Jackson
Officer Title	Environmental Protection Manager
Officer Contact Details	dave.jackson@stroud.gov.uk
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:	
Yes - The motion relates to contaminated land issues which are currently addressed by our Senior Contaminated Land Officer. Essentially, the motion requests expansion of the current work.	
Does the motion support any of the priorities set out in the Council Plan?	
Yes – The Environment and Climate Change priority in general; however the motion does not directly link to any specific objectives or actions.	
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:	
The intent of the motion would create significant additional resource implications for the Council in terms of staff and finances for increased inspections, assessments, sampling and analysis, potential remediation, etc. The existing budget would not be sufficient.	
Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be:	
There should be no additional such implications as the motion seeks to expand existing measures.	
Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be:	
These implications are set out within the motion.	
Should an equality impact assessment be completed before the deliberation of this motion?	
Not considered necessary	
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:	
Not at this stage – the motion is seeking action at a national level in the first instance.	

END

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Swedish Timber Houses - Redevelopment Sites			
Purpose of Report	To consider the proposal to allocate the additional budget required.			
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to approve the request for additional budget of £14.7m to be funded from capital receipts, Homes England funding and borrowing as set out within the report to enable the council to continue with the next phase of the New Homes and Regeneration Programme as recommended by the Housing Committee.			
Consultation and Feedback	<p>Further information has been provided in terms of the recommendation in this report and feasibility layouts shared with all the impacted tenants and private owners, Ward Councillors and the Town and Parish Councils and meetings have been held with those who have requested this.</p> <p>An information sharing meeting has been held with the Head of Uley C of E Primary School which is adjacent to the site at The Knoll. The feedback from this is shown in paragraph 2.14.</p> <p>Feedback from initial stakeholder meetings was set out in Appendix B to the report to Committee in February. Further feedback is set out in the body of this report.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place with the Strategic Leadership Team and Alliance Leadership Team.</p>			
Report Author	Alison Fisk, Head of Property Services Tel: 01453 754430 Email: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<p>1) Three layout options have been considered at the Knoll, and one of the alternative layouts could be brought back to Committee for approval; numbers of affordable homes and the financial implications will be different for each one.</p> <p>2) The Committee could decide not to approve one or more of the sites. A subsequent decision would need to be made to refurbish or to sell the Swedish Timber houses on any of the sites that were not approved for redevelopment.</p>			
Background Papers	Moving Tenants; Decanting Policy			
Appendices	<p>Appendix A: Draft Layout, The Avenue, Stinchcombe</p> <p>Appendix B: Draft Layout, The Knoll, Uley</p> <p>Appendix C: Draft Layout, Mount Pleasant, Wotton-Under-Edge</p> <p>Appendix D: Financial, Social and Corporate Viability Matrices</p> <p>Appendix E (i): Summary of Additional feedback</p> <p>Appendix E (ii): C20 Society letter of objection</p> <p>Appendix F: Estimated Key Project Milestones</p> <p>Appendix G: Equalities Impact Analysis</p> <p>Appendix H: Report from Uley Parish Council</p>			
Implications (further details at end of report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1. At this Committee's meeting in February 2024, members approved the preferred option to redevelop the sites at The Avenue, Stinchcombe; The Knoll, Uley; and Mount Pleasant, Wotton-under-Edge, subject to a further report to Committee setting out details on the proposed schemes, the financial implications and feedback from further stakeholder consultation.
- 1.2. This work has been undertaken with additional pre-apps sought from Development Management on the proposed layouts, informal advice from Gloucestershire County Council Highways and a tree survey at The Knoll, Uley to confirm the health of trees on site and root protection areas which need to be taken into consideration. This additional work has been undertaken now because of the concerns regarding highway safety that has been fed back from Ward Councillors, Parish Councils, and residents.
- 1.3. All three sites are located within their settlement boundaries, where the principle of development can be supported subject to satisfactorily addressing all other material planning considerations. The loss of the Swedish Timber houses (and harm in heritage terms) would need to be balanced against any public benefit (e.g. the delivery of affordable homes) in accordance with policy ES10 of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.4. The inputs and assumptions used to model the financial appraisals in terms of costs and values have also been reviewed, revised and challenged by officers including further discussion with the Accountancy Manager and S151 Officer.
- 1.5. Further meetings have been held across the three sites, if requested, by private owners and tenants or where properties needed to be re-inspected.
- 1.6. Confirmation of the recommendation in this report and draft layouts have been sent to all the key stakeholders; namely Ward Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, tenants and private owners who are directly impacted and Uley CofE Primary School. Meetings have been held with Stinchcombe, Uley Parish Councils and Wotton-Under-Edge Town Council and the Head Teacher and a Governor of Uley Primary School.
- 1.7. All residents who are affected by the recommendations in this report will be offered meetings after this committee meeting, regardless of the outcome.
- 1.8. This report was presented to the Housing Committee on 19 March 2024. The Committee agreed to recommend to Council as per the decision box.

2. The Proposed Redevelopments

- 2.1 Initial layouts and drawings have been prepared in order to assess the redevelopment potential and seek pre-app advice from Development Management and informal advice from Gloucestershire County Council Highways.
- 2.2 **The Avenue, Stinchcombe**
- 2.3 The site comprises 2 pairs of semi-detached Swedish Timber houses, comprising 3 no. 2 bedroom properties and 1 no. 4-bedroom property, set in large gardens on the edge of the village. The site is within the settlement development boundary, in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and adjacent to the Stinchcombe Conservation Area. There is no vehicular access or private parking to the existing properties.
- 2.4 There is one privately owned house on the site, one tenanted property and 2 long-term major voids that require extensive work. The residents do not wish to move. The Parish Council has also objected to the redevelopment (as appended to the February report), unless it is with a similar scheme i.e. replacement in terms of design, materials and number of homes.

- 2.5 A scheme which only redeveloped one pair of the houses was also tested to avoid having to acquire the private property and move a tenant household. This did not receive support from Development Management officers. Subject to securing planning permission, the site has the potential for redevelopment at a higher density. The layout in Appendix A shows a scheme of 18 new council homes, however, following pre-app advice, the council has reduced the density assessed the site assuming a maximum of 16 new affordable homes can be delivered.
- 2.6 **The Knoll, Uley**
- 2.7 This site comprises 2 pairs of 3 no. bedroom semi-detached Swedish Timber houses on the lower half of the site (numbers 5 to 8) and 2 pairs of semi-detached traditionally built houses, comprising 3 no. 3 bedroom and 1 no. 4 bedroom on the upper part of the site (numbers 1 to 4), including 8 existing houses in total. The traditional houses are set in large gardens, with their back gardens adjacent to the school. Only one of the traditional houses has vehicular access and one of the Swedish Timber houses has vehicular access/parking to the side. There is also a resident's only parking area with 10 (useable) spaces adjacent to the site, this is quite narrow and some of the spaces are difficult to access.
- 2.8 The site is within the settlement development boundary, surrounded by Uley Conservation Area to the North, South and East.
- 2.9 An application by the Twentieth Century Society in 2018 to Historic England for a Listing assessment for all four Swedish Timber houses was unsuccessful. This was in response to the council's planning application for External Wall Insulation, which the Society had objected to.
- 2.10 The council took the opportunity to buy back 7 The Knoll in 2021 as it had not progressed with the proposal to install External Wall Insulation and the opportunity to redevelop the site was apparent. However, it wasn't considered appropriate to progress any proposals during the pandemic. Only one of the non-traditional Swedish Timber houses is now tenanted and these tenants have been clear that they do not wish to move. Of the traditional houses, two are tenanted and two privately owned. The residents here have a mixed view on redevelopment, some not wishing to move/sell their property, whilst others are prepared to consider this.
- 2.11 Three options have been considered for this site; this was to assess the impact of only redeveloping the 4 Swedish Timber properties and leaving the 4 traditional houses as they are, against delivering a larger redevelopment of all 8, and a compromise between the two which leaves out one of the pairs of semi-detached properties, which could reduce the impact on residents. It was clear that all 3 options would impact on the traditional homes, requiring land from the front gardens to allow for a new vehicular access and parking on the site.
- 2.12 A draft layout of the larger site is shown at Appendix B. This site could deliver a maximum of 18 units (houses and flats).
- 2.13 The Knoll also lies next to a primary school which is tightly constrained with a narrow footpath into the school grounds and no parking. An initial meeting has been held with the Head and a school Governor to share the proposals and see if there are any opportunities to improve access to the school in any of the redevelopment options.
- 2.14 The school has highlighted several concerns, in particular with regard to building so close to the school, overlooking and safeguarding of children, disturbance to pupils during construction; a possible detrimental impact on pupil numbers and highway safety concerns which also been expressed by other stakeholders.
- 2.15 Redevelopment of the larger site is recommended as the financial appraisals between the 3 options are not significantly different and this option would deliver the most affordable new homes. This will also allow more flexibility in considering the impact on the school and opportunities to adjust to the layout which could be beneficial to it.

2.16 Mount Pleasant, Wotton-under-Edge

- 2.17 This site comprises two pairs of 2-bedroom semi-detached Swedish Timber houses. Of these properties, 2 are major long-term voids, one is tenanted and one privately owned. The tenants and private owners have mixed views, on the redevelopment of this site.
- 2.18 The site is within the settlement development boundary, it is relatively small but has the potential to deliver 8 affordable homes and a feasibility layout is shown at Appendix C. The Town Council is supportive of redevelopment of these houses in principle, subject to planning.

3. Site Appraisals

- 3.1 The Financial, Social and Corporate Viability Matrix which was approved by Committee in December 2022 for assessing sites is attached at Appendix D. This sets out a summary of the key outputs and metrics of each site.
- 3.2 Together, the three schemes are expected to be able to deliver an increase from 16 homes (12 non-traditional and 4 traditional build) to a potential 42 new homes, with off road parking, all at an EPC A. This is an increase from the 11 council owned houses (excludes 7 The Knoll which has been brought back and included at cost in the financial appraisal) to 42. This will result in lower running costs for tenants and lower maintenance costs to the HRA. In addition, the new homes would be designed and built to Part M4(2) Building Regulations meaning they would be adaptable and accessible for tenants. The homes would have an expected life span of 100+ years.

4. Funding

- 4.1 Members will be aware of the impact on the New Homes & Regeneration Programme of rising building costs and in December 2022 agreed to fund an additional £5.42m for the current programme. A contractor is currently being re-procured for Tranche 2 of the programme and bids will be submitted by Mid-April this year. An update on the programme is included on the agenda for this meeting.
- 4.2 The viability of other sites and projects in the pipeline that are currently being progressed are also impacted by these rising costs and changes to the property market. The impact is compounded by the lack of certainty regarding funding from Homes England which is unable to provide subsidy estimates until a bid for funding has been made. Homes England advise submitting bids following a tender return due to the volatility of the market.
- 4.3 Whilst the financial appraisals for these sites are showing the need for high levels of subsidy and a longer borrowing period, the need to continue to provide affordable homes has also increased, making the council's New Homes Programme arguably more important than ever.
- 4.4 However, it is important to highlight that if Committee approves the redevelopment of these sites, it is unlikely that it will be able to fund or provide sufficient project management resources to significantly progress other sites in the medium term, even if construction costs decrease and/or funding sources are significantly better than currently forecast.
- 4.5 The New Homes team will be at capacity dealing with the Tranche 2 sites which are expected to start on site later this year and, if approved, progressing these Swedish Timber sites. Approving the redevelopment of these sites means that they are being given priority over other sites being worked up. Officers will continue to progress those other sites as far as possible within current budgets and officer resource and will continue to report on the pipeline sites to future Committee meetings.
- 4.6 Homes England is currently in discussion with central Government about a future Affordable Homes Programme beyond 2021-26. It is proposed that funding of these

schemes would comprise a mixture of Homes England (or other) subsidy, the use of Right to Buy and other HRA capital receipts as well as additional borrowing.

5. Consultation Update

- 5.1 The feedback from key stakeholders has not changed significantly since the Committee meeting in February, as set out in the appendices to that report, this has been referred to again in section 2 above. New information has also been included with the feedback from Uley CofE Primary School.
- 5.2 The Chair of Committee has received some correspondence objecting to the proposal at the Knoll and a letter of objection from the Twentieth Century Society. The correspondence is summarised at Appendices E(i) and E(ii) and discussed in this section.
- 5.3 The Twentieth Century Society is not a statutory consultee in the planning process. Historic England have said that the buildings are not of evident significance and hence haven't been taken forward to a full assessment for Listing. Nevertheless, the heritage value of these houses is acknowledged and it is appreciated that some have considerable value to their local communities, this has been raised at Uley and Stinchcombe.
- 5.4 This will be a material consideration in the planning process and the reasons for proposing their redevelopment has been set out in this report and the February report to Committee.
- 5.5 It is worth noting that the houses were not gifted to the Country as is being stated as an argument for retaining them. They were bought as part of an emergency programme of temporary housing by the Government for agricultural workers after the war and they have outlived their original life span (60 years) and purpose. It is also worth noting that this could only have been achieved through regular maintenance and investment by the Council and its predecessors. The Council should not be fettered by their original purpose when considering if they are still suitable for current and future tenants.
- 5.6 Also among the objections for The Knoll in particular are highway safety issues, which will be addressed during the planning process as explained in the response to public questions during February's Committee. Comments on the site's unsuitability largely linked to the highway concerns and the rural setting (these are similar to Stinchcombe where concerns have also been raised regarding contributions to infrastructure and the scheme density) will also be addressed through the pre planning and planning stages, as will ecology and biodiversity on the site including the requirement for biodiversity net gain. The layout plan allows for a tree protection zone around the large trees on the site and they have recently been surveyed to confirm this is sufficient. There is no intention to remove these.
- 5.7 The comments regarding lack of maintenance is to some extent a result of the site being identified as a potential redevelopment site. Where this is confirmed as a definite option, planned works are paused and only urgent repairs carried out. The comparison of refurbishment against redevelopment has been assessed as part of the options appraisal and was set out in February's Committee report. They are also discussed again in the financial implications to this report.
- 5.8 Energy efficiency comments. The Council has achieved EPC 'A' ratings on its most recently completed sites within the New Homes Programme and the revised specification provides for future homes to achieve this. The refurbishment of the non-traditional homes on these sites is not expected to deliver more than an EPC 'C'.
- 5.9 Moving residents: Finally, it is laudable that there is concern expressed for the tenants and private owners who will need to be moved as part of any redevelopment. This concern has been made for all 3 locations. These residents will be offered accommodation according to the Council's decanting policy which provides for tenants and qualifying homeowners to choose whether they move temporarily or permanently once registered on GlosHomeseekers.

- 5.10 Direct matching may be offered to facilitate timely moves and the process allows for tenants to remain in the local area and have a high priority for properties in other areas. There is provision for exceptions to the policy regarding bedroom needs assessments which is made by the Council's Housing Advice Manager. The policy gives every resident the option to choose the geographical area in which they wish to move within the District. However, there is of course no guarantee as to which properties will become available within the timescale for redevelopment. Hence considerable support is offered through the process by the Council, and residents are encouraged to register on GlosHomeseekers as soon as possible.
- 5.11 Residents will be made 3 reasonable offers of suitable accommodation with the option of a 4th at the discretion of the Head of Housing Services. The terms 'reasonable' and 'suitable' take into account the resident's preference and residents have the right to refuse offers.
- 5.12 All tenants being moved from a development site will also have the right to return to the new site if a suitable property is available (at social rent) and officers consider these needs with regard to the housing mix proposed. Private owners are also given the option of a property on the new development.
- 5.13 Disturbance payments are paid for both temporary and permanent moves and potentially a home loss statutory payment to compensate tenants who have to permanently move out of their home. This includes tenants who move back onto the new site.
- 5.14 The council will seek to acquire any private houses by negotiation at a reasonable cost. Should there be a need to consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders, a further report would be brought to Committee and Full Council to be considered and seek approval to this.
- 5.15 Officers and members are due to attend an extraordinary meeting of Uley Parish Council after this report has been published and will update the Committee on any further feedback at its meeting.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Further work has been undertaken on assessing the proposals for these sites and whilst acknowledging the objections received from Stinchcombe and Uley Parish Council's and residents and the impact this decision will have on tenants and private owners, it is recommended that the sites are progressed for redevelopment.
- 6.2 The need to address the improvement of the Swedish Timber houses, which would still require a higher ongoing maintenance programme, and to deliver more energy efficient, high quality council homes is pressing and the demand for affordable homes in the district continues to rise.
- 6.3 The delivery of new council owned, energy efficient, affordable housing remains a priority in the Council Plan and redevelopment of these sites will support action CW2.1b 'design, build and deliver new affordable housing across the district via our own New Homes Programme which will deliver EPC A rated properties.
- 6.4 In addition, the Strategy for New Council Homes contains seven strategic objectives; the building blocks of the programme. The recommendations in this report will support delivery of all 7 strategic objectives but primarily; 1) be agile in assessing land opportunities and maximise existing land holdings to exploit the limited supply of land available across the district, 3) design good quality, sustainable, dynamic, energy efficient homes that address the Council's 2030 commitment, 4) build new council homes that strengthen communities and growth in the local economy.
- 6.5 Investment in the construction of new affordable homes brings with it a number of economic and social benefits, such as employment, lower crime (as a result of higher employment) improved access to healthcare and education and reduced homelessness.

- 6.6 It is, therefore, recommended that, whilst acknowledging the impact on the delivery of other sites and the challenging funding position, these Swedish Timber sites should be redeveloped as the priority and next phase of the programme, subject to planning permission and funding.
- 6.7 This will address the major long-term voids which have been held pending this review and provide certainty on the future of these properties, in addition to delivering much needed energy efficient affordable housing. The refurbishment of the Swedish Timber houses on these sites is not considered appropriate or value for money due to the significantly high refurbishment costs and their still limited quality and life span; particularly when the maintenance programmes in the HRA are under increasing pressure and difficult choices will need to be made in future years.
- 6.8 This option does, of course, involve moving tenants at all three sites and acquiring private properties, and the impact of this on these residents is fully acknowledged. The council has extensive experience of successfully supporting tenants and private owners in these circumstances. If the recommendation is approved and, subject to Council approving the budget requirement to redevelop these sites, the next step will be to meet with all the tenants and private owners and understand their particular circumstances and views in more depth, with the ability to be clear about the decisions that have been made, the process, next steps and the support that can be offered to them. In the meantime, officers are available to discuss these in principle and any concerns, questions they may have.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

From a strictly financial perspective the best option would be to sell the sites. However, this would not meet the Council's aim of providing affordable housing or improving energy efficiency of homes in the district.

The refurbishment option would improve energy efficiency in the homes to an adequate level. The cost of the works is substantial (in the region of £100k per property), and the external wall insulation would need to be replaced after 30 years. The lifespan of the refurbished property is expected to be a maximum of 60 years, at which point the housing would very likely need to be replaced. This option is marginally financially viable, with the cost of the works approximately being repaid over the 60-year life. Where no other option is available this would be considered in order to keep the affordable housing available for tenants.

The redevelopment option is the most expensive but would provide much higher quality housing in terms of energy efficiency and allows higher numbers of housing to be available for current and future tenants. The new housing can also be expected to last significantly longer than refurbished housing. The total cost associated with the three schemes is £14.7m. It is expected that borrowing (of £9.4m) will need to be taken out over a period of 60 years, which although is higher than has been included for previous new build schemes, matches the period of repayment needed for the refurbishment option. The housing would be expected to last well beyond these 60 years and provide future rental income to the HRA.

After receipts from shared ownership sales (currently estimated at £1.1m, but would depend on the percentages sold), remaining subsidy required of £4.2m would need to be sourced from Right to Buy receipts, shared ownership capital receipts, other HRA capital receipts including the sale of garage sites, and Homes England Funding. The mix of funding would be confirmed when further details are known about levels of Right to Buy (RTB) funds available (capital receipts from future RTB sales) and Homes England funding levels. Using RTB receipts on these schemes would allow us to maximise the use of future RTB receipts and keep a programme of schemes that will help prevent repayment of

unused receipts to Government. As with all affordable housing schemes there is a risk that tenants would exercise their Right to Buy, but this cannot be avoided. There would be a property cost floor in place for the first 15 years, where a tenant would not be eligible for discount that would take the price below the cost of building the property, which gives some protection.

Since subsidy would be incorporated to reduce borrowing to a level that is repayable from the rents paid (i.e. the rent receivable less any ongoing maintenance costs, would be enough to fund the interest and repayment of the borrowing) there would be no overall impact on the HRA revenue position. There would, however, be a draw on the HRA capital receipts to fund the additional subsidy needed. These capital receipts from the sale of housing (through RTB), garages and unused HRA land are set aside for the new build and development programme and so this would be an appropriate use of the reserves. However, this would reduce funding available for future, as yet unidentified, schemes.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager

Tel: 01453 754343 Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk

7.2 Legal Implications

If the Council needs to purchase some of the existing houses for redevelopment, then subject to the agreement of the property owner, such purchase will be under the powers contained in section 17 of the Housing Act 1985, which allows the Council to purchase houses or other land for housing purposes.

Any future sale or lease (excluding to owner/occupiers) of the property will have to comply with the restrictions contained in that Act. It will not be possible to dispose of the property (including by a lease for a term of 21 years or more) without first obtaining the consent of the Secretary of State. This may prevent the Council from being able, for example to grant a long lease of the premises to a management company and other options would need to be considered for the management of the sites.

Specialist tax advice may need to be obtained in respect of SDLT liability if any of the properties need to be purchased. Such figures will vary according to the price paid for the property. SDLT payable may also be subject to change if there is a budget prior to the completion of a purchase.

In the event that the Council decides to proceed with redevelopment of the sites where this option is proposed and the current owner occupiers are not agreeable, then compulsory Housing Committee Agenda Item 10 06 February 2024 purchase may be considered. In order for the Council to be able to use compulsory purchase powers, it must:

- be able to make a compelling case and consider what enabling powers may be used;
- know that planning permission would be granted (although it does not need to be in place);
- demonstrate that it has attempted to negotiate acquisition and made a formal offer; and
- If using housing powers (s17 Housing Act 1985), demonstrate a benefit in terms of housing provision.

Any redevelopment of the sites will need planning permission, with any applications assessed against planning policies (national and local) including in respect of tenure mix. The Council will also need to ensure that it adheres to its Decant Policy (April 2022).

If the Council needs to appoint external contractors to carry out the redevelopment, the appointments will need to be undertaken in compliance with the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedures Rules set out in the constitution.

One Legal

Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

7.3 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.

7.4 Environmental Implications

The following sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

The council's previous specification was for a minimum SAP rating of 86 (EPC B), however it achieved a much higher SAP rating on the first 36 new homes delivered in the first tranche of the programme, achieving an EPC A rating. It is intended that this will be replicated across the remainder of the programme and the latest specification for the council's new homes aims to achieve a minimum SAP rating of 92 resulting in an EPC A rating.

This is a significant step towards meeting the targets set in SDC's Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy and officers will continue to work with contractors to develop ways of meeting our 2030 stretch goals. The specification of our new homes is above Building Regulations standard and complies with Local Plan policy. Some of the features which have been included within the specification to support the environmental aspects are: the inclusion of air source heat pumps; recyclable kitchens; and ecological enhancements, including bird/bat boxes, bug hotels and hedgehog holes in all fencing.

These sites include the demolition of existing homes traditional and non-traditional. There is embedded carbon in these properties but the council does not have an assessment tool for calculating this. Where properties have been demolished on other sites, significant reuse and recycling of materials has been undertaken by the contractor with approximately 91% of demolition materials reused or recycled from the first tranche of the programme.

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Please note this is a DRAFT layout which shows 18 units, if redevelopment is approved the plans will be developed with a maximum of 16 units on the site.

Layout Subject To The Following;

- Topographic Information
- Services Scan & Searches
- Title Assessment
- Arboricultural Survey/ Assessment
- Ecological Survey/ Assessment
- Engineering/ Drainage Assessment/ Input
- Statutory Consultations (Planning/ Highways/ Fire Authority/ Building Control Refuse Collection)

Please note this list is not exhaustive

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FEASIBILITY

Development Schedule

Gross Site area - 0.369ha

1b2p - 6no.
 2b4p - 8no.
 3b5p - 4no.

Total - 18no.

Rev	Date	Revisions	Initials	Checked

1-4 The Avenue,
 Stinchcombe

Illustrative layout -
 Option1

The Malthouse
 60 East St, Helen Street
 Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 5EB
 Tel (01235) 522139
 Fax (01235) 521662
 e-mail: enquiries@westwaddy-adp.co.uk

westwaddy ADP

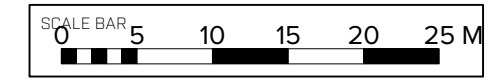
Agenda Item 8a
 Appendix A

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KEY / NOTES

Site Boundary (0.48ha)

6no. 2b4p House
 Plots 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 16,

6no. 1b2p Maisonettes
 Plots 1, 2, 11, 12, 17, 18.

6no. 3b5p House
 Plot 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15,

Total 18 dwellings

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHK

STATUS **FEASIBILITY**



WEST WADDY ARCHADIA

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CLIENT	
PROJECT	LAND OFF SOUTH ST, THE KNOLL, ULEY
TITLE	PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

Appendix B
 Agenda Item 8a

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Please note this is a DRAFT layout subject to the following;

- Topographic Information
- Services Scan & Searches
- Title Assessment
- Ecological Survey/ Assessment
- Engineering/ Drainage Assessment/ Input
- Statutory Consultations (Planning/ Highways/ Fire Authority/ Building Control Refuse Collection)

Please note this list is not exhaustive

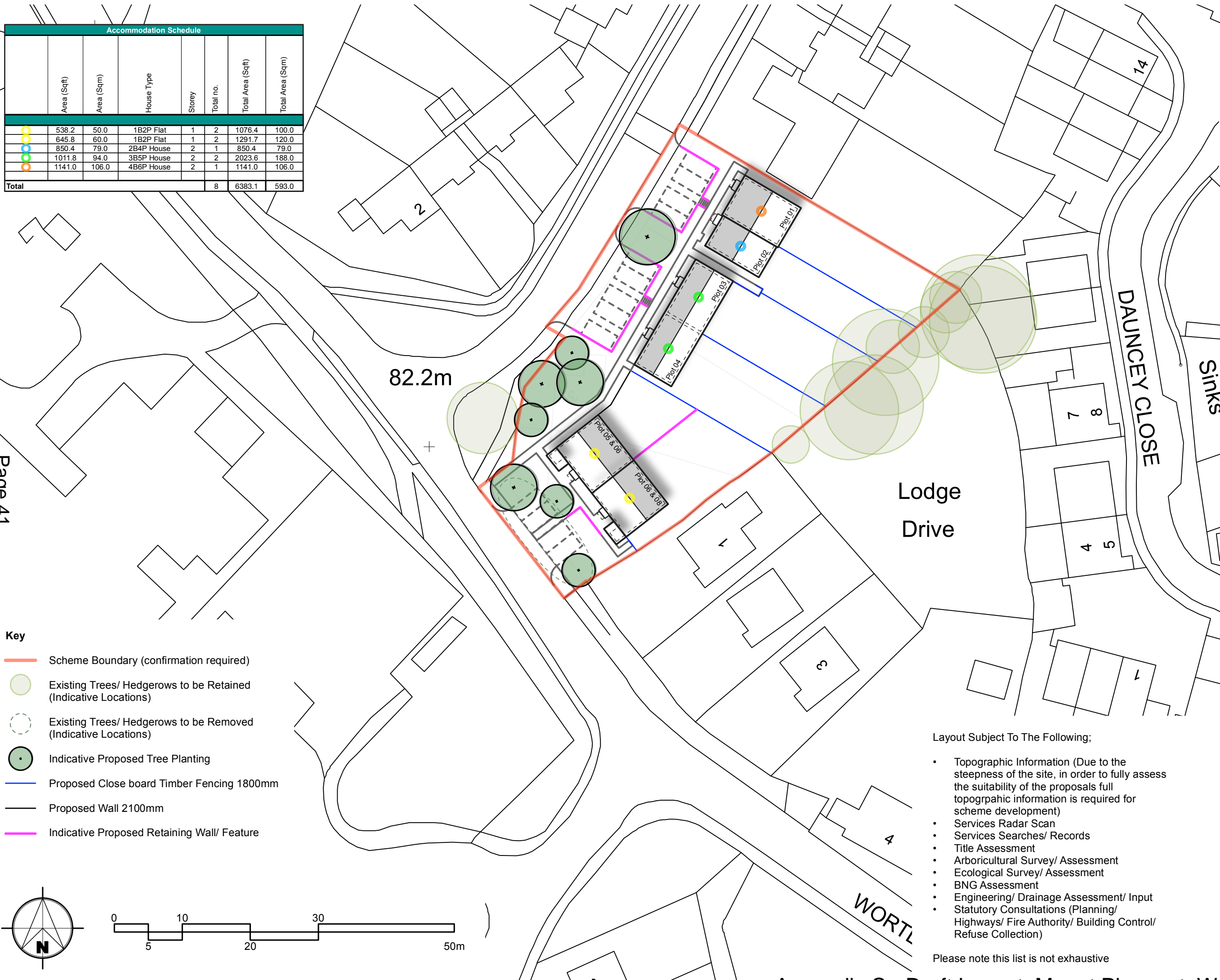
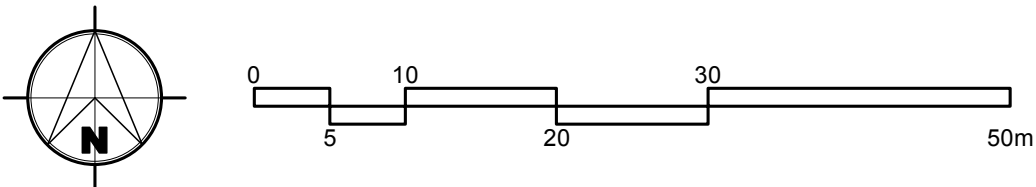
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Accommodation Schedule							
	Area (Sqft)	Area (Sqrm)	House Type	Storey	Total no.	Total Area (Sqft)	Total Area (Sqrm)
●	538.2	50.0	1B2P Flat	1	2	1076.4	100.0
●	645.8	60.0	1B2P Flat	1	2	1291.7	120.0
●	850.4	79.0	2B4P House	2	1	850.4	79.0
●	1011.8	94.0	3B5P House	2	2	2023.6	188.0
●	1141.0	106.0	4B6P House	2	1	1141.0	106.0
Total					8	6383.1	593.0

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- Key**
- Scheme Boundary (confirmation required)
 - Existing Trees/ Hedgerows to be Retained (Indicative Locations)
 - Existing Trees/ Hedgerows to be Removed (Indicative Locations)
 - Indicative Proposed Tree Planting
 - Proposed Close board Timber Fencing 1800mm
 - Proposed Wall 2100mm
 - Indicative Proposed Retaining Wall/ Feature



DRAWING TITLE
 Feasibility
 Indicative Site Layout
 OPTION 1

PROJECT
 Mount Pleasant,
 Wotton-under-Edge

CLIENT
 Stroud District Council

SCALE 1:500@A3

DRAWING NO. 7153-F-101
REV A

Layout Subject To The Following;

- Topographic Information (Due to the steepness of the site, in order to fully assess the suitability of the proposals full topographic information is required for scheme development)
- Services Radar Scan
- Services Searches/ Records
- Title Assessment
- Arboricultural Survey/ Assessment
- Ecological Survey/ Assessment
- BNG Assessment
- Engineering/ Drainage Assessment/ Input
- Statutory Consultations (Planning/ Highways/ Fire Authority/ Building Control/ Refuse Collection)

Please note this list is not exhaustive



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Appendix D Viability Matrices

Financial, Social and Corporate Viability Matrices - Swedish Timber Sites

SCHEME SUMMARY		The Knoll	SCHEME SUMMARY		The Avenue	SCHEME SUMMARY		Mount Pleasant
Site Location		Uley	Site Location		Stinchcombe	Site Location		Wotton-Under-Edge
Current Scheme Overview		Four existing non-traditional Swedish Timber homes owned by SDC, one is tenanted and three are void. Four traditional homes two of which are owned by SDC, both of which are tenanted and two are privately owned.	Current Scheme Overview		Four existing non-traditional Swedish Timber homes, three of which are owned by SDC, one is tenanted and two are long term voids. One property is privately owned.	Current Scheme Overview		Four Swedish Timber homes, three of which are owned by SDC, two are long term voids and one is tenanted. One property is privately owned.
Summary of Proposed Units & Tenures		<p>Full Affordable Rent (80% Market Rent)</p> <p>6 x 1 bedroom 2 person flats 4 x 2 bedroom 4 person houses 4 x 3 bedroom 5 person houses</p> <p>Shared Ownership 2 x 2 bedroom 4 person houses 2 x 3 bedroom 5 person houses</p> <p>Replacement homes = 8 Additional homes = 10 TOTAL NEW HOMES = 18 (of which additional Council owned homes = 13)</p>	Summary of Proposed Units & Tenures		<p>Full Affordable Rent (80% Market Rent)</p> <p>6 x 1 bedroom 2 person flats 3 x 2 bedroom 4 person houses 3 x 3 bedroom 5 person houses</p> <p>Shared Ownership 3 x 2 bedroom 4 person houses 1 x 3 bedroom 5 person house</p> <p>Replacement homes = 4 Additional homes = 12 TOTAL NEW HOMES = 16 (of which additional Council owned homes = 13)</p>	Summary of Proposed Units & Tenures		<p>Full Affordable Rent (80% Market Rent)</p> <p>4 x 1 bedroom 2 person flats 1 x 2 bedroom 2 person house 2 x 3 bedroom 5 person houses 1 x 4 bedroom 6 person house</p> <p>Replacement homes = 4 Additional homes = 4 TOTAL NEW HOMES = 8 (of which additional Council owned homes = 5)</p>
Standards		EPC A Rated Nationally Described Space Standards Part M4(2)	Standards		EPC A Rated Nationally Described Space Standards Part M4(2)	Standards		EPC A Rated Nationally Described Space Standards Part M4(2)
SCHEME SUMMARY		The Knoll	SCHEME SUMMARY		The Avenue	SCHEME SUMMARY		Mount Pleasant
FINANCIAL SUMMARY			FINANCIAL SUMMARY			FINANCIAL SUMMARY		
Total Scheme Cost		£6,628,211	Total Scheme Cost		£5,195,608	Total Scheme Cost		£2,834,416
Build Cost per m2		£3,100	Build Cost per m2		£3,100	Build Cost per m2		£3,250
Total Scheme Cost/Market Sales Value		136.38%	Total Scheme Cost/Market Sales Value		110.54%	Total Scheme Cost/Market Sales Value		130.62%
Total Subsidy Required to Repay Borrowing Over 60 Years		£2,320,626	Total Subsidy Required to Repay Borrowing Over 60 Years		£1,026,618	Total Subsidy Required to Repay Borrowing Over 60 Years		£878,790
Subsidy Per Unit		£122,589	Subsidy Per Unit		£51,964	Subsidy Per Unit		£109,849
SOCIAL VALUE			SOCIAL VALUE			SOCIAL VALUE		
<p>1. Social - contributing to a vibrant and healthy community by increasing new affordable homes and reducing the running costs to tenants. Opportunity to provide improvements which could be beneficial for the school.</p> <p>2. Economic - delivery of new housing will support the local economy and encourage economic growth. This will result in additional social outcomes such as benefits to employment, healthcare, reduced homelessness, education and lower crime .</p> <p>3. Environmental - protecting, promoting and enhancing the environment by going above industry standards and achieving high energy ratings as well as complying with Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.</p>			<p>1. Social - contributing to a vibrant and healthy community by increasing new affordable homes and reducing the running costs to tenants.</p> <p>2. Economic - delivery of new housing will support the local economy and encourage economic growth. This will result in additional social outcomes such as benefits to employment, healthcare, reduced homelessness, education and lower crime .</p> <p>3. Environmental - protecting, promoting and enhancing the environment by going above industry standards and achieving high energy ratings as well as complying with Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.</p>			<p>1. Social - contributing to a vibrant and healthy community by increasing new affordable homes and reducing the running costs to tenants.</p> <p>2. Economic - delivery of new housing will support the local economy and encourage economic growth. This will result in additional social outcomes such as benefits to employment, healthcare, reduced homelessness, education and lower crime .</p> <p>3. Environmental - protecting, promoting and enhancing the environment by going above industry standards and achieving high energy ratings as well as complying with Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.</p>		
LINKS TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES			LINKS TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES			LINKS TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES		
<p>1. Council Plan CW2.1b 2. Strategy for New Council Homes 3. Housing Strategy 4. Carbon 2030 Strategy</p>			<p>1. Council Plan CW2.1b 2. Strategy for New Council Homes 3. Housing Strategy 4. Carbon 2030 Strategy</p>			<p>1. Council Plan CW2.1b 2. Strategy for New Council Homes 3. Housing Strategy 4. Carbon 2030 Strategy</p>		

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Appendix E (i) Summary of additional feedback received

Source	Theme	Comments received
Local residents Uley. 4 emails and 1 letter: objections 1 objection from tenant impacted These residents have objected or complained/commented about the redevelopment at the Knoll.	Highway Safety:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School, café and Prema Arts Centre leads to congestion on South Street • Limited on-street parking. • Danger to school children walking/cycling • Blind bend • Lack of pavement
	Unsuitable location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to highway safety concerns , setting of the site, impact of development • Other places abandoned, empty and unused in the village
	Residents and tenants forced to move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional distress to residents • Residents won't be re housed in the village
	Lack of maintenance of Swedish houses has led to the need to demolish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberately neglected • In good repair • Regular repairs stopped • Some 'abused' by tenants • Reasons for redevelopment 'unfounded'
	Energy Efficiency/Environmental concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Timber are solid in construction and warm • EPC 'C', with some internal insulation • Can the Council achieve an EPC 'A' rating? • Potential loss of trees/ wildlife habitat • Potential drainage problems
	Heritage value of the Swedish Timber Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifted by Sweden • Historical interest • Could be repaired • Valued by the community
	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for affordable housing recognised/supported but not in this location

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Email: Cllr.Mattie.Ross@stroud.gov.uk

26 February 2023

Dear Cllr Mattie Ross,

RE: Swedish Houses, Stroud

The Twentieth Century Society has been alerted to Stroud District Council's intentions to redevelop three sites accommodating Swedish houses: The Avenue in Stinchcombe, the Knoll in Uley and Mount Pleasant in Wotton-Under-Edge. We write to make clear our interest in these sites and to urge you not to push forward with redevelopment but to instead seriously consider retention and retrofit.

We understand that the council's Housing Committee will meet on 19 March to discuss the proposed redevelopment and ask that you please share the Society's letter with committee members.

Background & Significance

The three sites accommodate pre-fabricated timber houses which were imported from Sweden and erected in the immediate post-war period. In 1943, the architect Cyril Sjostrom (who later became better known by his mother's name Mardall of the practice Yorke Rosenberg Mardall or YRM) worked with MI6 to bring Swedish prefabs to Britain, but these were intercepted by the Nazis. The English architects Arthur Kenyon and Robert Matthew then came up with a house design that was manufactured in Sweden for the British Government. The intention was for 10,000 prefabs but eventually a deal was agreed for 5,000 pairs of houses – this was because currency restrictions saw softwood in short supply until the early 1950s. There were four 'types', intended for specific destinations: 1,000 of 'Type A' (also known as 'H-type') were imported - Type A was a semi-detached two-storey house with attached wash house, intended for English rural areas; 1,400 of 'Type B' intended for Scotland, and without a wash house; 600 of a four-unit terrace 'Type C' were intended for Scottish urban areas; and there was also 'Type D' (also known as 'B-type'), a dormer bungalow with the upper storey in the roof, of which 1,500 were intended for England and Wales. So, around 2,500 (to be precise, 2,444) Swedish houses were built in England and Wales. Most were built in 1945-6 and very few were erected after 1948. They provided much-needed houses cheaply and quickly in the post-war decades.

The Twentieth Century Society is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England no 05330664

Registered office: 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ
Registered Charity no 1110244

The first Swedish houses constructed in England were at Abbots Langley in Hertfordshire in 1945. The houses were transported, flat-packed to site and then quickly erected.

In England, many were erected in rural locations in East Anglia and around Doncaster and Gloucestershire. One pair (of the 'Type D'/ 'B-type' dormer bungalows) located in Doncaster (nos.9 & 11 Ellers Lane in Auckley) has been Grade II listed, recognising the building type's heritage significance at a national level.

Stroud District Council owns c.21 Swedish houses, including the houses on these three sites. The Avenue in Stinchcombe accommodates two pairs of 'Type D'/ 'B-type' dormer bungalows, the Knoll in Uley is home to two pairs of 'Type A'/ 'H-type' two-storey houses, and Mount Pleasant in Wotton-Under-Edge also has two pairs of bungalows.

Swedish houses have featured in several publications highlighting their importance within British architectural history, including in Elain Harwood's *Space, Hope and Brutalism: English Architecture, 1945-75* (2015) and *Mid-Century Britain: 1938-63* (2021).

Assessment

Built to meet pressing demands for housing in the post-war years, Swedish timber prefabricated houses are, what Historic England calls, "significant physical records of the social and economic history of this country immediately after World War II" (list entry for 9 & 11 Ellers Lane in Auckley). With just c.2,500 built and about c.1,900 surviving across England and Wales, the Swedish house is "a rare type nationally", according to Historic England (see the Prefab Museum's website for an [up-to-date list of survivors](#)). The council's properties in Stinchcombe, Uley and Wotton-Under-Edge should all be identified as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) in recognition of their heritage value.

Because of the nature of their construction—which means that these buildings require routine maintenance and repair, and come under pressure for upgrades to improve their environmental performance—and increased demand for higher-density housing, Swedish houses are at major risk of harmful alteration or demolition. It is our firm belief, however, that it would be possible to repair and retrofit these homes in a way that would conserve their heritage significance.

Stroud District Council is fortunate to have in its possession a collection of Swedish houses and should see itself as a custodian of these rare and culturally important buildings. We urge the council to reconsider its redevelopment plans and to properly investigate alternatives to demolition.

We hope that these comments are of use to you.

Yours sincerely,



The Twentieth Century Society, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ – Tel 020 7250 3857

coco@c20society.org.uk
www.c20society.org.uk

Coco Whittaker

Senior Caseworker

The Twentieth Century Society
70 Cowcross Street
London, EC1M 6EJ
Tel 020 7250 3857
coco@c20society.org.uk

Remit: The Twentieth Century Society was founded in 1979 and is the national amenity society concerned with the protection, appreciation, and study of post-1914 architecture, townscape and design. The Society is acknowledged in national planning guidance as the key organisation concerned with the modern period and is a constituent member of the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies. Under the procedures set out in *ODPM Circular 09/2005*, all English local planning authorities must inform the Twentieth Century Society when an application for listed building consent involving partial or total demolition is received, and they must notify us of the decisions taken on these applications.

The Twentieth Century Society, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ – Tel 020 7250 3857

coco@c20society.org.uk
www.c20society.org.uk

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Estimated Key Project Milestones

		Vacant possession of sites required		
Feasibility & Pre-Planning Stage	Planning		Pre-Contract Stage	Construction
Legal/ Surveys/ Design/ Pre-planning,	Submission and determination of Application		Contractor procurement, funding confirmed mobilisation and discharge of planning conditions	
Public and key stakeholder Consultation	Statutory consultees, public objections/support			
Negotiations with Private owners and tenants re moving, moves undertaken			Engagement with residents continues if returning to site	
12 to 24 mths	3 to 4 months		6 to 8 mths	The Avenue, Stinchcombe: 14 to 18 mths
				The Knoll, Uley : 18 to 20 mths
				Mount Pleasant, WUE : 11 to 13 months

These milestones are subject to approval of the redevelopment of these sites by Housing Committee and Council approval of the budget required on 25 April 2024

It should be noted that the above are estimates only and will depend on vacant possession of each site and the requirements of the planning process. It assumes that private properties are acquired by negotiation

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Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to –*

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at: <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Alison Fisk	Telephone: 01453 766321
	E-Mail: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Property Services	Date of Assessment: 11 th March 2024

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

New Homes and Regeneration Programme – Proposed redevelopment of Swedish Timber sites

Is this new or an existing one? This is an existing programme, but these are new sites

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The main aims of this project are:

- To replace ageing Swedish Timber houses with new build, high quality energy efficient homes (EPC A) with a longer life and lower running and maintenance costs, built to Part M4 (2) of the Building Regulations
- To increase the number of affordable homes on each site, which meet a variety of current and future needs
- To create a range of different size accommodation and tenures that responds to local and/or wider housing need
- To ensure the council's new homes meets the expectations of current and future tenants

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

Appendix G

The Housing Act 1996 and Localism Act 2011 : in relation to moving tenants and allocating accommodation

Both of the Acts mentioned above will be adhered to, to enable direct matches to be made when moving residents ; how the Council moves tenants and allocates accommodation is set out in its Decanting Policy 2022

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

Current and future Stroud District Council tenants will benefit from the improved range of accommodation on offer. The proposed changes will provide greater choice to tenants and additional affordable homes for those on the waiting list.

6. What outcomes are expected?

- The regeneration of these Swedish timber sites will result in an expected increase in council owned houses from 11 (5 properties are, or were, privately owned) to an anticipated 42 and in terms of numbers of homes from 16 to 42.
- The replacement of older stock with new homes will result in the council having more sustainable stock in these locations, which is modern, high quality and offers a choice of accommodation types

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

- Initial information gleaned from the residents currently living in houses on these sites and consultation with Parish and Ward Councillors
- Condition surveys and council data on repairs and planned works carried out on the current properties
- The Council’s Housing Needs Survey
- Stinchcombe (2019) and Uley (2024) Parish Housing Needs Surveys

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

Yes
 Ward Councillors
 Town and Parish Council's
 Initial meetings with tenants and private owners (where requested) and correspondence with all residents affected
 Consultation will continue throughout the project

9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;

Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;

Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
Age	Moving residents : Negative and positive impacts depending on those tenants’ and private owner’s individual circumstances and whether they wish to move or not.

	<p>The council will work with tenants with families to endure that the disruption to children and young people who attend school and college is minimised.</p> <p>Additional support with arranging moves will be provided for tenants or private owners who need this, including elderly tenants.</p> <p>Positive impact: New Homes: as they will be built to Part M4(2) of the Building Regs (Accessible and adaptable dwellings) and have improved energy efficiency (EPC A)</p>
Disability	<p>Moving residents: Negative and positive impacts depending on those tenants' or private owner's individual circumstances and whether they wish to move or not and the condition and layout of their current home.</p> <p>Additional support with arranging moves will be provided for tenants or private owners who need this .</p> <p>Positive Impact: New Homes: positive impact as they will be built to Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and have improved energy efficiency (EPC A) and off-street parking.</p>
Gender Re-assignment	<p>Moving residents: Neutral impact: Additional support with arranging moves will be provided for any tenants or private owners who need this</p>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>Negative and positive impacts depending on those tenants' or private owner's individual circumstances and whether they wish to move or not and the condition and layout of their current home</p> <p>Additional support with arranging moves will be provided for any tenants or private owners who need this and the council will ensure that this is provided to someone who is pregnant or has young children.</p> <p>The council will work with tenants and private owners with families to ensure that the disruption to children and young people who attend school or nursery is minimised.</p> <p>New Homes: as they will be built to Part M4(2) of the Building Regs (Accessible and adaptable dwellings) and have improved energy efficiency (EPC A) with off-street parking.</p>
Race	<p>Neutral impact: Additional support with arranging moves will be provided for any tenants or private owners who need this</p>
Religion – Belief	<p>Neutral impact</p>
Sex	<p>Neutral impact</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>Neutral impact</p>
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	<p>Neutral impact</p>
Rural considerations: i.e Access to	<p>Moving residents: The council will work with residents to understand their needs of areas that may and may not be suitable for them to move to. The sites in Stinchcombe and Uley are in rural areas with low levels of affordable housing available, particularly in Stinchcombe.</p>

Appendix G services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Tenants and private owners will be able to return to the new homes once constructed.
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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
Initial (and ongoing) meetings will be undertaken with tenants and private owners to understand their individual circumstances and their needs in terms of additional support, potentially also provided from other agencies if required including independent representation/ advocates.	Alison Fisk	Officer time and possible funding required with provisional sums allowed for in the budget request	Led by the availability of other properties to move residents to, their individual needs. Estimated at between 1 to 2 years based on other similar projects.

Declaration

We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this project and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.

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

Completed by: Alison Fisk	Date: 11th March 2024
Role: Head of Property Services	
Countersigned by Head of Service/Director: 	Date: 11th March 2024

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

Report from Uley Parish Council for inclusion in papers for meeting of SDC Housing Committee on Tuesday 19th March 2024

On Thursday 14th March Uley Parish Council (UPC) arranged a public meeting in Uley Village Hall in order to gather the views of the community concerning Stroud District Council's (SDC) proposed development of The Knoll.

In excess of 85 members of the public attended the meeting, some of whom were representing others unable to attend. Members of the public were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions of a panel which included two District Councillors and several members of the SDC Housing Committee and Planning Department.

All the comments and questions asked were against the proposal.

The main areas of concern were:

The school. Very close proximity to major building site; safety of access for pupils, staff and parents; severely damaging effect upon appeal of the school, overall pupil numbers, attraction and retention of high quality staff; noise and particle pollution effect upon health and wellbeing; distraction from education. Currently open, peaceful outlook from classrooms and playing field; these would both be overlooked by development with potential views into the classrooms.

Safety. Widespread concern regarding safety of pedestrians, particularly the young and the old, both in the vicinity of the site and over the whole length of South Street and the feeder road, The Street, the main access points to The Millennium Green and to Prema and its café. These concerns were both for the period of demolition and construction and for the future with a net increase of 15 dwellings on this site.

Decanting. Widespread distress at the way tenants and owner occupiers have been treated; lives put on hold and futures made uncertain; destabilising effect upon residents' lives; daily stress about future which is likely to take at least 2 years to determine. How do residents manage their households through this lengthy period of uncertainty.

Highways. Access totally unsuitable: too narrow; lack of pavements; danger to pedestrians, parked cars and animals; existing traffic and parking pressures. Pedestrian access to the school. Access off The Street already severely congested at times. Additional construction vehicles over building period of in excess of two years will exacerbate. No turning space for large vehicles. Increase in volume of traffic with 18 new dwellings. Further congestion of The Street, Uley's main thoroughfare. Safety of access for existing residents of South Street to doctor's surgery. Insufficient parking spaces allocated for new residents; no visitor spaces.

Loss of Heritage Asset. Many people, both within and without the community, admire and treasure the Swedish houses. They form part of the history of the village. General dissatisfaction that they have been allowed to deteriorate, that useful housing has been left empty and that heritage assets have been allowed to rot. Everyone attending was in favour of retention and retrofit of these houses. 20th Century Society recommend that they should be designated Non-Designated Heritage

Appendix H

Assets (NDHAs) in recognition of their heritage significance. The 20th Century Society is a Statutory Consultee for listed buildings and is a recognised consultant for NDHAs.

SDC's report for next week's meeting somewhat misrepresents Historic England's view; HE's 2018 report clearly states that these buildings are of local significance.

Access for Emergency Vehicles. This is already very constricted and causes worry.

Infrastructure. Severe problems already exist with the main sewage system through the village and along the river. Severn Trent has acknowledged that the mains water supply pipework is in an unsatisfactory state in some parts of the village.

Planning Blight. Over the whole area. This is a peaceful area of Uley, close to the settlement edge. Because of the problems of access and the likely duration of demolition and construction, every house on South Street would be affected by noise, traffic, congestion, loss of amenity, disruption of peaceful enjoyment and loss of value. Damaging effect of the current uncertainty about the future is bearing on house values.

Ecology. Grave concerns about the disturbance of wildlife across this area of the village and the Millennium Green, the effects of run-off, both during demolition/construction and from the increased hard landscaping. Pollution of River Ewelme below.

Budget. At meeting in January number of new units increased from 16 to 18 because of marginal viability of scheme. Therefore highly unlikely that there will be scope in the budget for a pre-school or a turning circle.

Current plan provides insufficient parking spaces for residents and none for visitors.

Resolutions. Two resolutions were proposed by a member of the public. These were carried.

- 1) To request the Parish Council to oppose the proposal to build 18 houses on The Knoll.
- 2) To request the Parish Council to request Stroud District Council to restore the existing Swedish houses and to bring them to full occupation.

In summary, UPC asks the Housing Committee to take note of the opposition to this development.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY 25 APRIL, 2024

Report Title	Visitors' Car Park Ebley Mill			
Purpose of Report	To consider a proposed change from a visitors only car park at Ebley Mill to a public (charging) car park in response to requests from local residents and businesses to access the car park.			
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to add to the capital budget the required sums for completion of the works to change the visitors' car park to a charging car park with Electric Vehicle charging points; subject to a decision to amend the Stroud District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2010 by adding the Ebley Mill car park. As recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.			
Consultation and Feedback	Local residents, businesses , Ward Councillors, the County Councillor and the Town Council have asked this council to consider making the visitors car park available for use by the wider community. Responses to the proposed tariffs will be considered as part of the legal process that has to be followed to add a car park to the Off-Street Parking Paces Order Consultation has also taken place with the Community Services Manager who is responsible for the management of the Council's public car parks.			
Report Author	Alison Fisk, Head of Property Services Tel: 01453 754430 Email: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering permits to residents has been considered but is onerous in terms of administration and would not allow wider access for the general public using the canal or local business or other potential casual users. • The council could decide to retain the car park for visitors to Ebley Mill only. • The council could decide not to charge for parking but it would be difficult to prevent the car park from being filled by long-term parking, to the detriment of other users and the operation of Ebley Mill. 			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – Location plan Appendix B – Proposed Tariffs and Time Limits, Ebley Wharf Car Park Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. Background

- 1.1 The main visitors' car park at Ebley Mill has 52 spaces and is operated by a security barrier with a code. This is not linked to the Mill and users have to be given the code on request to exit the car park or call at reception if there are any problems with the barrier during office hours. The car park has been used in the evenings and weekends by a neighbouring commercial business subject to a licence since 2012, but this has now been terminated by the company.
- 1.2 The council received a request from the Greenaways Residents' Association to use the Ebley Mill visitors' car park to ease parking problems on its estate, towards the end of the pandemic. It was deemed too early to establish what the future demand for the car park would be at that time.
- 1.3 Subsequently further requests were received and a potential question submitted to Council as Gloucestershire County Council Highways considered the implementation of double yellow lines along Westward Road and the entrance to the Greenaways Estate. A resident on Westward Road and one of the businesses at Ebley Wharf have also requested the car park be opened up to use for local residents and customers. The car park is also used occasionally for canal events held nearby.
- 1.4 The County Council has finished its consultation and confirmed its decision to implement waiting restrictions on Greenaways, Ebley Wharf and Westward Road through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). It is understood that the double yellow lines are likely to be in place by the end of March this year.
- 1.5 A planning application/ Listed Building Consent application has been submitted to change the use of the commercial buildings at Fifth Dimension to a residential use, potentially adding to car parking pressures (Planning Ref/; S22/2745/FUL) this application is under consideration.
- 1.6 Ward Councillors, the Town Council and County Councillor have all advocated for the use of the car park by local residents.
- 1.7 Since the pandemic the number of in-person visits to Ebley Mill has dropped significantly (>60%) as the public access and pay for services on-line and meetings are held virtually. Staff numbers have also dropped with hybrid working, the pressure on parking has reduced and it is anticipated that normal levels of demand can be contained within the staff car park for the foreseeable future, with the visitors/public car park still available for overflow.
- 1.8 There is accessible and visitor parking (15 spaces) directly outside of Ebley Mill which will continue to provide free, convenient parking for drop-in visits.
- 1.9 This report was presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 7 March 2024. The Committee agreed to recommend to Council as per the decision box.

2. Main Points

- 2.1 In response to the requests for residents parking and the reduced use of the car park, officers have considered providing residents permits as an option but this would be onerous to administer, would have to be on a 'first come/first served' basis and there is benefit to allowing wider use of the car park in terms of opening it up for canal visitors, customers of the businesses on Ebley Wharf and the wider public who may also need parking but have not yet approached the council.
- 2.2 The most efficient way to manage car park use, encourage 'turnover' of spaces and enforce time limits is through charging and it is therefore proposed that the car park is changed to a charging public car park. The proposed charges are set out in Appendix B

and match charges in Stroud Town Centre (short stay) car parks during office hours, but with a low charge outside of office hours (e.g. evenings and weekends). The limited stay and higher charges during office hours are aimed at ensuring turnover, as this is likely to be when demand is highest and this, along with overnight and weekend charges, also reflects the location of the car park and its ongoing importance to the council's main offices at Ebley Mill, where it may still be required as overflow parking.

- 2.3 Visitors to Ebley Mill will be signposted to park outside the front of the Mill (which will remain free of charge) and this is the most convenient area for the public to park and for the majority of the time has sufficient spaces to accommodate demand for drop-in visits. Additional demand can still be met by the visitors' car park (e.g. for meetings at the Mill) and free parking can be provided e.g. via a tablet in Ebley Mill reception for those visiting the Mill, as required.
- 2.4 Staff and at least one resident have also requested Electric Vehicle (EV) charging which has been included in the costs. The most significant element of this is bringing upgraded cabling from the rear of the Mill round to the car park. Any rollout of EV chargers will reflect the infrastructure being introduced to car parks throughout the district and for which Council has already allocated capital.
- 2.5 Lastly, there is also an opportunity to pilot contactless payments as well as cash and MiPermit options with a new Pay and Display machine, this offers more choice, only adds a capital cost of £600 to the scheme and is familiar to most drivers.

3. Estimated Costs

3.1 Table 1

Capital	Contactless option £
Machine Costs	5,554
Installation P&D (contactless)	630
Signage	1,000
Works/Lining	2,000
EV Charger heads * 22KW 4 no. charging points	9,000
Electricity supply for EV chargers	20,000
Total	£38,000
Revenue Costs	Per annum £
Machine maintenance, MiPermit fees, cash collections, tickets, sundries	2,000
Maintenance (increase from current costs)	500

Contactless fees range from 8p to 11p per transaction, therefore, revenue costs would also include these transaction costs , but it is difficult to estimate gross and net revenue income with demand unknown at present.

4. Proposed Charges and Time limits

- 4.1 These can be seen at Appendix B to this report and are in-line with charges proposed for Stroud Town Centre. The aim of the charges is to provide residents parking but limit long-

stay to overnight and weekends for non- season ticket holders. Season ticket numbers will also be limited to a maximum of 50% of spaces.

- 4.2 The number of general spaces will reduce from 52 spaces to approx. 42 spaces to allow for wider spaces for EV charging and accessible & parent/child spaces.

5. Funding

- 5.1 Costs can be met from within existing budgets but it is not possible to estimate demand, with no similar car parks to compare to in terms of size, location and charges. As the County Council will be proceeding with parking restrictions this will force some car owners to find parking elsewhere and some Greenaways residents have confirmed that they are willing to pay for permits to use this car park.
- 5.2 Enforcement would be through the current establishment of Car Park Enforcement Officers. No increase in staffing is proposed.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 It is recommended that the underused visitors car park is used more productively by changing it to a charging public car park supporting the Council Plan Objective ER1 Economic Recovery – Support our High Streets and Businesses) as well as CW3 (Strengthen Local Democracy). Demand from Ebley Mill has changed over time and the local community and stakeholders have asked the council to respond to these changes and make the car park more accessible to the local community.
- 6.2 The car park also provides an opportunity to install EV chargers which can be used by the public without compromising the security of the staff car park. The use of contactless payments will also be monitored to inform future procurement of pay and display equipment.
- 6.3 The provision of a public car park will increase capital and revenue costs to the council. It is important to recoup these costs and to manage the use and demand for the car park (which may also change in the future) through charges; to balance the demands for residents parking with the need to provide sufficient parking for visitors, staff and tenants at Ebley Mill. The use of the car park will, therefore, be kept under review and season tickets will be limited to ensure the availability of short-stay spaces.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

Revenue and capital costs of implementation are clearly shown in Section 3.1.

The capital cost of installation will be likely be contained within existing maintenance budgets, with any additional cost being funded being funded from income created by parking revenue.

The ongoing maintenance and any future capital works relating to the car park will be met through the income from the parking tariff. Future income is difficult to estimate at this early stage and will be reported to this Committee through the budget monitoring process.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Tel: 01453 754115 Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

7.2 Legal Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Under section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, a local authority may provide off street parking places.
- If the proposed changes set out within this report are approved, the statutory consultation, as required by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, with Gloucestershire County Council, the Chief Officer of Police and other stakeholders, will be required. There are notification and publicity requirements in relation to new Orders relating to off street parking places.
- Responses received as part of the consultation period should be carefully assessed prior to any further action to amend the existing It is proposed that the existing Stroud District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2010 ('the Order').
- Any amendments to the existing Order, following the consultation period and compliance with the notification and publicity requirements, will be made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- There may be insurance implications if the Council's car park is available to members of the public for a charge.
- There may be additional, including legal, resource required for new, or updating existing, contractual arrangements in relation to EV charging points or parking enforcement arrangements.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272012 Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

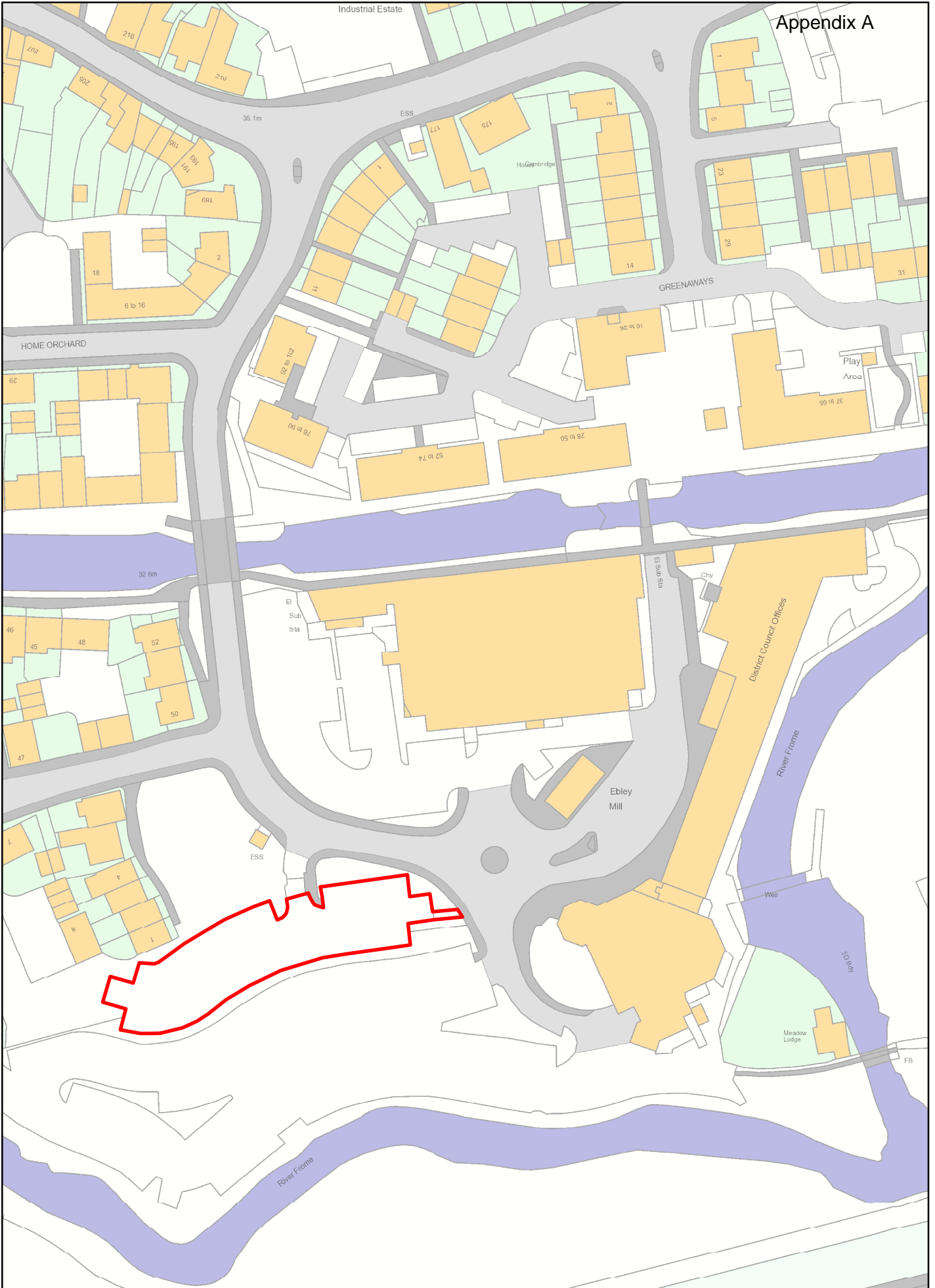
7.3 Equality Implications

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.

7.4 Environmental Implications

The introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging Points supports the rollout in the council's public car parks across the district and has the potential to contribute towards saving the amount of carbon being released in the district each year. Whilst use is expected to be low in the early years, a strong network of charge points will offer surety of supply; an essential step for residents that don't have access to their own electricity supply via off street parking. A network of charge points also allows vehicle 'top up' in market town and other locations, increasing confidence and reducing range anxiety.

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Appendix A - Visitor Car Park, Ebley Mill

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Proposed Charges and Time Limits; Ebley Wharf Car Park

Charges will apply Mon to Sunday.

Mon to Friday – SHORT STAY ONLY 8 am to 5pm

1 hr	£1.70
2 hrs	£2.50
3 hrs	£3.70

Maximum 3 hrs, no return within 1 hr

Overnight charges - Weekdays

Mon to Thursday 5 pm to 8 am	£1.00
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Maximum 15 hr stay

Weekend Charges

Friday 5pm to Monday 8 am	£3.00
---------------------------	-------

Season Tickets Charges:

1 month	£55.00
3 months	£165.00
6 months	£300.00
Annual	£550.00

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Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council’s General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to –*

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at: <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

[Guidance available on the HUB](#)

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Name(s): Alison Fisk	Telephone: 01453 766321
	E-Mail: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk
Service: Property Services	Date of Assessment: 23/02/24

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

Change of visitor’s car park at Ebley Mill to a public (charging car park)

Is this new or an existing one?

This is a new policy/ project but a change of access to what is effectively a private car park

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The policy change seeks to provide access to the local community and visitors to the canal and local businesses to additional car parking whilst also retaining short stay use for visitors to Ebley Mill

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

Appendix C
 Changing the car park to a public 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?

Local residents, the general public, local businesses by providing more off road parking

6. What outcomes are expected?

An increased use in the car park and corresponding decrease in on-street parking in the surrounding residential areas. Improved accessibility to the canal.

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

Requests from local residents, businesses, ward councillors and the County Councillor have been made to access this car park.

Local knowledge and experience of on-street parking and the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order by the County Council (double yellow lines being introduced)

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

Further consultation will take place as part of the statutory 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)
Age	Potential positive impact. Additional safe off-street parking close to the canal 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 area.
Disability	Potential positive impact. Through the creation of additional public parking spaces it is possible to include as part of the process a consideration of whether this includes additional accessible parking provision in the extended car park
Gender Re-assignment	No impact anticipated
Pregnancy & Maternity	Potential positive impact. Through the creation of additional public parking spaces it is possible to include as part of the process a consideration of whether this includes additional parent and child parking provision in the car park
Race	No impact anticipated

Religion – Belief	No impact anticipated
Sex	No impact anticipated
Sexual Orientation	No impact anticipated
Marriage & Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)	No impact anticipated
Rural considerations: le Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	Increased parking in the area is likely to allow greater access for those who live outside and who are dependent on vehicle travel to access local businesses and the canal

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
Consideration of more Disabled Parking and parent/Child parking provision as part of parking plans	Brian McGough	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

Completed by: Alison Fisk	Date: 23/02/24
Role: Head of property Services	
Countersigned by Head of Service/Director: 	Date: 26/02/24

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

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Cotswold Canals Connected Project Update			
Purpose of Report	To update the Committee on the revised approach to the delivery of the Cotswold Canals Connected project.			
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to approve the revised approach as set out in this report as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee.			
Consultation and Feedback	The revised approach for the project that is set out in this report has been the subject of detailed discussion and agreement with all partners on the Cotswold Canals Connected Project Board, including Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Cotswold Canals Trust, Canal and Rivers Trust and Stroud Valleys Canal Company. The revised approach has also been agreed by the principal funding body for the project - National Lottery Heritage Fund.			
Report Author(s)	Chris Mitford-Slade – Canal Project Director Email: chrisms@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	Members may opt to not support the revised approach to the delivery of the project that is set out in this report. This is not recommended as the approach has been developed following detailed analysis and discussion with the relevant project partners as well as National Lottery Heritage Fund.			
Background Papers	Engineering Programme – CCT Update Jan 24 Cotswold Canals Trust “TROW) Magazine - Spring 2024			
Appendices	Appendix A – Environment Programme Progress Report Jan 24 Appendix B - Community Engagement Progress Report Jan 24			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A detailed Canal Report was submitted to the Strategy and Resources (S&R) Committee on 24th November 2022 where it was agreed to allocate £1m to the Phase 1B project from the SDC Capital Reserve Fund as an additional contribution to the project. This was further discussed at the full SDC Council Meeting on 15th December 2022 where it was resolved to increase the capital budget for the Canal Project by £10.87m. During both of these meetings there was agreed support across all councillors for the successful completion of the Canal Project (Phase 1B) and recognition of the significant economic, environmental and community benefits of this project.

- 1.2 The following key information was highlighted in the Minutes of the November 2022 S&R Committee Meeting:
 - 1.2.1 The restoration of the canal would bring significant economic, environmental and community benefits to the local area.
 - 1.2.2 The project budget was set in early 2020 prior to the start of the Covid Pandemic and was based on a completion date of the end of 2024.
 - 1.2.3 Following the first lockdown in May 2020 a Covid Impact Assessment was drafted which stated that the situation could change if there were further impacts of Covid-19.
 - 1.2.4 There had been an impact on both project delivery and costs.
 - 1.2.5 Rising inflation had impacted energy costs and the cost and availability of materials.
 - 1.2.6 A gap of approximately £10m had been identified.
 - 1.2.7 The CCC Project were applying for £2.2m from National Highways and between £2m and £2.5m from the National Lottery Covid Fund.
 - 1.2.8 The remaining funds would be made up from other partners, fundraising and the sale of materials.
 - 1.2.9 If the Committee agreed to additional funding it would not be drawn down until after full Permission to Start was awarded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 1.3 Since the decision in November 2022 there have been two significant changes to the project delivery:
 - 1.3.1 Planning approval has taken longer than expected, but planning was permitted at the Development Control Committee Meeting on 27th February 2024 subject to S106 agreement and planning conditions. The Engineering Programme and project completion is now unlikely before end 2027. The timeline for completion is primarily driven by the time required to secure the additional funding to complete the project. The two biggest projects to be funded are Walk Bridge and the M5 crossing.
 - 1.3.2 Grant funding bids from National Highways and National Lottery were not been submitted as it should be noted that the as the National Highways fund closed unexpectedly in June 2023 as their remaining funds were allocated to the Ash Dieback project which went significantly over budget. The next National Highways fund is expected to be open for grants from April 2025 but the size and criteria for this fund have not yet been confirmed. A detailed fundraising plan is in place which includes securing the additional funding through public sector grants, charitable trusts, corporate sponsorship, legacies, donations and general fundraising.
- 1.4 Despite these challenges progress has been made on both the Environment and Community programmes and these reports are attached at Annexes A and B respectively, with the plan of works for 2024.
- 1.5 This report was presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 7 March 2024. The Committee agreed to recommend to Council as per the decision box.

2. THE REVISED APPROACH TO THE PROJECT

- 2.1 Due to the significant changes in the project delivery a detailed review of the Phase 1B project was conducted by the Cotswold Canals Connected (CCC) Project Board in October 2023 and approved by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Board. This programme was based on delivering the following “*phased programme of work*” by December 2025 within the original budget:

- a. Completing the Community Engagement and Environment programmes
 - b. Completing Section 3 of the canal (Stonehouse to Eastington)
 - c. Monitoring & Evaluation report to be submitted in December 2025
 - d. Securing additional funding required to complete the project
 - e. Commencing works in the Missing Mile once Planning Approval secured and within available budget funding
- 2.2 The majority of the work in the “*phased programme of work*” will be volunteer led projects and Cotswold Canals Trust (CCT) are currently recruiting for additional volunteers as well as putting in place the teams, processes and resources to deliver these projects. Maps, engineering designs and photographs of the engineering sub-projects are attached at Annex C. There are also a number of interesting articles in the Spring 2024 Edition of the TROW Magazine (Annex D), including an update on the project on pages 12 to 15.
- 2.3 Completing the engineering project and connecting the Stroudwater Canal to the national canal network at Saul Junction will be dependent on finding more affordable design solutions, as well as securing the additional funding required to deliver these. Both of these programmes are already in place with the new Chief Engineer, Rob Benson, leading on a design review of the engineering projects: the two largest projects being the M5 crossing and Walk Bridge.
- 2.4 Quarterly progress reports will be submitted to both CCC Project Board and NLHF so that they can assess progress against:
- 2.4.1 Phased Programme of Work.
 - 2.4.2 Forecast engineering costs to complete the project, and securing the additional funding required (Note: the additional £1m allocated by S&R Committee in November 2022 has been allocated to this additional funding).
- 2.5 The NLHF Board will review progress in December 2024 and will consider making a further grant to the project once forecast costs are known and the majority of funding is in place to achieve this.
- 2.6 The key difference to the plan submitted to the S&R Committee in November 2022 is that this plan commits the current budget to delivering a reduced section of canal (Stonehouse to Eastington). The engineering costs of completing the project, and the funding required to meet the additional costs, remain as the highest risk to the success of this project. The £1M awarded by the S&R Committee will help to reduce this funding gap and demonstrates the council’s commitment to the project.
- 2.7 The S&R Committee also need to be aware that Stroud Valleys Canal Company (SVCC) and CCT have a framework agreement to hand over the responsibility for operating and maintaining the canal from SVCC to CCT. There are significant benefits with this approach as CCT have resources, volunteers and an established fundraising model; and are also recognised as the face of the canal. They are currently working up this model and it is anticipated that they will require commitment and support from the four members of SVCC (SDC, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), CCT and the Company of Proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation (CoPSN). They will assess this in two parts:
- 2.7.1 Maintenance model pre-connection. This will include the maintenance of Phase1A and the additional work required pre-connection which will be mainly around additional moorings. This was a known requirement when the bid was submitted but for the costs for this work was not included in the NLHF bid.
 - 2.7.2 Maintenance and operations model post connection. The canal will not be operational until the Phase1B project has been completed. The operating model

was submitted at Annex I (Business Plan) to the NLHF bid. This will need to be reviewed.

3. CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The S&R Committee is requested to support the revised programme of work agreed by both the CCC Project Board and NLHF Board.
- 3.2 The S&R Committee is requested to note that the future operating model of the canal is being developed and that this may have an impact on SDC, as one of the four members of SVCC. It is acknowledged that impacts on SDC will likely require a decision by members. Therefore, a further report will be presented to S&R Committee, once proposals for the future operating model are available and potential impacts on SDC are known.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

The main financial implication is that the original canal budget is not sufficient to deliver the project and will only restore a reduced section of canal (between Stonehouse and Eastington). The S&R Committee were briefed on the reasons for the cost increase in November 2022 where they awarded a further £1m to the project. This money will be kept in reserve to make up the funding gap to complete the project. There are therefore no financial implications on SDC with this approach.

4.2 Legal Implications

The project is continuing under the original agreement with NLHF and the revised Partial Permission to Start which was issued on 15th January 2024. There are therefore no legal implications associated with this approach.

4.3 Equality Implications

There are no equality implications arising from a decision to endorse the revised approach to delivery of the canal project set out in this report.

Members are asked to note that the Community Engagement programme has been established to provide accessibility and opportunities for all along the canal. This work is being evaluated by an independent consultant, Ann Nicol, and an interim report will be produced in December 2024.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are therefore no environmental implications arising from a decision to endorse the revised approach to delivery of the canal project set out in this report.




Members are asked to note that the Environmental programme has been established to increase the biodiversity along the canal and ensure that the engineering programme adheres to environmental best practice and legislation.

Cotswold Canals Connected (CCC)
Working with Nature
Progress Report: 1st July to 31st December 2023

The information in this document is submitted and discussed as part of the CCC Project's quarterly reporting to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Progress towards the project's approved purposes

Green	Delivery is on track
Amber	Minor issues are impacting delivery
Red	Major issues are impacting delivery

People & Nature Activity	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN01 – Environmental Training</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Volunteers are skilled and well-equipped to carry out tasks.</p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and environment.</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p> <p>70 people trained</p> <p>20 training courses</p> <p>4 accredited courses</p> <p>20 people engaged new to environment work</p> <p>8 environmental guardians</p>	<p>Various training courses arranged in the last 6 months. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush cutter and scythe training for volunteer leads to enable them to run volunteer work parties and teach volunteers necessary skills to carry out tasks • Riverfly training course arranged for 11 volunteers on 27/09/2023, led by a trainer from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust • Various on-site sessions for volunteers such as bird nesting check training and toolbox talks. <p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83/70 people trained to date • 13/20 training courses • 4/7 accredited courses • 17/20 people new to environmental volunteering • 3/8 environmental guardians <p><u>Photo's</u></p> <p><i>Figure 1: Riverfly training</i></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div>	

Approved purpose Appendix A	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN02 – Habitat creation and enhancement projects</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Volunteers are skilled and well-equipped to carry out tasks.</p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and environment.</p> <p>Vols have increase in happiness, satisfaction, wellbeing and connection to place</p> <p>Minimal negative environmental impact during the construction phase</p> <p>Community members feel positive about biodiversity creation and improvements</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p> <p>100 WWN volunteers</p> <p>30,000 trees/plants planted by vols</p> <p>20ha or new or restored habitat</p> <p>4km of new hedgerow</p> <p>100 bird/bat boxes installed</p> <p>Minimum 10% increase in biodiversity units</p>	<p><i>Habitat Creation/Restoration</i></p> <p><u>Scrape Creation (site 7)</u></p> <p>We hired the Liebrecht rotary ditcher in September 2023 to create a series of connected scrapes, shallow pools and ditches which will fill with water during periods of prolonged rainfall. It's the only machine of its kind in the UK. Owned by the RSPB, it has the sole purpose of wetland creation. This large cylinder on wheels is towed by a large tractor and has a rotating barrel inside armed with large "teeth". It's designed to scoop up and churn the topsoil before spraying it over a large area, avoiding the creation of spoil heaps.</p> <p>The ditcher created nine pools which vary in size and depth and connecting ditches. On the first run the driver removed the soil close to the surface. Several runs were needed to get down to the desired depths – between 40 and 50cms deep. Due to some quite substantial wet weather this winter the scrapes are already holding water and we'll soon see many species of plants and invertebrates arrive. We hope this will become an important feeding ground for waders and wildfowl, many of which migrate to wetland sites across the UK in the winter. Amphibians, bats and countless species of invertebrates will also benefit.</p> <p>The majority of the costs for hiring the ditcher (£14,280 of £15,320) will be paid for under the sites higher-tier countryside stewardship agreement, under option GS10 Management of wet grassland for wintering wildfowl and waders.</p> <p>To finish the site, we will lower 2 sections of the existing flood embankment to reconnect the floodplain with the River Frome and allow the scrapes to be filled from the river as well as rainfall. This is planned for summer 2024.</p>  <p><i>Figure 2: Drone footage of scrapes during construction</i></p>  <p><i>Figure 3: Pete Savage (Canal Project Officer) and rotary ditcher on site.</i></p>	



Figure 4: Scrapes starting to hold water as viewed from Occupation bridge

Orchard Restoration (site 6a)

The restoration of Pockett's orchard continues unabated with monthly volunteer work parties alongside some additional sessions to focus on constructing a field shelter for use by volunteers, the local school and community whilst on site.



Figure 5: New field shelter under construction at Pockett's orchard

Species Rich Grassland (site 6b)

We are currently in a higher-tier stewardship agreement for land on the north canal restoring it to species-rich grassland, To do this we are managing (reducing) grazing pressure by working with the local tenant farmer under a grazing license, as well as updating and replacing infrastructure such as fences and gates so that we can control cattle movement across the site.

Site 3

No progress over last 6 months as the priority has been delivering the scrapes and getting the water vole licence application in place.

Due to delays in the delivery of the Missing Mile, and because the two areas are likely to include similar working areas, it will not be possible to complete the habitat creation works in this area by the end of 2024. Instead, the aim is to have completed detailed design and have planning permission and all the necessary consents in place by the end of the year.

Progress against targets

- 91/100 WWN volunteers
- 10/20ha or habitat restored or enhanced
- Net gain calculations not yet complete

Appendix A

Landscape Connectivity and Enhancement Projects

Hedgerow Planting

We have now planted over 1km of new hedgerow as part of the CCC project with more planned for the coming year. We have also put on some recent hedge laying training for existing CCT/SDC volunteers to ensure they have the skills to manage both new and existing hedgerows in the future.

There have been some delays with agreeing locations for additional planting for this winter season. At one location where discussions had progressed well the landowner is now trying to apply for BNG which might mean that we are unable to deliver the 1.5km of hedge planting we had anticipated. We are pursuing other areas.

As the environment team will only be working on the project until the end of 2024 it is unlikely all the hedge planting will be completed - there is some 880m of new hedge planned within the Missing Mile and a 25m section of hedging at Walk bridge, neither of which can be planted until after the associated engineering/construction work has been completed. This also means we are unlikely to hit our targets for planting 30,000 trees/plants shrubs as most of these are within the hedged areas. All outstanding works will need to be handed over to a responsible person within CCC at the end of 2024 and this will be documented in the GWT/CCC transition/handover pack.



Figure 6: Hedge Laying near Ham Mill Lock (phase 1A)

Built Habitat

Built habitat work has been a slow burner in the last 6 months as we have been focusing on getting the main habitat creation areas completed. We have, however installed 5 bird boxes in 3 locations we have planted new hedges (Pockett's orchard, Newtown Lock and at the Boatmobility compound. We also have agreements in place to install both bat and bird boxes within a pocket of woodland alongside the canal.

The biggest installation to date has been a barn owl box which was installed on land near Stanley Downton (to the southeast of the Ocean Railway Bridge).



Figure 7: Barn Owl box installation near Stanley Downton

The box was constructed by one of our volunteers, a real bird expert (he used to work for the British Trust for Ornithology) - this meant we only ended up paying for the material. In addition, as the box was so large, we arranged for an experienced

tree climber to install the box for us. Manuel ended up not charging us for this work (around half a day on the weekend) as he was so supportive of what the group is trying to achieve for wildlife.

As with the hedgerow work, the plan is to leave a detailed plan at the end of 2024 of where any uninstalled built habitat can be located.

Progress against targets

- 91/100 WWN volunteers
- 4,218/30,000 trees/shrubs/plants planted
- 1.08/4km of new hedgerow planted and managed
- 6/100 bird/bat boxes installed

Approved purpose	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN03 – Wildlife Monitoring</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and the environment.</p> <p>More engagement with nature leading to improved health and wellbeing</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p> <p>4000 volunteer hours</p> <p>Volunteers identify increased number and frequency of species using new habitat areas</p> <p>More multifunctional natural spaces and blue green infrastructure</p> <p>More connectivity of wildlife habitats in Severn Vale</p>	<p><u>Baseline Surveys - SWSG</u></p> <p>Stroud Wildlife Survey Group (SWSG) have been conducting ground and riparian (the area between a land and water) surveys across the CCC project area, laying the groundwork and creating a baseline which allows us to assess how healthy it currently is and record improvements over the next few years and beyond.</p> <p>SWSG was set up in 2016 by a number of volunteers within GWT for the purpose of monitoring and surveying wildlife in the Stroud area. It consists of around 70 volunteers with a diverse set of ecological survey skills. A significant proportion of the groups surveying was directed by GWT pre-Covid. Most of the work stopped like everything else during lockdowns. Since then, the group has slowly re-convened and there is a desire to get the organisation into a shape where it can operate independently, providing survey services organisations in the area.</p> <p>To help support the group in its aims to become an independent survey team for the Stroud area, CCC have provided some funding to cover some of the administration costs incurred setting up as an independent organisation and by providing survey and monitoring training for volunteers in a wider range of skills.</p> <p>In addition to the surveys by SWSG, GWT staff and trainees have also been on site carrying out a baseline Nature Reserve Condition monitoring which will be repeated every 3 years and will allow us to track change and adapt management in the future.</p> <p><u>Species Rich Grassland (site 6b)</u></p> <p>We are currently in a higher-tier stewardship agreement for land on the north canal restoring it to species-rich grassland, To do this we are managing (reducing) grazing pressure by working with the local tenant farmer under a grazing license, as well as updating and replacing infrastructure such as fences and gates so that we can control cattle movement across the site.</p> <p>The fields have also been subject to a full botanical survey which identified over 46 species including the rare (and rather beautifully named) Corky-fruited Water-Dropwort which is found in damp meadows and moist grassy places and often beside ponds or ditches (or on this case canals).</p> <p><u>Ongoing Wildlife Monitoring</u></p> <p>Since 2019 we have had a number of camera traps out along the canal – the exact location of these varies with the season. These images get sifted through by a GWT volunteer and then uploaded to MammalWeb for classification by volunteers online. This data then supports wider research on the current state of UK mammals. Since our project page went live over 129 different individuals have taken the time to classify the wildlife captured by the trial cams.</p> <p>https://www.mammalweb.org/en/?view=projecthome&option=com_biodiv&project</p>	<p style="background-color: #90EE90;"></p>

<p>Appendix A</p>	<p>id=131</p> <p>Following the completion of a Riverfly monitoring course earlier this year we are currently undertaking regular surveys at 2 sites locations along the river (the canal itself is too deep to allow monitoring to be carried out safely). This will increase to 5 or 6 sites after March once river levels recede.</p> <p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2367/4000 volunteer hours ▪ Baseline surveys completed across project area 	
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Approved purpose	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN04 Citizen Science</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and environment.</p> <p>More engagement with nature leading to improved health and wellbeing</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p> <p>75 people participate in analysis and classification</p> <p>Increased biodiversity within 15 years</p>	<p>A number of citizen science projects have been ongoing across the Delivery Phase</p> <p>Mammal web – see above, 129 individuals to date.</p> <p>SWSG surveys – see above, 12 individuals involved to date.</p> <p><u>Riverfly Monitoring</u></p> <p>As briefly mentioned above, following, the completion of a Riverfly monitoring course by 11 individuals earlier this year we are currently undertaking regular surveys at 2 sites locations along the river (the canal itself is too deep to allow monitoring to be carried out safely). This will increase to 5 or 6 sites after March once river levels recede.</p> <p>Riverfly monitoring involves volunteers taking 3-minute samples from the riverbed each month and recording the presence and abundance of eight pollution-sensitive invertebrate groups. The focus of the sampling is on ‘riverflies’ – mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies. If invertebrate numbers drop below a ‘Trigger level’ (expected population abundances), the Environment Agency is notified so that the problem can be identified, and action taken. This scheme allows groups and individuals to monitor and help to protect their local rivers and helps ensure rivers are monitored more widely and at greater frequency than is possible by the Environment Agency alone.</p> <p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 152/75 citizen science volunteers! ▪ Baseline surveys completed across project area 	

Approved purpose	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN05 – Health & Wellbeing</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and environment.</p> <p>Participants feel more engaged with nature, are happier, have increased satisfaction and/or connection to place</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p>	<p><u>Built structures – bird hides and benches</u></p> <p>Various built structures were planned as part of the delivery of the project but much of the work on these has been delayed due to general project programming and to allow focus on other priority areas.</p> <p>Bird hides – we have so far created one small bird hide within Pockett’s orchard. This was created by a corporate volunteer group back in 2022 and is regularly used by a number of individuals from Whitminster village. A much bigger, roofed bird hide will be constructed adjacent to the towpath overlooking the new scrape areas over the next year (likely summer 2024).</p> <p>Benches – a number of locations are proposed for the siting of benches to encourage people to go outdoors and enjoy the canal. However, the locations need to not only be guided by aesthetics but also take into account the needs of the towpath users and take into consideration the proximity to interpretation. Given the overall delays with completion of the towpath and engineering works it is highly</p>	

<p>More multifunctional natural spaces and blue green infrastructure</p> <p>Building with Nature accreditation</p> <p>6 benches installed</p> <p>2 bird hides installed</p> <p>People make use of benches and bird hides</p>	<p>unlikely that there will be time to both agree and install benches before the end of 2024. As such it is proposed that any aspects of this work not completed are handed over to the engagement team at the end of 2024. We will, however, be able to install at least one bench within Pockett's orchard over the coming months.</p> <p><u>Building with Nature Accreditation</u></p> <p>It has not been possible to apply for Building with Nature Accreditation at this stage given the ongoing changes to project design. It will become clearer across 2024 whether gaining accreditation will be achievable by the end of the year.</p> <p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0/6 benches installed ▪ 1 of 2 bird hides install ▪ BwN accreditation not yet applied for ▪ Baseline surveys completed across project area
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Approved purpose	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN06 – Pockett's Orchard</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Orchard feels like a positive space</p> <p>Greater knowledge and understanding of canal wildlife and environment.</p> <p>People learn new skills, are happier, have increased connection to place and experience improved health and well being</p> <p><u>Targets and Outputs</u></p> <p>More multifunctional spaces & blue green infrastructure</p> <p>More connectivity of wildlife habitats</p> <p>At least 4 orchard events held annually</p>	<p>The orchard restoration continues, with a monthly volunteer work party held on a Saturday to allow attendance from those people who cannot normally help out in the week.</p> <p>Work parties have picked and pressed apples (although the majority go off to one of the volunteers who makes his own cider), carried out formative and restorative pruning, scrub removal and lots of thistle pulling!</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p><i>Figure 8: Pockett's Orchard volunteers carrying out various restoration tasks</i></p> <p>Alongside the volunteer work we have also used the orchard for various events from foraging evenings to Bioblitz days for families. The local school in Whitminster also regularly use the orchard as an outdoor learning area and to hold their annual harvest festival day celebration.</p> <p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular orchard work parties and events held across the year including monthly work parties 	

Approved purpose	Summary of progress	Status
<p>PN07 – Engage with Nature</p> <p><u>Priority Outcomes</u></p> <p>Young people: have greater knowledge and</p>	<p>A number of the outcomes for this activity will now be delivered by (and subsequently reported on) by the engagement team, under Tony Chalk.</p> <p>We have continued our relationship with the local primary school in Whitminster who have already undertaken a number of projects with us – from painting signs for the orchard trees, to planting the edible hedgerow on the northern boundary of Pockett's orchard.</p>	

Agenda Item 9b

understanding of the Appendices A canal wildlife and environment

Increased engagement with nature

Experience health and wellbeing benefits

Targets and Outputs

6 educational projects with schools or colleges

200 children engaged

4 local primary schools have resources and training

2 schools run events independently

In the last 6 months we have also worked with them on an Eels in the Classroom project in partnership with Bristol Avon Rivers Trust and the Sustainable Eel Group. After applying for the necessary permissions from the Environment Agency, Pete Savage (Canal Project Officer) collected around 100 elver (young eel) from a local elver fisherman. These were then taken to the school where we had already set up a tank ready for their arrival. The elvers were looked after by the children for around 6-weeks, during which time they learnt about why eels are endangered and how many species struggle to move around our rivers (and indeed the wider landscape) due to the man-made barriers in their way.

Once they had started to pigment and mature into yellow eel the elver were then transported to the River Frome (close enough for the school children to be able to walk to the release site) and released into the river to carry out their lifecycle.



Figure 9: Whitminster school children welcoming the eels to their new home!

Progress against targets

- 4/6 educational projects completed
- 140/200 children engaged with
- 1/4 primary school has training/resources
- 1 of 2 schools run events independently

2024 Programme

Green	Delivery is on track
Amber	Minor issues are impacting delivery
Red	Major issues are impacting delivery

		2024								
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Habitat creation Projects										
Frome Washland (Site 3) - south of Frome, Missing Mile	Detailed design									
	FR modelling									
	Planning application									
	Consenting - IDB, EA, NE									
	Baseline surveys									
	Tree planting									
Species-rich grassland and heirloom orchard (site 6b)	Infrastructure work - fencing and water troughs									
	order trees and shrubs									
	Heirloom Orchard creation									
	Baseline Surveys									
	Finalise Management Plan									
Pockett's Orchard (site 6a)	Restoration work - pruning, grafting etc									
	Culvert and access western boundary									
	Order and plant trees									
	Hedge laying and gapping up eastern boundary									
	Baseline Surveys									
	Orchard signs and interpretation									
	Continued orchard training - PN06									
	Bench									
	Install field shelter									
	Finalise Orchard Management Plan									
Scrapes and pools (site 7)	FR modelling									
	Planning application									

	Hedge planting	■	■	■															■	■	
	Hedge maintenance				■	■	■	■													
	Management plan incl laying																		■	■	■
Standard Trees	Ocean Bridge re-planting			■	■																
	Black Poplars																			■	■
	Standard tree planting			■	■	■														■	■
Vegetation Management	Invasive Non-Native species control - HB				■	■	■	■	■												
	Mink control			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Hazardous tree work			■	■															■	■
Built Habitat	Installing bat boxes			■	■																
	Installing bird boxes (various)			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Adapting pillboxes																			■	■
	Insect houses					■	■														
	Reptile/amphibian hibernacula					■	■	■	■												
Environmental training for volunteers - PN01	Environmental awareness training			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Toolbox talks			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Basic Tree Inspection course 2					■															
	Expert talks and ID various			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Wildlife monitoring and surveys - PN03	Expert talks and ID various					■	■	■	■												
	Basic Tree Inspection of Phase 1					■	■	■	■												
	SWSG baseline surveys					■	■	■	■												
Citizen Science Projects - PN04	SWSG baseline surveys					■	■	■	■												
	Riverfly monitoring			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Eels in the classroom					■	■	■	■												
	Mammal web			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Health and Wellbeing	Building with Nature Accreditation																			■	■
	Benches																			■	■

Appendix A
Risks and Issues

Risk / Issue	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	Priority
<p>1. Water Voles Water voles are present at R. Frome around the M5 and in the canal at Whitminster and Dock Lock. Otters and badgers present in all sections. WV displacements required at multiple locations with 3 translocations required at Wharf House, Bonds Mill Embankment and Dock Lock.</p> <p>Delays to project likely to result in even wider distribution of water voles across project area.</p> <p>Previous work undertaken by SDC and CCT volunteers is likely to have come close to breaching legislation causing huge risk to project.</p> <p>Need to consider impact both during restoration and once operational. Standard management of canal will not be possible.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protected species surveys completed, and ecological consultants appointed for delivery phase - includes Mike Dean to oversee wv work. ▪ Mitigation strategy for water voles written and has been submitted for consideration by Natural England as part of the DAS, no major amendments requested at this stage. This will allow a site wide licence to be approved, increasing seasons when work can be carried out and meaning all works can be consented in one go rather than requiring individual licences. ▪ Programme and budget includes habitat creation/restoration for wv on both canal and river which should result in a clear conservation gain for the species overall ▪ Update to above - project delays have required separate licence applications for different sections of canal - Section 3 licence application submitted Dec 23. ▪ Water Vole action plan written and signed off by SVCC, CCT and CCC Boards. Cascade training outlining responsibilities and consequences to be rolled out. 	
<p>2. Flood Risk Increased flood risk to people or property from biodiversity creation projects.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flood risk modelling has been completed by Katherine Teakle Associates as part of MM planning application - this includes canal, river and biodiversity creation areas (sites 3 and 7). ▪ Further modelling planned for water vole receptor ponds, lowering flood embankments. This is being carried out by Linda Hemsley. 	
<p>3. Biodiversity Net Gain Failure to meet restoration targets e.g. areas created, time for habitat to reach condition.</p> <p>Lack of design freeze (eg location and duration of compounds, access etc) mean BNG metrics cannot be assessed</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat Condition Assessment has been carried out (to meet requirements of current metric) ▪ Habitats identified for creation are priority habitats which score highly on metrics 	
<p>4. Long-term management of biodiversity creation areas Failure to meet restoration targets e.g. areas created, time for habitat to reach condition.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GWT Board have agreed to acquire and manage land in principle. ▪ On-going management sustainable by project volunteers led by GWT. ▪ SVCC have agreed to cover the costs of this for 15 years, which will allow time for habitats to establish and reach appropriate conditions to meet net gain targets. ▪ Agreement in principle to be drawn up by parties in summer 2024 	

<p>5. Budget Changes from budgeted figures - large increases in water vole population and delays in delivery have increased Env budget considerably. In addition, budget submitted to NHLF was as at 2017 rather than updated version so not correct</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have carried out budget reforecast to take into account additional work required (e.g. receptor ponds) and increased costs due to covid and inflation. This has been submitted to exec board ▪ Additional funding streams such as Countryside Stewardship (which will pay for a lot of the capital items on site) and updated bid to National Highways 	
<p>6. Health & Safety Health and safety of volunteers working on habitat creation projects and vegetation management. Working near water. Handling mechanical equipment.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training to be provided to volunteers and project staff. Assessed for competence in task and use of equipment. ▪ Risk assessments, personal protection equipment, and on-site briefings. Insurance cover. ▪ and made available when anyone working on site. 	
<p>7. Biodiversity site 3 Washland design needs to be re-designed and approved by utilities companies and EA. Site 3 will not be delivered during time project team are in contract. Project Director might choose to cut this from programme to decrease budget resulting in project not achieving BNG. This could also impact ability to secure additional funding from National Highways</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilities companies to be re-engaged with re requirements. ▪ Further design work to be commissioned once FRM completed and agreed for Missing Mile ▪ Environment agency engaged with re design ▪ Site 3 with be progressed to detailed design, with planning and consents in place by end of 3024. Full budget handed across to Project Director ▪ Transition plan in place setting out when and how this work will take place with clear commitments to deliver 	
<p>8. Planning permission (habitat creation) Wetland areas require planning permission under TCPA.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early engagement with planning team at SDC and working with EA and local community to ensure design is suitable for planning permission. ▪ Programming gives time for TCPA application and consultation. ▪ Once detailed design work completed meetings to be held with SDC planning team to get early advice. 	
<p>9. Invasive Non-Native Species The spread of INNS as a result of restoration work opening up canal and G&S</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INNS management plan, engagement and education. ▪ Mink and plant control underway since the development stage to minimise spread. ▪ Train people in identification. ▪ Biosecurity measures such as Virkon to be put in place for contractors 	
<p>10. Fish migration and biodiversity Project is deemed to impact on River Frome and potential fish populations. Additional compensation required that cannot be delivered by costed habitat creation works</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engagement with EA and partners to ensure robust mitigation strategy in place and areas for improvement identified. ▪ Eel strategy completed and sent to EA. Eel passes included as standard within new lock design ▪ APEM have been appointed to oversee migratory fish sections of MM planning application ▪ Fish survey undertaken for Oldbury Brook in advance of planning conditions 	

Appendix A

<p>11. Lack of coordination between project themes, particularly where early works can be undertaken</p> <p>Programmes not properly aligned causing delays to engineering or environmental works or requiring additional work to put right afterwards.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular meetings between environment, engagement and engineering teams. ▪ Programme revision underway to align and complement engineering programme 	
<p>12. Consenting</p> <p>Various works will require consents from IDB, EA etc. This could cause programme issues if delayed and/or impact overall project outcomes if aspects cannot go ahead at all.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consenting matrix written for NHLF bid setting out requirements for consents at each stage. ▪ Timelines for each consent included within the project programme. ▪ Good working relationships established within the project team and with statutory authorities. ▪ IDB and EA engaged with during design stages of w 	
<p>13. Regulatory infringement during project delivery</p> <p>Works undertaken without correct training or not to agreed working methods breaches licence conditions and/or results in impacts to protected species</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental training to be provided to volunteers ▪ Matrix written showing ecological enabling works required before, during and after every engineering project ▪ Engagement with engineering PM team ▪ Incident reporting to Exec team with escalation to PB as required ▪ Escalation and engagement plan included in training for all contractors. ▪ Ecological consultants to produce PWMS and provide ECoW to mitigate risks and meet licence conditions 	
<p>14. Protected species (other)</p> <p>Volunteer groups not planning works to avoid bird nesting season. Necessary checks not being carried out and documented ahead of works.</p> <p>Members of the public making complaint to police and/or on social suggesting project is breaking the law or not taking wildlife into consideration</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further bat surveys required for MM and Walk Bridge ▪ Badger setts known and mitigation has been undertaken where appropriate (setts closed in MM) ▪ Mapping created for use by engineering team and volunteers highlighting areas where protected species are present ▪ Regular meetings with engineering team to schedule works in advance 	
<p>15. Vegetation Clearance</p> <p>Volunteer groups not planning works to avoid bird nesting season. Necessary checks not being carried out and documented ahead of works.</p> <p>Members of the public making complaint to police and/or on social suggesting project is breaking the law or not taking wildlife into consideration</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vegetation management plan written by CCT, currently undergoing update ▪ Advice sought with C&RT and alignment of policies ▪ Incident reporting to form part of monthly feedback to Exec team with clear actions to avoid impacts ▪ Bird nesting check form created and circulated amongst organisations 	
<p>16. Reduced capacity</p> <p>In the last few months of the project due to staff leaving fixed-term posts early to secure future employment.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing conversations with project staff to ensure early notice of intentions / plans to leave their posts. ▪ Existing ways of working lend 	

Budget - breakdown of expenditure (spent and committed)

Project	Description	Cost
Frome Washland (site 3)	Spend to date £0	
	Detailed design (incl FRM), planning application and consents	£22,700
	Site infrastructure – gates, fences etc.	£3,300
Pockett's Orchard (site 6a)	Spend to date £4,692	
	Planting and tree guards	£1,100
	Bench and wooden field shelter	£1,000
	Volunteer training (PN06)	£1,180
Species-rich grassland (site 6b)	Spend to date £1137	
	Planting	£1,000
	Site infrastructure – fences, gates, water troughs	£2,500
Scrapes and pools (site 7)	Spend to date £24,077	
	FRM, planning application and consents	£5,200
	Water facilities for cattle	£3,920
	Lowering of flood embankments	£9,000
Water vole receptor ponds	Spend to date £12,400	
	Design (including FRM), planning application and consents	£9,700
	Excavation/spoil removal (incl. archaeological watching brief)	£76,000
	Planting and vegetation work	£13,500
	Water vole fencing and sundries	£75,000
Wildflower meadows and grassland	Habitat creation (including restoration of compounds)	£16,500
Hedgerows and Trees	Spend to date £5,339	
	Hedgerow plants, guards, bark mulch and fencing	£15,250
	Standard tree planting (incl black poplar)	£3,500
Built Habitat	Spend to date £101	
	Bat and bird boxes incl kingfisher tunnel	£3,900
	Insect houses, amphibian and reptile hibernacula	£150
	Pillbox conversion	£5,000
Citizen Science	Spend to date £540	
	Various projects	£1,960
Health & Wellbeing	Main bird Hide	£13,000
	Benches	£1,000
Vegetation Management	Spend to date £31	
	Invasive Species control	£719
	Hazardous tree work	£15,000
General	Spend to date £21,127	
	Tools and materials (incl PPE/HSE)	£8,673
	Vehicle	£3,400
	Events and expenses	£2,071
Training (PN01 and PN03)	Spend to date £3,170	
	Environment and wildlife training volunteers	£1,830
Ecological work	Spend to date £104,727	
	Ecological surveys including Ecological Clerk of works	£82,757
	Natural England licensing	£4,100
	Accreditation	£3,380
TOTAL BUDGET 2024		£350,312

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Highlights September 23-February 24

Creating a sense of place.

- Stroud College Creative Arts students visited the Fromebridge area of the canal for a drawing session, this was then followed up by a classroom session designing canal interpretation. Some of the drawings have been incorporated into designs for permanent interpretation panels. Another visit is planned for the Spring.



- We worked with the Stroudwater Navigation Archive Charity (SNAC) and Flies on the Wall youth theatre company to deliver an immersive history walk on the canal. Young actors took on the parts of local people and enacted stories taken from the archive. These will be recorded to create a digital resource on the Stroudwater History website.



Broadening opportunities to a wider audience to build resilience and cohesive communities.

- We are developing a good relationship with the Nelson Trust, an addiction rehabilitation centre who are located on the canal-side in Brimscombe. Last autumn we delivered a successful 'Forage and Feast' workshop on the canal with a group of service users. The group took part in a foraging walk, learning about local plant-life before coming together for a lunch made from foraged ingredients. Feed-back from participants included: *"I loved the information and seeing locals it made me feel a part of the canal community...I definitely look at foraging differently and see the canal as a fun learning opportunity"*. More workshops focused on wellbeing and natural heritage are planned for 2024.
- We commissioned a storytelling group 'Playcircle' to create two Christmas performances for families. Playcircle worked with Stroudwater Textile Trust (STT) to create a musical storytelling performance based on Stroud's textile industry and the animals that can be found on the canal. This brought a new, younger audience to an event hosted by STT. We will be commissioning Playcircle again this year to create a new piece inspired by the canal working with SNAC, this will be performed at local events throughout the Spring and Summer.



- We have begun an 'accessible volunteering' programme with the National Star College, a further education college for disabled people. Two students have been regularly taking part in activities on the canal including maintenance and environmental work as well as visiting Museum in the Park and

Boatmobility. Bringing the students into existing volunteering opportunities is helping us to learn how volunteering on the canal can be made more accessible.

- We organised a series of events for women with the aim of creating a positive experience, building confidence in visiting and taking part in activities on the canal, boosting wellbeing and building a connection with nature. A separate report on these events is attached.

Creating pathways for heritage learning.

- We have been working with Stroud High School to achieve 'Heritage School' status. This embeds local history into the curriculum ensuring that learning about the history of the canal becomes a core part of young people's history lessons.
- We have established a 'Heritage Learning Forum', this brings together project delivery partners to work collectively on helping young people to learn about the history of the canal. Work undertaken by the group currently involves developing 'resource boxes' for schools and an exhibition project led by young people.

The Year Ahead

Green	Delivery is on track
Amber	Minor issues are impacting delivery
Red	Major issues are impacting delivery

Amber risks:

- Engagement with Primary Schools has been more challenging than expected. We will continue to pursue contacts and develop learning resources through the Heritage Learning Forum that can be offered to local schools.
- We are yet to begin activity plans to deliver training workshops using the SNAC archive. Time and capacity is a concern, we plan to bring in additional resource through commissioning a creative practitioner.
- Much of the interpretation plan around Fromebridge is dependent on the timetable to restore towpath and bridges in the area. We will continue to work closely with engineering colleagues to ensure interpretation is completed and evaluated within the required timeframe.
- Britta Lippiatt, Volunteer Development Coordinator has just started in post. There is a lot to do under the ‘volunteering’ section of our activity plan as we have not previously had the resource to fulfil these requirements. Britta’s time will be prioritised on strengthening capacity around existing volunteer programmes within the partnership and developing a more diverse range of volunteers.
- The project team would like to align the project with plans to develop the Former Ship Inn Site in Stonehouse into a community hub. The team will need to be able to work alongside members of the ‘Ship Inn Community Enterprise Group’ to deliver a project that is truly reflective of the local community. If this is not possible, activity in Stonehouse will continue but may not have a sustainable legacy.

Activity	2024			2025		
Primary Schools						
Whitminster Primary DT Project						
Secondary Schools						
SHS Heritage School Award						
SHS Riverfly Monitoring Project						
Heritage Learning Forum						

Development of Resource Boxes							
Miniature Museum Audio Digitisation Project							
Exhibition Project							
Work Experience							
Accessible volunteering with National Star College							
Experience Day' programme for Young People							
Heritage Archives (SNAC)							
ghost stories audio' recorded and uploaded to Stroudwater History website							
archive training workshops for young people							
Exhibition at Gloucester Heritage Hub							
Interactive exhibition space at Museum in the Park							
Canal Heritage Trails							
Development of Whitminster trails with Parish Council							
Ghost stories' trail using SNAC archive							
Outdoor interpretations							
Harper Field (Boatmobility)							
Fromebridge area							
Family-friendly interpretation							
Ongoing interpretation & information							
Noticeboard development							
Canal Consultations							
Project Update events with CCT							
Whitminster Towpath Project							
Accessible Canal							
Accessibility Toolkit							
Women's events in partnership with Love Her Wild							
Interpretation Workshops							
Photography competition - workshops, exhibitions							
Stroud College Visit							
Family-friendly interpretation workshop							

Events							
Vyshyvanka Day with Stroudwater Textile Trust and Stroud Stands with Ukraine							
Workshops with The Nelson Trust (natural dyes and foraging)							
The Lock Challenge							
Playcircle storytelling commission using SNAC archive							
Canal Festival							
Summer events on Stonehouse canal in partnership with SpICE (Ship Inn Community Enterprise)							
Canal Ambassadors							
Consultation and role brief development							
Recruitment							
Induction and training							
Volunteer Recruitment Campaign							
Boatmobility Trustee and Volunteer recruitment							
Volunteer Induction & Training							
Boatmobility Training							
Policies and Procedures							
Boatmobility support							
Websites, Social media & Press							
Canal stories' initiative							
Development of project webpage on CCT website							
Thank You Events							
April event at Stonehouse Court Hotel							

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	M5 Junction 14 - Funding Costing and Design approval for the Draft Local Plan
Purpose of Report	<p>This report sets out :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The background to the pause in the examination of the draft Local Plan • The Inspectors' concerns over M5 Junction 14 • The work that needs to be undertaken to progress the draft Local Plan (design and costing) • The funding required to deliver the design and costing as set out in the Joint Action Plan
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to: Approve budget of up to £100k for M5 Junction 14 Design and Costings to allow the draft Local Plan Examination to continue.
Consultation and Feedback	<p>The Local Plan and supporting evidence have been subject to much public consultation at the different stages of production as required by the Plan making regulations. Since 2017, the Council has worked collaboratively with our Consultants AECOM, Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways as well as other relevant stakeholders to seek to address several transport issues. The matter has been discussed at the Examination and the Inspectors were concerned on matters relating to M5 Junctions 12 and 14. The Council has provided a commitment to resolve these concerns during a pause in the Examination. Further consultation on the matter will be held in Autumn 2024.</p>
Report Author	<p>Tom Ridley, Interim Planning Strategy Manager Email: Tom.Ridley@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Options	<p>Option 1 – Address the Inspectors' concerns over M5 Junction 14 by undertaking the work that is required to progress the draft Local Plan. including the funding required to deliver the design and costing as set out in the agreed Joint Action Plan. This is the option promoted in the report. This approach is considered to be the best option for progressing the Local Plan to formal adoption without any further unnecessary delay.</p> <p>Option 2 – Make a decision that differs from the officers' and Inspectors' recommendations. If the Council were to propose a decision that differs from the Inspectors' recommendations and agreed position set out in the Joint Action Plan, in the absence of a robust justification, failing to take the local plan transport work forward would negate the existing funding, work and time invested in the Stroud District Local Plan to reach this advanced stage in the plan making process. The likely consequence is the draft Local Plan would have to be formally withdrawn and the significant planning risks are identified later in this report.</p>

Background Papers	The full evidence base and information on the Examination can be found here: https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-buildingcontrol/planning-strategy/stroud-district-local-plan-review/local-planexamination/examination-library			
Appendices	There are no Appendices			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Local Plans sit at the heart of the national planning system, providing a framework for managing the use of land, to address local housing, employment and other needs whilst conserving and enhancing our local environment. The NPPF (2023) clearly states in paragraph 12 *“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”*
- 1.2 Council adopted the current Stroud District Local Plan in November 2015. The Government expects local planning authorities to review plans regularly and to update them in whole or in part at least every five years. The adopted Local Plan is now more than five years old and the housing requirement set out in the Plan is no longer up-to-date.
- 1.3 In order to comply with Government requirements, in September 2017 Environment Committee approved a timetable for the Local Plan Review and approved an Issues and Options paper for public consultation. In October 2018 Environment Committee approved an Emerging Strategy for further public consultation and in October 2019 Environment Committee approved a draft Local Plan for further public consultation. A final Additional Housing Options document was approved by Environment Committee in October 2020 for public consultation.
- 1.4 The Local Plan Review has included four stages of public consultation to engage local communities and stakeholders from the start of the plan making process. The first three stages of public consultation included public exhibitions around the District, meetings with town and parish councils, key stakeholders and hard to reach groups. The Additional Housing Options public consultation was undertaken online due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Reports from each of these initial consultation stages outlining the public consultation activities carried out, comments received and the Council’s response are set out in the Examination Library (CD4a – CD4e).
- 1.5 The next stages required the Council to comply with Regulation 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 (As Amended). Regulation 19 is the last stage of public engagement before submitting the draft plan to the Secretary of State who appoints Planning Inspectors to investigate the legal compliance, soundness and robustness of the Local Plan through Examination. This is a formal process set by Government regulations. On 20th April 2021 Environment Committee resolved to recommend to Council the formal submission of the draft Local Plan:

“The draft Local Plan is approved for publication in accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and subsequently to be submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.”

This was followed on the 29th April 2021 with the Council resolution to:

“Approve the draft Local Plan for publication in accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and subsequently submit to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.”

- 1.6 Following the required 8 weeks formal consultation period in accordance with Regulation 19, the draft Local Plan, public consultation responses and supporting evidence base required by Regulation 22 (Regulation 22 sets out which statutory documents must be submitted as part of the submission) were submitted for examination to the Secretary of State in October 2021. Two Inspectors were appointed to examine the Plan. Hearing sessions commenced in March 2023 and were paused in June 2023 to allow a summer break. The majority of the hearing sessions have already been held and have covered all site allocations and most of the policies set out in the draft Local Plan.
- 1.7 During the summer break, the Inspectors wrote to the Council on 4th August 2023 setting out concerns with three areas of soundness. The first issue was regarding the Strategic Road Network (SRN), specifically the capacity of M5 Junctions 12 and 14. The second issue raised specific issues with Strategic Site Allocation PS37 Wisloe new settlement in relation to the provision of the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the motorway on grounds of viability and deliverability. The final issue identified was with Strategic Site Allocation PS36 Sharpness new settlement regarding the provision of a passenger train service and bespoke Mobility as a Service transport scheme (MaaS) and concerns relating to the viability and deliverability of these schemes.
- 1.8 It is very important to note that this report considers only the concerns over M5 Junction 14. National Highways view that the existing junction arrangement at M5 J14 is operating at capacity and an improvement is required to accommodate growth in the area. This report does not address any other issues raised by the Inspectors. Those issues and how they are being dealt with are set out separately in the Joint Action Plan which is available in the Examination Library here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2237308/sdip-joint-action-plan.pdf>
- 1.9 Since that initial letter, the Council has been closely working with Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways to address the concerns raised with M5 Junction 14. Through joint working the Council, Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways agreed the Joint Action Plan which sets out how all parties will work together, and the tasks required to address the Inspectors concerns over M5 Junction 14. The Joint Action Plan was submitted jointly on behalf of all parties to the Inspectors on 29 November 2023.
- 1.10 On 5 February 2024, the Inspectors wrote to the Council confirming:
- 1.11 *Since August last year we have been considering the request from Stroud District Council (SDC) to grant a pause in the Local Plan Examination. The purpose of this request is to allow SDC to undertake further work to address the concerns that we set out in our letter dated 4 August 2023 (id-010) specifically relating to the strategic highway network. Since then, we have exchanged several letters with SDC requesting and receiving clarification on the work to be carried out. We have also considered the responses from Highways*

England, Gloucestershire County Council and South Gloucestershire District Council on this matter.

In light of the information now received, we can confirm that we agree to pause the Examination for the works to be undertaken. As requested in SDC's most recent letter the pause will be for a duration of ten months. This comprises seven months to complete the work set out in the Joint Action Plan, as dated November 2023, and three months to undertake a period of public consultation. The pause shall begin on the date of this letter. The Examination shall therefore resume on 5 December 2024.

The full letter is available in the Examination Library ID-015 <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2345077/id-015-stroud-dlp-letter-from-inspectors-05-february-2024.pdf>

- 1.12 The Council and the other parties must now undertake the tasks and roles as set out in the Joint Action Plan in line with the timetable set out and approved by the Inspectors. This will allow the Examination to resume in December 2024.

2. Main Points

- 2.1 During the Examination in Public of the draft Local Plan, National Highways shared its view that the existing junction arrangement at M5 Junction 14 is currently operating at capacity at peak times. Therefore, an improvement is required to accommodate future identified growth in the area. The draft Local Plan acknowledges that improvements are required at M5 Junction 14 for some of the proposed allocated sites in order to be deliverable. The Inspectors have asked for these concerns to be addressed and the Joint Action Plan has been produced by the Council, Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways jointly setting out the tasks and work to address these concerns. The Joint Action Plan covering M5 Junction 14 is available here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2237308/sdjp-joint-action-plan.pdf>
- 2.2 M5 Junction 14 is not located within the Stroud District and is not under the control of the Council. Instead, South Gloucestershire Council is the Local Highway Authority and the Local Planning Authority for South Gloucestershire where M5 Junction 14 is located. South Gloucestershire Council does not currently have an interest in acting as the lead on Costings and Design of a scheme at M5 Junction 14 as their draft Local Plan is at an early stage of production with housing numbers and locations of development yet to be fixed within an agreed strategy and policy framework. The outcomes of their Regulation 18 Consultation are not yet in the public domain and their reliance on M5 Junction 14 may change with future iterations of their draft Local Plan.
- 2.3 Another material consideration is the recent and rapid development of the 'Severn Edge' proposals. Western Gateway have been championing the Oldbury and Berkeley sites collectively as 'Severn Edge' low carbon energy hub since the unsuccessful bid to host the country's first prototype commercial fusion reactor. Two important developments have occurred recently.
- 2.4 Firstly, the Oldbury site has been purchased by the Government ('Great British Nuclear') from Hitachi, as a potential nuclear site. There is also a Government sponsored process to bring forward Small Modular Reactors which a number of major industry players are engaged in, including Rolls Royce.
- 2.5 Secondly the Berkeley campus, with exception of the college itself, has been sold by SGS College to Chiltern Vital Group which has a focus on low carbon energy and an ambition

to link with the wider Severn Edge proposition. Chilton Vital Group is the leader of a consortium which includes Rolls Royce and University of Bristol.

- 2.6 The above developments are being viewed by Western Gateway and partners as a major opportunity to promote Severn Edge and accelerate the delivery of a nationally significant low carbon energy hub. The prospect of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project in close vicinity to M5 Junction 14 is also being considered by National Highways who have confirmed that potential future uses, impacts and any required mitigation impacting M5 Junction 14 should be considered by both Stroud and South Gloucestershire's draft Local Plans. This work though will have a lead-in time. Nevertheless, as a material consideration, it should be an option explored as part of the Costing and Design works proposed to be undertaken in the Joint Action Plan.
- 2.7 As South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways are not currently in a position to lead on the required works, the Council must now take a proactive lead on the initial Costings and Design work in order to progress our own Local Plan to a successful conclusion. The work on the Costings and Design will be starting with existing work previously undertaken by South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways which will make the process quicker and more cost effective. Without this, the Council will not be able to progress with the draft Local Plan Examination and face a potential recommendation to withdraw the draft Local Plan from the Planning Inspectors. The risks associated with this are outlined in section 2.8 below.

2.8 Risks

- 2.8.1 There are several risks associated with the Council not undertaking the Costing and Design works as set out in the Joint Action Plan. The first risk would be that the Council would not be able to demonstrate it had undertaken the tasks set out as agreed with the Inspectors in the Joint Action Plan. In this scenario it is possible the Inspectors would be unable to restart the Examination on 5 December 2024 and would instead recommend withdrawal of the draft Local Plan.
- 2.8.2 If the Council had to withdraw the draft Local Plan, it would be required to take stock and then start a new Local Plan as the requirement to have an up-to-date adopted plan would still be in place. The Government is currently reviewing and updating how Local Plans are to be prepared and any new plan would fall under the new regulations and guidance. This would result in a significant delay before any new Local Plan could be prepared, taken through Examination, and adopted. This would result in the significant costs of starting a new Local Plan as all the work and evidence base undertaken for the current draft Local Plan would need to be started again or refreshed.
- 2.8.3 Any new Local Plan would still face the same potential issues and constraints caused by impacts on M5 Junction 14 and the same works as proposed in the Joint Action Plan would still be required by National Highways for any future Examinations.
- 2.8.4 During the period of preparing a new Local Plan, the Council would be at significant risk of being unable to demonstrate the required five year housing land supply. This would result in the Council, and the communities it serves, having less control over where new development is located in the District with decision making in accordance with NPPF policies for sustainable development rather than based on the high environmental standards and locally set policies that are in the draft Local Plan. This would also likely bring high costs regarding planning appeals due to the Council fighting inappropriate developments. As the Council is currently still at Examination, it currently benefits from only having to demonstrate a four year deliverable housing land supply. While the Council can currently demonstrate a healthy supply against the four-year requirement, upon withdrawal

of the draft Local Plan the Council may be faced with the immediate loss of supply against the higher five year housing land supply requirement.

2.8.5 Finally, it is likely that not advancing with the Joint Action Plan Costing and Design work for M5 Junction 14 would delay or make the Severn Edge developments undeliverable. This could potentially have large impacts on a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and potential economic development and investment in the District.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The draft Local Plan Examination is currently in a ten month pause to undertake several tasks as set out in the Joint Action Plan as agreed with Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways. This approach has been agreed with the Inspectors and is required before the Examination can resume in December 2024.
- 3.2 As the Council is at a more advanced stage with its draft Local Plan than South Gloucestershire Council, there is a need for one of the authorities to oversee the Costings and Design work as required to advance the Examination. The Council has always expressed that it would be willing to lead on the M5 Junction 14 Costings and Design work only if required to advance the draft Local Plan Examination and if funding was approved by Members.
- 3.3 As South Gloucestershire Council is not currently in a position to lead on the required works and National Highways do not have the resources, the Council must now lead on the Design and Costings or be in a position of not being able to progress with the draft Local Plan Examination and face the risks set out in this report.
- 3.4 While the Costing and Design work that needs to be undertaken has been agreed by all parties and accepted by the Inspectors, there is a cost of £100k required to undertake the works. The funding for this work is not included in the base budget for 2024/25 as at this stage budget was required for M5 Junction 12 only. In order to fund the work on M5 Junction 14 a transfer of £100k would be made from the Council's General Fund Equalisation Reserve into the Local Plan Reserve. This could then be released for spending on M5 Junction 14 as required. Any sums not required would be returned to the Equalisation Reserve at the end of the 2024/25 year. The Council would look to recover proportional costs from South Gloucestershire Council if the costings and design works are incorporated into South Gloucestershire's next draft Local Plan.
- 3.5 The draft Local Plan has taken a lot of resources and financial cost to prepare. Without the Council taking a proactive lead and funding the initial costs for the Costing and Design work, there is a danger all this work will be abortive. By approving the funding to undertake the work, the draft Local Plan Examination will continue, allowing the Council control of where development will be located in the District and delivering its high environmental policies. This report therefore recommends that Members approve the £100k to be paid from the Council's General Fund Equalisation Reserve. This will enable the Council to progress with the Examination in Public and avoid the risks and consequences of not progressing the Local Plan. Without having an adopted Local Plan in place the Council could face planning by appeal with associated cost implications and lose its ability to determine its future growth strategy.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

Financial implications are primarily set out in paragraph 3.4.

If Council agrees the requested budget, a transfer of £100k will be made from the Equalisation Reserve into the Local Plan Reserve and then used to fund payments against the budget. This will reduce the anticipated balance on the equalisation reserve by £100k (this was anticipated to be £6.776 Million at the end of 2024/25 in the most recent Medium Term Financial Plan).

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4.2 Legal Implications

The Report has set out the background to and the statutory requirements of the local plan making process.

The statutory framework for town and country planning development control in England is plan led. Decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

District local planning authorities are required to produce a local plan and keep it under review and up to date. The Council has been adhering to this process and as set out in the Report the Stroud draft local plan is now at the examination stage. The Government has expressed a clear desire to see local plan examinations completed and the Secretary of State has exercised intervention powers elsewhere to ensure this happens.

As a result of the draft local plan being at the examination stage it is now under the control of the Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State. Currently the Council and its partners are seeking to comply with the directions of the Inspectors in respect of the examination process following concerns expressed (inter alia) regarding the capacity of M5 Junction 14. The Report highlights a need for funding of further work to comply with those directions in respect of Junction 14 and to ensure that the local plan examination can restart in December 2024.

The risks and consequences to the Council of not progressing the local plan are set out in the body of the report (see Paragraphs 2.8 and 3.5).

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 authorises a local council to spend money for the direct benefit of its area, or part of its area, or all or some of its inhabitants.

Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 further provides for local authorities to have a general power of competence. Section 1 of the Act gives district councils England a power to do anything that generally individuals can do. The power can be exercised in any way whatever, including:

- (a) anywhere in the UK or elsewhere;
- (b) for a commercial purpose or otherwise for a charge, or without charge: and
- (c) for, or otherwise than for, the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

The generality of the power is not limited by the existence of any other power of the authority which (to any extent) overlaps the general power.

Subject to the above limitations, expenditure of money outside of the administrative area of the District is permissible.

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4.3 Equality Implications

An EIA is not required because an EIA was undertaken as part of the draft Local Plan preparation.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category as the Draft Local Plan has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) during its preparation which has included assessing the contents against the objective of encouraging social inclusion, equity, the promotion of equality and a respect for diversity. The Draft Local Plan has taken account of any SA recommendations during its production.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Updates to the Constitution			
Purpose of Report	This report brings forward to Council recommended amendments to sections 2 (Meeting of the Council) and 4 (Scheme of Delegation) of the Constitution, as approved by the Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 22 February 2024.			
Decision(s)	That Council RESOLVES to approve the revised section 2 (Meetings of the Council) and section 4 (Scheme of Delegation) of the Constitution			
Consultation and Feedback	The amendments were considered and agreed by the Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 22 February 2024			
Report Author	Claire Hughes, Corporate Director (Monitoring Officer) Email: claire.hughes@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The Council may determine not approve the amendments.			
Background Papers	The Constitution			
Appendices	Appendix A – Section 2 (Meetings of the Council) showing proposed amendments as tracked changes Appendix B - Section 4 (Scheme of Delegation) showing proposed amendments as tracked changes			
Implications (further details at the end of report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	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 22 February 2024 to consider proposed changes to Sections 2 and 4.
- 1.2 This report sets out the recommendations from the CWG to Council.

2. Section 2 (Meetings of the Council)

- 2.1 Section 2 of the Constitution sets out the meetings of the Council and the terms of reference for each committee.
- 2.2 With the exception of the Audit and Standards Committee the terms of reference have been limited, which, on occasion has resulted in it being unclear which committee has responsibility for specific functions. The proposed amendments update the section to reflect current practice.
- 2.3 The proposed amendments marked as tracked changes in Appendix A were considered by the Constitution Working Group on 22 February 2024 who approved them for ratification by Council.

3. Section 4 (Scheme of Delegation)

- 3.1 Section 4 of the Constitution sets out the Scheme of Delegation for officers. This is the document which identifies which decisions may be taken by officers as opposed to being presented to a committee or Council.
- 3.2 The current scheme has been updated to reflect the existing officer structure, and to clarify some areas where it was unclear whether matters were delegated or not.
- 3.3 The biggest proposed change relates to planning enforcement, specifically the recommendation to move away from the current process which requires the circulation of an expediency report for consultation. Feedback from the service area is that this process is a significant operational constraint, is restrictive and not consistent with other Local Planning Authorities. Experience suggests that members do not engage with the process and is somewhat disingenuous as it implies some ability to be involved in the decision making whereas any decision to refer enforcement matters to DCC lies with the Head of Development Management.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended that the process is updated to reflect the scheme of delegation. This would mean that enforcement decisions are notified to relevant ward members and then reported to the DCC via a regular enforcement report.
- 3.5 The proposed amendments, showed as tracked changes in Appendix B, were considered by the Constitution Working Group on 22 February 2024, who approved them for ratification by Council.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this decision.

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4.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation of the report. Any decision to make substantive changes to the Constitution rests with Full Council. The Constitution should be kept under review and amended where necessary to provide a clear governance framework that will support effective, efficient, and lawful decision making in a manner that also supports accountability, scrutiny and transparency.

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4.3 Equality Implications

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

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Stroud District Council

Meetings of the Council

This section of the Constitution provides a summary of the Council bodies and the detailed terms of reference for each of those bodies. The terms of reference explain the areas of work that will be considered by each body.

Summary of Council Bodies

Meeting	Number of Councillors	Notes
Council	All 51 members	<u>None</u>
Strategy and Resources	13	<p>The chair of this committee is the Leader of Council.</p> <p>The Chair of the Community Services, Environment and Housing committees will each have seats on the Committee as will the leaders of each political group.</p> <p>A member of the Committee will be appointed to chair the Council's District Planning Review Body<u>Strategic Planning Advisory Board</u> which shall consider issues affecting the delivery of the Council's strategic planning policies; review planning appeal decisions which have key implications for the Council's strategic planning policy or planning performance; and where appropriate make recommendations on the above matters to the Strategy & Resources Committee to promote the continuous improvement in planning performance and planning policy strategy.</p>
Community Services and Licensing	12	<p>This committee has a sub-committee known as the Licensing Panel which determines relevant licensing applications. The Panel comprises 3 Councillors who are trained on licensing matters and who are members of the committee.</p> <p>No Councillor whose employment or business involves dealing with licensing matters within the district should be a member of the Licensing Panel. All Councillors and their appropriate Group Leaders must consider the appropriateness of their involvement in the Panel. They are required to make a reasonable assessment of whether their professional interests would preclude them from sitting on the Panel and / or committee. Advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of any appointments. It is anticipated that a cautious (whilst practical) approach in the interests of the Council should generally be taken.</p>
Environment	12	<u>None</u>
Housing	12 + up to 2 Co-opted members	The two co-opted members act as representatives of the Council tenants and are entitled to speak (but not vote) on matters concerning Council housing. The Committee also holds a variety of events which seek to maximize tenant engagement and effective consultation by the Council on issues affecting its housing.
Audit and Standards	<u>911</u>	In addition to this committee, the Council has a Standards Panel which is comprised of the Chair of Council the Audit and Standards Committee (or in their <u>their</u> absence the Vice-Chair), <u>two other district councillors, one</u> two Parish / Town Councillors and <u>one</u>

		independent members person who are is co-opted to the Council Standards Panel to determine reports that D istrict or Parish / Town Councilors have breached their Members' Codes of Conduct in accordance with the procedures set out in this constitution.
Development Control	12	No Councillor whose employment or business involves dealing with planning matters within the district should be a member of the Development Control Committee.

Terms of Reference

<p>FULL COUNCIL</p> <p>The full Council primarily undertakes the following work, although it ultimately responsible for all functions of the Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopting and making substantive changes to the Constitution; 2. <u>Approving or adopting the Annual Budget and- any amendments to it which cannot be made by other bodies pursuant to the Constitution or the Financial Rules</u> 2.3. <u>S</u>etting the Council Tax; 3.4. Any application to the Secretary of State in respect of any Housing Land Transfer; 4.5. Agreeing and/or amending the terms of reference for committees, deciding on their composition and appointing the chairmen and vice chairmen to of them⁴; 6. Decisions relating to the creation of sub committees are reserved to Council and shall not be undertaken by committees themselves; 5.7. <u>Electing the non-executive Leader of the Council;</u> 8. Adopting a members' allowances scheme; 6.9. <u>Adopting Codes of Conduct for members;</u> 10. Confirming the appointment, dismissal or retirement of the Head of Paid Service, <u>Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer;</u> 7.11. <u>Appointing the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer</u> 8.12. Approving the proposals for salary packages or severance payments of £100,000 or more; 9.13. Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting bylaws and promoting or opposing the making of local legislation or personal Bills; 10.14. All other matters which by law must be reserved to Council including but not restricted to the approval of the Local Plan; 11.15. Approving joint arrangements as necessary, with one or more local authorities to carry out such functions as it considers appropriate, including the appointment of a Joint Committee.
<p>COMMITTEES ⁴</p> <p>The terms of reference of committees are not an exhaustive list and should be interpreted broadly. Generally, committees are tasked with undertaking all functions associated with their broad purpose and terms of reference. This may include dealing with strategies, policies and performance monitoring as opposed to the detail of service delivery.</p> <p>The terms of reference of committees need to be balanced with the delegations to officers. The expectation is that officers will be able to take decisions to further the objectives, policies and strategies set by committees.</p>

With the exception of those matters delegated to officers and the Development Control Committee which has a quasi judicial role, all committees will have responsibility for the following as relevant to their functions:

- All strategies and policies associated with their functions that are not reserved for Council;
- Over-viewing and scrutinising the outcomes of projects with reference to the effective delivery of the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan, including its Jobs and Growth Strategy (and / or other key corporate policies / strategies as may be adopted from time to time);
- Setting of fees and charges, monitoring budget and performance management;
- Engagement with the business, statutory, voluntary and community sectors;
- Establish ad hoc task and finish groups to consider matters and report to committee;
- Appointments to outside bodies pertinent to their other terms of reference.

With the exception of the Development Control Committee, at the commencement of each civic year, each committee will produce a work plan report to help promote the committee's scrutiny work.

Performance Reporting Arrangements

Any two members of each committee will meet on quarterly basis with senior management teams in non decision making informal meetings. These members will then report back to committees on an exception basis to report highs and lows.

Strategy and Resources Committee ^{2,3}:

The broad portfolio of the committee covers the following functions with the exception of those matters delegated to officers.

- Resources and finance including the development of [the annual budget, medium term financial strategy and capital programme and the associated](#) recommendations to Council;
- Revenues and Benefits
- Development and recommendation to Council of the Council Plan;
- Maintaining strategic oversight of all Council services, including oversight of resources, performance and risks;
- Commissioning, procurement and management of external contractors on matters falling within the Committee's area of responsibility, and to maintain strategic oversight of the Council's commissioning and procurement processes;
- Liaison with external partners including the oversight of the Council's relationships with partner organisations, and involvement in formal and informal partnerships, in matters falling within the committee's area of responsibility, including strategic relationships with government and Gloucestershire County Council;
- Economic development;
- Overview in reviewing the Local Plan;
- Asset management, including approval of the Asset Management Strategy;
- Organisational Health and Safety (supported by the Joint Safety Committee)
- Jobs and growth;

- Functions in relation to fair pay policy and senior appointments, including the ability to establish an appointments and employment panel to deal with:
 - The recruitment of the Chief Executive and other Chief Officers;
 - Variation of the terms and conditions of employment of the Head of Paid Service;
 - Recommendation to Council on the appointment or dismissal of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer and in relation to dismissal only following the report of a Designated Independent Person;
 - To appoint a panel and consider the report of the same pursuant to Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015/881 on disciplinary action in relation to the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or ~~Chief Financial Officer~~Section 151 Officer.

Community Services and Licensing Committee ^{1,2,3:}

The broad portfolio of the committee covers the following functions with the exception of those matters delegated to officers.

- Licensing¹;
- Community safety including crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour;
- Leisure Services
- ~~Cultural services;~~
- Public spaces, including play areas;
- Revenues and benefits;
- Community Grants and Crowdfunding
- Health and well being;
- Voluntary and Community sector;
- Inclusivity and tackling disadvantage;
- ~~—~~
- To undertake the statutory scrutiny function of the Stroud District Community Safety Partnership.
- Emergency planning
- Youth service

In respect to its ~~key~~ function of licensing, the committee has responsibility for:

- ~~All the licensing functions of the Council including the power to hear and determine on behalf of the Council, any appeal by any person aggrieved by a decision of an officer where the initial right of appeal is to the Council through a Licensing Panel.~~
- ~~To consider and recommend to Council on all matters concerning licensing.~~
 - i. To review and make recommendations to Council upon policy in relation to licensing matters under the Licensing Act 2003 and the statement of licensing policy;
 - ii. To discharge the Council's functions as a Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, within agreed policy;

- iii. To arrange for the discharge of any of the licensing functions exercisable by the Committee to an Officer of the Licensing Authority subject to the limitations set out in Section 10(4) of the Licensing Act 2003;
- iv. To review and make recommendations to Council upon policy in relation to licensing matters under the Gambling Act 2005 and the statement principles;
- v. To discharge the Council's functions as a Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005, within agreed policy;
- vi. To arrange for the delegation of any of the licensing functions exercisable by the Committee to an Officer of the Licensing Authority subject to the limitations set out in Section 154 of the Gambling Act 2005;

General Licensing Matters

- vii. To ~~make~~ review and adopt licensing policy for any matters that are not required by legislation to be adopted by Council;
- To review and make decisions in accordance with Council policy in licensing matters under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 3 (Sex Establishments) and Schedule 4 (Street Trading) Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 and Town Police Clauses Act 1984 (taxi and private hire) and Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.
- viii. To discharge the Council's functions as a Licensing Authority under the legislation in paragraph vii within agreed policies;
- ix. To arrange for the delegation of any of the licensing functions exercisable by the Committee to an officer of the Licensing Authority subject to the limitations set out in- the legislation listed in paragraph vii ;
- x. To discharge all licensing functions of the Council not reserved to Full Council;

Licensing Sub Committees will be comprised of 3 members of the Community Services and Licensing Committee

A Licensing Act Subcommittee shall have responsibility for:

Licensing Act 2003

- i. Application for a personal licence if any objection is made;
- ii. Application for a personal licence where a person has any unspent convictions;
- iii. Application for a premises/club premises licence if a representation is made;
- iv. Application for a provisional statement if representation is made;
- v. Application to vary the DPS if the police object;
- vi. Application for the transfer of premises licence if the police object;
- vii. Application for interim authority if the police object;
- viii. Application to review a premises/club premises licence

- ix. Decision to object when the Councils a consultee and not the Licensing Authority; and
x. 10. Application for a temporary event notice when the police object.

Gambling Act

- xi. Application for a premises licence where representations have been received;
xii. Application to vary a premises licence where representations have been received;
xiii. Application to transfer a licence where representations have been received;
xiv. Application for a provisional statement where representations have been received;
xv. Review of a premises licence;
xvi. Application for club gaming machine permits where representations have been received;
xvii. Cancellation of a club gaming machine permit; and
xviii. Application for more than 4 gaming machine permits in a licensed premises.

Street Trading

Matters referred to a Licensing Sub Committee in accordance with the Council's Street Trading Policy

Taxi and Private Hire

Matters referred to a Licensing Sub Committee in accordance with the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Policy

Sex Establishments

Matters referred to a Licensing Sub Committee in accordance with the Council's Sex Establishments Policy

Scrap Metal Dealers

Matters referred to a Licensing Sub Committee in accordance with the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

The General Licensing Subcommittee shall have responsibility for making decisions about individual licensing matters and appeals where not otherwise delegated to officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

Each Member of the committee is required to complete in full an induction programme; undertake regular training; and attend development updates in relation to the licensing function. Any Member not undertaking these training activities will be unable to serve on the Licensing Panel until such time that the full training requirement has been met.

Environment Committee ^{2,3}:

The broad portfolio of the committee covers the following functions with the exception of those matters delegated to officers:

- Strategic planning of the Local Plan;
- Statutory Building Control;

- Matters requiring member decisions relating to public rights of way, traffic orders, street lighting, street naming and numbering and dangerous land (as defined in the Highways Act 1980);
- Green spaces, open spaces and grounds maintenance;
- Waste and recycling;
- Street Cleansing;
- Environmental health;
- Canal;
- Carbon management;
- Ecology and Climate;
- Air Quality;
- Public Conveniences-
- To resolve to make an 'Area of Special Control' under the Advertisement Regulations;

Housing Committee ^{2,3}:

~~Since the 1st December 2016,~~ The broad portfolio of the committee covers the following functions with the exception of those matters delegated to officers:

- Oversight of performance management and statutory compliance in relation to the councils housing authority role, including compliance with all Social Housing Regulations and associated legislation
- Public and private housing issues affecting the Council's housing authority roles;~~and~~
- Housing Policy.
- Housing advice, homelessness prevention and housing register;
- Affordable and social housing;
- Disabled facilities grants;
- Empty dwellings;
- Private-sector housing support and enforcement;
- Play areas

Development Control Committee^{1,2,3}:

The committee has responsibility for discharging the following functions:

- Statutory development and planning control and public rights of way including all orders and necessary actions in respect of highways affected by development
- Consider and report on such matters as referred by Council or the Environment Committee.

Unless delegated to officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, the Committee shall have responsibility for making decisions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, including:

- i. The granting of permissions, or approvals;
- ii. Refusals of permissions;

- iii. Applications for listed building and conservation area consent;
- iv. Resolution to make and confirm tree preservation orders;
- v. Orders under Section 215 relating to maintenance of waste land and resolution to prosecute for noncompliance with an order;
- vi. Resolution to serve enforcement notices and listed building enforcement notices and service of "stop notices", or resolution to prosecute in the case of failure to comply with any type of confirmed order;
- vii. Resolution to serve a repairs notice and to carry out urgent works to preserve listed buildings under Sections 48 and 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- viii. Resolution to prosecute for the unauthorised display of advertisements.
- ix. Agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended);
- x. Notices under Section 79 of the Building Act 1984;
- xi. To respond to consultations on any planning applications to be carried out by and/or determined by other Authorities, Agencies or Government Departments;
- xii. The determination of applications for development to be carried out by the Council;
- xiii. To resolve to secure the preservation of a building under Sections 3 and 4 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 or such other relevant legislation as may be enacted thereafter;

Setting of fees and charges, monitoring budget and performance management

All Members and officers involved in the Development Control Committee and the planning process will have due regard to, and abide by, the member protocol on planning.

Members must attend DC training annually. New Members must attend induction training before they can sit on the Committee. Any Member not undertaking these training activities will be unable to serve on the Committee until such time that the full training requirement has been met.

<p>Audit and Standards Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee to be drawn from</p>	<p>(1) Statement of Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Audit and Standards Committee is a key component in the Council's corporate governance structure ensuring compliance and maintenance of high ethical standards. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. • The purpose of the Committee is to provide independent assurance to Council of the adequacy of the risk management
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<p>outside the group or groups forming the administration.</p> <p>To include an Independent Member who is not a Councillor or an officer of the Council.</p> <p><u>The quorum for meetings of the Audit and Standards Committee shall be 5 members</u></p>	<p>framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.</p> <p>(2) Governance, Risk and Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, including the ethical framework and consider the local Code of Corporate Governance. • To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control. • To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements. • To consider the adequacy of Council's framework of assurance i.e. the Three Lines of Defence model. • Undertaking regular monitoring of the Council's treasury management policies and practices. • To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Council and to monitor progress in addressing risk-related issues reported to the committee. • To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions. • <u>To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.</u> • <u>To receive assurance regarding the operation of the Councils in-house leisure services</u> <p>(3) Ethical Governance / Conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption. • To monitor the counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources. • To be responsible, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, for all matters relating to the Members Code of Conduct • Keeping under review a Code of Conduct to promote high ethical standards amongst Officers and to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Officers. • Keeping under review the Council's 'whistle-blowing' policy. • Keeping under review the Council's arrangements for handling complaints and investigations by the Local Government Ombudsman. • To promote, maintain and assist the achievement of high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. • To monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members and be responsible for dealing with any matters referred to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer.
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- To advise the Council on any amendment or revision of the Code.
- To secure mandatory training of Councillors and co-opted Members on the Code of Conduct for Members.
- To keep under review the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.
- To keep under review the Register of Gifts and Hospitality maintained by the Monitoring Officer
- To establish a Sub-Committee to hear allegations that Members have failed to comply with the Authority's Code of Conduct.
- To assess and review allegations of Member misconduct and to determine allegations of Member misconduct.

(4) Internal Audit

- To approve the Internal Audit Charter and Code of Ethics.
- To review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services.
- To review and approve the risk-based internal audit plan.
- To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements, including significant consulting services not already included in the audit plan, prior to acceptance of the engagement, if this materially impacts on core assurance activity.
- To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the Head of Internal Audit to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Head of Internal Audit. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP) and to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- To consider reports from the Head of Internal Audit on internal audit's performance during the year, including the performance of external providers of internal audit services.
- To consider the Head of Internal Audit's annual report and the opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the committee in reviewing the AGS.
- To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Head of Internal Audit has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- To provide free and unfettered access to the committee chair for the Head of Internal Audit, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the Committee.

(5) External Audit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the independence of external audit through consideration of the external auditor’s annual assessment of its independence and review of any issues raised by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) or the authority’s auditor panel as appropriate. • To consider the external auditor’s annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance. • To monitor management’s response to the External Auditor’s findings and the implementation of External Audit recommendations. • To commission work from internal and external audit. • To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies. <p>(6) Financial Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and approve the annual Statement of Accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council. • To consider the external auditor’s report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts. <p>(7) Accountability Arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report to those charged with governance on the Committee’s findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions. • To report to full council on a regular basis on the Committee’s performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the committee in meeting its purpose. • To publish an annual report on the work of the Committee. <p>Note: The Committee has the right to require the attendance of any council officers or members in order to respond directly to any issue under consideration. In addition, the Committee has clear rights of access to other committees/functions, for example service committees, risk management group and other strategic groups.</p>
<p>Sub-Committee</p> <p>5 Councillors proportional to the political composition of the Council. Two Independent Persons</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To receive reports referred from the Monitoring Officer following investigations into complaints against District and Parish Councillors and other steps associated with that function. 2. To conduct standards hearings and all other steps associated with that function in relation to the District and Parish Councils, including the imposition of sanctions for District Councillors and making recommendations on sanctions to Parish Councils taking into account the advice of the Independent Person.

<p>Quorum of 3 present for its duration which must include at least one Independent Person</p>	<p>3. If the panel determines that a breach of the Authority's Code of Conduct has occurred, the panel can impose one or more of the following if appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Censure; b) Report to Council; c) Recommend actions to the Leader of the Council; d) Recommend actions to Group Leader; e) Removal from Outside Bodies; f) Withdrawal of facilities, such as Council email/website/internet access; g) Exclusion from the Council offices or other premises with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Committees or Sub-Committees and/or nominating a single point of contact; and/or h) Requesting the Member to undertake actions deemed appropriate e.g. training, issue of an apology. <p><u>4.</u> To set-up when necessary an interview panel comprising of the lead members of each party to shortlist and interview candidates for the role of Independent Person.</p> <p><u>5.</u> To recommend successful candidates to the Council to be chosen by a majority of Councillors.</p>
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Notes:**1. Whipping**

Within the context of the quasi-judicial functions of the Council undertaken by the Development Control Committee, the Audit and Standards Committee and the Licensing Committee, the whip must not be applied by any of the political groups on their Members when they are undertaking such functions. No political meetings of the committee shall consider any such quasi-judicial business of these committees. For the avoidance of doubt, all members of these committee are required to act in accordance with the specific protocols and guidance that the Council may issues from time to time in connection with such quasi-judicial functions.

2. Task and Finish Groups

The Strategy and Resources, Community Services and Licensing, Environment and Housing Committees have the ability to establish task and finish groups to consider matters and report to committee, normally with a maximum life of three months.

3. Joint Meetings

Joint meetings of committees may take place when required to consider a matter that crosses two committee areas.

4. Procedure when a Councillor resigns from a committee or stops being a Councillor

A Councillor can resign from a committee by notifying the Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer in writing. If someone stops being a Councillor or resigns from a committee, the Group Leader of the relevant political group (if any) or in their absence

their deputy) can nominate a replacement committee member who will fill the vacancy immediately. The replacement member's appointment will be confirmed at the next Council meeting.

Stroud District Council

Scheme of Officer Delegations

The Scheme of Delegation sets out the situations when officers may make decisions on behalf of the Council. The scheme is divided into four sections:

- Part A sets out general principles that apply to all officer delegations;
- Part B sets out those general management delegations that apply to all members of the Strategic Leadership Team;
- Part C sets out delegations applicable to specific services; and
- Part D lists those officers who have been designated by the Council as 'Proper Officers' as required by statute.

Part A: General Principles of Officer Delegation

- i. The following general principles shall apply in respect of all officer delegated powers.
- ii. Officers are expected to make decisions regarding budgetary, operational, statutory and staffing matters for the services for which they are responsible and as with all functions delegated to officers, decisions should be in accordance with:
 - All other parts of the Constitution;
 - Approved budget and policies of the Council; and
 - The law.
- iii. Member decisions may only be made in Committee or at Council meetings. Officers are able to consult with Members prior to taking decisions. The decision remains an officer decision.
- iv. Functions delegated are by reference to job titles or posts as at the date of adoption of the Scheme. In the event that such titles or posts are deleted or otherwise changed subsequently, the delegations will be transferred to those Council post holders whose duties include or most closely correspond to the duties of the post originally referred to.
- v. Any function delegated to a specified officer may also be exercised by any officer who has been so authorised in writing by the officer to whom the function is delegated, or by the Chief Executive.
- vi. Where an officer who is not a Strategic Director has delegated authority to discharge a function by virtue of this Constitution, the relevant Strategic Director in relation to that officer or post may discharge the delegated function where that officer is unable to act, through absence or otherwise, or where the post with the delegated function is vacant.
- vii. Each Strategic Director or Head of Service should immediately notify the Monitoring Officer of any authorisations who will maintain a separate record of sub-delegations relating to that Strategic Directorate.
- viii. Any reference to specific legislation includes any amendments to or modifications of it for the time being in force.

Part B: To the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors

The following delegations apply to the Chief Executive, [Monitoring Officer](#) and Strategic Directors, or their duly authorised officer(s).

Urgent Decisions

- B1.1 The Chief Executive may take any action which is required as a matter of urgency in the interests of the Council or its residents in consultation with
- (a) the Leader and other Group Leaders if time permits, or Chair of Committee (if appropriate)
 - (b) the Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer (as appropriate).
- B1.2 A matter may be deemed urgent if, in the reasonable opinion of the Chief Executive, a delay would seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or of the public and it is not practicable to convene a meeting of the relevant decision-making body in sufficient time to take the decision.

- B1.3 Should the Chief Executive declare an interest in any decision proposed to be made or be unable or incapable of acting, then the delegated authority transfers from the Chief Executive to either the Monitoring Officer or any of the Strategic Directors.
- B1.4 Any decisions so taken will be in accordance with the budget and policy framework and will be reported to the appropriate meeting as soon as practicable and will be recorded in a report and Officer Decision Notice, published on the Council website which will record the reason for urgency, the consultees and any response.
- B1.5 In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and any associated or subsequent legislation to act as emergency and local civil emergency planning district controller as required. Authority to incur expenditure as required for the particular emergency.

Management of Services for which they are responsible

- B1.5 The management and administration of the services for which they are responsible, and the incurring of expenditure for such purposes within the approved budget and policy in accordance with the Constitution including for the avoidance of doubt, (subject to any necessary direction from the Chief Executive) authority to take such action as is necessary to implement the decisions and policies of the Council.
- B1.6 To accept a quotation or tender, which is other than the best value price, subject to consultation with the Monitoring Officer following consultation with the relevant Committee Chair.
- B1.7 To transfer expenditure between budget areas, providing this is within their approved budget, subject to consultation with the S151 Officer.
- B1.8 To dispose of surplus or obsolete stock and equipment at the best prices obtainable in accordance with procedures agreed with the S151 Officer.
- B1.9 To write off bad debts and incorrect charges to a limit of £10,000 in any one case, following consultation with the S151 Officer.
- B1.10 The appointment and operational management of all categories of staff, for whom they are responsible.

Staffing

- B1.11 The granting of awards to employees under the Long Service Award scheme.
- B1.12 To take disciplinary action, including dismissal in relation to staff for whom they are responsible in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.
- B1.13 The granting of special leave with pay on compassionate grounds.
- B1.14 The authorisation of attendance or secondment of employees on courses or seminars within the approved Training Plan.
- B1.15 The authorisation of annual leave to be carried forward from one year to the next.

- B1.16 The determination of car allowances in accordance with the criteria adopted by the Council.
- B1.17 The determination of ex-gratia payments in respect of damage to, or loss of, employees' personal property up to £200 and, in consultation with the appropriate Committee Chair, for all other amounts.
- B1.18 To amend the numbers, duties and grades of posts within their responsibility and to change vacant or new posts, within Council policies, priorities and budgets. Such changes are to be the subject of prior approval of the Strategic Director Resources.
- B1.19 To determine applications for extensions of sick pay.
- B1.20 The approval of applications for early retirement from employees and all applications involving voluntary redundancy, and payment in lieu of notice, if appropriate, in accordance with the Council's agreed scheme, subject to having obtained approval of the S151 Officer.

Miscellaneous

- ~~B1.21 To give written notice seeking deemed planning permission for proposed development to be carried out by the Council or on land owned by the Council where the Council has approved in principle any proposal (whether generally or specifically) which affects or may affect the land to which the planning application relates.~~
- B1.21~~2~~ The authorisation by such officers as may from time to time be determined in consultation with the Monitoring Officer to authorise surveillance requests for the purposes of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
- B1.22~~3~~ To serve requisitions for information as to the ownership of property under the various statutory provisions where necessary.
- B1.23~~4~~ To sign and serve all and any documents and notices on behalf of the Council unless specifically reserved to another officer by legislation or this Constitution.
- B1.25~~24~~ To authorise staff with relevant qualifications as may be required by law or in accordance with the Council's policy, to take samples, make inspections, enter premises, and generally perform the functions of a duly authorised officer of the Council (however described) under the statutory codes and provisions and to issue any necessary Certificates of Authority.

PART C: Delegations to Specific Officers

Subject to the overall direction by the appropriate Strategic Leadership Team member where relevant, the following delegations apply. The Delegations are listed in service areas as follows:

- C1 Delegations to the Chief Executive

- C2 Delegations to the Section 151 Officer and those within that officer's management responsibility
- C3 Delegations to the Strategic Director Resources and those within that officer's management responsibility
- C3A Delegations to the Monitoring Officer
- C4 Delegations to the Strategic Director Communities and those within that officer's management responsibility
- C5 Delegations to the Strategic Director Place and those within that officer's management responsibility

C6 Delegations to the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit

C1 Chief Executive

- C1.1 All powers necessary and appropriate for the operational discharge of those functions undertaken by the Council, whether mandatory or discretionary, delegated or allocated to the Council by primary and secondary legislation, regulation, law or agreement are deemed delegated to the Chief Executive without the necessity of a specific resolution of Council, unless the specific legislation, regulation, etc., requires a positive resolution of Council or a specific procedure to be adopted before the function may be undertaken by the Council. Such delegated powers are to be exercised with due professional skill and diligence relevant to the post and are subject to the limitations, if any, set by the Council's adopted policies and strategies and budgetary resources and must be exercised in compliance with, and consistent with, the principles of this constitution, the policy framework and the law.

Note: Operational discharge of functions relates to those decisions and actions that are required to be made or taken to undertake the day to day operational activities within the Council's functions.

C1.2 To carry out the functions identified in Article 11.3(b) of this Constitution

C1.~~32~~ To administer the Civic Fund in consultation with the Chair of Council.

C1.~~43~~ In consultation with the relevant Chair, to rearrange dates and times of meetings, previously approved by the Annual Meeting of the Council.

C1.~~54~~ All matters relating to staffing, employment, terms and conditions and industrial relations for the Council's workforce.

C1.~~65~~ In conjunction with the Strategic Director Resources to operate a system of appeals for all staffing matters.

- C1.76 To act as Returning Officer with the authority to approve at any time the revision of scales of fees for elections and registration of electors where there is no deviation from the basis of nationally agreed scales.
- C1.87 To act as the Council's shareholder representative for all matters relating to the Ubico partnership.

C2 Section 151 Officer

To carry out the functions identified in Article 11.3(d) of this Constitution

Mortgages and Other Loans

- C2.1 To extend periods of mortgage repayments and convert to a maturity basis in individual cases where financial circumstances and mortgage provisions permit.
- C2.2 To approve small dealings with property in mortgage to the Council.
- C2.3 To approve proceedings for the recovery of mortgage debts.
- C2.4 To issue Loan and other Credit Instruments up to a maximum of £5,000,000 per issue with a life of not less than one year and not more than twenty years where legally permitted.
- C2.5 To determine price, rate of interest and period until redemption of Loan Instruments.

Treasury Management and Investment

- C2.6 To externalise internal investments as necessary and appoint agents to manage the investments in a portfolio compliant with legal requirements and as set out in the Council's Treasury Policy Statement.
- C2.7 To set the interest rate applicable for 6 monthly periods on Housing Act advances in line with Government directions.
- C2.8 To execute and administer treasury management decisions including making investments and undertaking borrowing-

Budget and Reserves

- C2.9 To establish and administer an effective scheme of virements
- C2.10 To use balances to finance General Fund and Housing Revenue Account expenditure in the future, as set out in the latest approved Medium Term Financial Plan.
- C2.11 To create new earmarked reserves as appropriate and close those no longer required in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair.
- C2.12 To carry forward unspent budgets into future financial years if deemed appropriate as part of the financial outturn process

- C2.13 To allocate resources from earmarked reserves to fund related expenditure in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair.
- C2.14 To increase or reduce earmarked reserves to ensure balances are adequate for the purpose intended in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair.
- C2.15 Reprofile capital budgets between financial years as set out in Capital Strategy

Council Tax

- C2.16 To set the tax bases for Council tax setting purposes, and calculate and set the estimate surplus on the Council Tax Collection Funds.

Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and Bad Debts

- C2.17 To determine applications for the grant of relief from Non-Domestic Rates on grounds of hardship and Discretionary Rate Relief.
- C2.18 To establish discretionary schemes for grant payments or Non-Domestic Rate relief
- C2.19 To act in the Council's best interests in relation to any proposed alteration to the Valuation List.
- C2.20 To make proposals for and to determine and make amendments to the relevant authorities in respect of the Collection Fund.
- C2.21 To authorise, under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, the appearance in the Magistrates Court of staff concerned with the recovery of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.
- C2.22 The write off Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and any other non-collectable debts owed to the Council, in accordance with the financial regulations.

Benefit Fraud

- C2.23 To institute Court proceedings in respect of alleged benefit fraud.

C3 Strategic Director of Resources

Human Resources

- C3.1 To determine the following matters subject to such being compatible with the overall direction of human resource matters by the Chief Executive:
 - (a) To administer and implement, in consultation with the Head of Human Resources the Council's organisational employee development and human resource plans;
 - (b) To determine the interpretation and application of pay scales and conditions of service for all employees;
 - (c) To consider and make changes in grading and other conditions for existing postholder(s);

- (d) To administer any schemes for awards to employees making suggestions which could affect economies and improve efficiency etc.

C3A Monitoring Officer

Monitoring Officer Responsibilities

- C3A.1 To carry out the functions set out in Article 11.3(c) of this Constitution
- C3A.2 To take all such action as may be required to properly discharge the duties of Monitoring Officer as specified in Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, with respect to the legality of action taken or proposed to be taken by the Council.
- C3A.3 To take all such action as may be required to properly discharge the duties of Monitoring Officer regarding Ethical Governance and Standards matters as specified in Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended).
- C3A.4 In consultation with the Chief Executive and Constitution Working Group to make such amendments to the Constitution which, in that officers judgement, need to be made in view of the Council's resolutions, to correct anomalies and to reflect any changes to the law, such amendments will be reported for information.

Information Management

- C3A.4 To act as the officer responsible for all matters relating to information governance including Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Regulation of Investigatory Powers and Surveillance which will include reviewing decisions made on requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.
- C3A.5 Where any document is necessary to any legal procedure or proceedings on behalf of the Council, to sign or authorise any other officer to sign for the purposes of authentication, unless:
 - (a) any enactment otherwise authorises or requires; or
 - (b) the Council has given requisite authority to some other person to authenticate.
- C3A.6 To witness the affixing of the Common Seal of the Council in any circumstances where that function has not been delegated under C2B.8.
- C3A.7 To make decisions as detailed in the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- C3A.8 To determine applications for the temporary exclusion of traffic from streets under Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

C3A.9 ~~To determine reviews against decisions on:~~

~~homelessness decisions under Section 202 Housing Act 1996;
the termination or extension of Introductory Tenancies;
the termination of a tenancy on absolute grounds under Section 85ZA of the Housing Act 1985;~~

~~as part of a panel involving one Member of the Audit and Standards Committee who has received appropriate training.~~

C3A.10 As the Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO), to provide guidance on information security, develop relevant policy, conduct annual reviews and investigate suspected breaches of relevant procedures or other requirements.

C3B Head of Legal Services (Director of One Legal)

Please note that authority for all matters formerly delegated to the Head of Legal Services has now been delegated to the Director of One Legal - Tewkesbury Borough Council, by virtue of a Section 101 Agreement dated the 30th September 2020.

Legal Proceedings and Advice

C3B.1 ~~To institute and defend in their own name all appropriate legal proceedings in any court, for and on behalf of the Council, where a decision has been made, whether under delegated authority of an officer or by the Executive, Council or committee, and which relates to a regulatory or enforcement power.~~

~~C3B.2 Where the Council is engaged in any litigation, to have the conduct of the matter and full authority to receive any information in connection therewith and to settle or compromise any proceedings as they deem appropriate and expedient for the Council's interests.~~

~~Authority to prosecute in the Magistrates' Court or to initiate proceedings in the County Court.~~

~~C3B.2 After consultation with the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer to initiate any action in the High Court.~~

C3B.3 To defend all actions brought against the Council in any court or tribunal.

C3B.4 ~~Authority to instruct private practice solicitors or Counsel to undertake legal work when considered necessary or appropriate.~~
~~To instruct Counsel.~~

C3B.5 To authorise the appearance of non-admitted legal staff within the section in the Magistrates' Court under section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972.

C3B.6 To settle disputes and litigious actions subject (if time constraints permit) in prior consultation with the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer where such actions are in the High Court.

C3B.7 To institute, defend or participate in any legal proceedings in any case where such action is necessary to give effect to decisions of the Council or in any case where the Director of One Legal considers that such action is necessary to protect the Council's interests and is satisfied as to the available evidence.

C3B.8 To determine reviews against decisions on:

- (a) homelessness decisions under Section 202 Housing Act 1996;
- (b) the termination or extension of Introductory Tenancies;

- (c) the termination of a tenancy on absolute grounds under Section 85ZA of the Housing Act 1985;

as part of a panel involving one Member of the Audit and Standards Committee who has received appropriate training.

Common Seal of the Council

C3B.8 The common seal of the Council will be affixed to those documents which in the opinion of the Director of One Legal should be sealed.

C3B.9 The common seal will be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Director of One Legal.

C3B.10 The affixing of the common seal must be attested by any of the following: the Director of One Legal (Tewkesbury Borough Council), a Head of Law (Tewkesbury Borough Council), the Chief Executive, Strategic Director, Monitoring Officer, Chair of Council, the Leader or Deputy Leader.

C3B.11 To undertake decisions delegated to the Chief Executive where such decisions are required to be dealt with by a Solicitor of the Supreme Court.

C3C Head of Property Services

C3C. 1 To procure contracts or additional works as appropriate to services for which the Head of Property Services is responsible subject to such being within approved budget and policy.

C3C.2 To act as the Council's Corporate Property Officer as defined in the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.

C3C.3 To purchase and dispose of land and property PROVIDED THAT in the case of purchases:

- (a) the Head of Property Services and Section 151 Officer are both satisfied that there is a robust business case for the acquisition); and
- (b) it is in accordance with approved policy and budget

AND FURTHER SUBJECT TO consultation with:

- (c) The relevant Ward Member(s);
- (d) The relevant Committee Chair; and
- (e) The appropriate Strategic Director.

C3C.4 To authorise appropriately qualified and experienced staff (namely Members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) to enter into negotiations in connection with the general management and control of all Council property (land and buildings).

C3C.5 To make decisions (including negotiating, agreeing, granting and issuing instructions to the Councils legal services provider to enter into appropriate agreements) in connection with the general management and control of all

Council property (land and buildings) in consultation with the appropriate service areas,

Right to Buy Disposals

- C3C.6 To approve the sale of houses and flats under the Right to Buy (RTB) legislation.
- C3C.7 To determine whether the Council's right to reclaim discount on a RTB sale should take priority over a legal charge in favour of a third party.
- C3C.8 To approve any waiver of repayments of RTB discounts in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Chair of Housing Committee.

Former Council Houses

- C3C.9 To determine applications from the owners of former Council houses in respect of covenants in any conveyance or transfer which relate to using the property as a single private dwelling house and/or preventing the erection of buildings, alterations or extensions, including hard standings.

Former Council Houses in the Cotswolds AONB

- C3C.10 To decide applications to purchase a former Council property where the applicant(s):
- (a) Has / have at least 3 years residency or employment in Gloucestershire for the three years preceeding the application for consent; or
 - (b) Has previously lived in Gloucestershire for at least 3 years
 - (c) Is / are member(s) of the Armed Forces and have lived in Gloucestershire for at least 2 years; or
 - (d) Is a Registered Proprietor of social housing which proposes to purchase under the Government's Mortgage Rescue subject to consultation with the Chair of the Housing Committee.

New Build and Regeneration Programme/ Major Works and Housing Management

- C3C.11 The Head of Property Services, Strategic Head of Housing and Head of Assets and Investments (council Housing) each
- (a) To make decisions in accordance with the Council's Decanting Policy; and
 - (b) To serve demolition notices on relevant tenants in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee and Ward Councillors)

C3D Head of Technology

- C3D.1 To invite tenders and accept tenders where provision has been made in the budget subject to both the Contract and Procurement and Financial Procedure Rules.
- C3D.2 To ensure procedures are in place (and communicated) to protect Council ICT assets from any inappropriate activity, use, loss or removal. This will include adhering to all appropriate legislation and Council rules regarding the

acquiring, use, retention and removal/destruction of all Council ICT assets (including information).

C3D.3 To procure contracts, additional goods, works and services as appropriate which fall within this area of responsibility subject to such being within approved budget and not contrary to policy.

C3D.4 To ensure IT service continuity in the event of a disaster that requires a switch over of the IT services from the primary site (currently at Ebley Mill) to the secondary site (currently at Littlecombe).'

C3D.5 To ensure damage from a cyber-attack is minimised and/or contained by switching off some or all of the IT services.

C4 Strategic Director of Communities

General

C4.1 To take all actions and make decisions relating to the Council's regulatory and permissive functions under relevant legislation and associated regulations in respect of:

- (a) anti-social behaviour, including high-hedges;
- (b) operation of all civil parking enforcement; and
- (c) waste fly tipping.

Tenant Services

C4.2 To determine all matters in connection with the general management and control of all property falling within the Housing Revenue Account subject to such being within approved budget and not contrary to policy.

C4.3 To procure contracts or additional works as appropriate to services which fall within his/her area of responsibility subject to such being within approved budget and not contrary to policy.

Housing / Homelessness

C4.4 To approve minor amendments to the Housing Allocation Policy.

C4.5 To make decisions on the allocation or transfer of Council House or other registered provider tenancies.

C4.6 To make decisions in respect of the provision of accommodation for homeless persons, subject to the review of any refusal decision by the Housing Appeals Panel.

C4.7 To agree temporary tenancies for either staff or persons displaced by renovation grant works.

C4.8 To make nominations of prospective tenants to registered providers of housing or other bodies.

- C4.9 To procure specialist housing or housing related support services, including in partnership with other organisations.

Housing Enabling

- C4.10 To advise Homes England of Affordable Housing Projects which meet priorities identified in strategies of both the Council and Homes England.
- C4.11 To commit payment of Affordable Housing Grants from within the approved Capital Programmes for new projects being developed by Registered Providers.
- C4.12 To undertake such ancillary duties, within the terms of the approved capital programme, as will facilitate the provision of affordable housing in the District.

Cultural Leisure Services

- C4.13 To set and vary fees and charges in relation to:-

(a) Use of Council facilities at:

- Ebley Mill;
- Joint Use Centres;
- Stratford Park Leisure Centre ~~(wet side only)~~;
- Shambles Market; Cornhill Market;
- Dursley Pool and Sports Centre;
- Museum in the Park; and
- Council public spaces.

(b) Food and Beverage vending machines at Council premises;

(c) Incentives/concessions/offers in line with approved business / service plans;

(d) Food and beverages, splits with promoters on performances and other incentives / concessions/ offers, exhibition and general hire prices in line with the business/service plan at:

- Museum in the Park

(e) Specific events at Stratford Park / Court.

Community Safety

- C4.14 To set charges for the removal/disposal of abandoned/scrap vehicles.

Off Street Car Parks

- C4.15 To propose and make changes in respect of off street parking and consider any objections to and implement changes (as appropriate) to the Stroud District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2010 (as amended from time to time), in consultation with:

(a) The Chair of the Community Services and Licensing Committee; and
The Head of Property Services.

Ubico

C4.16 To act as the Council's nominated director on the board or authorise an appropriate officer to act in that role in their stead.

C4A Strategic Head of Housing

Council House Tenancies

C4A.1 To determine:

- (a) All matters relating to transfer applications (including cases where there are rent arrears and special circumstances);
- (b) Applications for mutual exchanges;
- (c) All matters regarding garage tenancies;
- (d) Applications from tenants wishing to use their dwellings for business purposes.

C4A.2 To make offers of accommodation and to commence tenancies of Council dwellings.

Breach of Tenancy Conditions

C4A.3 To take action in respect of:

- (a) the recovery of rent arrears and/or other breach of tenancy conditions;
- (b) to sign and serve of Notices to Extend Introductory Tenancies, Notice of Proceedings for Possession, Notice of Seeking Possession, Notices Seeking Demotion of Tenancy and Notices to Quit;
- (c) in consultation with the Director of One Legal to:
 - preserve the individual and collective rights of tenants to quiet enjoyment of their properties;
 - seek injunctions in connection housing tenancy enforcement.

C4A.4 To determine proposals for the settlement, deferment or variation of arrangements in connection with outstanding rent arrears.

C4A.5 In consultation with the Director of One Legal to take action against trespassers in council housing or other housing related land.

Grants to Tenants' Groups

C4A.6 To allocate grants for specific projects within agreed budgets pertinent to tenants' groups.

New Build and Regeneration Programme/ Major Works and Housing Management

C4A.7 The Head of Property Services, Strategic Head of Housing and Head of Assets and Investments (council Housing) each

- (a) To make decisions in accordance with the Council's Decanting Policy; and
- (b) To serve demolition notices on relevant tenants in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee and Ward Councillors)

C4B Head of Assets & Investment (Council Housing) Contract Services

- C4B.1 To undertake such ancillary duties, within the terms of the approved capital programme, as will facilitate the provision of social housing in the District.
- C4B.2 To procure contracts or additional works as appropriate to services for which Head of Contract Services is responsible subject to such being within approved budget and policy.

New Build and Regeneration Programme/ Major Works and Housing Management

- C4B.3** The Head of Property Services, Strategic Head of Housing and Head of Assets and Investments (council Housing) each
 - (a) To make decisions in accordance with the Council's Decanting Policy; and
 - (b) To serve demolition notices on relevant tenants in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee and Ward Councillors)

C5 Strategic Director of Place

General

- C5.1 To take all actions and make decisions relating to the Council's regulatory and permissive functions under relevant legislation and associated regulations in respect of:
 - (a) environmental crimes in connection with services for which the Strategic Director of Place is responsible;
 - (b) serving of fixed penalties in connection with services for which the Strategic Director of Place is responsible;

Miscellaneous

- C5.1A To lodge formal objections to good vehicles operator licences.
- C5.1B To authorise officers to enter land or premises for enforcement and other purposes in exercise of the Council's functions as local planning authority.
- C5.1C To obtain particulars of persons interested in land under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- C5.1D To serve service remedial notices regarding high hedges pursuant to Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Grant Funding

- C5.2. To agree, maintain and renew all core grant funding agreements with voluntary and community organisations within the criteria set by committee subject to:
 - (a) consultation with the relevant committee's members; and

- (b) none of the consulted committee members requiring the decision to be referred to committee for determination.

Finance

- C5.3 In consultation with the relevant Committee Chair and the Strategic Director of Resources to determine the operation and award of all expenditure to relevant organisations from the Regeneration Service Budgets.
- C5.4 To determine the operation and award of all expenditure for relevant projects funded from Climate and Carbon Management related budgets.

Consultation Responses

- C5.5 To agree and when necessary, present responses to both statutory and non-statutory consultations relevant to the Place Directorate on behalf of the Council. The Strategic Director of Place may consult with Members prior to submitting a response but for the avoidance of doubt the decision remains an officer decision. (The Strategic Director of Place has delegated this to the Head of Development Management in relation to operational planning matters)

Community Infrastructure Levy

- C5.6 With the exception of substantive changes to the Council's adopted Charging Schedule or the Regulation 123 List or the allocation of funds, to determine all community infrastructure levy matters in accordance with the Charging Schedule, the Regulation 123 List and other associated policies and practices affecting the Council.
[NB. Delegation C54.67 may also be exercised by the Head of Planning Strategy Strategic Planning and Economic Development]

Street Naming and Numbering

- C5.7 To name and number new streets, to rename streets and to set fees in respect thereof unless statutorily prescribed.

Local Land Charges

- C5.8 To set fees for all Local Land Charges matters except where such fees are statutorily prescribed.

- C5A Head of Development Management, Head of Building Control and Head of Strategic Planning Strategy and Economic Development

Head of Development Management ~~and Related Applications~~

- C5A.1 To determine all planning and related applications in accordance with the operational arrangements specified in Appendix A to the Scheme of Delegations Part C.
- C5A.2 To set and subsequently adjust as necessary the scale and scope of charges for planning submissions in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the relevant Committee Chair.

- C5A.3 In consultation with the Director of One Legal to determine the content of Section 106 Deeds, variations and releases and to execute such deeds in the name of the Council.
- C5A.4 To refuse planning and related applications on such terms as they consider appropriate where the relevant application has been:
- (a) superseded by events; or
 - (b) where information requested has not been received; or
 - (c) which have been considered by the Development Control Committee but the applicants or their appointed agents have not made reasonable attempts to complete a Section 106 Deed which is acceptable to the Planning Manager/Head of Development Management within six months of the resolution by Development Control Committee.

Listed Buildings

- C5A.5 To issue and serve:
- (a) Building Preservation Notices;
 - (b) Listed Building Enforcement Notices.
- C5A.6 To undertake works to secure compliance with any listed building enforcement or allied notice.
- C5A.7 To authorise the execution of any urgent work considered necessary to preserve an unoccupied listed building.
- C5A.8 To apply for injunctions to restrain breaches of Building Preservation Notices or Listed Building legislation.
- C5A.9 To prosecute for any breach of Listed Building Control.

Planning Enforcement

- C5A.10 Unless consideration is reserved to Development Control Committee under Appendix B to the Scheme of Delegations Part C to take enforcement action (including but not limited to):
- (a) issue and/or service of Enforcement Notices and Breach of Condition Notices;
 - (b) issue and/or service of Stop Notices (including temporary Stop Notices);
 - (c) undertake works to secure compliance with any enforcement or allied Notice;
 - (d) apply for injunctions to restrain breaches of planning control;
 - (e) prosecute for any breach of planning control;
 - (f) require proper maintenance of land and to take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with any notice (e.g. section 215 notice);
 - (g) issue and service of Planning Contravention Notices and Notices under Section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act

Protection of Trees and Hedges

- C5A.11 To make Provisional (Emergency) Tree Preservation Orders.

- C5A.12 To revoke or vary Tree Preservation Orders.
- C5A.13 To confirm Tree Preservation or related Orders unless there is any sustained objection.
- C5A.14 To serve notices requiring the replacement of trees.
- C5A.15 To apply for injunctions to restrain actual or threatened damage to protected tree(s).
- C5A.16 To prosecute for any offence relating to trees.
- C5A.17 To respond to notifications to fell or lop trees which are in Conservation Areas.
- C5A.18 To determine applications to fell or lop trees the subject of a confirmed Tree Preservation Order.
- C5A.19 To take action in relation to dangerous trees.
- C5A.20 To take action to protect important hedgerows.

Advertisements

- C5A.21 To require the removal of the unauthorised display of advertisements.
- C5A.22 To authorise the removal or obliteration of unauthorised placards or posters.
- C5A.23 To prosecute for any offence relating to the display of advertisements.

Head of Strategic Planning ~~Strategy~~ and Economic Development

Localism

- C5A.24 To confirm a parish council's designation as a 'neighbourhood' and any associated issues, subject to there being no objections to a notification.
- C5A.25 To determine nominations for land and property as Assets of Community Value.

Article 4 Directions

- C5A.26 In consultation with the Director of One Legal to make Directions under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, removing or restricting permitted development rights from land and property.

Head of Building Control

Building Control

Note: In accordance with the Building Safety Act 2022 all officers discharging any Building Control delegation must meet the professional requirements imposed by Part 2A of the Building Act 1984.

- C5A.27 To pass or reject plans submitted to the Council under Building Regulations.
- C5A.28 To determine applications made to the Council for dispensations from or relaxations of Building Regulations.
- C5A.29 To issue or serve any appropriate notices under the Building Act 1984, including Notices in respect of dangerous structures.
- C5A.30 In consultation with the Director of One Legal, to prosecute or take other appropriate legal proceedings to secure compliance with the Building Act 1984 and under the Building Regulations.
- C5A.31 To set charges for all Building Regulation purposes together with power to vary such charges where it is considered to be in the Council's interests to do so.
- C5A.32 To participate in the Partner Authority Scheme whereby local Building Control bodies aid each other in providing a coordinated delivery mechanism to applicants.
- C5A.33 To issue completion certificates for works carried out under a Building Regulations and those requested in respect of premises designated under the Fire Precautions Act 1971/Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- C5A.34 To act as "appropriate officer" for the purposes of the Party Walls etc. Act 1996.

C.5B Head of Environmental Health

General

- C5B.1 Subject to paragraph C5B.45 below, take all actions and make all decisions relating to the Council's regulatory and permissive functions under relevant legislation and associated regulations in respect of the following:
 - (a) Animal activities and animal establishments
 - (b) Animal welfare
 - (c) Air quality
 - (d) Caravan sites
 - (e) Cinemas
 - (f) Contaminated Land
 - (g) Control of Pollution
 - (h) Control of smoking in enclosed spaces
 - (i) Environmental crimes, anti-social behaviour and serving of fixed penalties, including functions under the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
 - (j) Environmental Protection – including statutory nuisance and environmental permitting and other functions under the Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - (k) Face to face fundraising activities

- (l) Flood prevention
- (m) Food safety and hygiene
- (n) Gambling (except where under Council policy or statute a matter must be determined by the Council or by the Licensing Committee)
- (o) Game and Game dealers
- (p) Hackney carriages and drivers (except where under Council policy or statute a matter must be determined by the Council or by the Licensing Committee)
- (q) Health and Safety
- (r) House to House collections
- (s) Infectious diseases
- (t) Land Drainage and foul drainage
- (u) Licensing Act 2003 (except where under Council policy or statute a matter must be determined by the Council or by the Community Services and Licensing Committee)
- (v) Licensing functions and consents other than those listed separately
- (w) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- (x) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
- (y) Lotteries
- (z) Motor salvage operators
- (aa) Noise and other statutory nuisances
- (bb) Pavement licences
- (cc) Port Health
- (dd) Pest control
- (ee) Private Hire vehicles (drivers and operators) (except where under Council policy or statute a matter must be determined by the Council or by the Licensing Committee)
- (ff) Private Sector Housing
- (gg) Private Water supplies
- (hh) Public Health
- (ii) Public Safety
- (jj) Public space and neighbourhood enforcement under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- (kk) Regulation of charitable collections
- (ll) Scrap metal dealers
- (mm) Sexual entertainment venues
- (nn) Skin piercing registrations
- (oo) Street collections
- (pp) Street trading
- (qq) Sunday trading
- (rr) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Sections 215 – 219

C5B.2 To appoint officers and inspectors to undertake work (including service of notices) relating to the Council's regulatory and permissive functions to which paragraph 4B.1 refers;

Licensing

C5B.3 To authorise the Licensing Manager and the Senior Licensing Officer to determine:

- (a) applications made under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 and associated regulations except where objections or representations have been received;
- (b) minor variation applications including occasions where any relevant representation is received;
- (c) applications relating to taxis and private hire operators, private hire vehicles and drivers and to revoke/suspend licences except where the Council's taxi and private hire licensing policy delegates the decision to be referred to a Licensing Sub-Committee ; and
- ~~(d)~~ (d) applications relating to street trading consents and to revoke/suspend consents except where the Councils' Street trading policy delegates the decision to be referred to a Licensing Sub-Committee
- ~~(e)~~ (e) applications for Pavement licences applications for house to house and street collections.A and
- (f) applications for house to house and street collections.

C5B.4 To review and amend fees and charges for matters relevant to functions in paragraph C5B.1, in line with inflation or other changes in charges to which the Council is subject.

Court Proceedings

C5B.5 To institute court proceedings in connection with the discharge of the functions delegated to them, subject to consultation with One Legal.

C6 Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit

C6. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000: Sections 28 and 29 To maintain and keep under review a central register of authorisations issued under Sections 28 and 29 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Appendix A

EXCEPTIONS TO DELEGATIONS REGARDING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (PARA C5A.1 OF THE SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS)

I. The delegation shall not apply to an application where the Chair of Development Control Committee (“DCC”) (or in ~~his/her~~their absence the Vice Chair of the Committee) having:

- (a) consulted the Head of Development Management (or their subdelegates); and
- (b) being satisfied that the application is a matter which should be considered by committee taking account of paragraphs 1 to 4 below

requires that the application first be referred to DCC for consideration before determination.

II. Requirements for reference of items to DCC

1. Requests for items to be placed before the DCC may only be made to the Development Team Manager, the Head of Development Management or the Chair of the DCC by:

- (a) the Parish or Town Council in which the application site is located, or
- (b) a Ward Councillor within whose ward the application site is located.

2. An application which the Head of Development Management (and relevant subdelegates) would otherwise consider it appropriate to determine pursuant to their delegation, should only be referred to committee where it has:

- (a) generated significant demonstrable third party interest; and
- (b) such interest is based upon relevant material planning considerations

3. Any request for an application to be referred to committee must:

- (a) be made in writing using DCC referrals web form;
- (b) be sent to `_WEB_DCC.referrals`;
- (c) be received by the Head of Development Management (or their subdelegates) before consideration of the application under officer delegated powers to ensure that the application is not determined prior to receipt of such request. (Applications will be placed before the delegated panel after the expiry of the 21 day consultation period)

4. An application may not be referred to committee pursuant to this Appendix if it concerns a matter of technical appraisal, fact or legal opinion; or is an application with fixed determination periods (e.g. notifications, prior approvals, approval to discharge conditions and ~~minor~~non-material amendments).

Appendix B

DELEGATION OF DECISIONS ON ENFORCEMENT ACTION OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS (PARA C4A.11 SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS)

This Appendix sets out operational arrangements relevant to the planning enforcement decisions in paragraph C4A.11 of the Scheme of Delegations.

1. Role of Expediency notice to Members

1.1 With the exception of paragraph 1.2 below the decision to take planning enforcement action is delegated to the Head of Development Management in accordance with Paragraph CA5.10 of this Scheme of Delegation.

1.2 Where the Head of Development Management considers it is appropriate to take action against a breach of planning control where enforcement action could result in the demolition of a dwelling(s), the case shall be referred to DCC for its consideration and decision.

1.3 Where the Head of Development Management (or subdelegates) considers it appropriate to take action against a breach of planning control ward members will be notified of the action via email with 5 days of the action being taken. A report detailing all planning enforcement action taken by the Head of Development Management will be reported to the Development Control Committee for information via the production of an enforcement report.

~~Where the Head of Development Management (or subdelegates) considers that public interest warrants it, an expediency report will be produced and circulated to all members of Development Control Committee and the relevant ward members(s) setting out the breach(es) of planning control that has been investigated and the action which officers recommend pursuing. No action will be taken until the expiry of III. below~~

I. Evaluation Period

~~No further action will be taken on the cases listed until a two week consultation period has expired after the publication to Members or all consultees have responded before the expiry of the 2 week period, or it has been agreed by the Head of Development Management in consultation with the Chair of DCC that the matter requires urgent earlier action.~~

2. The withdrawal of an enforcement decision

Any early withdrawal of an enforcement notice will be agreed by the Head of Development Management in consultation with the Chair of the Development Control Committee

II. Information reporting to committee

~~Where the Head of Development Management considers it is appropriate to take action against a breach of planning control where enforcement action could result in the demolition of a dwelling(s), the case shall be referred to DCC for its consideration and decision.~~

~~Demolition of building of over 100m² floor space, or an extension to a dwelling house of over 100m² floor space, the case will be reported to the DCC for information on a quarterly basis.~~

3. Further action

Where the delegated decision is to take enforcement action, the delegation includes authority to take any further action to secure a cessation of the breach.

PART D: DESIGNATION OF PROPER OFFICERS

D.1 Chief Executive

In the absence of the above, any of the Strategic Directors will be the Council's Proper Officer for any of the below purposes.

Legislation	Detail
Local Government and Housing Act 1989	
<u>Section 2</u>	<u>Officer responsible for maintaining a list of politically restricted posts</u>
Section 4	Officer designated as Head of the Council's Paid Service.
Sections 15 - 17 and associated Regulations	Officer responsible for the purposes of legislation relating to political groups and balance on Committees etc.
Section 18 and associated Regulations	Officer responsible for the purposes of the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme.
Section 19 and associated Regulations	Officer to whom general notices of interests shall be given and who shall maintain records which are open to public inspection
Local Government Act 1972	
Section 13(3)	Officer who, in appropriate circumstances, shall, with the Chair of the Parish Meeting, constitute the "Parish Trustees".
<u>Section 30(5)</u>	<u>Receive Notice of Ombudsman's reports</u>
Section 83	Officer to whom declarations of acceptance of office shall be delivered.
Section 84	Officer to whom written notice of resignation may be delivered.
Section 88	Officer who may convene a meeting for the election of Chair of Council following a casual vacancy in that office.
Section 89	Officer to whom notice of a casual vacancy may be given.
Section 210(6) and (7)	Officer in whom shall vest any power with respect to a Charity and who shall be included as a Trustee of any charity within the meaning of the Section.
Section 225(1)	Officer responsible for receiving any document on behalf of the Council and for carrying out the duties relating thereto as required by the Section.
Schedule 12	Officer who shall sign summonses to Council meetings and receive notices of addresses to which summonses are to be sent.

Other	To be the Proper Officer of the Council in relation to any reference in any enactment which is to be interpreted as a reference to a Proper Officer of a local authority where the Council has not appointed another officer to be its Proper Officer and also excepting any such reference which is within the direct remit of one of the Council's Strategic Directors or which implies that Council's the Monitoring Officer or the Section 151 Officer shall be so designated.
Representation of the People Act 1983	
Section 8	Officer appointed as the Registration Officer for any constituency or part of a constituency within Stroud District.
Section 35	Officer appointed to be the Returning Officer for elections of Councillors of the Stroud District and for elections of Councillors of parishes within the District.

D.2 Section 151 Officer

In the absence of the above, the Deputy Section 151 Officer will be the Council's Proper Officer for any of the below matters.

Local Government Act 1972	
Section 115(2)	Officer to whom all money due from every officer employed by the Council shall be paid.
Section 146(1)(a)	Officer authorised to make statutory declarations and issue certificates relating to the transfer of securities on the alteration of areas etc.
Section 151	Officer responsible for the administration of the Council's financial affairs. (Section 114 of the 1988 Act places a specific duty on this officer to make a public report in specified cases of actual or anticipated financial misconduct).
Section 191(2)	Officer to whom applications under S1 Ordnance Survey Act 1841 shall be sent.
Section 228(3)	Officer responsible for making "Proper Officer" accounts open to inspection by members of the authority.

D.3 Monitoring Officer

In the absence of the above, the Director of One Legal or their nominee may act as Proper Officer in respect of any of the below matters provided always that any person appointed "Deputy Monitoring Officer" shall assume the role of Monitoring Officer.

Local Government Act 1972	
Section 100(B)	Officer to decide which exempt items shall be excluded from those made available to the public before a meeting.

Section 100(C)	Officer to make a written summary of proceedings where exclusion is necessary of parts of minutes which would reveal exempt information.
Section 100(F)	Officer to decide that documents relating to the business of the Council, which contain exempt information under paragraphs 1-6, 9, 11, 12 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, are not required to be open for inspection by all members of Council.
Section 236 (9) and (10)	Officer responsible for sending a copy of every by-law made by the Council to Parish Councils, Town Councils and Parish Meetings within the District and to the County Council.
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976	
Section 41	Officer who shall certify copies of resolutions and minutes of proceedings of the Authority.
Data Protection Act 2018	
Data Protection Act 2018	Officer designated as the Council's Data Protection Officer.
Freedom of Information Act 2000	
Freedom of Information Act 2000	Officer responsible for Access to Information.
Local Government and Housing Act 1989	
Section 5	Officer designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

D.3A Director of One Legal

Section 223 (1)	Officer authorised to prosecute or defend or to appear on the Council's behalf.
Section 238	Officer who shall certify a copy of a by-law made by the Council for evidence purposes.

D.4 Strategic Director of Place

In the absence of the above, any of the Strategic Directors shall be the Council's Proper Officer for any of the below purpose.

Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977	Officer responsible for the registration of burials and for the storage of appropriate records and the operational management of cemeteries.
<u>National Assistance Act 1948 (section 47)</u>	<u>Officer responsible for orders dealing with elderly, infirm etc</u>

In respect of matters arising under the Building Act 1984, the Council's Building Control Manager shall be its Proper Officer. In respect of all other matters, the Strategic Director of Development Services or the relevant manager responsible for dealing with the matter in question shall be the Proper Officer of the Council.

Building Act 1984	
Section 61	Officer who shall be permitted to have free access to works of repair etc to drains.
Section 78	Officer who may exercise the powers of Sub-Section (1) relating to emergency measures necessary in respect of dangerous buildings or structures.
Other	Officer authorised to serve any notice in respect of matters within his/her area of responsibility where such service is to be undertaken by an Officer designated by the Authority.
Stroud Port Health Authority Order 1979	Officer designated as Proper Officer for the purposes of this Order and any related legislation. To be the appointed Registered Medical Practitioner for the purposes of this Order and any related legislation.
Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984	To be the Proper Officer of the Authority for all purposes under this Act other than those for which any other officer is specifically so designated.
<u>S.49(3)(a) of the Food Safety Act, 1990</u>	<u>Officer responsible for authentication of documents etc</u>

D.5 Strategic Director Communities

In the absence of the above, the Strategic Head of Housing shall be the Council's Proper Officer for any of the below purpose.

Rent Act 1977	Officer authorised to sign certificates on behalf of the Council, as the Local Housing Authority.
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D.8 Generic

The Chief Executive, the Strategic Directors and the Monitoring Officer are designated “Proper Officer” in respect of the following functions in so far as the matter relates to their respective areas of responsibility. In the absence of a Strategic Director, the relevant Service Head or Manager, responsible for dealing with the matter in question shall be the “Proper Officer” of the Council.

Local Government Act 1972	
Section 229(5)	Officer responsible for certifying a photographic copy, as being a copy of an original document.
Section 234	Officer authorised to authenticate documents which require such authentication.

Section 100D	Officer responsible for the identification and listing of background papers in his/her name or joint reports where his/her name is the first shown.
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000	Such officer or officers who may be designated to grant authorisation for the carrying out of intrusive surveillance under Sections 28 and 29 of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 which as at February 2022 is the Head of Environmental Health and Strategic Director of Place.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Gloucestershire City Region Board
Purpose of Report	To consider the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB), the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership and joint scrutiny arrangements.
Decision(s)	<p>The Council RESOLVES to:</p> <p>a) Agree to the establishment of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB; the Board)</p> <p>b) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise and complete the Inter-Authority Agreement and other key documentation and to take all necessary steps to create the GCRB, including finalising the terms of reference for the GCRB</p> <p>c) Agree that the above resolutions will not be effective until all Gloucestershire councils pass equivalent resolutions.</p> <p>d) Upon the establishment of the GCRB:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i) delegate this Council's functions to the GCRB as are necessary for the delivery of the functions identified in the Terms of Reference at Appendix 1 to this report;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii) confirm the appointment of Gloucestershire County Council as the Administering Authority;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii) agree to appoint the Leader of the Council to the GCRB as the nominated member of the Board. If the Leader is unable to attend a meeting of the GCRB the Leader will nominate an alternative member of the administration to attend the Board as a substitute.</p>
Consultation & Feedback	All Group Leaders.
Report Author	Kathy O'Leary, Chief Executive Email: Kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk
Options	<p>As part of the development of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB) alternative options were considered.</p> <p>Retaining both a GCRB and a Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) was deemed to create significant duplication and would not be effective.</p> <p>Disbanding any joint governance and Gloucestershire authorities instead operating individually was also discounted, as without a collective decision making forum to invest pooled business rates funding via the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF), Gloucestershire authorities would be significantly financially worse off. In addition, disbanding a joint decision making forum and not proceeding with the GCRB would limit Gloucestershire's ability to proceed with and secure further devolution and county-wide powers.</p>

Background Papers	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: 9 February 2023: GEGJC Future Governance Update V2.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)			
	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: 25 September 2023: GEGJC Pool Update Sept 2023.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)			
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference and Constitution for Gloucestershire City Region Board Appendix 2 – Principles for the administration of Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)			
Implications (further details at the end of report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Gloucestershire local authorities have worked jointly together through membership of several Boards (Severn Vale, Rural Ambitions and Central Gloucestershire City Region) together with the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) for several years. Following a review of the joint working arrangements, Leadership Gloucestershire agreed that the three boards and the Joint Committee should be merged into a single forum under the name of Gloucestershire City Region Board serving the whole of the county.
- 1.2 This report sets out the emerging form and function of the Gloucestershire City Region Board, the nature of its authority, terms of reference, membership and joint scrutiny arrangements.

2. The Gloucestershire City Region Board – overall structure and function

- 2.1 The overall aims of the new Board will be to develop and deliver a vision for the future economic success for the whole of the Gloucestershire economic area.
- 2.2 The new Board will also provide an opportunity to establish the City Region as a nationally defined area that is a single economic functional area. City Regions include urban and rural areas that have inter-related economic activities with the potential for increased success through coordinated interventions which benefit the whole. Gloucestershire is a county with significant aspiration and ambition which integrate with and support the national and regional economic development agendas.

3. Principles of the Gloucestershire City Region Board

- 3.1 The proposed terms of reference set out in Appendix 1 provide details of the Board’s purpose, powers and administrative arrangements.
- 3.2 The following detailed matters explain the nature of the authority given to the Board which ‘empowers’ the Board to make binding decisions but subject to the following governance arrangements:
 - Whilst the Board’s remit is as wide as possible, partner councils will not have ‘delegated’ economic development or other functions to the Board.
 - Leaders will still need to operate within the authority delegated to them by their own councils when participating at the Board’s meetings. Leaders and officers will therefore need to work with their own councils to secure the necessary authority to facilitate the Board’s decisions.
 - A partner council will be free to undertake any economic activity it deems necessary within its own area. Notwithstanding this, it will be necessary for partner councils to

agree a protocol that they will not decide or undertake any activity which is contrary to those decisions made by the Board.

- In order to protect the interest of partner councils it will be necessary to agree a protocol that although the Board's decisions are by majority, the Board will not make a decision which impacts upon one council's area, without that council's agreement.

3.3 The following principles for the operation of the Gloucestershire City Region Board were developed, following consultation and engagement with Leadership Gloucestershire and all the Gloucestershire authorities:

- The proposed membership of the Board will be through elected representatives from each of the seven Gloucestershire local authorities. Each member will have an equal vote at the Board.
- The proposal is for the Chair of the Board to be a Gloucestershire County Council Cabinet Member. This supports the Government's arrangements through the levelling up agenda where the upper tier authority in a two-tier county, such as Gloucestershire, is given the lead role in negotiation of any county devolution deals. Therefore, Gloucestershire local authorities recognise the opportunity for a county deal is more about providing devolution from central government to Gloucestershire, rather than a mechanism for realigning and removing powers from an individual Gloucestershire local authority.
- Meetings will remain in public and external attendees will be invited to present and engage in the discussion about the economy and growth in Gloucestershire.
- The future development of the Board will be dependent on any County Deal that is negotiated and agreed with Central Government.
- The Senior Officer Group comprising of nominated senior officers from each of the seven Gloucestershire local authorities will continue to support the work of the Board.
- The County Council's GEGJC Scrutiny Committee will be re-constituted and reviewed to be re-focussed on having oversight if the activities of the GCRB. This will potentially include monitoring the delivery of projects that have received investment from the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF) or making suggestions to the GCRB on potential areas of future investment of the fund.

3.4 The proposed Board's operational arrangements between the Gloucestershire authorities will be the subject of an inter-authority agreement. The agreement will include (amongst other things):

- the establishment of the Board (as a Joint Committee)
- agreed terms of reference set out in Appendix 2
- the operational arrangements mentioned above
- the Board's resourcing, the role of the County Council as administering authority
- business plan formulation
- the arrangements should the Board were to widen its powers (which would require all the Gloucestershire authorities to agree such a change), and
- the overall constitutional arrangements for the Board.

3.5 Article 10 of the Constitution recognises the Council's power to establish joint arrangements with one or more other local authorities to exercise functions and any such arrangements which may involve the appointment of a joint committee with these other local authorities. The exercise of powers will, as mentioned above, require each constituent council to provide the authority to exercise such powers at the Board.

3.6 Leadership Gloucestershire has considered and supports the proposal to establish the Board.

4. Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

- 4.1 The Gloucestershire local authorities established the Business Rates Pool which enabled part of the Pool to be used to create the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF). The former GEGJC administered the fund through an eligibility and project approval process approved in November 2018.
- 4.2 At the GEGJC's final meeting in September 2023, members welcomed the reported growth of the Business Rates Pool and fund. The GEGJC asked whether a more strategic approach could be taken when considering and allocating SEDF funding. The fund operated under the GEGJC on an ad hoc approach – on a first come first served basis. GEGJC noted that projects are not always strategic in nature which risks funding being allocated to projects that may not maximise economic benefit and growth to the county.
- 4.3 The proposal is for the Gloucestershire City Region Board to administer the SEDF. This will enable the Board to reconsider the approach to the allocation of bids by developing a longer vision and a portfolio approach to assessing funding bids in the pipeline. This will enable the Board to apply a more rigorous selection of projects that would deliver and add value in supporting the growth of the local economy through a more strategic approach.
- 4.4 The former GEGJC considered it was important to establish a new strategic process in advance of the inauguration of the Gloucestershire City Region Board. It was suggested that this strategic approach could be lined up with the Economic Dashboard data and the emerging Countywide Economic Strategy.
- 4.5 The former Joint Committee Senior Officer Group proposed an approach to the Board's administration of the SEDF Fund as set out in Appendix 2, which will be considered at the Board's inaugural meeting.
- 4.6 Stroud District has been a recipient of SEDF investment in the past to support the development of the Low Carbon Training Centre skills at SGS's Berkeley Green campus, which has made an important contribution to activities to promote the importance of retrofit and green skills in Gloucestershire. It is important that a new joint committee is established to take decisions on SEDF investment and to ensure that timely and strategic investments are being made to develop the Gloucestershire economy. SEDF is important to help invest in business, education and skills to help create growth following the impacts of both the pandemic and cost of living crisis, including high inflation rates, which have acted as significant constraints on the economy.

5. Scrutiny Arrangements

- 5.1 The activities of the previous GEGJC were scrutinised by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC). This was a County Council scrutiny committee whose membership comprised seven County Councillors and 6 Co-opted District Councillors. Through consultation with all Gloucestershire authorities, it has been agreed that a joint scrutiny function will continue to exist to scrutinise the work of the GCRB. As before each local authority will be able to nominate a representative to that committee.
- 5.2 The creation of a new GCRB provides a timely opportunity to undertake an appropriate review of the scrutiny function for the new board to ensure that it aligns with the future activities of the GCRB.
- 5.3 The review of the scrutiny function is proposed to include (not an exhaustive list):
 - Scope the committee
 - Review of scrutiny's oversight and monitoring of SEDF Bids
 - Development of devolution and the implementation of any agreed County Deals
 - Monitoring outcomes and benefits through the implementation of the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy.

- 5.4 Following the review, the GCRB and Leadership Gloucestershire will be consulted on the future scope and activities of the County Council's Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee. The recommendations from the GCRB and Leadership Gloucestershire will be referred to the County Council's Constitution Committee and full Council for consideration. Subject to the County Council's approval, the new scrutiny arrangements are likely to come into effect in the late summer of 2024 following the creation of the GCRB.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

The inter-authority agreement provides for a contribution towards the County Council's Administering Authority role, which includes committee administrative support together with the statutory officer responsibilities. The funding for this support will be taken from the Business Rates Pool.

SDC support for the Board will include undertaking the role of administering authority for the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool. SDC Officers will be the main liaison with Central Government for the Pool and will prepare monitoring reports for the City Region Board. The cost of this is through officer time and no funding is drawn from the Pool to support this cost.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
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6.2 Legal Implications

Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables two or more local authorities to discharge any of their functions jointly and arrange for the discharge of those functions by a Joint Committee.

Section 9EB of Part A Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 Act enables the Secretary of State to make Regulations permitting arrangements under Section 101 (5) where any of the functions are the responsibility of the executive of the authority. The relevant regulations are the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012/1019 and Regulation 11 allows for a joint committee under Section 101 (5) of the 1972 Act.

Article 10 of the Council's constitution specifically allows the Council to enter into joint arrangements with one or more local authorities to exercise functions. Details of any such arrangements will then need to be reflected in Article 8 of the Council's constitution "Statutory, Regulatory and Other Committees".

One Legal

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6.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific implications in relation to the above matters in establishing the Board. However, the Board will consider such implications in making its decisions and in administering the SEDF.

6.4 Environmental Implications

There are no specific environmental implications in establishing the Board. However, the Board will consider environmental implications in making its decisions and in administering the SEDF.

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Terms of Reference and Constitution for the Gloucestershire City Region Board

1. Governance

- 1.1 The Gloucestershire City Region Board ("**GCR Board**") is a Joint Committee under ss101(5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 and under Part1A Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 Political Proportionality rules will not apply to the GCR Board as so constituted.
- 1.3 The GCR Board will include all of the Partner Authorities.

2. Host Authority

- 2.1 The GCR Board will be hosted under local government arrangements by Gloucestershire County Council. The Host Authority will provide Secretary/Clerk, s151 and Monitoring Officer roles of the GCR Board.

3. Functions of the GCR Board

- 3.1 Each of the Partner Authorities empowers the GCR Board to:
 - 3.1.1 engage in strategic discussion and act as the primary consultative forum to set a dynamic vision for Gloucestershire and to present and discuss issues relating to the following:
 - (a) economy and growth;
 - (b) funding and bids;
 - (c) devolution; and
 - (d) skills and employment;
 - 3.1.2 develop and support a shared vision for strategic growth and economic success for the County of Gloucestershire;
 - 3.1.3 champion that shared vision and its delivery with a single voice inside and outside Gloucestershire, including with strategic partner organisations such as the Western Gateway Partnership.
 - 3.1.4 lobby and bid for funding and support via government growth programmes and Western Gateway Partnership and other partners to support the delivery of the GCR Board's ambitions;
 - 3.1.5 promote the success of the Gloucestershire City Region and its strengths to attract inward investment and growth;
 - 3.1.6 work closely with all sections of the Gloucestershire City Region communities, businesses and agencies to engage them in the generation and delivery of the vision;
 - 3.1.7 build upon the inter-related strengths of the communities of the Gloucestershire City Region to fulfil the ambitions of each place and maintain their identities;
 - 3.1.8 create a positive vision for vibrant rural communities, businesses and infrastructure to maximise their contribution to Gloucestershire;
 - 3.1.9 work with partners to ensure the Gloucestershire City Region Vision can guide and integrate with future strategic spatial and infrastructure plans;
 - 3.1.10 ensure the development of a Gloucestershire Vision complements other visioning and strategic plans in the County of Gloucestershire;
 - 3.1.11 aim to create, through the Gloucestershire City Region Vision, a special county which has uniquely attractive offers as a place to live and visit and a vibrant economy firmly based on modern commercial activity, built on the strengths of our communities;
 - 3.1.12 discharge on behalf of Partner Authorities the power to do anything it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire together with such additional functions as the respective constituent Councils may determine from time to time;
 - 3.1.13 facilitate and enable collaboration between the Partner Authorities on economic development, employment and skills, and associated activities;

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- 3.1.14 formulate and agree the GCE Strategy from time to time and other plans and strategies related to economic growth, and to work jointly to ensure their delivery;
 - 3.1.15 lobby and carry out other activities that help achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire;
 - 3.1.16 promote the vision contained in the GCE Strategy;
 - 3.1.17 seek the allocation of resources to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of the area of Gloucestershire; and
 - 3.1.18 ensure a co-ordinated approach to and liaise with such relevant Groups/Boards as the Partner Authorities and/or the Senior Officer Group may determine from time to time.
- 3.2 To provide political and democratic accountability by:
- 3.2.1 monitoring the delivery of each priority, plan, project or programme included in the GCE Strategy and by ensuring that action is taken to review and prepare revised action plans as necessary;
 - 3.2.2 monitoring the Annual Budget;
 - 3.2.3 advising and making recommendations to the Administering Authority;
 - 3.2.4 providing Leadership Gloucestershire with regular updates in respect of the work of the GCR Board and (where appropriate) the governance of the GCR Board.

4. **Membership of the GCR Board and appointment of the Chair**

- 4.1 The GCR Board shall be comprised of:
- 4.1.1 One member from each of the District Authorities ; each such member to be an appointed executive member (where executive arrangements are in place)from the relevant District Authority (voting); and
 - 4.1.2 One member from the Administering Authority, such member to be an appointed executive member (where executive arrangements are in place) from the Administering Authority (voting), who shall also act as the Chair.

The GCR Board may from time to time at its absolute discretion appoint one non-voting member to the GCR Board from Gloucestershire's business community. Each such appointment shall continue for a fixed term to be determined by the GCR Board unless removed earlier by the GCR Board.

- 4.2 Each District Authority shall appoint a substitute member (being an executive member of the relevant District Authority where executive arrangements are in place). The substitute member shall have the same rights of speaking and voting at meetings as the member for whom the substitution is made.
- 4.3 The Administering Authority shall appoint a substitute member (being an executive member of the Administering Authority where executive arrangements are in place). The substitute member shall have the same rights as the member for whom the substitution is made in respect of speaking, voting and acting as the Chair at meetings.
- 4.4 Each GCR Board member appointed by a Partner Authority shall remain in office until removed and replaced by his or her appointing Partner Authority, or in the case of an executive member, until he or she ceases to be a member of the Executive of the appointing Partner Authority.

5. **Voting**

- 5.1 One member one vote for each Partner Authority .
- 5.2 Normal rules as to declarations of interest to be applied in accordance with the Gloucestershire County Council Code of Conduct.
- 5.3 Except as otherwise provided by the Local Government Acts 1972 and 1985 and subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, all matters shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the voting members present.

5.4 Subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, in the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the GCR Board.

6. **Quorum**

6.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be the member from the Administering Authority together with 3 (three) other voting members. No business shall be transacted unless quorum is reached. If quorum is not reached within thirty (30) minutes of the start of the meeting (or if quorum ceases to be present during a meeting), the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue to a date determined by the Chair.

7. **Meetings**

7.1 The Chair of the meeting shall be the member from the Administering Authority or their substitute, also from the Administering Authority

7.2 Each member entitled to attend will send a substitute member as per paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 in the event of his or her unavailability. The Secretary/Clerk for the GCR Board shall be informed prior to the commencement of the meeting of any substitute members attending.

7.3 A meeting of the GCR Board must be convened by the Chair within twenty-eight (28) days of the receipt of a requisition of any two voting members of the GCR Board addressed to the Secretary/Clerk to the GCR Board. All requisitions shall be in writing and no business other than that specified in the requisition shall be transacted at such a meeting.

8. **Constitution**

8.1 The Constitution of Gloucestershire County Council shall apply to the GCR Board.

9. **Attendance**

9.1 Members of the SOG, together with the Administering Authority's s151 Officer, Legal Advisor and the Clerk shall be entitled to attend meetings of the GCR Board to advise the GCR Board on matters relevant to the functions and activities of the GCR Board but shall have no voting rights.

9.2 Each Partner Authority may send any of its officers (as it considers to be appropriate) to meetings of the GCR Board, or any sub-committee thereof, to support its GCR Board Members or those invited to observe the meeting.

10. **Responsibilities of the Chair and (if applicable) their substitute**

10.1 The role of the Chair and (if applicable) their substitute, is to ensure that the meetings of the GCR Board are conducted efficiently and in accordance with the Standing Orders and Rules of Procedures.

10.2 The role of the Chair's substitute is to deputise for the Chair during any period of the Chair's absence or at other times as appropriate and his responsibilities shall be the same as those of the Chair.

10.3 Subject to the protocol in respect of the Chair's casting vote set out in **Error! Reference source not found.**, the Chair or (if applicable) their substitute shall have a second or casting vote in the event of an equality of votes when presiding at a meeting of the GCR Board.

11. **Meetings of the GCR Board**

11.1 Part I of Schedule 12 of the LGA 1972 shall apply to meetings of the GCR Board.

11.2 At its first meeting and at each Annual General Meeting thereafter the GCR Board shall:

11.2.1 adopt a Scheme of Delegation; and

11.2.2 approve the schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year.

11.3 Subject to paragraph 11.5 below, and the need exceptionally to call additional meetings, the GCR Board shall meet at least four times each year. The Chair shall decide the venue, date and time of all meetings of the GCR Board. Wherever practicable, at least ten (10) Business Days' notice of such meetings shall be given to each GCR Board Member, the

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Senior Manager, the Administering Authority's s151 Officer, the Legal Advisor and to each of the Partner Authorities by the Clerk.

- 11.4 Meetings of the GCR Board shall be open to the public and press except during consideration of items containing confidential or exempt information in accordance with the provisions of sections 100 to 100K of the LGA 1972; and reports to and the minutes of the GCR Board shall (subject to the provisions of sections 100 to 100K of the LGA 1972) be available to the public and press as though they were the reports or minutes of a meeting of a Partner Authority.
- 11.5 Any GCR Board Member may requisition a meeting of the GCR Board by giving notice of such requisition to the Chair and to the Clerk. Immediately upon receipt of such requisition, the Chair shall call a meeting of the GCR Board in accordance with paragraph 11.3 which shall be no later than ten (10) Business Days after the receipt by the Clerk of the notice of requisition.
- 11.6 The Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure shall be applicable to meetings of the GCR Board. The Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure may only be amended or replaced if the amendment or replacement is agreed by not less than three-quarters of the GCR Board Members
- 11.7 If a quorum is not present within thirty (30) minutes of the time set for the commencement of a meeting of the GCR Board (or a quorum ceases to be present during a meeting) the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue five (5) Business Days later or to such other date, time and venue as the Chair (or other person who is chairing the meeting) shall determine.
- 11.8 The Chair shall normally preside at all meetings of the GCR Board. If the Chair is not present within fifteen (15) minutes of the time for the commencement of a meeting, or being present does not wish to preside or is unable to do so, then their substitute shall preside at that meeting. If (in the event of the absence or non-availability of the Chair) their substitute is not present within fifteen (15) minutes of the time for the commencement of the meeting or does not wish to preside or is unable to do so, the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue five (5) Business Days later.

12. **Delegation to Sub Committees and Officers**

- 12.1 The GCR Board may arrange for any of its functions to be discharged in accordance with the provisions of a Scheme of Delegation as approved by the GCR Board.
- 12.2 The GCR Board may appoint working groups consisting of GCR Board Members, officers from the Administering Authority (including of the SOG) and officers of any of the Partner Authorities to consider specific matters and report back to the GCR Board or any sub-committee with recommendations.

13. **Scrutiny Arrangements**

- 13.1 Subject as set out in this paragraph 13 the decisions made by the GCR Board shall for the time being be subject to the Scrutiny Arrangements of each Partner Authority and each Partner Authority acknowledges the requirements in paragraph 13.8 below for cooperation between the respective Scrutiny Committees of each Partner Authority.
- 13.2 Any decision of the GCR Board, except those agreed as urgent in accordance with paragraph 13.3 shall not be implemented until the Scrutiny Arrangements of the Partner Authority whose membership has called in the decision or action has been completed.
- 13.3 Where the GCR Board decides that a decision must be implemented without delay and as a matter of urgency it shall record the reasons for such urgency in the minutes of the meeting and any subsequent 'call in' of that decision should normally relate only to the process leading to the decision and not to the decision itself and the chairmen of the Partner Authorities Scrutiny Committees shall be advised immediately.
- 13.4 A summary record of decisions made by the GCR Board will be made available to the public via the website of the Administering Authority within two (2) Business Days of the decision being made. At the same time the Administering Authority will provide a copy of the summary record of decisions to all Partner Authorities for them to make available to

their members as they see fit. The summary record will indicate which of the decisions are subject to the urgency provision and therefore are not available to be 'called in' prior to implementation.

- 13.5 All decisions of the GCR Board (unless urgency is specified in accordance with paragraph 13.3) to be subject to call-in processes of each Partner Authority. It not called in during that period any decision shall then be available for implementation.
- 13.6 The GCR Board Members and the relevant officers from each Partner Authority shall fully cooperate with the relevant Scrutiny Committee of any of the Partner Authorities and attend as directed by the Scrutiny Committee. The GCR Board Chair may nominate the GCR Board Member(s).
- 13.7 Where a decision is called in by more than one Partner Authority, the Scrutiny Committee of each of the Partner Authorities calling in the decision will be invited to request the County Council to convene a meeting of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hear evidence, views, options considered, reasons for decision and to ask questions of appropriate GCR Board Member(s) and officers of the Administering Authority (including of the SOG) and others invited to participate.
- 13.8 After these "hearings", each relevant Scrutiny Committee will meet separately to decide on what comment, view or recommendations (if any) it wishes to make to the GCR Board.
- 13.9 Where the account to be given to the Scrutiny Committee requires the production of a report, then the GCR Board Member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to prepare the documentation.
- 13.10 Once it has formed recommendations on a call-in (or proposals for development in accordance with paragraph 13.13) a Scrutiny Committee shall prepare a formal report and submit it for consideration by the GCR Board.
- 13.11 The GCR Board shall consider the report of a Scrutiny Committee at its next suitable meeting and shall issue a formal response to such a report.
- 13.12 The Clerk shall monitor the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency annually, and submit a report to the GCR Board with proposals for review if necessary.
- 13.13 A Scrutiny Committee should notify one of the GCR Board Members for its Partner Authority if it includes in its work programme any aspect of policy development or review relating to the work or functions of the GCR Board.

14. **Annual Budget**

- 14.1 The GCR Board and the Partner Authorities will prepare the Annual Budget for future Financial Years in accordance with the following deadlines:
 - 14.1.1 No later than 31 July in each Financial Year the Administering Authority or the Senior Manager (if appointed) shall submit a draft Annual Budget to the SOG in respect of the next Financial Year;
 - 14.1.2 The SOG shall within twenty (20) Business Days of receipt of the draft Annual Budget consider and provide comments on or suggest amendments to be included in a revised draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.3 No later than 30 September in each Financial Year the GCR Board will approve the draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.4 Each Partner Authority will consider, as part of its budget setting process the draft Annual Budget;
 - 14.1.5 No later than 30 November in each Financial Year each Partner Authority will provide any comments or proposed amendments to the draft Annual Budget to the GCR Board;
 - 14.1.6 No later than 15 January in each Financial Year the Administering Authority's s151 Officer will insert the actual costs to the GCR Board into the draft Annual Budget and circulate it to the s151 officer and to the GCR Board;
 - 14.1.7 No later than 18th February in each Financial Year each Partner Authority will approve any amendments to the draft Annual Budget; and
 - 14.1.8 The GCR Board will approve the Annual Budget by no later than 28 February in each Financial Year.

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- 14.2 If the Partner Authorities or the GCR Board are unable to approve the draft Annual Budget for a Financial Year before 26 February in any year, the GCR Board shall perform its delegated functions and activities set out in paragraph 2 in conformity with the approved Annual Budget for the previous Financial Year, subject to an adjustment for inflation using indices determined by the Administering Authority's s151 Officer from time to time, until such time as an Annual Budget is approved in accordance with this paragraph 14.
 - 14.3 At any time within a Financial Year the GCR Board may agree by a majority vote amendments to the Annual Budget for that Financial Year to accommodate any unforeseen change in circumstances and to assist the GCR Board in performance of its functions.
 - 14.4 Where the GCR Board is to consider amendments in accordance with paragraph 14.3 above, the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) shall forthwith notify the Chief Executive of each of the Partner Authorities of the proposed amendments to the Annual Budget. Each Partner Authority shall have a period of twenty (20) Business Days from receipt of the proposed amendments in which to consider them and to notify the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that such amendments require the approval of the Partner Authority.
 - 14.5 Where no Partner Authorities serve notice (in accordance with paragraph 14.4) on the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) the GCR Board may implement such proposed amendment.
 - 14.6 Where one or more of the Partner Authorities has notified the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that it needs to approve the proposed amendments, the GCR Board shall not implement such proposed amendments unless and until the notifying Partner Authority has approved the proposed amendments and informed the County Council or the Senior Manager (if appointed) that it has approved such proposed amendments.
 - 14.7 The Partner Authorities shall pay any due contribution of the Annual Budget to the Administering Authority in accordance with clause **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Agreement and any additional contributions which may arise as a result of the operation of paragraphs 14.3 to 14.6 above shall be paid in accordance with clause **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Agreement.
15. **GCR Board Member Conduct**
 - 15.1 GCR Board Members shall be subject to the code of conduct for elected members adopted by the Partner Authority that nominated them to be a GCR Board Member.
 16. **Liability of GCR Board Members**
 - 16.1 A GCR Board Member shall have the same responsibilities and liabilities as those that apply when sitting on other committees and bodies as an appointed representative of his nominating Partner Authority.

Principles for the administration of the ASED Fund

- To establish two calls for funding bids in a financial year – for 2023/24. These are currently proposed as November 2023 and April 2024. This will enable the Senior Officer Group and Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB) to have a pipeline of projects to consider at any time.
- The Fund to remain open to other partners and organisations, as well as all the Local Authority Partners, and LEP successor. Any potential bids will still need to have a Local Authority or LEP successor project sponsor in order for it to be submitted and considered.
- Strategic Alignment/Fit – important that any funding requests align with strategic priorities, as the basis for filtering those bids that can be considered and assessment through the SEDF process. SOG recommend using the strategic priorities in the emerging County Economic Strategy.
- To maximise the impact of the funding, projects need to demonstrate their reach and benefit to as many districts/areas and local communities as possible.
- Projects/bids will need be able to demonstrate clearly the leverage and impact that any SEDF funding would achieve in particular the economic & social benefits and outcomes. Projects/bids that identify/secure other direct match funding will be viewed favourably.
- Financial sustainability is an important factor, and any projects or bids would need provide details as part of an exit strategy, to show how they will be financially sustainable once any SEDF funding awarded has been spent.
- For those more commercially focussed projects, to consider on a case by case basis, the potential to recover a proportion of any SEDF awarded – use of a super profits clause (as per Local Growth Deal funded contracts).
- To establish a more robust monitoring regime to assist with the testing of the value for money, and demonstrating the added value and impacts against envisaged benefits and outcomes. This would also assist officers with spotting worthy proposals and bids for future consideration. The scale of monitoring required will also be commensurate to the value of the funding sought/awarded. We would expect more monitoring of a £200k project compared to a £20k project. Officers will amend the current Expression of Interest form, and add an evaluation section for applicant to complete that identifies SMART measures such as amount of public/private sector leverage, job creation/retention, number of beneficiaries, geographic areas that have benefitted.
- To retain the current eligibility criteria, and officers to review the current guidance on the nature and type of projects that could be eligible for funding, and review and revise the current assessment template including the criteria, which translates into a point system.
- To investigate and put in place a light touch independent/external appraisal for any project that makes through the initial pipeline shift process, for consideration for funding by the SOG and GCRB. This approach has been in place previously for the LEP Growth Deal and Get Britain Building Fund, as well as the GILF loan funding.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	County Deal and Devolution Memorandum of Understanding			
Purpose of Report	To note the emerging County Deal for Gloucestershire and to agree to the Leader of the Council signing the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding with Gloucestershire County Council on behalf of Stroud District Council.			
Decision(s)	The Council RESOLVES to agree to the Leader of the Council, on behalf of the Council, signing the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding at Appendix 1 to this report with Gloucestershire County Council in respect of the proposed County Deal for Gloucestershire.			
Consultation and Feedback	Leadership Gloucestershire, All Group Leaders			
Report Author	Kathy O'Leary, Chief Executive Email: Kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	Gloucestershire County Council is seeking the support of all six district and borough councils to pursue a County Deal for Gloucestershire, and the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding provides reassurance to the districts and boroughs in respect of controls that the GCC intends to leave with the districts and boroughs. If the Council does not sign the MoU, it risks losing control of its UKSPF allocation when the County Deal is agreed.			
Background Papers	None.			
Appendices	Appendix 1 – District / Borough Devolution Memorandum of Understanding			
Implications (further details at the end of report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Devolution is defined as the process of devolving powers and budgets from central government to localities. It enables decisions to be made closer to the local people, communities and businesses they affect.
- 1.2 There is a complex pattern of devolution of powers, budgets and responsibilities to mayors and through city deals to mostly metropolitan areas of England. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 created a new type of Combined Authority for England, the County Combined Authority (CCA) designed for more rural areas. Like Combined Authorities, CCAs are made up of upper tier authorities only, although districts / boroughs can become non-voting members if certain conditions are satisfied.

- 1.3 The Government's Devolution Framework (Levelling Up White Paper) sets out three levels of devolution:
- Level 3 – a single institution (Combined Area or County Combined Area) or County Council with a directly elected mayor across a functional economic area or whole county
 - Level 2 - a single institution (Combined Area or County Combined Area) or County Council without a directly elected mayor across a functional economic area or whole county
 - Level 1 – local authorities working together across a functional economic area or whole county.
- 1.4 To date Gloucestershire has been operating at level 1, with the local authorities in the county working together as part of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC). Members will note that there is a related report on this agenda detailing the successor to the GEGJC, the Gloucestershire City Region Board, which will have a role in moving forward the County Deal and further devolution for Gloucestershire.
- 1.5 In the 2023 Autumn statement, the Chancellor announced the intention of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to offer Level 2 devolution deals to seven county areas: Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Somerset, Oxfordshire and Hertfordshire.
- 1.6 On budget day, Wednesday 6 March 2024, the Level 2 devolution county deals for Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire and Surrey were announced. The plan is for the others to follow rapidly, with the deals to be concluded this Spring.
- 1.7 Level 2 devolution county deals carry no requirement to have an elected mayor or create a combined authority. The deals effectively comprise 'off the peg' devolved powers and funding for the geographical counties named. County deals also do not necessitate local government reorganisation.

2. Gloucestershire County Deal

- 2.1 The benefits to Gloucestershire of a county deal would be:
- Transfer of the Adult Education Budget (£10m, expected to take effect in 2026/27)
 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) strategic oversight
 - Land assembly and compulsory purchase powers (between the local planning authority, county council and Homes England)
 - Local Skills Improvement Plans (from April 2024)
 - Integration of LEP functions (from April 2024 with the demise of the G First LEP)
 - Climate Change Responsibility (commitment from Government to work with local areas to explore approaches, from April 2024).
- 2.2 The six district / borough Leaders and Chief Executives in Gloucestershire raised some initial concerns about points 2 and 3 above. In respect of UKSPF, ostensibly the county deal would allow the County Council to take control of the UKSPF allocations for all six districts / boroughs for the remaining year of its allocation. Beyond the next year, the future of the UKSPF is uncertain and will be a matter for the incoming Government beyond the General Election. In respect of land assembly, there were again concerns that the wishes of the local planning authorities could be overridden.

3. Devolution Memorandum of Understanding

3.1 However, the attached draft Devolution Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) helps to alleviate the initial concerns raised in the following ways:

- The aim of the MoU is that the county council will transfer the control of spending of UKSPF to districts/ boroughs – i.e. an allocation from UKSPF (using the proportions of the current allocation) from 2025/26 will be under the direct control of each council. The future of UKSPF beyond the next year is unknown.
- In line with the draft devolution deal document, under the MoU the county council will seek the agreement of the districts/ boroughs prior to working on land assembly or CPO for any land within district council areas or owned/controlled by each council.

3.2 The six District / Borough Council Leaders have been asked to sign the MoU as soon as possible given the Government's intention to conclude the county deal this Spring.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The MOU demonstrates a commitment by the County Council that the District will retain its current allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which lasts until the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

Information about the future of UKSPF after 2025 is not known but the MOU commits that SDC will still have oversight of a proportion of any funding received. This proportion will be calculated using the overall allocations for Gloucestershire in the initial UKSPF period of 2022-25.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

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

4.2 Legal Implications

Under the Constitution, Full Council is responsible for approving joint arrangements as necessary to carry out functions as it considers appropriate.

The MoU is as a reassurance statement from Gloucestershire County Council that the District will continue to have oversight of an appropriate proportion of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from April 2025 and that the County will seek agreement from the District before they enact any power to access additional land for housing and regeneration purposes.

If the County Council do not adhere to the terms of the MoU the District will have no legal recourse to enforce these provisions.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272254 Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

4.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications in noting the emerging County Deal and signing the Devolution Memorandum of Understanding. However, the new Gloucestershire City Region Board will consider equality implications in making its decisions in respect of the emerging County Deal and in administering the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF).

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no specific environmental implications in connection with this report. However, the emerging County Deal offers a significant opportunity in respect of discussions with Government about Climate Change Responsibilities (see paragraph 2.1 above). The new Gloucestershire City Region Board will consider environmental implications in making its decisions and in administering the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF).

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DRAFT

[District/Borough] Devolution

Memorandum of understanding

26th February 2024

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1 Background

- 1.1 Gloucestershire County Council and [District/Borough] have formed this partnership to agree the delivery terms for a level 2 devolution deal across [District/Borough].
- 1.2 It is an equal partnership for the mutual benefit of both parties.

2 Partnership aims and objectives

- 2.1 The overarching aim of this partnership is to clarify the roles and responsibilities for both partners in delivery of a devolution deal for Gloucestershire.
- 2.2 Specific objectives are:
 - 2.2.1 Confirm that [District/Borough] will continue to have oversight of an appropriate proportion of UK Shared Prosperity Funding from 1st April 2025.
 - 2.2.2 Confirm that any power evoked within the [District/Borough] boundaries or with land owned and/or controlled by [District/Borough] to access additional land assembly and compulsory purchase powers for housing and regeneration will require the agreement of [District/Borough].

3 Partnership activities

- 3.1 Activities to be delivered by the partnership are:
 - 3.1.1 Strategic oversight of delivery of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
 - 3.1.2 Exploration of the potential for additional land assembly and compulsory purchase powers for housing and regeneration.
- 3.2 The initial timeframe for partnership activities will be 5 years, commencing on the 1st April 2024.
 - 3.2.1 UKSPF is subject to comprehensive spending review and guaranteed for 2024/25 financial year at the present time. Gloucestershire County Council agrees that a proportionate amount of the overall county allocation of UKSPF for [District/Borough] will be distributed directly by [District/Borough]. The amount to be transferred will be calculated on the basis of the initial allocation of UKSPF to Gloucestershire for the financial years 2022-2025.
 - 3.2.2 Gloucestershire County Council undertakes not to begin the process of land assembly and compulsory purchase powers with the boundaries of [District/Borough] or with land owned and/or controlled by [District/Borough] without the agreement of [District/Borough] as stipulated in paragraph 24 of the devolution framework agreement.
- 3.3 Activities will be reviewed annually to ensure that they are being delivered as agreed, and that they are having the intended impact.

Appendix 1

4 Monitoring

- 4.1 All partners commit to ongoing monitoring, with the aim of ensuring accountability and performance against milestones.
- 4.2 The designated partnership leads outlined in 6.2 will co-ordinate the monitoring and report back to corporate leadership teams and cabinets as appropriate.

5 Impact evaluation

- 5.1 Detailed impact assessments will be developed by [District/Borough] for the distribution of UKSPF.
- 5.2 The designated partnership lead outlined in 6.2.1 will have oversight and responsibility for UKSPF impact evaluation.
- 5.3 The designated partnership leads outlined in 6.2 will ensure that the conditions of 3.2.2 are adhered to.

6 Designated partnership leads

- 6.1 Each partner will appoint a senior member of staff to lead on the work of the partnership.
- 6.2 The designated lead member of staff for each partner will:
 - 6.2.1 Chief Executive, [District/Borough]
 - 6.2.2 Director of Economy and Environment, Gloucestershire County Council
- 6.3 Designated leads will report back through the appropriate corporate leadership team structures and to the leader of their respective authority.
- 6.4 Should the designated lead posts become vacant the respective authority will appoint an appropriate substitute within 28 days

7 Financial contributions

- 7.1 There will be no transfer of financial resources between partners except for the proportionate allocation of UKSPF to [District/Borough] as outlined in 3.2.1.

8 Disclaimer

8.1 It should be noted that by signing this document or by participating in the [District/Borough] Devolution partnership, the partners are not committing to legally binding obligations. It is intended that the partners remain independent of each other and that their collaboration and use of the term 'partner' does not constitute the creation of a legal entity, nor authorise the entry into a commitment for or on behalf of each other.

Signed on behalf of [District/Borough]

..... Date

XXX, Leader

Signed on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council

..... Date

Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE, Leader

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Appointment of a Monitoring Officer			
Purpose of Report	To appoint a Monitoring Officer			
Decision(s)	<p>The Council RESOLVES that:</p> <p>a) Hayley Sims be designated Monitoring Officer for the Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 with effect from 1 May 2024 for an initial period of one year</p> <p>b) The Chief Executive be authorised to enter into a secondment agreement with One Legal (via Tewkesbury Borough Council) to second the above-mentioned One Legal officer to Stroud District Council</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	All Group Leaders			
Report Author	Kathy O'Leary, Chief Executive Email: kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The Council must have a Monitoring Officer so if this appointment is not made an alternative must be appointed.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	None			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended) the Council has a duty to designate an officer as Monitoring Officer. The Act specifically excludes the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) from being the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.2 The Monitoring Officer has a number of statutory duties and responsibilities which include ensuring that the Council acts lawfully and to avoid any maladministration. This encompasses advising on the lawfulness of decision making, applying and maintaining the Council's Constitution and arrangements for effective governance.
- 1.3 The Monitoring Officer also has responsibilities arising from the Localism Act 2011 relating to Councillor conduct (Council and Parish Councils). These responsibilities include dealing with complaints relating to the Code of Conduct and providing training for Members thereon.
- 1.4 Claire Hughes has been the designated Monitoring Officer since 24th October 2022.

- 1.5 This is currently a shared role of Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer between Stroud District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council, which generated a financial saving included in the Medium Term Financial Plan. The role is directly employed by Stroud DC and seconded back to Cheltenham BC for half of the working week. At Stroud DC the role carries Strategic Director level pay and responsibilities and also serves as the Council's Data Protection Officer, and at Cheltenham BC it sits at Corporate Director level. Half of the cost of the post is recharged to Cheltenham Borough Council, confirmed in a secondment agreement. The role sits in the Strategic Leadership Team of both Councils.

2. New Monitoring Officer Arrangements

- 2.1 Following a restructure of the Strategic Leadership Team at Cheltenham Borough Council, approved by their Cabinet in February 2024, Claire Hughes will be taking up a permanent appointment as full-time Director of Governance and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer) at Cheltenham Borough Council with effect from 1 May 2024. This means that Stroud District Council must make alternative arrangements to appoint a Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2 Members will recall that previously Stroud District Council has shared the Monitoring Officer role with Gloucester City Council and Cotswold District Council prior to the current shared arrangements with Cheltenham Borough Council. The council will continue to explore opportunities to share should they arise. At present no other districts are looking for new shared Monitoring Officer arrangements that would be a good match with our needs, so that is not an option currently open to the council.
- 2.3 Members may also recall that when Stroud District Council transferred its legal team in 2020 into the One Legal partnership, based at Tewkesbury Borough Council, there was an ambition for the One Legal partnership to provide its members with Monitoring Officer services where there was a desire and need to do so. At that time One Legal could not fulfil that ambition for Stroud District Council in addition to the other districts for which it made provision. It is now in a position to be able to do so, in addition to the (shared) Monitoring Officer provision the partnership makes for Tewkesbury BC and Gloucester City.
- 2.4 Members will be aware that when the Monitoring Officer is unable to attend a meeting for whatever reason, they appoint a Deputy Monitoring Officer in their place. Hayley Sims of One Legal has deputised for Claire Hughes at Stroud District Council meetings on several occasions and has expressed an interest in stepping up into the role of Monitoring Officer for the council.
- 2.5 When the new Monitoring Officer is unable to attend a meeting they will also appoint a deputy to attend in their place, either from the One Legal partnership or from within the council.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 It is proposed to contract Monitoring Officer services through the One Legal partnership from 1 May 2024 and to appoint Hayley Sims of One Legal as Stroud District Council's Monitoring Officer.
- 3.2 The role will continue to be for half of the working week, and it will remain part of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team. This will generate a further cost saving to the council as it will be contracting with One Legal rather than directly remunerating the role at Strategic Director level. The Data Protection Officer responsibilities will become part of the role of another officer of the council for which the postholder will be remunerated.

- 3.3 It is proposed to appoint to the Monitoring Officer role for an initial period of one year after which the new arrangements will be reviewed. A further report will be made to Council in April next year.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The move to a Monitoring Officer provided through One Legal and an in house DPO will have an additional cost of approximately £2k p.a. This can be found from existing staffing budgets or, if approved, the resource requested in the Organisational Changes report going to this Council meeting.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Tel: 01453 754115 Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal Implications

The council is required to appoint a statutory Monitoring Officer by Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended).

Article 11 of Stroud District Council's constitution requires this to be a decision of Council and sets out fully the functions of the Monitoring Officer.

Shahzia Daya, Director: One Legal
Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

4.3 Equality Implications

An EIA is not required because there are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this decision.

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL
THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Organisational Changes			
Purpose of Report	To advise Members on the arrangements for the redistribution of the responsibilities of the current Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer and to seek support for a process to identify and appoint one Strategic Director as Deputy Chief Executive.			
Decision(s)	<p>The Council RESOLVES to:</p> <p>a) Note the arrangements for the redistribution of the responsibilities of the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer not covered by report to appoint a new Monitoring Officer</p> <p>b) Support the process outlined in this report to identify and appoint one Strategic Director as Deputy Chief Executive, including the involvement of all Group Leaders or their nominated representatives and the Chief Executive in the Final Selection Panel</p> <p>c) Add £16k to the budget from 2024/25 to support the arrangements set out in this report.</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	Strategic Leadership Team, All Group Leaders			
Report Author	Kathy O'Leary, Chief Executive Email: Kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<p>Most of the arrangements in this report are to note as a decision is not required.</p> <p>Members are encouraged to support the Chief Executive to put in place the leadership and management arrangements that as Head of Paid Service, she considers necessary to run the council. Members could choose not to support the designation of one Strategic Director as Deputy Chief Executive with appropriate remuneration for that role.</p>			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	None			
Implications (further details at the end of report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) of the council comprises the three statutory officers of the council – the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer (appointed pursuant to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) – and the council's

directors (Corporate Director and Strategic Directors of Communities, Place and Resources). The Strategic Director of Resources is also the Chief Financial Officer (S151 Officer) and the Corporate Director is also the Monitoring Officer so SLT is currently five individual members of staff.

- 1.2 Currently the Monitoring Officer is a shared Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer with Cheltenham Borough Council, an arrangement that ends on 30 April 2024 with the postholder moving full-time to Cheltenham as Executive Director and Monitoring Officer following a reorganisation of Cheltenham's Strategic Leadership Team.
- 1.3 Elsewhere on this agenda is a report to appoint a new Monitoring Officer for Stroud District Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government Act 1972. The plan is to contract Monitoring Officer services from the One Legal partnership and to appoint a One Legal officer as the Monitoring Officer for Stroud District Council.
- 1.4 This report addresses the plan for other responsibilities covered by the current Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer and related organisational changes including to the Strategic Leadership Team. These are a matter for the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service.

2. Data Protection Officer

- 2.1 The current Monitoring Officer also fulfils the role of Data Protection Officer for Stroud District Council. All public authorities are required to appoint a Data Protection Officer in accordance with Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.
- 2.2 The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the data privacy practices of their organisation. The tasks for which the DPO is responsible include the following:
 - Informing and advising the data controller or processor, elected Members and employees of their obligations according to comply with the UK GDPR and other applicable data protection laws
 - Monitoring compliance with applicable data protection laws and internal policies, including assignment of responsibilities, awareness raising and training of staff and elected Members involved in data processing activities, and related audits
 - Advising on data protection impact assessments and monitoring performance
 - Acting as a contact point for the supervisory authority (Information Commissioner's Office, or ICO) and individuals on issues relating to the council's processing activities
 - Consulting, where appropriate, with regard to any other matter.
- 2.3 The council could contract Data Protection Officer services in addition to Monitoring Officer services through the One Legal partnership. However, the council already has an extremely competent Information Governance Officer in the Corporate Policy and Governance Team within the Resources directorate, who works closely with the current Monitoring Officer in her capacity as Data Protection Officer. The chosen option is to appoint the postholder to fulfil the additional duties of Data Protection Officer and to remunerate them accordingly, mostly using the savings generated by contracting Monitoring Officer services through One Legal.

3. Other responsibilities

- 3.1 Although the shared Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer does not have line management responsibilities in the same way that the three Strategic Directors do, the postholder has taken the strategic lead on several important areas of activity at Stroud District Council. These include the creation and chairing of an internal Corporate Governance Group, concerned with operational service performance data and any necessary management response, taking the strategic lead on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity, and championing Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion and the Charities Group.
- 3.2 It is planned to distribute most of these responsibilities to the other existing team members, that is, the Chief Executive and the three Strategic Directors, with the exception of leading the Corporate Governance Group, which is to become the responsibility of the Head of Corporate Policy and Governance, supported by the Strategic Director of Resources and the other Strategic Directors as appropriate.

4. Deputy Chief Executive

- 4.1 The departure of any member of the Strategic Leadership Team can be unsettling for the rest of the team and presents an opportunity to reflect on how the team is operating.
- 4.2 Currently the Chief Executive does not have a formally nominated deputy. Since taking up her post in November 2018, the Chief Executive has been grateful for the support of all Group Leaders to allow the directors to take turns at deputising in her absence. This has proved to be an excellent development opportunity for the three Strategic Directors and the Corporate Director and has strengthened their individual approaches to leading the council.
- 4.3 Recently the Chief Executive has spent more time promoting the interests of the District Council and its communities at county, regional and national level. The Chief Executive is currently lead spokesperson for the Environment and Climate Change portfolio on the Policy Board of the national Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Officers (Solace) and South West Chief Executives' sponsor for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion. Much of this work is carried out remotely, although it occasionally requires the Chief Executive to travel, as does some work to support the Local Government Association which is principally leading Corporate Peer Challenges at other councils.
- 4.4 Recent work carried out by the Solace Policy Board recommends that a Chief Executive should appoint a deputy. That isn't necessarily about the appointment of a formal Deputy Chief Executive, it is about the good practice of formally or informally appointing another to deputise for the Chief Executive when the Chief Executive is not available, which apparently many other councils do not do. Appointing a deputy gives certainty about who is in charge, responsible and accountable when the Chief Executive is away. Appointing a formal Deputy Chief Executive gives that certainty on a more permanent basis and is a good step to take in succession planning.
- 4.5 It is therefore proposed to undertake a process to formally identify a Deputy Chief Executive. This would comply with HR policies and procedures. The council's three Strategic Directors would be invited to submit an Expression of Interest to fulfil the role, which would be in addition to their current Strategic Director responsibilities. Those submitting an Expression of Interest would be subject to a selection process including the involvement of all Group Leaders or their representatives and the Chief Executive on the Final Selection Panel. The successful Strategic Director would carry the additional title of

'Deputy Chief Executive' and would effectively be a 'first amongst equals' in relation to the other directors.

- 4.6 It is proposed that the successful candidate for the role of Deputy Chief Executive would be remunerated accordingly. Initial benchmarking with councils of a similar nature suggests that a Deputy Chief Executive role would require remuneration of approximately £10k p.a. above the current Strategic Director pay grade. As the majority of the saving in contracting the Monitoring Officer role through One Legal covers the costs of reassigning the Data Protection Officer, Council approval is sought to add the Deputy Chief Executive Officer uplift to the Council budget.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Council is asked to note the arrangements for the redistribution of the main responsibilities of the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer outside the Monitoring Officer role, and to support the process to identify and appoint one of the Strategic Directors as Deputy Chief Executive, with appropriate remuneration for the additional responsibilities.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

The net increase in cost for the proposals in this report is £16k per year and the decision includes a recommendation to add this amount to the budget to support these costs.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager

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6.2 Legal Implications

Under Article 11.3 of the Constitution the Head of Paid Service may where they consider it appropriate, report to the authority on the organisation of officers. The Chief Executive is the Head of Paid Service at the Council.

Under Article 4.3(d) the Council is responsible for the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects.

Advice will be sought from Human Resources to ensure that the implementation of the process outlined in this report comply with relevant HR policy and procedures.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272254 Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

6.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications related to this decision, other than a ring-fenced equality of opportunity to all three Strategic Directors to express an interest in the additional responsibilities of Deputy Chief Executive.

6.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant environmental implications arising from this decision.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

Report Title	Ubico Five Year Vision and Business Plan 2024/25			
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the Ubico Five Year Vision and Business Plan 2024/2025.			
Decision(s)	The Council RESOLVES to Note the Ubico Business Plan for 2024/2025.			
Consultation and Feedback	Officers and shareholders; Environment Committee in December 2023, All Group Leaders and Chair of Environment Committee.			
Report Author	Kathy O'Leary, Chief Executive Email: Kathy.oleary@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The report is for information only.			
Background Papers	None.			
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Ubico Five Year Vision and Business Plan 2024-25			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	No

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Stroud District Council has a multi-service contract with Ubico to provide the collection of waste and recycling, street cleaning, grounds maintenance and building cleaning. Ubico is a Teckal company wholly owned by local authorities including Stroud District Council.
- 1.2 A Teckal company is a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) formed to provide services back to the councils via a service contract, where a Teckal or in-house exemption enables the company to be established without the requirement for a procurement exercise in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 1.3 The annual business plan is produced by Ubico and taken to the Directors and Shareholders meetings in February / March of each year for agreement for the following financial year. It sits within the context of a five-year vision for the company agreed in 2021. Directors and Shareholders meet quarterly to progress the business plan and monthly meetings are held with officers to discuss operational performance. The Strategic Director of Communities sits as a director on the Ubico Board and the Chief Executive fulfils the shareholder function for the Council.
- 1.4 As the council's Ubico shareholder representative, the Chief Executive has authority sign written resolutions to approve the business plan and agree other matters. However, for openness and transparency these are brought to Council for Members to consider and note.

2. Business Plan 2024/25

- 2.1 In 2019, it was agreed that the Council's Environment Committee would have early sight of the draft business plan prior to its consideration by director and shareholder sign-off meetings, to allow for Members' comments to be considered prior to the plan being finalised and endorsed by shareholders.

- 2.2 At the Environment Committee on 7 December 2023, Ubico's Managing Director gave a presentation which included outlining the business plan themes for 2024/2025. Similar presentations were made to groups and committees at each Ubico council.
- 2.3 The proposals contained in the business plan are built around the four key pillars of People, Operational Excellence, Climate and Business Development and focus on the following themes:
- Leveraging synergies and economies of scale
 - Harnessing opportunities to deliver back to partners
 - Using technology to drive operational efficiency
 - Understanding our communities' need
 - Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services.
- 2.4 The year 2024/25 is the fourth year of delivering the five-year vision for Ubico agreed in 2021. The business plan for 2024/25 seeks to build on the successes already achieved. As a significant local employer, Ubico will continue to have a strong focus on its people this year and will continue to advance its work on climate initiatives, also working closely with partners to support them in delivering their ambitious climate targets.
- 2.5 Ubico has seen significant growth since it started delivering services in 2012 and in 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, extending the services it delivers for the Forest of Dean District Council to include waste, recycling and street cleaning services from August 2024. The mobilisation and delivery of these services will be a key focus in the first half of the year.
- 2.6 Subject to shareholder approval and funding being in place, foundational work on cross-boundary and cross-partner initiatives commenced in prior years will move to delivery phase this year, with the project to centralise fleet ownership and deliver savings to partners in future years being the first on the roadmap. Other partnership-wide opportunities will continue to be explored and presented to shareholders for their consideration, as will any potential external growth opportunities that could deliver greater value to all partners.
- 2.7 The draft version of the Business Plan for 2024/2025 was shared with the board of directors and shareholders in February and councils were asked for any further feedback.
- 2.8 The resulting final version of the business plan is attached here. It is intended to publish the plan in May 2024 once the shareholders have signed off the written resolution to approve it. As the council's Ubico shareholder representative, the Chief Executive will sign on behalf of Stroud District Council.
- 2.9 Ubico will submit individual business cases for approval as appropriate to support potential investment proposals within the 2024/2025 Business Plan, to develop areas of the business identified as having potential to deliver greater value for shareholders.

3. Remuneration of Ubico's Managing Director and Executive Directors

- 3.1 A report was brought to the Ubico Shareholders' AGM on 28 November 2023 to consider the remuneration arrangements for the Managing Director and the two Executive Directors, the Financial Director and Operations Director. These had not been reviewed since 2020. A significant pay differential between the Operations Director and Financial Director presented a risk to the business which the report sought to address.
- 3.2 Whilst the shareholders agreed that there should be pay parity between the two Executive Directors, they did not agree with the introduction of a 10% performance related pay bonus

scheme for the Executive Directors to mirror that already in place for the Managing Director. Subsequently the Managing Director's bonus scheme was revisited and replaced with a more competitive base salary in line with that of other senior officers of the shareholding councils, and it was agreed that career grades should be introduced for all future Executive Director appointments.

- 3.3 The Chief Executive, in her role as the council's Ubico shareholder representative, together with the other shareholders signed a written resolution to agree the revised remuneration arrangements in February 2024.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Members are recommended to note the Business Plan for the financial year 2024/2025 appended here, and the Chief Executive's intention to sign the written resolution to approve the Business Plan in her capacity as the council's Ubico shareholder representative.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

An annual contract sum is reviewed and agreed with Ubico as part of the budget setting process and considered by full Council each February.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Under paragraph C1.7 of the Scheme of Officer Delegations, the Chief Executive will need to make a formal decision to approve the business plan as the shareholder representative of SDC.

One Legal
Email: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

5.3 Equality Implications

Ubico's Business Plan promotes equality of access to essential services.

5.4 Environmental Implications

The Business Plan supports the Council's environmental and climate change priorities.

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2024/25 Business Plan

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1. Business Overview

1.1. Introduction













Ubico is a successful and well-respected local authority owned company operating across Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire. We deliver high quality environmental services including waste and recycling collections, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and household recycling centre management. Our purpose is to keep places clean and green for every resident, visitor, town, village and community. Our close relationships with our council shareholders see us working in partnership to deliver the best services possible for our local communities. Now operating across the whole of Gloucestershire and in West Oxfordshire, our growth, size and position places us in a strong position to leverage opportunities for greater efficiencies across a wider base, leading to cost-savings for our councils and their residents and the opportunity to explore new and exciting areas for growth and innovation.

We set out a new five-year vision for the company in 2021, and in 2024/25, the fourth year of this vision, we will build on the successes already achieved. Ubico has seen significant growth since we started delivering services in 2012 and in 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, extending the services we deliver for the Forest of Dean to include waste, recycling and street cleaning services from August 2024 and the mobilisation and delivery of these services will be a key focus in the first half of the year.

We are a significant local employer, particularly in Gloucestershire, where we are 72nd in the top 100 employers in the county (based on 2022 turnover). We employ over 800 staff, the backbone of our operations. We will continue to have a strong focus on our people this year and will continue to advance our work on climate initiatives, also working closely with our partners to support them in delivering their ambitious climate targets. Subject to shareholder approval and funding being in place, foundational work on cross-boundary and cross-partner initiatives commenced in prior years will move to delivery phase this year, with the project to centralise fleet ownership and deliver savings to partners in future years being the first on the roadmap. Other partnership-wide opportunities will continue to be explored and presented to shareholders for their consideration, as will any potential external growth opportunities that could deliver greater value to all partners.

1.2. Our services

Our services

 Refuse collections	 Food waste collections	 Garden waste collections	 Recycling collections	 Trade waste and recycling collections	 Recycling centre management
 Recycling and bulking transfer	 Street cleansing	 Building and public convenience cleaning	 Grounds maintenance	 Fleet management and maintenance	 MOT and taxi testing

1.3. Our shareholders

 STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL	 Forest of Dean DISTRICT COUNCIL	 Tewkesbury Borough Council
 Gloucestershire COUNTY COUNCIL		 Gloucester City Council
 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL	 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	 CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.4. Quality and safety

Ensuring high standards of health, safety and compliance is a key priority and underpins everything we do. This is demonstrated through our ongoing achievement of industry-recognised accreditations, including ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 for our Health and Safety Management and Environmental Management Systems respectively, which reflects our positive health and safety culture which we are committed to maintaining and improving. Our Safety, Health, Environment and Quality team drive our safety culture and practices, and health and safety performance is monitored at all levels of the business and reviewed by our board of directors at every board meeting. Our internal compliance team supports the company in maintaining high standards through a thorough programme of scrutiny involving both scheduled and risk-based assessments, checking compliance in key areas such as ISO standards, fleet compliance, Environment Agency permitting requirements and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. This is complemented by our annual internal audit plan which is drawn up in consultation with the chair of the Risk and Audit Committee and in partnership with our internal auditors.

In 2024/25 we will continue our commitment to seeking continuous improvement in our health and safety performance, with a focus on vehicle accidents and employee wellbeing. Our internal training team support us in delivering flexible, targeted training, including health and safety and compliance-related training which consistently receives high feedback scores for both content and delivery. We will continue to support them to deliver excellent, highly valued and effective training that meets the needs of our business.

1.5. Governance and risk management

1.5.1. Governance

Good corporate governance and the continued professional development of the board of directors and the senior management team is fundamental to the effective operations of the company. In 2024/25 we will continue to ensure appropriate competency standards and qualifying criteria are applied to all directors and follow the spirit of the UK Corporate Governance Code. At all times, the company will remain open, transparent and accountable. The board and its members will operate as a cohesive team, with its priority at all times to further the aims, goals and values of the company, whilst always having risk and risk management at the forefront of discussions.

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Ubico's board of directors comprises three executive directors, four non-executive directors from local authority shareholders, and three independently appointed non-executive directors including an independent chair of the board. During 2024/25 two of the current local authority appointed non-executive directors will come to the end of their term and we will work with partners to ensure that the skills and experience of any new appointee will support and enhance the skills and knowledge of the board.

The board is supported by two sub-committees, a Risk and Audit Committee and a Governance and Nominations Committee. These committees support the board in key governance areas, for example, better understanding of business risk, and ensuring the processes to mitigate risk are effective and there is compliance.

As a company, we regularly review our policies, procedures and governance arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose, represent good practice and meet all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, with key policies routinely scrutinised and signed off by the board of directors.

An internal audit programme is completed annually against a plan which is agreed by the board. The findings and the full audit reports are shared with the board of directors for review and oversight, and progress against action plans arising from the audits is monitored by the Risk and Audit Committee and reported to the board.

External audit of the company's accounts is determined by our shareholders at the Annual General Meeting.

1.5.2. Risk management

Risk management is a core principle of effective corporate governance and is also a key contributor to a sound internal control environment. Ubico continues to seek and adopt recognised best practice in the identification, evaluation and cost-effective control of risks and opportunities to ensure that these are managed at acceptable levels.

Our strategic risk management objectives include board and senior management setting a 'tone from the top' on the level of risk we are prepared to accept - our risk appetite. We maintain a strategic approach to risk management in order to make better informed decisions and use risk management to enable consistent appraisal of options and improved flexibility/agility in delivering change. We are committed to ensuring leadership capacity and skills to ensure understanding of the risks facing the company and how we manage them,

and to integrate risk management into how we run Ubico business/services. Overall, we aim to develop a culture of balanced and informed risk taking throughout Ubico, including strategic, programme, partnership, project and operational risk.

1.6. Our values



1.7. 2023 Headline Performance

Pillar	Measure	2021 Goal	2021 Achievement	2022 Achievement	2023 Achievement	2026 Goal
People	Vacancy fill rate (advertisement to acceptance)	<1 month	84.08% fill rate Time to hire 2.4 months	85.02% fill rate Time to hire 1.9 months	Time to hire 2.3 months	<1 month
	Annual training budget utilisation	80% of annual training budget	80.08% (Apr to Dec)	100% (21/22)	108% (22/23)	100% of annual training budget
	Conformance to mandatory training to schedule	>90%	New starters >95%	New starters >95%	New starters >95%	>95%
	Staff turnover	<14% attrition	9.62% (20/21)	13.4% (21/22)	15.09%	<10% attrition
Operational Excellence	Service KPIs - Missed bins	<0.05 %	0.073% per 100,000 collections	0.0807% per 100,000 collections	0.071% per 100,000 properties	<0.075 % per 100,000 properties
	Fleet compliance	Fleet Audit Scores >90%	92.37% average	92.76% average	93.2% average	Fleet Audit Scores >95%
	RIDDOR occurrence	<12 per year	6	11	9	<9 per year
	Deliver to set budget	Within 5% set budget	-6.4% (20/21)	-3.1% (21/22)	+1.5% (22/23)	Within 3% set budget
Climate	Reduced carbon emissions	Benchmark in 2021/22	Carbon reduction strategy in place Baseline work in progress (consultant engaged to advise on methodology)	Emissions from activities from fuel consumption: CO2e 6,237t	Emissions from activities from fuel consumption April to Dec 23: CO2e 4.161t	Sophisticated measures in place across transport, buildings and key activities

1.8. Balanced Scorecard

A Balanced Scorecard will be introduced in 2024/25. This is a tool which will use meaningful key performance indicators and key results indicators to measure our performance against our strategy objectives, and will help to steer our future direction in relation to strategic goals and objectives.

2. Business Plan 2023/24

2.1. Our five-year vision (2021-2026)

Recognised by our customers and employees as a quality provider of sustainable services for our local communities, delivering best value and reliability

Through:

- Leveraging synergies and economies of scale
- Harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to our partners
- Using technology to drive operational efficiency
- Understanding our communities' needs
- Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services

2.2. Strategic Pillars

Four strategic pillars underpin delivery of our vision and our business plan is built around pillars:

People	Operational Excellence	Climate	Business Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will deliver high quality services which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.

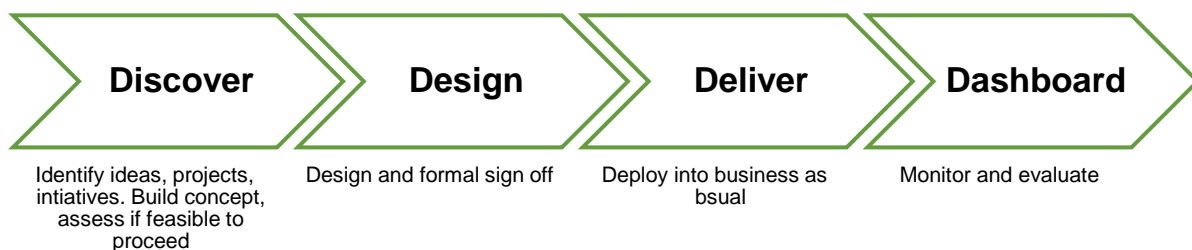
2.3. Strategy planning

Ubico’s board routinely evaluate the validity of our 5-year vision and plan, and the roadmap for its delivery, ensuring it reflects the needs and desires of our shareholders and maintains the company as a sound proposition, whilst driving value. The process for drawing up the annual business plan incorporates feedback from key stakeholders, including the company’s senior management team and the board. Shareholder engagement presentations take place with each shareholder council ahead of presentation of the final written business plan, which incorporates feedback received.

Our current five year strategy takes us to the end of the 2025/26 year, therefore in 2024/25 the board will begin work on the strategy for the next ten years for presentation to shareholders towards the end of the year.

2.4. Project lifecycle

We have adopted a project lifecycle with four phases; Discover, Design, Deliver and Dashboard, and these can be seen alongside the activities outlined in this business plan. This aids in identifying the stage of each project or initiative and assists with long term planning and mapping, and resource management.



All projects and programmes are managed through a stage gateway system and strategic projects are managed by the PMO and sponsored by a member of the executive leadership team. The project scope, objectives, goals, budget, and necessary stage documents are closely managed by the senior leadership team, and progress against delivery of strategic projects is routinely monitored by the board.

2.5. People Pillar

We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.

Attract and retain

Recognise

Upskill

Satisfaction

2.5.1. 2024/25 Activity

In our people pillar we will continue our focus on attraction and retention, supporting and valuing our excellent staff. In order to continue to deliver safe, compliant and relevant services for its shareholders, Ubico must offer a package that is competitive and attractive in the marketplace, both to retain current, loyal employees, as well as to attract new ones when required. Starting last year, and working closely with our recognised trade unions, we began a review of our terms and conditions package to ensure that we are both competitive to retain our staff, and attractive in the employment market when we need to recruit. 2024/25 will see us complete this work and deliver any agreed changes arising from the review, staying within existing budgets unless separate business cases are approved by shareholders.

In 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, welcoming staff delivering waste, recycling and street cleaning services in the Forest of Dean, and proportionally increasing capacity requirements in a number of our support teams which will be recruited to throughout the year. A new role will also be introduced, Head of People, reflecting a specific need for greater leadership capacity in HR within the business.

Our Communications Strategy has a strong focus on our market presence and enhancing our reputation to support attraction and retention of staff. In 2024/25 we will continue to enter sector awards to promote the excellent work of the business and make best use of our social media channels and work with our shareholder communication teams to promote our reputation. We will continue to develop our employee engagement and communication programme, following up on actions identified in our employee engagement surveys to ensure continuous improvement in staff satisfaction.

We will also explore opportunities for new partnerships with external organisations to broaden our recruitment routes for new employees.

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A pilot of a new skills assessment process for our supervisors proved very successful last year, and this year we will extend the pilot to include management roles with a view to extending this across all roles in future years. To ensure consistent ongoing management of this programme, a learning management system may prove beneficial. Stand-alone software has previously been considered; however, it was found the renewal of other systems due in the next few years may offer an opportunity to incorporate this functionality, reducing the total number of software programs needed and driving efficiency. This opportunity will be further assessed this year.

2.5.2. People risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Our employment offer is unattractive in the marketplace.	Terms and conditions review underway, any agreed changes to be implemented 2024/25. Monitor market conditions, interest in our vacancies, vacancy fill rate and attrition rate.
HR leadership capacity insufficient to meet growing size of the company.	Head of People role to be recruited in 2024.
Skills assessment process does not drive the desired benefits	Progress and success to be monitored throughout the year. Internal compliance function to be commissioned to undertake an audit during 24/25

2.6. Operational Excellence Pillar

We will deliver high quality services which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.

Performance

Quality

2.6.1. 2024/25 Activity

The activities identified in our operational excellence pillar support Ubico in providing high quality, safe and compliant services, harnessing continuous improvement and innovation wherever possible.

A large element of the work that we undertake in 2024/25 in the operational excellence pillar will be to support projects which sit in our business development pillar, particularly preparing for, and then delivering, the waste, recycling and street cleaning services for Forest of Dean, and supporting the project to deliver efficiencies for all shareholders through centralising vehicle ownership.

Our programme of digital transformation has seen significant achievements in the last few years, with the connected workforce ('in cab') technology system now in place across the company for waste and recycling, and work commencing in early 2024 to extend the system to include further services such as street cleaning and grounds maintenance. This programme of work will continue throughout this year, including expansion to bring the system into the Forest of Dean waste and recycling services. It will then move into benefits realisation and insight analysis towards the end of the year and into the next, to drive further efficiencies where possible. In addition, we will further digitise our fleet workshop processes, introducing tablets to record and manage workshop tasks, providing an interface with fleet back-office systems, and providing improved efficiency and improved management information.

Software will be needed to support project implementation for the centralised vehicle ownership, including fleet management software, and software which can help deliver unit

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costings for each of our services. The discovery stage of the new fleet management software began last year and procurement or re-procurement of the system will take place in 2024/25.

We will continue to support our in-house training team to deliver excellent, highly valued and effective training that meets the needs of our business. In 2024 the team will be extending their services to include in-house Accredited Driver Continuing Professional Competence (Driver CPC) training. This is compulsory training for large goods vehicle drivers and bringing the training in house will allow us to offer content that is specifically relevant to the services we deliver, at a time that best suits our colleagues. We will support them to develop their offering further to support the business in meeting our operational needs.

We will also continue our work developing longer term strategic cost projections for each partner, aligning them across partners where possible. Last year we commenced a pilot with a limited number of partners developing longer term strategic cost projections to enable a better understanding of cost commitments when aligned to residency profiles, service level commitments and climate target aspirations. In 2024/25 we will complete these plans for all our partners, and combine them to create a company long-term strategic financial plan to better support our strategic aims.

2024/25 marks the final year of our current communications strategy, and work will be undertaken to develop a new one to commence the following year.

Our work to measure our progress against our strategic goals and develop sound business intelligence to be able to react and adapt to change has been proceeding well and will continue this year. The data this gives, combined with insights from the connected workforce ('in cab') software, will give us insights into quality and performance that we can use to strengthen the management of the business and inform future business decisions and strategy.

We are committed to fostering positive impacts on society and the environment and will continue to ensure that social responsibility is embedded into our policies, plans and business practices to the benefit our staff, the wider community, and the environment. In 2024/25 we will continue to use procurement opportunities to gain social, economic and environmental benefits for the communities we serve, sourcing local source goods and services wherever economical and practical. We will provide local employment opportunities

with good employment standards and practices and will provide apprenticeship and training opportunities, and support community initiatives and events.

2.6.2. Operational excellence risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Digitisation projects are not delivered to agreed timetable resulting in agreed project budget being insufficient	Partners are key decision makers on programme board Programme structure enables progress monitoring at appropriate levels, and clear and early presentation of risks and any potential costs to the programme board allows for informed decision making at all times
Benefits of digitisation projects are not recognised	Monitor capture and share benefits realised through digitalisation, including financial benefits, future financial pressures mitigated following realisation of efficiencies, and other areas of added value.
Budget pressures	Continue to seek early understanding of areas of cost pressure for partners and work together to determine mitigation plans where necessary. Continue to highlight potential areas of cost pressure as early as possible in both budget setting processes and monthly forecasting reports. Ensure partners are aware that Ubico do not hold contingency funding
Demonstrating value. current and predicted shareholder cost pressures	Monitor capture and share benefits realised through digitalisation, including financial benefits, future financial pressures mitigated following realisation of efficiencies, and other areas of added value direct and indirect. Results of benefits be published evidencing value

2.6.3. Procurement Activity 2024/25

In 2024/25 we will complete procurement activity to allow contract award as follows:

Further to procurement activity undertaken in 23/24, contracts will be awarded for the supply of:

- Vehicle maintenance in West Oxfordshire
- Agency staff
- Container refurbishment
- Liquid Fuel - Supply of HVO
- Bulking and haulage - material marketing
- Cleaning and grounds products
- Site fire and security contracts

Award contract extensions or undertake new procurement activity and award a contract for the supply of:

- CPC Driver training
- Fleet management system
- Connected workforce ('in-cab')
- PPE - Footwear and Gloves

Undertake new procurement activity and award a contract for the supply of:

- Absence management service
- Small plant and equipment – hire
- Small plant and equipment – purchase
- Weed control (Cheltenham and Cotswold)
- Tachograph audit services
- Mobile compactors service and maintenance
- Bins/bags and containers
- Interceptor waste
- External audit provider
- Internal audit provider

2.7. Climate Pillar

We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.

Our environmental impact

Supporting partners with their impact

2.7.1. 2024/25 Activity

Ubico's carbon strategy recognises two strands of activity:

- Ubico owned carbon reduction activities that are within the gift of the company to deliver.
- Shareholder sponsored activity which requires approval and funding from our shareholders.

In 2024/25, we will continue to develop our work to understand our environmental impacts across the business and design a programme of activity which aims to reduce the main impact areas, including behaviour change programmes to reduce our energy consumption in buildings.

We will continue to work closely with our significant suppliers to encourage them to measure and report on their scope 1 and 2 emissions to support us in achieving more detailed scope 3 emissions data. We will ensure that climate implications are built into our project initiation processes so that climate impact is considered early and mitigating measures and initiatives can be built into project design and implementation wherever possible, and will seek further opportunities for recycling or reuse of our waste streams wherever possible.

We will work closely with our partners to identify and action joint carbon reduction schemes, including playing a key role in the waste sub-group for the Climate Leadership Gloucestershire project. We will support them in evaluating alternative fuel options for fleet and reviewing infrastructure requirements they may bring. This could include the installation of refuelling and/or recharging infrastructure where necessary, and (as existing capacity in electrical supply within depots is likely to be insufficient as demand grows for battery electric vehicles), supporting partners with assessments of electricity supply requirements for any

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battery electric fleet that may be purchased. We will also work closely in partnership with our shareholders on any projects to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon pollution from our joint land management and maintenance activities.

2.7.2. Climate risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Emissions from fleet remain high due to ageing fleet or fuels chosen.	Alternative fuel vehicle options identified on fleet replacement programmes; replacement strategy agreed with partners.
Ubico is not consulted on decisions which could impact carbon emissions, or the success of our carbon reduction initiatives.	Ubico invited to attend key meetings, both with individual partners and in wider partnership forums to ensure our input or impact on our activities is considered.

2.8. Business Development Pillar

We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.

Assess and evaluate

Create value

Build

2.8.1. 2024/25 Activity

Further to foundational work undertaken in 2023/24 exploring opportunities to further leverage partnership working across boundaries to drive value, subject to shareholder support and funding, we will commence mobilisation of the centralised fleet ownership project in 2024/25. In addition, we will evaluate further cross-boundary opportunities facilitated by owning the fleet and present business cases back to shareholders for their consideration.

A number of the current partner contracts will require renewal in 2027, offering an opportunity to make any adjustments required to reflect new partnership working arrangements. Work will begin in 2024/25 to scope this work and consider necessary elements for review or inclusion, and to design a timeline for commencement of the review process.

Another key piece of work will be the continuation of mobilisation work, leading to the commencement of delivery of the waste, recycling and street cleaning services for Forest of Dean District Council from August.

In addition, we will consider any approaches relating to growth which could create value for the partnership, presenting back business cases as appropriate for shareholder consideration and designing any growth projects which are approved.

We will also continue to work with individual councils on service design and innovation projects where required.

2.8.2. Business development risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Cross boundary or collaborative working proposals are not endorsed.	Proposals are not taken forward
Current company governance arrangements require review to be appropriate for greater level of cross boundary / collaborative working.	Review of contracts planned ahead of some 2027 expiry dates, to include review of overarching governance arrangements
Expectation of delivery beyond that which can be achieved with available capacity.	Assess methods to estimate capacity and resourcing requirements to support strategic programmes.
Leadership capacity to manage an expanding portfolio.	Focus on core environmental services where we are skilled and experienced. Include additional, appropriate, leadership capacity in any business cases for growth.