



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 7 December 2023

7.00 - 9.16 pm

Council Chamber

### Minutes

#### Membership

**Councillor Chloe Turner (Chair)**

Councillor Martin Brown

Councillor Gordon Craig

Councillor Christopher Evans

\* Councillor Jessie Hoskin

Councillor Steve Hynd

\* Councillor George James

\*Absent

**\* Councillor Robin Layfield (Vice-Chair)**

\* Councillor Haydn Jones

Councillor Ashley Smith

\* Councillor Haydn Sutton

Councillor Brian Tipper

Councillor Tricia Watson

#### Officers in Attendance

Strategic Director of Place

Managing Director, UBICO

Finance Director, Ubico

Senior Community Infrastructure Officer

Principal Planning Officer

Accountant

Democracy & Information Governance

Officer

#### EC.015 Apologies

The Chair, Councillor Turner welcomed Councillor Craig to his first Committee meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hoskin, James, Jones, Layfield and Sutton.

#### EC.016 Declaration of Interests

Councillors Craig and Tipper advised of interests under Agenda Item 10.

#### EC.017 Minutes

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 were approved as a correct record.

#### EC.018 Public Questions

Public questions were submitted. They were answered by the Chair, Councillor Turner. Supplementary questions were also answered. (Refer to the recording of the meeting).

**EC.019**      **Member Questions**

There were none.

**EC.020**      **Ubico Annual Presentation (Verbal Update)**

The Managing Director of Ubico provided a verbal update to Committee on the Business Plan for 2024/2025 and explained the different pillars (People, Operational Excellence, Climate and Business Development) of the plan in addition to the sub pillars.

Councillor Tipper asked what checks were being undertaken to prevent identity theft of residents who do not remove their name or address from items presented for refuse and recycling. The Managing Director of Ubico advised staff were regularly trained on GDPR and sensitivity of data. The Finance Director of Ubico also confirmed impact assessments were undertaken regularly and Ubico had a dedicated Data Protection Officer.

Councillor Craig asked if Ubico adopted the 7-year renewal for the vehicle fleet. The Managing Director of Ubico confirmed however the vehicles were reviewed beforehand to see if they were still suitable past the 7-year recommendation.

Councillor Hynd asked what weight climate commitments and social value had within Ubico's procurement policy. The Finance Director of Ubico advised that the Business Plan was currently going through the engagement process however he was aware of the social value portal for tendering and would contact the Strategic Director of Resources in relation to Stroud District Councils (SDC) Procurement Policy.

**EC.021**      **Budget Monitoring Report Q2 2023/24**

The Accountant introduced the report and advised of a projected overspend of £178k. She advised that table 1 outlined the breakdown of Services within the Committee and there were not many significant changes to quarter 1 except the improved recycle costs, increased garden waste income and the overspend at Ubico linked to the salary uplift.

Councillor Craig asked if the increased costs on vehicle hire and repair was a result of Ubico wanting to purchase new vehicles and SDC were preventing it. The Chair, Councillor Turner advised the delay in replacing the vehicle fleet was due to waiting on the results from the Governments consultation relating to the future of recycling to ensure the correct vehicles could be procured. In response to a further question from Councillor Craig, the vehicle procurement had been budgetted for. The Accountant confirmed.

Proposed by Councillor Watson and seconded by Councillor Brown.

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

**RESOLVED To note the outturn forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget and the Capital Programme for this Committee.**

**EC.022**      **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REVENUE ESTIMATES – REVISED 2023/24 AND ORIGINAL 2024/25**

The Accountant introduced the report and highlighted the key points within the report. Table 1 outlined the base budget for 2023/2024 and the increased proposed budget for 2024/2025. Table 2 provided narrative on the detail relating to where there were changes

to budgets and included the carry forward virements from 2023/2024. Appendix B outlined the fees and charges growth which had been increased by the 5% inflation unless otherwise stated e.g. statutory fees.

Proposed by Councillor Hynd, seconded by Councillor Watson.

On being put to the vote, the Motion received 5 votes for and 3 abstentions.

**RECOMMENDED TO STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

- a) **The revised Environment revenue budget for 2023/23 and original 2024/25 revenue budget are approved.**
- b) **The Fees and Charges list as shown at Appendix B is approved.**

**EC.023 Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025.**

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the report advising the Plan enhanced and conserved the natural beauty of the Cotswold National Landscape (CNL). He continued and advised that the plan increased emphasis on the current climate and ecological crisis and could also be used as material consideration of any Planning Plans and Strategies including planning applications. Under 1.3 of the report, it outlined the reasons for the plan running for 2 years.

Councillor Smith referred to 2.5 of the report and asked the Principal Planning Officer what the implications would be to Stroud if the Cotswolds became a National Park given Stroud chose not to adopt the last CNL Plan. The Principal Planning Officer advised a key concern when Stroud responded to the Glover Review consultation was related to accountability and that the CNL Board were appointed not elected and secondly National Parks had their own planning powers.

Councillor Craig asked for clarification that the plan related to only the areas of Stroud included in the AONB. The Principal Planning Officer confirmed.

Proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Smith.

Councillor Brown summed up as proposer reiterating the key issues identified by the Principal Planning Officer and that the plan was compatible with SDC's Carbon Neutral ambitions. He advised that the CNL would be producing its own pathway to Net Zero to be adopted in February at the CNL Board which would require all partners to cooperate with.

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

**RESOLVED To note the content and aspirations of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 and recognise its importance in supporting and information the following:**

- a) **Part of the evidence base for the Local Plan;**
- b) **Part of the evidence base for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans;**
- c) **Part of the evidence base for the preparation and implementation of relevant Council strategies, policies and projects;**
- d) **The determination of planning applications (where compatible with relevant Local Plan and national policy) by acting as a material consideration; and**

e) **The development and delivery of the Council's services and activities.**

**EC.024      COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - SPENDING ALLOCATIONS FOR 2024/2025**

The Senior Community Infrastructure Officer advised that the report listed the Officers recommendations for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding spending for projects been April 2024 – March 2025. She continued and provided Committee with an overview of CIL including the legislative framework for the allocation of funding. She additionally also provided Committee with an overview of each of the projects that were being recommended for approval and refusal.

Councillor Brown asked if the CIL funding being allocated to Standish Path in addition to their other third-party funding revenues would complete the project. The Senior Community Infrastructure Officer advised the CIL funding would contribute to a specific phase of the large project connecting Standish Village to Stonehouse only, not the whole project to connect Stonehouse to Gloucester.

Proposed by Councillor Hynd seconded by Councillor Brown.

Councillor Brown advised he would like to see more shuttle bus options however acknowledged CIL funding would not be able to fund these types of projects due to not meeting the criteria.

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

**RECOMMENDED    That funding commitments are agreed according to the report.  
TO STRATEGY  
& RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**

**EC.025      Open Spaces in New Residential Development**

The Strategic Director of Place introduced the report and explained that the report followed the Motion taken to Full Council on 20 July 2023 to explore potential options. SDC and Parish/Town Councils could contribute to the management of open spaces and amenities associated with new housing developments. He drew Members attention to section 3, in particular 3.2 of the report which outlined the four key actions and confirmed that a further report would be brought to Committee in December 2024 with the findings of the action points.

Councillor Craig asked a question relating to the high level costing action point and whether it had been considered for developers to make an upfront cost contribution in advance. The Chair, Councillor Turner, advised that this suggestion was part of ongoing discussions relating to the arrangements of costings.

The Chair, Councillor Turner, gave thanks to Councillor Ryder whose Motion in July has resulted in positive cross party working group with officers.

Proposed by Councillor Brown seconded by Councillor Craig.

Councillor Hynd advised that residents within his ward had reported issues relating to Community open spaces not being maintained.

Councillor Brown summed up as proposer advising the four action points identified were taking positive steps following the Strategic Planning Advisory Board (SPAB) Meeting relating to the Motion.

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

**RESOLVED To endorse the actions proposed in section 3 of this report, concerning the management of open spaces and amenities in new residential developments.**

### **EC.026      Appointments**

#### a)      Performance Monitoring Representative

Councillor Evans stood down from the role, Councillor Craig placed his name forward for nomination which was agreed. The Chair, Councillor Turner advised she would continue to support as the second representative.

#### b)      Gloucestershire Resources Waste Partnership (GRWP) - Additional Representative

It was agreed that Councillor Watson would be SDC's second representative and Councillor Hynd would be substitute.

### **EC.027      Member / Officer Reports**

#### a)      Strategic Planning Advisory Board (SPAB) (Verbal Update)

The Chair, Councillor Turner, advised a special meeting to discuss the Open Spaces Motion had taken place as the regular meeting was cancelled due to the only item on the agenda being the Local Plan and no decisions were required to be made at that current time relating to it.

Councillor Craig expressed his concern and advised of the importance for SPAB to meet due to potential cost implications in defending non-appropriate planning applications if there were delays. The Chair, Councillor Turner, advised SPAB had discussions relating to the ramifications following receipt of the inspector's letter where SPAB agreed to respond to the letter. She advised SPAB's input would be crucial once a response is received back from the inspectors.

#### b)      Stroud Regeneration Committee (Verbal Update)

There was no update as Councillor Layfield was not in attendance.

#### c)      Performance Monitoring

There were no questions.

#### d)      Climate Leadership Group (Verbal Update)

The Chair, Councillor Turner, advised an update was received on the energy theme from Forest of Dean District Council who were beginning development of a Local Area Energy Plan for the county. SDC provided an update on the Retrofit Work being undertaken at Stroud and finally, a new fund of £200k had been received from partners of the Climate Leadership Group which was going to fund a County risk and vulnerability assessment, a bid writer for County and a Green Skills Officer the County.

e) Stroud Canal Company (Verbal Update)

There was no update as Councillor Layfield was not in attendance.

f) UK100 Statement of Shared Intent

There were no questions.

**EC.028**      **Work Programme**

Councillor Brown requested the Adoption of the Cotswold National Landscape Board Net Zero Pathway be added for March.

**RESOLVED To note the Work Programme.**

The meeting closed at 9.16 pm

Chair