



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices • Ebley Mill • Ebley Wharf • Stroud • GL5 4UB  
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## STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY</b>	Regeneration and Investment Board
<b>DATE OF LAST MEETING</b>	18 July 2023
<b>ATTENDED</b>	27 September 2023

### BRIEF REPORT:

The following matters were discussed at RIB meetings on 18 July and 27 September 2023:

#### **Economic Development Strategy**

A progress update was given on all objectives of the Stroud District Economic Development Strategy:

- Improve skills and opportunities and reduce inequalities
- Create advanced and connected workspaces and communities
- Reduce carbon and ecological impacts
- Boost our market towns and rural vitality
- Support inward investment into the local economy

A response has also been provided to the emerging Gloucestershire Economic Strategy, and SDC were represented at a stakeholder event at Kingsholm Stadium on 28 September 2023. In its response, SDC had stressed the importance of being an equal partner in the delivery of the strategy, particularly in light of our planning and economic development responsibilities. The final strategy would come to GCC for approval in early 2024.

#### **Levelling Up Fund – Round 3**

No further news had been received from Government (DLUHC ) in respect of LUF 'Round 3'. An announcement was still anticipated this Autumn and there was continuing speculation of a move towards a more 'allocative' approach to funding awards, rather than the competitive bidding process that had been in place for LUF rounds 1 and 2.

#### **Stonehouse (Bristol Road) Rail Station**

Government had awarded 50k for the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the re-opening of this station, supported by Siobhan Baillie MP. The SOBC had been developed by a Steering Group chaired by Chloe Turner and including representatives from GCC, Stonehouse Town Council and SDC. The bid had been submitted 12 months ago and a decision from Government was anticipated later in 2023. If successful, a more detailed business case would then be developed which would require significant investment from Government and partners, including Network Rail and Great Western Railway.



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It was noted that Stonehouse Bristol Road served the largest conurbation without rail access to Bristol as the regional capital and that Western Gateway had specifically referenced the re-opening of the station in its Vision for Rail.

#### **Redevelopment of Tricorn House**

The Board discussed progress with the above redevelopment and noted that a planning enforcement report had been circulated in September – under the Council's Scheme of Delegation - to Development Control Committee members and Cainscross Ward Members. The report concluded that a material change of use of the building from offices to residential had occurred and that it would not be expedient to take enforcement action. These conclusions have been accepted by the Head of Development Management and no further action will be taken by the Local Planning Authority in respect of the works at the site.

The owner's agent has confirmed that internal fitout of the building is almost complete and works on communal areas and external drainage and utilities was progressing well. Marketing strategies for the 44 residential units are being formulated.

A further meeting with local ward members, Cainscross Town Council representatives and the local MP would take place later this Autumn.

#### **Stroud Rail Station Project**

A presentation was given on emerging ideas for the regeneration of Stroud Rail Station and adjacent town sites owned by Network Rail and Stroud District Council, including Cheapside Car Park and the Bath Place site (recently acquired by SDC from Newland Homes). Taken as a whole, these sites provided a major opportunity to create new homes and high quality, welcoming and accessible places for residents, businesses and visitors. The ideas also fitted well with other investments that were either planned or already happening, such as the re-opening of the Imperial Hotel (to be re-named *The Stroud*) and GWR's recent Access for All bid to create step free access for the Rail Station.

Proposals were still at an early stage and there would be engagement with key stakeholders such as the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce. A report on the development and decisions required by SDC would come to Strategy and Resources Committee in early 2024.

#### **Project Pipeline and Highlight Reports**

The Board looked at the existing pipeline of regeneration projects across the district, and an updated status report/position on each of these. The pipeline comprised of projects led by SDC as well as by partner organisations, such as the Canal and River Trust.

Highlight reports for the following priority SDC led projects were also reviewed:

- Rail Station, Bath Place and Cheapside sites (update above)



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- Brimscombe Port
- May Lane (Dursley)
- Zero Carbon Public Estate

Regarding the Brimscombe Port Project, the Board were informed that discussions were continuing with St Modwen Homes to enable the Development Agreement to be signed and that it was expected that more information on the timing of a further round of public consultation on the redevelopment plans would be made before Christmas.

<b>FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	22 November 2023
<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Brendan Cleere – Strategic Director of Place