



18th May 2021

To Members of Environment Committee Working Group

You are hereby invited to a virtual MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP **to be held on** Tuesday, 25th May 2021 at 7.30pm, **to conduct the following business.**

Helen Bojaniwska
Town Clerk

The meeting will be held via the [Zoom meeting platform](#)
To attend the meeting please use ID 876 4262 1623 – password - Community
For more information please refer to the [guidance on our website](#)

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interest or requests for dispensations
3. To receive questions from members of the public
4. To receive the Chair's welcome and remarks regarding the role of the Committee
5. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 30th March 2021 previously circulated
6. To receive the Deputy Clerk's report
7. To receive the budget monitoring report
8. To receive an update from Climate Action & Nature Recovery Officer
9. To approve dates for committee members to visit the Council's Green Spaces
10. To receive the following notes of the meetings;

Stroud Town CAN – 2nd March 2021

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, marital status and disability); Crime and Disorder (Section 17); Health and Safety; and Human Rights.

Clerk's report for Environment Committee Working Group 18/5/2021

Staff recruitment

Interviews for the Green Spaces Manager vacancy were held during the week commencing 10th May and a candidate has been offered the role. We hope that they will begin in early June, pending the required satisfactory references. We look forward to having the Green Spaces Team back to full capacity.

The new Green Spaces Manager will be introduced to the committee working group once they begin, and we they will be in attendance at the next meeting on 13th July.

Vandalism at the Cemetery

We have had two serious incidents of vandalism at the Cemetery which have been reported to the police. The first incident included damage to several prominent memorials and was reported on in the local press. As a result of the coverage, a local stonemason has offered to help with the restoration of some of the memorials, and offer which has been gratefully accepted by the Clerk.

Wildlife Crime

Unfortunately, early Spring has brought a spate of wildlife crime in the parish (details can be supplied). All incidents of wildlife crime against protected species have been referred to the police and local experts brought in to educate the public on the challenges faced by certain species.

Adder expert Dr Angela Julian appeared on BBC radio Gloucestershire to highlight the important work done by our Rangers and the national rarity of the species.

Works

The ranger team continue to work diligently despite the pressure of not having a Green Spaces Manager. The inevitable spate of anti-social behaviour as a result of warmer weather and lockdown restrictions easing will no doubt increase this pressure. This time of year is extremely busy for the team with additional mowing and strimming required across all our sites.

Kate Montgomery
Deputy Town Clerk
18th May 2021

Item 7 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET REPORT APRIL 2021

Expenditure	Budget	Spent	Committed	Balance
Staff costs	129,349	10,517		118,832
Training	2,000	-	2,015	-15
Travel/expenses	200			200
Rates	9,149			9,149
Rent (Depot)	10,000			10,000
Health safety security	3,000		262	2,738
Utilities	2,000			2,000
Consumables	600			600
Tel/post/communications	2,000	20		1,980
Insurance/Legal expenses/Consultancy	2,000			2,000
Site materials	7,500		275	7,225
Small tools and equipment	2,750		108	2,642
Equipment hire	1,500	-		1,500
Equipment maintenance	1,000	-	125	875
Fuel and oil	1,400			1,400
Vehicle lease	300			300
Vehicle maint./MOT/Tax	3,500	-	49	3,451
Planting	10,000	-	11,642	-1,642
Legal expenses	-	-	1,186	-1,186
Carbon reduction projects	-			-
Contracted grass maintenance	14,350		10,345	4,005
Contracted infrastructure	10,000	0	405	9,595
Contracted grave digging	12,000			12,000
Contracted waste management	8,000		311	7,689
Contracted play equip works	25,000		739	24,261
Contracted tree reports & works	3,000		583	2,417
Environment projects	35,000		-	35,000
Stroud Valleys Project	1,000		250	750
Community engagement	1,800		500	1,300
Climate change grants	10,000	1,305		8,695
Loan repayments	15,484	-		15,484
Graffiti removal/vandalism	500			500
Contingencies/liabilities	4,000			4,000
TOTAL	328,382	11,842	28,795	287,745

Income	Budget	Received	Balance
Burials	30,000	-	30,000
s.106	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-
Wayleaves	0	-	-
Sales of assets	-	-	-
Use of reserves	28,098	-	28,098
Precept	270,284	135,142	135,142
Total Green Spaces	328,382	135,142	193,240

REPORT TITLE - ST CAN UPDATE

AUTHOR

Tricia Watson – Climate Action and Nature Recovery Officer

CONSULTEES

Kate Montgomery – Deputy Town Clerk

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE

25th May 2021

RECOMMENDATION

For information

PROGRESS REPORT

Stroud Town Community Action Network (ST CAN) task & finish groups have extended our reach beyond the initial seven core organisation members to establish an impressive network of contributors from across the Stroud area. The agreed approach is action led with each organisation or group offering up projects that contribute to the overall objectives of carbon reduction and nature recovery within the parish boundary, Stroud Town Council being one of those contributors.

Despite lockdown reducing opportunities for interactive events, we have an impressive list of fifty contributions, in various stages of feasibility, progress or complete. Over fifteen of those are town council led, supported or grant funded with co-ordination and support for all projects provided by our Climate Action and Nature Recovery. As lockdown eases, it is intended that the focus is more on building community engagement and hands-on activities while embracing an emerging relationship with other CANs to share expertise. The ST CAN has a broader role than others due to town being the 'service hub' to many rural communities, to the extent Nailsworth have opted to host an event at the Subscription Rooms to maximise outreach.

The ST CAN web site and social media presence is under development. The aim of the online platform is to provide a central point where all activities are on a calendar regardless of leading partner. Links to other CANs and contributing organisations will help share and amplify relevant information without having to reinvent the wheel. A 'soft launch' is planned at a Stratford Park Covid-19 safe event planned in place of this year's Festival of Nature 3/4th July to reach out more publicly to town residents and visitors.

The Town Council have supported an emerging town hub collaboration through Freezer of Love and other Covid-19 support activities for residents during lockdown. It is hoped this network will facilitate community outreach for many ST CAN projects and enrich the lives of those in town in a sustainable way.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

ST CAN has opted not to set up its own 'legal entity' or run things directly. Each organisation will run its own projects, in collaboration with other partners, with volunteers managed under existing risk management and insurance protocols.

The Town Council operates under the General Power of Competence, which means it can do anything an individual can legally do.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

No additional funding implications beyond grant applications which go through standard process.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Lockdown restrictions have reduced communication opportunities to mostly digital platforms, so may be disproportionately impacting many groups not active in that space.

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CO2 IMPLICATIONS

Project success will be measured using a range of criteria including carbon reduction where applicable/data available. Biodiversity gain and community engagement also

DECISION

Stroud Town CAN

Zoom meeting

2nd March 2021 10.30am-12.30pm

In Attendance :

Fred Barker	Transition Stroud
Adrian Oldman	Transition Stroud
Nick Turner	Landwise
Cllr Rob Green	Stroud Town Council
Kate Montgomery	Stroud Town Council
Tricia Watson	Stroud Town Council
Helen Bojaniwska	Stroud Town Council
Steve Roberts	Stroud Nature
George Vigileos	Earth Protector Communities

Apologies :

Julie Ellison	Earth Protector Communities
Cllr Stella Parkes	Stroud Town Council
Clare Madiyone	Stroud Valleys Project (arrived part way through)

1. Agree notes from 1st December 2020

The notes from the meeting on 1st October were agreed. Noted that the Comms & Engagement convenor & 'next meeting' date had changed since the meeting.

Actions update:

All present confirmed their groups had signed off MoU.

Suitable document storage still pending – action with **TW**

SDC CN2030 – Simon Pickering's recent presentation to STC was discussed. Strategy due to be presented to full council 15/3/21. This group concerned that high levels of constructive critique requiring radical changes had not led to further consultation round. News of 3 new posts to progress actions welcomed, as was funding for community development hubs (noting good progress already being made in town around Paganhill, middle & top of town, Trinity rooms)

Nick commented on good community organiser training he had recently attended, details to be circulated **NT**

Helen mentioned Creative Sustainability commissioned to work on community hubs.

2. Feedback / Project Proposals from Task & Finish Groups

Barriers to progress discussion requested by Geo.

Key points agreed by group:

- Continue expansion beyond core group members through networks and projects, to source new energy & resources
- Convenors / Tricia to collate ideas arising between meetings (via email until suitable online platform secured)
- Core group / convenors / Tricia to 'connect dots' and find synergies across projects that bridge multiple themes
- Convenor role process & admin burden to be minimised
- Core group to be less 'prescriptive' than envisaged, work happens in the sub groups to flow with style & specialisms of group members (within agreed MoU framework & emerging comms guidelines – core group to raise flag if any concerns)
- Core group to have 'standard' agenda, with timely prompt for additional input (target 2 weeks prior to meeting)
- Amplify & support what is already happening; replicate good examples
- Collate and share relevant information whatever the source

Common themes across groups included

- Recognition that all groups had already extended membership beyond core group and facilitated beneficial new networking
- More progress was happening in between times than the 'non delivery' fear during lockdown (though post-lockdown events can't come soon enough!)
- Project delivery needs to be agile, to respond to external opportunities & participant enthusiasm/availability
- Measurement criteria need to extend beyond traditional carbon (see 5)

a. Local & Sustainable Food

11 groups now represented, more new than core members who were delighted to meet (for the 1st time in some cases) to increase the impact of common objectives.

Previous project list not reviewed in detail, 2 new ideas were met with great enthusiasm. 1 has already delivered a pilot which can now be developed with Down to Earth/Long Table/Town hubs all benefitting from collaborative efforts. Cress growing no carbon benefit but 'gateway' to establishing early life relationship with growing from seed & eating what you grow. Community engagement would best measure success.

Garden Guardians HLF bid to make next steps more accessible post lockdown.

Action: NR to discuss wider benefits of food growing with RG

b. Transport & Energy

More transport than energy reps, new energy member recruited!

Helen's overview of current town strategy set the scene very positively.

2 current projects

- 1) Transition to EV through car clubs (survey promoted through extended network) and evidence for street side charging points. SDC liaison to feed into town plan.

- 2) Community rooftop PV project to replace solar streets. Citizen science/outreach to desktop research suitable rooftops followed by approaching building owners. Training and support provided by Big Solar Co-op. Lead partner/actions TBC
Geo asked if any Ecotricity/Good Energy involvement. Broad discussions to be integrated via Fred.
Kate raised issue of microgeneration capacity checks & grid upgrade requirements
**Action: FB to add Western Power liaison to project plan
FB/STC to discuss resource availability re: solar project**

c. Resources & Waste

4 recruits from outside the group including 2 external organisations.
4 projects are ticking over with 'mini wins' during lockdown despite most action being on hold due to staff furlough, practical actions to do with 'stuff' being so restricted and business priorities radically changed (again).
While the virtual world takes centre stage, 'Recycling Locator' database is underway, Refill apps and externally accessible Terracycle collection points have been publicised via network social media, and since the meeting Chamber has launched a 'virtual exchange' for packaging.
Bridging the groups and making good use of local 'hub' sites, Longtable 'potting shed' & Down to Earth at Paganhill has started redistributing donated tools/plant pots/compost/coffee grounds for growing initiatives, while Trinity Rooms are redistributing toys & books.
Also since the meeting, the network arising from this group has come together to collaborate on a potential National Lottery bid which could deliver a lot of the projects on the current and aspirational list, thanks Fred for leading the charge, will update at the next meeting.

**Action: TW/FB to report back to next R&W and core groups re: NL progress
FB to link STC CAN MoU fit with their collaboration criteria
TW/Emily (STC) to review potential activity opportunities at other town hubs**

d. Land & Nature Recovery

Key themes and threads rather than specific projects led the discussion.
Quick wins in town with visual changes are high priority, how to overcome land ownership identified as potential barrier. Backyards and verges, corridors focus.
Big overlap with what Stroud Nature were already doing, bringing interested parties together to achieve much of this group's objectives.
Balance ambitious STC projects with what is happening elsewhere.
Geo raised canal biodiversity & summer student opportunities.
Steve liaising with canal in background, no action on our 'patch' yet.
Steve also liaising with Stroud College re: opportunities beyond lockdown e.g. Stratford Park pond.
Nature festival is going ahead weekend 3/4th of July assumed 'bubble' constraints limited numbers being planned for.

Action: HB recommended volunteer recruitment across all projects is a key Comms group activity

e. Communications & Engagement

Again virtual dominates the group's current activities with its limiting outreach aspirations. Social media and web domains in place, web site plans moving on apace.

Adrian reported back on other local CAN approaches to share learnings. Wotton - simple people-led action. Use non-profit local paper, shop fronts and WWF carbon calculator. Involves DofE gold. Real, local, pertinent action.

Nailsworth established pre-lockdown, more traditional steering group/chair. Common theme, no global doom sharing, positive local action only! Give people agency to take action and lobby. Comms group includes professional comms volunteers who provide content, soc media team handles channel management. Suggest we model our web site on theirs, worth paying for a professionally managed site.

Rob reflected on similarity with previous contact Charlton Kings group. Support maximum engagement, low key & bottom up.

Rob reiterated that 'core messages' to be endorsed by core group.

Message House diagram received positively by all.

**Action: AO/SP taking comms strategy & web design forward
AO/STC to apply for grant funding for web site**

3. Walk through process for ST CAN project approval

The principle of keeping process to minimum while enabling group ownership/ approval/ effective benefits measurement broadly agreed.

Needs to be manageable for convenors who are all spread rather thinly!

Action: TW & Convenors to take this action away, present at next core group

4. Confirm 'Soft Launch' date & scope

Web/ecomms as soon as ready, target 1 month prior to Stratford Park weekend event which will form primary focus for activity based/printed material launch.

ST CAN to have a stand at the event to include public feedback/ suggestions

**Actions: ALL GROUPS to prepare material/ covid-compliant activities/
handouts & example project list**

5. Project 'success' measurement & community feedback

All agreed 'light touch' and individual project based on common themes rather than over ambitious combined measures.

Adrian recommended easy feed back graphics to represent top line numbers useful at year end / for web site

Earth clock/digital display Geo's aspiration, format/content tbc.

Suggestions in document approved.

Rob requested updated accurate data vs 'headlines' to maintain momentum & engagement.

Kate emphasised the importance of wellbeing and empowerment aspects in addition to numbers, both now essential for grant funding.

Helen noted that post covid, grant emphasis has changed with huge community focus.

Actions: ALL to include proposed appropriate measures in project outlines

6. Date for next meeting – Tuesday 11th May 10:30am, STC to convene