

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the REGENERATION WORKING GROUP

Thursday, 17th February 2022, at 10.00am

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Present

Cllrs Liz Child, Kevin Cranston, (Deputy Chair), Tony Davey, Mick Fealty, Stella Parkes (Chair)

In attendance

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Alison Rood (Project Officer), Chris Woolner (Green Spaces Manager); Gloucestershire County Council: Cllr David Drew, Alexis Newport (Parking Manager); Stroud District Council: Cllr Robin Layfield, Leonie Lockwood (Regeneration Delivery Lead); Andrew Watton, Stroud Chamber

1. Apologies

Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Camilla Hale; Yakub Mulla, Gloucestershire County Council Highways

2. Declarations of interest

None declared.

3. To consider requests for dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. Questions from members of the public

There were no questions.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the Committee meeting on 9th December 2021 were noted by the members present and will be approved by the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Members agreed to reorder the agenda as follows.

7. Budget report to end January 2022

The budget report was noted.

8. Project Officer report

Members were advised that the weekly road closure of London Road would come to an end on 26th March. Traffic management costs had been covered by the government's Welcome Back Funding which ends on 31st March.

Members expressed disappointment at the recent announcement by Stroud District Council to raise car parking charges. A suggestion had been made to District Council members that the additional revenue raised could be used to pay for continued traffic management subject to a Temporary Road Closure being approved. It was hoped

that this would be discussed at the District Council's Full Council meeting on 17th February, when their budget would be approved.

Item 8 discussion was suspended to allow attendance by GCC officer and discussion of Item 6.

6. Gloucestershire County Council Parking Review update

Alexis Newport, Parking Manager at Gloucestershire County Council gave an update on the town centre parking review, which had involved focus groups. During this informal consultation stage, the parking review team learnt of multiple other projects currently underway or planned e.g. the Town Council's Street Spaces project and other proposals being considered for inclusion in the District Council's Levelling Up Fund. The Regeneration Working Group's previous decision to commission a town centre parking survey was also noted. It was therefore suggested a working group be set up to help ensure solutions were complementary.

Members asked when the responses/results of both consultations (residential and town centre) would be available. The results of consultation relating to residential areas were likely to be available by the end of March and a report from the town centre consultation would be sent after the meeting.

Action: Alexis Newport to send report, and Project Officer to set up and identify members for a working group

Item 8 discussion resumed.

The Project Officer updated members on development of a town-wide parking research project, which includes on- and off-street parking. A comprehensive brief was being developed with Stroud District Council.

Action: Project Officer to bring brief and further update to the next meeting

9. Design work update at Subscription Rooms forecourt

The Green Spaces Manager presented initial concept design illustrations and explained that an accessibility report will also be commissioned. A communications plan for internal and external audiences including both public face-to-face and online consultation was in development.

Members welcomed the concept design drawings and **agreed** to recommend them to Full Council alongside a community engagement plan for approval.

Action: Green Spaces Manager to present designs and community engagement plan to Full Council on 7th March.

10. Update on Levelling Up Fund bid

Leonie Lockwood, Regeneration Delivery Lead from Stroud District Council, updated members on the progress of bid development. Although the Levelling Up White Paper was published by government on 2nd February it did not contain a timetable or further details for Round 2 Submission bids. Consequently, the council will continue with all projects in anticipation of a June submission date. This includes junction

improvements at Wallbridge and Merrywalks, railway station improvements including the forecourt and Goods Shed areas, access to Brunel Mall car park, the Subscription Rooms forecourt (see Item 9) and improvements to Lansdown Hall.

11. Stroud District Council waste storage support at Fawkes Place

Stroud District Council had requested support from the Town Council for the installation and maintenance of a secure, lockable commercial waste storage unit in Fawkes Place. The area is subject fly-tipping and residential properties disposing their domestic waste alongside the commercial waste.

Members noted that the Town Council was not responsible for waste and did not have the resources to do so. The Working Group **agreed** that a secure store is needed in Fawkes Place and suggested that the Town Council could contribute to the construction costs, and potentially manage keys to the store, but were not willing to commit to the management and maintenance due to a lack of capacity.

Other approaches were discussed, including learning lessons from the district councils' approach to the storage of domestic waste at their properties in Paganhill, which appeared to be successful. A suggestion was made to procure specialist advice and to find out what solutions any other towns had used to address similar issues. Members discussed the possibility of including the bin store in the Levelling Up Fund bid. Leonie Lockwood felt this would be unlikely but agreed to check.

Action: Clerk to request information on similar experiences and solutions via Clerks' Forum.

12. Tourism support report

The Project Officer presented a brief for tourism support which had been developed with Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse and Wotton-under-Edge Town Councils. The brief was for the procurement of a copywriter to write copy for each of the market towns, for use on websites, the Visit Stroud website, social media etc.. The market towns were currently in the process of confirming funding with their respective councils.

The Project Officer also informed members that Dursley Town Council had discussed with Stroud District Council an additional opportunity to procure a place experience platform/app and management system using the government's Welcome Back Funding. Costs of £20,000 plus an annual £3,000 fee for maintenance could be covered by the Fund for the first year, if procured before the Welcome Back Fund closes on 31st March. The app is currently in use in a variety of locations including Bristol and Salisbury. There would be some resource implications involved to put content on the app. Copy generated through the procurement of a copywriter could be included on the app as well as the other websites.

Members discussed the proposals and **agreed** to take the brief forward. They also **agreed** to support the procurement of the app, but did not commit to the provision of any future funding for it.

Action: Project Officer to liaise with other market towns procure copywriter

13. List of actions

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.20

Chair

Date