

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of COUNCIL
13th September 2021 at 7.30pm
St Laurence Church Hall, The Shambles, Stroud

Present

Cllrs Kevin Cranston (Chair), Kate Crews, Tony Davey, Mick Fealty, Sue Fenton, Mark Graham, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, Steven Naumann, Adrian Oldman (from item 3), Stella Parkes, Lucas Schoemaker, Naomi Seffar and Gill Tavner

In attendance

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Kate Montgomery (Deputy Clerk), Marianne Sweet (STC Communications), Gloucestershire County Councillor David Drew

Absent

Cllr Haydn Sutton

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Liz Child and Laurie Davies (all personal).

2. To receive declarations of interest or requests for dispensations

No interests were declared at this point but see also item 16 below. There were no requests for dispensations.

3. Co-option of a councillor for Farmhill and Paganhill ward

Candidate Adrian Oldman was invited to present his applications for co-option. He was then co-opted to represent Farmhill and Paganhill ward.

4. To receive additional declarations of interest or requests for dispensations

None received.

5. Committee Appointments

There were no nominations for a space on the Finance and Policy Committee.

Cllr Oldman was **elected** to join the Community Committee.

Cllrs Davey and Oldman were **elected** to join the Consultations and Highways Committees.

6. Minutes of the meeting of 19th July 2021

The minutes of the council meeting on 19th July 2021 were **approved** by the members present and will be signed by the Chair.

7. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor reminded members of the rules of debate. He reported that he had attended a canal vision meeting and would shortly be meeting the new canal project manager. He had attended the launch of the 2021 Stroud Book Festival and commended the organisers on an excellent programme.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had attended a photoshoot for the relaunch of the WASWAY Walk around Stroud. The route signage was being renovated by councillors.

Cllr Parkes and the Mayor had met the Stroud District Council Strategic Director of Place, with the Town Clerk, to discuss concerns raised by the Regeneration Committee about funding bids.

The Mayor had been interviewed by BBC Radio Gloucestershire about the launch of the Stroud Town CAN. The launch at the Retrofit Fair at the Subscription Rooms had been very well attended.

The Deputy Mayor reported on a visit to the AGM of the Middle of the Hill Residents Association, noting that the group have been very active and are receiving excellent support from Stroud District Council and the Town Council's Community Development Officer.

8. Questions from members of the public

No questions were received.

9. Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Drew reported on a meeting with County Council officers and the contractors who are progressing the rollout of fibre broadband in the Stroud area, in response to concerns raised by the Town Clerk about the delay in rolling out faster broadband services in the town centre. It was noted that the town centre is lower down their list of priorities, but businesses in the area could help by registering their interest in services.

Cllr Drew also confirmed that: the planned parking review had been put on hold; resurfacing work in the town centre is planned for 2022; and some town centre loading bays had been repainted. He felt that highways signage in the town centre needed to be reviewed and improved.

Finally, Cllr Drew expressed concern about the potential impact of the reduction in universal credit due to come in from mid-October, which he felt would see a rise in demand for the Stroud food hubs and Marah, who are already providing 100 meals, 4 days a week.

Cllr Shoemaker reported that there had not yet been a full District Council meeting since the election in May. He confirmed that the Council were finalising their 2020-2026 plan, which he felt needed to contain measurable targets/goals. Discussions were ongoing about budgets for retrofitting, addressing the scale of the work and considering how private properties would be funded. He noted that fuel poverty was a real concern, particularly in the private rented sector, but there were restrictions on what funding support can be provided.

Cllr Crews reported that the Community Services and Licensing Committee were due to discuss a draft Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy later in the week.

10. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted.

11. Covid-19 risk assessment for Council and Committee meetings

It was **agreed** that the current guidance for attendance at Full Council meetings, including mask-wearing and social distancing should remain in place.

The Clerk's recommendation against a return to face-to-face Committee meetings was noted, but it was **agreed** that the Consultations and Highways Working could trial hybrid meetings subject to consultation with staff and a check of the technical requirements.

It was further **agreed** to review these arrangements at the next meeting.

Actions:

Consult staff (Clerk)

Explore technical requirements for hybrid meetings (Clerk)

12. Payments from May and June

Payments from May and June as listed in Appendix 1 were **approved** as recommended by the Finance and Policy Working Group.

13. External Auditor's report for the financial year 2020-21

The external auditor's report was noted. No comments had been made.

14. Appointment of an Internal Auditor

It was **agreed** to appoint Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council for the 2021-22 internal audit.

Action:

Confirm appointment to Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Council

15. Transfer of the freehold of the Leazes Playing Field from Stroud District Council

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk explained the background to the proposed transfer, which had been under discussion for some time and discussed previously by the Environment Committee.

It was noted that one section of land on the south side of the site, would be excluded from the transfer. Ownership of this section would be retained by Stroud District Council and fenced off as a buffer zone, due to concerns about potential liabilities arising from an adjacent retaining wall. Concerns about the condition and potential repair costs had been raised in a condition survey commissioned by the Town Council.

It was noted that the Environment Committee would need to consider a budget and plan for the maintenance of boundary walls included in the transfer.

It was **agreed** to proceed with the transfer of the freehold of the Leazes Playing Field from Stroud District Council subject to the following conditions:

- the freehold of the buffer zone of 5m is retained by Stroud District Council
- the freehold is transferred at no cost to the Town Council (apart from solicitor's fees, searches and Land Registry fees)
- the buffer zone fence is installed by Stroud District Council in consultation with the Green Spaces Manager at no cost to Stroud Town Council

- the buffer zone fence is to be maintained by Stroud Town Council once the transfer is complete.

Actions:

Instruct solicitor (Deputy Clerk)

Write to Stroud District Council (Deputy Clerk)

16. Local Government Pension Scheme investments in fossil fuels

The Clerk presented a report highlighting concerns raised by Council staff about the ongoing investment of the Gloucestershire County Council Pension Fund in fossil fuels.

Cllrs Parkes and Oldman declared an interest as members of the Local Government Pension Fund.

It was noted that staff are extremely concerned that their pension contributions are still supporting the industry responsible for the climate crisis and that nationally billions are being invested in companies that are actively blocking climate action.

It was **agreed** to support the Council staff by writing to the Pension Committee at Gloucestershire County Council calling for divestment from fossil fuel industries and issuing a press statement about this issue.

Gloucestershire County Councillor David Drew expressed his support on this issue.

The Clerk was also asked to write to Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils to encourage other councils to support the call for divestment.

Actions:

Write to Gloucestershire County Council (Clerk)

Issue a press statement (Clerk)

Write to Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (Clerk)

17. Climate & Ecological Emergency Bill

A report on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill was presented by the Clerk.

It was **resolved** to support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill; inform the local media of this decision; write an open letter to Siobhan Baillie MP (shared with residents through local and social media) urging her to sign up to support the Bill, and write to the CEE Bill Alliance, the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, expressing the Council's support.

Actions:

Issue a press statement (Clerk)

Write an open letter to Siobhan Baillie MP (Clerk)

Write to the CEE Bill Alliance (Clerk)

18. Section 25 Agreement for a path from Horns Road to footpath ZST54

As recommended by the Consultations and Highways Working Group it was **agreed** to enter into a Section 25 Agreement with Gloucestershire County Council under the Highways Act 1980 for a path from Horns Road between the New Cemetery and Spider Lane Allotments and to the Rear of 39-41 Highfield Road leading to footpath ZST54.

It was also **agreed** to write to Stroud District Council requesting that they progress a Section 25 Agreement with Gloucestershire County Council under the Highways Act 1980 for a short section of path connecting the route above to Highfields Road.

The Clerk explained that the Council had previously set up a working group to progress applications for so called Lost Ways to ensure that they are registered before the government deadline. It was noted that this work is becoming more urgent and that a call for more volunteers had been sent out. Councillors were also asked to report any concerns about missing or damaged signs to the Clerk in response to a request from Siobhan Baillie MP's office who had offered to help with this issue.

Actions:

- Write to Gloucestershire County Council (Clerk)
- Write to Stroud District Council (Clerk)
- Report any concerns about missing or damaged signs to the Clerk (Councillors)

19. Timetable and process for setting the 2022-23 budget

A timetable and process were **approved**. The Clerk was asked to present a report to the Finance and Policy Committee meeting on 13th December 2021, on the online engagement planned for later in the year, including a survey based on draft budget.

Actions:

- Progress agreed process
- Prepare report on online engagement (Clerk)

20. Working Group reports

The following reports, previously circulated, were received.

Community:	28th June 2021
Consultations & Highways:	12th July 2021, 16th August 2021
Environment:	13th July 2021
Regeneration:	22nd July 2021

21. Exclusion of press and public

It was **resolved** in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

22. To receive a report on stonework at the Subscription Rooms

The Clerk presented an interim report from the council's solicitor.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Appendix 1

Payments May 2021

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
04/05/2021	Ellis Whittam Limited	4985	£3,240.00	One year consultancy
04/05/2021	Ellis Whittam Limited	4986	£285.36	Insurance Apr 21 - Mar 22
04/05/2021	GAPTC	CSUM	£3,138.57	Annual Membership Subscription
04/05/2021	Haymarket Business Media Ltd	SUB21	£250.00	Horti Weekly Sub
04/05/2021	WSP Solicitors	CWSP	£500.00	Fennells View Land Transfer
04/05/2021	Wotton Tree Consultancy	738	£150.00	Tree report - cemetery
04/05/2021	Working Planet Ltd	6305	£454.80	GSM Recruitment Ad
04/05/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	3624	£22.38	Site Materials
04/05/2021	Stroud Alarms Fire and Securit	953/470	£360.00	Cabling underground Depot
04/05/2021	SAFPRO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY	386/440	£440.64	PPE and uniform - new ranger
04/05/2021	Playsafety Ltd	4387	£427.80	Annual Play Checks
04/05/2021	Mount Pleasant Trees	645	£19.80	Hornbeam reduction
04/05/2021	Lansdown Road Motors Ltd	1332	£217.75	MOT for Kangoo
04/05/2021	Edwards Engineering Ltd	7899	£375.90	Standpipe for Cemetery
04/05/2021	Mrs Patricia Phipps	22PP	£10,000.00	Rent for Libbys Drive Depot
04/05/2021	KJS ACCOUNTANTS	10	£1,003.00	Accountancy Services
04/05/2021	JAMES & OWEN LTD	166	£117.06	Stationary
04/05/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	2913	£591.72	IT Support and Broadband
04/05/2021	ICCM	4370	£95.00	Annual Membership
04/05/2021	HHGL Limited	4231	£555.06	Multiple Invs
07/05/2021	ALL Star Business Solutions	8167	£162.07	Fuel
07/05/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	B038	£43.02	PLASSON COMPRESSION/pipe liner
07/05/2021	Ubico Limited	2325	£8,640.00	Dog bin emptying yearly charge
11/05/2021	Paganhill Community	4146	£1,800.00	Grant

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
13/05/2021	PAYROLL	PAYROLL	£16,686.11	MAY PAYROLL
13/05/2021	HMRC	HMRC	£5,545.87	HMRC MAY
13/05/2021	GLOUCESTERSHIRE LG	PENSIONS	£6,776.00	GLOUCESTERSHIRE LG
14/05/2021	Streets Reimagined Ltd	C01A	£4,800.00	Consultancy Street Spaces project
14/05/2021	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	1982	£2,268.00	Cemetery Cuts 13th & 29th Apr
14/05/2021	COMMONPLACE DIGITAL LTD	155	£2,400.00	NDP Subscription Fee
14/05/2021	CONSORTIUM	383	£46.36	Office Stationery
14/05/2021	DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd	9648	£1,104.00	Accounting Services
14/05/2021	Nailsworth Garden Machinery	Nailsworth	£193.10	Machinery
14/05/2021	DENIS BROWN & SON (Nailsworth)	1880	£58.80	Timber
14/05/2021	ERMIN PLANT LTD	6558	£38.02	Chisel Crowbar
14/05/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	2985	£593.85	IT Support, calls, broadband
14/05/2021	JAMES & OWEN LTD	8645	£32.49	Office Stationery
14/05/2021	Konica Minolta Business Solutions	9516	£37.72	Printing
14/05/2021	MIW Water Cooler Experts	9016	£150.00	Sanitisation of water fountain
14/05/2021	Smiths (Gloucester) Ltd	3845	£38.46	Waste collection Libbys Dr
14/05/2021	Thirsty Work Ltd.	8639	£3.71	Drinking Water Thanet Hse
14/05/2021	Allsorts Gloucestershire	4121	£3,000.00	Grant Funding
14/05/2021	Citizens Advice Bureau	4080	£5,000.00	Grant Funding
14/05/2021	Veriphy Ltd	8768	£4.20	Credit screen
14/05/2021	Hughes & Salvidge Holdings Ltd T	8744	£268.80	Exchange of 6 Yard Skip
14/05/2021	Ellis Whittam Limited	5867	£450.00	Pre-Placement Medical with OHA
14/05/2021	A E Evans Ltd	365	£887.28	Group swing seat
14/05/2021	Blooming Baskets	2168	£7,388.40	Refill baskets and troughs
14/05/2021	EESI LTD	7007	£196.49	Heating service and gas safety
14/05/2021	ERMIN PLANT LTD	9057	£70.34	GS equipment various
14/05/2021	Free Range Designs Ltd	6993	£1,207.00	Stroud Signage Project 1/3

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
14/05/2021	GlosJobs	444	£51.60	Job vacancy finance admin
14/05/2021	Storm Board LLP	1176-B	£960.00	Community Notice Boards
14/05/2021	Homestart	4139_HS	£3,000.00	Homestart Grant
14/05/2021	Lansdown Hall	4125_LH	£500.00	Grant to Lansdown Hall
14/05/2021	Marah Trust	4084_MT	£5,000.00	Grant Marah Trust
14/05/2021	Stroud Preservation Trust	4146_SP T	£500.00	Grant
14/05/2021	Lansdown Hall	4125_GR ANT	£4,500.00	Grant (4,500 total grant 5,000)
14/05/2021	Free Range Designs Ltd	0764/	£1,100.00	Gypsy Caravan Compost WC
14/05/2021	Lilian Faithfull	FPO	£3,000.00	Grant
14/05/2021	Ellis Whittam Limited	24986	-£1.80	Insurance
15/05/2021	Nadja Gajadharsingh	110	£500.00	Fundraising services
15/05/2021	Gloucester Locksmiths Ltd	8131	£24.00	Emergency lock replacement
15/05/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	8170	£1,770.86	Road closure London Road
15/05/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	8173	£63.30	Payroll services
17/05/2021	SDC	DD	£1,068.00	Business Rates
17/05/2021	SDC	DD	£624.00	SDC
18/05/2021	Renault Finance	5152	£30.00	Battery Lease Van
25/05/2021	Ecotricity	49391	£122.01	Utilities Libbys Drive
25/05/2021	Ecotricity	52716	£48.33	Thanet House Electricity
25/05/2021	Ecotricity	3686	£72.94	Thanet House -
25/05/2021	Lister Unified Communications	ST8117	£56.40	Call charges
26/05/2021	EE Ltd	961	£72.17	Mobile phones
26/05/2021	Greenway Training	2430	£216.00	LANTRA Training Course SM
26/05/2021	McAllister Masonry Limited	3654	£162.00	Stonemason works
27/05/2021	Historic Towns and Villages Fo	9612	£50.00	Climate change webinar Camilla
27/05/2021	Polybags Ltd	2826	£251.50	Refuse sacks
27/05/2021	SAFPRO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY	7153	£54.00	Mascot Manheim Trouser
27/05/2021	Somerset County Council	1040	£63.60	Pollution tube analysis
27/05/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	215	£11.67	Site materials
27/05/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	737	£7.46	Drainage gully grating
27/05/2021	University of Bristol	4741	£1,690.00	RHS Level 2 training

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
27/05/2021	GLOUCESTERSH IRE lg	PEN 05	£5,629.95	PENSIONS
27/05/2021	HMRC	HMRC 05	£4,908.33	PAYE/NI May
27/05/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	4956	£262.00	SLCC Membership Deputy Clerk
27/05/2021	Gloucester Theatre Company	4171/GT C	£650.00	Covid Grant

Payments June 2021

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
01/06/2021	Renault Finance	621	£30.00	Battery lease van
03/06/2021	Land Registry	26781	£3.00	Title Plan
07/06/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	STR002	£30.00	Payroll re-run charge
07/06/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	STR002/1	£61.32	Payroll processing
07/06/2021	ALL Star Business Solutions	164667	£137.76	Fuel Card
08/06/2021	Zoom	7969	£287.76	Zoom Annual Subscription
09/06/2021	Land Registry	34199	£6.00	Title Plan and View
11/06/2021	Amazon	5502	£48.99	Shelving Units
15/06/2021	Alan Price	1046	£1,340.00	Grave Digging Fees
15/06/2021	Avelec Solutions Ltd	616	£566.54	Service Visit
15/06/2021	BAILEY PARTNERSHIP	105503	£1,056.00	Project Management
15/06/2021	J S Whittaker T/A Colors	5503	£2,000.00	Planting and maintenance
15/06/2021	CONSORTIUM	4917	£31.25	Centrefeed Dispenser
15/06/2021	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	5432	£2,268.00	Grounds Maintenance
15/06/2021	Damselfly Communications Ltd	621	£2,225.00	Media consultancy
15/06/2021	Greenway Training	2509	£138.00	First Aid training
15/06/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	3057	£598.13	IT Services
15/06/2021	KJS ACCOUNTANTS	stc011	£855.00	Interim Finance Role
15/06/2021	Konica Minolta Business Soluti	2298	£89.14	Bizhub
15/06/2021	Nadja Gajadharsingh	1112	£960.00	Fundraising services May
15/06/2021	Nailsworth Garden Machinery	51176	£18.50	Repair to brushcutter
15/06/2021	Roberts & Jones Mechanical Ser	4618	£4,609.38	Ventilation system
15/06/2021	SAFPRO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY	498239	£108.00	Safpro
15/06/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	133578	£220.80	Job Advertising Services
15/06/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	1784	£144.00	Staff Training-Comms
15/06/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	2306	£90.00	Staff training-Leadership in a
15/06/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	2307	£90.00	Leadership in action

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
15/06/2021	Smiths (Gloucester) Ltd	49267	£138.60	Waste Collection Services
15/06/2021	Somerset County Council	21134	£63.60	Analysis of diffusion tubes
15/06/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	2071	£579.00	Bank Gardens Traffic Management
15/06/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	5855	£1,690.37	Farmers Market Stroud
15/06/2021	Thirsty Work Ltd.	6452	£3.71	Rental Charges
15/06/2021	Veriphy Ltd	91138	£4.20	Credit screening
15/06/2021	Zurich Municipal	55357	£6,648.57	Annual Insurance
15/06/2021	N D Weaver	13.21.22	£180.00	Callout to Lansdown building -
15/06/2021	Payroll	PAYROL L	£17,749.61	June Payroll
15/06/2021	Paganhill Community	EFT P/HILL	£1,200.00	Grant
15/06/2021	SDC	DD SDC	£1,068.00	Bus Rates Libbys Drive and Cem
15/06/2021	Public Works Loan Board	DD PWLB	£9,881.45	Loan Repayment
15/06/2021	KJS ACCOUNTANTS	1011-1	£0.50	Correct invoice 855.5
22/06/2021	Water Plus Ltd.	11632	£13.41	Water supply Thanet House
22/06/2021	Lister Unified Communications	56.52	£56.52	Mobiles Comms
22/06/2021	SDC	BUS RATES	£624.00	Business Rates-Thanet House
24/06/2021	Ecotricity	5087	£132.44	Electricity - Libbys Drive
24/06/2021	Ecotricity	5126	£79.33	Electricity Thanet House
24/06/2021	EE Ltd	3015	£71.59	Mobile Services