

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Monday, 13th January 2020, at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Simon Arundel, Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston (Chair), Steve Dechan, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, John Marjoram, Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage, Lucas Schoemaker, Haydn Sutton and Chas Townley

Absent: Cllrs Davies, Lunnon and Price

In attendance: Gloucestershire County Councillor Eva Ward, District Councillor Simon Pickering, Marianne Sweet (STC Communications), Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Kate Montgomery (Deputy Clerk) and one member of the public

Action

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bloxsom and Naumann

2. Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

None

3. Gifts and hospitality

None

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the council meeting on 9th December were **approved** by the members present and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

5. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor reported that he had joined the staff festive lunch at the Long Table, and taken the role of Master of the House for the Wassail. The Deputy Mayor had attended the Rise Awards ceremony in Bristol.

6. Questions from members of the public

None received.

7. District and County Councillors' reports

County Councillor Ward announced that a consultation on the draft Local Transport Plan 2015-41 would be launched on 16th January and end on 26th March. Public and stakeholder events would be held at Ebley Mill on 13th February. Cllr Ward reminded the Council that the County Council's budget consultation closes on 17th January.

District Councillor Pickering reported on Environment Committee decisions on funding for carbon neutrality, the approval of an updated environmental strategy and air quality monitoring. It was noted that a consultation would be commencing soon on proposals to extend current Public Space Protection Orders for 3 years and remove the requirement for dogs to be kept on a lead on cycle paths and the canal towpath.

District Councillor Townley reported on the introduction of higher council tax charges for long-term empty properties and approval of a homelessness strategy.

District Councillor Pickering additionally reported that development proposals for Brimscombe Port would be reviewed as part of a wider strategic review of the whole valley corridor.

District Councillors Sutton and Marjoram had nothing further to add.

8. Clerk's report

The Clerk's report was noted.

The Clerk additionally reported that part of the retaining bank above the stream at the Long Ground had collapsed over the weekend, leaving a large pile of debris, including a Stroud District Council refuse bin, in the watercourse. The damage had been reported to Highways, the Environment Agency and Stroud District Council.

9. Election of Committee members and appointment of chairs

Following approval at the previous Council meeting of new Committee structures, the following members, chairs and deputy chairs were elected:

Consultations and Highways:

Simon Arundel (Chair), John Bloxsom, Alice Campbell, Steve Dechan, Camilla Hale (Deputy), Sarah Lunnon, Steven Naumann, Margaret Poulton and Chas Townley

Environment:

Rob Green (Chair), Sarah Lunnon, John Marjoram, Steven Naumann, Margaret Poulton (Deputy), Lucas Schoemaker and Haydn Sutton

Community:

Geoffrey Andrews, Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston, Rob Green, Camilla Hale (Deputy), Vanessa Price and Alan Sage (Chair)

Regeneration:

Geoffrey Andrews, John Bloxsom, Kevin Cranston, Steve Dechan (Deputy), Camilla Hale, Lucas Schoemaker and Chas Townley (Chair)

Personnel:

Kevin Cranston, Rob Green (Chair) and Lucas Schoemaker

Appeals: to be appointed should there be a need.

Finance and Policy:

Simon Arundel, Kevin Cranston, Steve Dechan, Rob Green, John Marjoram, Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage (Chair), Lucas Schoemaker (Deputy) and Chas Townley

The Clerk was requested to simplify the process for councillors to express their committee preferences in future.

10. Staff review

A report on the outcome of a staff review was noted.

11. Budget 2020-21

The Clerk answered questions about the budget including the use of reserves. The Clerk reported that that the Environment Committee would be asked to review the new cemetery project and reserve during 2020–21.

It was **resolved** to set a budget of £1,334,270 of which £169,159 would be funded from reserves, £429,231 from other income and the balance from the precept.

Clerk

12. Precept 2020-21

It was resolved to request a precept of £735,880 for 2020-21.

Clerk

The Town Clerk left the meeting.

13. Report on emergency expenditure on Council website

The council received the Clerk's report.

Cllr Marjoram asked to be notified of the latest numbers of visitors to the website.

Clerk

14. Climate Perks scheme

The Council discussed the initiative, but had reservations about the inequity of such a scheme and its unsuitability for a small organisation.

It was **resolved** to decline to adopt the Climate Perks scheme, but it was **agreed** to look at possible policies for incentives in the future.

Clerk

15. Local Electricity Bill

Aspects of the bill were debated and clarified. It was **resolved** to support the bill.

Clerk

16. Change in Designation of the Neighbourhood area for the Shaping the Heart of Stroud Neighbourhood Development Plan
It was **resolved** to request a change in the designation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area.

Clerk

17. Committee reports

Reports of the following meetings, having been previously been circulated were received:

Consultations:	4 th November and 2 nd December 2019
Personnel:	11 th November and 16 th December 2019
Finance, Community & Policy:	18 th November 2019
Green Spaces:	26 th November 2019

18. Exclusion of members of the public

In view of the confidential nature of the remaining business, it was **resolved** to exclude members of the public for the remainder of the meeting.

19. Potential office relocation

The Deputy Clerk updated the council on the latest information. Cllrs requested that the Clerk undertake further comparisons with buildings in the town.

Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Chair

Date