

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of COUNCIL
17th January 2022 at 7.30pm
St Laurence Church Hall, The Shambles, Stroud

Present

Cllrs Liz Child, Kevin Cranston (Chair), Tony Davey, Laurie Davies (from item 7), Mick Fealty, Sue Fenton, Mark Graham, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, Steven Naumann, Adrian Oldman, Stella Parkes, Lucas Schoemaker, Naomi Seffar and Megan Sheer

In attendance

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Marianne Sweet (STC Communications)

Absent

Cllrs Geoffrey Andrew and Kate Crews

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Rachel Smith (personal).

2. To receive declarations of interest or requests for dispensations

No interests were declared. There were no requests for dispensations.

3. Additional interest or requests for dispensations

No discussion required - agenda item included in error.

4. Minutes of the meeting of 8th November 2021

The minutes of the council meeting on 8th November 2021 were **approved** by the members present and will be signed by the Chair.

5. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor wished everyone a happy new year and expressed his concern about the lack of government action on enabling councils to meet remotely.

6. Questions from members of the public

No questions were received.

Cllr Davies joined the meeting.

7. Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Drew had submitted a written report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Shoemaker had no news to report.

Cllr Davies reported on the establishment of a new multi-agency "Transform" group to support residents in Slade ward.

8. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted.

The Clerk also reported that progress on a project to redesign the Subscription Rooms forecourt would be reported to the Regeneration Working Group at their meeting on 17th February 2022. In view of the tight deadline for making the project “shovel-ready” for potential inclusion in the Stroud District Council Levelling Up Fund bid, the Clerk asked whether members would be happy to attend an extraordinary Full Council meeting to review concept designs and consultation plans before the next planned meeting. There was general support for an additional meeting.

Action: Clerk to schedule Extraordinary meeting.

The Clerk also reported that she had been appointed as a Fellow of the Society of Local Council Clerks and was congratulated by members.

9. Payments from October, November and December

Payments from October, November and December as listed in [Appendix 1](#) were **approved**.

Action: Clerk to investigate why there were no payments for grave digging and redact additional names of private individuals from the list.

10. Communications Strategy

The Mayor introduced a report on discussions and recommendations from the Finance and Policy and Personnel Working Groups concerning a new Communications strategy and additional staffing for communications and community engagement.

The Finance and Policy Working Group had recommended that a provisional figure for a new Communications and Community Engagement post should be included in the draft 2022-23 budget. The Clerk/RFO recommended a provisional budget of £22,454 inclusive subject to further analysis by a project group proposed by the Personnel Working Group to lead on the Communications Strategy. The group's role would be to: refine the content of the draft strategy and Action Plan, and work through the finer details of a new role and how it would relate to the existing Communications Contract and the Stroud Town CAN (Community Action Network).

Discussion followed on how a new strategy could create value for the Council by ensuring the delivery of strong messages, overcoming misinformation and making a strong case for the importance of local councils in the face of the anticipated government devolution white paper and potential reconfiguration of local government structures.

It was felt that additional staff resources were needed to communicate with fragmented audiences and to address a lack of understanding about which tier of local government does what.

Questions were raised about the carbon footprint of online messages, the need to balance electronic and face-to-face communications, and focus on impact rather than volume, prioritising projects and changes that are in progress.

It was **agreed** to set up the recommended project group and Cllrs Green, Oldman, Parkes and Sheer were appointed.

Action: Clerk to arrange meeting for new project group

It was **agreed** to defer discussion about a budget for the new post to item 12.

11. Staffing requirements

The Mayor introduced a report on the need for a new administration post based on a job description circulated to members.

It was **agreed** to create the new post with recruitment to commence as soon as possible, and defer discussion about a budget for it to item 12.

12. Approval of budget for 2022-23

The Clerk introduced a report and draft budget for the 2022-23 financial year. The Clerk explained how the tax base is calculated.

The report explained the potential impact of the addition of the two new posts discussed under agenda items 10 and 11 and noted that this could be mitigated by repurposing the budget previously allocated to a pilot project officer post relating to the Stroud CAN which had been discontinued.

Cllr Green noted that the structure of the CAN was still under discussion, but there was an opportunity to use to some of pilot post budget to directly support CAN projects.

There was a general discussion about the need for restraint in increasing the precept and the potential for capping to be introduced by the government. This was weighed against the volume of additional services and assets that the Council had taken on, including the successful community development post, replacing work previously done by other agencies.

A question was raised about evaluation of how much the work of the Green Spaces team contributes to carbon reduction, but it was felt that this would be hard to quantify. A suggestion that the new Communications post could be appointed for fewer hours was rejected, because it was felt that the volume of work could easily be justified.

A proposal to repurpose most of the budget previously allocated to the pilot project officer post to the new Administration post, with the balance, £7,992 being added to the Carbon Reduction grants fund was **approved**.

A total expenditure budget of £995,682 for 2022-23, including the addition of the two new posts discussed under items 10 and 11 was **approved**.

A 2% increase in cemetery fees for 2022-23 was **approved**.

Action: Clerk to update schedule of cemetery fees and circulate to funeral directors

It was **agreed** to spend £104,453 from earmarked reserves and to increase the Opportunities Fund by £5,000.

13. Approval of the precept for 2022-23

A precept of £793,629 for 2022-23 was **approved**.

Action: Clerk to submit precept request to Stroud District Council

14. Opportunity to formalize a public path on Council land at The Long Ground

It was **agreed** to enter into a Section 25 Agreement with Gloucestershire County Council under the Highways Act 1980 for a path across the Long Ground marked in blue on the attached map ([Appendix 2](#)).

Action: Clerk to contact Gloucestershire County Council and arrange agreement for signature

15. Additional signatories for online bank payments

It was **agreed** that Cllr Oldman should be added to the Council’s bank mandate and authorised to approve online payments.

Action: Clerk to arrange bank paperwork

16. Working Group reports

The following reports, previously circulated, were received.

Personnel:	9 th September, 24 th September, 5 th January 2022
Consultations & Highways:	22 nd November 2021 and 4 th January 2022
Environment:	30 th November 2021
Community:	6 th December 2021
Regeneration:	8 th December 2021
Finance and Policy:	13 th December 2021

17. 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.

18. Report on office accommodation

A progress report from the Office Working Group was noted. It was **agreed** to progress works to make the upper floors of Thanet House habitable for office staff accommodation. The Working Group were asked to focus on the question of whether to sell Thanet House and to consider the potential for staff to work from split sites.

Action: Clerk progress works on upper floor and research property options for discussion by Working Group

The meeting ended at 9pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Appendix 1 Payments October to December 2021

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
01/10/2021	Royal British Legion Poppy Shop	5959	21.98	Remembrance wreath
01/10/2021	DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd	9849	246.00	Preparing VAT calc
01/10/2021	Lister Wilder	1432	97.87	Keys and fobs
01/10/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	3842	360.00	Locum fees August
01/10/2021	Somerset County Council	21518	63.60	Nox tubes august
01/10/2021	Stroud Alarms Fire and Security	45920	245.40	Replace bellboxes
01/10/2021	Stroud Office Supplies Ltd	87882	34.73	Office supplies
01/10/2021	Thrupp Tyre Company Ltd.	3538	65.00	New tyre Renault
01/10/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	BBP282	62.64	Site materials
01/10/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	BBP301	11.60	Site materials
01/10/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	BBP556	48.73	Site materials
01/10/2021	T.W.HAWKINS & SONS	1462	411.12	Contract mowing 7/7 - 31/8
01/10/2021	SDC	DD	291.49	Council tax 58a/b
04/10/2021	Association of Accounting Tech	8992	50.00	AAT membership
05/10/2021	PortalPLanQuest Ltd	52v1	490.00	Planning app fee
07/10/2021	Allstar Business Solutions Ltd	4026	190.57	Fuel charges Sept
12/10/2021	TOWN CLERK IMPREST ACCOUNT	Imprest	1,000.00	Tfr bus to imprest
15/10/2021	SDC	DD	1,068.00	Rates Cemetery/Libbys Drive
15/10/2021	Payroll	DD	19,729.07	Payroll
15/10/2021	LGPS	BACS	6,141.24	Oct Payroll-Pension
15/10/2021	HMRC	BACS	5,447.39	Oct Payroll-PAYE
18/10/2021	Canva Pty Ltd	5914	99.99	Subscription to Canva Pro
18/10/2021	J Parker Dutch Bulbs WS Ltd	4793	341.32	Plants
18/10/2021	2commune Ltd	3407	522.00	Website hosting/support/licenc
18/10/2021	All Done and Dusted	5676	115.20	Cleaning at Thanet House
18/10/2021	BAILEY PARTNERSHIP	6188	528.00	Project mgmt
18/10/2021	BPE Solicitors LLP	7716	3,420.00	Professional charges
18/10/2021	BrightHR England	282	362.88	Provision of services
18/10/2021	Childs and Sulzmann Ltd.	3293	3,024.00	Thanet House refurbishment
18/10/2021	DENIS BROWN & SON (Nailsworth)	12020	55.06	Site materials
18/10/2021	Down to Earth Stroud	0721A	225.60	Gardening assistance July
18/10/2021	Down to Earth Stroud	0821A	333.00	Gardening assistance Aug
18/10/2021	Down to Earth Stroud	0921A	186.00	Gardening assistance Sept
18/10/2021	EDF Energy	644	34.05	Electricity 58b Thanet House
18/10/2021	HHGL Limited	9787	45.40	Store purchases
18/10/2021	ICCM	13981	324.00	Online training
18/10/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	3344	519.63	IT Support
18/10/2021	Locking Hill Surgery	1165	50.00	Letter re REDACTED

18/10/2021	Nadja Gajadharsingh	121	1,220.00	Fundraising services Sept
18/10/2021	Nailsworth Garden Machinery	53108	60.00	Battery trimmer repairs
18/10/2021	SAFPRO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY	5616	59.94	Safety boots
18/10/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	3871	246.00	Job advert services
18/10/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	3888	648.00	Locum fees Sept
18/10/2021	Smiths (Gloucester) Ltd	1582	18.00	Recycling containers rental
18/10/2021	Stroud Electrical Services (UK	6318	59.82	Replaced boiler back box
18/10/2021	Stroud Parish Churches	507	105.00	Venue hire St Laurence hall
18/10/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	5315	1,529.36	London Road closure Sept
18/10/2021	Thirsty Work Ltd.	5196	40.74	Rental charges Thanet House
18/10/2021	Hughes&Salvidge Holdings Ltd T	6183	268.80	Skip exchange
18/10/2021	Water Plus Ltd.	6851	36.87	Water charges Libbys Drive
18/10/2021	Dr E N Johnson	TRANSFER	135.41	TOTTS reimbursement
19/10/2021	Home Bargains	5328	3.99	Disposable masks
19/10/2021	Renault Finance	5152OCT	30.00	Battery for Renault
22/10/2021	Wilko	1388	12.00	Hand gel
22/10/2021	Osborne Books Ltd	6331	30.70	Adjustment on SLINV21_136331
22/10/2021	BLT Direct Ltd	9448	56.08	Fluorescent 18 watt bulbs
22/10/2021	HMRC	BACS	213.43	HMRC Underpayment September
22/10/2021	SDC	DD	624.00	Rates Thanet House
22/10/2021	HMRC	TRANSFER	213.43	HMRC
22/10/2021	HMRC	TRANSFER	-213.43	HMRC
25/10/2021	Ecotricity	1784	33.11	Electricity charges Libbys Dri
25/10/2021	Ecotricity	6471	138.88	Electricity LLS Thanet House
25/10/2021	Lister Unified Communications	5739	56.52	Mobile call charges sept
26/10/2021	EE Ltd	1738	71.59	Mobile phone charges
29/10/2021	Konica Minolta Business Soluti	8149	89.14	Photocopier charges
01/11/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	5912	63.30	Payroll month 7
01/11/2021	SDC	DD	339.22	Council Tax 58a/b
05/11/2021	Autopa Ltd	3854	118.62	Galvanised hinged post
05/11/2021	David Austin Rose Ltd	8872	63.45	Plants
05/11/2021	JAMES & OWEN LTD	17836	45.33	Stationary office supplies
05/11/2021	Kingsdown Nurseries	74293	327.54	Plants
05/11/2021	Lister Unified Communications	544-LIS	10.80	Handset unlock
05/11/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	506	432.02	Road closure King Street
05/11/2021	Somerset County Council	21577	63.60	Nox tube analysis
05/11/2021	Wheatley Printers Ltd.	3291	516.00	About Town Newsletters x7000
05/11/2021	MHCG	BACS	440.00	Grant payment
05/11/2021	MHCG	BACS	70.00	Grant payment
05/11/2021	St Laurence Church	BACS	1,000.00	Christmas tree festival grant

05/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	179.10	Newsletter deliveries
05/11/2021	Stroud Goodwill	BACS	2,000.00	Lantern festival grant
08/11/2021	Allstar Business Solutions Ltd	1770	214.50	Fuel
08/11/2021	Stroud Subscription Rooms Trus	300	120	Tickets - Merlin Sheldrake
15/11/2021	SDC	DD	1,068.00	Rates Cemetery/Libbys
15/11/2021	Payroll	DD	17,967.88	Payroll
15/11/2021	Emorsgate Seeds	7723	99.53	Seeds
18/11/2021	Countrywide Grounds Maintenanc	532	1,134.00	Ground maintenance cemetery
18/11/2021	GAPTC	7091	50.00	Better Councillor training
18/11/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	3441	455.67	IT services
18/11/2021	JAMES & OWEN LTD	17920	92.74	Stationary supplies
18/11/2021	Lansdown Road Motors Ltd	43163	63.60	Service Renault
18/11/2021	Lister Wilder	2532	71.10	Fitment of loader Kubota
18/11/2021	Lister Wilder	2533	732.62	Clerical error overpaid £9
18/11/2021	The Nursery at Miserden	1001	239.96	Plants and compost
18/11/2021	The Nursery at Miserden	1002	149.98	Plants and compost
18/11/2021	The Nursery at Miserden	1003	138.98	Plants and compost
18/11/2021	Nadja Gajadharsingh	122	180.00	Fundraising services October
18/11/2021	O'Brien & Price	29	1,326.00	Inspection of stonework
18/11/2021	Paganhill Community Group CIC	19	250.00	Vouchers for survey
18/11/2021	SAFPRO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY	8825	136.51	Clothing
18/11/2021	GeoXphere Ltd	4	270.00	Annual subscription
18/11/2021	Lighthouse Charity Consulting	1	250.00	Fundraising consultancy
18/11/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	3910	246.00	Job advertising
18/11/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	936-1	90.00	Conference
18/11/2021	Smiths (Gloucester) Ltd	4862	18.60	Recycling October
18/11/2021	STL Gloucester Ltd	4.21.22	540.00	Cherry picker hire
18/11/2021	Streets Reimagined Ltd	C01D	480.00	Refining report
18/11/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	3645	1,770.87	Road closure London Road
18/11/2021	Thirsty Work Ltd.	4190	4.80	Rental charges Oct-Nov
18/11/2021	Veriphy Ltd	2289	4.20	Credit screen
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	176.22	Newsletter deliveries
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	133.56	Newsletter deliveries
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	110.70	Newsletter deliveries
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	84.60	Newsletter deliveries
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	82.44	Newsletter Deliveries
18/11/2021	REDACTED	BACS	88.20	Newsletter deliveries
18/11/2021	LGPS	BACS	6,141.24	LGPS Oct
18/11/2021	LGPS	BACS	-6,141.24	LGPS Oct entered in error
19/11/2021	Renault Finance	5152NOV	30.00	Battery charges - Renault

22/11/2021	SDC	DD	624.00	Rates Thanet House
23/11/2021	Lister Unified Communications	6806	102.59	Mobile phone charges - Oct
23/11/2021	Ecotricity	634	145.29	Electricity - LLS Thanet House
24/11/2021	Ecotricity	2973	120.08	Electricity - Libbys drive
24/11/2021	Ecotricity	3023	202.74	Electricity - Thanet House
26/11/2021	EE Ltd	3536	11.54	Mobile phone charges - Nov
29/11/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	7692	65.28	Payroll Month 8
29/11/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	7936	30.00	Payroll charges
29/11/2021	Konica Minolta Business Soluti	47692	45.50	Photocopier charges
29/11/2021	The Plastic Card Factory	3736	42.11	Staff ID cards
29/11/2021	Facebook Ireland Ltd	FCR2	20.00	Recruitment CDO
01/12/2021	Facebook Ireland Ltd	BDR2	20.00	CDO job advert
01/12/2021	Arien Designs	7101	3960.00	Oak posts for welcome signs
01/12/2021	ERMIN PLANT LTD	7090	63.90	Hand saw/gloves
01/12/2021	GAPTC	7116	25.00	Chairmanship skills
01/12/2021	GlosJobs	2345	56.40	Advertising com dev officer
01/12/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	8991	564.00	Intel core PC
01/12/2021	JobLadder Ltd	7893	210.00	Advertising com dev officer
01/12/2021	Nailsworth Garden Machinery	3604	216.90	Various GS equipment
01/12/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	3938	270.00	Locum fees KH
01/12/2021	Somerset County Council	234	63.60	Nox tube analysis Feb 2021
01/12/2021	STL Gloucester Ltd	21.22	157.50	Install hanging baskets
01/12/2021	Stroud Alarms Fire and Securit	6684	72.00	Alarm call out
01/12/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	V758	6.68	Plasson straight coupling
01/12/2021	Hughes&Salvidge Holdings Ltd T	8309	238.80	5 yard skip
01/12/2021	SDC	DD	374.63	Rates Thanet House flats
01/12/2021	A R Lomborg	BACS	80.00	Manure from Horns Road Farm
01/12/2021	Glos LGPS	BACS	5893.54	Pensions
01/12/2021	High Sheriff Glos	BACS	100.00	Donation
01/12/2021	HMRC	BACS	5484.89	PAYE/NIC Nov
01/12/2021	REDACTED	BACS	109.62	Newsletter deliveries
01/12/2021	REDACTED	BACS	100.44	Newsletter deliveries
03/12/2021	Facebook Ireland Ltd	FCR2	20.00	CDO job advert
03/12/2021	TOWN CLERK IMPREST ACCOUNT	Top up	1000.00	Top up Clerk's Account
06/12/2021	Ecotricity	3343	33.13	Electricity LLS Thanet Jul-Nov
07/12/2021	Allstar Business Solutions Ltd	3830	158.30	Fuel
08/12/2021	BannerBuzz UK	7872	68.83	Banner for Stroud Seatery
09/12/2021	Waitrose & Partners	1654	480.00	Staff Christmas gift cards
10/12/2021	Oxfam Shop	800	7.98	Mayor's Christmas cards

14/12/2021	Ecotricity	7144	146.18	Gas Thanet Nov
15/12/2021	SDC	DD	1068.00	Rates cemetery and depot
15/12/2021	PWLB	DD	9881.45	PWLB
15/12/2021	Payroll	DD	16756.48	Payroll Dec
17/12/2021	Astralsound	2352	156.00	Hire PA system and operator
17/12/2021	BAILEY PARTNERSHIP	6584	495.00	Project management pre contrac
17/12/2021	BPE Solicitors LLP	8945	429.00	Prof charges re Subs stonework
17/12/2021	Breakthrough Communications	290	2007.00	Communications strategy/social
17/12/2021	Chubb Fire & Security Ltd.	5126	163.38	Fire safety service
17/12/2021	Countrywide Grounds Maintenanc	6530	1134.00	Ground maintenance cemetery
17/12/2021	Down to Earth Stroud	1021A	252.00	Gardening assistance Oct
17/12/2021	ERMIN PLANT LTD	9170	142.26	Tools
17/12/2021	ERMIN PLANT LTD	9171	17.71	Tools
17/12/2021	HHGL Limited	9948	122.25	GS site materials
17/12/2021	ITEC Support Ltd	3541	588.47	IT services
17/12/2021	MK Illumination UK Ltd	25955	375.36	Xmas lights
17/12/2021	Nadja Gajadharsingh	124	440.00	Fundraising services Nov
17/12/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	4029	144.00	Locum fees Nov
17/12/2021	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	6828-1	464.00	Membership fee
17/12/2021	Smiths (Gloucester) Ltd	8135	18.00	Bin/mixed recycling
17/12/2021	Somerset County Council	1636	63.60	Nox tubes analysis
17/12/2021	Sunbelt Rentals Ltd	2558	3541.72	London Road closure Nov
17/12/2021	Thirsty Work Ltd.	3895	4.80	Rental charges
17/12/2021	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd.	W408	10.39	Black bitumen macadam
17/12/2021	Hughes&Salvidge Holdings Ltd T	9499	268.80	Skip exchange
17/12/2021	Glos LGPS	BACS	5500.99	Pensions Dec
17/12/2021	HMRC	BACS	5028.52	PAYE/NIC Dec
17/12/2021	HMRC	BACS	4.00	PAYE/NIC Oct
17/12/2021	Sladebank Woods CIC	BACS	880.00	Grant payment
20/12/2021	DVLA	BACS	275.00	Vehicle tax DS11 LGW
20/12/2021	Renault Finance	5152DEC	30.00	Battery for Renault
20/12/2021	DVLA	BACS	275.00	Vehicle tax DS11 LGW
20/12/2021	DVLA	BACS	-275.00	DVLA Correction
22/12/2021	SDC	DD	624.00	Rates Thanet House
23/12/2021	Water Plus Ltd.	3769	45.88	Water charges Thanet House
23/12/2021	Ecotricity	8948	71.22	Electricity LLS Thanet Nov-Dec
23/12/2021	Lister Unified Communications	7871	97.27	Mobile phone charges
23/12/2021	Ecotricity	5292	127.41	Electricity Thanet Nov

23/12/2021	Ecotricity	4936	367.43	Electricity Libbys Drive Nov
24/12/2021	SGW Payroll Ltd.	9819	63.30	Payroll month 9
24/12/2021	Ecotricity	1706	194.13	Electricity LLS Thanet Nov-Dec
29/12/2021	Digdat	4628	30.00	Water and sewage maps for Subs
29/12/2021	Water Plus Ltd.	362	16.59	Water charges cemetery
29/12/2021	EE Ltd	6639	35.80	Phone charges
31/12/2021	Ecotricity	7660	61.98	Gas Thanet

Appendix 2 Footpath at the Long Ground

