

# STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration Committee

13<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Present:** Stroud Town Councillors: Kevin Cranston, Steve Dechan, Lucas Schoemaker, Chas Townley (Chair); Gloucestershire County Councillor: Eva Ward; Stroud District Councillor: Simon Pickering; Stroud Chamber: Tony Davey and Andrew Watton; Stroud Civic Society and Stroud Preservation Trust: Hugh Barton; and Stroud Tourism Forum: Hannah McDonnell

**Absent:** None

**In attendance:** Stroud Town Council: Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Kim Cowan (Project Officer); Gloucestershire County Council: Dan Tiffney (Local Highways Manager); Stroud District Council: Sinead Chambers (Civil Enforcement Supervisor), Brendan Cleere (Strategic Director of Place), Brian McGough (Building Programmes Manager) and Mike Towson (Community Services Manager).

### ACTION

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Stroud Town Councillors Camilla Hale (personal), Geoffrey Andrews (personal) and John Bloxsom (work).

#### 2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

#### 4. Terms of Reference for the Committee

The Terms of Reference were noted. It was confirmed that only Stroud Town Council members of the committee have voting rights and that the Committee would operate under the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

#### 5. Co-option of business and community representatives

It was noted that Terms of Reference allow for the co-option of representatives from business and community organisations as non-voting members of the Committee. It was **resolved** to co-opt the representatives of the Chamber, Tourism Forum, Civic Society and Stroud Preservation Trust who were in attendance. It was further **agreed** to invite a member from the Local Enterprise Partnership and the new Growth Hub based at SGS College, to attend to represent the interests of business and education.

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## **6. Questions from the public**

There were no questions.

## **7. Budget report to December 2019**

The report was noted.

The agenda was re-ordered as follows.

## **14. Preliminary design proposals for the open space at Wallbridge**

Officers from Stroud Town Council and Stroud District Council described the history of the Wallbridge project and changes to funding.

It was **agreed** to progress more detailed planning of planting, walls and surfaces and consultation with Travis Perkins to facilitate public consultation on the design. It was noted that the project programme will need to accommodate events which may use the site e.g. Stroud Fringe. Officers were requested to explore initial costs and a phased approach to delivery.

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## **10. To receive a report from the tourism group**

A report was tabled with apologies from the Town Clerk for the omission of the document from the agenda pack.

## **11. To consider proposals for a tourism website**

Hannah McDonnell gave an overview of the Tourism Forum's feasibility study and rationale for developing a district-wide tourism website which was funded by Dransfield and Stroud Town Council.

The Committee felt that support from other strategic partners would be necessary. The Tourism Forum were thanked for the work that had been completed and the high levels of engagement that had been achieved with local businesses in a short space of time.

It was noted that the Tourism Forum plan to meet with the Local Enterprise Partnership and Stroud District Council to discuss strategic priorities for tourism and funding opportunities.

## **8. Concordat Parking Working Group recommendations concerning off-street parking**

Stroud District Council Officers were asked to comment on the recommendations agreed by the Concordat Parking Working Group on 17th July 2019. It was reported that none of the recommendations had been implemented and did not appear to have been considered in a review of car parking charges due to be debated by Stroud District Council on 20th February.

Stroud District Council officers declined to comment on the recommendations and requested a formal letter from the Committee asking Stroud District Council to officially consider them. It was, however, confirmed that a request to consider the working group's

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recommendations would be taken into account in their budget setting process.

Cllr Pickering left the meeting.

### **9. Gloucestershire County Council on-street parking review**

Initial data collection had been undertaken in Stroud and Tewkesbury by the County Council's contractor. At preliminary meetings to discuss the review in Stroud, the Town Council had requested the inclusion of additional streets where on-street parking is already a problem or could become an issue if changes were made to existing parking arrangements e.g. resident parking schemes. The Town Council had also recommended that an holistic approach be taken, considering both on- and off-street parking arrangements and the way vehicles interact with the town centre.

A Gloucestershire County Council public consultation and information sharing event planned for March had been postponed.

Concern was expressed that Gloucestershire County Council's aims and objectives might not match local concerns and priorities.

The Town Clerk was requested to re-draft the Terms of Reference for the Concordat Car Parking Working Group, and to invite Gloucestershire County Council officers to participate, to enable transparent aims and objectives to be established as starting point for the parking review and to improve communication and collaboration on the project.

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### **12. Neighbourhood Development Plan projects**

The Committee received a report on progress on Neighbourhood Development Plan projects.

The Committee discussed the need to: create "bid-ready" projects; to understand why previous bids for funding have failed and how they can be improved; and to work with strategic partners who may be better placed to lead on infrastructure projects.

The Town Clerk was requested to arrange a meeting with the MP for Stroud to seek intelligence on the likely priorities of the new government and potential funding opportunities; and to request feedback on previous applications to GFirst LEP and the Future High Streets Fund.

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It was **agreed** to review the project priorities at the next committee meeting.

Councillor Schoemaker left the meeting. Cllr Shoemaker's departure meant that the meeting was no longer quorate, so the following items were considered for information only.

### **13. Report on a meeting with Network Rail about Stroud Station**

The Stroud Town Council Project Officer reported on a meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020 with Network Rail. Assistant Commercial Scheme Sponsor for Network Rail at Stroud Station Emily Luszcz attended with her manager to explain how Stroud Town Council could engage with Network Rail to advance the projects identified in the NDP and the Stroud Station Masterplan.

Network Rail; are not obliged to invest in stations to improve them and are primarily concerned with infrastructure. Future meetings with Network Rail will incur a cost so representatives from STC and SDC agreed that further preparatory work on the project is required. There are two options for engagement; directly with Network Rail through an Asset Protection Agreement, whereby the lead organisation would employ contractors to deliver the work; or through the Train Operating Company, who would sign an agreement with Network Rail and deliver the work. Network Rail agreed to arrange a 'free' meeting with GWR and all partners when STC and partners are ready to proceed.

The Committee discussed the need to enlist the support of high profile partners such as the MP, CEO of the District Council and others and to meet with Gloucestershire County Council officers with experience of station improvements to guide preparations for a future meeting with Network Rail and the Train Operating Company.

It was noted that the need for station improvements could be included in the Town Council's response to the review of the Local Transport Plan

The Town Clerk was asked to explore options for funding to pay for a quantity surveyor to do costings for the project to support future funding bids.

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### **15. Review of the Shaping the Heart of Stroud Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The Committee received a timetable for the review.

It was reported that an application had been submitted to Stroud District Council to adjust the boundary of the Plan area to include retail areas to the west and east of the current area. The application would be subject to a 6-week consultation closing on 18th March 2020.

### **16. Minutes**

In view of the lack of quorum this item was deferred to the next meeting, which would be held on Thursday 2nd April 2020 at 10am.

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The meeting closed at 12.40pm.

Chair .....

Date .....