



Minutes of the meeting of the  
**Community Committee**  
2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

**Present**

Councillors Geoffrey Andrews, Sue Fenton (Chair), Adrian Oldman and Louisa Stinton

**Absent**

None

**In attendance**

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Laura Beattie (Community Development Officer (CDO)) and Hugh O'Boyle (Community Development Support Officer (CDSO))

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Davies and Graham (both personal).

**2. Declarations of interest or requests for dispensations**

There were no other declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

**3. Questions from the public**

There were no questions.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**5. To receive the budget monitoring report**

The budget monitoring report to end of October 2023 was noted.

**6. Participatory Budgeting Youth Engagement Project**

The CDSO gave a presentation on a proposal to organise a Youth Participatory Budgeting project. He explained the history and benefits of participatory budgeting, and presented a proposal for a pilot working with young people aged 13 or 14.

The Committee were supportive of the proposal and felt that it should be run through Archway school. It was noted that the project had good synergy with work being supported by the PCC relating to anti-social behaviour, and that there could be potential for external grant funding.

The CDSO and Town Clerk provided some examples of Participatory Budgeting projects from Frome and Dursley.

It was noted that it would be important to manage participants' expectations and ideally tie the project in to the school curriculum. In order to secure a diverse group

of participants the Committee recommended working with local community groups, for example Young Carers.

The Committee **approved** a Participatory Budgeting Project, with a budget of £5,000 from the Youth Budget for 2024-25.

### **7. Review of Strategic Action Plan for the Community Committee**

The Committee noted progress on their projects from the Council's Strategic Action Plan.

### **8. Draft budget for the Community Committee for 2024-25**

The Committee reviewed their draft budget for 2024-25 and **agreed** to recommend it to Council, with the addition of an extra £15,854 to increase the working hours for the Community Development Officers from 30 to 37 hours per week from 1st April 2024, subject to agreement of the officers.

### **9. Verbal update from the Community Development Officer (verbal)**

The CDO provided a detailed report on Community Development work since the last meeting.

It was noted that the CD team had taken a step back from working with Paganhill Community Group, who had been advised to review their governance and operational arrangements following a review by GRCC. It was noted that their presence was not welcomed by the whole board of directors, who need space to complete a significant review of their working arrangements, including important decisions about ongoing use of the Octagon. Support was still being provided in partnership with NOSH (Network of Stroud Hubs) and contingency plans were being drawn up to maintain essential services if necessary. The CD team were also still active in the Paganhill community, for example patrolling with PCSOs.

The Uplands Hub's new café was reported to be very successful. The CDSO was supporting the group with their policies and procedures.

The Middle of the Hill Community Group were reported to be doing well, and currently busy fundraising. The CD team had been providing practical support and advocating for the group to secure more space from Stroud District Council.

The Trinity Rooms Community Hub were reported to be doing very well and providing outreach to other hubs. They led on the successful provision of community meals on Christmas day at 3 venues, which had been supported by a grant of £500 from the CDSO budget.

Chapel Street café attendance was reported to be variable, but Stroud District Council officers are attending regularly and social prescribers sometimes visit. A flu and health check clinic was planned for February. Some consultation events were planned to help inform planning for future cafés, covering the days and hours, and potentially widening the geographical focus. Fifteen residents had visited the Trinity Rooms Community Hub for a meal which had been very well received. The Film Festival plan to screen the film Dream Horse at the café in March. Work on cultural placemaking was continuing, for example creating a mural, storytelling about the lives of local people, and music.

The CD team were continuing to support NOSH with work on their vision and values, document facilitation and governance structures. The Communications and Engagement officer had supported them with communications about Christmas provision.

The Coat Drop and Toy Drive in the lead up to Christmas had been very successful.

The CD team have been supporting NOSH to engage with Stroud District Council and Creative Sustainability on a district-wide hubs project. The CDSO was acting as the area representative for this work and the CDO on the District forum. The needs of the hubs had been identified and expert advisors would be made available.

Winter Warm Spaces had been provided again using the same structures as last year and a detailed timetable had been advertised. Grant applications from providers had been received.

The CD team had been doing some valuable networking with community development staff from other councils, large and small.

A programme of detached youth work had been completed in Park Gardens in partnership with Prospects. A report had been produced with some ideas for future projects in the park, including more shelter and events.

**Action:** Clerk to circulate Park Gardens report

#### **10. Service Level Agreement for Play Gloucestershire**

It was noted that Play Gloucestershire had successfully provided activities for young people at two sites in Stroud for many years, but under an annual contract rather than a formal agreement. It was felt that a Service Level Agreement would clarify their arrangement.

It was **agreed** to recommend to Council approval of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Play Gloucestershire to provide after school activities in Stroud from 1st April 2024 to be reviewed in three years.

#### **11. Approval of Service Level Agreements for the 2024-27 period**

The Committee reviewed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) as follows and **agreed** to recommend to Council renewals as follows:

Citizens Advice – it was noted that the SLA for Citizens Advice had already been reviewed and would continue until 2025.

Lilian Faithful – it was noted the Lilian Faithful had ended their services in Uplands, so their agreement had been cancelled.

Down To Earth – gardening support scheme up to £1,750 for one year from 1/4/2024.

Homestart – £3,000 for three years from 1/4/2024

Lansdown Hall and Gallery – services provided to be reviewed and reported back to the next meeting – £5,000 for three years from 1/4/2024

Marah Trust – £5,000 for three years from 1/4/2024

Allsorts – £3,000 for three years from 1/4/2024

Subscription Rooms – services to be provided to be reviewed and reported back to the next meeting. Provisionally agreed £15,000 for one year from 1/4/2024 including £5,000 for project management services for any building works.

Paganhill Community Group – not due for renewal until 31/03/2025, but the Committee were keen to receive a report for the current year and discuss service provision for the coming year at the next meeting. It was noted that if the agreement is not continued the budget could be retained for use in the Paganhill community.

## **12. Play reports from Play Gloucestershire Play Rangers**

Reports from Play Gloucestershire were noted.

## **13. Reports from grants awarded**

None received.

## **14. Remaining funds available in the Grants Funds for 2023-2024**

It was noted that the following funds were available:

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Arts and Culture       | £3,750.00 |
| Small Grants           | £2,500.00 |
| Community Support Fund | £1,517.85 |

## **15. Grant applications**

### Arts and Culture

Miserden Morris – **refused** – the Committee felt that hall hire should be part of the group's general running costs and was not therefore appropriate for grant funding.

### Small Grants

None received

### Community Support Fund

Great Western Air Ambulance – **deferred** – the Committee decided to defer a decision until the final meeting of the financial year, and would potentially offer a grant if there are sufficient funds remaining in the budget. The Committee were also keen to know how many times the ambulance has attended incidents in Stroud in recent years, and why the costs for Stroud were stated to be higher than other locations.

**Action:** Clerk to raise questions with applicant.

## **16. Stroud District Community Safety Partnership**

The Minutes of Community Safety Partnership meeting 19th September 2023 were noted.

## **17. Exclusion of the press and public**

It was **resolved** in view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting. (No press or public were present.)

**18. Report regarding the Top of Town Community Hub**

The Committee received a report about the future of community use of the former Children’s Centre on Bisley Old Road and the Cadet Hut on Mason Road.

It was **agreed** to advocate for provision of a decent, rentable community space at the top of town and to organise a meeting with Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council to discuss further.

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

Chair .....

Date .....