

7th February 2024



To Members of the Regeneration Working Group

You are invited to a virtual meeting of the Working Group to be held on **Thursday, 15th February 2024** at **10am** to conduct the following business and make recommendations to the Town Clerk.

Helen Bojaniwska
Town Clerk

The meeting will be held via the [Zoom meeting platform](#).

Meeting ID: 819 8623 1485
Passcode: COMMUNITY

For more information about attending Council meeting via Zoom please refer to the [guidance on our website](#).

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest
3. To consider requests for dispensations
4. To receive questions from the public
5. To note the minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration Working Group on 30th November 2023, previously circulated (minutes will be formally approved by the Committee when meetings resume)
6. To receive an update on actions from previous meetings
7. To receive a budget report to end of January 2024
8. To receive a report on a possible new bus shelter in Russell Street
9. To receive the Project Officer report
10. To consider an update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan review
11. To receive a report from the Stroud District Chamber of Trade
12. To receive an update on Stroud District Council regeneration projects
13. To consider updated designs for tourism signs
14. To consider a report on funding for A419 Stroud-Thrupp feasibility study
15. To identify potential projects for funding from Stroud District Council's Vitality Fund

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, marital status and disability); Crime and Disorder (Section 17); Health and Safety; and Human Rights.



**Minutes of the meeting of the
REGENERATION WORKING GROUP
30th November 2023, at 10.00am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)**

Present

Town Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Kevin Cranston (Chair), Liz Child, Tony Davey, Adrian Oldman, Stella Parkes (Deputy Chair); Cllr Robin Layfield (Stroud District Council), Mike Towson (Stroud District Council), Brendan Cleere (Stroud District Council); Cllr David Drew (Gloucestershire County Council); Tim Mars (Stroud Civic Society)

In attendance

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Alison Rood (Project Officer)

Absent

Town Cllrs Mick Fealty and Camilla Hale

1. Apologies

None received.

2. Declarations of interest

None declared.

3. To consider requests for dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. Questions from members of the public

There were no questions.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 12th October 2023 were **approved** by the members present and will be signed as a correct record by the Chair at the next opportunity.

6. Budget report to end October 2023

The report was noted.

7. Project Officer's report

Members expressed disappointment that Stroud had received no funding allocation in Round 3 of the Levelling Up Fund and asked how projects within the original bid were to be taken forward. The Clerk advised that a smaller scheme for Lansdown Hall improvements had been funded by the Town Council using the match funding included in the bid. Independent fundraising would be necessary for the Subscription Rooms interior improvements, and there was no funding available to progress the Subscription Room forecourt project. It was understood that Stroud District Council were progressing plans around the station area, Cheapside and Bath Place. Dransfield Properties Ltd were also progressing their project independently at Five

Valleys. At a meeting in Westminster Cllr Davey had received feedback from civil servants indicating that the bid had failed due to a lack of employment and investment opportunities. Members acknowledged there were no suitable 'shovel ready' projects available at the time of bid submission and this should inform future suitable bids.

8. Stroud District Council update on items outstanding

Mike Towson, Community Services Manager at Stroud District Council (SDC) updated on the following items:

- Bench refurbishment. Some painting to mountings had been undertaken, but repairs to slats were still to be completed.

Action: Mike Towson to follow up.

The Clerk highlighted future painting should be done in green, as required by the Public Realm Strategy, not the black currently being used.

- Doors at Brunel Mall car park. All the door guards had been serviced and set to open. However, any loud noise e.g. fire alarm would cause them to close automatically. Parking attendants who were based in the building would take ownership and check regularly. Members requested attendants be informed the default should be 'open'.

Action: Mike Towson to brief parking attendants.

- Cleanliness of Bedford Street toilets. SDC regular inspections rate cleanliness as good, so Mike Towson wanted to understand the Town Council's concerns. If members could identify failings, this may unlock access to a SDC maintenance budget. Discussions concluded these concerns were mostly centred around the general disrepair of the toilets. It was suggested that the 'Out of Order' signage be improved and that a British Toilet Association assessment be undertaken to inform any repairs.

Action: Mike Towson to improve signage and contact British Toilet Association to arrange an assessment.

There was further discussion about the lack of 24-hour public toilet provision and the negative impact this has on the town. A Community Toilet Scheme, like the one in Gloucester was proposed. Cllr Davey said the idea had been raised at Chamber of Trade meetings, but more discussion was needed.

Secure cycle parking. The Clerk informed the meeting she had recently met with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to identify suitable locations. GCC had applied to SDC's CIL fund and were awaiting a response. The Clerk also highlighted potential funding from SDC's Walking and Cycling fund.

The lack of cycle stands located at the Museum in the Park was also raised. Cllr Layfield informed members that a programme of free stands for businesses and schools was included in SDC's Walking and Cycling fund. The Museum in the Park could apply.

Action: Brendan Cleere will investigate lack of cycle parking at the museum.

Members also discussed a scheme currently running in Newport to provide cycle parking in vacant shops. The Chamber had investigated this option and had previously forwarded details onto the Community Services Team at SDC.

9. Neighbourhood Development Plan review

The Project Officer presented work done to review policies in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. In addition, new proposed policies were included. The Project Officer had proposed two in-person meetings in December to finalise policies prior to further public consultation in January 2024. Members requested that all Councillors be invited to the meetings, not just those in the Regeneration Working Group.

Action: Project Officer to invite all Councillors to December meetings.

10. Stroud District Chamber of Trade update

Tony Davey, Chair of the Chamber gave a verbal update. Although the overall climate remained difficult some new businesses had opened. The Chamber was working with estate agents and landlords to develop an agreement enabling empty shops to be used to display signage for cultural events or for businesses as pop-up shops.

Traffic to the Visit Stroud website was very good and the recent 'Catch a bus' promotion had proved successful, with people still engaging with it. For some people it had highlighted unknown/unused bus routes. The hospitality sector was struggling with Christmas bookings down.

11. Progress on Action Plan

The Clerk introduced the report and highlighted some of the projects. The signage project had been superseded by Gloucestershire County Council's (GCC) wayfinding project as part of the CIL walking and cycling bid. The protocol for town centre demonstrations had started in the Regeneration Working Group before going to Full Council where it had been 'parked'. The Clerk asked members to inform her if this was a priority to revisit.

Cllr Oldman asked for clarification around the lift or bridge project at the railway station. The Deputy Clerk had recently had an on-site meeting with Great Western Railway and the Clerk would check outcomes with her. Cllr Drew asked about electric vehicle charging points at the station and the need to identify suitable sites for the town. The Clerk confirmed Gloucestershire County Council's on-street rollout team had invited the Town Council to submit suitable sites for consideration.

Actions: All members to contact the Clerk regarding their views on whether the protocol on town centre demonstrations should be considered a priority. The Clerk to follow up with the Deputy Clerk with regard to the on-site meeting regarding lifts at the railway station.

12. Installation of tourism signs

At the previous meeting, members had requested mock-ups of the brown tourism signs to be placed on the four main entrance routes into Stroud. Members considered the mock ups and discussed various wording and symbols for use. There was some disagreement about the signs, wording and symbols.

Members requested further mock ups and recommended that the recent tourism work undertaken by the Town Council with neighbouring towns be used to influence symbol choice. They also recommended that the Tourism Officer at Stroud District Council be consulted.

Actions: Project Assistant to create new mock ups. Project Assistant to refer to tourism work and consult Tourism Officer at Stroud District Council to inform choice of wording and symbols.

The meeting closed at 11.30am

Chair

Date

UPDATE ON ACTIONS OUTSTANDING OR IN PROGRESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

DATE OF MEETING	ACTION	OFFICER	STATUS	NOTES
27/04/2023	Liaise with Mike Towson (SDC) to identify areas for 'deep clean' and potential for further graffiti removal.	Clerk	Complete	
23/05/2023	Clerk to set up meeting with Simon Maher & James Jeffrey re London Road closures	Clerk	Not started	
20/07/2023	Inform group when Market Tavern planning application has been submitted	Project Officer	Not started	No news yet.
12/10/2023	Mike Towson to follow up with colleagues re both questions from public 2. repair bench in Threadneedle Street	Mike Towson (SDC)	Complete	Bench repaired
12/10/2023	Deputy Clerk to discuss setting up SLA with SDTF with the Town Clerk	Deputy Clerk	Not started	
12/10/2023	Project Officer to research options for brown signs other than 'Historic Market Town'	Project Officer	Complete	Discussed 30/11/2023
12/10/2023	Mike Towson to speak to colleagues re progress to improve untidiness of town first raised at 20/7 Regen	Mike Towson (SDC)	Not started	
12/10/2023	Members to send their feedback on NDP policy analysis to Project Officer by 5pm on 23.10.23	All members	In progress	None received
12/10/2023	Deputy Clerk to speak with Comms Officer to produce communication to explain/promote Netomnia rollout.	Deputy Clerk	Cancelled	Not progressed
12/10/2023	Leonie Lockwood to report on plans for toilet improvements	Leonie Lockwood (SDC)	Not started	
12/10/2023	The Clerk to report back on any subsequent meetings with SDC regarding economic recovery	Clerk	In progress	First meeting planned Jan 2024
30/11/2023	Bench refurbishment. Some painting to mountings had been undertaken, but repairs to slats were still to be completed.	Mike Towson (SDC)	In progress	
30/11/2023	Doors at Brunel Mall car park. All the door guards had been serviced and set to open. However, any loud noise e.g. fire alarm would cause them to close automatically. Parking attendants who were based in the building would take ownership and check regularly. Members requested attendants be informed the default should be 'open' Mike Towson to brief parking attendants	Mike Towson (SDC)	In progress	

DATE OF MEETING	ACTION	OFFICER	STATUS	NOTES
30/11/2023	<p>Cleanliness of Bedford Street toilets. SDC regular inspections rate cleanliness as good, so Mike Towson wanted to understand the Town Council's concerns. If members could identify failings, this may unlock access to a SDC maintenance budget. Discussions concluded these concerns were mostly centred around the general disrepair of the toilets. It was suggested that the 'Out of Order' signage be improved and that a British Toilet Association assessment be undertaken to inform any repairs.</p> <p>Action: Mike Towson to improve signage and contact British Toilet Association to arrange an assessment.</p>	Mike Towson (SDC)	In progress	
30/11/2023	Brendan Cleere will investigate lack of cycle parking at the museum	Brendan Cleere (SDC)	In progress	
30/11/2023	<p>The Project Officer had proposed two in-person meetings in December to finalise NDP policies prior to further public consultation in January 2024.</p> <p>Action: Project Officer to invite all Councillors to December meetings</p>	Project Officer	In progress	See report – Item 10
30/11/2023	All members to contact the Clerk regarding their views on whether the protocol on town centre demonstrations should be considered a priority.	Committee members	In progress	None received
30/11/2023	The Clerk to follow up with the Deputy Clerk with regard to the on-site meeting regarding lifts at the railway station.	Clerk	Complete	Leonie Lockwood (SDC) to report
30/11/2023	Project Assistant to create new mock ups. Project Assistant to refer to tourism work and consult Tourism Officer at Stroud District Council to inform choice of wording and symbols.	Project Assistant	In progress	New designs prepared for consideration 15//2024

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 10)

Note: Regeneration Committee Report 31 Jan 2024

		<u>2022/23</u>		<u>2023/24</u>				<u>2024/25</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
Regeneration										
108	REGENERATION									
4028	MILLON HOURS PROJECT	0	0	0	188	0	0	0	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	649	682	700	0	0	0	1,000	0	0
4043	FUEL & OIL	0	114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4115	CHRISTMAS LIGHTS	7,210	7,640	6,000	0	0	5,600	6,000	0	0
4128	TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS/CLEANLINE	4,500	4,000	3,000	282	0	0	5,000	0	0
4216	NDP Working group projects	12,984	1,815	5,000	0	0	0	30,000	0	0
4217	NDP Review	10,000	6,184	0	512	0	0	0	0	0
4219	Sub Rooms forecourt project	50,000	5,025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4222	STREET SPACES WOR	12,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4223	GOLDEN VALLEY PROJECT	16	17	20	17	0	0	18	0	0
4225	Pollution Monitoring	1,161	809	750	533	0	365	1,000	0	0
4226	Tourism - Market Towns	0	24,950	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4228	BUS SHELTERS	0	0	15,000	0	0	0	15,000	0	0
4231	Real time passenger informatio	0	0	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	0	0
4232	Walking and Cycling projects	0	0	0	4,000	0	0	10,000	0	0
4998	TF FROM OTHER FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0	-64,000	0	0
4999	TF TO OTHER FUNDS	0	1,740	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	98,520	52,977	40,470	5,533	0	5,965	14,018	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(98,520)	(52,977)	(40,470)	(5,533)	0		(14,018)		

Continued on next page

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 10)

Note: Regeneration Committee Report 31 Jan 2024

	<u>2022/23</u>		<u>2023/24</u>				<u>2024/25</u>		
	Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
Regeneration - Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expenditure	98,520	52,977	40,470	5,533	0	5,965	14,018	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(98,520)</u>	<u>(52,977)</u>	<u>(40,470)</u>	<u>(5,533)</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>(14,018)</u>		
Total Budget Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expenditure	98,520	52,977	40,470	5,533	0	5,965	14,018	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(98,520)</u>	<u>(52,977)</u>	<u>(40,470)</u>	<u>(5,533)</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>(14,018)</u>		

New bus shelter, Russell Street

AUTHOR

Project Officer/Town Clerk

CONSULTEES

Gloucestershire County Councillor John Bloxsom

FOR MEETING

Regeneration Working Group, 15/02/24


RECOMMENDATION

Request the Clerk to work with Gloucestershire County Council to investigate the potential installation of a bus shelter at this site and report back to the next meeting.

REPORT

In January 2024 Gloucestershire County Councillor John Bloxsom contacted the Integrated Transport Unit at Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and the Town Council to request the installation of a new bus shelter at the bus stop outside the vacant Peacocks shop in Russell Street (see map below). Cllr Bloxsom noted several bus routes (see screenshot below) used the stop. These services do not stop at Merrywalks meaning passengers would not benefit from the new shelters proposed there. He requested consideration be given to including a bus shelter at this location as part of the Merrywalks plans.

Further investigations will be needed to establish whether there is suitable space for a shelter at this location and what size/shape might be suitable. Previous discussions about new bus shelters have included consideration of green roofed versions.

Route	Direction
 Stagecoach West 67	Cashes Green The Beagles
Stagecoach West 69	Stroud
Cotswold Green 40	Wotton-under-Edge
Cotswold Green 8A	Stroud
Stagecoach West 67	Cashes Green The Beagles

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a specific power to provide and maintain bus shelters under the Local Government (Misc Provisions) Act 1952, s.4

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

There is £15,000 available in the Regeneration budget for bus shelters. This should be sufficient for a new shelter at this location.

Some staff time to liaise with GCC ITU.

CRIME AND DISORDER

The Council has a duty to consider the impact of all its functions and decisions on crime and disorder in the local area, under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

The Council is legally bound by the public sector equality duty to prevent and eliminate discrimination, establish and promote equality and equal opportunities, and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics. There will be a need to consider how any changes to the public realm in the area impact on people with disabilities and seek opportunities to make enhancements to improve accessibility. Providing a shelter with seating will also support this aim.

CO2 AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

In 2018 the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030 and to seeking ways to facilitate and encourage the community in reducing direct and indirect CO2 emissions and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

Installing a new bus shelter encourage greater use of public transport and contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions.

AR

31/1/24

Project Officer's report

AUTHOR

Project Officer

CONSULTEES

Town Clerk

FOR MEETING

Regeneration Working Group, 15th February 2024

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

Air pollution monitoring

The Project Officer has investigated the purchase of two Particulate Matter (PM2.5) monitors. Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) is essentially 'dust' that is small enough to get into the lungs and bloodstream and can travel large distances. Initial discussions with Stroud District Council indicated monitors would cost in the region of £25-£60. Research so far has indicated far higher costs of between £600-£800.00. Clarification on type of monitors has been sought from the District Council. Any monitors purchased will use funding previously budgeted for an air pollution monitoring report.

AR

7th February 2024

Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Report

AUTHOR

Project Officer

CONSULTEES

Town Clerk

FOR MEETING

Regeneration Working Group, 15/2/24

RECOMMENDATION

Working Group members are request to assist the Project Officer to move forward with the review by providing feedback on

- the draft policies
- thoughts on the addition of reference to the climate emergency within the Vision
- the creation of an additional Theme and associated Objectives

REPORT

At the last meeting on 30th November 2023 the Project Officer proposed two in-person meetings in December to further inform policy development prior to public consultation in March 2024. Members requested that all Councillors be invited to the meetings, not just those in the Regeneration Working Group. All Councillors were invited to meetings but take up was low and therefore minimal feedback was received.

Appendix 1 includes the proposed new Vision, Theme, Objectives and Policies. Supporting text will be further updated once policy content has been agreed. Members are asked to provide feedback to these changes.

Working with the Communications and Engagement Officer a consultation plan was devised, and an application made to Locality for funding to assist with costs associated with the consultation. However, the Project Officer is leaving the Town Council on 15th February. This, combined with numerous other events, the forthcoming local elections and continued uncertainty around Stroud District Council's Local Plan, had led to a decision by the Clerk to temporarily postpone work on the NDP. In the short term this will mean consultation planned for March will be postponed until later in the year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has the General Power of Competence which is “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws. This power enables the council both promote and fund initiatives relating to town centre improvements.

Adherence to the Localism Act of 2011 which details Neighbourhood Planning procedures.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

The application to Locality for funding during the 2023/24 grant period was successful, however due to the postponement of consultation and departure of the project it will not be feasible to spend the funding before the end of March 2023 deadline. This application can form the basis of another application during the 2024/25 grant period, should additional funds become available.

Considerable staff time (Project Officer, Communications and Engagement Officer and Project Assistant) is being dedicated to review processes. This is likely to continue for up to a year, depending on the procedures required.

CRIME AND DISORDER

The Council has a duty to consider the impact of all its functions and decisions on crime and disorder in the local area, under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

The Council is legally bound by the public sector equality duty to prevent and eliminate discrimination, establish and promote equality and equal opportunities, and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics. There will be a need to consider how any changes to the public realm in the area impact on people with disabilities and seek opportunities to make enhancements to improve accessibility.

CO2 AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

In 2018 the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030 and to seeking ways to facilitate and encourage the community in reducing direct and indirect CO2 emissions and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

New or amended policies introduced because of this process may contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions.

AR

7/2/2024

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT NEW VISION, THEMES AND OBJECTIVES AND NEW POLICIES

VISION

Current Vision	Proposed Vision
<p>The vision for Stroud town centre is that it should be 'a welcoming, healthy, thriving place'. It should be attractive and make the most of its heritage and its diverse cultural character; it should be accessible to all and have a vibrant feel; and it should be an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable place which reflects its bohemian and 'green' personality</p>	<p>Stroud town centre is a welcoming, healthy and thriving place which enables its inhabitants to be resilient to the impacts of climate change and provides a good quality of life.</p> <p>It should be attractive and make the most of its heritage and its diverse cultural character; it should be accessible to all and have a vibrant feel; and it should be an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable place which reflects its bohemian and 'green' personality.</p>
<p>Reason for change. Climate change adaptation and mitigation does not appear to be 'front and centre' in the current plan. Since publication of the original plan in 2016 STC has declared a climate emergency. In its Strategy 2020-2015 (published 2019) Objective 1 commits to become 'a carbon neutral town which recognises the limits of the global environment'. Given the plan will be in place beyond 2030 it is incumbent of the town council to encourage residents to consider how the NDP can address the climate emergency. Consultation responses showed that people wanted the plan to address climate change more explicitly. Embedding climate change in the Vision enables the objectives and policies to be shaped to achieve the Vision. By doing this climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience becomes much more central in the plan.</p>	

THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

2.4.1 To achieve the vision the Plan focuses on **six** cross-cutting themes and 15 objectives as set out in the table below:

Theme	Objectives (Some objectives relate to more than one theme)
<p>1. Addressing the climate emergency through climate change mitigation and resilience.</p>	<p>Stroud Town Council will become carbon neutral by 2030</p> <p>Reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and noise from traffic.</p> <p>Encourage walking and cycling. Support the remodeling of town centre routes to create an improved environment for walking and cycling.</p> <p>Provide more high-quality carbon-neutral dwellings to increase the number and diversity of people who live in the town centre.</p> <p>Ensure all new developments demonstrate consideration of natural Sustainable Urban Drainage features to help alleviate surface water run-off and flooding.</p>
<p>2. Sustaining the economy of the town centre</p>	<p>Diversify the economy of the town centre so that it is an active place throughout the week, including evenings and at weekends.</p> <p>Welcome and support new and existing businesses and provide a good range of high-quality accommodation in which businesses, including social and cultural enterprises, can establish and grow.</p> <p>Optimise opportunities to develop or redevelop land within the town centre to meet the needs of the town and make the most efficient use of land and buildings.</p> <p>Make the town centre a welcoming place where people are encouraged to spend time.</p> <p>Improve the appearance of the town centre.</p>
<p>3. Improving access to the town centre</p>	<p>Encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>Ensure that people are able to move easily into and around the town centre by all modes of transport using safe, convenient, well-designed and signposted routes.</p> <p>Improve the links between the town centre, the canal and Stratford Park.</p> <p>Mark the main entry points to the town centre (gateways) and provide a sense of 'arrival'.</p>

<p>4. Strengthening the social and cultural fabric of the town centre</p>	<p>Welcome and support new and existing businesses and provide a good range of high-quality accommodation in which businesses, including social and cultural enterprises, can establish and grow.</p> <p>Provide more high-quality carbon-neutral dwellings to increase the number and diversity of people who live in the town centre.</p> <p>Make the town centre a welcoming place where people are encouraged to spend time.</p> <p>Optimise opportunities to develop or redevelop land within the town centre to meet the needs of the town and make the most efficient use of land and buildings.</p>
<p>5. Enhancing the environment of the town centre</p>	<p>Improve the appearance of the town centre.</p> <p>Protect and enhance important spaces including green spaces. Enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>Respect the setting of the town centre by protecting important views.</p> <p>Enhance the historic fabric and identity of the town centre, including the relationship to the restored canal.</p> <p>Reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and noise from traffic.</p>
<p>6. Creating a healthier town centre</p>	<p>Encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>Ensure that people are able to move easily into and around the town centre by all modes of transport using safe, convenient, well-designed and signposted routes.</p> <p>Protect and enhance important spaces including green spaces.</p> <p>Reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and noise from traffic.</p> <p>Provide more high quality carbon-neutral dwellings to increase the number and range of people who live in the town centre.</p>

PROPOSED NEW POLICIES

DRAFT POLICY Electronic Advertisements

Introduction

Freestanding electronic advertisements are a recent idea for Stroud. They offer businesses the opportunity to advertise in a relatively novel, visual way. The plan area contains three conservation areas and numerous listed buildings which contribute to an attractive and vibrant centre, full of local distinctiveness. The town

centre has been subject to applications for free standing electronic advertising boards – all of which were ultimately withdrawn. Issues with electronic advertisements relate to the potential impact of proposed signs on the amenity of the street scene, road safety and environmental impacts e.g. energy consumption, effect on wildlife though light pollution.

NEW POLICY

This policy sets out criteria against which any proposal will be assessed. An electronic advertisement will be considered to have an unacceptable impact on amenity where it would:

- Create or reinforce an incongruous feature in, or result in a negative visual impact on, its immediate neighbourhood;
- Result in harmful clutter;
- Detract from the character or setting of any feature of scenic, historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest;
- Be unduly prominent in medium or long-distance views;
- Cause a noise or other nuisance; or
- Result in a negative impact upon residents' living conditions by reason of its siting or illumination.

Advertisement proposals of all types will be considered harmful to public and road safety where they would:

- Obscure views into an area, reducing natural surveillance;
- Obscure safety cameras;
- Unsafely reduce natural or street lighting; or
- Create visual distraction which would be harmful to the attention of road users or the ready interpretation of road signs, traffic signals and visibility of junctions.

Explanation

The policy aims to guard against proposals which would be harmful to local character and amenity. The illumination and movement associated with such advertisements can increase their capacity to harmfully impact the amenities of an area or to affect public safety. Digital and illuminated advertisements should have regard to the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Professional Lighting Guide 05 'The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements'.

Such advertisement may be able to ensure they will not have harmful impacts associated with their luminance through:

- Restricted operation hours.
- Maximum luminance levels.
- Provision of ambient lighting sensors.
- Provision of a default black screen.

- Demonstrate how they have considered guidance contained within the Stroud Neighbourhood Plan design Guidelines (June 2020)
- Provide information on energy supply and usage

In conservation areas, proposals will also be expected to demonstrate how they would conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area, as required under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

DRAFT POLICY Design Guidelines

Introduction

In 2020 a set of Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines were produced based on the character and special qualities of the parish, with a focus on the town centre. The overall objective is to provide guidance on design matters that are specific to the town centre to retain and protect the historic character of the town and the wider scenic beauty of the area. The guidelines will inform and influence any future planning applications. Stroud Town Councils' 'Shop Fronts in Stroud Town Centre - a Design Guide' should also be utilised where appropriate. Both documents can be found in Appendix ? of this plan.

NEW POLICY

All new development within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary shall have regard to the Stroud Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines and, where appropriate, the Shop Fronts in Town Centre Design Guide. New development should demonstrate how the guidelines have influenced and been incorporated within the proposed design.

Development that fails to take account of the design guidance will need to provide a clear statement as to why this is the case.

OR

Development that fails to take account of the design guidance should be refused.

Explanation

The town centre has 95 Grade II listed buildings and three Grade II* listed buildings. In addition, it has three Conservation Areas. This policy aims to ensure new development is informed by and enhances the historic character of the town centre. The guidelines provide clear advice to developers regarding what will or will not be acceptable in terms of design. This policy should be applied alongside the Area development policies and the Zonal development policies.

The widening of permitted development rights has the potential to erode the character of the town, especially outside of the Conservation Areas and as such is a cause for concern. It is hoped that these design guidelines can also inform those developers undertaking permitted development works.

DRAFT POLICY Healthy Lifestyles

Introduction

This plan seeks to encourage users of and visitors to the town centre to make healthier choices both for themselves and the wider environment. This could be by encouraging more active travel such as walking and cycling. This will require improvements to infrastructure such as more pedestrian crossing areas or secure cycle parking. These travel issues are addressed in more detail in Policy AP3 Access and Movement.

This plan can help people make healthier lifestyle choices by managing the impacts of some retail premises which may be detrimental to physical or mental health e.g. calorie dense hot food takeaways, bookmakers and vape shops. Alongside this the plan needs to ensure the vitality and viability of town centre and to meet the needs of its diverse population.

Early consultation showed a mix in attitudes regarding the number of hot food takeaways, vape shops and bookmakers in the town centre. Youth vaping was of particular concern to many. Concerns centred on the detrimental health impacts on young people and the risk of future addiction. Also of concern was the impact on the natural environment of the use of disposal vapes.

National government is currently consulting on creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping through restricting the marketing and sale of vapes, especially single-use vapes, to young people. (Will need to keep up to date with Govt plans on youth vaping/disposal vapes. Depending on timing this may make some of this obsolete)

Bookmakers can have a detrimental impact on those who often have or go onto develop gambling addictions. The increase in popularity of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals within betting shops is thought to have contributed to rising rates of problematic gambling. Managing new outlets will help promote healthy communities and maintain the character, vitality and viability of our high streets.

NEW POLICY

Over the plan period, opportunities will be sought to improve the health and well-being of town centre users by managing the impacts of

- Hot food takeaways
- Bookmakers
- Vape shops/outlets

Hot food takeaways

Hot food takeaways (use Class A5 - CHECK USE CLASS UPDATES) will be permitted where

- The development of new hot food takeaway businesses does not exceed X% (tbc) of the total number of business premises within the town centre shopping area as shown on Map ? (CHECK MAP REF)
- There will be no more than two hot food takeaway businesses located directly adjacent to each other
- Development proposals for hot food takeaways must include the provision of a litter bin on land within the premises, of which the property will be responsible for its maintenance, emptying on a regular basis and the area adjacent to the premise to be kept clear, where appropriate. Where a litter bin cannot be provided within the curtilage of the premises, a commuted sum will be sought towards the provision of a litter bin within a nearby location.

Bookmakers premises

- The development of new bookmakers businesses does not exceed X% (tbc) of the total number of business premises within the town centre shopping area as shown on Map ? (CHECK MAP REF)
- There will be no more than two bookmakers businesses located directly adjacent to each other (OR could include distance criteria e.g. within 300 metres of each other)

Vape Shops/Outlets

- The development of new vape shops or vape outlets does not exceed X% (e.g.1%) of the total number of business premises within the town centre shopping area as shown on Map ?(CHECK MAP REF)
- There will be no more than two vape shops or outlets located directly adjacent to each other, or within 400 metres (tbc) of any recreational venues specifically for children/young people.

Explanation

This policy needs to support businesses within the town centre which provide the services that people want. It is not the aim of this policy to ban such businesses. However, by restricting their numbers its intention is to help individuals make decisions which will lead to a healthier lifestyle.

Hot food takeaways provide products and services that are valued by residents and visitors alike. Many, but not all, sell low cost, energy-dense meals with little nutritional value that can contribute towards obesity and its ensuing health issues.

Wider costs to society of poor health e.g. NHS impact, impacts on climate (through choices of food eaten), environmental damage from disposal vapes, both due to harmful chemical they contain and littering. Disposal vapes are particularly attractive to younger people and can establish a lifetime of smoking with associated health impacts.

Bookmakers can have a detrimental impact on those who often have or go onto develop gambling addictions. The increase in popularity of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals within betting shops is thought to have contributed to rising rates of problematic gambling.

The aim of this policy is to managing the overall number and location of these outlets to help promote healthy lifestyles whilst maintaining the character, vitality and viability of the town centre

REVISED MOCK UPS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR TOURISM SIGNS

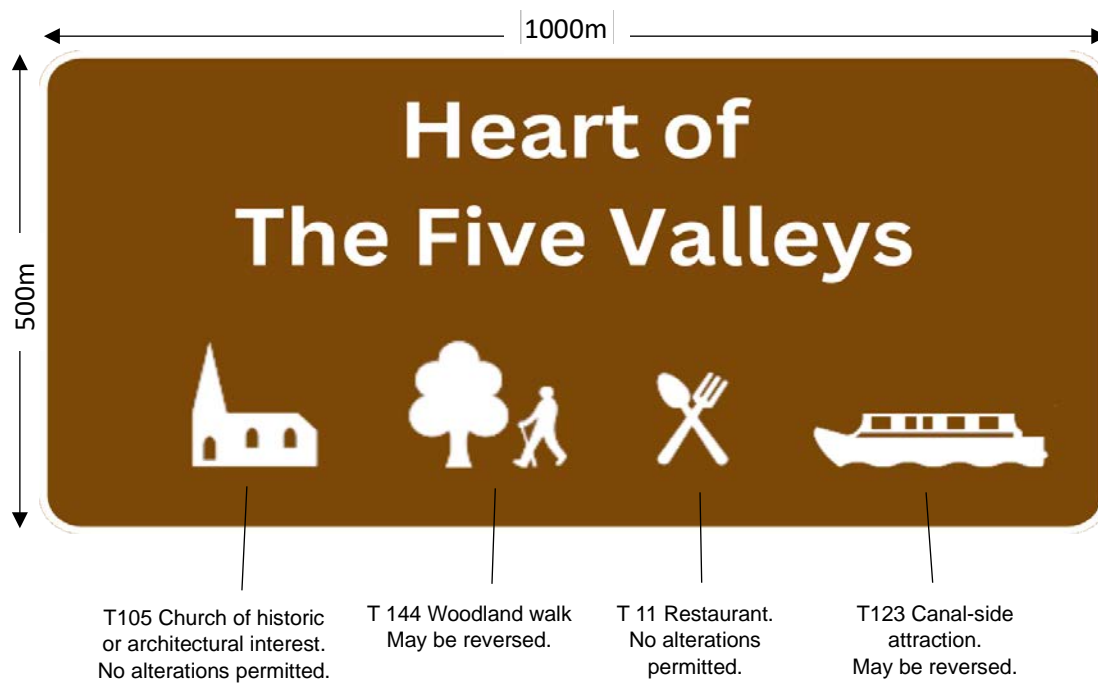
Tourist sign specifications

Size:	1000mm L x 500mm H with 1.5r rounded corners
Position:	Landscape (horizontal) orientation, directly beneath existing white 'Stroud' sign
Mounting:	U-brackets with flush bolts
Material:	Composite metal with HIP reflective vinyl overlay
Design:	Descriptive phrase centred above four symbols
Typeface:	'Transport' (see below)
Colours:	Brown background with white lettering and symbols. Proportionate white edging, i.e., stroke-width
Symbols:	T11, T105, T123, T144
Options:	T123 and T144 may be horizontally flipped. Descriptive phrase may be all capitals or capitals and lowercase.
Limitations:	Lettering may only take up to 80% of sign area if symbols are used. Lowercase letters must be >50mm, <400mm
Production lead time:	Seven working days (Morelock)



Note: This typeface was not available for mock-up examples; a similar font is used in the images that follow.

DESIGN 1A



DESIGN 1B



DESIGN 2A

**Historic
Market Town**



DESIGN 2B

**HEART OF
THE FIVE VALLEYS**



Golden Valley route

AUTHOR

Town Clerk

CONSULTEES

Gloucestershire County Council Principal Transport Planning Officer: Strategic Infrastructure

Representatives of Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council
County and District Councillors for the area

Stroud District Council Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer

FOR MEETING

Regeneration Working Group, 15/02/24

RECOMMENDATION

Request the Clerk to negotiate funding from Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council and Stroud District Council's Walking and Cycling Fund, then recommend to Council approval of match funding up to £10,000 to support the development of a feasibility study on the first section of the Golden Valley route on the A419 to the east of Stroud.

REPORT

Following recent discussions with the consultees outlined above there is a desire to progress a feasibility study for the first section of the route identified in the Vision Study commissioned in 2019. The area under consideration runs from the Waitrose roundabout to the junction of the A419 with Thrupp Lane. This section is felt to represent the best opportunity to develop the project because there is more space to accommodate walking and infrastructure than the sections further to the east. It would also serve a population judged to have the greatest propensity to cycle.

GCC have obtained a quotation from their in-house contractors for a feasibility study, based on the Inspiration Study as follows:

Scope: A419 Stroud to Chalford Feasibility Study Proposal

Limit of Liability: aggregate limit of liability for this task is £100,000

Week 1: Inception meeting with the client

Weeks 1 – 2: Background data/ Constraints

Weeks 3 – 4: Option development and Appraisal

Weeks 5: Costing

Week 6: Reporting/ Client Meetings

Tasks
Width tool
Check background data e.g. traffic counts, ecological preservation
Basic constraints Map
Active travel England Route Check Tool

Option appraisal - multi criteria assessment
Cost estimate
Review
Project management
Client meetings

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council may exercise the General Power of Competence for expenditure and actions relating to this report.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

The quotation from GCC's contractors Atkins is for £14,000. If a contract of this value were being procured directly it would be necessary to seek at least three quotations, but in this instance the contractors have already been through GCC's procurement processes.

It has been proposed that Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council could contribute £1,500 subject to approval. An application to Stroud District Council's Walking and Cycling Fund would also be made.

The Stroud Town Council 2024-25 budget includes a sum of £10,000 for walking and cycling projects, which could be accessed to progress this work.

Some staff time to liaise with GCC and their contractors.

CRIME AND DISORDER

The Council has a duty to consider the impact of all its functions and decisions on crime and disorder in the local area, under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

The Council is legally bound by the public sector equality duty to prevent and eliminate discrimination, establish and promote equality and equal opportunities, and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics. The study will need to consider how any changes to the public realm in the area impact on people with disabilities and seek opportunities to make enhancements to improve accessibility.

CO2 AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

In 2018 the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030 and to seeking ways to facilitate and encourage the community in reducing direct and indirect CO2 emissions and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

Providing infrastructure to support walking and cycling rather than driving will contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions.

HB

7/2/24

GOLDEN VALLEY ROUTE – INSPIRATION STUDY

AUTHOR

Town Clerk

CONSULTEES

See attached reports – (it is suggested that you read them in the order shown):

- Golden Valley Route leaflet
- Golden Valley Route Inspiration Study
- Golden Valley Route FAQs
- Golden Valley Route Technical Report
- Golden Valley Route Technical Report Appendices

FOR MEETING

Consultations and Highways 12/10/2020

RECOMMENDATION

Note the report and authorise the Clerk to continue to support the partnership group with development and promotion of the project, starting with the “next steps” outlined below.

REPORT

In 2019 [Witteveen+Bos UK](#) (engineering consultancy who specialise in infrastructure relating to walking, cycling and air pollution) and [Clifton Emery design](#) (urban design specialists) were commissioned to produce a study to investigate whether the A419 between Stroud and Chalford could be improved, to make it welcoming to everyone, not just cars.

The project was developed and funded as a partnership with Brimscombe & Thrupp Parish Council, Chalford Parish Council and Stroud Valley Cycling Campaign, and with collaboration from Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

After extensive research and community consultation an “Inspiration Study” was produced which sets out a vision for how the Frome valley route could look while allowing pedestrians, cyclists **and** traffic to safely use the A419 alongside each other, in a greener and MORE pleasant environment.

It should be stressed that the project is still at a very early stage and a great deal more consultation and technical assessment will be required before the whole route could be delivered.

The **next steps** recommended in the Technical Report are:

“In order to manage this process pro-actively, a pre-engagement approach to sharing the Inspiration Study is recommended which continues leading through community engagement as follows:

- Pre-engagement with school children and young people to address some of the sampling bias of the online questionnaire.
- Pre-engagement with business stakeholders and partnerships to gain further insight into the business implications of the proposal and level of support.

- Further Pre-engagement with key delivery partners including Gloucestershire County Council Highways, Stroud District Council, Brimscombe Port Development Board and potential developers.
- Pre-engagement with Network Rail due to the close proximity to the A419.
- Pre-engagement with bus service providers.
- Pre-engagement with the police regarding road safety”

The project group have however, agreed to bring forward the publication of the report, partly because the Covid19 situation has sparked a great deal of interest in improving routes for walking and cycling in the area, but mainly because Gloucestershire County Council have included part of the route in their bid to central government for cycle lane funding.

If the GCC bid is successful segregated cycle lanes could potentially be installed on the first section of the route out from Stroud to Bowbridge and also on the Cainscross Road, so the group felt it was important to get publish now in order to stimulate interest and encourage community engagement with the scheme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has the General Power of Competence which is “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications to the Council, other than incidental costs like printing. The Council’s project officer is already supporting and promoting the project.

An early estimate for the cost of delivering the whole route is “between £10-25m, but this does not include the removal of any pollutants from verges or land acquisition costs. These figures have been estimated using Department for Transport guideline figures for the creation of similar infrastructure”.

These costs are obviously beyond the budgets of the partners involved, but we can play a significant role in helping with community engagement and advocating for change.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Accessibility will be a key element of the technical design process.

CO2 IMPLICATIONS

Transport is the largest single contributor to Stroud District’s carbon footprint (54%), and most of that comes from passenger cars. Very few other projects could help quite so much as this one. If implemented the whole scheme has the potential to save more than 3m kg of carbon per annum. (There is more information on this in the FAQs.)

Adding in the Cainscross Road scheme, should GCC’s funding bid be successful, will undoubtedly increase the carbon saving, but no figures are available for this yet.

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1ST FEBRUARY 2024

Report Title	Establishment of Stroud District Market Towns Vitality Fund			
Purpose of Report	To propose the establishment of a Market Towns Vitality Fund for Stroud District			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the sum of £200k from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve for the Market Towns Vitality Fund. • Approve the approach to operation of the Market Towns Vitality Fund, as set out in section 2 of this report 			
Consultation and Feedback	The principle of establishing the Market Towns Vitality Fund (MTVF) was approved at Strategy and Resources Committee on 23 rd November 2023. The concept has also been discussed at two meetings of the Market Towns Forum (comprising the relevant town councils and the district Chamber of Commerce), most recently on 9 January 2024. These discussions have informed the approach set out in this report.			
Report Author(s)	Email: brendan.cleere@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	There is an option to not support the recommendation to introduce the MTVF. This is not recommended as to do so would hinder the development of local initiatives to benefit the vitality of the High Street in our Market towns.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices				
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	yes	No	No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** With the ongoing transition of high streets nationally from retail to experience destinations, there is a need to support our district's Market towns. Combined with the growing concern as businesses leave the high streets due to factors such as inflation, high energy costs, wider cost of living pressures, and the continued growth of online retail provision, it is important to continue developing our work with our town and parish council partners and other key stakeholders, to ensure that we are doing all we can to promote thriving market towns for our residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.2** Our Council Plan (2021-2026) outlines our commitment to support high street businesses in the area, to deliver local incentives to increase footfall, and to grow a sustainable visitor economy, including the night-time economy. Similarly, the Economic Development Strategy prioritises boosting our market towns and rural vitality and our Local Plan has a well-established focus on supporting market towns and their hinterlands. To deliver against these priorities, and to respond to the challenge of empty shops given the decline of retail in many places, we are proposing to introduce a Market Town Vitality Fund (MTVF), aimed at supporting the vitality of our market towns during the ongoing challenging economic climate.
- 1.3** This proposal was discussed at the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on 23 November 2023, where it was agreed to carry out further engagement with our Market towns and other partners, to help shape the design and operation of the MTVF. Final proposals for MTVF would then be brought to this meeting (1 February 2024).
- 1.4** Engagement with the Market Towns Forum has now taken place (in November 2023 and January 2024) and the proposals in section 2 have been shaped by that engagement. Membership of the Market Towns Forum comprises representatives from each of the Town Councils and the district Chamber of Commerce.

2. PURPOSE AND APPROACH TO THE MARKET TOWNS VITALITY FUND (MTVF)

2.1 Purpose

- 2.1.1** The purpose of the MTVF will be to support locally led initiatives to promote the vitality of the High Street and address key priorities identified by different market towns across the district. Details of the initiatives will not be prescribed at this stage but could include (for example) tackling the impact of empty shops, promotions and campaigns to promote greater footfall/spend, pop-up shops, schemes to beautify the High Street and other projects.

2.2 Funding Levels and Eligibility

- 2.2.1** A new allocation of £200k will be included in the 2024/25 budget, to be drawn from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve. This will be committed to specific projects across the district's market towns over the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26 and will also cover SDC costs associated with running the Market Towns Vitality Fund.
- 2.2.2** The market towns eligible for this funding will follow the settlement hierarchy established in both the adopted and emerging Local Plans for the district. Accordingly, this will include the five 'Principal Market Towns' of Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Stroud and Wotton-

under-Edge, plus the four 'District Centres' of Berkeley, Cam, Minchinhampton and Painswick.

2.3 Community Engagement and Partnership

- 2.3.1 Boosting engagement and partnership and strengthening relationships with market towns, who know their own places best, will be at the heart of the whole approach to the MTVF.
- 2.3.2 Engagement will focus initially on the identification of main priorities and potential projects for each market town. This process will be led by the Council's Economic Development Team and will include different approaches to gather input from a variety of stakeholders and interested parties, working closely throughout with the relevant Town Council and engaging the relevant ward members. The engagement process will also seek to utilise and not duplicate any consultation exercises that have been carried out by others, such as the District Chamber of Commerce.
- 2.3.3 As the engagement process moves forward, there will also be an emphasis on sharing ideas and emerging priorities across all market towns, as there may well be some initiatives that will be more appropriately delivered across more than one market town. There is an established Market Towns Forum that would provide a useful mechanism for this sharing of knowledge and intelligence, and the Economic Development Team will also work with Market towns to widen participation further.
- 2.3.4 The process of engagement will be informed by existing strategies and plans, as they relate to Market towns. These strategies and plans already have a strong evidence base and grounding in consultation and will include (for example) the Economic Development Strategy, the adopted and emerging Local Plans for the District and the emerging Cultural Strategy.
- 2.3.5 The engagement process will also be informed by research into successful approaches and ideas to boost vitality that have been successfully implemented elsewhere, as well as opportunities for funding and other support that is available from the Council and other partners.

2.4 Allocation of MTVF

- 2.4.1 The amount of funding to be allocated to individual Market towns will not be prescribed at this stage. This will be determined by the challenges and opportunities identified through the engagement process, and the priorities and actions to address these.
- 2.4.2 As mentioned above, there may be some projects that are more appropriately delivered on a wider geographic basis, potentially even district-wide, to benefit more than one Market town.
- 2.4.3 In determining the allocation of funding, there will be a focus on achieving the greatest possible impact from the money available. Whilst match-funding will not be a requirement, the engagement process will also seek to identify potential other sources of funding that could assist in making a project happen.
- 2.4.4 Funding will typically be allocated to the relevant Town Councils who will be leading on project delivery. For some projects, such as those being delivered across more than one market town, it may be appropriate to allocate funding to a different constituted body, such as the Stroud District Chamber of Commerce.

2.4.5 Decisions on funding for specific MTVF initiatives will be delegated to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee. The relevant ward members will be kept informed of any funding awarded and how this is used.

2.5 Indicative Timetable

2.5.1 Preparation for the engagement process described in section 2.3 will begin shortly after the scheme is approved. Priorities and potential actions for MTVF support will be identified during the spring and summer period, with decisions on funding support to be made in Autumn 2024.

2.5.2 Although considered unlikely, there may need to be further engagement to identify projects if the full allocation of funding is not taken up.

2.5.3 There will be a 'light-touch' and proportionate process of project monitoring and reporting established, to ensure that actions and desired outcomes from funded projects are being achieved.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Financial Implications

The value of the fund will be set at £150k with additional administration costs of £50k. The total of £200k can be allocated from the Business Rates Pilot Reserve. Strategy and Resources Committee has previously agreed the principles of distributing that reserve, which include supporting local businesses.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources

Tel: 01453 754115 Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

3.2 Legal Implications

Whenever the council gives funding to persons other than individuals, it needs to consider the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which is in force to ensure that financial assistance given using public money causes minimal distortion to UK competition and the UK's international obligations. The Act applies to 'enterprises' which are defined as "persons engaged in economic activity that entails offering goods or services on a market, to the extent that the person is engaged in such an activity". Passing the funding onto the Town Councils in itself is unlikely to be considered subsidies because the Town Council will not be acting as an enterprise offering goods or services.

The Town Councils will need to be mindful of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 when deciding how to use the funding so that it complies with Act if it intends to give direct or indirect financial assistance to one or more enterprises.

Appropriate terms and conditions on the payment, use and monitoring of the funding given to the Town Councils can be prepared by One Legal.

legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

3.3 Equality Implications

There are no equality implications arising from a decision to support the establishment of the MTVF. There may be equality implications arising from specific projects supported by the MTVF, but these will be identified at the appropriate time, along with any actions required.

3.4 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from a decision to support the establishment of the MTVF. There may be environmental implications arising from specific projects supported by the MTVF, but these will be identified at the appropriate time, along with any actions required.