

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Monday, 29th October 2018, at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Kate Montgomery (Deputy Clerk), Gloucestershire County Councillor Eva Ward, Stroud District Cllr Simon Pickering, one member of the public and one member of the press.

1. Apologies

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

2. Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

It was noted that a dispensation previously granted to Cllrs Marjoram and Townley in respect of the Subscription Rooms remains in force.

Cllr Townley declared a personal interest in Item 15 as a member of the Stroud Valleys Cycle Campaign.

3. Gifts and hospitality

None.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meetings of 3rd September and 1st October were **approved** by the members present and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

5. Stroud Neighbourhood Policing

Inspector Sarah Blake gave a report on current policing issues focusing on recent concerns about the town centre and Daisy Bank relating to street drinking, begging and drugs and explained how officers are responding and co-ordinating with relevant support agencies, for example P3 and Change, Grow, Live, where necessary. The recent collaboration with the Council on a campaign to encourage people to report incidents of anti-social behaviour was welcomed.

Inspector Blake recommended use of the online system for reporting non-urgent incidents and offered support for setting up Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Action

Inspector Blake reported that the move of the CCTV to police headquarters at Waterwells had been positive as the cameras are monitored for more hours and recordings can be quickly downloaded. Members were invited to visit to see how the system works. It was noted that the Council no longer receive CCTV monitoring reports and the Inspector agreed to look into this.

Inspector Blake answered questions about Community Impact Statements and explained how they are used with regard to Community Behaviour Orders. It was confirmed that burglary is an ongoing priority for the Stroud neighbourhood team.

6. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor asked members to be mindful of the current heavy workload of the council staff and to avoid asking for support with non-urgent matters.

The Mayor reported on recent launches of a campaign to encourage reporting of anti-social behaviour and the Refill project. He had attended the Stroud in Bloom AGM, the 'We Are One Awards' ceremony in Gloucester which celebrates people standing up to hate.

The Mayor had also met with the Small Business Commissioner to discuss issues relating to late payments and attended the opening of the Nelson Trust's new training centre.

7. Questions from members of the public

There were no questions.

8. District and County Councillors' reports

County Cllr Ward reported that she had attended a ceremony for people leaving care and noted that there are 50 care leavers living in Stroud. Cllr Ward also reported on the latest Ofsted report which showed a gradual improvement in children's services; reduced opening hours at Horsley recycling centre; Horns Road resurfacing was due to start on 10th December and community watch is being set up at the top of town. A community meeting about speeding on Bisley Old Road would take place on 8th November. It was noted that vehicle activated signs had been erected on Stratford Road and London Road and two on Bisley Old Road.

District Cllr Pickering reported that a consultation on the review of the Local Plan would run from 16th November for 9 weeks focusing on growth concentrations; the Green Infrastructure Pledge had been adopted and the LEP are working on a potential "Statement of Agreement" on strategic planning across the county.

District Cllr Townley reported that he has produced a booklet about the war graves in the cemetery and will be leading a walk on 11th November. Cllr Townley reported that proposals to charge for parking at

Stratford Park had been withdrawn and noted the opportunity to look at parking in Stroud town linked to work on the future of town centres.

Cllr Townley also reported on issues relating to homelessness and the difficulties of acquiring properties to accommodate rough sleepers. The Clerk was requested to share with members contact details for P3's StreetLink service.

9. Clerk's report

The report was noted. It was further reported that the vehicle activated signed had now been installed.

Clerk

The Clerk was requested to check the wording on the public works loan consultation for clarity.

Clerk

10. Code of conduct complaints

A report on three complaints was noted. The Clerk was asked to circulate to members correspondence from the Monitoring Officer relating to a complaint about Councillor Marjoram.

Clerk

It was noted that Stroud District Council are reviewing their procedures regarding complaints – the Clerk was asked to contact District Cllr Studdert-Kennedy who is leading on this work.

Clerk

11. Anti-social behaviour

A progress report on actions agreed at the meeting on 3rd September was noted. Cllr Townley responded to questions about the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and it was noted that further information about the arrangements for this winter will be distributed shortly.

A question was raised about the sharps bin at Bedford Street toilets installed by Stroud District Council. The Clerk was asked to raise a concern with Stroud District Council officers that people may be embarrassed or reluctant to use them in public view.

Clerk

12. Subscription Rooms

A progress report was received including a report on accessibility and the results of a public consultation on proposed designs for building improvements.

The Clerk reported on a meeting held with Stroud District Council officers earlier in the day. It was noted that contracts are being revised such that the building will still transfer to the Town Council, but the business, the staff will transfer direct to the Stroud Subscription Rooms Trust and the grant from the District Council will be paid direct to the Trust.

It was noted that quotations for the roof and stonework repairs have come in over budget, so District Council officers are seeking alternative

quotations. They are also investigating the possibility of sponsoring admission of the Trust to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

It was **resolved** to:

- approve the revised contractual arrangements in principle, subject to legal advice and final sign-off at next meeting on 10/12/2018.
- authorise the Clerk to submit listed building and planning applications (not including photovoltaics) subject to any final minor changes to be agreed in consultation with the Stroud Subscription Rooms Trust and the Subscription Rooms Working Group
- commission further research on the potential for the installation of photovoltaics
- request the Finance, Community and Policy Committee to review expenditure at their meeting on 19/11/2018 and consider the budget implications.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

13. Community Governance review

Members considered a report and recommendations from the Clerk regarding Stroud District Council's Phase 1 Consultation Survey

It was **resolved** to respond to the Consultation Survey recommending that the following options be considered:

Clerk

- increasing or decreasing the number of parish/town councillors
- merging or splitting parish/town councils
- creating or changing existing parish ward boundaries (if applicable)
- grouping or de-grouping together with a neighbouring parish/town councils

It was further **resolved** to approve the Consultation Committee recommendation to commission an external consultant should further work be required to support this process.

14. Safe Passage

It was **resolved** to support the Safe Passage campaign which helps unaccompanied child refugees and vulnerable adults find safe, legal routes to sanctuary. The Clerk was asked to write a letter of support.

Clerk

15. Cycling infrastructure

A report on a proposal to support a project to create a cycle route on the London Road out towards Chalford was considered. Whilst there was general support for the proposal the Clerk was requested to refer the proposal initially to the NDP Working Group and seek confirmation of funding from other sources, particularly Highways, and for an updated report to be considered by the Finance, Community and Policy Committee.

Clerk

16. Code of Conduct

It was **resolved** to amend the Code of Conduct to include additional text relating to: harassment; authorising the use of resources; having regard to officers’ and professional advisors’ advice; and giving reasons for decisions made, as recommended by the Finance, Community and Policy Committee.

Clerk

It was **agreed** that at their next meeting the Finance, Community and Policy Committee should examine the requirements in the Code for leaving meetings.

Clerk

17. Complaints Policy

It was **resolved** to amend the Complaints Policy to require all Code of Conduct complaints referred back to the Council by the Monitoring Officer for resolution, to be referred to a complaints committee, rather than to the Town Clerk, as recommended by the Finance, Community and Policy Committee.

Clerk

It was noted that the Council’s grievance policy will also need to be updated and this will be referred to the Personnel Committee meeting on 12th November.

Clerk

18. Standing Orders

It was **resolved** to revoke Standing Order 21a, as recommended by the Finance, Community and Policy Committee, as there is now no statutory requirement to appoint a data protection officer.

Clerk

19. Financial Regulations

It was **resolved** to amend Financial Regulations, as recommended by the Finance, Community and Policy Committee to:

Clerk

- Include a new regulation regarding expenditure in cases of an emergency or extreme risk to the delivery of Council services
- Extend the definition of “other specialist services” in Reg. 11.1 (a) ii to also include: engineers and gravediggers
- Increase the limit in Reg. 6.22 to £500.

20. Committee reports

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

Consultations:	10 th September, 8 th October
Green Spaces:	2 nd October
Finance, Community & Policy:	15 th October

The meeting closed at 9.58pm

Chair

Date