

# STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting of the

### Finance, Community and Policy Committee

19<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Present:** Councillors Kevin Cranston, Laurie Davies, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, John Marjoram, Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage (Chair) and Lucas Schoemaker

**In attendance:** Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk)

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Arundel (personal), Bloxsom (work), and Dechan (work).

#### 2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Hale declared an interest in item 8 as a member of Stroud Preservation Trust.

#### 3. Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

#### 4. Questions from the public

No questions were received.

#### 5. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were **approved** by those present and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

#### 6. Authorisation of payments

It was **resolved** to authorise payments from October 2018.

#### 7. Internal audit

It was **resolved** to appoint Peter Newman as Internal Auditor.

#### 8. Report from Subscription Rooms working group

The Clerk gave a progress report on legal matters and reported on budget overspends and estimates, which were largely due to additional legal fees.

Cllr Green presented a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that a budget for interim staff should be provided to support the transfer process to provide funding raising, project support and PR/marketing.

**ACTION**

Clerk

It was **resolved** to approve use of the general reserve to support ongoing work on handover of the Subscription Rooms and equipment purchases.

Clerk

It was **resolved** to approve a budget of up to £238,773 for Phase 1 building works in 2019–20, subject to sufficient funds being raised.

Clerk

It was **resolved** to approve a budget for 2019–20 of £4,000 for building insurance.

Clerk

## **9. Lansdown Hall**

Proposals for a further phase of improvements works were presented by Cllr Hale, Chair of the Lansdown Hall Working Group. It was noted that the Lansdown Hall and Gallery trustees had produced a business plan as previously requested.

The Working Group recommended proposals to provide improved toilets, a new bar/kitchen serving area, improved ventilation, a new entrance, and additional lighting in Bank Gardens, based on a feasibility study by Bush Architects commissioned in 2017, for which Listed Building Consent would be required.

The Clerk presented budget estimates for the scheme as recommended by the Working Group and alternatives without the proposed ventilation scheme or a very simple scheme based on inserting mechanical ventilation extracts in the roof. The latter scheme was felt to be inappropriate because of concerns about noise pollution. There was a lengthy discussion about the designs and budget estimates for the proposals, focusing on whether or not a business case could be made for the ventilation scheme, which was felt to be very costly at nearly £145,000 including fees.

It was **resolved** to recommend to Council the proposals and budget estimates for development works at Lansdown Hall (Option 1) in principle, subject to public consultation and detailed costings, but excluding the ventilation scheme.

Clerk

It was **resolved** to extend the Service Level Agreement with Lansdown Hall and Gallery for one year, until 31/3/2020.

Clerk

## **10. Accessibility guide**

The Committee considered a proposal to produce an accessibility guide for Stroud. It was noted that previous work completed by a local access group could potentially be reviewed and updated and there was an opportunity to work in partnership with local organisations to ensure that a wide range of access considerations are included, e.g. dementia. There was a concern that some building owners might not be able to make any modifications, but it was noted that the project had the potential to influence the wider environment, for example through the

provision of dropped kerbs and a reduction in street clutter across the whole town and not just the town centre.

A budget of up to £3,950 was **approved** from the Town Centre budget, subject to some reshaping of the project brief. Cllr Green agreed to help with the project.

Clerk

### 11. Cycling infrastructure

It was **resolved** to authorise a budget of up to £3,000 to employ professional specialists in cycling and walking infrastructure to survey the A419 transport corridor and make recommendations about how cycling infrastructure, particularly may be improved, subject to the project being supported by the other parishes along on the route and match funding being secured.

Clerk

### 12. Sustainable Tourism Hub

It was **resolved** to appoint Creative Sustainability CIC to develop an Action Plan for a Sustainable Tourism Hub, the plan to include long-term financial projections and budgets. The Project was felt to link well with the Canals project, NDP and Cultural Strategy work and would be funded from the NDP Working Group budget.

Clerk

### 13. Stroud Road TRO

It was **resolved** to support changes to Station Road parking to reduce congestion and improve the gateway to Stroud town centre from the station with the cost of legal fees for a Traffic Regulation Order to be met from the NPD Working Group budget.

Clerk

### 14. Budget Estimates for 2019-20

A draft budget was discussed. The Clerk was asked to update the draft to take into account the implications of the decision regarding Lansdown Hall (Item 9) and to correct a minor error in the calculations for NDP Projects, before presenting to Full Council for approval.

It was **agreed** to ask the Green Spaces Committee to consider phasing some of their proposed projects and potential use of the new cemetery earmarked reserve.

Clerk

### 15. Minutes

The minutes of the following meetings were received:

Lansdown Hall Working Group 4<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Chair .....

Date .....