



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2018-2022

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Our plan is framed in a challenging financial climate. We no longer receive revenue support grant from the Government – we are the first council in Gloucestershire to be in this position. In 2019/20, we are required to pay £549,000 to the Government. This will be the largest sum paid by any Gloucestershire council. Effectively, we have to become a 'self financing' council and it marks a new relationship between central and local government.

By 2020 our principal sources of income will be council tax and business rates. The Government has reduced New Homes Bonus and, as a result, our income will fall regardless of performance. Although the Government has indicated that a large proportion of business rates will be retained

by local government, it is unclear what this is and how the income will be distributed between councils. We are managing a business rate retention pilot on behalf of Gloucestershire councils. This is one of a small number across England.

We are tackling these budget challenges confident in the knowledge that the district's residents and businesses have a very positive view of the council:

- High public and business satisfaction with the council (79% and 70% respectively)
- Resident and business rating for value for money, efficiency and service standards at best ever

While the national trend is down, our satisfaction rates remain high.

We also continue to deliver on our priorities:

- council housebuilding programme delivering to timetable and budget (236 homes at cost of £19m over five years)
- house building and commercial development rates being sustained
- council seen as an effective and valued partner in economic development and regeneration by local companies, investors, business organisations and GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership
- carbon management programme delivered – the council was the first in Europe to be 'carbon neutral'
- membership at both leisure centres at record levels - good for health and well being, good for income!
- award winning canal regeneration project with high levels of public support, over £113m private investment and, in three years alone, 48,000 hours of volunteer work
- successful management of the single largest regeneration site in Gloucestershire (council owned site at Littlecombe, Dursley)
- substantial reduction in waste to landfill – already half the countywide target for 2020 – and a substantial increase in recycling (the success of which has brought issues and increased cost)
- nationally acclaimed natural flood management schemes in the Stroud Valleys – one of only two UK projects sponsored by the Environment Agency – CPRE award
- successful work on education-business links and skills – our Skills for Stroud programme (Stroud Ambitions, Employability Charter and support for Festomane)
- continuing high quality services – accreditation such as EMAS for environmental management and Green Flag for park management
- 12th best council tax collection rate in the UK and best in Gloucestershire, improved position on business rates and best in Gloucestershire
- top quartile performance for homeless prevention

OUR VISION...

Leading a community that is making Stroud district a better place to live, work and visit for everyone.

The plan seeks to demonstrate how this will be achieved around key priorities:

ECONOMY

Help create a sustainable and vibrant economy that works for all

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Provide affordable, energy efficient homes for our diverse and changing population

ENVIRONMENT

Help the community minimise its carbon footprint, adapt to climate change and recycle more

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Promote the health and well being of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda

DELIVERY

Provide value for money to our taxpayers and high quality services to our customers



ECONOMY

Key Actions for 2018/19

- Working with partners, lead the Heritage Lottery Fund project to link our award winning canal to the national network - the £23m Stonehouse to Saul restoration will bring economic, environmental and well being benefits
- Complete and fully let the 18,500 sq ft of flexible business space at Littlecombe, Dursley - the £1.9m project
- Select a development partner for the Brimscombe Port development which will provide 170 new homes, business units, a community facility and a canal marina
- Provide a site at Stratford Park so Rush skatepark, one of Europe's best skateparks, can relocate from Brimscombe Port and build a new multi-million 'state of the art' facility



- Support the transformation of the Merrywalks shopping centre in Stroud by offering a £2m commercial loan to the developer, alongside £4m of financial support by Gloucestershire's Local Enterprise Partnership
- Working with our MPs, lobby Government and agencies for infrastructure investment critical to the delivery of our award winning Local Plan
- In partnership with the LEP, businesses, local colleges and schools, implement our successful skills initiatives

OUR FOUR YEAR FOCUS

- promote investment to create rewarding jobs that benefit the local area, with a focus on environmental technologies, engineering and manufacturing, creative industries and high quality social care
- work with partners to promote safe, accessible and efficient transport that is healthy and does not damage our special environment, with an emphasis on limiting car use through cycling, walking and improvements to public transport
- work with business, education and the voluntary sector to build skills and employment opportunities
- promote investment in our high streets and regeneration sites to help sustain and enhance our distinct and varied service provision and cultural heritage
- lobby for key infrastructure investment, particularly transport improvements to link Stroud to Bristol, the Midlands and Wales

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



OUR FOUR YEAR FOCUS

- deliver 236 new affordable homes through our £19 million council house building programme
- implement the sheltered housing modernisation plan
- reduce the number of empty homes in all tenures
- drive up standards in private rented housing
- work with partners to meet a range of housing needs including extra care and vulnerable young people



Key Actions for 2018/19

- Complete our award winning council house programme - the scheme at Stonehouse in 2018/19 will complete our programme of 236 affordable homes over 5 years
- Revise our 30 year Housing Revenue Account business plan
- Carry out up to £6.7m of planned work to council homes, helping tackle fuel poverty
- Deliver the £2.6m sheltered housing modernisation and replacement programme in Cam, Nailsworth and Wotton-under-Edge
- Provide capital finance for a scheme that provides temporary homeless accommodation in the district
- Lobby Government to remove the HRA cap and allow use of 100% of right to buy capital receipts as finance for new council house building

ENVIRONMENT



Key Actions for 2018/19

- Phase out single use plastics across the Council and use by our contractors and suppliers
- Introduce cost saving measures for grounds maintenance, building cleaning and waste collection
- Implement our cycling and walking plan focused on Saul – Stonehouse - Stroud - Brimscombe, Stroud - Nailsworth and Cam – Dursley – Uley
- Refurbish Stratford Park Lido and install solar panels to heat pool water
- Carry out market town improvements in partnership with town councils
- Agree a long term investment and management plan for Stratford Park with partners and contractors



OUR FOUR YEAR FOCUS

- reduce the number of households in fuel poverty through energy efficiency measures
- complete a review of the Local Plan by 2020
- reduce household waste going to landfill through cost-effective recycling
- design and implement a cycling and walking plan

HEALTH AND WELL BEING



OUR FOUR YEAR FOCUS

- to work with partners to help deliver the public health agenda across a range of services including meeting the needs of the ageing population
- to work with and influence health providers to ensure the delivery of locally accountable services
- reduce poverty and inequality and help vulnerable people cope with welfare reform



Key Actions 2018/19

- Provide a council-wide focus for mental health and well being by appointing councillors as 'mental health champions'
- Provide support for households in fuel poverty to install efficient and affordable heating
- Deliver new 'walking sports' and 'healthy lifestyle' programmes

DELIVERY



OUR FOUR YEAR FOCUS

- deliver our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Workforce Plan
- use IT investment to provide better customer access and enhance workforce productivity and service innovation
- invest in projects and assets that deliver a return, generate income or deliver savings, so enabling us to continue to fund essential public services
- develop and implement a self-financing plan for the council



Key Actions 2018/19

- Introduce new facilities and charges at car parks in Nailsworth, Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge and Stratford Park
- Promote good employment practice by adopting the 'Construction Charter' and 'Modern Slavery Charter' and expecting our contractors and partners to do likewise
- Implement the next phases in the workforce reduction plan
- 'Risk based' investment in key ICT infrastructure that delivers better customer services, mobile working for staff and service efficiencies
- Consider in-house options for some services, based on successfully bringing in-house the delivery of gas servicing, bailiffs and youth services
- Transfer community buildings and other assets to local organisations as part of implementing our property assets strategy

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Our 2017 annual budget consultation shows high levels of satisfaction among both residents and businesses. The survey shows that residents' satisfaction with the council is 79%, and business satisfaction remains the same as last year's all time high of 70%. The figures are in contrast to national figures for satisfaction with local government which are in decline.

Residents survey

- 95% of residents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- 79% of residents were satisfied with the way SDC runs things
- 6% were satisfied that SDC is working to improve the environment
- 72% agreed that they get value for money from SDC

Businesses survey

- 94% of businesses were satisfied with the local area as a place to do business
- 85% of businesses were satisfied that SDC is working to improve the environment
- 70% of businesses were satisfied with the way SDC runs things

