



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COUNCIL MEETING

19 December 2019

7.00 pm – 8.27 pm

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Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud

Minutes

Membership

Martin Baxendale	P	Nick Hurst	A	Nigel Prenter	P
Dorcas Binns	P	George James	P	Skeena Rathor	P
Catherine Braun	P	Julie Job	P	Sue Reed	P
Chris Brine	A	Haydn Jones	P	Mark Reeves	P
Miranda Clifton	P	John Jones	P	Steve Robinson*	P
Nigel Cooper	P	Norman Kay	P	Mattie Ross	P
Doina Cornell	P	Darren Loftus	A	Tom Skinner	A
Gordon Craig	P	Stephen Lydon	P	Nigel Studdert-Kennedy	P
Rachel Curley	P	John Marjoram	P	Haydn Sutton	P
Stephen Davies	P	Phil McAsey	A	Brian Tipper	P
Paul Denney	A	Karen McKeown	P	Chas Townley	A
Jim Dewey	P	Jenny Miles	A	Jessica Tomblin	A
Jonathan Edmunds	P	Dave Mossman	A	Ken Tucker	P
Chas Fellows	P	Gill Oxley	A	Martin Whiteside	P
Colin Fryer	P	Keith Pearson	P	Tim Williams	A
Lindsey Green	P	Simon Pickering	P	Tom Williams	P
Trevor Hall	P	Gary Powell**	A	Debbie Young	A

**Chair *Vice-Chair P = Present A = Absent

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive

Principal Accountant

Democratic Services & Elections Officer

Interim Head of Legal Services and
Monitoring Officer

Democratic Services & Elections Manager

Others in Attendance

Head of Health and Wellbeing, Commercial Services Manager, Environment Protection Manager, Senior Animal Welfare Officer and Head of Community Services.

CL.035 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brine, Denney, Hurst, Loftus, McAsey, Miles, Mossman, Oxley, Powell, Skinner, Townley, Tomblin, Tim Williams and Young.

In the absence of Councillor Powell the meeting was chaired by Councillor Robinson the Vice-Chair of Council. He announced that Agenda Item 8 – Supporting and Signposting

Victims of Domestic Violence, Mental and Financial Abuse would be deferred to a future meeting.

CL.036 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

CL.037 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED That the minutes of the Council's meeting held on 17 October 2019 are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

CL.038 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair confirmed that he had several awards to present to Officers.

- a. The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Highly Commended award in 'Best Business Support' category for our ongoing commitment to help combat red tape and regulation, and encourage businesses to excel in areas such as food safety. This award was presented at the FSB awards on Friday, 22 November 2019 in Gloucester.
- b. The Association for Public Service Excellence award for the most improved performer in Environmental Health which was presented at the APSE awards on Thursday, 5 December 2019 in Blackpool.

The Head of Health and Wellbeing, the Commercial Services Manager and the Environmental Protection Manager collected these awards on behalf of the team.

Councillor Ross, Chair of Community Services and Licensing Committee presented the Senior Animal Welfare Officer with the RSPCA 'Paw Prints' silver award for the work that had been carried out on animal activity licensing and the RSPCA 'Paw Prints' gold award for the Council's Stray Dog Service.

On behalf of his service, the Head of Community Services collected the RSPCA 'Paw Prints' bronze award for Contingency Planning.

Changes to the Civic Timetable

- a. The Development Control Committee on Tuesday, 7 January 2020 had been cancelled due to lack of business.
- b. An additional Council meeting would be held on Thursday, 16 January 2020 because two reports, the Polling District Review and the Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel Members were not able to be completed in time for this meeting due to the recent general election.
- c. The Housing Committee on Tuesday, 11 February 2020 had been cancelled due to lack of business.

Leader

Following the Parliamentary Election last week Siobhan Baillie was congratulated as the newly elected MP for the Stroud Constituency and the Leader would be arranging to meet her in the New Year. David Drew had also been contacted and thanked him for all of his hard work.

Chief Executive

An update was provided on the 4 new Strategic Director Appointments:-

- a. Andrew Cummings - Strategic Director of Resources already in post,
- b. Caron Starkey - Strategic Director of Change and Transformation (started last week),
- c. Brendan Cleere - Strategic Director of Place (starts on 6 January 2020), and
- d. following an interview on Monday Keith Gerrard had been appointed as the new Strategic Director of Communities and would be starting in the New Year.

CL.039 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

CL.040 **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

RESOLVED To note the appointment of Sandra Longstreth as the new Tenant Representative.

CL.041 **UBICO BOARD ARRANGEMENTS AND DELEGATIONS**

In presenting the above report, the Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer outlined the changes to the makeup of the Ubico Board. He drew Members' attention to paragraphs 1.2 and 6 within the report.

Councillor Pickering proposed the report, which was seconded by Councillor Lydon. The Proposer urged Members to support the recommendations.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

- RESOLVED**
1. To note the changes to the composition of the Ubico Board.
 2. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to be the Shareholder Representative, to take all decisions as such and to sign the Shareholder Agreement in consultation with the Leader.
 3. That the relevant Strategic Director or Head of Service be the Council's Local Authority Director on the Ubico Board.

CL.042 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**Audit and Standards Committee – 19 November 2019

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy, the Chair of Audit and Standards Committee presented the two reports. He drew attention to paragraph 5 on page 43, the current financial position. He also confirmed that the Chair of Committee was not a member of the alliance.

Councillor Pickering enquired where did the risk of climate change on the financial viability of the Council sit. A number of big financial houses are requesting financial

disclosure. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy stated that Audit and Standards Committee checked a process after it had taken place.

Councillor James proposed a Motion to amend the wording from “independent member” to “independent person”, as this may cause confusion.

Councillor Tom Williams stated that each Committee should scrutinise their own work. If there was a concern it should be defined and added onto the Council’s risk register, which is reviewed at each meeting by Audit and Standards Committee. Committees define the risks and Audit and Standards Committee review them.

Before the vote a discussion ensued regarding the wording proposed by Councillor James. Councillor Pearson suggested that the wording “an independent person is co-opted as a Member of the Audit and Standards Committee”. The Monitoring Officer and Chair of Committee concurred.

Members unanimously agreed to the amendment. When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

- RESOLVES**
- 1. The Audit and Standards Committee’s Terms of Reference are approved.**
 - 2. That an independent person is co-opted as a Member of the Audit and Standards Committee on a non-voting basis.**
 - 3. That the appointment of the independent person is delegated to the Audit of Standards Committee.**
 - 4. That the process for selecting and recommending an appropriate candidate is delegated to the Strategic Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair of Audit and Standards Committee.**

Half Year Treasury Management Activity Report 2019/20

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy outlined the report making reference to various paragraphs contained therein.

Councillor Pickering asked if the Audit and Standards Committee had assessed the risk of climate change on any of the investments in respect of yield and return; the risks in the long term and what factors had been assessed on those risks. Had we asked these questions of our investors to ensure that our investments are safe and give the Council the best return.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy stated that the investments had been discussed by a cross-party group and put investments into asset funding expecting them to perform. We do not always have the knowledge of where these investments are going. We need a framework on how this could be done.

Councillor Curley was a member on the cross-party group. She confirmed that the group had looked very carefully into each of the companies’ investment strategies and had done their best to ensure that investors had been discounted if they invested in fossil fuels.

In response to Councillor Tipper’s concern that the Council should ensure that the Council received value for money, Councillor Studdert-Kennedy stated that this was always considered.

Councillor Pickering stated that he wanted to ensure that the Council received a maximum return on investments and that they were safe.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy confirmed that the CCLA had moved since discussions had taken place and a final decision would be taken at February's Council meeting.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED To approve the Treasury Management Activity Half Year Report for 2019/20.

Environment Committee – 5 December 2019

Councillor Simon Pickering, the Chair of Environment Committee presented these items, a Carbon Neutral update report and Adoption of Byelaws.

In reply to Members' questions the Leader confirmed that the informal discussion group would be a non-decision making cross party group.

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer clarified that businesses had to be registered to carry out procedures and if they did not adhere to the legislation enforcement action would be taken to protect members of the public.

Councillor Pickering confirmed that the informal round table group would also liaise with other groups and report back. In summing up he stated that we were not doing enough to keep fossil fuels in the ground and should all be looking at using less energy. The energy we do use should be from renewable sources. The Council needed to work with other partners and community groups.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED 1. To set up an informal round table discussion group to progress strategy around CN2030 on a cross party basis with members to be nominated by each political group.

2. To authorise the Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to affix the common seal to new Byelaws for the regulation of businesses that carry out acupuncture, tattooing cosmetic piercing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, and electrolysis and carry out the necessary procedure and apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

3. Subject to the confirmation of the proposed new Byelaws, take such steps necessary to revoke the Council's existing Byelaws relating to acupuncture, tattooing, ear piercing and electrolysis that came into force on 1 August 1986.

Council Tax – Long Term Empty Property Premium

Councillor Cornell, the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee confirmed that the Council currently had 193 properties that were affected within the district. This figure would be reduced as the sheltered housing redevelopment programme progressed. Now that the HRA cap had been lifted Cambridge House, Dursley can be retained.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED That the Long Term Empty Property Premium (currently set at 50%) is:-

1. Increased to 100% from 1 April 2020 for those properties which have been empty for two years and over;
2. Increased to 200% from 1 April 2020 for those properties which have been empty for five years and over;
3. Increased to 300% from 1 April 2021 for those properties which are/have been empty for ten years and over.

CL.043 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW AMENDED
RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Davies, the Chair of the Community Governance Review Working Group presented the recommendations. He outlined the work that had taken place since the Council meeting on 18 July 2019. On 2 December 2019 mediation between Kingwood Parish Council and Wotton-under-Edge Town Council had taken place resulting in an amendment to the boundary. A map was displayed showing the area of land in question highlighted in yellow.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED 1. To approve the amendment to the recommendation to Kingswood Parish Council and Wotton-under-Edge Town Council boundary following the Community Governance Review;

2. To authorise the Democratic Services and Elections Manager to request the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to make a related alteration order to change the district ward boundary; and
3. To authorise the Interim Head of Legal Services to make a reorganisation or community governance order to implement the change if agreed by Council.

CL.044 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

One question was submitted by Councillor Davies and was answered by the Leader, Councillor Cornell. (Refer to the [Council's webcast](#) and Item 11).

The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

Chair