



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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To all Members of Stroud District Council

19 October 2020

You are hereby summoned to attend a remote meeting of **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL** on **THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER 2020 at 7.00 pm.**

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

This is a remote meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Venue

This meeting will be conducted using Zoom and a separate invitation with the link to access the meeting will be sent to Members, relevant officers and members of the public who have submitted a question.

Public Access

Members of the public, who have not submitted a question, are invited to access the meeting streamed live via Stroud District Council's [YouTube channel](#).

Recording of Proceedings

A recording of the meeting will be published onto the Council's website (www.stroud.gov.uk). The whole of the meeting will be recorded except where there are confidential or exempt items, which may need to be considered in the absence of press and public.

A G E N D A

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest.
- 3 **MINUTES**
To approve the Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 16 July 2020 and 7 September 2020.
- 4 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
To receive announcements from the Chair of Council.

5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chairs of Committees will answer questions from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS

Noon on Monday, 19 October 2020

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and can be sent by email to democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

6 **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Police and Crime Panel - Councillor Ross is to be replaced by Councillor Brine.
Strategy and Resources Committee – Councillor Steve Robinson is to be replaced by Councillor Rachel Curley
Development Control Committee – Councillor John Marjoram is to be replaced by Councillor Norman Kay
Audit and Standards Committee – Councillor Rachel Curley is to be replaced by Councillor Colin Fryer

7 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 25 AUGUST 2020 AND 6 OCTOBER 2020

The relevant Committee reports are available on the Committee's website page for this Council meeting.

The Chair of Audit and Standards Committee will present these items.

7a **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS AND THE ARRANGEMENTS UNDER WHICH ALLEGATIONS CAN BE INVESTIGATED ([Agenda Item 3 – 25 August 2020](#) and [Agenda Item 9 – 6 October 2020](#))**

To consider the recommendations from Audit and Standards Committee, to formally adopt the amended Code of Conduct and Arrangements for investigating alleged breaches of the Code with immediate effect.

7b **COUNTER FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY STATEMENT AND STRATEGY 2020-2023 ([Agenda Item 5 – 6 October 2020](#))**

To consider the recommendations from Audit and Standards Committee, to approve the Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy (including Anti Bribery Policy and Anti Money Laundering Policy) 2020-2023.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE – 1 OCTOBER 2020

The relevant Committee reports are available on the Committee's website page for this Council meeting.

The Chair of Community Services and Licensing Committee will present this item.

7c **ADOPTION OF LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY ([Agenda Item 6 - 1 October 2020](#))**

To consider the recommendations from Community Services and Licensing Committee, to formally adopt the Final Statement of Licensing Policy.

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 8 OCTOBER 2020

The relevant Committee reports are available on the Committee's website page for this Council meeting.

The Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee will present this item.

- 7d** **BUDGET STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2024/25 (Agenda Item 8 – 8 October 2020)**
To set out the assumptions that will be used when preparing the upcoming Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 8** **APPOINTMENT TO THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**
To approve the recommended appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Members' Scheme of Allowances.
- 9** **CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS**
To make changes to the Constitution.
- 10** **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**
See Agenda Item 5 for deadline for submission.
- 11** **MOTIONS**
- 11a** Motion regarding Making the Stroud District Council more diverse and representative of the residents of our District is proposed by Councillor Whiteside and seconded by Councillor James.

Full council notes that:

1. No system of election is perfectly fair, but it is our wish to make those elected to the District Council as representative of the residents' wishes and demographics as is reasonably possible. The Council considers that a more representative and diverse Council can make better decisions and increase the level of ownership of those decisions by our residents.
2. The electoral system used for local elections in England and Wales, First Past the Post (FPTP), is not a fair system, because it means that votes do not have equal weight and many votes are wasted. This can lead to voter apathy and a feeling of disconnection from local democracy. In Stroud District in 2016 we had a number of 3 member wards in which only 41-43% of votes were cast for candidates of a party resulting in all 3 councillors for that party being elected. In effect 57-59% of the electorate's votes didn't count.
3. An alternative to FPTP is a system of proportional representation (PR), where votes cast for parties translate more proportionately into seats won. There are many variants of PR; the Single Transferable Vote system (STV) variant of PR is already in use for local elections in Scotland and Northern Ireland. With this system, voters rank candidates and those who receive the most backing (including second and subsequent preference votes) are elected to serve. The introduction of PR for local elections in Scotland has led to an increase in voter turnout.
4. Council also recognises that in age, gender and in other protected characteristics the members do not adequately reflect the demographic of our

residents. Although not guaranteed, a more proportional system like STV may provide a means for improving this that we as a Council could try.

5. Changes in the voting system do not preclude the Council and political parties also using other positive actions to increase diversity of representation that do not require permission from central Government.
6. An additional barrier to a more diverse member make-up is the time commitment required to be an elected councillor. Job sharing is already an established practice in many spheres of professional life. The opportunity to job-share the councillor role might enable younger people, people working inflexible hours and people with caring commitments (often women) to take on this role. It could also increase the range of skills delivered by councillors. Job sharing councillors would only have one vote in a committee between them and share one councillor allowance.
7. Stroud District Council has already passed a motion in favour of votes at 16 years old.
8. This motion does not preclude a more proportional system of election being requested for Town and Parish Councils, but it seems fair to leave them to make the case for what is appropriate to them.

This council therefore requests the Chief Executive to write to Her Majesty's Government to request changes to legislation that would permit Stroud District Council to take steps to increase its diversity and representativeness by:

- (a) Allowing the Council to trial a more proportional voting system in District Council elections;
- (b) Allowing job sharing of the elected councillor role;
- (c) Allowing those aged 16 and over to vote in local elections.

12 GREEN HOMES GRANT – LOCAL AUTHORITY DELIVERY SCHEME BID

This item has been added as an urgent item on Friday 16 October 2020.

To authorise the Chief Executive to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to accept £1,094,050 of capital BEIS funding for a Project to be delivered under the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LADS)