

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

31 March 2016

7.00 pm – 8.40 pm

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud

3**Minutes****Membership:**

Councillor Simon Pickering**	P	Councillor Chas Fellows	P
Councillor Paul Denney *	A	Councillor Colin Fryer	P
Councillor Liz Ashton	A	Councillor Haydn Sutton	P
Councillor Tim Boxall	A	Councillor Brian Tipper	P
Councillor Kevin Cranston	A	Councillor Ken Tucker	P
Councillor Julie Douglass	P	Councillor Tim Williams	P

** = Chair * = Vice Chair

P = Present A = Absent

Other Member In attendance

Councillor Karon Cross

Officers in Attendance
 Strategic Head (Development Services)
 Planning Strategy Manager
 Policy Implementation Manager
 Senior Policy Officer

 Environmental Protection Manager
 Private Sector Housing Manager
 Principal Environmental Health Officer
 Democratic Services Officer
EC.032**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Liz Ashton, Tim Boxall, Kevin Cranston and Paul Denney.

EC.033**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

EC.034**MINUTES****RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 December 2015 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

EC.035**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

EC.036 **STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

The Senior Policy Officer outlined the above report which formed a view of the costs and benefits of using electric vehicles in the managed fleet. An in depth review to explore all options was required. The role of the vehicle would have to be an important factor, together with the load, terrain and number of passengers.

The Chair moved an amendment to add the words “look at electric cycles” into the decision box because this would reduce road congestion. Councillor Brian Tipper also moved a further amendment to add the words “and hybrid vehicles”. All Members agreed these amendments.

RESOLVED **To request that the Energy Savings Trust reviews the current lease/ownership arrangements for all SDC fleet vehicles to include the benefits and costs of using electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles in further improving the Council’s environmental performance and this review will also include electric cycles.**

EC.037 **OUTLINE ASSESSMENT OF THE OPPORTUNITY FOR STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY ENERGY GRANT/LOAN SCHEME**

The Strategic Head (Development Services) informed members of the potential for the setting up of a Stroud District Council Community Energy Grant/Loan Scheme, the options available and likely resources required to investigate this further.

In response to Members’ questions it was confirmed that there was no defined budget for this project and if the Council did offer loans it would ideally need to be with interest.

RESOLVED **That the opportunities for the establishment of a financial support mechanism specifically to support community energy projects are limited and that any opportunities for investment should be considered on their own individual business case merits.**

EC.038 **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE**

The Planning Strategy Manager outlined the above report to approve a draft CIL charging schedule for public consultation. He highlighted an error in paragraph 3.4 (page 18), third line down on the table which should have read “Residential (excluding older people’s housing), and not the word “including”. A further report would be presented to Committee after consultation had taken place. An independent examination would take place later in the year when the examiner would test the evidence. A recommendation to Council for adoption is expected by the end of the year.

In response to Members’ questions the following was confirmed:-

- Where possible plain English would be used in documentation.

- All of the persons who had made submissions during the preliminary draft charging schedule consultation period would receive a response reflecting the agreed changes to the draft charging schedule.
- Employment development was not viable with CIL and therefore no CIL would be charged.
- To maintain flexibility there should be discretionary relief, the details of which would be set out before the examination.
- The instalments policy included reasonable time limits dependent upon the size of the site. The policy had been subject to viability testing. Once a trigger point was reached the CIL charge for infrastructure would come on stream.
- The use of CIL for canal infrastructure would include maintenance funding.

RESOLVED **To approve the Draft CIL Charging Schedule set out in Appendix A for publication for the purposes of public consultation.**

EC.039 **PLANNING OBLIGATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)**

The Planning Strategy Manager outlined the above report to approve draft Planning Obligations SPD for public consultation. Section 106 Agreements were required to deliver onsite infrastructure and affordable housing. A consultation period of 6 weeks would run in parallel with consultation on the CIL Draft Charging Schedule and then responses would be brought back in a further report to Committee.

A discussion ensued regarding affordable housing. The Policy Implementation Manager confirmed that there was a need for affordable housing throughout the district. If a site was suitable for housing it was also suitable for affordable housing. The prospective tenants would be aware of the transport links and other amenities prior to occupation. Rural exception sites are supported by national policy and occupants have to have a local connection to the area to qualify. The majority of affordable housing was located within larger developments.

RESOLVED **To approve the Draft Planning Obligations SPD set out in Appendix A for the purposes of public consultation.**

EC.040 **UPDATE ON AIR QUALITY IN STROUD DISTRICT**

The Environmental Protection Manager outlined the background to the report and also provided an update on the current position regarding air quality within the Stroud District.

The following responses were made to Members' questions:-

- The assumptions on the environmental information relating to Javelin Park had been reviewed and the Council was in broad agreement with their findings.
- The Environment Agency was the regulatory authority for the entire operation at Javelin Park.

- RESOLVED**
- a. To endorse the Council's Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment submitted to DEFRA; and
 - b. To note and support the approach taken with respect to Local Air Quality Management requirements as set out in the report.

EC.041 **BID FOR EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESIF) TO EXTEND THE RURAL SUDS PROJECT COUNTRYWIDE**

The Private Sector Housing Manager outlined the above report confirming an amendment in the decision box for the deletion of the words in brackets in the recommendation to Strategy and Resources Committee.

Work was being carried out countywide to engage with both large and small landowners to disseminate information.

- RESOLVED**
- a. Submit a bid for £600,000 for ESIF funding to extend the Rural SuDS project Countywide.
 - b. Delegate authority to the Strategic Head (Development Services) with regard to delivering a successful bid project.

RECOMMENDED TO STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE £50,000 of matched funding be set aside to support the wider bid to ESIF.

EC.042 **HYDRO PROJECT UPDATE**

The Strategic Head (Development Services) provided members with a verbal update on the above project following a detailed study. The estimated initial cost of £325,600 excluded fish passes, landscaping and turbine housing. The estimated return was 4.7%, but this reduced to 4% once a reasonable estimation of additional costs was included. All potential investment opportunities would be discussed under delegated authority with the Chair and the Strategic Head (Finance and Business Services). If the scheme were to go ahead there would be no negative impact on water quality and it may promote other landowners to follow the Council's lead.

EC.043 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.

Chair