



**SRC.020**                      **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

None received.

**SRC.021**                      **WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

The Committee agreed the Work Programme for 2015/16.

**RESOLVED**                      **To note the Work Programme.**

**SRC.022**                      **MEMBER REPORTS**

**(a) Performance Monitoring**

Councillors Keith Pearson and Rhiannon Wigzell gave a performance monitoring update as detailed in their report of 16 September 2015, previously circulated to Members. Issues arising were:

- (i) Procurement has been identified as an area of concern although the Council as a whole is much clearer about the rules and regulations relating to procurement and more training and awareness is planned.
- (ii) IT support/help is available for members if required.

The Leader reminded the Committee that Members are encouraged to attend the Stroud Ambitions event to be held on 11 November 2015. (see also SRC 025 c).

**(b) Stroud Concordat**

Councillor Simon Pickering gave an oral report on the scope of the work of the Stroud Concordat:

- (i) It is a formal partnership between SDC, Stroud Town Council and the County Council focusing on improving Stroud town centre.
- (ii) Projects undertaken include organising the Christmas lights along with the consideration of more strategic issues such as traffic/car parking changes.

**(c) Planning Review Panel**

Councillor Haydn Jones reported that the Planning Review Panel is currently formulating a detailed proposal to be submitted to Council shortly.

**RESOLVED**                      **To note the updates.**

**SRC.023**                      **COUNCIL DISCOUNT FROM APRIL 2016 – LONG TERM LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES**

The Revenue and Benefits Manager outlined the purpose of the above report which:

- (a) Amends the level of discount applied under Class C.
- (b) Increases the council tax on properties at the point they are unoccupied for 2 years with the potential to generate additional income dependant on whether owners choose to bring the property back into use before the increase becomes effective.

- RESOLVED** 1. To note the report; and
- RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** 2. To increase the charge to 150% on properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over 2 years.

**SRC.024**                      **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

The Revenue and Benefits Manager outlined a report to set a Council Tax Support Scheme for the period 01 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

- RESOLVED** 1. To note the report; and
- RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** 2. To adopt the current Local Scheme as the scheme for Stroud District Council for the period 01 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

**SRC.025**                      **JOBS AND GROWTH PLAN 2015/16**

The Learning and Development Officer gave verbal update on the following:

**(a) Work Experience Charter**

- (i) Key areas of focus are employability skills, the skills gap, and the changing business world, providing information on the labour market and fostering engagement with parents.
- (ii) Work with partnership schools has evolved hugely over the past 10 years. Initiatives include staff mentoring programmes, mock interviews and career speed dating.

**(b) Apprenticeships**

- (i) SDC has apprentices in Business Administration, Customer Service, ICT and Operations.
- (ii) In the past five years, SDC has recruited 31 apprentices; of these 50% have moved on to further employment with 37% staying with SDC. SDC currently has 7 apprentices with a recruitment of 5 further apprenticeships ongoing.

**(c) Stroud Ambitions**

- (i) This is a unique, interactive careers and information event organised by SDC and SGS College Stroud to be held on 11 November 2015.
- (ii) The daytime event will cover nearly 30 major employment sectors and involve year 9 students (13-14 year olds) attending workshops and participating in small group discussions.
- (iii) The evening "Changing Futures" session is open to all students from year 10 upwards, parents and interested adults. It aims to give a comprehensive guide to future employment and further study/skill development for all.

The Leader gave an oral report on the work of the following:

**(d) Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)**

- (i) This is a statutory joint committee made up of the seven Gloucestershire Councils.
- (ii) The main purpose of the GEGJC is to ensure that the seven Councils co-ordinate their efforts in support of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Growth Deal. Current areas of focus include Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment and the Gloucestershire Rail Study.

**RESOLVED**            **To note the updates.**

**SRC.026                    BUDGET MONITOR REPORT 2015-16 - QUARTER 1**

The Accountancy Manager provided the Committee with an overview on the above report. Key issues highlighted were:

- (a) A number of variances between General Fund revenue budget and the projected outturn with an overall net variation of £30K projected.
- (b) An estimate that the General Fund Capital Programme will be underspent by £8,440 million in 2015/16.

During members' questions, it was suggested that an extra column could be added to financial tables in future reports detailing expenditure incurred to date.

- RESOLVED**            **3. To note the outturn forecast for the General Fund Revenue Budget and the Capital programme for 2015/16.**
- 4. To approve the funding from the ICT Reserve to fund Webcasting Equipment Purchase as set out in paragraph 24 of the report.**

**SRC.027                    BUDGET STRATEGY 2016/17 - 2019/20**

The Strategic Head of Finance & Business Services outlined the above report on the Council's current financial position and the outlook over the medium term.

- RESOLVED**            **1. To approve the Budget Strategy 2016/2017 – 2019/20 as set out in the report and;**

- RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**    **2. That Stroud remains in the Business Rates Pool from April 2016 if to do so maximises the retention of business rate income in Gloucestershire.**

**SRC.028                    COUNCIL DEPOSIT IN ICELANDIC BANK**

The Strategic Head of Finance & Business Services gave a verbal update on the above as a supplement to the Members' briefing note circulated in June.

- (a) Following the Icelandic Central Bank's foreign currency auction and SDC's sale of its stake to Deutsche Bank for a cash sum, 98% of the original capital had been recovered.

- (b) There are limitations on what information can be disclosed; much of the information is privileged.

**RESOLVED** To note the report.

**SRC.029 COUNCIL PROPERTY ASSET REGISTER REVIEW PHASE 1**

The Property Manager updated the Committee on the progress of asset reviews to date.

- RESOLVED**
1. That the Management Agreement with Stroud Town Council be extended for a further year with effect from 31 March 2016 and to delegate authority to the Head of Asset Management to dispose of the assets to Stroud Town Council on terms to be agreed by December 2016 in consultation with the Chairs of Strategy & Resources and Community Services Committee.
  2. To carry out a detailed review of the options for the future use of Kingshill House and bring a further report to a future meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee.
  3. To investigate option 3 in respect of the Old Market precinct and bring a further report to a future meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

**SRC.030 ACQUISITION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BRIMSCOMBE PORT, THRUPP**

The Head of Asset Management presented a report to seek the Committee's approval to the transfer of Brimscombe Port, Thrupp and to progress the redevelopment of the site.

- RESOLVED**
1. To accept the freehold interest in Brimscombe Port Thrupp from Stroud Valleys Canals Company as directed by the Homes and Communities Agency and to delegate authority to the Head of Asset Management in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee to finalise terms of the transfer.
  2. To progress the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port and implement infrastructure works using HCA funding should it become available) and to delegate authority to the Head of Asset Management in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee to enter into a new funding agreement with the HCA.
  3. To continue to grant fund Stroud Valleys Canal Company up to £50K per annum until 2020 to use for the Maintenance of the Cotswold Canal.

- 4. To delegate authority to the Head of Asset Management to use any surplus from Brimscombe Port towards any items or enabling works which will bring forward the redevelopment of the site and help meet the funding gap or to set aside in a reserve for the same purpose, as appropriate.**

During consideration of this item, and in accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members voted to continue with the meeting after 10 pm until the business on the agenda had been concluded.

**SRC.031**

**DEVOLUTION UPDATE**

The Leader and Chief Executive gave an oral update on the above report. In reply to Members' questions the Leader explained:

- (a) Gloucestershire's bid is being considered, potentially with a view to a 'deal' being announced by the Chancellor in November
- (b) Devolution aims to facilitate greater strategic decision making on a local basis.
- (c) If devolution goes ahead SDC would still continue to make local decisions but would potentially have a voice in other wider issues such as health matters.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. To note the report; and**

**RECOMMENDED  
TO COUNCIL**

- 2. That a report be made to full Council on 15 October 2015 setting out the latest position and inviting members to consider the bid document.**

**SRC.032**

**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

None received.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

**Chair**