

Councillor report – March 2025

Council meetings

Link to meeting agenda and documents in the committee title.

Housing Committee - 4th February

- Resolved to adopt the following new and updated policies:
 - Leasehold Management Policy
 - A revised Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
 - Tenancy & Estate Management Policy
 - Repairs and Planned Maintenance Policy.
 - Recommended the Draft Council Plan and the accompanying Delivery Plan for approval by Strategy & Resources Committee and then adoption by Council.

Video recording

Strategy and Resources Committee - 6th February

- Agreed the two funding allocations from Strategic Infrastructure Funding scheme for SDC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding:
 - Feasibility Study for a new Cam Doctors' Practice to receive £5,880
 - Feasibility Study for Cam Health Hub to receive £15,000.

A full list of projects funded under this allocation over the past five years can be found in the committee information sheet [here](#).

- Approved the annual update to the Council's Social Value Policy. This policy requires all appropriate contracts over £75k to include social value requirements. Of the 21 contracts which were let since April 2023, £3.4 m in social value has been delivered so far.
- Local supplier spend analysis (which covers suppliers with a 'GL' postcode) was almost half (47%) of all SDC contracts let in 2023/24, due to large capital projects in that year.
- Canal Project. Agreed to drawdown £1m from capital reserves which had already been allocated by Council to the canal project, to continue with the revised programme of work.

- Annual presentation of financial reports for 2025/26 including: Council Tax support, Council Tax premiums on second and empty homes, budget for General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, and the in-year budget monitoring report.
- Recommended the Draft Council Plan and the accompanying Delivery Plan for adoption by Council.
- Regeneration & Investment Board [report](#) covered the Canal Project, Local Growth Plan and Tricorn House.
- Gloucestershire City Region board meeting [report](#) covered the county's Local Skills Improvement Plan, the Growth Hub Network and Business Support Review, the Local Growth Plan, development of a Gloucestershire Strategic Plan, Business rates funding, SGS College Berkeley Campus training centre for low carbon renewable technologies, and the county's economic dashboard.

Full Council - 13th February

- Annual Budget meeting which approved the treasury management, investment and associated strategies and policies.
- Fair Pay and Senior Pay Policy Statement. There is a ratio of 1:7.8 between lowest and highest pay bands (including apprentices) and a ratio of 1:5.5 between all the staff grades. Apprentices are paid the National Minimum Wage rate, which is higher than the national Apprentice wage rate.
- Updates to the SDC constitution relating to new contract and procurement rules.
- [New Council Plan 2025-2029](#) adopted with its five priorities.
 - Environment, Climate and Nature
Making Stroud District net zero and nature friendly with communities that are well prepared for the impacts of the climate crisis.
 - Communities and Wellbeing

Work to reduce health inequalities and support our network of community hubs.

- Local Economy

Building a more sustainable and inclusive local economy meeting the needs of local communities.

- Housing (new priority)

Ensure that the quality and quantity of homes in our district is enhanced.

- Working for our Communities (new priority)

Improve Council services through fuller community engagement.

- Budget items for 2025/26 approved:
- Council Tax support – agreed to continue to provide up to a maximum of 100% support for those who are unable to pay.
- Council Tax premiums noted for second homes (535 properties in Stroud district) and empty homes (119 properties empty for more than 12 months) and mandatory exceptions adopted.
- General Fund Budget: Agreed a 2.99% increase in Council Tax for SDC services.
- Housing Revenue Account Budget: Agreed that social, affordable and garage rents to increase by 2.7%

See Press release: [Investment Confirmed for services across Stroud district](#). This includes:

- Additional funding to support the new Council Plan priorities includes:
- New play strategy for young people
- New high-definition CCTV to help tackle ASB
- Ongoing support for community hubs
- Audit of public facilities and toilet provision
- Investment in leisure services
- Enhance the council's flood prevention and resilience
- Contaminated land assessment and air quality improvement
- Replacement of some vehicles used for waste collection
- Investment in the bulky waste service
- Litter action plan, to include replacement of over 200 litter bins
- Investment of £14m. to build more than 100 new council homes
- Budget for purchasing additional council homes increased to £5m.
- New Economic Development and Tourism Strategy funding
- [Woodchester Mansion](#) funding bid support.

[Video recording](#)

Other news

- [Draft Local Plan](#) – the draft Plan is still in the ‘Examination in Public’ process, but the Planning Inspectors have now ‘recommended’ to SDC that the draft Plan should be withdrawn.

The Council contests some claims made by the Inspectors and is preparing a detailed technical response, which will be shared on the council’s [Local Plan Examination webpage](#) in due course. The Inspectors’ concerns relate to the capacity of Junctions 12 and 14 of the M5, and transport infrastructure for a proposed settlement at Sharpness. The Council’s Local Plan adopted in 2015 is still in place and used to determine planning applications.

- [Car park improvements](#) in Berkeley (21 extra spaces to be added) and Stonehouse (EV charging installed and resurfacing)
- [Garden waste collection service](#) runs from February to November
- All [17 projects](#) from the first round of the new Stroud district crowdfunding scheme (Stroud Funding) have reached their target! This includes the natural swimming project in King’s Stanley! The [second round](#) of Stroud Funding is now open.
- [Bar owner fined](#) for letting smokers light up indoors
- Launch of the new SDC [nature recovery project](#), focused on district council owned land. Opportunity to contact the SDC team about other potential nature recovery sites.
- [Car dealer sentenced](#) after visitor fell 6ft over unfenced drop
- Stroud District Council to provide [better resources](#) for local veterans and members of the armed forces.
- [Polling station job opportunities](#) – for county council elections on 1 May 2025. The deadline to register to vote is 11 April.