



STONEHOUSE **TOWN COUNCIL**

Council Strategy Document

Adopted 22 May 2017

The Council motto means Let Flourish, from this motto and that of the Neighbourhood Plan Document “shape, enhance and protect Stonehouse” we have developed the following strategy.

The Strategy

In 2017-2022 the Council’s Strategy will be to work alone, and with others, to shape enhance and protect facilities and services in Stonehouse.

We will take heed of consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan policies on the following themes:

Theme 1: Amenities and facilities

Aim: to meet the recreational aspirations, the health and wellbeing and the practical needs of our community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of Stonehouse.

Policies:

Protect community facilities
Create Additional community facilities
Encourage and protect town centre retail

Theme 2: Travel and transport

Aim: to ensure Stonehouse is accessible and people can get around easily and conveniently by foot, mobility scooter, bicycle, public transport and private motorised transport, encouraging more sustainable travel and a consequent reduction in traffic congestion.

Policies:

Protect pedestrian and cycle routes, enhance design and encourage use
Ensure new developments provide pedestrian links to the town centre
Encourage the creation of an additional railway station
Prevent loss of parking capacity

Theme 3: Housing

Aim: to retain strong family and community ties, a mix of housing types will be supported to meet existing and future requirements.

Policies:

Comment on planning and monitor dwelling size and type
Ensure ease of access in new residential development
Require play areas in new residential developments

Theme 4: Employment

Aim: to support employment opportunities and secure a prosperous economic future for Stonehouse.

Policies:

Safeguard Local Employment Sites (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8)
Resist loss of employment space outside of designated employment sites
Support small and medium sized business
Ensure connectivity and communication infrastructure

Theme 5: Environment

Aim: to protect and enhance access to green spaces both within the town and the surrounding countryside.

Policies:

Monitor and protect the natural environment
Ensure there is a green infrastructure network
Protect local green space
Protect the heritage assets of Stonehouse
Contribute to protecting and enhancing the Stroudwater canal
Protect views and vistas
Require high quality design
Require provision of outdoor amenity space in new developments
Require allotments

Priority Projects identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

The Council will take account of the infrastructure improvement projects identified in the Neighbourhood Plan when considering priority infrastructure projects for funding from developers' contributions and from other sources.

In addition the Council has the following objectives:

Objective 1:

The Council will ensure assets in its care are maintained, fully utilised and add value by:

- 1.1 Redevelopment and renewal of Council facilities to bring long term benefit to the community.
- 1.2 Improving accessibility and security of Council facilities.
- 1.3 Increasing usage of hired facilities to provide income.
- 1.4 Managing land in a sustainable way.
- 1.5 Planning for renewal of equipment.
- 1.6 Seeking funding.

Objective 2

The Council will endeavour to improve and protect services and facilities which are important to the sustainability of the town by:

- 2.1 Monitoring the success of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.2 Contributing to the improvement of strategic transport, amenity, leisure, retail sites.
- 2.3 Contributing to consultations on strategic plans i.e. Local Plans, Infrastructure and Transport Plans.
- 2.4 Consultation with the community through a variety of channels.
- 2.5 Communicating with other Local Authorities/Public Bodies to achieve positive outcomes.
- 2.6 Developing cluster working where appropriate.
- 2.7 Influencing planning decisions and redevelopment of redundant buildings.
- 2.8 Promoting Stonehouse in a positive light.
- 2.9 Improving the town environment.

Delivery of the Strategy

1. The Council will follow its policies and procedures in the delivery of the Strategy
2. The Council will utilise its resources in terms of people and precept to deliver the strategy. It will ensure that it can adapt to change and challenges by:
 - Ensuring its staff are equipped and trained to deliver services
 - Ensuring councillors are trained and informed
 - Ensuring that it is financially sustainable and performing well
 - Ensuring that its resources are not overstretched
 - Creating Action Plans which are reviewed and monitored for success
3. The Council will act through Terms of Reference which will be reviewed at the Council's AGM as necessary:

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference - Town Council (TC)

- Adopts a Code of Conduct
- Appoints Committees
- Adopts Policies & Procedures & Terms of Reference & Standing Orders
- Co-opts Councillors
- Appoints an Independent Internal Auditor
- Appoints a Responsible Financial Officer
- Authorises Expenditure from Reserves
- Agrees an Annual Budget & Precept
- Debates Matters of Public Interest

- Confirms Eligibility of General Power of Competence
- Approves the stages of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Approves the Year End Accounts, makes Statement of Assurances
- Makes resolutions to govern the work of the Council

Terms of Reference - Finance and Strategy Committee

- To set a budget for the sound administration of the council's business and town hall
- To monitor the annual draft budgets for each committee ensuring value for money
- To approve the annual accounts prior to submission for internal audit and presentation at annual town meeting
- To review expenditure against budget
- To consider internal and external auditors' reports and make recommendations to council
- To recommend level of precept
- To consider the objectives and priorities of the TC and make recommendations as necessary to the council
- Promotion of the TC, through Mayoral activities, Annual Town meeting, website, newsletter, Social media and community engagement
- To draw up and review TC policies and standing orders
- To review TC investments
- To ensure that the council is adequately insured
- To approve subscriptions
- To set fees and charges for hire of Town Hall
- To consider applications for TC grants.
- To carry out annual risk assessments on all council activities
- To be responsible for the upkeep and improvement of the Town Hall
- To appoint working groups and consider their reports and agree any actions
- Approve recommendations from Staffing Committee confidentially
- To review the levels of use of the Youth Centre, ensuring value for money
- To make periodic inspection of the buildings to assess safety and functionality
- To create management policies with regards to youth matters
- To review the activities of the Town Council's youth provider ensuring value for money
- To set a budget allocation for youth matters

Terms of Reference - Staffing Sub-committee

- To review and recommend employment policies for adoption
- To be responsible for those staffing matters not in the responsibility of the line manager i.e. grievance appeals, salary adjustments, staffing structure, dismissals, appointments
- To consider budget matters relating to staffing from all relevant committees and deliver staffing according to those set budgets

- To ensure adequate staff training and development
- To review staffing levels to minimise risk to council's operation

Terms of Reference - Amenities & Recreation ~~and Tourism~~ Committee

- To set a budget for the smooth maintenance of amenity buildings & land
- To review expenditure against budget and make timely requests for additional funding from reserves
- To review recreation facilities and street furniture, their management and replacement
- To organise seasonal displays to enhance amenity land
- To appoint working groups and consider their reports and agree any actions
- To manage the lease or hire of football club, pitches and Magpies Social Club and Cadet Hut and mast, making an annual review of charges

Terms of Reference - Regeneration and Environment Committee

- To receive planning results from Stroud District Council
- To set budgets for specific projects
- To review expenditure against budget and make a request to Council for expenditure from Reserves
- To consider regeneration issues relating to Stonehouse, including neighbourhood plans and Local Plan. To monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan (should it be adopted as part of the statutory planning system).
- To consider environmental issues relating to Stonehouse
- To prepare and oversee emergency planning
- To appoint working groups and consider their reports and agree any actions
- To consider traffic and transport
- To maintain bus shelters belonging to TC
- Contribute to the improvement of strategic sites
- Seek funding for regeneration projects

Terms of Reference - Development Control Panel Sub-committee

- To consider planning applications received from Stroud District Council with **delegated powers** to put forward TC's response within the time-frame allowed.
- To consider TC's response to planning appeals, scoping reports and pre-application requests.

CURRENT ACTION PLANS - 2017-2022

Theme Objective	Scheme	Committee	Current Status	Updated
Theme 1 & 3 Objective 1/2	New Community facilities at Oldends Lane comprising community hall, skittle alley & bar, housing and landscaping	Amenities & Recreation	Planning Stage	Jul 2017
Theme 3 Objective 2	Development of redundant Pavilion for social housing	Amenities & Recreation	Legal Stage	Nov 2017
Theme 1 Objective 1/2	Improve usage of the town hall	Finance & Strategy	Consultation Stage	Feb 2017
Theme 1 Objective 2	Town Events	Finance & Strategy	Planning Stage	Feb 2017
Theme 5 Objective 2	Ship Inn Site - working with canals trust and district council to provide amenity space on the canalside	Regeneration & Environment	Planning Stage	Nov 2017
Theme 5 Objective 2	Footpath to town centre carpark	Regeneration & Environment	Actioned	Finished
Theme 5 Objective 2	New railway station Bristol Rd site	Regeneration & Environment	Consultation stage	Feb 2017
Theme 1 Objective 1	Updating Play Equipment Laburnum	Amenities & Recreation	Finished	Oct 2017
	Oldends Lane Playing field		Consultation	Nov 2017

Review of the Strategy

The Policies Working Group will re-evaluate the Strategy objectives set out in the Neighbourhood Plan .

The Working Group will also evaluate whether the Council is meeting it's strategic theme objectives, as set out in the Action Plans, annually prior to the AGM