



STONEHOUSE **TOWN COUNCIL**

Adopted 15 Jul 2019 (Minute TC2234)

Next Review: July 2020

Council Strategy Document

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 2019-2024 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 Redeveloping and renewing 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 to contribute to the above.

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 for wildlife and for people.

Objective 3

The Council is committed to playing its part in reducing Global carbon emissions and will do this, by:

- 3.1 Pro-actively reducing our CO2 emissions as an organisation
- 3.2 Seeking to encourage and enable our community to decrease their emissions and improve their resilience to climate change
- 3.3 Seeking to influence the policies of other organisations to encourage them to reduce their emissions.
- 3.4 Acknowledging that 'business as usual' is not an option in the face of the climate emergency, and that society in its current form is unsustainable.
- 3.5 Strategically reassessing and adjusting the scope of our current activities.

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
 - Maintaining the general power of competence
 - Ensuring that its resources are not overstretched
 - Providing grants to local organisations.

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

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
 - Acts as Data Controller
 - Authorises special payments & contracts as required under Financial Regulations
 - Considers any legal matters including legal disputes, acquisitions and disposals of Fixed Assets
 - Authorises Expenditure of S106
 - To ensure that the council is adequately insured
 - To approve subscriptions

Terms of Reference - Council Business Committee (Chair of Council plus 6 councillors)

- 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 and recommend the level of precept
- 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 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 set fees and charges for hire of council premises
- 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 council premises/playing fields making periodic inspection to assess safety and functionality
 - To manage the lease or hire of the sports stadium, pitches, and public land making an annual review of charges
- To appoint working groups and consider their reports and agree any actions
- To review the levels of use of the Youth Centre, ensuring value for money
- To create management policies with regards to youth matters
- 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 ensure adequate staff training and development
- To review staffing levels to minimise risk to council's operation

Terms of Reference - Human Resources Sub-committee

The HR Sub Committee will consist of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council, plus two other councillors.

The HR Sub Committee reports to the Business Committee

It is responsible for:

- issues pertaining to the wellbeing, support and development of all the Council's people including councillors, paid staff and any volunteers.
- employment matters (including relating to contracts, Terms and Conditions, Job Descriptions and recruitment) of paid staff.
- Ensuring it has sufficient level of HR expertise which may include purchasing of services subject to the agreement of the relevant committee.

All matters affecting Council employees, councillors and volunteers will be discussed in confidence.

Terms of Reference - Town Environment Committee

Terms of Reference - Town Environment Committee (Vice Chair plus 6 councillors)

- To draft a budget for acceptance by the Town Council
- To review expenditure against budget and make timely requests for additional funding from reserves
- To review street furniture, maintenance and replacement
- To organise seasonal displays to enhance amenity land
- To appoint working groups and consider their reports and agree any actions
- To receive and record planning results from Stroud District Council
- To consider and respond to planning, appeals, scoping reports and pre-application consultations
- To consider environmental issues relating to Stonehouse and seek funding for ad hoc projects
- To consider traffic and transport issues
- Respond to other local authority consultations about strategic plans

- To consider regeneration issues relating to Stonehouse, including Neighbourhood and Local Plans.
- To work towards the creation of a cultural identity for Stonehouse with provision of annual events
- To manage the maintenance and use of the Town Greens

Review of the Strategy

The Council will evaluate annually prior to the AGM to ensure it is meeting its strategic objectives, as set out in the Action Plans,

CURRENT ACTION PLANS - 2019-2024

| Scheme | Committee | Current Status | Updated |
|---|-------------|---|------------|
| New Community facilities at Oldends Lane comprising community hall, skittle alley & bar, housing and landscaping | Environment | Planning refused Resubmission | April 2019 |
| Landscaping of Oldends Lane carpark | Environment | Awaiting decision on renewed planning application | April 2019 |
| Development of redundant Pavilion for social housing | Environment | Progressing | April 2019 |
| Improve usage of the town hall including co-location with the library | Business | Consultation on co-location | April 2019 |
| Town Events: Maintaining and Expanding the range of events such as The Goodwill Fest and Thursday market | Business | Ongoing | April 2019 |
| Ship Inn Site - working with SHIPS and Stroud District Council to provide amenity space on the canal side | Environment | Planning for social housing refused SHIPS working on alternative proposals. Requesting change to Neighbourhood Plan | April 2019 |
| Wharfdale Way sites - working with Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to improve canalside facilities | Environment | Funding in place GWT arranging concrete removal, planting and fencing SDC commissioning landscape architect | April 2019 |
| Improving signage between the Town Centre, station, | Environment | Funding obtained | April 2019 |

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|---|-------------|---|------------|
| Cotswold Way, canal and cycle route | | | |
| Working with the Canal Partnership to promote the use of the canal | Environment | Ongoing | April 2019 |
| Updating Play Equipment Laburnum New Play Scheme Oldends Lane Meadow Road | Environment | Laburnum and Oldends (first stage) completed | April 2019 |
| Investigate ways for the Town Council to become a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030 and produce a strategy for achieving this. | Business | Environmental Working Group formed to look at this | April 2019 |
| Encourage and enable our community to decrease their emissions and improve their resilience to climate change | Business | Environmental Working Group formed to produce plan | April 2019 |
| Research funding available for grant schemes from 2020-2021 onwards which will enable carbon-reduction activities in Stonehouse and provide guidance on grant criteria. | Business | Environmental Working Group formed to look at this | April 2019 |
| Town Centre Regeneration | Environment | Working with CCRI and GMTF to produce data for use in funding applications | April 2019 |
| Improving bus shelter provision | Environment | Town centre shelters all replaced or repaired and ownership taken on by Town Council.. Contribution made to new shelter at Stagholt (just outside town boundary) | April 2019 |

Appendix A - Desired Infrastructure Projects

| Project / Delivery Objective | Evidence of need / source of proposal | Possible funding Source(s) | Project Status / Progress to date | Project Notes / Comments | Last updated |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Sensory garden at Garden of Rest adjacent to Laburnum Field | | | Stonehouse in Bloom actioning | | April 2019 |
| Management of Court View newt ponds | | | GWT actioning | | April 2019 |
| Increase the variety of sports facilities in Stonehouse eg tennis courts, all weather pitch, swimming pool | Neighbourhood Plan | | | | April 2019 |
| Reopening of Bristol Road station | Neighbourhood Plan | | Negotiations continuing | | April 2019 |
| Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Great Oldbury and to the industrial estate | Neighbourhood Plan | Developer contributions | | | April 2019 |
| Additional loop of the Cotswold Way into Stonehouse | Neighbourhood Plan | | | | April 2019 |
| Improved disabled access at Burdett Road station | Neighbourhood Plan | | | | April 2019 |
| Improved cycle access to Ebley Road avoiding the horsetrough roundabout | Neighbourhood Plan | | Awaiting current A419 alterations | | April 2019 |
| Improvements to National cycle Route 45 | Neighbourhood Plan | | Awaiting current A419 alterations | | April 2019 |
| Cinema | Neighbourhood Plan | | | | April 2019 |

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|---|--------------------|---|--|--|------------|
| Improved 'gateways' to Stonehouse | Neighbourhood Plan | | | | April 2019 |
| Improved recycling facilities eg segregated litter bins | | | | | April 2019 |
| Tree planting scheme | | | | | April 2019 |
| Provision of co-working and flexible working space | Neighbourhood Plan | SDC Market Town Initiative: £20,000 contribution agreed | | | April 2019 |