

SDC Councillor's Report - March 2026

Council meetings

Link to meeting agenda and documents in the committee title.

Full Council - 19th February 2026

Annual budget meeting, to agree the final SDC budget and also the council tax for 2026/27. Council tax comprises four elements - to pay for the county council, district council, Gloucestershire police, and the parish or town council services. Council tax rates vary from parish to parish, depending on the parish precept. The final council tax figures for Stroud district parishes can be found [here](#).

This budget will increase council tax by 2.99% (£7.27pa) to £250.35 at Band D, an increase of under 14p per week for the services provided by Stroud District Council.

The budget identifies funding for priority initiatives as well as support or ongoing services, and includes a commitment of £1.3million to community services, health and well-being and community safety initiatives.

Social and affordable rents for council houses will increase by 4.8% in line with national rent guidance limits. The Council will be investing a further £9.9million in new council homes for next year. Nationally, Stroud District is in the top 30 council house builders in the country, building more council homes than Manchester.

It was noted that the final local government financial settlement from the Government, announced only a few days before the budget was finalised, will mean reduced funding for the following two financial years from 2027.

Documents approved were:

- The General Fund Budget, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan.
- The Council's Treasury Management & Investment Strategies for 2026/27.
- The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026/27 - providing up to 100% support for vulnerable residents (currently over 5,000 households in the district benefit from this scheme).

The **Council Plan** which sets out the priorities for the Council, has undergone an annual review, and the updated version for 2025-2029 was approved ([link](#)).

The **Council Constitution** was updated to reflect some minor changes and councillors voted to change the rules for council meetings, to bring them in line with committee meetings, meaning that councillors will no longer be required to stand when they speak in the meeting.

Council agreed to support a national [letter](#) about **proposed planning reforms** to the Secretary of State, asking the Government to remove the proposed restriction which would prevent councils in their Local Plan from requiring developers to build new homes to net zero operational standards, higher than the national minimum standard.

The **Civic Timetable** setting all the dates for council and committee meetings in 2026/27 was approved ([link](#)). Meetings of the Development Control Committee which deals with planning applications, will henceforth be scheduled more frequently, on a monthly cycle.

- [Video recording](#)

Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy approved. SDC must survey and locate any potentially contaminated land then produce a strategy that explains how it will identify and assess those sites, carry out inspections, and secure remediation when required. To date, it is estimated that 450 of the 1746 sites currently identified have been investigated remediated or deemed suitable for use. The updated strategy details the complete procedure from detection through assessment to clean-up.

Climate & Nature Decision Tool. A new tool was approved that will provide summary information about the impacts of any decision on aspects of climate, nature and the environment to inform significant decisions taken by the Council and its officers

Member Reports included:

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire. Selected three of five grant applications (total £80k) for climate projects in Cheltenham and Tewkesbury and funding for the Gloucestershire Nature & Climate Fund. Work was noted on the climate impact and adaptation aspects of the new GCC Spatial Development Plan. The group also endorsed the letter opposing limits on local authorities setting net-zero standards for new buildings and referenced recent briefing notes by the group on Warm Homes and the National Planning Policy Framework consultation.

Gloucestershire Resource & Waste Partnership This group takes a collaborative approach across district & county councils to share best practice, trial a range of initiatives & work towards more unified waste arrangements in preparation for unitarisation, retaining local specialisms where these are beneficial.

- Communications will be focused on two recycling priorities to support the new 'Simpler Recycling' arrangements: food-waste and flexible plastics, leveraging national campaigns.
- Reported steady reductions in household waste with just over half of waste now recycled, and this recycling rate is above the national average. Aim to further increase recycling, driven by carbon-metric targets and upcoming incineration taxes.
- Explored improvements such as smaller bins, less-frequent collections, and differentiated regimes for flats, with benchmarking against top-performing regions like Wales (an exemplar through consistency & Govt. investment).
- Piloting a "Fast Food litter" app (for rollout in spring), proposal for the voluntary code of practice for food-on-the-go to be mandatory, and a fuel-station plastic glove-removal trial by Tesco was successful and councils will request that it is rolled out nationally.

Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board

- Secured an additional £2m loan from the Public Works Loan Board for pump projects amid rising construction costs.
- Highlighted ongoing works: 2,750 home residential development at Berkeley, land-owner enforcement at Tockington and drainage maintenance at Lydney.
- Noted funding pressures after the Environment Agency ends its flood-defence maintenance program and rising electricity costs for pump operations.
- Raised concerns with Ofgem over the volatility of electricity bills for drainage boards, emphasising limited progress from those discussions.

Minchinhampton & Rodborough Commons Advisory Committee

- Completed a visitor-journey audit of Rodborough Common (late 2025); identified need for dog-walker signage and cohesive visitor messaging.
- Faced reduced National Trust funding, prompting greater reliance on volunteers and staff-led maintenance.
- Launched a grazing-recruitment drive to replace retiring grazers and sustain ecological management.
- Scheduled a public talk, 7pm 18 March 2026 at Rodborough Community Hall, by Prof. Chris Short on environmental governance.
- Marking Day 2006 celebration on 16 May 2026 details to follow.

· [Video recording](#)

Other news

Council reorganisation - Residents are encouraged to [share their views](#) about the three proposals to reorganise the district councils and county council in Gloucestershire before a Government consultation closes on 26 March.

For info - A majority of Stroud District Councillors voted to support a single unitary council for Gloucestershire. This is due to the disadvantages that would arise, for residents in Stroud district, if the county is split into two unitary councils for the East and West, and due to the extra cost, complexity and duplication that dividing county council services would cause.

Crowdfunding Stroud District Council invites community groups to [explore crowdfunding support](#) with free workshops. There will be two free online workshops in early March to get ready for the Spring 2026 funding window on [Wednesday 4 March, 12–1pm](#) and [Thursday 5 March, 6–7pm](#). Project creators will need to have their crowdfunding page live on the Stroud Funding platform by 6 May 2026.

[Canal clean-up](#) restores pride in Stroud's waterways. SDC has been carrying out a targeted clean-up operation along sections of the Stroudwater Navigation to remove graffiti and repaint areas where marks cannot be safely cleaned away. This work is helping to improve the look and feel of the area and is partly funded by the Office of the Police and Crime

Commissioner (OPCC) for Gloucestershire. To report graffiti or damage in our district, please visit www.stroud.gov.uk/report-it