

Stroud District Council Report April 2026

Council meetings

Link to meeting agenda and documents in the committee title.

Strategy & Resources Committee - 16th April

- **Stratford Park Lido in Stroud** - Capital Investment Options. The lido first opened in 1937 and is now an ageing facility in need of repair, and due to its condition needs to remain closed to allow further investigations to be completed. Work to reopen the lido depends on addressing a number of safety-critical issues identified through specialist surveys.

At the Committee meeting, an amendment to the recommendation was agreed, which commits the council to develop a costed schedule and timetable identifying the minimum essential works required to bring the lido back into safe use as soon as possible, and a similar schedule for a more comprehensive plan for the refurbishment of the lido for the medium and longer term.

Subject to the survey results (expected June 2026) being satisfactory, and to any costed plans being within budget (£900k capital investment works and/or £200k revenue repair works) the repairs could commence immediately. There is further info about the lido, including FAQs and fortnightly updates on the Council's website <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/culture-leisure-sports-parks/lido/>

- **Active Lifestyles Stroud - Leisure centre in Stratford Park** - Agreed to add £650,000 to the Capital Programme to fund the gym equipment replacement and refurbishment works to ensure resources are targeted to meet community needs. This is much needed investment to replace ageing equipment and to refresh the facilities following the council taking back management of the centre over a year ago.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy** - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced in 2008. It provides a fair and transparent means for ensuring that development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure it will ultimately rely on, such as schools, social infrastructure, flood risk mitigation works, transport, and roads. Previously, SDC could only make formal CIL funding allocations over one financial year. The revised guidance extends this to three years, giving partner organisations greater financial certainty and more time to plan and deliver community infrastructure projects. This year any bids for CIL funding must be sent to SDC by 10 September.
- **Corporate Enforcement Policy** - The Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit (CFEU) has prepared this new policy which sets out the legal framework and principles the Council will follow when undertaking investigations for a wide range of breaches and offences. It demonstrates the Council's consideration of necessity, proportionality and public interest when deciding on enforcement action.
- **Local Government Reorganisation Joint Scrutiny Proposals** - A new joint scrutiny group will be set up across all Gloucestershire councils, to ensure accountability for, and understanding of, the Gloucestershire Local Government Reorganisation Programme. This new scrutiny group will be in place until the 'shadow' unitary authority/ies are elected, which is currently expected in May 2027.

- **Leadership Gloucestershire** - covered Police Reform White Paper, Local Growth Plan, Gloucestershire Housing Commission, skills and training, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision, and a new 'anti-hate statement' to be used by Gloucestershire organisations in public facing communications to demonstrate that hate and discrimination will not be tolerated in the county.
- **City Region Board** - covered the Together Gloucestershire project which aims to create a platform for private and public sector organisations to source ethical and reliable suppliers in Gloucestershire; challenges facing the retail and hospitality sectors; a Spatial Development Strategy for the county (which would sit above the local plans); Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool and Strategic Economic Development Fund.
- **Canal Project** - updates on governance, M5 crossing project, community engagement, and the recent visit by the National Lottery Heritage Fund Board of Trustees in March which included filling Oldbury Pound with water - the first section of the 'missing mile' of the canal to be reconstructed since part of it was filled in by M5 construction from the late 1960s.
- [Video recording](#) (626 views)

Environment Committee - 23rd April

- **Tree Management Policy** - A new SDC policy where trees are recognised as vital natural assets that enrich biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience, shape local landscape character and enhance community wellbeing. The policy has eight objectives: maintaining public safety through proportionate tree risk management; delivering cost-effective, environmentally positive tree care; ensuring high professional standards in arboricultural work; improving public information and engagement; protecting biodiversity with a focus on notable, ancient and veteran trees; increasing canopy cover through appropriate planting and climate-resilient species; supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation; and ensuring fair distribution of tree benefits across all neighbourhoods.
- **Biodiversity and Monitoring Duty Report** - SDC's progress from July 2023 to January 2026, highlighting achievements in habitat restoration, community engagement, and statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) implementation. Eight approved gain plans delivering 75% on-site biodiversity gains. There are continued commitments to 2031, including expanded land management across 30 sites, strengthened governance integration, and ongoing landscape-scale recovery projects with partners like the National Trust and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.
- **Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG)** - This group ([CLG link](#)) brings together all the councils in Gloucestershire along with health and other partners. In the context of local government reorganisation, it is recommended that the group's work should continue and potentially expand to include broader community engagement. Current waste actions were reviewed, which are: Reducing non-recyclable waste; Encouraging circular economy network; De-carbonise waste fleet; Reduce food waste; New depot provision (Shared Tewkesbury and Cheltenham site). The group added a new action on the Javelin Park Incinerator and its future operation. The Secretariat produced a climate policy planning document for sharing with councils.

- **Stroud Valleys Natural Flood Management Steering Group** - Inspected a new intervention at Syde, near Miserden, where a 400m straightened channel was restored to its natural floodplain state using leaky woody dams and scrapes to slow water flow and improve wetland connectivity. The project successfully reduced downstream flood risk and created 0.52ha of improved habitat, the visit highlighted a need for better public education regarding the temporary visual impact of restoration works and suggested acquiring water monitoring equipment to track nutrient levels.
- **Update reports** - from the Lower Severn Independent Drainage Board and Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership.
- [Video recording](#) (36 views)

Council - 30th April

- **Leisure services** - Council received questions about the lido and confirmed the recommendation above for investment in renewing the gym at the Active Lifestyles Stroud. Cllr Kitchen asked for information relating to investment relating to active lifestyles work in relation to the Wotton ward. Cllr Braun highlighted the council's [Healthy Lifestyles Scheme](#) which supports people to be more active in a safe way to benefit both their physical and mental health, delivered across the district in partnership with health professionals and instructors.
- **New Local Plan** - Council approved the commencement of a new Local Plan, which is a Government requirement. This will mean publication of the statutory Notice of Commencement by 30 June 2026 and a 'Gateway 1' self-assessment by 31 October 2026. The Government's new system introduces a 30-month end-to-end process to produce a local plan, supported by three Gateway stages. This is intended to accelerate plan adoption and achieve universal coverage of up-to-date Local Plans across England.
There is a significant cost associated with this new Local Plan process (approx £2.5 million) but numerous advantages, including: strong plan-led control over development; responding to higher housing needs; addressing key infrastructure constraints; demonstrating a five-year housing land supply, and avoiding the risks of speculative development. The final guidance on this new local plan process has not yet been published and is expected this summer.
- To note: Stroud district's minimum local housing need will rise to at least 820 dwellings per annum, a significant 33% increase over the 620 dwellings per annum used for the submitted 2021 draft Local Plan.
At the same time, the draft Local Plan is still under examination, with the Planning Inspectors currently consulting with the local councils and National Highways about the M5 Junction 12 and 14 corridors. This examination and any final report will stretch well into 2026 and overlap with the new Local Plan preparation.
- **Gloucestershire council reorganisation** Council noted the SDC formal responses to two recent consultations:
 - Government Consultation on Local Government reorganisation in Gloucestershire; SDC is strongly in favour of a single unitary authority
 - Joint response to Government Consultation on Areas for producing Spatial Development Strategies states that Gloucestershire's devolution journey should lead to membership of the West of England Combined Authority, and

that Gloucestershire should form a single foundation strategic authority as a pre-cursor to joining the West of England Combined Authority.

- **Committee meeting format and deadline for public questions** Council approved changes to its constitution:
 - At the Development Control Committee, for public speaking and parish presentations to take place before the Planning Officer's introduction, so technical issues raised during public participation can be better addressed.
 - To give a longer deadline for the submission of public questions - so that questions can be submitted up to 3 clear working days ahead of the meeting (previously 4 clear working days).
- **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging Annual Report** - Approved the annual report and action plan and the formal addition of the socio-economic duty to the Council's policy to better address financial inequality. This follows successful progress on accessibility and engagement initiatives last year. It was agreed that neurodiversity would also be considered in future.
- **Ubico business plan** - [Ubico](#) is the council-owned company which delivers environmental services (including bin collection) across Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire. The business plan notes the company's expansion into Wiltshire, and the launch of a new five-year roadmap focused on operational efficiency, fleet decarbonisation, and preparation for Local Government Reorganisation. The plan prioritises growth while enhancing safety, digital transformation, and community partnerships across Gloucestershire.
- **Canal project** - Agreement that the Chief Executive, in consultation with group leaders, and subject to appropriate risk assessment, could enter into the Heads of Terms for a lease with National Highways to operation of a new section of the Stroudwater Canal beneath the M5 Motorway.
- [Video recording](#) (203 views)

Other news

- **School Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme** - Cllr Cohen is working with SDC to put in place local HAF provision for the summer which will be in Wotton and Kingswood.
- **Climate and Nature briefing** - a new 50 minute film, the [People's Emergency Briefing](#), which sets out the key information everyone needs to know about the climate and nature emergency (particularly councillors), is being screened at venues across our local area. It's a compelling watch and well worth attending one of the viewings: [Wotton Cinema](#) (9 May - tickets £6), Sawyer Hall Nailsworth (1 June), The Armstrong in Thornbury (4 June), the Chantry Centre in Dursley (7 June) and the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester (25 June). Further details and information can be found on this [map](#) along with options to host further screenings at community venues.
- **Westridge Woods** - Cllr Braun continues to engage with relevant officers and residents about the forestry management works in the woods and has discussed with the SDC Tree Officer that it would be useful for parishes to be notified in future about any felling license consultations from the Forestry Commission.

- **Recycle more at home:** we're now collecting toothpaste tubes and brown (but not black) plastic plant pots <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/recycle-more-at-home-we-re-now-collecting-toothpaste-tubes-and-plastic-plant-pots/>
- **New council homes** First six of sixteen new affordable homes in Kingswood bought by Stroud District Council <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/first-six-new-affordable-homes-bought-by-stroud-district-council/>
- **New £5 bulky waste collections** for eligible residents <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/new-5-bulky-waste-collections-for-eligible-residents-1/>
- **Community climate and nature grants** - new round now open <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/new-round-of-community-climate-and-nature-grants-now-open/>
- **Renters Rights** Stroud District Council prepares residents for major changes under the Renters Rights Act <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/stroud-district-council-prepares-residents-for-major-changes-under-the-renters-rights-act/>
- **Music in the Park** - returns to Stratford Park this May <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/music-in-the-park-returns-to-stratford-park-this-may/>
- **No Mow May** Residents encouraged to take part <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news/leave-what-you-can-residents-encouraged-to-take-part-in-no-mow-may/>