



## STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

<http://lsp.stroud.gov.uk>

Meeting held on Friday 11 September 2020  
Online meeting

Theme for this meeting:

**What is the 'New Normal' in the Stroud District**

### Present:

Anna Herbert	CEO OPENHouse	Ben Falconer	Corporate Communications Manager, SDC
Beth Whittaker	Stroud Businesswomen's Network	Chris Pockett	Renishaw PLC
Cllr Doina Cornell	Leader, Stroud District Council	Cllr Stephen Davies	County Councillor and District Councillor
Dr Roma Walker	Chair, Stroud Hospital League of Friends	Fred Barker	Director of Transition Stroud
Helen Edwards	NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	Helen March	Stroud District Youth Council Chair
Janice Banks (Chair)	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council	Kathy O'Leary	Chief Executive, Stroud District Council
Martin Hughes	CEO Lilian Faithfull Care	Max Comfort	Social Enterprise & WCCG
Neil Grecian	Mayor of Dursley	Paul Cruise	Gloucestershire Constabulary
Rob Fountain	Age UK Gloucestershire	Russell Warner	Federation of Small Businesses
Will Mansell	The Grace Network		

### Apologies and absent:

Alison Robinson	Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils	Alison Truphet	Executive Director, New Ventures Trust
Carole Stubbs (Vice Chair)	Job Centre Plus, Gloucestershire & West of England District	David Nairn	Fluid Transfer
David Owen	CE, GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership	Eilis Cope	Cope Sales & Marketing
Emily Gravestock	UK Space Agency	Geoff Beckerleg	Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Stroud
Kevin Hamblin	South Gloucestershire & Stroud College (SGS)	Margaret Wilcox OBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Mary Hutton	NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	Richard Kerry	Station Manager, Stroud District Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Sarah Telford	CE, Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswolds	Simon Bernstein	Chief Executive, Longfield
Siobhan Baillie	MP for Stroud	Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown	MP for The Cotswolds
Sue Bailey	Sue Bailey Consulting	Tom Woods	MD Greiner Bio
William Frazer	National Farmers Union		

## Guests & Support Officers:

Petula Davis, Stroud District Council	Steve Miles, Senior Youth Officer
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### 1. Welcome, introductions, apologies

Janice Banks, the new Chair welcomed everyone to the first Zoom meeting and a number of apologies had been received. Carole Stubbs of the DWP has taken the Vice Chair position.

Janice thanked Beth for her enthusiasm, ideas and energy over the past two years as the LSP Chair. Beth will be remaining on the LSP representing the Stroud Businesswomen's Network.

### 2. UK Ventilator Challenge (ppt)

[Renishaw](#) – Chris Pockett

In March, it was predicated that the UK would require up to 30 thousand ventilators. Renishaw amongst others were approached by the Cabinet Office to help with the scaling up of the production of ventilators. Renishaw were part of a consortium who teamed up with current suppliers – Penlon (Abingdon) and Smiths Medical (Luton) who were manufacturing about 50-60 ventilators per week. In just 12 weeks the 13.4 thousand finished ventilators were produced. The group effort from all the partner organisations had one single focus of getting the 'job done' rather than promoting their organisations. Renishaw's machine shops in Stonehouse and Miskin (nr Cardiff) worked 24/7 to manufacture 115,000 components for assembly using 5km of steel bar stock (25 tonnes in weight). Renishaw received the Royal Academy of Engineering - President's Special Awards for Pandemic Service.

Adapting to the new normal, has meant change. The manufacturing sites remain open but overall capacity is reduced due to reductions in staff numbers. A high level of home working for office based employees. Customer support throughout the pandemic has been through the utilising digital collaborative tools for training/presentations and remote diagnostic tools. Only after rigorous risk assessments have necessary sites visits been undertaken. Prior to the pandemic Renishaw, which is a global business, had to size the business but still have a strong balance sheet.

*Comments made:*

*Found to be very heartening that so many organisations pulled together in a time of need with an absolute focus on what they wanted to achieve rather looking at what they could get out of it for their organisation.*

### 3. The Long Table – Will Mansell (ppt)

The Long Table is part of the Grace Network which owns and operates a number of social enterprises in the Stroud District. <https://www.thelongtableonline.com>

Before lock down The Long Table was a restaurant with a focus on the way food is produced, cooked, eaten and shared, sharing premises with the Food Bank. Following the March restrictions, the Long Table was looking at bankruptcy as, applying social distancing rules would mean it was no longer viable. So a rethink was needed. So we offered to cook frozen meals for those people who cannot get out and based it on a social enterprise model. Then we were approached by a number of contacts from across the County including the Bishop of Gloucester who said 'That's a good idea, can you help others to do that?' So in the space of 10 weeks we delivered 31.5k meals (47K to date). We formed a coalition with 7 community kitchens from

Gloucestershire using Long Table recipes and then formed another coalition of referrers and distributors, supplying food to foodbanks, supported housing, government contracts including food for the homeless hostels.

How did we do it we worked together others and helped other groups. Grace network's theory is Heart of a charity, Mind of a business. In March it was a natural reaction to changing circumstances We believe that values are the way to lead change. The Grace Network are good at getting things done but we can be tricky to work with. At a local level enterprise coalitions were formed during lockdown without friction – Good culture combined with professional logistics create change.

Question for LSP – Home working is good for those whose involves using your head not your hands, low wage businesses will struggle to retain staff who 'work with their hands', and are not able to work from home. With the furlough scheme ending, how can we help mitigate the effects and manage the needs of those who are unable to work from home?

*Comments made:*

*'Heart of a charity and mind of a business', this is a point that all community and charity groups need to embrace.*

#### **4. Stroud District Council – Kathy O'Leary (ppt)**

Impact of the pandemic on the Council, particularly of how we met some of the challenges with the community and what is the new normal for Stroud District Council.

Through our emergency planning, SDC has had flu / pandemic plans in place for a number of years, however not to this unprecedented scale. We had been moving all staff from fixed desks to laptops which we stepped up, which ensured that all 367 staff were enabled to work from home when we went into lock down, allowing Council services to still operate. At the announcement of lock down emergency plans were activated by the Local Resilience Forum which was driven by Government and led by the Director of Public Health. Communications were key to residents, staff, tenants and members all having access to the right information, using our website and social media. <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/health-wellbeing/coronavirus-update>

A Gloucestershire Community Help Hub was setup and SDC co-ordinated the activity to help the vulnerable people we knew and find and help those we didn't know. The Community response was inordinate

A Community Resilience Fund was also set up and gave grants worth £49,664 to 55 community groups. All 15 rough sleepers and sofa surfers were placed in accommodation. Grants of more than £26m were given to eligible business helping 2414 businesses. Waste and recycling collection continued as normal. There was an increase in anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and noise complaints. Council meetings were held remotely.

With the summer easing of lockdown, SDC agreed new plans of

- Recover, Reset and Renew
  - Business and economy, market towns and rural vitality
  - Community resilience and wellbeing
  - Housing and homelessness
  - Climate Change and Environment
- SDC modernisation
  - Capitalising on progress made during the pandemic
  - Reshaping services, improving digital offer

The new normal?

- SDC is Ready to respond as infection rate rises, working with community groups
- Continuing recovery work
  - Leisure Centres open with reduced offer
  - Museum in the Park open by appointment <https://museuminthepark.org.uk/>
  - Staff back at Ebley Mill in 'bubbles' and on rotas
  - Ebley Mill Reception opening early October by appointment only, (Government guidance changed after the meeting and so remains closed.)

*Comments made:*

*Thank you to SDC for quickly getting grants out to small businesses. Is there any way that SDC could publish 'scores on the doors' for Covid inspections?*

## **5. Partners' updates**

The partner updates were focused on 'The New Normal'.

GRCC – have adapted over the period contacting vulnerable people that we were aware of and contacting other organisations to ensure that people were connected for food and medicine supplies. Running on online sessions to get the community halls up and running again. In Stroud GRCC have taken over the Independence Trust <https://www.independencetrust.co.uk/> delivering a community well-being and also a mental health service and autism support service countywide – no change to the service delivery to users.

Stroud Businesswomen's Network – Continued to meet via Zoom meetings and have been well attended, a lot of members are sole traders/micro businesses that did not qualify for help but the meetings enabled people to share problems which has been good for mental wellbeing.

Paganhill Community Group – 40 local people volunteering working with the Food bank and the group has enabled a community garden and the produce is being shared. Working with SDC to help with key messages to the local community.

Dursley Town Council – moved from physical meeting to zoom. Working together with SDC in supporting our High street which is now open be it limited. GL11 with its volunteers has been the main support HUB for help and advice.

Transition Stroud – a new member of the LSP - a community based organisation that seeks initiatives to support sustainability. Pre pandemic we were supporting the creation of Climate Action Networks. However, the focus of communications changed to sign posting people to information and support dealing with the pandemic. A Forum was developed for the CAN groups already formed, to continue to exchange advice and experiences. At the next Forum meeting, Rachel Brain Carbon Neutral Officer from SDC will be discussing the Council's draft 2030 Climate Strategy and how the groups can get involved with its consultation. The Forum also looks at practical projects and how they can promote the Green Homes grant scheme that the Government is introducing within their communities and encourages retrofit on their properties. Work with Stroud Valleys Project to see how we can help contribute to the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy. About half the town and parishes have Climate Action Groups.

Age UK Gloucestershire – Our Help Team has been very busy. The immediate response at the beginning was around worries over safety, food and medication supplies. However, the level of demand has shot up with July being the busiest month due to people coming out of lockdown with benefit and health and social care needs issues which had been 'stored' up. The complexity of cases and the demand of services is higher than a normal winter. There is an increase in demand for Home Share. Most community engagement is now on line but have

produced activity packs for those unable or unwilling to be on line and posters for shops to help them with older shoppers.

Stroud Hospital League of Friends – Changed our processes and awarded block grants to the General (£30k) and Maternity (£20k) Hospitals to enable them to spend as needed ASAP. We also provided support to the GPs and Co-vid Hub with PPE and £15k to the Long Table. Going forward long term projects such as refurbishment of wards are on hold and we are likely to have to look at recruiting new volunteers. Pre Co-vid our volunteers were very hands on in the hospitals café, helping bed making, trolley service for example but most of our volunteers are 65 years + so it was unsafe for them to remain. When we return our pool of volunteers is likely to be reduced and so more/younger volunteers will need to be recruited.

Federation of Small Businesses – the majority of small businesses are made up of one or two people, and initially the high volume of calls we dealt with were from very desperate business owners. The grant funding was a very welcome relief for many but not all. Some businesses have been hit very hard – retail, hospitality, and travel but there have been winners including distribution, medical and communications. We are currently trying to help those who have not qualified for any help.

Open House – we provide housing and support for young people with complex needs, who had difficulty in understanding the Co-vid restrictions which led to an increase in mental health issues. We also have 10 roomed property, Painswick Inn, in Stroud which was empty due to a previously lost contract. When the Government's instruction of 'all in' where rough sleepers to be housed, we realised that our property could be part of the solution. Working with SDC, the Long Table and others, we took on the high risk of housing 10 entrenched adult rough sleepers with complex issues. Though a challenge it has been very rewarding and hope to be part of making a change going forward.

Stroud District Council comms. – huge increase in the use of digital communications with visits to SDC Facebook page and other social media channels up by 40%. However, to ensure that residents had information about getting help and advice a 'yellow letter' was sent to all 54206 households. Internally the use of Teams and Zoom is the new norm, with expectations of returning to Ebley Mill in reduced numbers shortly. The annual SDC newsletter which due out in the next couple of months will be full of help and advice.

Stroud District Council – Leader. Going forward we are concerned with the economic impact when the furlough scheme ends and people lose their jobs and how the Council can help by working with Glos. County Council, LEP and community organisations to sign post to practical help and how we can support businesses, individuals and communities. SDC has also seen its income cut and so we are looking to be more of an enabler. Stroud Growth HUB is local resource for businesses. Despite the restrictions we are still doing business such as the Local Plan and have just started to review our Equality Policy and how the protected characteristics are impacted in our area.

The Exchange - Thankful for the discretionary grants. Currently working on addressing the affordable housing concerns following the government planning reform white paper. Looking at setting up a Stroud District Housing Fund with the intention that should a site come up for sale we will have the funds to buy it for affordable housing.

Stroud District Youth Council – The Youth Council has continued to function with online meetings which has been difficult as we rely on personal interactions. We have continued to interact with the British Youth Council with meetings and workshops which has allowed us to have influence on a wider geographical scale during co-vid. Priorities have been towards supporting young people in lockdown with the different struggles they face - exam results day

and more recently being blamed for the spread of the virus. Our Annual Review will look back at our achievements over the last 18 months and looking forward to see how we can continue to facilitate a youth voice and influence. Nominations for the Youth Council will take place next week with the AGM to follow. Youth Sector has been deemed to be an essential service more aligned with education.

Gloucestershire Police – we had started to decentralise our teams starting with community policing, co-vid sped this process up and Stroud and Dursley have now been teamed up with the Cotswolds as one area. Staff have also been working from home and we are gradually returning to work. With regards to the Government rules we continue to follow – Engage, Explain, Educate and lastly Enforce.

Lillian Faithful Care – We run 5 homes looking after 300 most vulnerable older people with 450 carers. In the Stroud district we have Resthaven Nursing Home and Uplands Day Service which merged on 1st March. We closed our doors two weeks before Government guidance and also bought a container of PPE from China and we have suffered minimal infections. We have now safely reopened the Uplands Day Service providing a huge support for to the elderly community in Stroud.

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Please send any requests for future agenda items to Petula Davis, [LSP@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:LSP@stroud.gov.uk)

### **Future meeting dates**

**2020**

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December**  
**Friday 5th March**

**Remote meeting**  
**Remote Meeting**

All meetings are 9.00am for a 9.15am start, until 11.30am