



STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Meeting held on Friday 6 December 2024

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill

Theme: Emergency planning and response

Present:

Will Mansell (Vice Chair)	The Grace Network	Adrian Oldman (in part)	Director, Transition Stroud
Alison Truphet	Amberley Shop & Café	Alyssa Pearce	Chair, Stroud District Youth Council
Andrew Cummings	Strategic Director of Resources	Anna Bonallack	CEO, Creative Sustainability
Anna Herbert	Chief Executive Officer, OPENhouse	Barbara Piranty	Chief Executive, GRCC
Beth Whittaker	Third sector / community involvement	Cllr Catherine Braun	Leader, Stroud District Council
Elizabeth Hall	Chief Executive, Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswolds	Georgia Spooner	Climate Engagement and Advocacy Officer
Ian Hunter	Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Stroud & District	James Hutchins	Stroud and Dursley Inspector, Gloucestershire Police
Lee Taylor	Stroud and Nailsworth Station Manager, Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service	Cllr Lindsey Green	Conservative Group Leader, Stroud District Council
Steve Elliott-Mead	Trustee, OPENhouse	Tim Davies (in part)	Chief of Staff for Dr Simon Opher MP

Apologies received:

Russell Warner (Chair)	Gloucestershire Area Lead, Federation of Small Businesses	Carole Stubbs	Job Centre Plus, Avon, Somerset and Gloucestershire District
Chloe Warden	Senior Economic Officer, Gloucestershire County Council	Chris Pockett	Head of Communications, Renishaw
Clare Davis	CEO, Longfield	Dan Morris	Deputy Chairman, Howard Tenens
Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown	MP, North Cotswolds	Helen Edwards	NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
Kathy O'Leary	Chief Executive, Stroud District Council	Keith Gerrard	Strategic Director of Communities, Stroud District Council
Kevin Hamblin	Group Chief Executive Principal, South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)	Lisa Ferneyhough-Moss	Deputy Director of Care Operations, Lilian Faithfull Care

Margaret Greaves	Interim Chair, Stroud League of Friends	Mark McShane	Head, Stroud High School
Max Comfort	Director, Stroud Commonwealth	Roz Savage	MP, South Cotswolds
Sarah Scott	Executive Director Adult Social Care, Gloucestershire County Council	Dr Simon Opher	MP, Stroud
Steve Olczak	Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions	Tanya de Leersnyder	Chair, Stroud Businesswomen's Network

Absent and apologies not received:

Chris Haine	Chief Officer, GAPTC	Indigo Redfern	Chief Executive, GL11 Community Hub
-------------	----------------------	----------------	-------------------------------------

Guests and Support Officers

Emma Smith	Projects & Consultation Officer	Gabrielle Webb	Emergency Planning Officer (Business Continuity)
Hannah Barton	LSP Coordinator	Rachel Seymour	Flood & Community Resilience Officer GRCC
Steve Miles	Youth Strategy and Safeguarding Manager		

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies.

Russell Warner (Chair) was unable to attend this meeting so Will Mansell (Vice Chair) chaired in his absence. The Vice Chair welcomed everyone and noted the apologies.

The Vice Chair asked those in attendance to discuss one thing that is going well and one thing that isn't going well in their workplace/position with the person sitting next to them.

2. Update on draft Council Plan

Cllr Catherine Braun outlined the progress on the draft Council Plan since the previous LSP meeting in September. The previous LSP meeting provided an opportunity for LSP members to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan and discuss areas where SDC could make improvements. Cllr Braun outlined the improvements that were made following LSP feedback.

Public consultation began in October and closes Sunday 8th December at midnight. Cllr Braun explained the next steps for the Council Plan after the consultation finishes. To ensure the Council Plan is clear and easy to understand, a glossary will be included, and an easy-read version will be produced, as well as a one-page overview.

A question was asked about the language used in the Council Plan and whether it is understandable for 'ordinary people', as hard to understand wording can put people off from getting involved. It was noted that there are lots of different audiences for the Council plan and the actions within the Council Plan will explain more specifically what steps will be taken for each of the priorities, aims and objectives. The feedback on the language used within the Council will be taken into consideration going forwards. It was highlighted how the Gloucestershire Youth Climate Group translated the County Council's climate action plan into an easy-read document, so this is something the Council could consider in future.

A question was asked about the Temporary Accommodation Strategy, and it was noted that this can be viewed on the council's website.

Another question was asked about the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Action Plan and where this can be found publicly. It was agreed that a link would be shared with the relevant LSP member following the meeting.

3. Community Emergency Planning

Rachel Seymour (Flood & Resilience Officer, GRCC) introduced herself to the LSP members.

The aim of GRCC is to create thriving, sustainable places for people to live and work. GRCC is a member of ACRE (Action for Communities in Rural England). GRCC aim to enable sustainable community development, and inspire, enable, and deliver community action.

Emergency planning can start at household level, such as grab bags, household emergency plans, ensuring householders have flood defences, and then develop to working with parish and town councils to develop community emergency plans. Emergency planning can be done for a wide range of situations. Knowing who is chair of the parish council, a builder, a tradesman, who has any first aid training, where the local defibrillator is located, is all essential to know how to respond to emergency situations.

Plans are created to help the community and emergency responders; plans should work in harmony with everyone and the emergency services. Emergency Planning doesn't replace the emergency services that are in the district. It gives the community the capacity to respond in the first instance effectively and puts in place a plan for the gap between calling the emergency services and waiting for them to arrive. Effective emergency planning can strengthen our communities.

Climate change as well as other external influences is affecting our weather patterns. Communities need to be able to respond to these to mitigate these changes. GRCC want the community to work together for the future generations, where people can stay and live in their area for as long as they want too.

Community Emergency Planning aligns with SDC's draft council plan priority 'Community Resilience & Wellbeing'. Resources for community climate action aim to empower communities, recommend environmentally friendly actions that can help combat climate change, and help the environment.

GRCC facilitate and coordinate the volunteer flood wardens. These are volunteers who voice the concerns of their community to implement changes in relation to flooding. They will be the voice of their communities, working with the Environment Agency, County Council, and anyone with a relationship to flooding, to ensure they are addressing any issues in that community.

A question was asked about how many flood wardens there are in the Stroud district. It was explained that there are none currently in the Stroud district yet, but GRCC are working with Gabrielle Webb to launch flood wardens in the Stroud district. Volunteers can be anyone over the age of 18, anyone interested in climate change, those effected by flooding in their community, or studying climate change related topics.

Another question was asked regarding how many flood wardens are appropriate when there are many smaller areas and villages in the district. Rachel noted that that there is a positive impact with a more connected community, and it can be very beneficial to have more flood wardens.

A further question was asked about whether people living at the bottom of hilly areas are being targeted to become flood wardens. Rachel explained that people from any area can be a flood warden and many volunteers might not necessarily be directly affected by flooding but can still help mitigate the problem. Rachel noted that flood wardens can report issues directly to the Gloucestershire County Council highways team.

4. Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Emergency Response Arrangements

Lee Taylor (Stroud and Nailsworth Station Manager) introduced his presentation about Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service is made up of five wholtime stations, two in Cheltenham, two in Gloucester, and one in Stroud. SkillZONE is a community education facility that hosts school trips and school visits. Lee covered the specialist capabilities and different appliance specialisms and officer specialisms across the county.

There are four strands of things the team do: Prevention and protection, pre-planning, and emergency response. Lee and the team can conduct familiarisation visits, which include things like checking hydrants work, and completing ops planning forms and tactical forms. Other elements to pre-planning include business fire safety checks, predetermined attendance, recording temporary risks, road closures and event plans.

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service undertake regular exercises, including testing new procedures and techniques, which are undertaken to ensure that all policies and procedures are effective and minimise casualties.

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service sit under the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a network for responders to communicate and work together for emergency planning and ensure effectively delivery of services. Command levels consist of three different stages. Strategic/Gold Commander, Tactical/Silver Commander, Operational/Bronze Commander.

An Oplink is a call that can be done in very short notice to get all the key responders onto a Teams call in an emergency. This enables the sharing of risks and hazards and makes it easy to communicate with each other.

Category 1 responders have a statutory duty of civil protection, and Category 2 responders have a limited supporting obligation to cooperate and share information.

Lee covered JESIP, which are joint models and principles that came out following the London bombings in 2007, and the 13/16 Arrangements which are intended to help fire and rescue services support each other and reduce the risk of being unable to handle an unexpected incident.

A question was asked about how district councillors or members of the public can report risks in the area. Lee noted that the business fire safety team can be contacted, who will go out and inspect the situation. Education plays a key part in these situations as lots of businesses/individuals don't realise that certain things are a fire risk.

Another question was asked about dealing with border issues and determining who responds to incidents close to borders. Lee explained that the closest appliance will respond regardless of border. For example, if there was a house fire in between two locations, both services would send out appliances with different resources to use in the situation.

A further question was asked about how often major incidents are tested Lee noted that there is a full major incident exercise every year, where they simulate a response, but there are also tabletop exercises throughout the year to ensure that officers and members of staff are trained.

A question was asked about whether organisations can request a familiarisation visit. Lee confirmed that this is possible, and crews can come out and offer safety advice.

There was some discussion about narrow roads in the district and access for vehicles. It was explained that there are restricted access vehicles (slimmer fire engines), and a 4x4 unit at Stroud, so they can ferry crews and equipment back and forth from a location. It was added that from a police perspective, the police will work with partners to ensure access and to help with moving cars that are parked on narrow roads.

A question was asked about why water companies are a Category 1 responder. It was explained that this is set by central government, but Severn Trent are very cooperative in emergency planning situations.

Fire's links with the VCS sector was discussed and it was highlighted that there is a VCS "cell" where members of the VCS sector are involved in emergency planning.

5. Emergency Planning in Local Authorities

Gabrielle Webb (Emergency Planning Officer (Business Continuity)) introduced herself and gave an overview of where she sits within the Council. Gabrielle works with the LRF, and a lot of subgroups, including the risk subgroup, planning subgroup, and others.

Category 1 responders include all the blue light services, NHS trusts, port health authorities, and the environment agency. The MET office joined the list of Category 1 responders recently. Category 2 include electric and gas distributors, water and sewage companies, and telephone service providers. As a category 1 responder, local authorities have a duty to respond to emergencies and to provide temporary accommodation for those that become homeless through an incident or an emergency. The Council also takes a lead in setting up rest centres. SDC has a list of pre-identified rest centres with the facilities they offer. Stratford Park can house up to 800 people if required. In the event of an emergency, a coordination team will be set up within the council offices to help coordinate the rest centre and emergency. In the event of an emergency, SDC will adopt the Command-and-Control structure. There are 14 silver tactical officers. There is always a silver or gold officer on call each week. Bronze team is the works team.

A question was asked about who determines when an incident turns into an emergency. It was explained that any organisation can arrange an op link call and declare an emergency. The government will cover financial losses or provide funding if necessary. Lots of different partners may need to be involved in the emergency for intelligence gathering.

Another question was asked about when the last rest centre was set up. Storm Eunice was the last time one was set up, but it didn't need to be open for long.

A further question was asked about the systems that are in place to communicate if Wi-Fi/signal goes down. It was noted that councils have RAYNET, the UK's national voluntary communications service provided for the community by licensed radio amateurs.

There was some discussion about communications as it was noted that communication was not great during COVID. The council review every incident for learnings and communication is always the first thing that is discussed when it comes to how SDC can improve. It was discussed how the LSP can support with communicating some of the information that is covered during the LSP meetings.

Social media was also discussed, including how it can be used in an emergency and in relation to mis- and dis-information. Rachel Seymour mentioned that GRCC are working on a piece of work about this, including evaluating previous situations and how misinformation can be prevented in emergency planning. James Hutchins mentioned that the Police communicate very carefully on social media, and a robust communication strategy is essential. It was also noted that people are choosing to film incidents on their phone, rather than calling the emergency service.

6. Recruitment of Vice Chair

Russell Warner's term as Chair will end in June 2025 and Will Mansell will take over the Chair position. This means there is an opportunity for someone to become the new Vice Chair. The next Vice Chair should come from the public sector as per the Terms of Reference. If anyone is interested in this role, please let the LSP coordinator know.

7. Future LSP meeting themes

The Vice Chair asked the group to consider themes for future LSP meetings and send any suggestions through to the LSP Coordinator.

8. Partners' updates

Steve Olczak, Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions:

The Stroud Job Centre is back open. With regards to pension credit, please remind people of State Pension age (66+) who are not receiving certain benefits* that they should check their eligibility and apply for Pension Credit, as they could qualify for Winter Fuel Payment* and other support like help with housing costs, help with Council Tax and a free TV licence for those aged 75 and over. There is also a new Veteran's Travel Card in collaboration with Gloucestershire County Council, which can be issued at any Gloucestershire Job Centre. The card enables the individual to have 50 single bus journeys which cover pretty much all the main providers as listed below, Should the Veteran use the 50 single journeys on card, they can go back to the Jobcentre to request another.

The bus travel card can be used 24 hours a day. Just hold the bus travel card against the card reader when you board a bus. Bus travel is not possible across county boundaries. Please contact Steve Olczak for further information.

[Deadline to claim Pension Credit in order to receive Winter Fuel Payment | Gloucestershire County Council](#) – Deadline 21st December 2024

[Veteran's Travel Card | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Margaret Greaves, Interim Chair, Stroud Leage of Friends:

The annual service at Holy Trinity Church in celebration of Stroud Hospital is set to resume in 2025. This particular year coincides with the 150th anniversary of the hospital on its present site. We have recently received confirmation from the hospital chaplaincy team that Bishop Rachel Treweek will attend the service to be held at Holy Trinity Church at 3pm on Sunday 6th July. Please contact Margaret Greaves for more information.

Cllr Catherine Braun, Leader, Stroud District Council:

Brimscombe Port – This is the biggest development the council has been involved in, constructing 150 homes. Consultation for this project will be held at Stroud Brewery on Thursday 12th December.

The council is working budgets for the next financial year, and the English deviation white paper is due anytime. The council is waiting to hear about the proposals.

Alison Truphet, Amberley Shop & Café:

Empathy Action are developing an immersive experience called 'Desperate Journeys' which is designed to raise awareness of the difficult circumstances that refugees are experiencing. These events will be happening in April at St Lawrence Church. 15 sessions are booked with Schools, and evening sessions will be available for local adults and students. There are lots of partners involved in this project, so please look out for it.

[Desperate Journeys — Empathy Action](#)

Ian Hunter, Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Stroud & District:

Chamber of Trade and Commerce have hosted a range of projects to attract more tourism to the area. This is the first year that they are coordinating the Goodwill festival. They will continue to promote the Stroud district in the future.

Georgia Spooner, Climate Engagement and Advocacy Officer, Stroud District Council:

The Climate Change and Sustainability team are refreshing the 2030 Strategy, which will be called the Climate and Nature Strategy. The Chair and Vice Chair will be attending an LSP meeting next year to hear ideas and comments. There is also a new company called 'Furbnow' that has been launched to help homes who have the money to retrofit their homes to make sure they are well insulated.

[Furbnow - Your companion for home energy improvements](#)

Anna Bonallack, CEO, Creative Sustainability:

The Creative Sustainability Hub on John Street will be educating people on the practical measures people can take to support a more sustainable future. Community programmes including the Stroud Library of Things (SLOTH) are taking shape. Bike repairs and refurbishments are also going well. Creative Sustainability are starting to look at supporting people to fix their small devices, as well as offering specialist and expert advice and running workshops regarding home insulation and similar things of nature.

Adrian Oldman, Director, Transition Stroud:

Pedal Power Scheme in Gloucestershire is now available. Opportunity for residents of Gloucestershire to rent an e-bike for up to 3 months.

[Pedal Power - E-bikes for everyone](#)

Alyssa Pearce, Chair, Stroud District Youth Council:

Stroud Youth Voice are reviewing the strategy and plan for the year ahead.

Rachel Seymour, Flood & Community Resilience Officer, GRCC:

GRCC are on the lookout for flood wardens, volunteers must be over the age of 18. They are mainly looking for younger generations, but also would like a diverse group.

Beth Whittaker, Third sector/Community involvement:

Read with Me are looking for volunteers to provide one-to-one support in primary schools across Gloucestershire to enable children to read well before they go to secondary school.

[Home - Read With Me](#)

Cllr Lindsey Green, Conservative Group Leader, Stroud District Council:

Developments with Neighbourhood Development plans and Green Parish plans, and Parish planning information will be distributed soon.

The Chair adds a final comment – What is the point of LSP? It is only as good as the outputs the LSP team make from it. If anyone has ideas about any other members of the district that should be at the meetings, anyone who would like to chair, or any ideas on content, please let the LSP team know.

Please send any requests for future agenda items or suggestions for future meeting themes to Emma Smith, emma.smith@stroud.gov.uk.

Next meeting

Friday 7 March 2025

The meetings are 9:00am for a 9:15am start, with meeting end by 11:30am.