STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
http://lsp.stroud.gov.uk

Meeting held on Friday 11 September 2026

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill

Theme: Making the Stroud district a place that engages, supports, and advocates young people through their journey to become adults.

Present:

Angele Presdee	Business Development Manager, Gloucestershire County Council
Anna Bonallack	CEO, Creative Sustainability
Annie Gould	Trust Relationships Manager, Longfield Hospice
Beth Whittaker	Third sector / community involvement
Cllr Chloe Turner	Leader of the Council
David Withey (Vice Chair)	Chief Executive & Principal, South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)
Georgia Spooner	Climate Engagement and Advocacy Officer, Stroud District Council
Niki Gould	Assistant Director of Services & Innovation Gloucestershire, Family Action
Rebecca Bound	STEM Outreach Officer, Renishaw
Rebecca Cleaver	Economic Development Officer
Sue Eskins	Chair, Stroud Businesswomen's Network
Will Mansell (Chair)	Founder, The Grace Network

Apologies received:

Adrian Judge	Director, The Engine Room
Adrian Oldman	Director, Transition Stroud
Alan Inman-Ward	CEO, Age UK Gloucestershire
Alyssa Pearce	Youth Council Chair, Stroud District Council
Angela Gillingham	Head of Community Services, Stroud District Council
Anna Herbert	Chief Executive Officer, OPENhouse
Barbara Piranty	Chief Executive Officer, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Ben Falconer	Corporate Communications Manager
Chloe Warden	Senior Economic Officer, Gloucestershire County Council
Chris Pockett	Head of Communications, Renishaw Plc
Chris Uttley	Climate Change and Sustainability Manager, Stroud District Council
Cllr Elisabeth Newman	Randwick & Westrip Parish Council
Cllr Katy Hofmann	Leader of the Labour Group
Cllr Lindsey Green	Leader of Conservative Group
Dai Briley	NFU Mutual Agent at Gloucester
Dr Roma Walker	Stroud League of Friends
Dr Simon Opher	Member of Parliament - Stroud
Elizabeth Hall	Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice Stroud
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP	Member of Parliament - North Cotswolds
Hattie Severinsen	Gloucestershire County Advisor, NFU

Kathy O'Leary	Chief Executive, Stroud District Council
LaToya Howe	Youth Participation Officer
Lee Taylor	Stroud & Nailsworth Station Manager, Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue
Lisa Wilson	Chief Executive, GL11 Community Hub
Mark McShane	Stroud High Head Teacher
Max Comfort	Director, Stroud Commonwealth
Roz Savage	Member of Parliament - South Cotswolds
Russell Warner	Gloucestershire Area Lead, Federation of Small Businesses
Sarah Clark	Head of Environmental Health, Stroud District Council
Steve Olczak	Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions
Suzanne Booker	Lilian Faithfull Care

Guests and Support Officers:

Adam Gain	Activities Lead, Creative Sustainability
Cllr Maggie Dutton	Labour Group
Elizabeth Bruce	Stroud Youth Action Network (SCYAN)
Emma Smith	LSP Coordinator
Hannah Drew	Communities Development Manager, Stroud District Council
Louise Myatt	Communities Development Officer, Stroud District Council
Poppy Stott	Caseworker, Dr Simon Opher MP Office
Thomas Haines	Dr Simon Opher MP Office
Tim Davies	Chief of Staff, Dr Simon Opher MP Office
Tom Harvey	Constituency Assistant, Roz Savage MP Office

1. **Welcome, introductions, apologies.**

The Chair explained the purpose of the LSP and why it has chosen to pivot it's focus on youth. The Chair introduced the speakers, and members introduced themselves.

2. **Youth Action Plan**

In 2024, the council started a journey to develop a youth strategy for the district. The development of the strategy began with a fresh approach to youth work by engaging a wider range of community stakeholders and partner organisations than ever before. Through the consultation process and feedback received from young people, community groups, partners and stakeholders, it became clear that a practical action plan was needed rather than a high-level strategy. As a result, the focus shifted towards creating a delivery-focused document that sets out clear priorities and actions to improve outcomes for young people across the district.

The team commissioned Active Gloucestershire to facilitate a series of dynamic systems modelling workshops involving adult stakeholders and community partners across the district. The purpose of these workshops was to examine and respond to a strategic development statement established by a project initiation group comprising of community stakeholders.

The Youth Action Plan sets out the districtwide vision, strategic priorities and outcomes to support children and young people aged 11-25 to be happy, healthy, safe, included and empowered to enable them to develop and strive to be the best they can be. The statement that brought community stakeholders together was 'We believe children and young people aged 11-25 should be happy, healthy, safe, included and empowered to enable them to develop and strive to be the

best they can be.' Alongside the community stakeholder consultation, the council's youth team collaborated with practitioners from five youth delivery organisations across the district to develop and deliver a youth consultation programme.

The aim of the action plan was to reflect the council's commitment to listen to youth voice, respond to their needs, and create inclusive opportunities for growth, wellbeing, and active participation. This approach to developing the action plan began with a desire to strengthen existing partnerships across the youth sector within the district and to build new ones.

3. Stroud Funding

Stroud Funding is the council's community funding initiative whereby projects ideas from the community, for the community, can come to life. There are two funding rounds per year, usually in spring and autumn, where organisations or individuals can apply. Along with pledges made from the community, the council can donate up to £10,000 to crowdfunding campaigns, capped at 50% of the project target. For example, a project of £3,000 could receive up to £1,500 from the council.

Stroud Funding is hosted on the Spacehive platform. The UK-based organisation works with local authorities to foster a collaborative approach in bringing forward external funding streams to compliment and leverage community projects. In the council's case, Spacehive do the verification checks for organisation backgrounds, project permissions, and costings, as well as project support in campaigning.

Louise Myatt provided an overview of the council's role in the initiative and how it aligns with the strategic priorities of the council. The Community Services team provide support and promote projects by sharing posts on social media and connecting organisers, with organisations. They host launch events as well as clinics to support project creators one-on-one. Louise demonstrated the impact Stroud Funding has had so far, with 3,559 total backers, 33 projects funded, £596,832 total pledged, with £142,039 pledged by the council itself.

There was a discussion about social value and how the LSP can get involved via partner donations, volunteering opportunities, and promotional support. Louise confirmed that organisations and individuals can apply more than once. Evidence of impact is encouraged, for example, if the project relates to mending a broken roof on a community building, applicants should demonstrate what activity would stop if this wasn't fixed. The more data provided the more evidence to support the project.

Members discussed how costs incurred with using Spacehive need to be made clear to project creators. Spacehive charge 7.5% + VAT for their platform fee, this is automatically added to the project target and included in the overall amount crowdfunded. There is a further 2.9% transaction fee charged by their payment partner Stripe. Spacehive do not charge fees for money submitted before the campaign officially starts. *Find out more information on their website.*

There was a discussion about informing those who have pledged previously about the outcome of a project, Louise confirmed she would contact project leads to ensure they are communicating this, she noted that projects are required to do an impact report once the initiative has concluded.

The Stroud Funding clinic drop in events are linked below, the deadline to have a project verified is **Wednesday 21 October 2026**.

SDC Grants Clinic Drop-In Tickets, Wednesday, September 23 • 10 AM - 2 PM | Eventbrite
SDC Grants Clinic Drop-In Tickets, Thursday, September 24 • 5 PM - 7 PM | Eventbrite

4. Safe, Inclusive Spaces, Enrichment & Opportunities, and Mental Health & Wellbeing

The Chair split members into three different groups and requested that they discuss which actions from the youth action plan they can support the delivery of, and which actions they are doing already. Notes were written on A2 paper which have been summarised below:

Members highlighted the importance of involving young people in decisions, services and spaces that affect them. This included co-designing public spaces, facilities, and services with young people, balancing youth voice with adult perspectives in decision-making, and engaging young people in strategic planning, including the Local Plan and other planning policy development.

Members recognised that meaningful co-production requires clear principles and takes significant time, best practice examples included Stroud Town Council's work on participatory budgeting and SGS College's Student Leadership Team.

There was agreement in adopting an inclusion-first approach to developing services for young people, drawing expertise from organisations like Creative Sustainability regarding cultural and attitudinal inclusion. More specific practical approaches to inclusion like improved lighting in darker spots across the district, and improved provision of online safety and crime prevention, particularly for young people with specific needs. There were also conversations about strengthening support for neurodiverse young people through existing networks.

Opportunities to connect young people with local employers were explored, including better coordination between public, private, and community and voluntary sectors when discussing work experience and shared activities, e.g. linking Stroud Businesswomen's Network with SGS College, and connecting the Climate Action Network Forum (CAN) with local schools and the Stroud Youth Action Network (SYAN). Other examples of organisations with a non-traditional approach to learning and development included the Red Horse Foundation equine-assisted therapy, and the Gloucestershire Youth Project practical learning and personal support for those who benefit from a smaller, more flexible education setting.

Discussions around safe, inclusive spaces for young people included maximising use of existing facilities, some of this provision included Creative Sustainability's post-college 3rd Space for young people aged 16 – 25, SGS CREATE aimed at young people aged 14 – 16, and SGS Oasis for SEND learners.

5. Discussion

Members were invited to discuss topics raised in their sub-groups. This began with what the council could offer; a new Local Plan is underway, so this was identified as a good opportunity to collect feedback about safe spaces in the district. Rebecca Cleaver noted that she would engage with strategic planning and planning teams to see if there is scope for involvement from LSP members and young people. Cllr Maggie Dutton suggested reaching out to Climate Action Network Forum (CAN) to see how they involve young people in their initiatives.

Stroud Youth Action Network (SYAN) is working with careers advisers to strengthen their involvement in youth clubs and is engaging with local employers to explore opportunities for organisations to work with young people in senior youth clubs. This aims to provide alternative pathways into education, training and employment, supporting young people in education and supporting those who are not to enable them to access employment opportunities.

Members noted the wide range of young people accessing local safe spaces and suggested developing a youth-led "wish list" to identify physical items, opportunities and support they would value. Elizabeth Bruce emphasised the importance of engaging young people in places they feel most comfortable, highlighting the Climate and Nature Team's successful drop-in session at a local youth club as an example. Members agreed that the development of dedicated safe spaces is

integral and suggested contacting Parish and Town Councils to see if they have created a similar initiative in their areas.

Members highlighted that many young people do not have a trusted adult in their lives and, as a result, may lack personal aspirations or goals. It was recognised that young people should feel a sense of belonging within their local communities, and members agreed that this is often fostered through non-educational settings such as youth clubs.

David Withey highlighted that SGS College has a range of facilities, including print rooms, media studios and workshop spaces, that they are keen to make available to a broader range of young people beyond its student population. He noted that the SGS strategy includes an ambition to transform its campuses into community hubs during the summer months where they are underutilised.

The Chair closed the conversation by noting that when people see an initiative that works, they tend to join in. He spoke about a language of civic trust and noted how it would be most impactful to identify activity that already exists and is establish how the LSP can support it's growth and development.

6. Future LSP meeting themes

The chair asked the members to discuss future themes and to email any suggestions to Emma Smith on emma.smith@stroud.gov.uk.

7. Partners' Updates

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

- A Climate and Nature Partnership meeting is scheduled for Friday 23 October, hosted at Rednock School. Young people will be attending the event to share their views on sustainability topics, the headteacher is also scheduled to speak, while partner organisations will have the opportunity to discuss the sustainability measures, they have already implemented, as well as measures they would like to develop in the future.
- Please contact Georgia.spooner@stroud.gov.uk if members would like to join the partnership or have access to the minutes.

Niki Gould, Assistant Director of Services & Innovation Gloucestershire, Family Action

- A successful summer event saw young people and PCSOs take part in a football match, followed by a rounders game in a local park identified as an area of concern. The events helped create a more positive use of the space and supported with breaking down barriers between young people and public services.
- Youth Support Manager vacancy has become available for anyone interested.

Annie Gould, Trust Relationships Manager, Longfield Hospice

- Longfield are extending their services to involve families that are impacted by illnesses and bereavement. They have created safe spaces for parents and grandparents to bring children with them when accessing their services alongside the delivery of a successful counselling initiative.

Elizabeth Bruce, Stroud Youth Action Network (SYAN)

- They are now properly formalised as a CIC and are seeking funding from any individuals or organisations, they are already partially funded via a Parish Council but require further financial support.

David Withey, Chief Executive & Principal, South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)

- There are a few spaces left in some courses at the college and guidance and advice sessions are available for those interested.

Anna Bonallack, CEO, and Adam Gain, Activities Lead, Creative Sustainability

- 3rd Space at Fromehall Mill is an initiative aimed at 16 – 25 years olds who need extra support.
- Access Bike is a youth space based at a community bike workshop which primarily supports young people aged 13 – 25, with an opportunity to come together to enjoy cycling, and to build, repair, and upcycle old bikes.
- They now have access to a film and audio suite where young people can develop media and filmmaking skills.
- The Great Big Climate Circus is a touring, youth-led creative programme working across 12 communities in Gloucestershire.

Chloe Turner, Leader of the Council

- The Thriving Communities Grant is open for applications on the Gloucestershire County Council website. These guidelines are also helpful for your consideration. The deadline to apply is **Friday 16 October** at midnight.
- The High Sheriff's Fund has reopened, please find further information on their website.
- The Community Climate Adaptation Fund is available, the deadline to apply is **Wednesday 30 September** at 5pm.

Next meeting
Friday 4 December 2026

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