

TRANSITIONSTROUD

INSPIRING ACTION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Transition Stroud belongs to the Transition Network – a movement of over 1000 communities in 50 countries. Transition Stroud was the eighth Transition Town and we work for a future with more locally grown food, less waste, affordable sustainable energy, better transport and a strong community

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY AND THE STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY REVIEW

In November the Government published its Industrial Strategy White Paper, setting out a commitment to act strategically and to coordinate efforts to address four ‘Grand Challenges’, including ‘clean growth’ and the ‘future of mobility’. It has also published a number of companion strategies and plans, including a Clean Growth Strategy and 25 Year Environment Plan.

In areas without directly elected Mayors, the White Paper gives Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) a lead role in developing **local Industrial Strategies**. In Gloucestershire, this responsibility will fall to GFirst. In principle, development of a Gloucestershire Industrial Strategy that tackles the ‘Grand Challenges’ offers great opportunity for transition to a more sustainable future. Transition Stroud has written to GFirst outlining initial suggestions for ways in which this could be done.

The Government’s Industrial Strategy, and associated strategies and plans, will also have implications for Stroud District Council’s Environmental Strategy (ES), which is currently under review. This note has been written in response to the invitation from the Chair of the Council’s Environment Committee for Transition Stroud to give a presentation on these implications.

The implications are addressed in the table below. The first column in the table outlines the priority areas in the Council’s ES. The second column summarises the most relevant aspects of the Government’s Industrial Strategy and associated strategies and plans for the priority area in question. The third suggests a series of corresponding actions for potential inclusion in the updated ES.

Note that the table does not present a comprehensive analysis, but focuses on the more obvious potential links between Government strategy and policy development and review of the Council’s ES. At the time of writing, we are not aware of how far the Council’s own ‘Task and Finish’ Group has got with updating the ES. We hope, nonetheless, that the suggestions in this note are helpful.

STROUD DC ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY REVIEW – POTENTIAL ACTIONS ARISING FROM GOVERNMENT’S INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY, CLEAN GROWTH STRATEGY AND 25 YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN

| SDC Environmental Strategy (ES) Priorities and Potential Topics | Key Points from the Industrial Strategy (IS), Clean Growth Strategy (CGS) and 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) | Potential Actions for Inclusion in SDC Environmental Strategy |
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| <p>Priority 1 – Sustainable Consumption and Production</p> <p>Topic – Circular Economy (resources and waste)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic partners - Business - Education - Collection systems | <p>Significantly, the IS commits to moving towards a circular economy to ensure the efficient use of resources and enhanced resource security across all sectors¹. A key feature of circular economy thinking is an emphasis on <i>design of products and processes</i> to enable re-use, refurbishment, re-manufacture and recycling. Further detail is to be provided in a new national Resources and Waste Strategy.</p> | <p>Strategic partners – engage with strategic partners (Joint Waste Committee, GFirst) about potential for developing a strategy to promote, encourage, enable and support transition to a circular economy (as part of a Gloucestershire Industrial Strategy).</p> <p><i>Comment – a circular economy strategy could include, for example, a focus on: enabling development of a ‘resource recovery’ infrastructure²; identifying clusters of local businesses that could work together to develop circular economy business practices³; and setting up a collaborative platform between businesses, educationalists and policy makers to enable information sharing and discussion of ways of stimulating circular economy activities and overcoming market barriers.</i></p> <p>Business - encourage businesses to focus on key circular economy ‘building blocks’, including circular product design and production, and ‘reverse logistic’ collection systems (see below)</p> |

¹ HM Government, ‘Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain Fit for the Future’, Cm9528, November 2017, p148-150, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664563/industrial-strategy-white-paper-web-ready-version.pdf.

² Phil Purnell, ‘On a voyage of recovery: a review of the UK’s resource recovery from waste infrastructure’, Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure, 2017, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/23789689.2017.1405654?needAccess=true>.

³ The CGS refers to development of a network of ‘resource efficiency clusters’ led by LEPs, and supporting processes such as industrial symbiosis and new disruptive business models that challenge inefficient practices. ‘The Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the Way to a Low Carbon Future’, October 2017, p109, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>.

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| | | <p>Education – encourage local educational institutions to develop appropriate courses and training so that a local skill base can help drive innovation in product and process design for the circular economy</p> <p>Collection systems – consider potential within the timeframe of the ES for supporting development of ‘reverse logistics’ to enable materials and products to be collected for re-use, refurbishment and re-manufacture (in addition to existing recycling schemes)</p> <p><i>Comment: circular economy infrastructure and business models are at an early stage of development. For further information see the analyses and advice of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation⁴, the views of the Local Government Association⁵, the pioneering work in Peterborough⁶, and the UK collaborative research programme ‘Resource Recovery from Waste’⁷.</i></p> |
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⁴ See, in particular, ‘Delivering the Circular Economy: A Toolkit for Policymakers’, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, June 2015, <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications/delivering-the-circular-economy-a-toolkit-for-policymakers>, and ‘Towards a Circular Economy: Business Rationale for an Accelerated Transition’, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, December 2015, p14-17, https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/TCE_Ellen-MacArthur-Foundation-9-Dec-2015.pdf.

⁵ LGA, ‘EU Circular Economy and Waste Markets Position Paper’, August 2015, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/lga-response-eu-waste-con-cb2.pdf>.

⁶ <http://www.futurepeterborough.com/circular-city/>.

⁷ <https://rrfw.org.uk/>.

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| <p>Priority 2 – Climate Change and Energy</p> <p>Topic – moving towards a zero carbon future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic partners - Renewables - Energy efficiency - Smart systems - Agriculture and food <p>[For transport, see priority 4]</p> | <p>‘Clean growth’ is one of 4 ‘Grand Challenges’ in the IS, and decarbonisation is a key feature of that Grand Challenge. The focus is on the development, manufacture and use of low carbon technologies, systems and services <i>across sectors</i>, including industry, businesses, housing, transport and power. The IS refers to four early priorities: the development of smart systems; transforming construction techniques; making energy intensive industries competitive; and moving to high efficiency agricultural systems.</p> <p>More detail about the proposals and policies to meet carbon targets (the 4th and 5th ‘carbon budgets’) are set out in the CGS. The UK’s Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has recently published an independent assessment of the CGS⁸. It</p> | <p>Strategic partners – engage with strategic partners (GFirst, Gloucestershire CC) in development of a Gloucestershire Energy Strategy (as part of, or linked to, a Gloucestershire Industrial Strategy).</p> <p><i>Comment: it is understood that GFirst have received the go ahead from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to procure an Energy Strategy⁹. This should include ambitious local carbon reduction targets and an associated programme of cross-sectoral initiatives to achieve them¹⁰. The process for development of the strategy should include stakeholder engagement, drawing on the experience of other LEPs¹¹.</i></p> <p>Renewables – consider what could be included within the scope of a revised SDC ES to encourage, enable and support the further installation of renewable energy capacity within the district.</p> <p><i>Comment: although the Government’s IS and CGS are not immediately helpful, future SDC roles might range from involvement in a future roll-out of domestic and community energy projects, to working with strategic partners to identify a portfolio of investable renewable energy projects¹². As the CCC points out, firmer Government policies are needed to provide a route to market for lower-cost renewable options</i></p> |
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⁸ ‘An independent assessment of the UK’s Clean Growth Strategy – from ambition to action’, Committee on Climate Change, January 2018, <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/independent-assessment-uks-clean-growth-strategy-ambition-action/>.

⁹ GFirst LEP Business Group Update – January 2018.

¹⁰ See, for example, the approach being taken in ‘Net Zero North: Delivering the Decarbonisation Mission in the North of England’, IPPR, December 2017, <https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/net-zero-north>, and Baxter D and Cox E, ‘A Northern Energy Strategy’, IPPR, October 2017, <http://www.ippr.org/publications/northern-energy-strategy>. See also the review of the cost and effectiveness of low carbon options, and the scope for their deployment <http://bristol.ac.uk/cabot/media/documents/bristol-low-carbon-cities-report.pdf>.

¹¹ Steps are being taken to develop an Energy Strategy by a number of LEPs in or close to the SW, including the West of England, Oxfordshire and the ‘Heart of the SW’. In each case, stakeholder workshops are being run to inform strategy development. See for example, CSE, ‘West of England Energy Study – Stakeholder Event Stimulus Paper’, February 2018, and <http://heartofswlep.co.uk/news/cornwall-isles-scilly-dorset-heart-south-west-local-enterprise-partnerships-joint-energy-strategy-development-project/>.

¹² The ‘in principle’ potential for renewable and low carbon energy schemes within the district is mapped out in AMEC, ‘Development Location Comparison and Carbon Footprinting Study’, Report to SDC, 2011, https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2322/carbon_footprinting_study.pdf. See also Section 5 in ‘The Power to Transform the SW’, The Resilience Centre, 2015.

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| | <p>concludes that although the Government has made a strong commitment to achieving the targets, policies and proposals need to be firmed up so that projected gaps to meeting the targets can be closed. The CCC also stresses that the Government should aim to outperform the current carbon targets, in order to provide contingency and to lay the ground for meeting the deeper reductions that will be required to meet the Paris Agreement.</p> | <p><i>such as onshore wind and solar. A less restrictive planning framework¹³ and community ownership models would also help. The CGS says Government will provide an update on its approach later this year. Ultimately, given growing pressure to meet deeper carbon reduction targets, greater scope for SDC initiatives could open up within the timeframe of the revised SDC ES.</i></p> <p>Energy efficiency – consider what could be included within the scope of a revised SDC ES to encourage, support and undertake further energy efficiency initiatives within the district, building on the Council’s experience to date¹⁴.</p> <p><i>Comment: the CGS outlines proposals to improve the energy efficiency of domestic properties, including an extension of the Energy Company Obligation to 2028, a commitment to consider energy performance standards across the private rented sector, and an ambition for as many homes as practicable to reach EPC band C by 2035. The Government has also committed to publish further proposals in 2018¹⁵. In its review of the CGS, the CCC highlighted the need for more detail, and called for swift publication of an ambitious action plan for able-to-pay homeowners. Others have called for new or revised domestic retrofit schemes to be driven at a local level, to develop home-owner demand and building-trade supply¹⁶, and with the close involvement of local authorities¹⁷. It seems likely that greater scope for SDC initiatives on energy efficiency and domestic retrofit could open up within the timeframe of the revised SDC ES.</i></p> <p>Smart systems – consider what scope there is for (a) further use of smart technolo-</p> |
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¹³ See, for example, <http://www.tltsolicitors.com/insights-and-events/insight/onshore-wind-planning-obstacles/> and Section 4 in

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN04370#fullreport> for the impacts of the June 2015 changes to onshore wind planning policy.

¹⁴ ‘SDC and Carbon Neutrality’, item 7 report to the Environment Committee, 17 December 2015, <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/208651/agenda-document-pack.pdf>, and ‘Warm and Well Partnership Update and Future Provision’, item 9 report to the Environment Committee, 15 September 2016, <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/208590/agenda-document-pack.pdf>.

¹⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/653731/Call_for_Evidence_-_Building_a_Market_for_Energy_Efficiency_Final.pdf.

¹⁶ <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/file/CSE-response-to-BEIS-call-for-evidence-jan-2018.pdf> and see the innovative approach being taken by a London-based co-operative, Retrofit-Works, <http://retrofitworks.co.uk/about/>.

¹⁷ Baxter D and Cox E, ‘A Northern Energy Strategy’, IPPR, October 2017, p28-29, <http://www.ippr.org/publications/northern-energy-strategy>.

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| | | <p>gies in the Council estate, including energy storage and smart meters, and (b) engaging with partners to help shape a more democratic, decentralised and decarbonised electricity system¹⁸.</p> <p><i>Comment: the Government considers smart systems to be an important part of the IS and CGS, and has published a ‘Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan’, which seeks to remove barriers to using smart technologies and enable take up¹⁹.</i></p> <p>Agriculture and food – consider what the Council can do to encourage, enable and support transition to sustainable agricultural and food practices, potentially including through its approach to farm diversification²⁰, procurement²¹ and planning²².</p> <p><i>Comment: the IS refers to the Government’s aspiration to put the UK at the forefront of advanced sustainable agriculture through its programme, ‘Transforming Food Production – From Farm to Fork’. The CGS outlines the Government’s commitment to develop a new system of agricultural support which will address climate change more directly, and contains a range of proposals²³. The CCC welcomes this commitment, but calls for strong policies to be developed soon to deliver emissions reductions in agriculture. Note also the opportunity for local discussion on the future sustainability of food and agriculture organised by the University of Gloucestershire²⁴.</i></p> |
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¹⁸ Regen SW, for example, has been running stakeholder workshops with Western Power Distribution to take discussion forward, <https://www.regensw.co.uk/Event/democratic-decentralised-and-decarbonised-energy-systems-with-wpd-birmingham>.

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/upgrading-our-energy-system-smart-systems-and-flexibility-plan>.

²⁰ Raised in Q2.1f of the Local Plan Review Issues and Options Paper.

²¹ LGA, ‘Healthier Food Procurement: Case Studies’, August 2016, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/healthier-food-procuremen-ade.pdf>. Healthier food procurement can include reduced meat consumption, which can contribute to reduction in carbon emissions.

²² For example, see LGA, ‘Tipping the Scales: Case Studies on the Use of Planning Powers to Limit Hot Food Takeaways’, February 2016, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/tipping-scales-case-studi-bff.pdf>.

²³ These include: working with industry to encourage the use of low-emissions fertiliser; developing affordable low carbon fertiliser products; exploring the potential for bio-stimulants to improve nutrient use efficiency; exploring the viability of fertiliser production by recovering nutrients from wastes and other organic materials; and reducing the costs of resource use in crop and livestock production by improving understanding of crop soil interactions and exploring the potential of robotics and precision farming technologies. ‘The Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the Way to a Low Carbon Future’, October 2017

²⁴ <http://www.ccri.ac.uk/growing-future-prospecting-innovative-approaches-food-farming-environment/>.

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| <p>Priority 3 – Protecting Natural Resources and Enhancing the Environment</p> <p>Topic – enhancing natural capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic partners - Natural capital - Green infrastructure strategy | <p>The IS commits the Government to working “to enhance our natural capital – the air, water, soil and ecosystems that support all forms of life – since this is an essential basis for economic growth and productivity over the long term” (p135). It highlights the importance of ensuring “all aspects of natural capital are taken into account in approaches to infrastructure and other major investment decisions”.</p> <p>The CGS looks at natural capital through the lens of potential carbon reductions, and focuses on proposals for establishing a new network of forests and woodlands, including on farmland. It provides a commitment to plant 11 million trees.</p> <p>Further proposals have been set out in the Government’s 25YEP²⁵ (see opposite).</p> | <p>Strategic partners – engage with strategic partners (Stroud Nature, Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, GFirst) about opportunities that will or could arise from proposals in the Government’s 25YEP including, for example, development of a ‘Natural Capital Plan’ for the region, identification of potential areas for woodland creation, and the utilisation of innovative funding schemes for enhancing natural capital and delivering eco-system services.</p> <p>Natural Capital – consider what initiatives to enhance natural capital could be included within the scope of a revised SDC ES, taking into account the proposals in the Government’s 25YEP.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Strategy – consider how proposals in the Government’s 25YEP might be utilised to further develop and implement the Council’s new Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p> <p><i>Comment - proposals in the 25YEP include: embedding an ‘environmental net gain’ principle in local development decisions²⁶; incentivising and rewarding land managers to enhance natural capital; developing new funding and delivery mechanisms for eco-system services; working with LEPs to identify areas for large scale woodland creation; developing a ‘nature recovery network’; drawing up a new national framework for green infrastructure standards; and developing ‘Natural Capital’ plans for Environment Agency/Natural England integrated areas.</i></p> |
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²⁵ HM Government, ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’, 2018, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673203/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

²⁶ It has been argued that the “environmental net gain principle” could incentivise much greater uptake of green infrastructure including sustainable urban drainage (SuDS), green space, and green roofs and walls. See https://www.theccc.org.uk/2018/01/12/25-year-environment-plan-climate-change-perspective/?utm_source=CCC+-+Master+List&utm_campaign=161f967866-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_02_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8e2885ebd5-161f967866-69340213.

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| <p>Priority 4 – Creating Sustainable Communities</p> <p>Topic – future mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic partners - Vehicle fleet - Charging infrastructure - Cycling and walking | <p>As aspiration of the ‘future of mobility’ Grand Challenge is to harness innovation to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, other pollutants and congestion. The IS highlights four early priorities: establishing a flexible regulatory framework to encourage new modes of transport and new business models; seizing the opportunities of moving to zero emission vehicles; preparing for new mobility services and increased autonomy; and exploring ways to use data to accelerate development of new mobility services.</p> <p>The CGS contains further policies and proposals, including: transitioning to zero carbon vehicles, developing the charging network and encouraging low carbon alternatives to car journeys. In its assessment of the CGS, the CCC challenges the Government to be more ambitious in its targets for electric vehicle sales, and calls for more action on HGVs and on reducing car use.</p> <p>Further strategy development is promised, including on transition to zero emission road</p> | <p>Strategic partners – engage with strategic partners (Gloucestershire CC, GFirst) about the implications of the Government’s proposals and policies on the future of mobility for: (a) any future review and revision of the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015-31²⁷; and (b) how the transport Grand Challenge should be addressed in a Gloucestershire Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>Vehicle fleet – consider what actions for transitioning to an electric fleet of Council vehicles should be included in the revised SDC ES.</p> <p><i>Comment: the Government’s proposals for moving to zero emission road vehicles should improve the case for transition to an electric vehicle fleet²⁸. The Government is to announce plans for the ‘public sector to lead the way’, including publication of new ‘Buying Standards’.</i></p> <p>Charging infrastructure – consider what actions to improve coverage within the district could be included in the revised SDC ES, taking into account Government strategy and the opportunities arising from increased national investment in the charging infrastructure.</p> <p><i>Comment: The IS announced support for electric vehicles through a £400m charging infrastructure investment. The CCC has published research on the future requirements of the charging network, considering numbers, types and locations of charging points²⁹. Note also that Travel West is running a major market research initiative to help inform the future development of the West of England’s charge point network³⁰.</i></p> |
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²⁷ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/gloucestershires-local-transport-plan-2015-2031/overarching-strategy/>.

²⁸ See the initial review at, ‘SDC and Electric Vehicles’, Environment Committee, item 5, 31 March 2016, <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/208642/agenda-document-pack.pdf>.

²⁹ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/plugging-gap-assessment-future-demand-britains-electric-vehicle-public-charging-network/>.

³⁰ <https://travelwest.info/drive/electric-vehicles/say-future-west-englands-electric-vehicle-charging-network>.

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| | transport (publication by March 2018), and on urban mobility. | Cycling and walking – consider what level of further aspiration should be included in the revised SDC ES, building on the Council’s current detailed Cycling and Walking Plan ³¹ . |
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³¹ The current plan takes into account the Government’s April 2017 ‘Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy’, maps proposed cycle routes, and sets out associated work programmes and potential funding sources, <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/355755/item-9-appendix-a-the-cycling-and-walking-plan-scoping-document.pdf> and <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/news-archive/council-to-decide-on-cycling-and-walking-scheme>.

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| <p>Priority 5 – Keeping a Focus on Environmental Limits</p> <p>Topic – promoting environmental sustainability and reporting progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GFirst - Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) reporting | <p>In areas without directly elected Mayors, the IS White Paper gives LEPs a lead role in developing local Industrial Strategies. In Gloucestershire, this responsibility will fall to GFirst. Local strategies are expected to align to the national IS, including its focus on ‘clean growth’ and ‘future of mobility’ ‘Grand Challenges’.</p> <p>In tackling the Grand Challenges, the Government points to the importance of “using well defined and concrete goals to allow progress to be monitored and assessed” (such as reducing carbon emissions by a given percentage over a specific period). It is appointing an independent IS Council to assess and report on progress.</p> | <p>GFirst – engage with GFirst in development of a Gloucestershire Industrial Strategy to ensure that that strategy will enable and support transition to a sustainable future for the district and county.</p> <p>EMAS Reporting – maintain EMAS registration and use the requirement to produce an annual Environmental Statement that reports progress against the Council’s ES, annual targets and delivery plans.</p> <p><i>Comment: the latest Environmental Statement on the SDC website is for 2014-15³². It is not clear whether the Council has been able to achieve an annual reporting cycle, with corresponding reviews of annual targets and updated targets for the year ahead.</i></p> |
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³² <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/3162/environmental-statement-2014-15.pdf>.