



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 30th September 2019

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Dee, Finnegan, Haigh, Hilton, Lewis, Organ, Pullen, Stephens, Taylor, Toleman, Walford and Wilson

Others in Attendance

Councillor Watkins, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods

Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member for Environment

Corporate Director (Partnerships)

Head of Communities

City Improvement and Environment Manager

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES : Cllrs.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11.1 Councillor Taylor declared an interest in agenda item 8 by virtue of a family member being employed by Barnwood Trust.

12. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

12.1 There were no declarations of party whipping.

13. MINUTES

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

14.1 There were no public questions.

15. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

15.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

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16. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

- 16.1 The Committee considered the Work Programme and Council Forward Plan. The Vice-Chair informed Members that a special meeting to consider the Supplementary Planning Documents for the Matson and Podsmead regeneration was confirmed to take place on Monday 4th November 2019. The meeting had been arranged due to a full agenda at the next ordinary Committee meeting.
- 16.2 **RESOLVED:-** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the Work Programme and Forward Plan.

17. GLOUCESTER COMMUNITY BUILDING COLLECTIVE

- 17.1 Councillor Watkins, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods introduced the report and highlighted key features. She stated that while Asset Based Community Development had been well embedded in the Council's work, the development of a Community Interest Company was the next step. Councillor Watkins advised Members that momentum had been gained from a number of national bodies and that the Key Cities group was looking to use Gloucester as a case study. She stated that she sought feedback from Committee Members particularly on the nomination of a charity should the company be wound up in the future.
- 17.2 Council Wilson expressed his concern that, as the Company's work start in a limited number of areas, what checks were there to ensure some directors did not dominate the board and limit expansion. He also asked why it would only be the City Council with directorships. The Corporate Director (Partnerships) advised that the articles of association would define the Company as Community Building across the City. In respect of directorships, the Corporate Director stated that the proposal was for the City Council to start the process but to subsequently nominate community leaders.
- 17.3 Councillor Stephens asked about the financial implications of setting up the Company and whether any funding had been secured. He also expressed concern regarding how the Company would be accountable to the Council given it would fund the Company. The Head of Communities stated that all funding to date and up to April 2020 was through fundraising. The financial commitment contained within the report was for the purpose of underwriting but that fundraising would be possible, particularly for job security of the community builders. The Corporate Director (Partnerships) advised that the Council would cease funding of the Community Interest Company at the end of phase one. She further advised that the Company would be independent and she envisaged secondments from independent bodies.
- 17.4 Councillor Stephens asked how the value and worth of the work would be gauged and stated that more could be done in terms of the level of engagement and projects. The Corporate Director (Partnerships) advised that consultants had been approached to work with the team to look at

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performance management and that funders would expect such measure to be in place.

- 17.5 Councillor Haigh stated that there was an expectation that the Community Interest Company would deliver on making residents' lives better and, as such, queried what oversight there would be from Members. Councillor Watkins stated that many community builders were not paid and that their contribution was for the benefit of the community as a whole. The Corporate Director (Partnerships) advised that it had not yet been decided whether the Council would withdraw entirely at some stage. Councillor Haigh asked why the Roundtable had been suggested as the nominated charity in the event the Company is wound up. Councillor Watkins stated that she was very much open to suggestions and that the Roundtable charity was as all-encompassing of the City as possible. She further stated that the purpose of nominating such a charity was for it to receive assets rather than take over the operational matters of the charity. In response to a query from Councillor Stephens as to whether it could be considered when it was a material question, Councillor Watkins advised that the potential recipient of any assets would have to be pre-determined.
- 17.6 Councillor Pullen shared his view that there should be defined outcomes such as improved well-being and community connections and that fundraisers would want to know these. He stated that there had been good work done by community builders in his ward.
- 17.7 Councillor Hilton stated that he was unsure if the project was working as it should and shared his view that he thought there was a lack of evidence of successful work. He also stated that some Members had found it difficult to get involved in community building. Councillor Watkins stated that she would speak with officers about keeping in touch with regarding community building. She also stated that while it was difficult to measure subjective material, evaluations had been undertaken. Councillor Watkins further reiterated that, if it was not working well, there was the option to cease operations at the end of phase one.
- 17.8 Councillor Lewis stated that he understood the difficulties with anecdotal evidence and suggested that the Company be allowed to 'bed in' and to keep communication with Members going.
- 17.9 Councillor Haigh shared her view that it was important that Community Builders work with Members and that Members needed to be involved in the governance of the organisation.
- 17.10 Councillor Ryall asked whether, given there were experts in evaluation and the Council was always looking to work with the University, a valuation study could be conducted. Councillor Watkins responded that she would be discussing how the University could be more involved.
- 17.11 Councillor Toleman suggested that there were a number of rotary clubs and that one of these could be nominated to receive any assets in the event of the Company ceasing operations.

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17.12 Councillor Organ stated that much work had been undertaken but was not known as there had been partial communication in some areas. He suggested that Members have sight of the Community Builders' roles and responsibilities as well as the details of who the Community Builders are. Councillor Watkins undertook for these to be supplied to Members.

17.13 Councillor Haigh proposed the following recommendations:

Cabinet consider providing criteria for measuring how the Company meets its aims;

A review is undertaken at the conclusion of Phase 1 to determine whether the Company had met its aims and, if it is determined that it had not, to cease operations;

To conduct a canvass of charitable organisations in the City and for Members to be asked to provide nominations for a particular charity to be the recipient of any assets in the event of the Company's dissolution.

17.14 Councillor Stephens proposed the following recommendations:

A further update on the Company's operations be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the commencement of Phase 2;

Cabinet examine a performance management framework and commission an evaluation of impact study in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire.

17.15 RESOLVED that: -

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that:

- (1) Cabinet consider providing criteria for measuring how the Company meets its aims;
- (2) A further update on the Company's operations be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the commencement of Phase 2;
- (3) A review is undertaken at the conclusion of Phase 1 to determine whether the Company had met its aims and, if it is determined that it had not, to cease operations;
- (4) To conduct a canvass of charitable organisations in the City and for Members to be asked to provide nominations for a particular charity to be the recipient of any assets in the event of the Company's dissolution;
- (5) Cabinet examine a performance management framework and commission an evaluation of impact study in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire.

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18. WASTE AND RECYCLING PROPOSALS

18.1 Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced the report and informed Members that there had been further changes to costs since publication of the report. He informed Members that there would be an amended resolution to Cabinet which was as follows:

2.1 Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE

2.1.1 that an investment of £135,000 per annum be approved for the lease of an additional Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) and crew for use on the garden waste service to be reviewed after 3 years.

2.1.2 that a one-off investment of £38,000 be approved to pigeon proof the recycling shed for the purpose of Health and Safety, quality of recycled material and longevity of operational equipment/building.

2.1.3 that business cases are developed based upon the latest information and market prices and that, where the case is beneficial, delegated authority is given to the Head of Place, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment to make the necessary investments:

(i) a one-off capital investment for the upgrade of the existing aluminium/steel baler resulting in additional forecast income due to higher quality recyclates

(ii) an investment in additional baler capacity to cater for all mixed fibres (paper and cardboard) resulting in additional forecast income due to higher quality recyclates

(iii) a one-off investment for a communications campaign from November 2019 to market the benefits of recycling and the garden waste service our residents and promote the most effective ways of presenting waste for kerbside collection

2.1.4 That the proposals around a glass screen contained in para 3.13 – 3.15 are noted, and that if after further monitoring the situation there is a clear business case for implementation then the power to purchase the necessary equipment is delegated to the Head of Place.

18.2 Councillor Wilson agreed with the need to make the investment and queried if there were any other plans to promote take up of the service other than flyers. Councillor Cook stated that, with the increase in housing he would anticipate a greater take up over the coming years.

18.3 In response to a query from Councillor Stephens regarding whether the original business case had changed substantially, Councillor Cook advised that prices of recyclables had fluctuated and that there was difficulty in predicting such prices. He further advised that the business case would be examined when new figures came back.

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- 18.4 Councillor Haigh stated the importance of communicating change but that many leaflets could be expensive and would have an environmental impact. She noted that marketing would commence in November and asked that either the changes be postponed or that they be advised through another means. Councillor Cook stated the marketing was timed to coincide with providing advice on Christmas collections as the primary cost was postage but that other ideas such as communicating it alongside council tax statements could be considered.
- 18.5 Councillor Pullen stated that he supported the investment and hoped that prices would not be raised. Councillor Cook stated that the desire was to increase demand and that raising prices could have the opposite effect.
- 18.6 **RESOLVED that:-** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.00 pm hours

Chair