



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Virtual Meeting (a viewing link will be published on the council's website at least 24 hours prior to the meeting)**

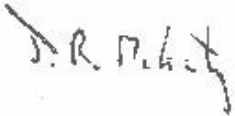
<b>Membership:</b>	Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Dee, Finnegan, Haigh, Hilton, Hyman, Lewis, Organ, Pullen, Stephens, Taylor, Toleman, Tracey, Walford and Wilson
<b>Contact:</b>	Democratic and Electoral Services 01452 396126 <a href="mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk">democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk</a>

### AGENDA

	<p><b>VIEWING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMOTE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>View the meeting here: <a href="https://bit.ly/2Z9HkTe">https://bit.ly/2Z9HkTe</a></p> <p>The meeting is being broadcast live using Microsoft Teams. We recommend that you install the Microsoft Teams app on your device for the best viewing experience. If viewing via a web browser, please note that this is not possible if using Safari; instead please download the Microsoft Teams app or the Microsoft Edge browser.</p> <p>Further advice on accessing meetings through Teams, is available here: <a href="https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Attend-a-live-event-in-Teamsa1c7b989-ebb1-4479-b750-c86c9bc98d84">https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Attend-a-live-event-in-Teamsa1c7b989-ebb1-4479-b750-c86c9bc98d84</a></p>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To receive from Members, declarations of the existence of any disclosable pecuniary, or non-pecuniary, interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item. Please see Agenda Notes.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING</b></p> <p>To declare if any issues to be covered in the Agenda are under party whip.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2020.</p> <p><b>Minutes to follow.</b></p>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)</b></p>

	<p>To receive any questions from members of the public provided that a question does not relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters which are the subject of current or pending legal proceedings, or</li> <li>• Matters relating to employees or former employees of the Council or comments in respect of individual Council Officers</li> </ul> <p><i>If you would like to ask a question at this meeting, please contact <a href="mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk">democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk</a> as soon as possible and by Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2020 at the latest.</i></p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)</b></p> <p>To receive any petitions and deputations provided that no such petition or deputation is in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters relating to individual Council Officers, or</li> <li>• Matters relating to current or pending legal proceedings</li> </ul> <p><i>If you would like to present a petition or deputation, please contact <a href="mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk">democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk</a> as soon as possible and by Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2020 at the latest.</i></p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN (Pages 7 - 32)</b></p> <p>To receive the latest version of the Committee's work programme and the Council's Forward Plan.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>REPORT INTO THE FUTURE MARKETING OF GLOUCESTER (Pages 33 - 64)</b></p> <p>To receive the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure which was conducted into the future marketing of Gloucester that the City Council commissioned following the liquidation of Marketing Gloucester Ltd in February 2020. Furthermore, the report also outlines the proposed steps to implement the recommendations of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee made at the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2020.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>GLOUCESTER RECOVERY PLAN - ECONOMIC RECOVERY &amp; GROWTH (Pages 65 - 74)</b></p> <p>To receive an update on the Economic Recovery &amp; Growth workstream of the Gloucester Recovery Plan.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>GLOUCESTER RECOVERY PLAN - HOUSING RECOVERY</b></p> <p>To receive an update on the Housing Recovery workstream of the Gloucester Recovery Plan.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>ANNUAL REPORT ON THE GRANT FUNDING PROVIDED TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR / VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY SECTOR RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT COVID-19 PANDEMIC (Pages 75 - 154)</b></p> <p>To receive the reports of the Cabinet Member for Communities &amp; Neighbourhoods. The Annual Report on the Grant Funding Provided to the Voluntary Sector outlines the Council's financial contributions towards the voluntary and community sector during the year 2019-20 and the VCS response to the current COVID-19 Pandemic presents the findings of an</p>

	intelligence gathering exercise about the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the VCS in Gloucester, and sets out proposals of how Gloucester City Council can support Gloucester's VCS in moving beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.
<b>12.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> of September 2020.



**Jon McGinty**  
**Managing Director**

**Date of Publication: Friday, 26 June 2020**

## NOTES

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows –

<u>Interest</u>	<u>Prescribed description</u>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the previous 12 months (up to and including the date of notification of the interest) in respect of any expenses incurred by you carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (or a body in which you or they have a beneficial interest) and the Council (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the Council's area.  For this purpose "land" includes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for you, your spouse, civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the Council's area for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you, your spouse or civil partner or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where – (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the Council's area and (b) either – i. The total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or ii. If the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, your spouse or civil partner or person with

whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

For this purpose, “securities” means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

NOTE: the requirements in respect of the registration and disclosure of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and withdrawing from participating in respect of any matter where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest apply to your interests and those of your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner where you are aware of their interest.

### **Access to Information**

Agendas and reports can be viewed on the Gloucester City Council website: [www.gloucester.gov.uk](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk) and are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

For enquiries about Gloucester City Council’s meetings please contact Democratic Services, 01452 396126, [democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk).

If you, or someone you know cannot understand English and need help with this information, or if you would like a large print, Braille, or audio version of this information please call 01452 396396.

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# Gloucester City Council

## FORWARD PLAN FROM JUNE 2020 TO MAY 2021 (REVISED 22/6/2020)

This Forward Plan contains details of all the matters which the Leader believes will be the subject of a Key Decision by the Cabinet or an individual Cabinet Member in the period covered by the Plan (the subsequent 12 months). A Key Decision is one that is:

- a decision in relation to a Cabinet function which results in the Local Authority incurring expenditure or making of a saving which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- a decision that is likely to have a significant impact on two or more wards within the Local Authority; or
- a decision in relation to expenditure in excess of £100,000 or significant savings; or
- a decision in relation to any contract valued in excess of £500,000

A decision maker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Cabinet Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

### Cabinet Members

Portfolio	Name	Email Address
<b>Leader and Environment (LE)</b>	Councillor Richard Cook	<a href="mailto:richard.cook@gloucester.gov.uk">richard.cook@gloucester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Deputy Leader and Performance &amp; Resources (P&amp;R)</b>	Councillor Hannah Norman	<a href="mailto:hannah.norman@gloucester.gov.uk">hannah.norman@gloucester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Planning &amp; Housing Strategy (P&amp;HS)</b>	Councillor Andrew Gravells	<a href="mailto:andrew.gravells@gloucester.gov.uk">andrew.gravells@gloucester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Economic Recovery &amp; Growth (ER&amp;G)</b>	Councillor Dawn Melvin	<a href="mailto:dawn.melvin@gloucester.gov.uk">dawn.melvin@gloucester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Culture &amp; Leisure (C&amp;L)</b>	Councillor Steve Morgan	<a href="mailto:steve.morgan@gloucester.gov.uk">steve.morgan@gloucester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Communities &amp; Neighbourhoods (C&amp;N)</b>	Councillor Jennie Watkins	<a href="mailto:jennie.watkins@gloucester.gov.uk">jennie.watkins@gloucester.gov.uk</a>

The Forward Plan also includes Budget and Policy Framework items; these proposals are subject to a period of consultation and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to respond in relation to the consultation process.

A Budgetary and Policy Framework item is an item to be approved by the full City Council and, following consultation, will form the budgetary and policy framework within which the Cabinet will make decisions.

For each decision included on the Plan the following information is provided:

- (a) the matter in respect of which a decision is to be made;
  - (b) where the decision maker is an individual, his/her name and title if any and, where the decision maker is a body, its name and details of membership;
  - (c) the date on which, or the period within which, the decision is to be made;
  - (d) if applicable, notice of any intention to make a decision in private and the reasons for doing so;
  - (e) a list of the documents submitted to the decision maker for consideration in relation to the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made;
  - (f) the procedure for requesting details of those documents (if any) as they become available
- (the documents referred to in (e) and (f) above and listed in the Forward Plan are available on request from the Council’s main offices at Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester GL1 2EQ. Contact the relevant Lead Officer for more information).

The Forward Plan is updated and published on Council’s website at least once a month.

KEY	= Key Decision	CM KEY	= Individual Cabinet Member Key Decisions
NON	= Non-Key Decision	CM NON	= Individual Cabinet Member Non-Key Decision
BPF	= Budget and Policy Framework		

**CONTACT:**

For further detailed information regarding specific issues to be considered by the Cabinet/Individual Cabinet Member please contact the named contact officer for the item concerned. To make your views known on any of the items please also contact the Officer shown or the portfolio holder.

Copies of agendas and reports for meetings are available on the web site in advance of meetings.

For further details on the time of meetings and general information about the Plan please contact:

Democratic and Electoral Services on 01452 396126 or send an email to [democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk).



SUBJECT (and summary of decision to be taken)		PLANNED DATES	DECISION MAKER & PORTFOLIO	NOTICE OF PRIVATE BUSINESS (if applicable)	RELATED DOCUMENTS (available on request, subject to restrictions on disclosure)	LEAD OFFICER (to whom Representations should be made)
<b>JUNE 2020</b>						
NON	<p><b>Establishing a City Centre Commission</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To consider a successor to the Regeneration Advisory Board to develop and oversee the delivery of a 10 year vision for Gloucester City Centre.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	17/06/20	Cabinet Leader of the Council			Ian Edwards, Head of Place Tel: 01452 396034 ian.edwards@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Kings Quarter - Development Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To provide Members with an update on the Kings Quarter Development.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: Westgate</i></p>	17/06/20	Cabinet Leader of the Council	The public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this report as it contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).		Ian Edwards, Head of Place Tel: 01452 396034 ian.edwards@gloucester.gov.uk
Page 10	<p><b>2019-20 Financial Outturn Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the Financial Outturn Report 2019-20.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	17/06/20  6/07/20	Cabinet  Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>2019-20 Year End Performance Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To consider the Council's performance in 2019-20 across a set of key performance indicators.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>17/06/20</p> <p>6/07/20</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager Tel: 01452 396125 tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Strategic Risk Register</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Members on the Council's Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>9/03/20</p> <p>17/06/20</p>	<p>Audit and Governance Committee</p> <p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Theresa Mortimer, Head of Audit Risk Assurance Tel: 01452 328883 theresa.mortimer@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p>

JULY 2020						
KEY	<p><b>Marketing Gloucester (MGL) Options</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To consider the report of the MGL Interim Chief Executive including recommendations for an in-house place marketing function.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure			Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk
NON Page 12	<p><b>COVID-19 Recovery Road Map</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To outline the steps being taken by the Council to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth			Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director Tel: 01452 396276 jonathan.lund@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the impact of COVID-19 and consider measures to support VCS organisations.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Liam Moran, Policy and Development Officer Tel: 01452 396049 liam.moran@gloucester.gov.uk
NON Page 13	<p><b>Annual Report on the Grant Funding provided to the Voluntary Community Sector</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Members on the impact of grant funding on the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and value for money that has been achieved.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	6/07/20  15/07/20	Overview and Scrutiny Committee  Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Ruth Saunders, Head of Communities Tel: 01452 396789 ruth.saunders@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Community Engagement &amp; Enforcement Policy 2020</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To review the Community Engagement &amp; Enforcement Policy 2020.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Gupti Gosine, Community Wellbeing Manager Tel: 01452 396288 gupti.gosine@gloucester.gov.uk
KEY	<p><b>Waste, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Services</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To consider an options report into the future delivery of Waste, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Services and to agree a way forward.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Environment			Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director Tel: 01452 396276 jonathan.lund@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Treasury Management Year End Annual Report 2019-20</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on treasury management activities.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk
NON	<p><b>The Fleece</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To receive a report on progress and to consider future development options.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: Westgate</i></p>	15/07/20	Cabinet Leader of the Council			Ian Edwards, Head of Place Tel: 01452 396034 ian.edwards@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>AUGUST 2020 - No meetings</b>						

SEPTEMBER 2020						
NON	<p><b>Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To receive an update on financial monitoring information for the first quarter 2020/21.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>16/09/20</p> <p>5/10/20</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To note the Council's performance in quarter 1 across a set of key performance indicators.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>16/09/20</p> <p>5/10/20</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager Tel: 01452 396125 tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Policy</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To review the ABCD Policy.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>16/09/20</p>	<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods</p>			<p>Ruth Saunders, Head of Communities Tel: 01452 396789 ruth.saunders@gloucester.gov.uk</p>



NON	<p><b>Social Value Policy</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To adopt the Social Value Policy and tool kit following consultation.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	16/09/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Adam Wassell, Economic Development and Regeneration Officer Tel: 01452 396974 Adam.Wassell@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>OCTOBER 2020</b>						
<p>KEY</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 17</p>	<p><b>Waste, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Services</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> Following consideration of an options report on 17 June 2020, to receive an update report and make any necessary decisions arising from the agreed way forward.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	14/10/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Environment			Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director Tel: 01452 396276 jonathan.lund@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Cultural Strategy Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To provide Members with a 6 monthly update in relation to the Cultural Strategy Action Plan.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	14/10/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure			Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk
NON	<p><b>City Council Energy Costs and Reduction Projects Annual Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the City Council Energy Costs and Reduction Projects.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	14/10/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Environment			Mark Foyn, Property Commissioning Manager Tel: 01452 396271 mark.foyn@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Armed Forces Community Covenant Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the work done by Gloucester City Council to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	14/10/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Ruth Saunders, Head of Communities Tel: 01452 396789 ruth.saunders@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>NOVEMBER 2020</b>						
NON	<p><b>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - Review of Procedural Guide</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To request that Members review and update the Council's procedural guidance on RIPA.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	11/11/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Community Wellbeing Engagement Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the activity of the Engagement Officers in the Community Wellbeing Team.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	11/11/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Leanne Purnell, Community Wellbeing Officer Tel: 01452 396069 leanne.purnell@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>DECEMBER 2020</b>						
NON Page 20	<p><b>Draft Budget Proposals (including Money Plan and Capital Programme)</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the draft budget proposals.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	9/12/20	Overview and Scrutiny Committee  Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk
NON	<p><b>Treasury Management Six Monthly Update 2020/21</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on treasury management activities.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	9/12/20	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Financial Monitoring Quarter 2 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To receive an update on financial monitoring information for the second quarter 2020/21.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	9/12/20	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON Page 21	<p><b>Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To note the Council's performance in quarter 2 across a set of key performance indicators.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	9/12/20	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager Tel: 01452 396125 tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
BPF	<p><b>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To advise Members of the requirement to review the Local Council tax Support Scheme (LCTS).</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	18/11/20 28/01/21	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>

JANUARY 2021						
KEY	<p><b>Festivals and Events Programme</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To seek approval for the 2021-22 Festivals and Events Programme.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	13/01/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure			Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk
NON Page 22	<p><b>Equality and Diversity Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the Equality and Diversity work and progress made against the action plan.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	13/01/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Gupti Gosine, Community Wellbeing Manager Tel: 01452 396288 gupti.gosine@gloucester.gov.uk

FEBRUARY 2021						
BPF	<p><b>Final Budget Proposals (including Money Plan and Capital Programme)</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To seek approval for the final Budget Proposals for 2021-2, including the Money Plan and Capital Programme.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>10/02/21</p> <p>25/02/21</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy Action Plan Annual Update 2020</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy Action Plan during 2020.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	<p>10/02/21</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</p>			<p>Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk</p>

NON	<p><b>Stronger and Safer Gloucester Partnership Annual Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the review of the Stronger Safer Gloucester Partnership.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/02/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Emily Bolland, Community Engagement Officer Tel: 01452 396268 emily.bolland@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>MARCH 2021</b>						
NON Page 24	<p><b>Pay Policy Statement 2021-22</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To seek approval for the annual Pay policy Statement 2021-22 in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21 25/03/21	Cabinet  Council Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk



BPF	<p><b>Treasury Management Strategy</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To seek approval for the Treasury Management Strategy.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21  25/03/21	Cabinet  Council Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk
NON	<p><b>Capital Strategy</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To approve the Capital Strategy 2021-22.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk
NON	<p><b>Financial Monitoring Quarter 3 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To receive an update on financial monitoring information for the third quarter 2020/21.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources			Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk

NON	<p><b>Performance Monitoring Quarter 3 Report</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To note the Council's performance in quarter 3 across a set of key performance indicators.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager Tel: 01452 396125 tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Risk Based Verification Policy Review</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To seek approval to continue with risk based verification policy.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Cultural Strategy Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To provide Cabinet with a 6 monthly update in relation to the Cultural Strategy Action Plan.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</p>			<p>Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk</p>

NON	<p><b>Annual Report on the Grant Funding Provided to Voluntary Community Sector</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Members on the impact of grant funding on the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and value for money that has been achieved.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director Tel: 01452 396745 anne.brinkhoff@gloucester.gov.uk
NON Page 27	<p><b>Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy - Strategy and Recovery Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To update Cabinet on the progress of the action plan year 1.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>	10/03/21	Cabinet Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods			Ruth Saunders, Head of Communities Tel: 01452 396789 ruth.saunders@gloucester.gov.uk
<b>APRIL 2021</b>						
<b>MAY 2021</b>						

ITEMS DEFERRED- Dates to be confirmed						
NON	<p><b>Green Travel Plan Progress Report 2020 and Update</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> Annual update on initiatives in the Green Travel Plan</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>		<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Environment</p>			<p>Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources Tel: 01452 396242 jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON Page 28	<p><b>Museum of Gloucester Development Plan</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To approve the Museum of Gloucester Development Plan.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>		<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</p>			<p>Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
NON	<p><b>Blackfriars Priory Development Plan</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To approve the Blackfriars Priory Development Plan</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>		<p>Cabinet Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</p>			<p>Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services Tel: 01452 396355 philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk</p>

NON	<p><b>Geographical Information Systems and Grounds Maintenance Contract</b></p> <p><u>Summary of decision:</u> To consider the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and grounds maintenance contract.</p> <p><i>Wards affected: All Wards</i></p>		Cabinet Cabinet Member for Environment			<p>Meyrick Brentnall, Climate Change and Environment Manager Tel: 01452 396829 meyrick.brentnall@gloucester.gov.uk</p>
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**Gloucester City Council**  
**Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**  
**Updated 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2020**

Item	Format	Lead Member (if applicable)/Lead Officer	Comments
<b>7 September 2020</b>			
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan - <i>City Council Financial Recovery</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources	Requested by Committee
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan – <i>Community Development</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods	Requested by Committee
<b>5 October 2020</b>			
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan – <i>City Council Services Recovery</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources	Requested by Committee
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan – <i>Environmental/Climate Recovery</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Environment	
Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 Report	Report	Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources	Requested by Committee
Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 Report	Report	Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources	Requested by Committee
<b>2 November 2020</b>			
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan – <i>Visitors and Cultural Recovery</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure	Requested by Committee
Gloucester (Covid-19) Recovery Plan – <i>Democratic Governance</i>	Report	Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources	Requested by Committee
<b>Carried Over From 2018/19</b>			
Progress on 67-9 London Road	Report	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy	Requested by Committee

<b>Item</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Lead Member (if applicable)/Lead Officer</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Disposal of HKP Warehouses	Report	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy	Requested by Committee

**NOTE: The work programme is agreed by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Spokesperson of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**



# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b> 6 July 2020 15 July 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Report into the Future Marketing of Gloucester</b>	
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</b>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework: No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services</b>	
	<b>Email: Philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk</b>	<b>Tel: 39-6355</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. The future marketing of Gloucester</b> <b>2. GCC budget for destination marketing</b>	

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the report (Appendix 1) conducted into the future marketing of Gloucester that the city council commissioned following the liquidation of Marketing Gloucester Ltd in Feb 2020 and
- 1.2 To consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 March 2020 in relation to the former Marketing Gloucester Ltd (see paragraph 3.12)

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the information contained in the appended report and make any recommendations to the Cabinet.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that
  - (1) The appended report is noted and the recommendations are accepted
  - (2) That the Head of Culture is authorised to set out and finalise the Terms of Reference for a Gloucester Marketing Steering Board in consultation with Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure (as in 3.9(2) of this report and 6.2 of the Brown report).
  - (3) The budget identified in Appendix 2 is approved for this work to commence.
  - (4) The response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 March 2020 are as set out in paragraph 3.13 of this report.

### **3.0 Background and Key Issues**

#### **The Future Marketing of Gloucester**

- 3.1 On 15 January 2020 the Cabinet considered a report on Marketing Gloucester following receipt of independent reports from Melanie Sensicle Associates and Grant Thornton. One of the recommendations in the 15 Jan report was the urgent appointment of an interim Managing Director to work with the Board to determine the Company's vision, mission and purpose, its business plan, its staffing structures, skills needs and budgets; and for this to include a review of best practice nationally and locally, including Marketing Cheltenham. Mr Steve Brown was appointed to the interim role later that month.
- 3.2 Events subsequently resulted in Marketing Gloucester Ltd going into liquidation in February 2020 but Mr Brown was retained with a revised brief to prepare a report for the City Council on the future marketing of Gloucester given his experience in the place and destination marketing sector and his good understanding of the needs of the city's marketing requirements and knowledge of the key officers and partners in the city.
- 3.3. The Future Marketing of Gloucester report was received by officers in April 2020 and is attached at Appendix 1. Since that time work has begun to understand the financial implications of operating a Destination Marketing function from within the city council, a key finding recommended in his report and identifying the required job roles.
- 3.4 The city has continued to be supported by a Destination Marketing team of staff formerly of MGL who were appointed to the city council on a temporary basis. The team have been working on maintaining social media presence and providing business support and information to the visitor economy sector, as well as supporting the covid recovery activity within the council and beyond.
- 3.5 The staff that were employed by the city council in February 2020 have had their initial fixed-term contracts extended to ensure continuity of service to the benefit of the city.
- 3.6 Job descriptions for three posts in an "in house" Place Marketing function within Cultural Services have been drafted and are undergoing job evaluation in readiness to implement as soon as possible, should the recommendations be accepted.
- 3.7 Research and advice has been sought from other Destination Marketing organisations and experts on the best approach to take in developing a city brand narrative and a risk register and action plan produced to support and implement the recommendations.
- 3.8 Many of the remaining recommendations arising out of the January 15 Sensicle/Thornton report have been overtaken by events and the demise of MGL however it should be noted that the City Council has continued to engage with GFirst LEP in connection with the UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre; closer working relationships are being built with the Gloucester BID and a broader

partnership of city organisations is engaged with planning and delivering the City's festivals and Events (albeit that the programme has been significantly disrupted by the Covid-19 Pandemic).

3.9 The recommendations as set out in section 6.1 to 6.10 of the Brown report are as follows;

- (1) Appoint a small but highly focused 'place marketing' team within Gloucester City Council for an initial period of at least two years.
- (2) Set up a high-level Gloucester Marketing Steering Board to advise and work alongside the new place marketing team.
- (3) Invest in creating a compelling brand identity for the city with a narrative that key stakeholders, including residents, can help create and coalesce around.
- (4) Prioritise developing a much stronger digital presence to promote the city and its narrative
- (5) Strengthen other aspects of the city's marketing collateral
- (6) If it goes ahead, embrace and help to shape the 'Visit Gloucestershire' initiative being championed by the GFirst LEP
- (7) Further develop 'history and heritage' as a key USP of the City and ensure it is at the heart of Gloucester's narrative
- (8) Curate and further develop a really strong events and festivals programme that reflects and builds the City's new narrative
- (9) Start to integrate the inward investment challenge into the place marketing agenda
- (10) Launch a Gloucester Business Ambassador Scheme

This report recommends that the Head of Culture is authorised to set out and finalise the Terms of Reference for Gloucester Marketing Steering board (as described in the Brown report, section 6.2) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.

3.10 Appendix 2 describes how a budget of £180,000 would be used to deliver an in-house Destination Marketing function.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 10 March 2020**

3.11 At a meeting on 10 March 2020 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to explore issues relating to Marketing Gloucester Ltd. Submissions were made and questions were answered by the two former Chairs of Marketing Gloucester Ltd, Councillors Paul James and Jennie Watkins and by Councillor Steve Morgan, the City Council's Managing Director and both Corporate Directors and Mr Steve Brown (who had been initially engaged to provide interim leadership at MGL prior to the Company going into administration, and who was then retained to prepare a report on the future Marketing of Gloucester) (see previous paragraphs and appendix 1)

3.12 At its 10 March meeting the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendations for consideration by Cabinet:

1. Once the liquidation proceedings have been concluded, a report is brought before the Committee detailing how grant money was spent by MGL and accounted for.
2. Cabinet reviews the Council's whistleblowing procedure particularly in relation to Teckal companies.
3. Cabinet reviews existing Service Level Agreements and performance management frameworks for existing contracts currently in place.
4. Cabinet reviews the role of Councillors on the Boards of the Council's partner companies and organisations.
5. The report which is being prepared by Steve Brown is brought before the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration prior to the report going to Cabinet. This report should also detail the Terms of Reference for the new Destination Management Organisation, if any, and the budget to be allocated for this.
6. When the Council enters into any arrangement with partner organisations there are access to information policies between the organisation and the Council.
7. When the Council enters into any such future arrangements there are clear guidelines and expectations for reporting to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3.13 In order to respond to the O&S Committee's recommendations Cabinet may wish to consider the following:-

- a) Agree to receive a report on how emergency grant money provided by the city council in Autumn 2019 was spent and accounted for by MGL following the conclusion of the liquidation proceedings;
- b) Authorise Officers to undertake the reviews recommended in 2, 3 and 4 and make recommendations to the General Purposes Committee as appropriate;
- c) Recommendation 5 has been/will be addressed by submission of this report and attachments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- d) Instruct officers to ensure that recommendations 6 and 7 are addressed in all future arms-length company arrangements.

#### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 Communication of social and cultural activity with the wider community will bring benefits to the residents of Gloucester, such as instilling local pride and by supporting people's emotional well-being. Supporting the city's businesses will ensure that the economy can begin to recover, which will provide opportunities for people to be active and engage with cultural activities in the city as lockdown eases. The continued need for a marketing function for Gloucester will be key to positive impact on residents and visitors to the city alike.

#### **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 The small destination marketing team promotes all aspects of the city's cultural offer as well as encouraging green forms of travel. There will be some limited impact on

the environment, however, as increased tourism and movement of people will increase emissions. This is not specific to this industry and is a wider societal issue. However, the team will develop stronger environmental messaging, whilst the Marketing function remains within GCC as it will benefit from the support of other council departments and policies.

## **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 The report explores a number of options and these are laid out clearly within the report.

## **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 The recommendations are laid out in the report.

## **8.1 Future Work and Conclusions**

8.1 Recruitment of the recommended Destination Marketing team roles commences as a matter of high priority to establish a team to take this work forward.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 Appendix 2 to this report provides detail of the net budget requirement for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

9.2 The budget requirement has been met by the residual council budgets to support Marketing Gloucester of £66.2k plus the agreed draw down from the Marketing Reserve of £100k per annum.

9.3 The reserve balance is £200k and will therefore provide support to the revised destination marketing function for two years. Once this has been exhausted either additional funding sources will need to be identified or the level of service will need to be reduced accordingly.

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

10.1 None directly arising from this report.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

## **11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

11.1 Risks of not accepting the recommendations – will result in the city not having an effective Destination Marketing function. This will disadvantage the city when compared to other areas of Gloucestershire and damage the visitor economy. Gloucester is a destination that supports a regional visitor economy worth over £110m GVA per annum (according to Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy, published 2015).

11.2 An effective and functioning Destination Marketing organisation attracts not only tourists, but supports businesses and attracts inward investment. These benefits

would be to maintain the visibility and viability of Gloucester as an attractive destination to visit, meet and invest.

- 11.3 The city will benefit from a collaborative centralised destination marketing and management function being held within the city council during the current challenging situation caused by coronavirus epidemic. The city can provide leadership and co-ordination when it would be high-risk to create a new organisation at this time.

## **12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

- 12.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

## **13.0 Community Safety Implications**

- 13.1 None

## **14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications**

- 14.1 None

**Background Documents:** Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy, 2015  
[https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/1371/growing\\_gloucesters\\_visitor\\_economy.pdf](https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/1371/growing_gloucesters_visitor_economy.pdf)





# The Future Marketing of Gloucester



# CONTENTS :

1. Executive summary
  2. New context : Covid-19
  3. Background
  4. Stakeholder consultation
  5. Review of other places and DMOs
  6. The detail of the recommendations
  7. Budget proposal
  8. Outline project plan
- Appendices
    - Consultation List
    - Outline job descriptions



# 1. Executive Summary

This work, commissioned by Gloucester City Council (GCC), is designed to create a new marketing framework for the City following the demise of Marketing Gloucester.

The recommendations for the future marketing of the City are based on two pieces of evidence.

First, there has been a significant consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders, among them, the Council and representatives of the cultural, tourism, heritage, retail, education and business sectors.

Second, an extensive review at how other cities market and promote themselves has been undertaken with a particular interest in how place-marketing activity has been organised - in house/separate company/contracted out etc.

The current Covid-19 crisis clearly impacts massively on this work but the assumption is made that **there will come a time when the City needs to ‘re-boot’** and be marketed assertively - and arguably taking the right approach will now be more important than ever.

The clear objective, within the allocated budget, is to create a place marketing capability and narrative for the City that fully supports its ambitious long-term growth and development plans. The emphasis of the recommendations is on being **pragmatic, collaborative and ambitious**.

A summary of the recommendations is as follows :

- Appoint a small but highly focused **‘place marketing’** team within Gloucester City Council for an initial period of at least two years
- Set up a high level **Gloucester Marketing Steering Board** to advise and work alongside the new place marketing team
- Invest in creating a **compelling brand identity** for the city with a narrative that key stakeholders, including residents, can help create and coalesce around
- Prioritise developing a much **stronger digital presence** to promote the City and its narrative
- Strengthen other aspects of the City’s **marketing collateral**
- If it goes ahead, embrace and **help to shape the ‘Visit Gloucestershire’ initiative** being championed by the GFirst LEP

- Further develop ‘**history and heritage**’ as a **key USP of the City** and ensure it is at the heart of Gloucester’s narrative
- Curate and further develop a really **strong events and festivals programme** that reflects and builds the City’s new narrative
- Start to integrate the **inward investment** challenge into the place marketing agenda
- Launch a Gloucester **Business Ambassador Scheme**

An outline budget and project plan are included later in the document alongside the detailed description of each recommendation.

There are two guiding principles of these recommendations based on the severe limitations of the budget. First, doing just a few things (rather than too many) but doing them really well. Second, creating low-cost initiatives that enable and empower a wide range of people to become advocates for Gloucester.

The most debatable recommendation is the idea that place marketing should sit within GCC. This has been proposed for three reasons :

- The limitations of the budget. It would not fund a separate DMO and would waste money on unnecessary overheads.
- There is little short-term prospect of securing additional funding from the private sector to support a new DMO. This is now exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis.
- There would be a huge credibility issue in launching a new DMO so soon after closing Marketing Gloucester. Relationships and trust needs to be rebuilt.

These recommendations are neutral on the 2025 City of Culture bid possibility. Again, the future timing of this initiative might now be in doubt. If though the City does get the opportunity to bid, and decides to do so, then it is likely that the resource committed to place marketing would need to be reviewed again.

## 2. New context : Covid-19

The bulk of the work for this report, and particularly the consultation exercise, was done prior to understanding the implications of COVID 19. Like just about every other aspect of life, the virus changes everything and especially the timing of when things might happen.

In many respects, there is a current irrelevance to this piece of work **BUT** there will come a time when the **'re-booting' and promotion of the City** becomes massively important if the local economy is to revive. Some of the worst hit sectors will be tourism, leisure, culture and retail and they will need substantial support when the tap is finally turned back on.

This report and set of recommendations then is designed as an 'off the shelf' plan that can be delivered in discrete projects or simultaneously, as and when conditions allow.

A big unknown of course is what the budgetary situation will be post Covid-19. Will 'place marketing', in the context of economic regeneration, be up or down the list of financial priorities ? Given the total uncertainty on this, the existing GCC budget parameters have been assumed : that is a **one-off contingency budget of £200,000 and an annual place marketing budget of £70,000 for the next two years.**

## 3. Background and terms of reference

After a near 12 year existence, the City's destination management organisation (DMO), Marketing Gloucester was declared insolvent in February 2020.

A consensus view would be that the company left behind a reasonable legacy of developing events and festivals for the City but has left a disappointing legacy in terms of marketing assets and in terms of some relationships. Marketing Gloucester did not have a reputation for being a collaborative force around the city.

The scope of this work does **not** include any proposals for the future of the UK DRIC. This is likely to be determined from discussions between GCC and GFirst LEP.

The demise of the company has led to a series of basic questions that need to be answered :

- Should the marketing responsibilities of the DMO be replaced and, if so, how ?
- How can any activity going forward reflect the aspirations of key stakeholders in the city ?

- What lessons can be learnt from other DMOs and other cities ?

From these questions, 4 options emerge as possible ways forward :

1. Do nothing and leave the marketing of the City to other organisations
2. Set up a new DMO with a new plan and set of priorities
3. Take back place marketing responsibility into the Council
4. Contract out specific marketing services to the private sector

With these questions and options in mind, the methodology for developing a forward plan and set of recommendations was based on two pieces of work :

- Consulting with a wide range of stakeholders across the City
- Researching how places, similar to Gloucester, organise their place marketing activity

The recommendations therefore are a balance between the views and aspirations of the stakeholders with the practical assessment of what has been achieved elsewhere.

#### 4. Stakeholder consultation

**Over 60 stakeholders were consulted** - a full list of people and organisations can be found in appendix 1. Clearly, there are some absentees from this exercise (notably Gloucester College and some of the leaders of large Gloucester based companies) but enough people have been spoken to for some clear themes to emerge and for the inevitable differences of opinion to be recognised.

On many issues, there was a **high degree of consensus** and this can be summarised as follows :

- Nobody stated that the “do nothing” option was a preferred way forward.
- By definition then, virtually **every stakeholder believes that the marketing of the city is important and deserves continued resource.**
- A substantial number of stakeholders believe that **the City has a weak brand identity and lacks a coherent narrative.** The lack of professional marketing material was highlighted as a symptom of that problem.
- Echoing the Melanie Sensicle review, there is a belief that the City has concentrated too much on events and festivals to the neglect of other aspects of marketing the City.
- There is a lot of advocacy for ‘history and heritage’ to be seen as the City’s USP.

- A significant number of stakeholders advised strongly that Gloucester’s residents should not be neglected in any place marketing push and that work is needed to engage better with the local population - “marketing Gloucester to Gloucester folk”, as one person put it.
- Just about everyone agreed that the ‘Marketing Gloucester’ brand is dead and should not be revived.
- A significant number of stakeholders talked about **the need to rebuild trust around the city and to improve collaboration**, a negative legacy of Marketing Gloucester. As a consequence of this, very few people suggested that there were any private revenue streams that could be easily tapped into for any future place marketing organisation.
- Though quite a small sample, representatives of the business community talked of how disconnected they felt from the City. One prominent business leader, with customers in over 100 countries, enthusiastically talked of his potential to talk up the city - if only he was given the tools to do the job. There seems to be a **huge opportunity for the Council to engage better with local businesses** and to use their firepower.
- Not surprisingly, there were representatives of some organisations - Gloucester Rugby Club, the University, the Cathedral - who talked of their need to engage with more regional and national marketing initiatives, given their ‘footprint’.

Where there was much less consensus was around the issue of how city place marketing capability should be organised. A number of stakeholders feel quite strongly that it should **not be a responsibility of the Council** and that a newly formed DMO should be the delivery mechanism. Digging into this, it appears that this viewpoint is based more on principled rather than practical considerations and the belief, from some people, that a Council led place marketing team would lack the creativity, versatility and vision necessary for the task ahead.

A couple of stakeholders advocated contracting out various marketing services but this seems to be a minority view.

This lack of consensus on exactly **who should deliver place marketing** for Gloucester therefore emerges as the key issue and became the focus of what can be learnt from other cities.

## 5. Review of other places and DMOs

The place marketing efforts of a whole range of cities and large towns have been reviewed but with a focus on places of a similar size and with similar demographics to Gloucester. Cities such as Manchester (Marketing Manchester),

Newcastle (Newcastle Gateshead Initiative) and Birmingham (West Midlands Growth Company) have mature, well regarded DMOs but offer little relevance to Gloucester because of their scale and significant public funding input.

Some of the operating models observed were as follows :

- **DMOs predominantly funded by Councils**

**Carlisle City Council** is a really good example of a Council that operates their place marketing activity in-house ([discovercarlisle.co.uk](http://discovercarlisle.co.uk)). It's a similar sized city to Gloucester and has similar assets. The Council operates the tourist information centre, runs the visitor website, organises events and leads and co-ordinates a very impressive 'Carlisle Ambassadors' scheme ([carlisleambassadors.co.uk](http://carlisleambassadors.co.uk)) which contributes significantly to the promotion of the city. The Council also contributes £5,000 to Visit Cumbria, a specific independent tourism website for the wider Lake district area. Interestingly, the view of the Council is that the city lacks a critical mass of tourism and cultural offerings that would make a separate DMO viable. Their approach is very pragmatic.

**Sunderland City Council** has similarly kept things in-house and have a simple statement of what they are trying to achieve : [seeitdoitsunderland.co.uk/about](http://seeitdoitsunderland.co.uk/about)

**Visit Hull and East Yorkshire** ([visithullandeastyorkshire.com](http://visithullandeastyorkshire.com)) is an example of two neighbouring authorities who contribute equal but significant funding for a largely tourism based DMO. They have a detailed tourism plan with clear objectives and, of course, they have used 'culture' (Hull City of Culture 2017) to underpin ambitious regeneration plans.

**Visit County Durham Ltd.** ([thisisdurham.com](http://thisisdurham.com)) is something of a hybrid model. It exists as a separate company but gets the bulk of its funding from the County Council (around £750k per year) and the 14 staff sit within the heart of the Council offices. It is an impressive operation and again is a reflection of a council that invests heavily in cultural activity. Durham County Council invests £1m in its bi-annual Lumiere light festival.

Similar to Durham, **Marketing Cheltenham**, ([marketingcheltenham.co.uk](http://marketingcheltenham.co.uk)) is a hybrid model. It operates as a department of the Council but sits in a separate building and seems to operate with a high degree of independence. The investment from the Council is somewhere between £150k and £200k and around £150k is added through a membership scheme, through providing some services for the Cheltenham BID and other commercial activity. David Jackson, who heads up Marketing Cheltenham, has been very open about their activity and it is a useful operation to learn from - and a potential good partner for Gloucester.

**Exeter** is another good example of a relatively small city that has kept their place marketing in house. They have also invested significantly in the brand identity of the city through their "Live Better" campaigning. In a very straightforward and

‘joined up’ way, they promote what the city has to offer for residents, students, visitors and investors : [exeterlivebetter.com](http://exeterlivebetter.com)

Their tourism website is also very good and projects the city in a very positive way : [www.visitexeter.com](http://www.visitexeter.com)

**Colchester** is another Council that quite impressively runs the tourism marketing function in-house ([visitcolchester.com](http://visitcolchester.com)) and co-ordinates a more generic marketing approach for the city through their ambassadors scheme : [colchesterambassadors.co.uk](http://colchesterambassadors.co.uk). It’s a city that also presents its history and heritage really well - “Britain’s oldest City”.

- **DMOs funded predominantly through commercial activity**

**Visit Northumberland** ([visitnorthumberland.com](http://visitnorthumberland.com)) is a small but highly focused, ‘not for profit’ tourism DMO, supported by Northumberland County Council. It raises the bulk of its revenue itself, largely through selling advertising in-print and online to the significant base of tourism businesses in the county.

Similar to Marketing Gloucester as was, **Visit Cambridge and Beyond** ([visitcambridge.org](http://visitcambridge.org)) is a separate company spun off from Cambridge City Council. It receives little Council funding and relies upon commercial activity (primarily generating £600k per year from operating walking tours around the Cambridge University colleges) for survival. It has though made a small loss in each of the last 3 years of trading and is in a precarious position (and now at very high risk because of COVID 19). The company, at the behest of the Council, was working on a long-term destination plan. Cambridge also has a separate membership organisation focussed on the long-term economic growth of the city : [cambridgeahead.co.uk](http://cambridgeahead.co.uk)

**Visit Greenwich** ([visitgreenwich.org.uk](http://visitgreenwich.org.uk)) is a really impressive example of a private sector led DMO with a mature membership scheme and a very assertive commercial strategy. It has the advantage of working with some iconic London institutions and it serves to make the point that operating a commercially successful DMO depends on the scale and range of the cultural/tourism/business base that a place has to work with.

**Make It York** (incorporating Visit York) is a company owned by the City of York Council with a wide range of responsibilities : tourism, city centre management (including responsibility for running York’s daily market), culture, business support, events and festival and inward investment. It is a £5 million business and has made a small surplus in each trading year since its inception in 2014. Only 6% of the company’s revenue comes from City of York Council funding, the other 94% comes from a very wide range of commercial activity. York does though have the massive advantage of that commercial base referred to in the comments above about Greenwich. For example, the Visit York membership scheme is supported by over 900 businesses generating annual revenue of over £350k. The development

of a large-scale Christmas programme has also been prioritised, raising revenue of nearly £800k - all of it being invested back into the city.

- **Other DMO models**

**Marketing Cheshire** ([marketingcheshire.co.uk](http://marketingcheshire.co.uk)) is an interesting example of a DMO working essentially under the auspices of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP. The LEP effectively commissions Marketing Cheshire to provide marketing services and that in turn helps to fund their impressive tourism effort through Visit Cheshire and Beyond ([visitcheshire.com](http://visitcheshire.com)). They have also developed a successful partnership scheme with more than 200 contributors and are commercially active. The Deputy Chief Executive of the LEP also serves as the Chief executive of the DMO, emphasising the integrated nature of the approach. It is an excellent example of joining things up but it clearly helps that the geographic footprint of Marketing Cheshire and the LEP are aligned.

**Ipswich** (“East Anglia’s waterfront town”) seems to share many of the characteristics of Gloucester. Their tourism marketing ([allaboutipswich.com](http://allaboutipswich.com)) is delivered by the Ipswich BID, **Ipswich Central**, ([ipswichcentral.com](http://ipswichcentral.com)) and is almost the reverse model of what Marketing Gloucester was trying to do i.e. the DMO delivering services for the BID. The ‘shop front’ place marketing looks good. BIDs though work in 5 year cycles and are subject to the agreement of a defined group of businesses that don’t always match the footprint of their town or city.

**Chelmsford** is another example of where the BID ([onechelmsford.co.uk](http://onechelmsford.co.uk)) has been given responsibility for the tourism marketing of the city via the brand Chelmsford For You : [chelmsfordforyou.co.uk](http://chelmsfordforyou.co.uk)

**The Shrewsbury BID** also plays a significant role in the place marketing of their town : [originalshrewsbury.co.uk](http://originalshrewsbury.co.uk)

**Destination Plymouth** is a really good example of a true public/private sector partnership. It receives funding from the Council, the BID and the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership as well as generating commercial revenue. The Council also invested significantly in developing a strong brand identity for the city : “Britain’s Ocean City”. The work was undertaken by an agency called Smith and Jones who also did the branding work for Exeter. The emphasis on branding is reflected in the city’s very stylish website : [visitplymouth.co.uk](http://visitplymouth.co.uk)

**One Worcestershire** ([oneworcestershire.com](http://oneworcestershire.com)) is another example of a public/private sector partnership but with an emphasis on inward investment.

**Visit Hertfordshire** ([visitherts.co.uk/about-us/](http://visitherts.co.uk/about-us/)) is a rare example of tourism marketing being contracted out to a third party. In 2015, following an open competitive tender process, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership awarded Go To Places an initial two-year contract to



develop a destination management service to strengthen the county's inbound tourism and highlight Hertfordshire's attractions. Go To Places ([gotoplaces.co.uk](http://gotoplaces.co.uk)) is a 'not for profit' DMO consultancy service specialising in tourism. They also run Visit Kent : [visitkent.co.uk](http://visitkent.co.uk)

**Switch On To Swindon** ([switchontoswindon.com](http://switchontoswindon.com)) is not a DMO as such but it is an excellent example of a place that has galvanised the business community to help promote the city. It runs on a very tight budget, with very limited funding from the Council, but relies on the goodwill of over 600 business ambassadors from 400 Swindon companies. It is a very collaborative model and in the words of the Chair of the organisation they are trying to establish "a tone of voice" for Swindon.

**Experience Oxfordshire** is a Charitable Trust that runs the DMO through a trading subsidiary : [experienceoxfordshire.org/partner/](http://experienceoxfordshire.org/partner/). It has traditionally received a grant from Oxford City Council amounting to about 20% of its revenue but this will, as things stand, reduce to zero from April 2021. There is some useful information here : <https://bit.ly/3dvZJQf>

It is worth mentioning the impressive efforts of **Derby**. They have a good looking tourism operation operated through the City Council ([visitderby.co.uk](http://visitderby.co.uk)) but there is also a separate organisation focussing exclusively on inward investment, Marketing Derby ([marketingderby.co.uk](http://marketingderby.co.uk) , funded primarily via a bondholder scheme.

### **What lessons can be learnt to help for the future marketing of Gloucester ?**

- **First, there is no 'blueprint'** - there is a wide range of operating models, DMOs come in all shapes and sizes.
- **Second, irregardless of the operating model, all the people spoken to complained of a shortage of funding and budget pressures.** Place marketing has clearly taken a severe hit from the prolonged reduction in public funding and DMOs have had to be very resourceful to survive. Those DMOs relying upon membership models will, following Covid-19, find it very hard to survive without replacement public funding.
- **Third, it is very easy to see that the place marketing digital output of many towns and cities - the 'shop front' - is significantly more professional and wide-ranging than from Gloucester.** This obvious weakness can be a quick win for the city and a relatively quick fix.
- **Fourth, there is no pattern to the success of a DMO operation in terms of its ownership.** Carlisle, Exeter and Sunderland City Councils seem to run very competent services in-house. York and Greenwich have very commercial DMOs operating as separate companies. Plymouth have progressed with a really strong public/private partnership. **The best place marketing models reflect the realism of the resources at their disposal.**

- Fifth, in doing this review, **there are lots of initiatives that would seem very relevant to Gloucester** and could be quickly picked up. These are reflected in the recommendations.

## 6. Details of the recommendations

### 6.1 : Appoint a small but highly focused ‘place marketing’ team within Gloucester City Council for an initial period of at least two years.

This recommendation reflects the reality of the current budget and recognises there is not the wide base of tourism and cultural businesses that would, for example, enable a membership model to work. It also acknowledges that, following the demise of Marketing Gloucester, there needs to be a period of relationship rebuilding before there can be any discussions around new private/ public sector partnerships. **Developing the ‘place marketing’ function within GCC should be on the basis of it being a highly collaborative effort across the city.** Budget reality should also mean that the emphasis is on doing a few things really well rather than trying to do too much.

Contracting out the service to the BID (the Ipswich model) has been discounted on the basis that the BID itself is going through a period of review and reinvention - the timing is not right. Contracting the service out to a third party like Go To Place (the Hertfordshire model) has been discounted on the basis that the budget is very limited and that it feels very important that the ‘re-booting’ of Gloucester’s marketing capability should come from within.

The proposed budget allocation (see next section) should allow for **a team of 3 people**. Ideally, this would be an experienced, energetic and resourceful marketer, supported by 2 ‘all rounder’ marketing assistants who should be skilled in digital and social media marketing, writing and photography. Brief, outline job descriptions can be found in appendix 2.

Ex Marketing Gloucester staff, currently on secondment should be given every opportunity to apply for the roles but the appointments should be opened out and selection made on the basis of the best skills and experience. **Strategy > Structure > People** should be the order of events.

The team could be joined by the transfer of another role. Currently, there is one person who is responsible for the booking of events space in the city. This could be become bigger and more important when the King’s Square development is available as a performance space. This role would be self-funding from the revenue that is generated and has not been included in the budget.

The team should sit within Cultural Services, working collaboratively with the events, visitor experience and museums teams. If not more importantly, **the brief of the new team should be to consistently engage with and work with other events, culture and tourism organisations in and around the city.**

Without being privy to the detail, there is the possibility of further re-organisation within the Cultural Services department at GCC to make the new 'place marketing' team more effective. For example, it seems that some people at GCC have a bit of their time devoted to managing other websites separate to Visit Gloucester (e.g. The Museum of Gloucester). There is potential scope to further bring together all the digital resource for a more efficient and integrated way of working.

The new place marketing team should have just a few highly targeted key tasks with a mission to :

**Build a highly professional marketing effort and city narrative that supports and showcases the ambitious growth and development agenda of the city**

These key tasks should include :

- **Significantly raise the level of digital marketing**, particularly the redevelopment and curation of the Visit Gloucester website (see later recommendation). This to include the launch of a new weekly 'what's on' e-newsletter for residents aimed at encouraging the local population to engage with City events and festivals (and not just those commissioned by GCC)
- **Establish a new wide-ranging base line for measuring the impact of place marketing** activity (e.g. hotel occupancy, cultural participation, website traffic, attraction visits, footfall figures etc.), reporting monthly against a clear set of KPIs.
- Administer and support the **City branding/narrative** project (see later recommendation)
- Develop relationships with Gloucester businesses involved with culture, tourism, leisure and events so that **everything going on in the city is promoted consistently and effectively to both residents and tourists**. Also, build relationships with other key organisations e.g. Visit Britain
- Develop a **series of marketing campaigns** that external organisations can buy into and get involved with
- Work in a collaborative way with the GCC 'growth' team, the LEP and developers such as Peel and Reef to **integrate the inward investment narrative** into the marketing of the City

Just 6 responsibilities but carry them out really, really well.

## **6.2 : Set up a high level Gloucester Marketing Steering Board to advise and work alongside the new place marketing team**

This could in effect be a short-term ‘task and finish’ group that helps to re-calibrate things in the light of the fragmentation and legacy left by Marketing Gloucester. It is designed to provide some comfort to those stakeholders concerned that place marketing becomes the sole responsibility of GCC.

The Board would have very clear terms of reference based on :

- **Providing a leadership role in encouraging marketing collaboration across the city**
- ‘Signing off’ on the final proposals that come from the City branding/narrative work
- Assessing progress and performance of the new place marketing team based on clear KPIs
- Delegating a couple of Board members to help with the selection of the new leader of the place marketing team
- Providing a rapid response mechanism for collaborative funding bids
- Providing ongoing advice, support and ideas for the place marketing team

The team would ideally comprise of the most senior person possible from the following organisations :

- GCC
- Gloucester Cathedral
- Gloucester Rugby Club
- Gloucester Culture Trust
- Gloucester Heritage Forum
- The Peel Group
- The Reef Group
- The BID
- Gloucestershire University
- A leading Gloucester private company e.g. Prima Dental Group

The Board would need a Chair (someone from GCC ?).

There could potentially be a tie-up with the new programming group that has been recently formed but this might just dilute the very focused way in which this marketing group needs to operate. A separate group is the suggested option.

**6.3 : Invest in creating a compelling brand identity for the city with a narrative that key stakeholders, including residents, can help create and coalesce around.**

This recommendation would achieve two things. First, it directly responds to the biggest piece of feedback received from stakeholders. Second, it should rebuild and fast-track collaboration across the City - **it is a cause that everyone can get involved with.**

The proposal is to allocate up to £50,000 from the contingency budget to commission a specialist agency to lead and complete the work. There will be plenty of enthusiastic applicants including 'Smith and Jones' who did the branding work for Exeter and Plymouth and Mosaique, a Tewkesbury based branding agency : [mosaique.co.uk](http://mosaique.co.uk)

The brief for the agency should include :

- Extensive stakeholder collaboration (including residents) to develop the narrative
- Close liaison with the new Marketing Steering Board - who will sign off the final proposals
- Production of a defined list of marketing resources that reflects the final narrative. This would include video footage, photography, a brand design 'tool-kit' etc. that can be used by all organisations across the City
- Ideas for encouraging pride in the city from residents - **winning 'hearts and minds'**
- Possible creation of a new tagline for the city

#### **6.4 : Prioritise developing a much stronger digital presence to promote the city and its narrative**

This recommendation is to invest around £25,000 from the contingency fund to add to the £17,000 offered by the Culture Trust **to completely re-vamp the Visit Gloucester website** (which attracts currently around 17,000 unique users a month) and associated websites.

A look at some of the other city websites, liberally linked to in this document, demonstrates how far Gloucester is behind. **Fixing this issue would be a very tangible, visible sign of progress** and, again, it would allow other organisations to collaborate on the project.

There are a few key things :

- This project would need to work closely with the branding/narrative project to ensure the 'look and feel' of the new sites are aligned.
- The place marketing team would need to work particularly closely with The Culture Trust and the Heritage Forum to ensure that tourism, culture and heritage are all suitably represented
- There are a number of smaller sites than Visit Gloucester in the city (e.g. Gloucester Museum) and it would make sense to wrap them into this project

- Other organisations are currently looking at digital projects (e.g. the BID and the Reef Group) - again, it would make sense to collaborate
- Thought needs to be given to how the new GCC inward investment site integrates in to the project - 'look and feel' need to be consistent

As well as a significant upgrade of the key digital assets, other initiatives should be progressed, specifically :

- A new weekly 'what's on' e-newsletter aimed at residents based on the Visit York concept : <https://bit.ly/39bFWlW> .This would demand having much better intelligence about the calendar of events in the City.
- A city-wide social media collaboration to build networks and to run campaigns

## 6.5 : Strengthen other aspects of the city's marketing collateral

One of the more disappointing aspects of the demise of Marketing Gloucester is how little quality marketing collateral has been left behind. The Tourist Information team, for example, have very limited material to hand out. This weakness needs fixing over time and will naturally evolve from the branding/ narrative project.

In the meantime, and designed as a 'quick fix', it is proposed that a budget of up to £5,000 should be invested in **producing a 2021 Gloucester Visitor Guide**, a basic requirement of any city. This can be contracted out to an agency (Offstone Publishing, for example, produce a number of visitor publications across the UK : <https://bit.ly/2UytAiA> - local publishers will be interested too). Additional funding for the publication can be raised through advertising revenue and it should be possible for this core resource to be self-funding in 2022 and beyond.

## 6.6 : If it goes ahead, embrace and help to shape the 'Visit Gloucestershire' initiative being championed by the LEP

An unexploited opportunity for the region is to get the tourism/place marketing teams across Gloucestershire working more closely together. Any over-night leisure visitor to the county has to navigate 7 very different tourism websites of varying quality. Gloucestershire does not make it easy to plan trips that embrace the different experiences of Gloucester, The Cotswolds and Cheltenham, to name just 3.

Gfirst LEP are looking to address this and are trying to assemble funding to make it happen. It is stressed that this initiative is **to add to not to replace current City and District initiatives** and that the funding would be additional and not a reallocation.

There is nothing to lose for Gloucester to support this. **It stands to benefit from more overtly attracting tourists from elsewhere in the County** and it

particularly helps out some of the city's major stakeholders - the Cathedral, the Rugby Club and the University.

It is recommended that Gloucester gets fully involved with this, if it happens, helping to shape it as much as possible for the City's advantage.

### **6.7 : Further develop 'history and heritage' as a key 'USP' of the city and ensure it is at the heart of the city's narrative**

Without pre-judging the outcome of the proposed branding/narrative work, it is obvious from stakeholders that the history and heritage of the city is considered to be a key asset and one that is undersold. To illustrate that, it's significant that **Gloucester wasn't involved with a substantial Visit Britain campaign** through the Discover England Fund. The campaign was called 'History and Heritage for Millenials' and involved 16 cities from around England including Worcester, Truro and Lincoln. This feels like just the sort of thing that Gloucester should have been engaged with. More information here : [heritagecities.com](http://heritagecities.com)

The Gloucester History Festival, the Gloucestershire Archives at the Heritage Hub and, of course, The Cathedral are just **three examples of world class 'content'** and it enables the city to play on a bigger stage. It also provides a focus for scarce marketing resource and it should act as a foundation from which other events and experiences, for both residents and visitors, can be built.

Stakeholders also declared their pride in Gloucester's industrial heritage, the history of the rugby club, the docks and the city's military history - 'history and heritage' just feels like the right thing to lead on in promoting and marketing the city.

This shouldn't be done in the context of Gloucester trading on its past rather than its future. Many cities are using their **history as a backdrop** for emphasising their **contemporary digital and creative skills**. The Gloucester Culture Trust does this very well already. A quick look at their website illustrates how 'ancient and modern' can work really well together.

### **6.8 : Curate and further develop a really strong events and festivals programme that reflects and builds the city's new narrative**

Again, once the proposed branding/narrative work is done, the events and festivals programme should be used to reinforce the 'story'. Decisions on new content for the city, and which things to develop, should be judged on whether they fit the narrative.

The events and festivals programme feels really important for the city. People in and around Gloucester have a lot of choice for the use of their time (Cheltenham, Bath, the Cotswolds etc.) so **continuing to animate the city with rich, fresh,**

**creative content is an intrinsic element of the city's place marketing development.**

Gloucester also has some great event spaces (The Quays, King's Square, The Gates) that other small cities just do not have. It's an asset that should be exploited to the full.

### **6.9 : Start to integrate the inward investment challenge into the place marketing agenda**

There need not be any physical integration of staff working in the 'place marketing' team with staff whose focus is on inward investment. However, it is important that there is close working and that 'everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet.'

Some basics would include :

- Ensuring that inward investment is included as part of the branding/narrative brief
- Ensuring that digital activity is joined up and that all promotional websites (tourism, culture, inward investment etc.) have the same 'tone of voice' about the city
- Ensuring that all printed marketing materials are aligned and 'on message'

### **6.10 : Launch a Gloucester Business Ambassadors Scheme**

Compared to other cities, there is a lack of business networks in Gloucester (Marketing Gloucester seemed to be running what was the Chamber of Commerce) and that **the relationships between the Council and key businesses could be stronger**. Some business stakeholders expressed a strong interest in getting more involved in the promotion of the city.

Carlisle, Swindon, Colchester and York, to name just 4 places, run successful business ambassador schemes and it is proposed that one is set up in Gloucester. The concept is simple and easy to deliver :

- Top business leaders in the city are identified and personally invited to join the scheme
- They are given a briefing and '**tool kit**' of marketing information (which should come out of the proposed branding/narrative work) that they can use to talk about the city to their customers and suppliers - around the UK and around the world
- They would be asked to feedback to GCC any leads they come across of businesses looking to expand, move premises etc. The ambassadors become the 'eyes and ears' of the city



- Two or three times a year, they would be invited to a GCC briefing about the development of the city and regeneration initiatives. This would be a great and easy way of improving relationships and getting the business community really engaged in the place marketing effort

It should not be a problem that GFirst LEP promote a similar initiative across Gloucestershire.

## 7. BUDGET

The existing budgets (£200,000 contingency fund and £70,000 for two years) does not represent a significant amount of money to set up a new place marketing function. However, the constraints are recognised and it is recommended that the money is allocated as follows :

Contingency fund :

- £50,000 to be allocated to the branding/narrative project
- £25,000 allocated to the digital upgrade project
- £5,000 to be allocated to the 2021 Visitor Guide project
- £80,000 (spread over two years) to be added to the operating budget of the new place marketing function
- £40,000 to fund any remaining costs relating to Marketing Gloucester with any remainder left as further contingency.

Operating budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 \* :

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Operational budget allocation	£70,000
Contingency fund allocation	£40,000
Revenue target	£30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£140,000</b>

\* Subject to delay and change due to COVID 19

Notes :

- It is assumed that the bulk of the £140,000 will be spent on staff costs (1 manager and 2 marketing assistants) and overheads e.g. licenses, expenses etc.
- The two one-off initiatives (the branding/narrative project and the digital project) will generate the bulk of the work in the early months and so the lack of a discretionary marketing budget should not be an issue.

- As the team and function develops, there will be the opportunity to develop marketing campaigns that partners and stakeholders can buy into.
- The revenue target should be achievable. Some revenue already exists (e.g. £12,000 from roundabout sponsorship) and there are other opportunities e.g. digital advertising on the new website, sponsorship, funding bids, developing the Christmas offer etc.
- No revenue is assumed from the BID. **This is a relationship that GCC needs to re-form and recalibrate.**
- This does not take into account the costs and revenue of the existing events staff member who hires out the City’s spaces. This could make a net positive contribution, particularly when King’s Square becomes available for hire.
- This budget does not take into account any other GCC budgets which might fit better with the place marketing function.
- This two year time-frame gives ample opportunity for the main projects to be delivered. **Towards the end of that period, the effectiveness of the activity can be assessed, the potential to seek private sector support can be reviewed and a decision can be taken as to whether the function stays within the Council or is spun off as a separate entity.**

## 8. OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN

Given current uncertainties, it is difficult to develop a detailed project plan so the table below represents a draft timeline as to how the plan could be implemented. Most of the 10 recommendations are discrete projects and can be introduced or delayed as necessary through the two year cycle

RECOMMENDATION	ACTIVITY	TIME-FRAME
	Project mobilisation (stakeholder communication, detailed job descriptions etc.)	Month 1
1	Recruit new team of 3 through an open process	Month 2-3
1	Develop a suite of KPIs and a baseline for measurement	Month 2-3
2	Recruit new Marketing Steering Board, including a Chair	Month 2
3	Procure the agency to take on the branding/narrative work	Month 4
3	Agency fulfils the branding/narrative brief	Month 5-7
3	Roll-out of new narrative for the city	Month 7 onwards
4	Procure the agency to take on the digital development project	Month 4

4	Digital development work takes place	Month 5-7
4	New websites rolled out	Month 8
5	Agency procured to produce 2021 Visitor Guide	Month 4
5	2021 Visitor Guide ready for distribution	January 2021
6	Support possible 'Visit Gloucestershire' initiative	As and when
7	'History and Heritage'	Ongoing
8	Events and festivals development	Ongoing
9	Inward investment integration	Ongoing
10	Business Ambassador Scheme	Month 7 onwards
	Formal review and evaluation of place-marketing performance and future budgeting and in-house/outsource decisions	Month 21-24

## APPENDIX 1 :

### Stakeholders invited to discuss and contribute to the future marketing of the City of Gloucester

- Outgoing board members of Marketing Gloucester
  - The Dean of Gloucester Cathedral
  - Relevant officers of GCC (Jon McGinty, Anne Brinkhoff, Jonathan Lund, David Evans, Ian Edwards, Philip Walker, Lucy Chilton, Phil Ardley)
  - The three main political party leaders - Richard Cook, Kevin Stephens, Jeremy Hilton
  - Councillor Steve Morgan
  - Board members of the BID
  - Philip Cooke, Destination Marketing Group
  - Richard Graham MP
  - Heather Forbes, Gloucestershire County Council
  - Hollie Smith Charle and other members of the The Culture Trust board
  - Paul Carter, Geoff Smith - The Mosaïque Group
  - Esther Croft - the Reef Group
  - Lance Bradley - CEO, Gloucester Rugby Club
  - Edwina Bell and members of the Gloucester Heritage Forum
  - Steve Collins - Hatton Hotels
  - Stephen Marston - VC of Gloucestershire University
  - Dev Chakraborty -Gfirst LEP
  - Phil Moss and members of the Civic Trust
  - Neil Hopwood - Cyber Central
  - Jason Pullen - The Peel Group
  - Jason Robinson - Eastgate Shopping Centre
  - Peter White - King's Walk
  - Anne Cranston - Gloucester Cathedral
  - Martijn Vos - MD, Hydro Components UK Ltd.
  - Lawson Willett - CBF Creative
  - Richard Muller - Group CEO, Prima Dental Group
  - Emma Willis - Emma Willis Ltd.
- 
- Jenny Groves, Chair - Switch on to Swindon
  - Paul Walker, Destination Manager - Carlisle City Council
  - Emma Thornton, CEO, - Visit Cambridge
  - David Jackson, Marketing Cheltenham Manager
  - Michelle Gorman, Managing Director - Visit County Durham
  - Kevin Blackadder - Cheltenham BID Director
  - Andy Farrell, Interim CEO - Visit Cheshire
  - Cris Brown, Operations manager - Northumberland Tourism
  - Peter Jones, Marketing Consultant - Visit Plymouth and Visit Exeter
  - Fiona Wright, BID Director - Ipswich Central

## APPENDIX 2 :

### Basic requirements for the job roles and job descriptions of the place marketing team (to be developed)

#### Place Marketing Manager

Key qualities required - Someone who is collaborative, a skilled marketer (with experience), energetic, resourceful, commercial and creative.

Key job role - Manage a small team, develop positive relationships with key stakeholders across the city, lead on collaborative place marketing projects, build partnerships across Gloucestershire and with other relevant organisations (e.g. Visit Britain) and create and execute marketing campaigns across the City.

#### Key responsibilities :

- Help to create and then report against a range of place marketing KPIs
- Lead on the city branding/narrative project
- Lead on the digital development project
- Prepare relevant reports and data for the Marketing Steering Board
- Develop a rolling plan of creative marketing campaigns for the city
- Search for and then respond to funding opportunities for the city
- Oversee the development of the city's marketing collateral
- Bring together city stakeholders for collaborative projects
- Work closely with the GCC Cultural Services team, the Culture Trust and the Heritage Forum in support of their activity
- Take personal key account responsibility for Gloucester Cathedral, Gloucester Rugby Club and Gloucester Quays
- Ensure that inward investment considerations are factored into the place marketing agenda
- Support the launch of a Business Ambassadors Scheme for the City

#### Place Marketing Assistants

Key qualities required - Two people with excellent 'all round' digital marketing and social media skills and who are flexible, creative and resourceful (ideally, one of the team will have good graphic design skills.)

Key job role - To curate content from across the city and present it, across all available channels, in an engaging, timely and compelling way, consistent with the brand narrative of the City.

#### Key responsibilities :

- Develop networks that enable the gathering of positive content about the City.

- Promote content across all available channels
- Manage the Visit Gloucester website, and associated sites, keeping content fresh and relevant and using all available media - video, photographic, audio etc.
- Manage social media activity and networks to promote positive content to as many people as possible
- Create and manage a weekly 'what's on' e-newsletter aimed at residents
- Consistently produce fresh marketing content that inspires residents and visitors
- Help to ensure that the City's new brand/narrative is supported and adhered to
- Help to create and promote regular marketing campaigns that support the place making objectives of the City

## Appendix 2

### Budget for Destination Marketing function within GCC

The Future Marketing of Gloucester report by Steve Brown outlined key roles and made recommendations for salary and operational budgets.

Of the total amount of budget that the city invested in Destination Marketing £215,000 was allocated to support the Festivals and Events activity. Of the remaining budget, approx. £140k allocated for staffing and £70k for operational costs – with some additional items of expenditure identified.

A team of 3 is the minimum recommended requirement to maintain an effective Destination Marketing function. With 3 members of the team – Destination Marketing Manager and 2 x Destination Marketing officers - total basic salaries for the three posts combined are approx £100k and when National Insurance and Pension contributions are combined with overheads – this results in approx £131k cost to the Council.

An initial income target has been set at £21,000 which would be brought in from a variety of sources, such as hire of advertising, sponsorship and support for city-wide campaigns from partners. This has been revised down owing to the impact of Covid from the £30k target recommended in the Brown report.

As part of the operational budget for this team, advertising, production and commissioning of assets (photography, video, database licenses) etc will be required on an annual basis.

Expenditure on city-wide marketing campaigns will be identified by the team and budget allocated from the operational budget, based on the strategic marketing plan.

Expenditure identified by the report in addition to salary are;

- £50,000 to be allocated to the branding/narrative project
- £25,000 allocated to the digital upgrade project (which will be supplemented by Great Place scheme from Culture Trust)
- £5,000 to be allocated to the 2021 Visitor Guide project
- £80,000 (spread over two years) to be added to the operating budget of the new place marketing function
- £40,000 to fund any remaining costs relating to winding up Marketing Gloucester with any remainder left as further contingency.

Operating budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 \*:

Expenditure		£ Amount
Staffing salary budget		102,500.00
NIC		10,550.00
Pension contributions		17,950.00
Staff salary subtotal		131,000.00
Overheads		7,500.00
Operational budget		62,500.00
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>70,000.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>201,000.00</b>

<b>Income target</b>		(21,000.00)
<b>Net Budget</b>		<b>180,000.00</b>

The net budget of £180,000 would be the minimum required to support an effective Destination Marketing function within the city per annum.



# Reinvigorate and Repurpose

An action plan for Gloucester's Economic Recovery post COVID-19

25 June 2020

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## Introduction

Gloucester is a growing, successful city, home to enterprising and creative people and with strong productive businesses. Gloucester offers competitive living and business costs, excellent transport and communications infrastructure, and a first class built and natural environment. The City has the youngest population in the County making it a perfect place for businesses to make the most of upcoming talent.

The city is changing and no more so than in the city centre where regeneration over recent decades is spurring on the next generation of projects – King’s Quarter, The Fleece hotel, Quayside. These and other projects that are of regional and even national significance are all firmly in the development pipeline and promising to continue the city’s transformation.

However, as the UK emerges from the Coronavirus lockdown it is likely that a period of economic downturn and recession will ensue. The impact on the local economy will be profound and complex.

- It will impact on different sectors in different ways – where face to face businesses and location-dependent leisure and retail sectors may be hit very badly, online businesses and business operating remotely could do very well.
- Businesses will emerge at different rates. Many visitor-focussed businesses have already lost much of the peak season, but the real impact may not be known until the Government’s furlough funding ends.
- It will lead to profound and long term changes in the way businesses operate, whether it is changing demand for business premises, a switch to on-line, or greater flexibility within the labour force.

The recession will impact on business closures and redundancies, creating empty retail units, high levels of unemployment, business failures, and low appetite for investment and risk. While in the short term consumer spending may bounce back, the effects of recession will be long lasting and profound, potentially leading to radical changes in direction.

## Reopen, Reinvigorate and Repurpose

There will inevitably be a period of economic downturn as businesses struggle with the months of lockdown and the loss of much of the summer’s trading opportunities. However, beyond that short to medium to term Gloucester has the opportunity to transform itself, to reinvigorate and repurpose the economy and to create new opportunities for businesses and residents.

It is anticipated that the economic recovery will be in three stages:

Stage 1 - Reopen	Stage 2 - Reinvigorate	Stage 3 - Repurpose
Easing of the lockdown (the restarting of the economy through the creation of safe spaces and places) during June and July;	Recovery and reopening of the economy through the remainder of 2020	Creating business opportunities and forging new directions for the economy and the city as we develop a 'new normal'.

### **The Gloucester Economic Recovery Task Force.**

Gloucester City Council has an important role to play in supporting how the city recovers, working with partners at the local and County-wide level. A collaborative approach is important to ensure that local agencies are working alongside County and regional partners, allocating responsibilities to the agency best placed to provide it, and respecting the strategic versus delivery focus of different bodies. The Gloucester Economic Recovery Task Force has been set up to confront the Recession head on, identifying opportunities to stimulate inclusive economic recovery across the city. The Task Force is chaired by Cllr Dawn Melvin, Gloucester City Council Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economy and Growth.

The Task Force acts primarily as a consultative body, comprising individuals and organisations that share the Council's commitment and ambition to see Gloucester's success, and that can make a difference. However, the Task Force is also be a 'doing' group, comprising subgroups focussing on specific workstreams and services and with the ethic and ability to create and instigate change. The Task Force sits alongside the county-wide Economic Recovery Group, led by the GFirst LEP, supporting its work, avoiding duplication of effort, and drawing upon its strategic linkages to maximise the benefits for Gloucester.

### **Economic Recovery Action Plan**

The remainder of this plan describes the actions to be led by the Economic Recovery Task Force intended to reopen, reinvigorate and repurpose the City. The plan is intended to be relatively short term, addressing actions that will enable the successful reopening of businesses during the aftermath of the Covid-19 lockdown. The longer term agenda for transformation and change will be designed by the new City Centre Commission, which will be progressed during the remainder of 2020. The plan sets out 4 areas of activity as follows:

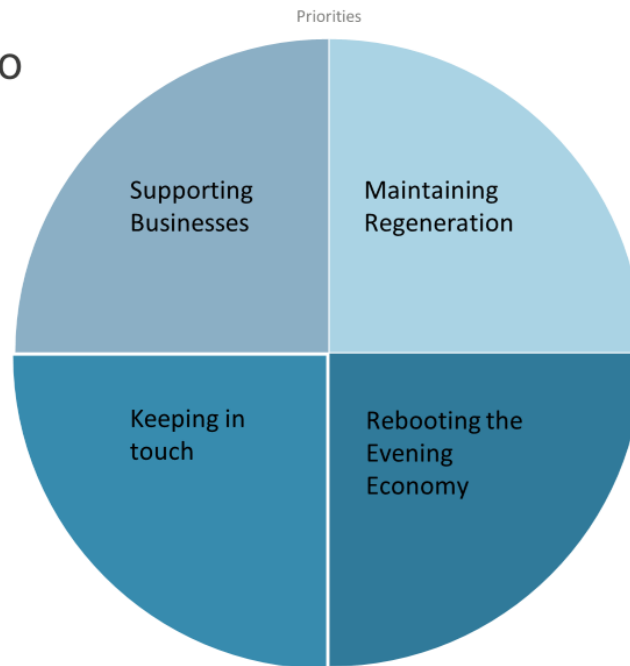
1. Supporting business recovery and inspiring new ideas
2. Maintaining the momentum on regeneration
3. Rebooting the evening economy
4. Keeping in touch with business in order to understand their situation

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## Reinvigorate and Repurpose

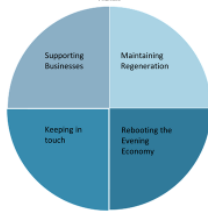
### Activities to support sustainable business recovery

July to December 2020



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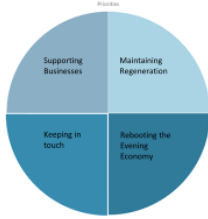
## Supporting business recovery and inspiring new ideas



1. Reopen the city centre safely
2. Actively attract new retailers and businesses to the city centre - explore and progress new retail specialisations
3. Make better use of the Eastgate market and street markets as an opportunity to start a new business
4. Finalise and launch new inward investment material for the City
5. Launch a new Destination marketing Organisation for the City (led by Visitor Economy Task Force)

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## Maintaining momentum on regeneration



1. Focus on key schemes in the City Centre:
  - King's Quarter, King's Square and the Railway Station
  - Westgate Street, including HSHAZ and The Fleece
  - The Docks, including HKP warehouse and the Food Dock
  - Blackfriars incl. Quayside and the Prison
2. Produce better regeneration literature and promotion, including a city centre roadshow
3. Targeted intervention in key voids in and around the city centre
4. Matson and Podsmead estates

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## Rebooting the Evening Economy

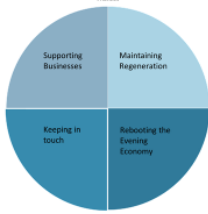


1. Issue written guidance and advice to eating and drinking establishments on how to reopen safely
2. Encourage proposals for temporary change of use and development to assist reopening.
3. Encouraging eating and drinking establishments to apply for a temporary license to open outdoors
4. Work with the Licensed Victuallers Association (LVA) to:
  - Provide training and awareness raising on preparing to reopen safely
  - Marketing and promotion of the city's evening economy



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## Keeping in touch with business to understand their situation



1. Gloucester Economic Recovery Task Force
2. County-wide coordination led by the GFirst LEP
  - Contact with largest 200 businesses
  - Sector groups meet on a monthly basis
  - Business survey
  - Gloucestershire Economic Recovery Task Force
3. Maintain contact with business representative organisations – Business West, FSB, BID – and serviced office providers.
4. Data collection and creation of a data dashboard, incl. footfall data in city centre, demographics, business trends and ownership of vacant properties.

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<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>06 July 2020</b>
	<b>Cabinet</b>		<b>15 July 2020</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Annual Report on the Grant Funding provided to the Voluntary Sector</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Leanne Purnell, Community Wellbeing Officer</b>		
	<b>Email: leanne.purnell@gloucester.gov.uk</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>396069</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. List of Groups Funded</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To outline the Council's financial contributions towards the voluntary and community sector during the year 2019-20.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** That the report be noted, and the same approach be endorsed for the 2020/21 year.

**3.0 Background and Key Issues**

3.1 The Council adopted the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model in 2012 and this has underpinned our approach to working with communities and partner agencies. ABCD is a philosophy and approach that seeks to identify and mobilise individual and community 'assets', rather than focusing on problems and needs.

3.2 The premise of ABCD is that communities can drive the development process themselves by celebrating existing strengths, responding to challenges and creating local social and economic improvements. To enable this, they often need a small amount of seed funding.

3.3 The Council's role is to support communities to recognise strengths and catalyse activity for themselves, as opposed to being more passive recipients of public services and our approach to funding supports this.

3.4 Funding is available through the funding arrangements identified in 4.1 below.

- 3.5 It is important to note that many of the activities funded in 19/20 (see appendix 1) have led to a dynamic and organic growth of projects, events, activities or support – without any additional intervention from the Council.
- 3.6 Community groups are supported by officers to achieve sustainability by making connections with other groups and organisations and sharing venues and equipment or assets. These connections are sometimes made by officers but often happen organically.

#### 4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

4.1 Our vision for Asset Based Community Development is a guiding principle for investing our voluntary and community sector budget. At present we invest in the following activities:

- **Grant Funding to advice agencies** (The Law Centre; CAB; Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS)) – who provide advice and very specific support to vulnerable people and communities.
- **Councillor Community Fund** – a fund to enable councillors to support community led projects within their own wards.
- **Gloucester Lottery** – a weekly online Lottery where local good causes can register to raise additional funds. There is a central pot of funding which the Council redistributes as small seed funding for residents who wish to deliver new activities or projects in the City.
- **Covid 19 Funding**- this was set up in March 2020 in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. Full details of this funding and the community support will be detailed in a separate report.

4.2 We have distributed £84,858.90 towards the voluntary and community sector in 2019/20 with £46,015 of that total towards the community response to Covid-19 which will continue into 2020/21.

4.3 The Gloucester Lottery funding has provided several groups with much needed seed funding to support the innovation and strength of new groups and projects. Young Thinkers Gloucester is an exciting new project for the Al Ashraf Primary School with the aim of delivering multiple exciting educational projects to the local community the funding provided much needed educational resources and equipment. The Redwell Centre Serenity Garden project transformed a derelict piece of land away from the main children's and family garden to ensure calmness and sometimes much needed isolation. It will be a peaceful and calm area for people with anxiety and depression and somewhere to also get involved with growing vegetables and flowers, sitting reading or listening to music for relaxation.

4.4 The Councillor Community funding is allocated to support projects or activities that benefit the communities within each ward. The funding has contributed towards a broad range of projects from improvements to community centres to outdoor equipment storage, community benches and gardens to play equipment and event support.

4.5 The Community Resilience funding was launched to support local voluntary sector agencies and community groups in supporting vulnerable people during the Covid-19 crisis to cover additional costs they may incur due to increased activity or functions that they have insufficient resources to meet. It was quickly identified by local groups that keeping children occupied during lock down was going to be a challenge, the resilience fund supported several of those local groups to make up and distribute activity packs containing arts & craft equipment and activity ideas.

## **5.0 Alternative Options Considered**

5.1 No longer providing grant funding in any form is an option, however this does not help to realise the ambitions we have for our City and build on the excellent progress which has been made in previous years through small investments in our communities.

5.2 Other Districts in Gloucestershire deliver support to the VCS in a variety of different ways which are similar to Gloucester but reflect the local context and approach. The amount of grant funding available to community groups is similar across the County, however, we are confident that our approach fits with our ethos around ABCD which adds benefit to our residents.

## **6.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 Cabinet are asked to note the contents of this report and endorse the same approach for the coming year.

## **7.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

7.1 Where possible, Community Wellbeing Officers look out for additional funding from a variety of sources.

7.2 Future grants from the City Council will be made through Councillor's Community Fund and the Lottery.

7.3 Community Wellbeing Officers will continue to signpost groups to other local grant funders such as the Barnwood Trust, Gloucestershire Funders and signpost to Gloucestershire VCS Alliance monthly funding bulletins.

7.4 A separate report will be brought to Members regarding the Advice Services grants as they are agreed through a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

7.5 In the wake of Covid 19 Gloucestershire County Council released £50k to each local authority, Gloucestershire Resilience Funding's purpose is to support local voluntary sector agencies and community groups who are supporting vulnerable people during the Covid-19 crisis to cover additional costs they may incur due to increased activity or functions that they have insufficient resources to meet.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 Members Grant allocations have been included in the Council Budget for 2020/21 as have the grants to advice agencies. The funds from the Gloucester Lottery are monitored and distributed on a case by case basis subject to funds being available.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 None directly relating to this report.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

10.1 There are no risks associated with this update report.

## **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

11.1 This is an update report and not PIA is required.

## **12.0 Other Corporate Implications**

### Community Safety

12.1 The work done through community projects can help increase social interactions and add to a feeling of security thus reducing the fear of crime.

### Sustainability

12.2 The nature of the grant funding available encourages community groups to sustain themselves and promotes the sharing of resources, equipment and volunteers. The seed funding grant has been successful in terms of sustainability as none of the groups who applied to it since it became available in 2015 have asked for further funding for their core costs.

### Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 Not applicable

**Background Documents:** None

## Appendix 1 List of Groups Funded

Group	Activity	Fund	Grant value
Together in Matson	Serenity Garden project, to transform a derelict piece of land away from the main children's and family garden to ensure calmness and sometimes much needed isolation	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Young Thinkers	Al-Ashraf Primary School and Nursery delivering multiple educational projects to the local community	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Oliver Hall Arts & Crafts	Willow weaving and basket making workshops/Classes for the Tuffley community	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Kingzone Kids	Support for room hire and activities equipment for new youth club for Dexter Way and Kingsholm children	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Gloucester Community Networking	Various workshops in schools about PTSD and mental health led by a disabled war veteran	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Estcourt Close Allotment Association	Regeneration plan towards improving the onsite facilities available to all allotment holders and we would like to focus on those with disabilities, physical limitations and special needs	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
Gloucester LesbiFriends	Support for social group for women interested in women who would like to meet up with like minded people	Gloucester Lottery	£500.00
DiverseCity	Contribution towards a multicultural community project at Gloucester Guildhall bringing the Creatives of Gloucestershire together	Councillor Community Fund	£750.00
Friendship Café	Contribution towards day trip to Cattle Country	Councillor Community Fund	£400.00
Rising Stars YFC	Contribution towards training costs	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
Jamaica Independence Day	Contribution towards the event and activities	Councillor Community Fund	£200.00
Hucclecote Community Association	Various projects, Hucclecote Community Day celebrations and a storage shed	Councillor Community Fund	£800.00
Barnwood Reading Rooms	Contribution towards a road sign to increase visibility of asset	Councillor Community Fund	£516.00
James Hopkins Trust	Funds for arts and crafts materials children to make Easter bonnets and baskets	Councillor Community Fund	£284.00
Friends of Gloucester Archives	Contribution towards Community Garden	Councillor Community Fund	£1,650.00
St Philip & St James Church	Contribution towards equipment for community lunches	Councillor Community Fund	£187.94
Hillview Evangelical Church	Contribution towards nativity on a lorry project	Councillor Community Fund	£205.96
Hucclecote Scouts	Contribution towards re-decoration of the man hall to be able to open in at for community use	Councillor Community Fund	£606.10
Glos Deaf Association	Contribution towards the annual pantomime which is a highlight for young deaf people	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00

## Appendix 1 List of Groups Funded

St Lawrence Church	Contribution towards an evacuchair	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00
Barnwood C of E School	Contribution towards creation of the Learning Lounge, to enable us to meet the needs of vulnerable members in our community	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00
Kingsway Wildlife & Sustainability group	Contribution towards activities for new toddler group and sports pavilion container	Councillor Community Fund	£900.00
Gloucestershire Bundles	Contribution towards family necessities including nappies, mattresses, stairgates	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
The Venture - White City	Contribution towards half term activities, play bark and the Last Blast Festival	Councillor Community Fund	£2,000.00
The Redwell Centre - Together in Matson	Contribution towards Easter holiday club and 1950's & 60's music event	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
GL Communities - book boxes	Contribution towards community book boxes	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
St Johns Ambulance	Purchased defibrillator for St Barnabus Church Hall	Councillor Community Fund	£1,250.00
Echoes #2	Contribution towards establishing another group which will be aimed at an older group of teenagers.	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Podsmead Big Local	Various including purchase and install community café equipment and sports and activity day	Councillor Community Fund	£374.90
Grange Primary Academy School	Contribution towards improvements to the library	Councillor Community Fund	£250
One Church	Contribution towards Podsmead holiday club	Councillor Community Fund	£150
Chatter Coffee	Contribution towards twice monthly coffee mornings to help bring vulnerable and isolated people together in the Abbeydale area	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Heron Primary School Council	Contribution towards improvements to lighting on pathway between the River Twyver and Speedwell Close	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Charlies Cancer Charity	Contribution towards Celebrating Volunteers event	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Tuffley Rovers Youth FC	Contribution towards running costs	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
University of Gloucestershire	Contribution towards Stop the Heartbreak campaign	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
Barton & Tredworth Cultural Fayre	Contribution towards the organising and running costs of the event	Councillor Community Fund	£650.00
Barton & Tredworth Ladies physical activity group	Contribution towards development of a new women's only exercise class	Councillor Community Fund	£150.00
TETRA	Contribution towards lunch club organised by TETRA	Councillor Community Fund	£200.00
Gloucester AIW Cricket Club	Contribution towards sight screens	Councillor Community Fund	£200.00
Fieldcourt Play Equipment	New play equipment for Fieldcourt, Quedgeley	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00



## Appendix 1 List of Groups Funded

Community bench Deans Meadow	Repainting and varnishing of existing community bench	Councillor Community Fund	£350.00
Elmscroft Community Centre	Contribution towards improvements to community building	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Greyhound Gardens Security measures	Security measures in Greyhound Gardens at the request of residents following travellers settling	Councillor Community Fund	£2,234.00
St James Church	Contribution towards new microphone equipment for the church and Chit Chat and Chatterbox group	Councillor Community Fund	£788.00
The Spring Centre	Contribution towards Easter Holiday activity programme	Councillor Community Fund	£712.00
Hempsted Village Hall	Contribution towards painting of Hempsted Village Hall	Councillor Community Fund	£200.00
Gloucester Guildhall	Contribution to the provision of a marquee as part of the hospitality of the Rifles Homecoming/Freedom March	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
Greenfields	Contribution towards tree planting	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
Community bench	Installation of new community bench at Holmleigh Parade shops	Councillor Community Fund	£346.00
K Gates at Randwick Park	Installation of K gates to prevent anti-social behaviour	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
Tuffley Festival	Contribution towards the Tuffley Sats Thanks event	Councillor Community Fund	£404.00
Remember Together Project - Knit & Natter	Towards making plaques for the local community to display to commemorate allies and the commonwealth feeding into local schools with local education talks in Quedgeley.	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
Rotary Club of Severn Vale	Contribution towards the running costs of the Kingsway Family Fun Run	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
Tredworth Infant School	Contribution towards the purchase of plants, vegetables and bedding plants for the developing 'growing garden' in the Early Years playground.	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
Stay & Play - Abbeymead Community Centre	Payments towards room bookings for the Stay & Play group	Councillor Community Fund	£320.00
Playing Out Gloucestershire	Playing Out starter pack for trial run in Abbeymead	Councillor Community Fund	£39.00
Glos Youth Mini Bike Project	Contribution to supporting activities and purchasing sandbags	Councillor Community Fund	£400.00
Sydenham Gardens bench	Purchase and installation of a new bench	Councillor Community Fund	£320.00
Gloucester Community Building Collective	Contribution towards time for community builder to work in and around the Parry Hall area	Councillor Community Fund	£250.00
Gloucester Youth Project	Contribution towards a new bike shed at Parry Hall	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00
Glos Wildlife Trust	Purchasing and installation of a sign for Rose Garden at Tuffley Ave / Stroud Road	Councillor Community Fund	£230.00
Westgate Gardening Club	Contribution towards landscaping near St Nicholas Church	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00

## Appendix 1 List of Groups Funded

Friends of Gloucester Park	Contribution towards activities planned with Community Roots CIC	Councillor Community Fund	£350.00
Chinese Womens Guild	Payment for room hire to continue community conversations with Dexter Way residents	Councillor Community Fund	£50.00
St Oswalds Village Community Choir	Contribution towards the St. Oswald's Village 9-Year Anniversary Party & Show	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00
Hempsted Community Choir	Contribution towards printing of music and books	Councillor Community Fund	£100.00
Rainbows (c/o Hempsted Village Hall)	Contribution towards the Rainbows girl guide group activities	Councillor Community Fund	£100.00
Messy Church	Contribution towards Messy Church	Councillor Community Fund	£100.00
St Oswalds Retirement Village	Contribution towards the gardening group	Councillor Community Fund	£150.00
Westgate Gardening Group	Contribution towards ongoing activities	Councillor Community Fund	£100.00
Friends of Elmbridge	Contribution towards improvements to landscaping of play area to allow disabled access	Councillor Community Fund	£1,000.00
One Church Youth Group	Contribution towards ongoing activities for the youth group	Councillor Community Fund	£300.00
Redwell Centre - Together in Matson	Contribution towards COVID 19 response	Councillor Community Fund	£550.00
KM Reprographics	Printing costs of community booklets for Longlevens	Councillor Community Fund	£676.00
Gloucester Foodbank	Contribution towards providing food to the families of children in receipt of free school meals during the Easter school holidays	Councillor Community Fund	£500.00
Court Community Association	Covid 19 support stickers distributed with leaflets and contacts details	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£150.00
The Direct Solution Ltd	PPE for all volunteers	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£4,100.00
The Venture White City	Purchase a community fridge/ freezer to help with food demands and better use of fairshares deliveries and activity packs	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£1,000.00
Gloucester Foodbank	Purchase stock during the Covid19 crisis. This is anticipated to buy what will be required to help through the next few months and to assist with the current increased demand levels.	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£5,000
B&T Covid response	Children's activity packs	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£1,250
Play Gloucestershire	500 Children's activity packs for vulnerable families	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£5,000
The Redwell Centre	Adult and child activity packs and essential items such as nappies, baby milk etc	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£1,500
Gloucestershire Bundles	Helping families with essentials such as clothes, nappies, toys etc	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
GL Communities	Children's activity packs	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£250

## Appendix 1 List of Groups Funded

Roots Coffee Community	Chest freezer for pre-cooked meals and food to support vulnerable families during the Easter Holidays	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£1,650
Food Consortium - The Knobbly Cob	Food essentials for to make up food parcels to distribute across the City	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£15,000
The Club at Tuffley Park	Chest freezer to store pre-cooked meals and food to support the Club Grub project	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£6,000
FairShares	Equipment for digital and virtual support - web cam and mobile phone	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£100
St Oswalds Church - Coney Hill	Fridge/freezer to support will be used for storing fresh food- this is in regard to establishing a food distribution hub at St Oswald's Church in Coney Hill.	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£450
GARAS	Purchase x5 smart phones to keep in touch with vulnerable clients	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£565
Elmscroft Community Association	Purchase a mobile phone to coordinate the efforts of the Covid 19 response group	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£100
Gloucester Deaf Association	Towards production and postage costs of information packs to connect and support vulnerable clients	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
Rooftop Housing	Wellbeing and activity booklets	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
The Nelson Trust	Support outreach work with vulnerable women	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
Guideposts	Support outreach work remotely with clients, purchase laptop and mobile phones	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
Home-Start	Equipment to offer virtual support to vulnerable families	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£500
Community freezer storage - Bisley Marquees & Hire	Long term solution for continuing to accept local business donations and distribution through networks	Gloucester Resilience Fund	£900

### Totals:

Gloucester Lottery- £3,500

Councillor Community Fund- £35,343

Covid Resilience Fund- £46,015

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<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 July 2020 15 July</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>VCS response to the current COVID-19 Pandemic</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Councillor Watkins- Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All Wards</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Bev Headman-Fearon, Community Wellbeing Officer</b>		
	<b>Email:</b>		<b>Tel:</b>
	<a href="mailto:Bev.headman-fearon@gloucester.gov.uk">Bev.headman-fearon@gloucester.gov.uk</a>		<b>396614</b>
	<b>Liam Moran, Policy and Development Officer</b>		
	<b>Email:</b>		<b>Tel:</b>
	<a href="mailto:liam.moran@gloucester.gov.uk">liam.moran@gloucester.gov.uk</a>		<b>396049</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>A. COVID-19 and the Voluntary and Community Sector - A Gloucester Perspective</b> <b>B. COVID-19 Intelligence Gathering Barnwood Trust</b> <b>C. Draft Criteria for the £10k recovery fund</b>		

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of an intelligence gathering exercise about the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the VCS in Gloucester, and to set out proposals of how Gloucester City Council can support Gloucester's VCS in moving beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **NOTE** the findings of the research in Gloucester's VCS Stocktake report as well as report produced by the Barnwood Trust.
- 2.2 For Cabinet to **APPROVE** a one-off Gloucester VCS Recovery Funding of £10,000 to small community/grassroots organisations with one-off grants to deal with the financial impact of COVID-19 and support their recovery. The delegate authority will be the Head of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities, together they will award such grants in accordance with the agreed criteria.

- 2.3 To **WELCOME** the introduction of a 'Business Mentor' Scheme, which will broker informal mentoring/advice from businesses to smaller VCS organisations within the City.

### **3.0 Background and Key Issues**

3.1 As COVID-19 continues to evolve in society, it is important that we as a city council understand how this is affecting one of our society's most important sectors – the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Gloucester City Council reached out to 17 organisations to invite them to take part in an interview as part of a VCS 'stock take'. The purpose of the interviews was to help Gloucester City Council understand the impact COVID-19 is having on the sector. These organisations form a representative sample of Gloucester's voluntary and community sector, however this is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of all VCS organisations in Gloucester. These sample organisations were agreed upon by Gloucester City Council's Cabinet Members with input from Group Leaders.

3.2 The organisations and charities the Council have spoken to range from small independent community centres, to larger, well known and respected city and county wide volunteering bodies – a full description of each organisation we spoke to can be found in the Appendix. The purpose of this report is to conduct an assessment of how Gloucester's VCS organisations are adapting and responding to the pressures of COVID-19 set out recommendations based on the SWOT analyses conducted. The report (Appendix A) identified the following key findings:

- VCS organisations in Gloucester have adapted well in the short term through implementing stop gap measures and other temporary solutions.
- Organisations are facing struggles, particularly surrounding finances, access to services, technological literacy and ensuring they retain client relationships.
- Changes in demand have varied across the voluntary and community sector - those organisations directly involved in the COVID-19 response effort have seen a notable shift in demand, with increases in some areas alongside changes in the service provisions they offer.
- There is variation in how staffing levels have been impacted by COVID-19, largely dependent on to what extent the organisation has been able to respond directly to COVID-19.
- There has been an increased prevalence of volunteers in the community willing to support VCS operations, along with increasingly creative and flexible ways of working.
- Most VCS organisations have not yet had time to consider the longer-term impacts beyond the immediate issues they are dealing with. Above all, organisations have expressed concern about the loss of face to face contact and the impacts that will have on their organisation and its connections with the community in the longer term.
- Organisations across the sector are looking for greater recognition for their staff and volunteers in the light of the pandemic, to celebrate their contribution and thank them for their hard work throughout this crisis.
- There is a desire for greater coordination across the sector to avoid duplication of effort, and ensure organisations are able to collaborate and learn from each other in their time of need.

- 3.3 From the key findings outlined above the report arrived at five key recommendations for change for the sector which could be supported by the City Council. They are:
1. Support the sector to invest in technology and increase skills, particularly around digital service delivery.
  2. Address food poverty in Gloucester.
  3. Re-examine the form and function of engagement between the VCS and the City Council to further improve communication, networking, advice and support but also facilitate effective links between the sector itself.
  4. Support the VCS in developing employee and volunteer retention strategies.
  5. Increase publicity initiatives and promotional support for the sector.
- 3.4 These recommendations will guide the COVID-19 recovery work of the City Council and inform our engagement with the VCS.
- 3.5 Findings in the Gloucester Stocktake are broadly representative of the findings of a similar report by the Barnwood Trust (Appendix B) which focuses on the VCS within Gloucestershire.
- 3.4 As demonstrated in both reports, VCS organisations have expressed concerns over the financial implications of the COVID-19 crisis, as well as a desire for support in navigating government schemes and following guidelines related to and in response to COVID-19.
- 3.5 The City of Gloucester is fortunate to have an established network of stakeholders specialising in businesses support. The Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (GFirst LEP) and University of Gloucestershire have both established a number of schemes in the County to support businesses, and by that extension VCS organisations. Two programmes in particular already operate offering similar services to those which would be provided by a business mentor:
- The Growth Hub offers a broad range of business support. Whilst their priority is to support businesses with high-growth potential, all businesses in the County can access their online support, attend networking events, and use their co-working space, free of charge. Depending on whether it meets their criteria, the Growth Hub also has a network of Business Navigators/Business Guides that offer 1-to-1 support.
  - The Start and Grow Enterprise programme (SaGE) offers free advice and support for those starting out in business for the first time, or those businesses less than two years old and looking to grow. SaGE advisors work with those who sign-up to create a bespoke action plan of development based on their needs. They are then given access to free courses, networking opportunities, and the chance to apply for an Enterprise Voucher (a £1000 grant).
- 3.6 It is proposed that contact is made with these organisations for support with the 'Business Mentor' Scheme specifically by offering a clear route of access to support for VCSE organisations. This could be achieved by having the City Council act as an intermediary to pass on details to these organisations as and when requests for support are received. In addition, we will promote volunteering opportunities amongst City Council staff in line with our volunteering policy and the provision of 2 working days of volunteering time for each member of staff.

3.7 In response to the concerns about direct Covid-19 related financial and cash-flow pressures for example as a result of loss of income, we propose to establish a one-off recovery funding that will be accessible to smaller community or grass-roots organisations with one-off grant payments to support cash flow or investments required to secure business continuity or transformation. We will ensure that organisations have exhausted other grants available to them, including local and national funders. Following the format of our COVID-19 community grants, we will devise a simple application process with an assessment process that provides challenge and support and signposting to more appropriate grant making organisations if appropriate. Draft criteria for this one-off fund are attached at Appendix C.

#### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 Several recommendations will have a direct positive impact on generating social value within the City.

#### **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 None directly arising from this report

#### **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 None directly arising from this report

#### **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 The one-off Gloucester VCS Recovery Funding of £10,000 to small community organisations as well as the introduction of a 'Business Mentor Scheme, are based on the key findings across Appendix A and B. These recommendations aim to address the main issues faced by the sector – through providing a stop-gap emergency fund, and ensuring advice and support is available to the sector.

#### **8.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

8.1 The next steps will include:

- Sharing the findings of the stocktake report with the VCS and developing a set of actions in response to the recommendations.
- The development and implementation of the Business Mentor Scheme.
- The design and implementation of the Recovery Fund.

#### **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 The £10k fund will come from the Covid-19 reserve.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

#### **10.0 Legal Implications**



10.1 None directly arising from this report other than ensuring that the agreed criteria for award is fair and transparent and consideration is given to a simple mechanism to monitor that the funds are used for the purpose for which the grants are awarded.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

**11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

11.1 N/A

**12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

12.1 N/A

**13.0 Community Safety Implications**

13.1 N/A

**14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications**

14.1 N/A

**Background Documents:** None

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# **COVID-19 and the Voluntary and Community Sector A Gloucester Perspective**

## Executive Summary

As COVID-19 continues to evolve in society, it is important that we as a city council understand how this is affecting one of our society's most important sectors – the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Gloucester City Council reached out to 17 organisations to invite them to take part in an interview as part of a VCS 'stock take'. The purpose of the interviews was to help Gloucester City Council understand the impact COVID-19 is having on the sector. These organisations form a representative sample of Gloucester's voluntary and community sector, however this is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of all VCS organisations in Gloucester. These sample organisations were agreed upon by Gloucester City Council's Cabinet Members with input from Group Leaders.

The organisations and charities the Council have spoken to range from small independent community centres, to larger, well known and respected city and county wide volunteering bodies – a full description of each organisation we spoke to can be found in the Appendix. The purpose of this report is to conduct an assessment of how Gloucester's VCS organisations are adapting and responding to the pressures of COVID-19, and set out recommendations based on the SWOT analyses conducted (also found in the Appendix). Through the research and data collected, this report sets out the following *Key Findings*:

- VCS organisations in Gloucester have adapted well in the short term through implementing stop gap measures and other temporary solutions.
- Organisations are facing struggles, particularly surrounding finances, access to services, technological literacy and ensuring they retain client relationships.
- Changes in demand have varied across the voluntary and community sector - those organisations directly involved in the COVID-19 response effort have seen a notable shift in demand, with increases in some areas alongside changes in the service provisions they offer.
- There is variation in how staffing levels have been impacted by COVID-19, largely dependent on to what extent the organisation has been able to respond directly to COVID-19.
- There has been an increased prevalence of volunteers in the community willing to support VCS operations, along with increasingly creative and flexible ways of working.
- Most VCS organisations have not yet had time to consider the longer-term impacts beyond the immediate issues they are dealing with. Above all, organisations have expressed concern about the loss of face to face contact and the impacts that will have on their organisation and its connections with the community in the longer term.
- Organisations across the sector are looking for greater recognition for their staff and volunteers in the light of the pandemic, to celebrate their contribution and thank them for their hard work throughout this crisis.
- There is a desire for greater coordination across the sector to avoid duplication of effort, and ensure organisations are able to collaborate and learn from each other in their time of need.

From the key findings outlined above, the recommendations of this report are:

1. Invest in technology
2. Address food poverty in Gloucester
3. Better co-ordinate work with local authorities and councils
4. Develop an employee and volunteer retention strategy
5. Increase publicity initiatives and support for the sector

## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the voluntary and community sector in Gloucester and how it operates. In order to assess this situation and establish recommendations to help the sector, Gloucester City Council has undertaken research to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the sector as a whole.

In this report, we examine the experiences of multiple VCS organisations in Gloucester and assess how they are adapting to the current COVID-19 crisis. We spoke with 17 organisations ranging from large established service providers to grass-roots providers – these organisations are listed in the Appendix. In the interviews, the research team asked seven questions, listed below.

- 1. How is your organization managing during the COVID-19 outbreak?*
- 2. As an organisation, what is your biggest challenge as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, and do you feel you can overcome it?*
- 3. Overall, has demand for your organisation changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being significant increase?*
- 4. Has your organisation seen a change in staffing levels since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being significant increase?*
- 5. What positive impacts, if any, has your organisation experienced since the start of the Pandemic and (how) are you planning to sustain these?*
- 6. Have there been any struggles? If so, how have you overcome them?*
- 7. Aside from financial assistance, what support would your organisation positively benefit from during the pandemic?*

The report will present and organise its findings through the lens of each question, setting out the responses we received and key takeaways. For those questions where a 0 to 10 scale was used, we will also map out where different types of organisation across the sector sat on that scale. The report will examine the key findings from each question in the next section, and will go on to draw conclusions from the interviews conducted. The appendix lists the organisations we interviewed, and provides more detailed responses to each question, using a SWOT analysis model.

Other reports have also been written on this topic, including one developed by the Barnwood Trust, which the Council has reviewed and considered in the development of this report. This report and its conclusions specifically aim to support and inform the recovery work of Gloucester City Council in moving beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, with key learnings and takeaways set out to help determine the best route forward to support the sector and our community resilience recovery work at Gloucester City Council.

## 1. How is your organization managing during the COVID-19 outbreak?

Many of the organisations we spoke to have had to substantially shift or re-align the services they provide to meet the needs and demands of their community in these times. Our research pulled out five key findings which demonstrate how the sector is managing during this outbreak:

*“Despite the current circumstances, our organisation is very busy and present in the community”*

- Having to close community halls has meant a loss of income for many VCS organisations, particularly community associations. Whilst some organisations have been able to furlough staff, they still must pay their fixed costs and bills despite their income stopping.
- Many organisations have sought to set up subsidiary groups which focus solely on the impacts COVID-19 is having in their communities. This has included setting up food banks and other community services.
- For organisations providing services direct to customers, the largest concern has been their inability to deliver these services face to face with clients, which has led to numerous difficulties adapting to virtual ways of working.
- More positively, most organisations have been able to adapt quickly to the challenges of the pandemic, including using technology to facilitate client and volunteer engagement.
- Technology and remote working is more difficult for some in the sector, with one organisation citing their inability to access emails while not connected to the server, as their use of technology is dependent on their physical presence in their building.

*VCS organisations in Gloucester have adapted well in the short term through implementing stop gap measures and other temporary solutions to address the current needs and demands they face.*

## 2. As an organisation, what is your biggest challenge as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, and do you feel you can overcome it?

VCS organisations discussed a range of challenges that they have faced during this pandemic. These challenges largely revolve around a lack of face-to-face contact and attempts to overcome this.

*“Staff being able to work from home has worked well, as we are able to continue offering some parts of the service we used to provide”*

- Organisations say they are not fully able to support the most vulnerable due to the fact they can no longer meet face to face. Some are worried these people will not return once lockdown is over.
- One organisation mentioned the challenge of ensuring that the contact details for their clients are up-to-date and accurate, making it easy to reach them via email, phone or post.
- There is concern over digital poverty, as many VCS clients either don't have access to technology or are not technologically literate, there is opportunity to improve digital literacy and build this into the existing services VCS organisations provide.
- Despite the challenges associated with technology, various organisations want to celebrate the community and its resilience once the lockdown is lifted and are exploring different ways of doing this to reunite their communities.
- Other challenges include navigating the UK Government's business grants and furlough schemes that many organisations found complicated and confusing.
- Having to close community halls has been extremely difficult, the largest concern for these organisations has been their inability to collect rent for the use of these spaces. This has led to great fiscal uncertainty for many organisations.

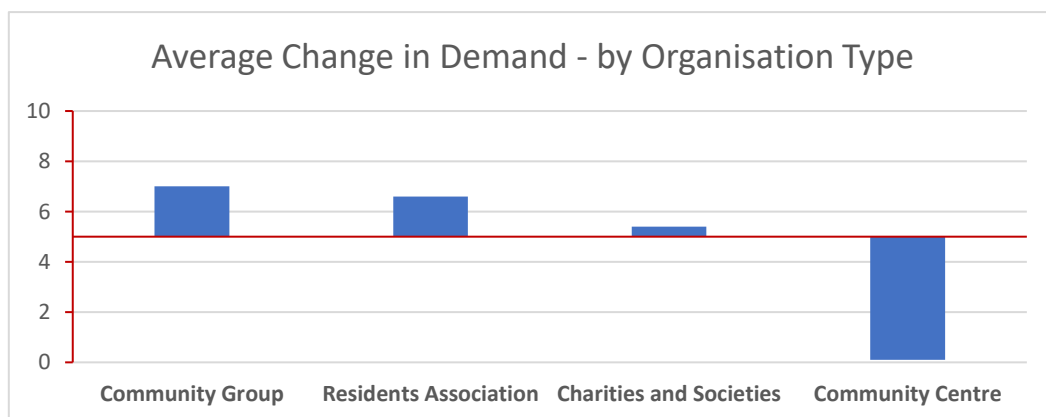
*Organisations are facing struggles but are focused on day to day operations at this time. It is unclear how a small minority of the organisations will overcome these challenges in the long term, however it is clear that VCS organisations will increasingly look to move services online where possible.*

**3. Overall, has demand for your organisation changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being a significant increase?**

Many VCS organisations have seen a change in demand; however, the results are very dependent on the services these organisations provide. On the whole organisations have seen a moderate increase in demand, with a notable exception being community centres – which have had to shut down most of their activities due to the need to close physical spaces.

*“The services our organisation provided have changed significantly since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. We now have more volunteers covering a range of services”*

- It was found that many of the VCS organisations have had to adapt and change the services they offer, rather than seeing a change in demand for their services.
- Organisations said that they are now offering services that they wouldn’t have offered before the pandemic started.
- Some organisations pointed out that previously they had a mix of both high and low intensity client needs but are now particularly engaging with people with higher level needs.
- An inability to meet face to face with clients is impacting demand, and some organisations are worried about losing sight of their regular clients.
- The majority of VCS organisations are trying their best to maintain constant contact with clients through other mediums available.



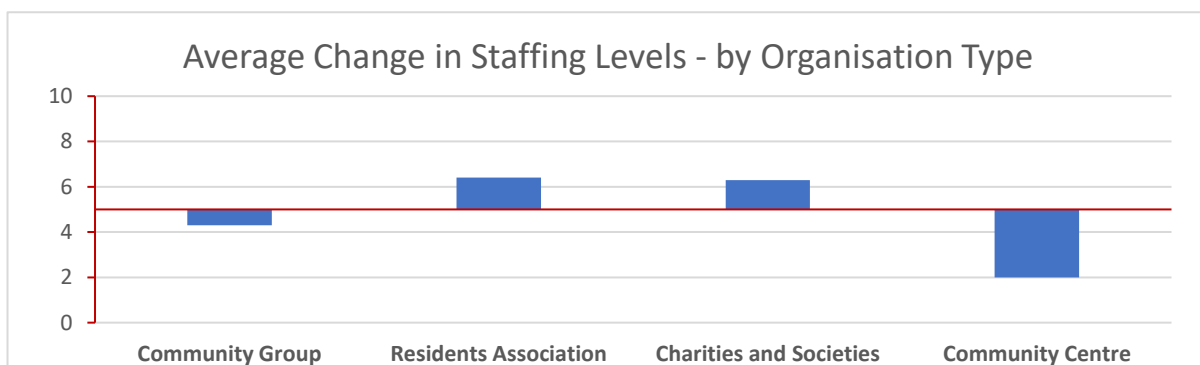
*Changes in demand have varied across the voluntary and community sector. Those organisations directly involved in the COVID-19 response effort have seen a notable shift in demand, while for those organisations not involved directly in responding to COVID-19, the picture is much more nuanced.*

**4. Has your organisation seen a change in staffing levels since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being a significant increase?**

Several organisations have seen a modest uptick in staffing levels since the start of the pandemic, largely due to increased numbers of volunteers rather than new paid employees.

*“It feels as if this pandemic has made our organisation go back to its roots, it has reminded us as to why it was founded many decades ago”*

- As the chart below shows, there is very much a nuanced picture when it comes to changes in staffing levels– with slight increases for residents’ associations and charities, and decreases for community groups and community centres.
- On the whole, most VCS organisations have been able to maintain the same amount of staff during the COVID-19 crisis so far.
- There is disparity within the sector with organisations directly involved in the COVID-19 response seeing upticks in volunteers, while those in other fields have been more likely to see decreases.
- This increase in staffing levels has allowed some organisations to expand the services they provide – but several organisations noted that these gains may not last in the longer term.
- Some of these organisations have had to furlough large portions of their staff, and some are worried about having to make some staff redundant because of the financial implications of the pandemic.



*There is significant variation in how staffing levels have been impacted by COVID-19, largely dependent on how the organisation has been able to respond directly to COVID-19. The furlough scheme was utilised by only a handful of organisations interviewed, however for the organisations that did have to use it, the proportion of staff being furloughed was significant.*

##### **5. What positive impacts, if any, has your organisation experienced since the start of the pandemic and (how) are you planning to sustain these?**

Many of the organisations noted that a real sense of community and comradery has grown since the start of the outbreak, and people in their communities are more willing to help.

*“We have become more embedded in our community and will continue with some of the projects that we have started running due to COVID-19”*

- A minority of organisations noted an increase of new volunteers and staff as a positive result of the pandemic.
- Organisations have said that the pandemic has caused their organisation to change its administrative practices in a positive way, as they no longer need to function in such a rigid way as they have in the past.
- Most VCS organisations are looking to expand the use of technology within their operations.

*While COVID-19 has been a largely negative situation for everybody, there have been some clear positives for the voluntary and community sector. This includes the increased prevalence of volunteers in the community supporting VCS operations, along with the increasingly creative and flexible ways of working that have been adopted.*



## **6. Have there been any struggles? If so, how have you overcome them?**

For many VCS organisations the biggest struggle is the uncertainty posed by the current circumstances, as they try to overcome both the immediate and long-term challenges they face.

*“We are worried about claims for loss of income because of the forced lockdown and forcing programmes to shut down”*

- Many organisations must be able to function for the long term with social distancing measures in place and finding ways of doing this is proving challenging.
- Another worry some organisations are trying to address is ensuring their clients are receiving the medical attention and treatments they need.
- Organisations have seen an increase in people that are anxious about getting food and supplies, largely because of a loss of work and/or being furloughed.
- On top of this, due to a loss of income, particularly for community centres, VCS organisations have their own worries about ensuring their funding lasts and that they don't deplete their reserves during these challenging times.

*There have been many struggles raised by VCS organisations, but most have not yet had time to consider the longer-term impacts beyond the immediate issues they are dealing with. Organisations have expressed concern about how they are going to implement social distancing measures, and many organisations are worried about their financial well-being.*

## **7. Aside from financial assistance, what support would your organisation positively benefit from during the pandemic?**

Despite the financial difficulties the sector is facing, VCS organisations mentioned various other ways in which they would like to be supported.

*“Our sector is not getting enough recognition; we have selfless volunteers going about caring for and helping our society's most vulnerable”*

- Many of the organisations stated multiple times that their sector is not getting enough recognition during this crisis.
- One VCS organisation said there needs to be more support for the sector as a whole, stating that public sector services are fundamentally flawed at all levels, including both the City and County Councils, when it comes to supporting the voluntary and community sector.
- One organisation suggested a celebratory event once lockdown is over, as one way of reconnecting with the community and recognising the significant contribution of the sector to the COVID-19 response effort.
- There is also the opportunity for the City Council to develop a more coordinated process of engaging with the Voluntary and Community sector when commissioning services, which could potentially be facilitated through the County Council.

*The majority of organisations across the sector are looking for greater recognition for their staff and volunteers in light of the pandemic. There is also a desire for greater coordination across the sector to avoid duplication of effort, and ensure organisations can collaborate and learn from each other.*

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Invest in technology**

- Continue to pilot Groop as a Community Management Platform to support the sector
- Facilitate a scheme, possibly across the County whereby the VCS is able to 'bulk-buy' hard and soft-ware
- Facilitate and support the development of digital skills and abilities, enabling VCS organisations to learn from each other

### **2. Address food poverty in Gloucester**

- In partnership with the VCS and the City Council, design and implement a project to address food poverty and promote social connectivity and greater wellbeing and health through food.
- Through collaboration in the voluntary and community sector, establish more permanent and reliable initiatives that seek to address food poverty and provide food to those who need it.

### **3. Better co-ordinate work with local authorities and councils**

- Establish a VCS forum, initially facilitated by the City Council in order to encourage regular dialogue and information exchange between the City Council and the VCS as well as promote learning and collaboration across the City Voluntary and Community sector.
- Influence the County Council to ensure that county wide commissioned VCS infrastructure support is visible, appropriate and successful
- Allow local VCS organisations to become increasingly involved with the running and management of the Community Help Hub at the Gloucester level, furthering the progress of Gloucester's Asset Based Community Development

### **4. Develop an employee and volunteer retention strategy**

- Assist in the development of a volunteer and staff retention plan by organisations, to consider how to retain staff and the right balance.
- Establishing a Gloucestershire wide system that can attract, recruit and match volunteers and provide more informal help. This can form a part of the county wide community recovery work, building on the Help Hub and working with Districts.

### **5. Increase publicity initiatives and support for the sector**

- Recognition through a county wide VCS organisation, maximising opportunities at the City level (both through officers and members) to promote our voluntary and community sector.
- The development of other publicity initiatives – such as a joint newsletter for VCS organisations across Gloucester, or an online web page listing the services on offer, all to help raise awareness and drive engagement.
- These initiatives could be supported by the Council through social media campaigns and web resources to outline the organisations and support on offer across the city.
- There is a potential opportunity for the council to review monetary assistance that could support some VCS organisations in the areas where loss of income has been substantial and poses a risk to the continuation of services the VCS organisation provides. This assistance could be provided and aided by the Gloucestershire Funding Consortium.

## **Conclusion**

It is clear from these findings that VCS organisations are doing their best to adapt their existing resources to meet the current demands our communities face due to COVID-19, but the sector has faced numerous challenges during this time.

One major challenge to overcome has been the loss of face to face connections many of these organisations depend upon to engage with their clients – particularly as community halls and centres have had to close, and people were urged to stay at home. Having to shift these connections online through the use of video conferencing applications such as Skype and Zoom has helped to bridge this gap, however some organisations have raised the issue of digital poverty as well as digital literacy, especially for elderly clients.

On top of this, the closure of many of the community halls and centres has led to one of the most pressing issues of all - finances. Many organisations have noted that because of their hall closures, additional sources of revenue have been cut off, and for a small number of organisations this loss of revenue poses a serious threat to the future existence of their organisation.

Despite the many negative impacts that COVID-19 is having, there have been some positive outcomes. A real sense of comradery and community is now felt throughout Gloucester's communities and neighbourhoods. Multiple organisations have noted that many new volunteers have joined their organisation to help with the delivery of multiple services. The ability to try and retain these volunteers is just one of the many opportunities the voluntary and community sector can take advantage of.

In conclusion, Gloucester's voluntary and community sector is managing its way through the COVID-19 pandemic well. Many short-term problems affecting organisations have been resolved, or stop gap measures have been introduced to see the organisations through the pandemic. However, the major threat facing the sector in the long term is the viability of some of these organisations. There is large concern about revenue sources no longer existing, and organisations not being able to rely on surplus funds in order to recover the costs incurred and income lost during the outbreak.

The recommendations outlined above could help inform the Council's recovery work as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are multiple options to consider to ensure Gloucester's voluntary and community sector is resilient, agile and adaptable – putting it in a strong position to continue to succeed in the longer term.

## Appendix

The research team spoke to a total of 17 VCS organisations ranging from small community centres, to large city and county wide charities. As mentioned in the introduction of the report, the organisations the research team spoke to form a representative sample of Gloucester’s voluntary and community sector, however this is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of all VCS organisations in Gloucester. These sample organisations have been agreed upon by Gloucester City Council’s Cabinet Members with input from Group Leaders.

All organisations were involved in interviews on the basis of anonymity; however, we have included below a brief description of each organisation and the type of work they are involved in. The second chart below groups these organisations into their relevant organisation type.

<i>Organisation Letter</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>
Organisation A	Support organisation for new residents of Gloucester
Organisation B	Community fundraising organisation in Gloucester
Organisation C	Community centre and hall for residents
Organisation D	Independent organisation providing advice and assistance to those in need
Organisation E	Sports and community venue for events in Gloucester
Organisation F	Organisation supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals
Organisation G	An organisation that facilitates community projects and engagement
Organisation H	Community development and regeneration organisation
Organisation I	A religious institution in Gloucester
Organisation J	A community centre and association providing a meeting place and social activities
Organisation K	A support group for Gloucester’s mature communities
Organisation L	A community development institution to support social and academic wellbeing
Organisation M	Provides youth and community-based activities in Gloucester
Organisation N	Local community association and centre
Organisation O	Non-profit organisation providing free and impartial advice
Organisation P	A social club and community association in Gloucester
Organisation Q	A health care charity based in Gloucester

<b>Organisation Type</b>	<b>Organisations</b>
Charities and Societies	F, H, I, L, M, O, Q
Community Centre	E, N
Community Group	A, D, K
Residents Association	B, C, G, J, P

These organisations represent a range of community interests, including organisations that operate at the street level all the way up to those who are county-wide or part of a wider national network. They also cover various aspects of the voluntary and community sector, working to address multiple themes throughout our communities.

The following SWOT analysis below informs the report and recommendations above. The SWOT analysis is formatted in a way that provides utmost transparency while keeping the organisations interviewed and their answers anonymous. The SWOT analysis provides a detailed breakdown of the responses received and is intended to supplement the report as a record of what organisations said.

**1. How is your organization managing during the COVID-19 outbreak?**

<b>Strengths:</b>	<b>Weaknesses:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented a plan of action in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.</li> <li>• Regular workloads and day to day work continues, we've also been able to provide regular physical and emotional check-ups for our clients and staff.</li> <li>• The current crisis has presented us with the opportunity to set up subsidiary organisations to focus solely on the COVID-19 crisis. Organisations have been able to quickly set up food banks.</li> <li>• Despite the current circumstances, our organisation is very busy and present in the community.</li> <li>• Our organisation has transitioned to online support in some areas with volunteers now using email and phone communications to reach our clients.</li> <li>• Our staff have benefitted from the government's furlough scheme, while those staff we have retained are keeping the organisation going.</li> <li>• We were able to reduce all our outgoing costs to a minimum and put heating on low.</li> <li>• Our office phones have been redirected to someone's house phone.</li> <li>• We have the opportunity to support our community by our main hall being used to store supplies.</li> <li>• Working with different community groups. Our main focus is sending out supplies, running errands and community work.</li> <li>• We are fortunate to receive donations from different organisations which is supporting us through this time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing the community hall has been extremely difficult for us in terms of a financial and social impact.</li> <li>• The food bank we operate is extremely challenging to do without our community hall.</li> <li>• One of our main worries is the fact that we are now unable to have face to face contact with our clients - this is a big challenge for us.</li> <li>• We are not managing – this has been a big struggle for us.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with other clubs and associations would be nice.</li> <li>• Our organisation has adapted well and the use of technology and remote working</li> <li>• We continue to lobby and contact politicians locally to advertise the ongoing work our organisation does. We also post these on our website. The HR process for furloughing was</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our hall had to close, no revenue is coming in at all.</li> <li>• We will deal with the financial implications later.</li> <li>• Our organisation is waiting for the government advice about what they can do and when they can open.</li> <li>• We are worried about our partners and whether we can fund them.</li> </ul>

<p>confusing at first, however they managed to do it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We currently don't have any remote access emails systems or computer network; this would be great and help us out.</li> <li>• We have offered our premises to the city and county councillors to use for storage.</li> <li>• Our organisation is very much undertaking projects during this time which are engaging with the community, and we are busy delivering food and prescriptions to vulnerable people. This varies from project to project.</li> <li>• We are using our premises to prepare and sending out supplies. It's a community effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are unable to provide any services since our organisation had to close.</li> <li>• We have suspended all our community activities, we had lots of groups meeting per week.</li> <li>• We are finding it difficult keeping up the specialist work we used to provide as one element of it normally brings in a regular income.</li> </ul>
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**2. As an organisation, what is your biggest challenge as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, and do you feel you can overcome it?**

Strengths:	Weakness:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring our contact details for our clients are up-to-date and accurate, making it easy to reach them. Our organisation is actively thinking about and preparing for life beyond lockdown.</li> <li>• Our organisation wants to celebrate the community and its resilience once the lockdown is lifted. This is a good opportunity for the organisation to re-connect with our clients and volunteers.</li> <li>• Finances and money are no longer our biggest challenge, we are in a stronger position on these fronts and we have moved on to focus on other aspects of our organisation.</li> <li>• We have reduced our overheads to a bare minimum, as we are fortunate to have a Contingency fund</li> <li>• Our Organisation moved to Office 365 cloud-based system before COVID-19.</li> <li>• Staff that have been able to work from home has worked well, as we are able to continue offering some parts of the service we used to provide.</li> <li>• keeping in touch by phone with our volunteers ensuring that they are ok.</li> <li>• We have adapted our offering and are now doing this online, which has benefitted our client group as they feel they are doing something useful.</li> <li>• We are remaining positive as we are part of a committee, we are grateful for what support we get. When things start running again, we will be inundated with work.</li> <li>• Currently applying for funding to continue with our work, we are waiting to hear the results of applications submitted.</li> <li>• We have been delivering little projects within the community in order to subsidise some of the costs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The technology has caused some problems and issues. Using Zoom can make tasks harder. We are more likely to miss things on Zoom.</li> <li>• Not being able to properly stay in touch with clients and worrying they will not return when lockdown is over.</li> <li>• Our organisation is struggling to contact the chair and committee members during lockdown.</li> <li>• Not fully able to support the most vulnerable due to no longer meeting face to face.</li> <li>• The panic at the start, about being able to afford to get through this crisis and keeping our organisation running was a major worry.</li> <li>• Challenges in supporting the vulnerable and at risk in terms of mental health during these uncertain times.</li> <li>• Financial survival was a concern for us as we had to close and we still had some overheads, that we reduced to a bare minimum, we are using our reserves.</li> <li>• Unfortunately, we had to cancel all our fundraising activities, which is what we relied on to deliver our projects.</li> <li>• Our biggest challenge was that meeting up as a group was prohibited, which is something we couldn't overcome.</li> <li>• Many of our members stopped attending well before the government announced the lockdown, due to pressures from family, this impacted on our numbers.</li> <li>• Individuals that use our organisation are frustrated they can't attend any of the services that we delivered; we too are frustrated that we are unable to increase our funds.</li> <li>• Finances are a real struggle for us, as we receive our funds after delivering our services.</li> </ul>
Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our organisation has been able to add people in need to our outreach programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We don't want to lose our client base.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our clients are not tech savvy, and getting online is a challenge, however we are amending our programming for the future and for right now – helping to widen participation.</li> <li>• We have been able to navigate the Government business grants and furlough schemes.</li> <li>• Our clients that are providing an income for us are mainly vulnerable, we are hoping that they can continue using us after the crisis.</li> <li>• Our organisation generated an income from selling products and room hire - we anticipate this becoming an opportunity again after COVID-19.</li> <li>• We have adapted our offering to online which is proving successful, as the staff feel valued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying the rent and utilities is a challenge in the short term, however there will be even bigger long-term challenges once this is over.</li> <li>• We have enough money to sustain ourselves for the short term, however, if the lockdown is prolonged further, we might not be able to last much longer.</li> <li>• The financial losses are a massive blow to our organisation and the future of our organisation is unclear.</li> <li>• Our area is quite deprived, there is a lack of affordable activities for people to engage in.</li> <li>• Whilst our premises have been closed, we have experienced some damage caused by squirrels.</li> <li>• We don't want to take want to take out a loan as we will be unable to pay it back.</li> </ul>
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**3. Overall, has demand for your organisation changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being a significant increase?**

<b>Strengths:</b>	<b>Weakness:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The services our organisation provided have changed significantly since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. We now have more volunteers covering a range of services.</li> <li>• Our demand hasn't necessarily changed, but rather, it has shifted to areas or services we didn't provide a lot of before the pandemic.</li> <li>• Our services have not had to change significantly, and the levels of service are in line with what we experienced before the pandemic.</li> <li>• The core function of our organisation is publicly funded, and we have an obligation to continue to provide this service.</li> <li>• The service we are providing now in this crisis is what we have always provided, so demand hasn't shifted.</li> <li>• We have seen an increase in demand, previously we had a mix of high and low intensity client needs but now we are engaging more with people with higher level needs, and the type of needs is much different than before.</li> <li>• Our experience is different for each project - for some there has been an increase, with regards to supporting our community.</li> <li>• Elements of the projects we deliver build people's self-confidence and we would like to continue with this as it's very important to those individuals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are losing sight of some of our regular clients that used to come in as groups.</li> <li>• We are no longer able to use our physical space.</li> <li>• More people are unemployed as a result of COVID-19 and there are limited job opportunities available.</li> <li>• We are unable to meet the demand, there is a limit to what we can do.</li> <li>• Our organisation has had a decrease in demand which has had a massive impact on us.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The demand for our services is now different and much higher because of the challenges of COVID-19.</li> <li>• We are seeing more people by making the sessions with our clients shorter, we recently received funding to help us engage with younger people.</li> <li>• We have become really reliant on others to ensure the groups of people we serve are ok.</li> <li>• Demand has increased for food and other supplies, so we set up a food bank, this is something we wouldn't have done were it not for COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our demand has significantly decreased as we have had to totally shut down.</li> <li>• We are now unable to help our client group due to COVID-19.</li> </ul>

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have adapted our projects in order to support our groups differently.</li><li>• Our buildings are not open, but we are doing everything we can to still deliver a service.</li></ul> |  |
|---|--|

4. Has your organisation seen a change in staffing levels since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak? With 0 being a significant decrease, 5 being “normal” and 10 being a significant increase?

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have been able to maintain the same amount of staff during the COVID-19 crisis.</li> <li>It has been really rewarding and a nice experience to see so many volunteers in our community come together. It is creating a real sense of community and I feel it is pulling the community together. We have seen an incredible increase in the amount of volunteers joining us since the start of the pandemic.</li> <li>It feels as if this pandemic has made our organisation go back to its roots, it has reminded us as to why it was founded many decades ago.</li> <li>We have now started to pay some of our staff during the outbreak which in turn has made our organisation more productive.</li> <li>Our staff are working hard, however our availability of work is limited.</li> <li>Due to the government furlough scheme we have be able to maintain our staff for once the crisis is over.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are no longer taking in any volunteers; however, we are focusing on a smaller number of clients. One of our areas of focus right now is ensuring home schooling can be done effectively for those families who might not have the technology.</li> <li>We have seen a significant decrease in our staffing levels.</li> </ul>
Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have seen a huge surge in staffing levels, as well as a huge surge in services we provide.</li> <li>Every road and street in our community is taken care of and accounted for.</li> <li>For our organisation, we haven't seen a massive intake of volunteers or staff, however we are encouraging others in our community to seek this opportunity out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our organisation is worried about people not returning to the community. Our core groups are those using the centre, we are worried they will not come back after this is all over.</li> <li>Our organisation has had to furlough 50% of our staff, this has been primarily on the retail side of our organisation.</li> </ul>

**5. What positive impacts, if any, has your organisation experienced since the start of the pandemic and (how) are you planning to sustain these?**

<b>Strengths:</b>	<b>Weakness:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the challenging times we are all in, it has given me and our organisation time to really reflect and think if we can do things differently. We have been able to sort out a lot of back of office and administrative matters, while also being able to take time to reflect.</li> <li>• The main positive impact on our organisation and community as a whole is the big sense of community. More people are coming out to support the community and more people are building comradery, and friendships with people they didn't even know before. It took people who were isolated to come together.</li> <li>• It has been nice to be working with new people and creating these new relationships.</li> <li>• New partnerships and conversations we are having with other organisations are good and helpful.</li> <li>• Our organisation was able to hold a financial contingency reserve, which we are relying on now, to help us get through this difficult time.</li> <li>• We have several partnership meetings online which is working very well, we are saving on travel costs, we have also got much better at using the online tools, which will change how we work in the future.</li> <li>• We have become more embedded in our community and will continue with some of the projects that we have started running due to COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We would like to see these new volunteers retained beyond the crisis, however, we are open to what people want to do and are ready for them not to return.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our organisation has changed its long-term planning approach. We want to improve our networking to make sure that we are there to support and engage the community. We are also looking to transition certain services into the association in order to protect them.</li> <li>• We have realised that our organisational practices did not have to be so rigid in the past, for example, our meetings did not always need to take place in person. We are looking to expand the liberal use of our</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been no positive impacts at all.</li> <li>• It has been very difficult; nothing has been positive.</li> <li>• This could have signalled the end of our organisation.</li> </ul>

technology as we have become more flexible during this crisis.

- We are looking at new flexibilities in order to adapt to the current circumstances, but also for the future.
- Our organisation is doing things differently and has become more efficient through video calls and administrative work, these are practices we intend on keeping for the long term.
- New people are now developing relationships with the organisation, it is a new edge in the community that is beginning to evolve, and we think we can retain this after the pandemic.

**6. Have there been any struggles? If so, how have you overcome them?**

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the immediate and long term challenges our organisation faces in the wake of the pandemic. Our organisation is adapting and must be able to function for the long term with these social distancing measures in place.</li> <li>• Our organisation is looking to move our social activities online.</li> <li>• Our organisation has benefited from a grant that has helped us significantly.</li> <li>• We have good community links which have enabled us to still receive our organisation’s mail to a staff member’s home.</li> <li>• Sending out weekly updates to our members has been good as the communication is still happening, at present we are getting by.</li> <li>• Referrals are coming in from some councils, and those patterns have been working well.</li> <li>• Apart from cash flow, our organisation has not had struggles.</li> <li>• We have no struggles we as an organisation reacted to the situation quite well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the message is getting across to the client group and getting them to understand that the lockdown is serious. Furthermore, we want to make these groups realise the dangerous actions they are taking and how it puts others at risk.</li> <li>• Another worry is ensuring clients get the medical attention they need, even those in the shielding category. Things like this take a lot of coordination, staying safe etc. How do you weigh up risk, what are they and how do you manage these risks? It is challenging.</li> <li>• We need to ensure that the vulnerable in our society are not being neglected.</li> <li>• People are anxious about getting food and supplies because of loss of work and furlough, we are calming people down.</li> <li>• We are confused about how our organisation was supposed to implement the lockdown.</li> <li>• We are worried about claims for loss of income because of the forced lockdown and forcing programmes to shut down.</li> <li>• We had to research all the legal implications of furlough, this was not clear at first, the scheme and dates for the schemes have been confusing.</li> <li>• Struggles are around the short-term delivery model.</li> <li>• Our organisation doesn’t have the systems in place to remotely access emails, and also to pay staff, we need to go into the office to do this.</li> <li>• Receiving our mail is difficult as we don’t have a post box.</li> <li>• We don’t have teleconferencing provision to communicate and have discussions with our members, some of which are elderly and can't use Zoom or Skype, also some of these individuals don’t have broadband.</li> <li>• We are struggling to come to terms with being denied each other’s company, as we are missing everyone.</li> <li>• One of our organisation’s biggest challenges is reaching people who aren't connected, either by IT or otherwise.</li> <li>• Human resources and uncertainty of the lockdown at the beginning was very difficult,</li> </ul>

	working out what to do, and trying to find a balance, it was a very challenging time.
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If we had a simple phone number that we can dial into, that would help us a great deal, we are willing to pay pepper corn rent for it.</li> <li>• Had we known that this would have happened (COVID-19) we would have issued everyone with a small device to keep in touch with our members. We and our members are not up with technology.</li> <li>• We have had a big learning curve in relation to IT, around people not having the right equipment at home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are beginning to use funding reserves and need to ensure these are not depleted.</li> <li>• Operating with proper hygiene tools available.</li> <li>• Lack of support from local government.</li> </ul>

**7. Aside from financial assistance, what support would your organisation positively benefit from during the pandemic?**

<b>Strengths:</b>	<b>Weaknesses:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our organisation still has quite a bit of cash left, so our finances are not an issue at the moment.</li> <li>• Our organisation is doing well despite the pandemic.</li> <li>• We are very happy that we have communication and we can keep in touch, via email and over the phones.</li> <li>• We have used this time to sort things out, and we are looking at how we can make things work in the future.</li> <li>• We are fortunate that we have staff on the ground that have been running errands for vulnerable people in the community.</li> <li>• We have spent a lot of money on our centre and have some funds left which should tide us over.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our sector is not getting enough recognition, we have selfless volunteers going about caring for and helping our society's most vulnerable.</li> <li>• We need to get more volunteers in, as some have had to take leave due to bereavements.</li> <li>• There needs to be more support for the organisations serving our communities. We think public services are fundamentally flawed at all levels including both the City and County Councils, as well as public health.</li> <li>• For some of our group members coming to our centre was the only time they went out, and now they are unable to leave their houses, due to the current situation.</li> <li>• Very few referrals coming in from GPs, they could be referring some people who are self-isolating.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to give real recognition to the voluntary and community sector.</li> <li>• Having professional advice, especially with regards to Human Resources, would be hugely helpful.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to have a singular member from the City Council to contact with regards to the voluntary and community sector and ask our questions.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to some organisations if you were to use the communication channels that the City Council have to advertise/ bring attention to the services that are being provided in the community, and signposting is really important for us.</li> <li>• It would be nice to see the voluntary and community sector act in a more co-ordinated way.</li> <li>• Our organisation would benefit from working with the local council and councillors to look at issues that have come up since lockdown, and the impacts on VCS organisations.</li> <li>• We need an economic development strategy that focuses on the peripheral communities, and not just the city centre in Gloucester.</li> <li>• Our organisation would like some support either from the Council or VCS, around better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our organisation must look at costs, we are unable to furlough and might have to make employees redundant.</li> </ul>



understanding of accessing our computer systems remotely, as we don't have the skills and knowledge.

- We are hoping to begin to re-open and have small group gatherings on a limited basis once the government relaxes the lockdown.
- It would be good if we had the technology for keeping in touch, we are grateful for phones and emails.
- We have started to think about how our organisation will function practically once we have come through this, we are looking at our policies and procedures to ensure people's safety and we are guided by the advice given. We don't see our organisation continuing as it was before COVID-19 took hold. Better ways of ensuring referrals are made, and better connections between agencies.
- An opportunity for our volunteers to be recognised for their rich community spirit.
- We would like those who are receiving our service to be patient with us given the circumstances.

Special thanks to all the Organisations that took the time to share their experiences with us during this difficult time.

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# COVID-19 and the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) in Gloucestershire: A situation analysis

17<sup>th</sup> April 2020

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## Executive Summary

This report collates the experiences of 58 VCS organisations in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, each of whom participated in an information gathering exercise during March and April 2020. All of these organisations work with vulnerable groups across Gloucestershire, including disabled people and people with mental challenges. They offer a variety of activities, services and support, and include organisations providing frontline services as well as specialist care (including palliative care). The report outlines the challenges experienced by these organisations as a result of the crisis, and the range of potential solutions that were identified. Case studies are given to highlight the nature of these challenges and adaptations being made.

The **challenges** experienced by the organisations fell into **three main groups**:

1. **Financial implications:** both in relation to **short-term challenges** and **long-term financial insecurity**. These ranged from losing income due to cancelling activities or closing services, developing online functionality, ceasing fundraising, uncertainty about delivering to grants from external funders, and covering staff costs.

**Almost three-quarters** of the organisations (72%) described **experiencing financial difficulties or requiring additional funding** to enable the continuation or expansion of their services. For **over half** (57%) of these organisations, the crisis presented an **existential threat to their current services** for which they were seeking financial assistance.

2. **Logistical implications:** logistical challenges were identified in both **continuing and adapting services**, including as a result of reductions in staffing capacity and due to an influx of new volunteers. A quarter of organisations (26%) reported operating with reduced levels of staff and volunteers.

Challenges also related to transitioning to online and telephone services, as well as use or maintenance of certain physical spaces. **Over half** (60%) of the 58 organisations were **already looking at developing online or telephone support**, either by expanding current services or creating new ones. Logistical challenges for individuals accessing support were also highlighted.

3. **Impacts for individuals:** Concerns were identified for the organisations' beneficiaries, particularly those which would result from **people being in isolation**. This included concerns about people becoming socially isolated, and being able to have their basic needs met (including due to logistical issues in accessing support). Concerns about the **mental health** of beneficiaries was a particularly **dominant theme**. The **impact for certain vulnerable groups**, including children and families, and those already experiencing financial difficulty, was highlighted. Concerns specifically relating to contracting the virus and about people's physical health were also raised.

In responding to the current crisis, a variety of **potential solutions** and **adaptations** were highlighted by the organisations (although these could cause additional financial or logistical challenges). This included



work already being done or which organisations are already planning to do, such as **developing programmes of practical support** or **finding innovative ways to continue existing services**.

Examples of organisations working collaboratively within and across sectors have emerged since the initial version of this report was produced. The report supplements information provided by the 58 organisations with details about an additional 36 services known about by Barnwood staff which are operating across the county to support people during the crisis.

The report outlines ideas suggested by respondents about **what would help to sustain their work** and **support the beneficiary groups** they work with. These ideas fell into **four key areas**:

1. **Financial support/donations for organisations**- both to support existing costs and to set up new services in response to the crisis (for example, to purchase technology)
2. **Financial support/donations for individuals**- including grants and loans to enable beneficiaries on low-incomes to buy food and essential supplies
3. **Collaboration with other VCS organisations**- to enable mutual support, avoid duplication, and share skills and assets (ranging from specialist advice about producing Easy Read information to arranging alternative use of empty venues)
4. **More information**- a need for accessible information about services to signpost beneficiaries towards, as well as clearer guidance available for organisations about government support and potential stop-gap funding

The report concludes with a series of **case studies** which illustrate the **interwoven nature of the challenges** being experienced by these organisations and the ways in which they are seeking to adapt in order to support vulnerable groups during the crisis.

Recently announced government funding of £750m for small and medium-sized charities will potentially be available to the organisations who participated in this information gathering exercise. However, the criteria and timescales for receiving government funding are yet to be determined, and it is likely that there will still be financial shortfalls given the anticipated loss of £4bn in the sector during the first 12 weeks of the crisis.<sup>1</sup> Several Gloucestershire VCS organisations supporting vulnerable groups across the county have launched **emergency appeals**, despite the recently announced funding.<sup>2</sup>

A **new collaboration of Gloucestershire Funders** has also been announced which seeks to help streamline the process for VCS organisations in the county looking to access local sources of funding. For more

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<sup>1</sup> See: *Government funding for charities: An important start but more is needed*  
<https://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2020/04/09/government-funding-for-charities-an-important-start-but-more-is-needed/>

<sup>2</sup> See: *Urgent appeal launched to help Hospice at Home service free up vital NHS beds in Gloucestershire*  
<https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/health/urgent-appeal-launched-help-hospice-4016053>



information, please see: <https://www.barnwoodtrust.org/news/gloucestershire-funders-COVID19-response/>

For more information about this work, please contact Georgia Boon (Director of Partnerships) at Barnwood Trust via [georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.uk](mailto:georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.uk)



## Introduction

Given the unprecedented situation we are all experiencing in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Barnwood Trust has produced a situation analysis of VCS organisations in Gloucestershire. Over 340 organisations were contacted, initially via email, to find out:

- What support organisations needed as a result of the outbreak
- What challenges there were where organisations were operating
- What organisations were already doing to adapt and respond

There was also an offer to take part in a conference call with other organisations, chaired by Georgia Boon (Director of Partnerships) at Barnwood Trust. Two of these calls were held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

This is an updated version of an earlier report produced at the beginning of the crisis (dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020). The views of 39 organisations were captured in the original report, however, a total of 58 organisations have now responded to the request for information and their views are encompassed within this report. Fifty-one organisations responded by email and a further seven took part in the two conference calls. Six organisations contributed both by email *and* the conference calls.

The 58 organisations who responded operate across the county and support a range of groups including disabled people and people with mental health challenges, older people, vulnerable children and families, those in food poverty and people experiencing (or at risk of) domestic abuse. Although ostensibly a health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic is creating (and exacerbating) crises which could disproportionately affect many of these groups<sup>3 4</sup>. A more detailed breakdown of the organisations involved in this report can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

In order to gain a broader knowledge of the organisations involved in this situation analysis and of the other services responding to the COVID-19 crisis in the county, supplementary information has been gathered from a variety of sources, these are indicated as applicable.

In bringing all of these sources together, the Research Team at Barnwood Trust have identified **three key challenges and concerns** for organisations as a result of the outbreak:

- **Financial** implications for organisations (in both the short and long term)
- **Logistical** implications for organisations (including continuing and adapting services)

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/human-rights-uk/coronavirus-effect-human-rights>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/covid-19-greater-health-risk-people-low-incomes-we-can-give-life-line>



- Concerns about **impacts for individuals** (including social isolation, mental and physical health and basic needs)

In addition, there were also a number of ways organisations said they were adapting and responding to the crisis as well as indications about the types of support that may be useful as the crisis continues.

This report, therefore, has been structured in the following way:

- **Section One** explores the challenges and concerns raised by the 58 organisations who took part in the situation analysis. These findings have been enhanced with additional information about the services these organisations provide, sourced through publicly available data, social media and the Charity Commission's website.
- **Section Two** highlights the ways organisations have been adapting and the potential solutions to limit the effects of the crisis for both the organisations themselves and the groups they support. The information in this section combines data from the situation analysis with supplementary intelligence gathered about 36 services in Gloucestershire (see [Appendix 2](#) for more detail). This intelligence has been gathered through existing connections within the wider Barnwood Trust team and publicly available information online and via social media.
- **Section Three** presents a series of case studies of organisations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These organisations all took part in the situation analysis and additional information sourced from websites and social media has also been included.

Due to the fast-paced nature of the situation, the variety of organisations involved and the challenges, concerns and solutions identified within this report are not necessarily representative of the VCS sector in Gloucestershire. This report is, however, intended to provide an outline of many of the immediate and long-term challenges and concerns that VCS organisations are facing as a consequence of the pandemic, as well as offering some insights into organisations' initial responses.



## 1. Organisational challenges and concerns

### 1.1 Financial implications for organisations

The **financial implications of the COVID-19 pandemic are stark and far-reaching**. Organisations large and small responded to say that they are **facing immediate financial challenges** as well as expressing **concerns about the long-term consequences of the outbreak**. In addition, organisations told us about the financial implications of adapting their services to be able to continue to reach those most in need, or to expand their services to support the civic response.

Almost **three-quarters of the organisations (72%)** who responded to Barnwood Trust described **experiencing financial difficulties or requiring additional funding** to enable the continuation or expansion of their services. Moreover, **over half (57%)** of these organisations indicated an **existential threat to their current services** for which they were seeking financial assistance.

#### Key Points in this Section

- Organisations are facing huge financial challenges in the short term and real financial insecurity in the long-term.
- 57% of organisations reported an existential threat to their current services and **Six organisations explicitly stated the survival of their organisation was threatened by the crisis**.
- The biggest financial challenges were linked to the **immediate cancellation of activities and the closure of services** that organisations were reliant on for their annual budgets. This was **exacerbated by uncertainties surrounding the crisis**, particularly the length of time services would be closed for.
- There was **uncertainty about the security of current and future grant-funding**.
- Where organisations were trying to adapt or develop online functionality, there were **challenges related to the costs of going digital**.
- Although organisations were clearly struggling financially, **many were looking to do their best to support their clients and even expanding their services to help people throughout the crisis**.

#### Immediate Funding Shortfalls

**83%** of the organisations who responded to Barnwood Trust to say they were experiencing financial challenges indicated that these related to immediate funding shortfalls as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak. The reasons for this included (**NB:** some organisations listed more than one reason):

	Frequency
Income shortfalls from closure of services and cancellations of activities	30
Staff costs*	13
Loss of income from donations	6
Uncertainties about external funding	5
Overhead Costs (rent, animal care, etc.)	4
Purchasing PPE	1

*\*Staff costs largely referred to routine paying of staff, however, one organisation indicated that everyone who delivers their services are self-employed and therefore are not currently earning anything whilst the service is closed. Similarly, one organisation said they had been forced to make redundancies.*

Organisations indicated that they were faced with **significant short-term challenges with potentially lasting consequences**. One organisation, for example, told us how they had financial reserves but did not want to use all of this up now as they wanted to be able to deliver particular projects in the future. Other organisations **wanted to protect their staff but were quickly running out of money to pay them**.

Within the two conference calls chaired by Barnwood Trust, a representative from the VCS Alliance and an arts organisation reported on the challenges they had been told about by the organisations they work with. They reiterated these findings that **organisations were struggling to survive**, would soon be unable to pay staff and that **income streams had dried up** because activities were unable to take place.

## Long-Term Funding Shortfalls

Beyond the immediate effects of the crisis, organisations also reflected on the long-term financial implications of cancelling activities, not being able to fundraise and the general uncertainty surrounding everything currently.

Half of the organisations involved in this situation analysis discussed to some extent the long-term financial shortfalls they were facing. 86% of these organisations also had reported short-term challenges. The long-term threats included (**NB**: some organisations listed more than one challenge):

	Frequency
Disruption to funding streams (including, long-term effects of not being able to fundraise, disruption to assumed sources of income and a lack of reserves)	11
Uncertainty about funding and grants	7
The possibility of forced cuts to staff and/or services	5
A lack of room within budgets to make up the shortfall	4

Six organisations were explicit in suggesting that **the crisis posed a threat to their survival**. These organisations support individuals from a variety of vulnerable or marginalised groups including:

- Disabled children and their families;
- The BAME community;
- Individuals requiring hospice care and their families;
- Adults with learning disabilities; and
- Individuals experiencing mental health crises and suicide-bereaved families.

Two organisations told us how their **efforts to become self-sustaining was seen as a major contributor to their difficulties**. Rather than relying (solely) on grant-funding, these organisations had developed social enterprises and diversified their income sources. However, **the nature of the COVID-19 crisis meant that all of these income streams had ceased at the same time** and so the organisations were without any income. One said they would “probably be one of the first charities to go” without financial assistance.

The following table offers examples of the *nature* of the shortfalls organisations have discussed:

Organisation A	A shortfall of between £800 and £3,000 per client.
Organisation B	Assumed loss of £60,000 over the next three months – assuming no further grants are awarded during this time.
Organisation C	Immediate loss of more than £2,000 per week. 22% of income from seasonal activities that are not likely to be possible in 2020.
Organisation D	Immediate loss of £2,000 per week. A staff member has voluntarily reduced their hours.  Potential annual loss of £200,000
Organisation E	Already experiencing financial difficulties.  Worst-case is a shortfall of £100,000 in 2020-1.
Organisation F	Loss of at least £1,000 from delivery of services.
Organisation G	Potential closure of charity shops would have an enormous impact – accounts for £2million of income annually.
Organisation H	General costs at £50 per day
Organisations I	Potential loss of paying service-users would cost £60,000 per month. Cessation of fundraising events will cost £120,000 - £150,000 this financial year.

Organisation J	Forecasting a 75% reduction in service provision (March-September). A deficit of £92,000.
Organisation K	Forecast income loss of at least £400,000
Organisation L	Approximately £42,500 per month in staff costs and response services.
Organisation M	Up to £5,000 to ensure continuation of community services.

Within the conference calls held on 19th March 2020, there were specific references to two areas of uncertainty:

- a) Clarity on government advice and assistance
- b) External funders

In both calls reference was made to how organisations were unsure as to their eligibility for the government's economic interventions. For example, were charities regarded as small businesses and therefore able to claim a proportion of the relief grants, apply for the business-continuity loans or be able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in which staff can be furloughed and their wages (up to 80% or £2,500 per month) will be covered by HM Treasury?

In absence of any clarity, one organisation described the limitations of such interventions. Charities already do not have to pay business rates, so are not helped by their removal and many charities would not have the certainty of income or fundraising to be able to pay back any loans.

Indirectly, organisations were also unclear about the definition of *key workers* and the implications of the recently announced school closures on their staff. Clarity on this would have allowed them to know what activities they *could* still run and therefore, income they may still be able to generate or be losing.

Since the conference calls took place (19th March 2020), there has been some further clarity with regards to the definition of *key workers*. The latest information can be found [here](#). Alongside professions such as health and social care, public safety and security, education and food delivery, are workers 'delivering key public services'. These key public services are not, however, defined.



Moreover, on Monday 8th April 2020, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak MP announced a £750million support package for UK charities<sup>5</sup> in addition to the business interventions charities are already entitled to use. Of this £750million, £370million has been ring-fenced specifically for small charities and up to £200million will support hospices. Within the announcement, the Chancellor named disabled people, vulnerable children and people experiencing domestic abuse as specific groups that would be supported by this intervention alongside organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. Moreover, the Government have committed to match-funding pound-for-pound, anything raised during the *BBC Big Night In* charity appeal (April 23rd) for the National Emergencies Trust (starting from at least £20million).

Whilst this appears to be an important intervention by the Government and may potentially provide a lifeline to some organisations including several of those featured in this report, **the VCS sector estimates there to be a £4billion black hole in funding over a 12 week period**. Therefore, this announcement may arguably be insufficient to save many organisations, however, it is an important first step<sup>6</sup>.

In the conference calls, organisations also felt there was **uncertainty regarding external funders**. Some discussed how their funders had shown immense flexibility and support, however, others noted a lack of communication about what funders were expecting and continued to request reports. One organisation had heard of a funder requesting their money back because the organisation was unable to fulfil their brief under the current circumstances.

Of the 58 organisations who responded to Barnwood Trust, **10 (17%) were seeking clarity from external funders**. It should be noted, however, that **several shared that their funders had been incredibly flexible**.

One organisation remarked how **the crisis had identified challenges with the funding models** within the voluntary and charitable sectors. Many organisations are reliant on short-term funding that restricts them to certain activities to which they must show immediate outcomes. Ultimately, they felt that the crisis has shown that such a model is unsustainable.

Again, there have been efforts since the original report was written to ease some of these challenges. Over the past fortnight, Barnwood Trust has been working alongside local and national funders to improve organisations' access to funding and reduce the need to write multiple application forms. This is part of Barnwood Trust's four point Keeping Strong strategy. Further information about support available for organisations can be found here: <https://www.barnwoodtrust.org/news/gloucestershire-funders-COVID19-response/>

<sup>5</sup> Full details of the Chancellor's announcement is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellor-of-the-exchequer-rishi-sunak-on-economic-support-for-the-charity-sector>

<sup>6</sup> See NCVO statement: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/2752-government-support-for-charities-ncvo-reaction>

## Costs of Adapting Services

As can be seen below, many of the organisations involved in this exercise have sought to adapt their services to continue connecting with their beneficiaries and service-users. Nine organisations spoke about the financial challenges related to these adaptations. These included (**NB**: some organisations listed more than one financial challenge):

	Frequency
The cost of purchasing new technology	4
The cost of expanding or adapting existing technology	4
New costs associated with delivering their services (e.g. mileage to deliver food or providing childcare support to key workers).	3

Seven of these nine organisations had also spoken of the immediate financial impact they were facing.

**Technology was evidently vital to organisations being able to continue some of their services.** Such need was largely related to video conferencing technology and to support staff working from home, however, one organisation was also mindful of the limited access their service users might have and hoped to support them to purchase some of this technology to continue accessing, for example, home-schooling. Two organisations spoke of the cost associated with using more technology including **the cost of diverting phone lines and the expected increase in phone and communications bills.**

Aside from technological adaptations, organisations were also looking to adapt their offer to their local communities. Two of the three organisations who spoke of these challenges were aiming to deliver food to local residents. **One worked in a rural area and so required additional funding to reimburse volunteers for their mileage to deliver food to isolated communities,** the other required funding to purchase the shopping they hoped to deliver to their neighbours. The third organisation wanted to be able to support the key workers by offering to contribute to their childcare requirements.

## Costs of Expanding Services

Eight organisations were responding to the crisis by expanding the services they offered, however, doing so required additional financial support. Six of these eight organisations were providing new services including:

- Offering something (as yet unspecified) to NHS workers;
- Expanding their offer to families;
- Distributing activity packs; and
- Delivering food and essential items.

Four of the eight organisations required additional staff (or additional funding to pay existing staff) to deliver their expanded offers.

[Case Study One](#) in Section Three of this report further illustrates some of the financial challenges VCS organisations reported facing.

## 1.2 Logistical implications for organisations

While many of the organisations we spoke to were mounting dynamic and innovative responses to the COVID-19 crisis, many also described facing a number of **novel logistical challenges** as the crisis began to unfold. Organisations have been getting to grips with **new technologies** and **new ways of working**, trying to work out how to continue looking after the **physical spaces** for which they're responsible, often with a **reduced staffing capacity** - or while trying to coordinate an influx of **new volunteers**.

### Key points in this section

- A quarter (15) of the 58 organisations we spoke to were operating with a **reduced staff or volunteer capacity**, as staff or volunteers were either self-isolating or looking after children.
- Conversely, five organisations were either recruiting or being offered staff or volunteers, with attendant **challenges around coordination, training, and funding**.
- 60% of the organisations we spoke to were **developing or expanding service provision via telephone, video calls or online**. While many were doing so successfully, there were some logistical challenges associated with this, including limited organisational expertise and capacity, the necessity of purchasing equipment and undertaking training, and the added logistical complexities of organising multiple forms of service in order to serve clients with varying capacity and preferences.
- A few organisations responsible for **physical assets**, including venue spaces, allotments, equipment, and even livestock, were struggling with working out how to continue looking after them.

### Concerns about volunteers and staff

The most common logistical challenges were around managing staff and volunteers.

Concerns fell into two broad groups:

#### 1. Reduction in staffing / volunteer capacity





- Some organisations were reliant on staff and volunteers who are **in at-risk groups** and are therefore now self-isolating. One organisation worked with 300 volunteers, 90% of whom were over 65.
- As of 17th April, **a quarter (15) of the 58 organisations we spoke to told us that they were working with a reduced staff or volunteer capacity**, either due to staff members self-isolating, or staff members needing to care for their children following school closures. One organisation running a residential home noted (on 19th March) that there was uncertainty about whether their staff counted as ‘key workers’ whose children were entitled to remain in attendance at school (as noted in [‘Immediate funding shortfalls’](#) above, the government has since issued more guidance on this.)

## 2. Challenges related to **managing, coordinating and training volunteers and staff**

- Some organisations spoke about challenges with managing and coordinating **existing volunteers and staff**. These included no longer being able to provide food or activities for volunteers, volunteers and staff already being at maximum capacity, and struggles around coordination. There was a significant cross-over with the financial challenges outlined above, with several organisations worried about being able to continue paying staff. Two organisations whose services relied on self-employed professionals were worried about the impact of the loss of income for them. One organisation was employing frontline staff who would struggle to find work to do once frontline activities stopped.
- While a large number of organisations were struggling with reduced staffing and volunteer capacity, **five were recruiting (or were being offered) more volunteers**, which sometimes brought **challenges around coordination and training** - a couple of organisations described being ‘swamped’ or ‘inundated’ with offers of volunteers. One organisation was urgently looking into the need for new software to enable new volunteers to enter data and handle payments remotely. A rural organisation had new volunteers come forward to offer support with shopping and practical support, but were unsure they would be able to afford to pay the volunteers’ mileage costs, which would be especially high in a rural context.

## Providing support services online or via telephone

Thirty-five of the organisations we spoke to talked about developing support services which could be **delivered online or via telephone**; some by expanding programmes they already had in place, but many by starting new services from scratch, sometimes in a matter of days. Many organisations were actively pursuing this and had useful ideas and expertise to share (see [‘What organisations are already doing’](#)), but a few were finding **logistical challenges** in doing so, including:

- **Lack of organisational expertise or familiarity** with relevant technology
- **Limited existing resources and infrastructure** to enable staff to work from home

- The necessity of providing **multiple forms of service** for people with different needs and preferences: as detailed further below, not all digital services are appropriate for everyone, so thought needs to be put into provision of multiple alternatives to ensure accessibility and take-up
- **Additional costs**
  - Purchasing new laptops or telephones to enable staff or volunteers to work remotely
  - Training staff and volunteers to use new technology, or to offer support remotely (one organisation which offered a counselling service noted that many of their counsellors needed to undergo additional training in order to be able to continue providing counselling remotely)
  - One organisation noted that this service was not currently included in the remit of their funded activities, so they'd potentially need permission from the funder.
  - Another organisation working primarily with people with visual impairments couldn't afford the additional cost of a diversion service on their telephone system, so was currently using a recorded message providing a mobile telephone number instead. They hadn't found that this was being used, and they worried that this is because their clients weren't able to write down the mobile telephone number provided.
  - There were additional challenges associated with the accessibility and universal suitability of this type of support; these are described in more detail [below](#).

One community-based organisation which was planning on mounting a volunteer neighbourhood support programme was facing logistical challenges of finding software which allowed their volunteers to log details remotely, and to manage money without exchanging cash.

### Maintaining assets & spaces

A few organisations were facing logistical challenges around physical assets and spaces. Three organisations spoke about challenges around **keeping their spaces clean**, with two describing a shortage in cleaning products, and one a shortfall in funding which impacted their ability to pay their cleaner. Some urgently needed a **new space to offer continued services**; others were trying to work out how they would **maintain vegetable allotments** and gardens, or continue to **care for livestock** and animals. One expressed concern about the **future of the venues** they were using, which were charities themselves and facing uncertain financial prospects.

### Specific logistical concerns associated with religious institutions

The Diocese identified a number of specific concerns which may well apply to other faith institutions. These included:

- How to continue safely providing chaplaincy services in hospitals
- How to prepare for an anticipated rise in number of funerals

- How to keep people safely connected in, for example, weddings and baptisms (these concerns were expressed before the government announced that events such as these would no longer be permitted).

Case Study Two in Section Three of this report further illustrates some of the logistical challenges VCS organisations reported experiencing.

### 1.3 Concerns about impact on individuals

This section looks at concerns expressed by the organisations about the beneficiary groups they support.

#### Key points in this section

- Concerns about the **effects of social distancing measures and social isolation** on beneficiaries, volunteers and staff; specifically concerns about the **impact on mental health** and difficulties in **meeting people's basic needs**. The impact for vulnerable people, and those already experiencing financial difficulty, was highlighted.
- Concerns regarding the **risk of contracting the virus to** beneficiaries', volunteers' and staff members' **physical health**

#### Impact of social isolation

Concerns about the **effects of social isolation** were widely expressed. Representatives of a number of the 58 organisations reported that the activities and opportunities they provide constitute the only social/face-to-face contact their beneficiaries have. One organisation, for example, reported that the activity they organise was often their beneficiaries' only regular commitment: time when they leave their homes and socialise. They believed that their beneficiaries would be extremely isolated during the coming weeks, as they are in the high-risk category. The representative of another organisation reported that their response to the crisis would focus on negating the effects of "even more social isolation" for the families they support. Concerns about the **impact of social distancing measures and increased social isolation on people's mental health**, and the **challenges of meeting people's basic needs** during this time, were key themes in the responses.

#### Specific concern about the impact on vulnerable children and families

A number of organisations reported being concerned about the impact of social isolation on vulnerable children and families. One respondent, for example, highlighted **particular risks for children living in complex family situations** where parents struggle to parent. The risk was seen as being especially high for children in families that do not have access to social services and who will now no longer be in school. The representative of another organisation reported concerns that **many families** in the area within which they work **would not be able to cope** with caring for their children full time at home during such a challenging period, due to mental health issues and deprivation. They highlighted the challenges of

suddenly needing to provide three nutritious meals a day and implement home learning and entertainment to keep children occupied.

### Impact on mental health

A number of the organisations raised concerns that social isolation would cause a **deterioration in their beneficiaries' mental health**. **Exacerbation of anxiety and depression** was mentioned specifically. An organisation that provides mental health services anticipated increased demand over the coming months as the impact of isolation manifests and people with mental health challenges are triggered or relapse. Another organisation reported being very concerned about the impact of loneliness on the vulnerable and isolated people in the area within which it works. They also cited worries about people being 'forgotten' and were especially concerned about those with dementia. Representatives of other organisations identified possible negative impacts on the mental health of young people. One of the respondents highlighted that people who have a visual impairment often find it difficult to access **online and technological solutions**, so these **may not help combat the effects of social isolation for some people**.

The representative of one organisation reported that the "level of concern" was worrying and identified "public perception of the virus" and "panic" as challenges within Gloucestershire/the area within which they work. Another organisation specifically highlighted the link between physical activity and mental health, citing concerns about the impact of no longer being able to take part in physical activities on beneficiaries' mental health.

**Concerns for the wellbeing of volunteers** were also expressed widely. The representative of one organisation, for example, reported being very worried that their volunteers' mental health would deteriorate rapidly when they were no longer able to participate in the charity's activities. Echoing others' comments about beneficiaries, they stated that many of the organisation's volunteers live alone and these activities constitute their only regular contact with other people.

## Concern about ability to meet people's basic needs

### Food

**Concerns about the availability of food** were expressed by many of the organisations that responded to the request for information. **Foodbanks reported** expecting an **increase in demand** and highlighted the challenge of being able to meet this. For example, the representative of one organisation believed that supermarket restrictions on purchasing would lead to a **reduction in donations** and this, coupled with increased demand, would result in **imminent shortages**. Another organisation reported concerns around a lack of milk/baby formula and the ability to replace free school meals with donations. In a response provided at the end of March, an organisation also reported that a number of its members who have particular dietary requirements had been unable to acquire specialist food.

In addition to concerns about availability, **logistical issues related to accessing food** were also highlighted. Examples given were:

- parents being unable to go to their child's school to collect free school meals as the school is a long taxi ride away;



- families that are self isolating being unable to collect food from foodbanks;
- older people not wanting to go to the post office to collect their pension and buy supplies;
- those who were shopping for others no longer being able to do so, because it was necessary for them to self-isolate too.

An organisation that supports older people reported that more than half of the 52 calls they logged in one day (on 23rd March) were related to shopping, and this was an increasing trend. A foodbank reported that so many of its clients were self-isolating, or were not able to get to the foodbank, that they urgently needed for the first time to be able to deliver food.

Although the government has offered families whose children are entitled to free school meals supermarket vouchers whilst schools are closed, there have been reports of delays in the distribution of these vouchers, meaning that some of the poorest families may not be receiving the support they need<sup>7</sup>.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning products

Concerns about a **shortage of items required to help reduce the spread of the virus**, such as cleaning products and face masks, were also raised by several organisations. One organisation reported that they had ordered PPE, but nothing was available to them currently and they had not been given a date when they could expect to receive any. Another organisation, that stated that it provides care for the most vulnerable people in the community, reported a **lack of essential PPE** for clinical staff.

## Money

The **financial implications** of the pandemic **for beneficiaries and staff** was a key concern. One organisation reported being acutely aware of parents who will be facing significant financial difficulties if their children cannot go to school for an extended period of time. Another organisation reported concerns about members of staff not being able to cover their living costs if they cannot work because projects cease. The **impact for families already on a low income** was highlighted, and one of the organisations anticipated needing additional resources going forward to provide advice about money.

Examples of **problems associated with accessing money** were also cited by an organisation that supports older people. This organisation reported that collecting pensions and paying bills was starting to become a significant issue for the people it supports. The difficulties people who are self-isolating face if they do not use online banking facilities, or they rely on receiving cash on a weekly basis, were highlighted.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/apr/09/uks-poorest-families-suffering-as-free-school-meal-vouchers-delayed>

## Care and support

Two organisations raised **concerns about the reduction in availability of personal care and support** if care staff become ill or stop working.

### Risk to physical health

The **impact of contracting the virus on beneficiaries', volunteers' and staff members' physical health** was identified as a key concern. Many of the organisations that responded to the request for information reported that they had, or planned to, cease all/most of their activity that involved face-to-face contact in order to reduce the risks. A number of the organisations reported that their **beneficiaries/clients** were **in the high risk category**, and several highlighted that **some of the most vulnerable people** (such as those who are homeless, or students who have EHCPs<sup>8</sup>) **may not be able to self-isolate**. In a response received in mid March, the representative of one organisation expressed concern that many of the groups they had spoken with recently, especially groups for older people, were continuing to run as normal.

Case Study Three in Section Three of this report further illustrates some of the key concerns VCS organisations expressed.

## 2. Organisational adaptations and potential solutions

While the COVID-19 crisis has created unprecedented challenges for the VCS sector and the people they support, many organisations are responding with remarkable speed and ingenuity. Many of the organisations who took part in the information gathering exercise - and many more which we're aware of from other sources - have adapted their programmes of work, or in some cases created brand new services, to continue supporting their clients - sometimes in a matter of days. Vehicles which were once used to take clients on day trips are now being used to deliver food; armies of volunteers are being recruited and trained; new equipment is being acquired to enable video calling and online support; staff are retraining and adapting to working from home.

There were also some clear calls from the organisations we spoke to about what they would need to be able to continue their work, both through the immediate crisis and in the longer term. Financial support was a key element, but there was also a keen appetite for collaboration and pooling of resources, and a recognition of the importance of clear information provision.

### 2.1 What organisations are already doing or planning to do

Here we are looking at what is already happening amongst VCS organisations in the county. Most of this information has been derived from the intelligence gathering exercise, which involved emails or telephone exchanges with 58 VCS organisations. There is also included here some supplementary information based on the pooled knowledge of Barnwood Trust staff, which covers a further 36 services

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<sup>8</sup> Education, Health and Care Plans

and organisations who did not take part in the intelligence gathering exercise. (More details about the types of services which are covered here can be found in the two [Appendices](#) to this report.)

## Providing support services online or via telephone

Of the 58 organisations which we spoke to, **over half (35) were looking at providing support online or over the telephone**, either by expanding an existing service, or, more commonly, by creating a brand new service.

Ideas included:

- Using **video calling** software like **Skype** or **Zoom** to offer individual support or counselling, or to replicate or establish support groups and social groups. One organisation, for example, spoke about hosting 'virtual coffee mornings' for its clients.
- Offering a **telephone support service**, including making **proactive phone calls** to known clients who may not make the call themselves
- **Online forums** for people to get connected and provide mutual virtual companionship and support
- **Facebook:**
  - Using Facebook Live to **stream wellbeing events**
  - Setting up **new groups** to replicate support programmes
  - Using **existing groups** - including neighbourhood groups and Mutual Aid groups - to spread information and coordinate support

There were some **challenges to using technological forms of support**, including:

- **Logistical challenges** and **additional costs** for organisations who aren't yet set up to provide this support - costs included purchasing new devices and paying for staff training
- Digital services are **not accessible to everyone**, particularly to people with visual impairments and learning disabilities
- **Lack of familiarity** with online or digital tools, notably amongst older people
- **Discomfort using online or telephone alternatives:** one organisation which offered a counselling service noted that 40% of its existing clients opted to end their counselling sessions rather than continue over telephone or video calls
- Lack of universal **access to digital devices** like tablets, phones and laptops
- **Lack of knowledge** about the existence of certain forums or Facebook groups
- People living in **unsafe home situations**, for example in situations of domestic or partner abuse, may not be able to use telephone support services safely



- One organisation working with people for whom **English was often not their first language** noted specific challenges for people trying to access e-learning, and also noted that providing interpretation services over the phone, including during healthcare appointments, was much more challenging than in-person interpretation.

Because of these problems, there is a clear **need for alternative support provision which doesn't rely on technology**. Some solutions proposed included:

- Redeployment or recruitment of staff and volunteers to provide on-the-ground neighbourhood support
- Making proactive phone calls to people who may be unlikely to reach out themselves
- Beyond providing support services, a number of organisations also had ideas around developing ways for people to have fun and stay active, many of which did not rely on technology (see [‘Developing ways for people to have fun, stay active, and stay social’](#), below)

Examples of transitioning to online or telephone services were also evident in the supplementary information about 36 other sources of support known to Barnwood staff. **Nearly a third of these organisations (31%) had established or expanded digital channels** through which their clients could continue to reach them or be supported. There were examples both of transitioning existing support services, such as counselling or support groups, to digital formats via video calls, telephone services, or chatrooms; and also of using social media to develop and coordinate new programmes of support. Notable examples of the latter included the newly formed Mutual Aid groups, which provide a forum for local residents to coordinate volunteers to provide practical support, share information, and seek donations for essential supplies.

### Developing programmes for practical support

Many organisations recognised the need for **increased practical support** for individuals who may be **self-isolating**, or likely to experience **financial hardship** as a result of losing work.

Almost half (28) of the 58 organisations we spoke to were either already providing, or exploring ways to provide, practical support of some kind. Many spoke of emergency support measures such as gathering and delivering packs of **emergency food and supplies** to people on low incomes, or providing **hot meals**, while some talked about coordinating programmes of **practical neighbourhood support** such as doing shopping for those who couldn't leave their homes. One organisation was planning on supporting adults with learning disabilities to learn how to shop for groceries online.

Some were planning on redirecting their existing resources (including staff, food preparation equipment, and transportation) to meet new needs in the community; others were recruiting volunteers, collaborating with other organisations, or gathering donations of money and supplies.



New national projects were also noted, including ‘Mutual Aid’ groups and the development of cards which community members are using to offer help to neighbours.

There were more details about this type of mutual neighbourhood support amongst the 36 additional services known to Barnwood staff. Staff recorded practical support offers including:

- Delivering prescriptions
- Walking dogs
- Taking in bins
- Calling ahead to check that planned appointments are still running so as not to risk making an unnecessary journey

Other examples of practical support were also evident in the supplementary information gathered about these 36 services. Over two-thirds of these services (69%) were offering practical support to some extent. Nearly three-quarters of these (72%) were offering practical support with food security by either providing food in foodbanks or by shopping on others’ behalf, or by distributing meals to those who are shielding or cannot afford food because of financial insecurity.

### Developing ways for people to have fun, stay active, and stay social

Some of the key concerns which the 58 VCS organisations we spoke to had about their clients was that they sometimes provided the only source of fun, activity, or socialising which their clients had access to, and there were concerns that having nothing to do during the crisis would negatively impact people’s mental health and wellbeing. In response to that concern, there were some really creative ideas around making sure that people were still able to have **fun** and stay **active**. Ideas included:

- Holding **competitions, quizzes** and **activities**, including online fitness challenges or virtual coffee mornings
- Creating and posting out ‘**parcels of activities**’ for vulnerable families
- Sending ‘**creative boxes**’ to people who are self-isolating, with the idea that they could display their creations in their windows. (A product called ‘Art in a box’ was noted.)
- A mooted idea for coordinating **pen pals**, allowing children to write to other children or to isolated people

### Generating and circulating information, advice, and signposting

There was a **clearly identified need** for both beneficiaries and organisations to have more access to information and advice. This was something with which **many of the 58 organisations were seeking more support** with. (See [‘Information’](#) under ‘What organisations think would help’ below.)

A few organisations had already established plans to gather and distribute information and advice. One organisation with a high level of expertise had created **Easy Read information sheets about self-isolation**.



Others were offering **signposting services** to clients, either individually or through online forums; providing **guidance to organisations** about managing volunteers; and working with other organisations to try to **establish clarity** about potential government financial support for charities. A council-led scheme was noted, creating an **online portal** for information.

Supplementary information gathered by Barnwood staff about an additional 36 services indicated that **a quarter of them were providing local residents with guidance** ranging from what the government was saying, to where to find different areas of support, how to cope with isolation and which shops were open and delivering in the local community.

## Collaboration with other local organisations

In the earliest responses we received, there was a clear appetite for, and a recognition of the importance of, collaborating with other organisations, to ensure best use of collective resources and skills to respond to the crisis (more on this under [‘What organisations think would help’](#), below).

In responses received more recently, we have begun to see examples of successful collaborations emerging already, including:

- Organisations working directly with people in food poverty partnering with food providers, including foodbanks, community cafes, and food-providing charities, to ensure that their clients have access to food
- Organisations serving similar populations collaborating to pool resources
- An organisation working with older people collaborating with GP surgeries to ensure delivery of prescriptions
- An organisation working with younger people collaborating with the police to ensure immediate support is available for the most vulnerable young people

## Social distancing measures

Even in the earliest stages of the intelligence-gathering process, much of which took place in the days before the lockdown measures had become regulatory rather than advisory, most of the organisations we spoke to were making considerable **amendments to their normal programmes of work** in order to comply with social distancing advice, sometimes specifically to **protect the vulnerable people** they were working with (generally older people and people with particular types of impairment).

As well as transitioning many support services **away from face-to-face provision**, organisations were **closing clubs, activities, and in some cases entire programmes**. Some were asking **staff to work from home**, or, where activities were continuing, to take additional precautions around **hand hygiene** and maintaining **physical distance**.

One organisation which worked with a large number of young people, many of whom have complex health needs and some of whom were resident on-site, had taken extensive measures to protect those they worked with. All **external visitors had been barred** from the site, and residents are taking part in activities

in **small groups with particular assigned members of staff**. Plans were being made to find a new **separate site to enable continued activities with non-resident** clients.

## Financial mitigation measures

As described in [‘Financial implications for organisations’](#) above, the financial impact of the crisis on many of the 58 organisations we spoke to has been considerable. As noted above, as of 8th April the government announced some limited funding for charitable activities, although it’s too early at this stage to know the extent of the impact that this will have. Speaking primarily before those announcements were made, several organisations spoke about the ways in which they were trying to mitigate the immediate impact on their financial situation.

One organisation spoke about having already had to **make redundancies** as they’d been forced to close existing services, and another spoke about staff **voluntarily reducing their hours**. Others were contemplating having to make redundancies, and seeking ways to avoid that wherever possible. A couple of those organisations who spoke to us after the government announced the **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** told us that they were hoping to apply for grants to cover some staff costs, although one noted that this was unlikely to be suitable for them as they would need to retain all staff on active duty in order to be able to respond to clients’ needs.

A few were also **continuing to raise income**, primarily through **hiring out venues** to support the emergency response. More commonly, organisations were **appealing to the public and funders for donations**, either to keep their running costs going, or to fund new emergency support programmes.

## Continuing existing services

Of the 39 organisations we’d spoken to as of 20th March, only five spoke about carrying on with their activities as normal, with **all but one expecting that these would soon either have to cease or face additional challenges**.

At that time, these services included:

- Coordinating volunteers and volunteer groups carrying on as normal (albeit with social distancing measures), but expecting that to have to end imminently
- Workshops for small groups, for as long as tutors are well
- A Men’s Shed continuing its activities (an important source of income)
- A specialist support service for deaf people continuing some normal services, neither of which involved face-to-face contact: a remote interpreting service and a postal service.
- A foodbank which was currently operating as normal but which anticipated high levels of demand and low levels of donations imminently (higher demand from individuals and other support agencies; lower level of donations due to supermarket restrictions on multiple purchases)

**None of the organisations who we spoke to after 20th March were attempting to carry on as they had before**, with the exception of foodbanks, who were continuing to provide services albeit under significant

stress. One foodbank we spoke to on 27th March was seeking urgent funding for transportation so that it might provide, for the first time, a delivery service to clients who were not able to travel to them.

Similarly, amongst the 36 additional services known to Barnwood Trust staff, a small number were attempting to some extent to continue business as usual. These included organisations for whom working with communities and community groups was their everyday work, but also those whose clients relied on the essential services they already provided, including, for example, maintenance of specialist smoke alarms for deaf people and people with hearing impairments.

## 2.2 What organisations think would help

### Financial support / donations for organisations

As detailed in [‘Financial Implications for Organisations’](#) above, many of the organisations we spoke to were experiencing sometimes significant financial challenges. Some identified needs included:

- Funding to **replace lost income**, and support **core running costs**, both in the immediate term and in the longer term,
- Commissioning / funding to allow them to **set up new services**, including by purchasing new **technological equipment** such as laptops and phones, increased costs associated with new or extended **staff and volunteer hours**, and **transport costs** to enable services to be provided directly to clients in the community.
- Donations or financing of basic supplies, including **food** to provide hot meals or deliver emergency supplies to clients, **cleaning products, alcohol gel**, and **personal protective equipment** for staff

### Financial support / donations for individuals

As described above in [‘Concerns about impact on individuals’](#), a number of organisations noted that many of their clients were likely to experience considerable financial hardship during the crisis. They identified some specific areas where direct financial support to individuals would be useful, including:

- **Grants or loans** to people on low incomes to buy **food and essential supplies**. Provision of **shop vouchers** or **cash grants** was suggested.
  - Direct provision of food, or the means to buy it, was considered especially important as those organisations which typically provide this type of support were likely to be unable to meet demand - as described above, foodbanks expected both a higher demand coupled with a reduction in donations and volunteer capacity, and were not in any case suitable for those who are self-isolating (although one foodbank did note that it was urgently seeking funding for vehicle hire in order to be able to deliver food for the first time). It was also noted that school closures and the loss of free school meals was creating problems for families who used to rely on them.

- **Vouchers for utility meters**, or cash grants to support basic household costs
- **Grants for laptops / tablets** for low-income families, to support e-learning (these would arguably be beneficial for other groups of individuals supported by VCS organisations, to enable access to e-support and facilitate social connection)

## Collaboration with other CVS organisations: Mutual logistical support, collective pressure on funders, sharing skills & assets

As noted above in [‘What organisations are already doing’](#), we have already begun to see examples of organisations working together to maximise resources and expertise. This is encouraging, as there was a clear desire amongst organisations in the earlier stages of the intelligence-gathering process to undertake such collaboration. Anticipated benefits included:

### 1. General collaboration:

- **Infrastructure** for collaboration needed - one suggestion is to continue with regular **conference calls**; and the **Community Resilience Command Centre** that is being launched by local authorities was also noted, although with the need to consider how it might be jointly held by community organisations as well.
- Benefits: **avoiding duplication, sharing expertise, resources and infrastructure**
- As well as collaboration between VCS organisations, collaboration with **businesses and community** was also considered valuable

### 2. To generate **collective pressure on funders and commissioners**, seeking:

- **Emergency funding** available immediately
- **Flexible support**, particularly around targets & deliverables which may have been set before the crisis hit
- Guarantee **not to seek to recoup funds** already donated (a couple of organisations reported having already been asked for money back)

### 3. To **swap skills and assets**

#### i) On offer:

- **Personnel**
  - SEN trained frontline support staff on payroll who aren’t able to carry out normal activities
  - Diocese have a network of staff and volunteers who could provide help in a non-digital way (for those without digital access) i.e. redeploy in some way. They can potentially link people across the county, including linking people in distress to the right places.
- **Venues & space** (eg potentially Hawkwood; Overton House)



- **Specialist advice** / support according to organisation (Easy Read; physical activity etc)

## ii) Seeking:

- **Administrative support:**
  - Higher than usual volume of emails / calls
  - Infrastructure
  - Management, in case management staff become unwell
- **IT support:** setting up software to allow volunteers to enter info into a database remotely via an app; also software to allow volunteers to collect money without handling cash
- **Venues & space**

## Information

Again, as noted above, many organisations were already prioritising information gathering and circulation as part of their response to the crisis - although there was also a clearly expressed need for further information provision, both for individuals and for organisations.

### 1. Information wanted to provide to **individuals**

- Places to **signpost** people:
  - Other organisations providing support
  - Referral of adults in distress
- Information about available **financial support**, including access to emergency grants and changes to the benefits system
- Details of any contingency plans for the provision of Adult **Social Care**, including the Safeguarding Help Desk
- Information targeted particularly for the most vulnerable people, especially including isolated or older people who may not have access to other sources of information
- Easy Read information

A suggestion of a jointly held call-centre for individuals to call in to for advice & support (although challenge around accessibility)

### 2. Information needed for **organisations**

- Sources of **stop-gap funding for organisations**

- Clarity on relevant **government policies** (this was particularly of concern amongst those organisations who we spoke to in the earlier stages of the intelligence-gathering exercise; latterly, a little more clarity has emerged as further announcements have been made and the details of various policies worked out, although some uncertainty remains):
  - Do VCS organisations count as ‘small businesses’ who may be eligible for the then recently announced package of emergency loans?
  - If schools are being asked to stay open for vulnerable children, should organisations providing activities such as short breaks also be continuing to offer these?
  - Who counts as a ‘vulnerable child’?

### 3. Case Studies

The following case studies of VCS organisations in Gloucestershire illustrate some of the challenges the organisations that participated in the information gathering exercise reported facing, as well as the key concerns they expressed and their responses to the COVID-19 crisis.

#### Case Study One: Illustration of financial challenges

Organisation 1 is a hospice which provides practical and emotional support for **adults living with life-limiting illnesses**, as well as carers, families and the recently bereaved.

This support includes:

- Day services, such as counselling, complementary therapy, and benefits guidance
- Workshops and support groups at community venues, including on wellbeing and managing symptoms
- Hospice at home service for people who wish to die at home

Over 85% of the organisation’s funding is through donations and fundraising (including fundraising events and charity shops).

The **hospice centre itself has now closed** and the organisation are seeking to **adapt their day services** to provide support online. **Hospice at Home care is continuing.**

Concerns identified by the organisation include:



- **Severe short-term cash shortfalls** and **long-term financial insecurity** due to closure of charity shops and cancellation of fundraising events
- Self-isolation of staff (particularly clinical staff) will **require hiring additional staff** but **without resources** to fund this
- Lack of essential PPE to enable clinical staff to care for people in the community
- The impact of **extended social isolation** for vulnerable individuals supported by the hospice, many of whom already have fragile mental health

They identified that it would be helpful to have a directory of resources in the community to support patients and carers including, for example, home delivery services and telephone befriending.

The organisation has now begun an **emergency appeal** for donations.

### Case Study Two: Illustration of logistical challenges

Organisation 2 is based in an urban area in one of the most deprived wards of Gloucestershire. The organisation provides a range of activities available to the whole local community, especially young people and families. For many individuals they support they are the only source of face-to-face contact for that individual.

Activities and facilities provided by the organisation include, but are not limited to:

- Arts and crafts groups/equipment
- BME carers group and various parents' groups
- Coffee shop and cookery classes
- English classes
- Sports groups/equipment
- Trips and events

Funding is derived from a range of sources including donations, income from venue hire and fundraisers, as well as grants.

The organisation is seeking to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by adapting their services to support those who need them most (e.g. by delivering food parcels).

In the wake of the crisis, the organisation is facing financial and logistical challenges both in seeking to maintain current services and to adapt to provide new ways to support residents. These include:

- Inability to pay staff, many of whom are already on low incomes due to working part-time, being the sole earner in their household, or due to benefits entitlement
- Cost of adapting services (e.g. paying volunteers' mileage to deliver shopping and webcasting instead of meeting face-to-face)
- Some staff are at high-risk of contracting the virus
- Lack of additional capacity amongst existing volunteers
- Major long-term financial implications if the organisation continues for any length of time





- Need for ongoing daily maintenance of community spaces even if activities have ceased (including due to presence of livestock)

A key concern is further social isolation for the individuals they support.

### Case Study Three: Illustration of concern about the impact of social isolation on individuals

Organisation 3 is based in a very **rural area** of Gloucestershire and provides support to **local people with sensory impairments**. The area is not otherwise well-served for local provision of this type of support.

The organisation provides a combination of emotional and practical support, including:

- Emotional support
- Social groups
- Advocacy
- Information and advice
- Assessments at home & work
- Equipment and training

They are a charitable organisation funded through a combination of grants from funders, donations, and income from their charity shop.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation have **closed their offices and their group activities**. Their primary concern is that the people they see will **become isolated**, particularly those who live alone. They hope to adapt their face-to-face buddying scheme to provide telephone support instead.

They are also grappling with a number of **financial** and **logistical** challenges.

- **Financially**, there has been both a **reduction in income** and an **increase in costs**
  - Income usually derived from their **charity shop** and from **paying service users** has immediately ended
  - Additional costs are arising from attempting to **divert their phone line** (this was so expensive that they were unable to do so), and in **paying mileage to new volunteers**, which could be especially expensive in a rural area.



- As of 18<sup>th</sup> March, there was considerable concern about the lack of clarity from the government about whether charities were eligible for grants schemes made available to small businesses.
  - **Overhead costs** such as rent and staff wages continue.
  - They hold some financial reserves but anticipate needing to use those on important services once they are able to reopen, and are reluctant to use them on core running costs.
- **Logistically**, there are challenges associated with:
    - **Diverting their phone line**: Unable to afford diversion, they have left an answerphone message with a mobile number – but they are concerned that clients with visual impairments would be unable to write down the new number to call.
    - **Coordinating new volunteers** who have approached them to offer a shopping / support service.

## Appendix 1: More about the 58 organisations who responded to the intelligence gathering process

Below is additional information about the 58 organisations involved in the situation analysis. This information was sourced either from the responses of the organisations themselves or through publicly available sources including the organisations' websites and the Charity Commission.

### Beneficiary Groups

The 58 organisations deliver numerous services including:

- Counselling and mental health support
- Supporting suicide-bereaved families, carers and the families of disabled people
- Provide services and social care to older people, disabled people and vulnerable individuals
- Running accessible activities that everyone can enjoy
- Distributing food to vulnerable families and individuals
- Provide vital support for those who have experienced domestic abuse
- Providing support for those living with addictions
- Support those requiring palliative care and their families
- Encourage families and individuals to participate in the arts and the benefits it can bring to wellbeing and mental health.

Such services support (and are relied upon by) a wide range of vulnerable groups across Gloucestershire such as: disabled people and people with mental health challenges, older people, vulnerable children and families, those in food poverty and people experiencing (or at risk of) domestic abuse. Although ostensibly a health crisis, the Coronavirus pandemic is creating and (and exacerbating) crises which could disproportionately affect many of these groups<sup>9</sup>. Equally, there may be individuals increasingly finding themselves within these groups as a consequence of these impacts, finding themselves in food poverty or experiencing mental health challenges for example.

The table below shows the range of groups the 58 organisations support. Broad headings are broken down where appropriate (**NB**: some organisations support more than one beneficiary group):

	Frequency
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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/human-rights-uk/coronavirus-effect-human-rights>

Disabled people and people with mental health challenges*	24
(Vulnerable) children, young people and families	22
No specific beneficiary group - community level (supporting people within local communities)	11
No specific beneficiary group - countywide (supporting people across the county)	9
Older people	6
People experiencing (or at risk of) domestic abuse	3
People in food poverty	2
Local organisations (organisations which support other organisations rather than specific groups of people).	2
Asylum seekers and refugees	1

*\*Of the organisations supporting disabled people and people with mental health challenges:*

- *Nine support people with mental health challenges*
- *Eight support disabled people generally*
- *Two support people with learning difficulties specifically*
- *Two support people with sensory impairments specifically*
- *Two provide palliative care for people with life-limiting illnesses*
- *One supports people with a particular health condition.*

## Operating Areas

The majority of the organisations who responded to the email from Barnwood Trust operated across the county (59%). The following table shows the operating areas of the organisations where this was known.

	Frequency
Countywide	34
District	14
Hyperlocal (within a specific community or place)	11
Unclear	4

Of those who operated at a district level, nine are in rural areas and five in urban. All six districts are represented to some extent, in particular the Forest of Dean and Gloucester City. However, of those who operated at a hyperlocal level, seven are in urban areas and four in rural. Again, many of these are in Gloucester City. Further information may be required from areas of the Cotswold district and Tewkesbury Borough to better represent the situation in these more rural parts of the county.

## Organisational Funding

Two-thirds of the organisations we spoke to appeared to be funded through multiple sources of income. The majority (60%) received at least part of their funding through fundraising, public donations or legacy contributions. Activity-related income and grants, funding and commissions from external organisations also contributed to around half of the 58 organisations involved in this work. The following table shows how the 58 organisations were funded based on responses, as well as additional research to gather publicly available information about the organisations' funding from their websites by the Barnwood Trust Research Team:

	Frequency
Fundraising, public donations and legacy contributions	35

Income from activities	28
External grants, funding and commissions	28
Income from shops and social enterprises	10
Income from investments	3
Income from corporate sources and sponsorship	2
Unclear	8

This information is particularly crucial when looking at the financial challenges organisations are facing as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic. Many of the organisations rely upon income from activities, public donations and shops and social enterprises which may not be able to operate with the restrictions that are in place, and the economic impacts being felt by individuals across the county, and indeed nationally.

## Appendix 2: More about the 36 additional services known to Barnwood staff

In addition to the 58 organisations who participated in the research intelligence gathering exercise, the wider Barnwood Trust staff have separately compiled information about 63 service providers and organisations, 44 of which were operating locally, and 36 of which had not already participated in the intelligence-gathering exercise. The information gathered about these 36 local services has been used to supplement the information compiled above about [‘What organisations are already doing’](#).

The 36 additional services compiled by Barnwood staff include both those provided by VCS organisations in response to the crisis, as well as newly-formed ‘Mutual Aid’ groups, schools and statutory providers (such as Gloucestershire County Council’s Help Hub).

Below is a breakdown of the types of services offered:

	Frequency
Food security (including foodbanks and food distribution services)	16
General community groups and support	12
Financial support	3
Mental health support	3
Carers support	2

Some of these services operated countywide, a few operated nationwide, but most were focussed on local areas. We have more information about services operating in some areas than others - notably, there are 15 services listed in Gloucester, but only five in Cirencester - so it is unlikely that this represents the full picture of VCS service provision across the county.

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## Gloucester Recovery Funding

Gloucester City Council recently carried out an intelligence gathering exercise about the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the VCS in Gloucester and set out proposals of how Gloucester City Council can support Gloucester's VCS in moving beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Having listened to the findings, Gloucester City Councils Recovery Fund is a onetime opportunity for those who might be at risk of financial sustainability and need one off support to adapt their business to the impact of Covid-19. It is aimed primarily at small community groups, grassroots organisations and community centres.

Who can apply:

- Community or voluntary groups
- Community Centres

What can the money be used for:

- Cover lost revenue from premises hire or cancelled fundraising activities
- IT/Technology
- Making premises Covid compliant – signage etc
- Support with adaptations to the way you work

What we will not fund:

- Staff costs which create an ongoing funding commitment from the city council

How do we apply:

Please email [grants@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:grants@gloucester.gov.uk) detailing who you are, what you do, how much you are applying for and your project plan. We would like you to demonstrate partnership working and include in your application how you plan your recovery coming out of lockdown to demonstrate what adaptations will be made and sustainability. We will also require some detail and evidence of the premises hire who, when etc and income lost over what period.

We would expect you to have exhausted all other funding opportunities both locally and nationally and would ask that you include this in your application.

Maximum amount that can be applied for is £1000

Decisions will be made on a first come first served rolling basis by a panel of officers, senior management and the cabinet member for Communities.

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