

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	9 March 2016
Subject:	Appraisal of Community Building in Kingsway		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods		
Wards Affected:	Kingsway		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Gareth Hooper, Senior Partnership and Engagement Officer		
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Appendices:	1. 'Asset-Based Approaches in Gloucestershire – A summary of current research'		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the effects of Community Building using the Asset Based approach in Kingsway. This report gives a general overview of what has been achieved. Personal interviews have been conducted with people in the community and these are to follow.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The contents of the report be noted
- (2) The City Council continues to use an asset based approach to service delivery

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The City Council adopted Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) in 2012. ABCD is a model of community development that puts citizens and communities at the heart of decision making and focusses on the assets and relationships that exist in communities before deciding what intervention may be required.
- 3.2 To enable relationship building, which is the primary step in ABCD, it requires a Community Builder. A Community Builder has the role of nurturing relationships in the community with the aim that those relationships build into local associations.
- 3.3 In 2014 Gloucester City Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Green Square Group contributed £6K, £30K and £3K respectively to fund the salary and on-costs of a Community Builder for 25 hours per week for two years in Kingsway.

- 3.4 The two year role concludes in April 2016 and this report provides an overview of the activity that has occurred in Kingsway. A follow up report will be provided which qualitatively assess the impact through personal interviews of people who have formed relationships and associations through Community Building.
- 3.5 The Community Builder had no agenda for Kingsway. Though the funding was primarily to address Anti-Social Behaviour in Kingsway, it was clear from the outset that there can be no agenda and that the community will determine its priorities alongside the Community Builder.
- 3.6 The Community Builder has connected people in Kingsway and as a result the following associations, amongst others, have formed:

Kingsway and Quedgeley Men's Shed – This is formed of 10-20 local men of a range of ages. The aim of the group is to share and use manual skills and provide a social setting to do so. The group is to soon be housed in its own Portakabin on land provided by the OPCC.

Kingsway Runners – This is formed of 150 people of all abilities who run recreationally around Kingsway every Monday. As well as the organised run training they hold social events. The group is free to join making it accessible to all.

Kingsway Cycling – This is a group of 10-15 cyclists that ride together every Sunday, as well as hold social events.

Kingsway Park Run – This event runs weekly and is set up and run by volunteers from Kingsway Runners. Each week 10-20 volunteers run the event and it attracts up to 175 runners per week. There are several anecdotes of the improved fitness people have got from doing this in Kingsway and local businesses are taking the chance to improve trade too.

Kingsway Choir – 20 people have come together to sing regularly in Kingsway

- 3.7 Other groups and activities that have happened in Kingsway as a result of community building are:

Wildlife and pond dipping days – these have been attended by approximately 40 families.

Kingsway's Got Talent – Attendees and performers total approximately 50 people

Kingsway Snappers – 5 people formed a photography club

Gaming Club – 5 people formed a club around war games

- 3.8 The implementation of ABCD is only partly around relationships in communities. The significant limb within ABCD is that agency agenda is driven by or in partnership with community. The method of co-production is valuable to work with communities.
- 3.9 With limited resource the number of associations and relationships in Kingsway has been significant. The qualitative work to follow will give detail on the personal

contributions these groups have made to personal lives. Anecdotally, there are several examples where people have found friendships after long periods of social isolation, lost weight and become active and have found support in times of poor mental health. All of these outcomes match those of the CCG, County and City Councils.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

4.1 The process of Community Building is built solely on the principles of ABCD.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 The alternative options to Community Building and ABCD are numerous. Social policy has many forms. The most attractive qualities of ABCD are that it builds upon what exists in communities and nurtures relationships rather than takes an approach of providing more resource without thoroughly understanding what community wants and can do for itself with the appropriate incentive, power or freedom.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 ABCD is an approach seeing greater inclusion and increased belief in people's individual behaviours to achieve outcomes in communities. Good community life and personal wellbeing comes from having good quality relationships and self-confidence and self-belief to prevent reliance on services. The examples in Kingsway clearly link with the outcomes of the CCG, City and County Councils. Therefore, it is recommended that the City Council, in association with its partner agencies, continue with the implementation of ABCD throughout the organisation.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

7.1 A consistent approach to working with communities is needed. Progress is being made to form a multi-agency Community Building Working Group. This will ensure all agencies are taking a consistent approach to the implementation of ABCD and values can be shared and challenged. A meeting with partners has already taken place and this may well be the precursor to that group.

7.2 Enabling Active Communities is a County Council project which will encompass the Community Building projects in Gloucester City

7.3 There is a plan in place to remove the Community Builder from Kingsway over the next 6 months. This is intentional so that the community does not become dependent and can grow together.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 At this stage, there are no financial implications.

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

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 At this stage, there are no legal implications.

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

10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

10.1 As mentioned in the appended report, ABCD comes with the predictable risks of handing more power to communities. However, the report also highlights the opportunities this presents.

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 The ABCD approach has no agenda for change or impact other than that determined by community. ABCD is wholly about inclusivity and the community are at the centre of the decision making.

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

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

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

12.2 Studies have shown that increased social connections and community projects can add to a feeling of security in communities as well as lower crime (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002)

Sustainability

12.2 ABCD is about creating interdependent relationships which function on community assets and therefore are as sustainable as they community wish them to be

Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 None identified

Background Documents: None