

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Cabinet	Date:	1 February 2021 10 February 2021
Subject:	Gloucester Community Building Collective		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods		
Wards Affected:	All wards		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director		
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Appendices:	1. Gloucester Community Building Collective Business Plan 2021-2026 (Restricted)		
	2. Appointment of additional non-executive Directors to the GCBC Board (Restricted)		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To update Cabinet on the work of the Gloucester Community Building Collective (GCBC), particularly in supporting the City's Covid-19 response and in the wide ambition for Gloucester to become a 'Centre of Excellence' in asset-based approaches. Further to seek approval of GCBC's Business Plan for 2021-2026, to approve changes to the Board of the GCBC and to approve that the City Council becomes a strategic investor for a period of 3 years.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The role of the Gloucester Community Building Collective in the response to the current Covid-19 pandemic is welcomed
- (2) The Gloucester Community Building Collective Business Plan for 2021-2026 is approved
- (3) The appointment of four Directors to the Board of the Gloucester Community Building Collective is approved
- (4) The reduction of the number of City Council Directors from currently two to one is approved and for this to come into effect in June 2021

- (5) The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods is authorised to sign the Written Resolution in respect of recommendations 2 – 4
- (6) Gloucester City Council make a strategic investment in the Gloucester Community Building Collective of £5,000 in 2021/22 and £15,000 per annum in 2022/23 and 2023/24
- (7) The City Council's work to become a centre of excellence in strengths based approaches is formally noted and commitment is given to continue the Council's strengths based work in cooperation with Gloucester Community Building Collective and other organisations, groups and stakeholders in the City

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The Gloucester Community Building Collective (GCBC) is a community interest company (company no. 12354927) limited by guarantee with the primary purpose of delivering and promoting medium to long term community building in the city of Gloucester through an asset-based community approach. The Company was incorporated in December 2019 to provide an independent entity to scale up community building activities within the City and to influence the wider system to adopt a more asset-based approach in how services are commissioned and delivered. The follows the City Council's long-standing commitment to strengths-based working and community building and its belief that people live more fulfilling lives when they have the power to shape their own outcomes and change things that matter to them. For communities to thrive, they need to be given the tools and resources to find solutions that work for them and for the places where they live
- 3.2 GCBC's support of the City Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been exemplary. Within weeks, it coordinated a leaflet drop to every resident in the city inviting them to support their neighbours. It coordinated a team of over 500 street champions who engaged local residents to provide advice, help and support. Over the summer, its website (<https://www.gloscommunitybuilding.co.uk>) became a hub of advice and guidance and a repository of stories of kindness and neighbourly support. The team was instrumental in supporting the City Help Hub offer and linked with partners including Gloucester Gateway, the Redwell Centre, Tuffley Community Association and Gloucester Culture Trust to deliver food, supplies and other resources including creative packs to support individuals' mental well-being. It was active in supporting our 'Covid-secure' work, particularly in the Barton & Tredworth wards, encouraging residents to comply with social distancing at a time of significant increases in Covid-19 transmissions. In autumn 2020, the Collective set up the <https://www.gloucestercan.co.uk/> website that showcases Gloucester residents' stories of community hope and kindness during these challenging times. These stories bring encouragement, inspiration and hope for people to keep connecting and strengthening local communities to gain confidence, combat loneliness and live lives to the full.
- 3.3 The GCBC has put together a robust and viable Business Plan which can be found at Appendix A. The plan sets two strategic priorities (Direct Community Capacity Building; and Influencing Systems Change) as well as activities and performance measures and KPIs. The Plan outlines a robust funding strategy, drawing on five

funding pillars, including strategic investors such as the Clinical Commissioning Group, and a viable cashflow for the next financial year.

3.4 In its first year, the company operated through a board of three Directors (two City Council representatives and the Executive Director of the GCBC) plus an advisory board made up of stakeholders. During autumn 2020, the Board conducted a governance review to ensure it possess the skills and competencies required for the company's future success. The review recommended to extend the Board of Directors with non-executive Directors that can bring skills in business development; financial management; social policy, research & evaluation; change management; communication and marketing; and community activism. A formal recruitment process in the autumn identified four new Board Directors who were approved by the Board at its December meeting (see Appendix 2). Between them, the four new Board Directors (see below) meet the skills requirements and bring a wealth of knowledge, experiences and networks, and will ensure that the Board is diverse and well equipped for the next phase in the life of the GCBC. Whilst the City Council support and leadership has been essential in establishing the GCBC, in the long-term the Board seeks to be independent and truly community led. It is proposed that the two City Council non-executive Directors will reduce to one Director from summer 2021.

3.5 The four new Directors are:

Miranda Bopoto – Gloucester resident and democratic and legal services officer at Gloucester City Council; and with a degree and experience in law as well as local and student politics and campaigns

Sally Byng – Chief Executive of Barnwood Trust, a charitable foundation who support social change and with a focus on people with disabilities

Mark Gale – Chief Executive of the Gloucester Gateway Trust and some 40 year experience in community development and social enterprise activity in Gloucestershire but with a focus on Matson, Robinswood and White City in Gloucester

Candace Plouffe – change facilitator and coach and previously Chief Operating Officer of the Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust until the merger in November 2019; and with huge experience in Children and Young People health services in various health organisations

3.6 Gloucester City Council is the sole shareholder in the company and a Member's Agreement is in place to govern the relationship between the Council and the Company. The GCBC is an independent organisation with a management board with responsibility for the supervision and management of the company and its business. The Council is entitled to appoint (and remove) at least one Director to the Board. The Management Agreement requires the GCBC to produce a Business Plan each financial year by no later than 31 December in the financial year preceding the year to which the plan relates.

3.7 The establishment of the GCBC has been an important part of the Council's commitment to becoming a centre of excellence in asset-based approaches as outlined in the 2016 – 2020 Council Plan. Increasingly, the City's work is recognised

nationally, for example through the collaboration with NESTA as part of a small group of councils who formed the 'upstream collective' and are piloting innovative ways of tackling the root causes of social problems; and also the Local Government Association where the City Council contributed case studies and delivered a webinar to some 300+ participants in November 2020. We have advised Council's within the South West and West Midlands on how to introduce asset-based approaches.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 The substantive purpose of the GCBC is to deliver social value through direct community capacity building and by influencing systems change. The Business Plan sets out in detail how the company seeks to achieve social value.

5.0 Environmental Implications

5.1 N/A

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 Representative of the GCBC meet quarterly with the City Council (Cabinet Lead and Corporate Director) to review the plans and work programmes of the company, consider key performance indicators and receive a financial update. The Business Plan has been developed by the Company Board informed by those discussions. As a consequence, competing or alternative options have not been considered.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 The recommendation to consider and approve the business plan and new Board members will ensure compliance with the existing governance arrangements between the Council and the Company.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 Once approved the Company will have all of the necessary authority to proceed to delivery the objectives and plans set out in the Business Plan and to good governance standards.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 The Council seeks to formally commit and support the work of the GCBC through a strategic investment over the next three years. It is proposed that funding of £5,000 is provided in 2021/22 increasing to £15,000 each year in 2022/23 and 2023/24 allocated from the Gloucester Lottery Central fund. This approach will not require a revision of the existing Money Plan.

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

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 Gloucester Community Building Collective is a community interest company (company no. 12354927) limited by guarantee with the primary purpose of delivering and promoting medium to long term community building in the city of Gloucester through an asset-based community approach.
- 3.2 Gloucester City Council is the sole shareholder in the company and a Member's Agreement is in place to govern the relationship between the Council and the Company.
- 3.3 The Management Agreement requires the GCBC to produce a Business Plan by no later than 31 December in the financial year preceding the year to which the plan relates. Approval of the Business Plan is a matter reserved for the Council as the sole shareholder and member of the Company. The Management Agreement also requires the GCBC to seek approval from the City Council for the appointment of additional Directors to its Board.

(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 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 N/A

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

- 14.1 N/A

Background Documents: None