

Brighton & Hove City Council

Tourism, Equalities, Culture and Community Committee

Agenda Item 51

Subject: Community Wealth Building Programme Action Plan

Date of meeting: 12th January 2023

Report of: Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 This updates the committee on the programme of work the Community Wealth Building Member Working Group has undertaken, and proposes an action plan to establish and promote Community Wealth Building within the city and the city council.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Committee agrees to the implementation of the Community Wealth Building Action Plan, as set out at Appendix 1, subject to any minor grammatical, non-material text and formatting agreed by officers in consultation with the Chair of the Committee prior to publication.

3. Context and background information

3.1 In 2019 the city council commissioned a diagnostic report from the Centre for Local Economic Strategies into Community Wealth Building in Brighton and Hove. This was first delivered in December 2019 and updated in August 2020.

3.2 There is no single agreed definition for Community Wealth Building (CWB). Generally, it is viewed as pursuing a form of economic development that develops and protects value locally within a community. Within that, there can be differing emphases.

3.3 The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) define Community Wealth Building this way:

As a fundamental driver of an inclusive economy, community wealth building aims to reorganise and control the local economy so that wealth is not extracted but broadly held and generative, with local roots, so that income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being. Through community wealth

building we are seeing a democratic, social and economic movement, which seeks to provide resilience where there is risk and local economic security where there is precarity.

Community wealth building has a particular focus on the activities of anchor institutions. Anchor institutions are large established organisations, rooted in local communities, which can improve local economic and social wellbeing through the use of their spend, employment practices, and use of land and assets.

- 3.4 The [Council Plan 2020-2023](#) identifies building community wealth, under the banner of 'A City Working for All' as being one of three main priorities for the council. [The council's current Economic Strategy](#) also has a chapter about developing a fairer economy, with CWB at it's heart. Priority Action 5 of the strategy (PA5: Developing long-term community capacity and citizen leadership) seeks to develop long-term community capacity and leadership to enable community wealth building.
- 3.5 In January 2020, a report went to Policy & Resources Committee to establish the CWB Member Working Group. In November 2021 that group reported back to this committee that it had undertaken the inception and scoping phase of its work, after a covid imposed break in the work of Member Working Groups, and was about to move into the investigation and planning stage. This stage has used the suggested action plan from CLES as a starting point for developing our own action plan.
- 3.6 The group has looked at other issues in more detail, and themed the study of those issues by the five pillars of community wealth building, as identified by CLES. These are:
- Progressive procurement of goods and services.
 - Fair employment and just labour markets.
 - Making financial power work for local places.
 - Socially productive use of land and assets.
 - Plural ownership of the economy.
- 3.6 The proposed action plan is included at Appendix 1. The action plan has been prepared in a way that is mindful of existing resources, and the budgetary constraints expected in future years. Some elements of the action plan align with existing work streams, but package them up into a single place so the council can better communicate its desire for community wealth building, social value and the need to keep the local economy vibrant. The group has also already started some work where there is already a committee resolution to do so, for example commissioning the feasibility work into 20 minute cities. 20 minute cities is the concept of planning the city in such a way that people can live, work, shop and socialise in a local setting – not having to travel more than 20 minutes to get to and from places they would like/need to be. This assists CWB by ensuring spend and therefore value stays within neighbourhoods.

- 3.7 To meet the first pillar, ***Progressive Procurement of Goods and Services***, the action plan focuses on implementing and building on the city council's Environmentally Sustainable and Social Value procurement policies. This good practice could then be shared with other anchor institutions to enable the sharing of progressive procurement.
- 3.8 Pillar 2, ***Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets***, it is proposed that a "Big Debate" to explore the appetite for a business-led fair work charter is organised with the Brighton Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce have been running a successful Living Wage campaign for the city and hold Big Debates on various topics.
- 3.9 ***Making Financial Power Work for Local Places***, pillar 3, the Financial Inclusion Strategy would be reviewed as part of the work around the Cost of Living Crisis. Better promotion of ethical local saving and borrowing through local credit unions would also be encouraged.
- 3.10 Under the 4th pillar, ***Socially Productive Use of Land and Assets***, includes a proposal to improve training in CWB for key decision makers looking at the use of council assets. It also seeks better use of public assets such as school sites or housing sites that Community Land Trusts might be better placed to deliver.
- 3.11 The 5th pillar, ***Plural Ownership of the Economy***, focuses on some key city projects to assist local owned businesses, including the Business and Intellectual Property Centre and the Research and Innovation Fibre Ring.
- 3.12 The preparation of the plan has been mindful of resources and the limited capacity within teams, so many of the ideas either rely on the council using its role as a convener within the city, or in some cases they pull together existing projects and work streams that come under the CWB banner. The action plan also highlights the areas in which the city and council are already delivering significant good practice.
- 3.13 The action plan is also a first version, and the intention is that it will be designed up for use online and then be regularly reviewed and updated – with updates to come to this committee. The Circular Economy Routemap, which has similar inclusive economy goals but focuses more on the reduction of waste and scope three emissions, is a similar document that intended to be a living document. It is meant to be agile and allow the council to respond to fluctuations in what is an increasingly volatile economic picture.
- 3.14 Part of the reviewing process will also entail monitoring of actions in the present plan to ensure they are being delivered. For that reasons the actions are meant to be measurable, with clear targets and milestones. This reporting will be done via the Economic Development Team.

4. **Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

- 4.1 The CWB Member working group has examined a number of areas that the council could focus on, and has arrived at the final proposed action plan as being the best option at this stage after consideration of resource, deliverability and impact. However, as set out above, the action plan is intended to be an evolving and living document and future iterations of it will adapt to consider issues and options not yet covered.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 The Economic Strategy, which sets out the goal for an inclusive economy which delivers CWB opportunities, was extensively consulted upon in its preparation. The CWB Member working group has heard from a number of external voices to help shape the proposed actions.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This action plan builds on existing policy and good practice the council already delivers. It seeks to move the implementation of Community Wealth Building from policy and individual stand-alone projects, to a coherent programme of work. The plan is intended to be agile and to change to suit local economic conditions, reacting to opportunities and building on strong good practice already within the city.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any costs associated with the Community Wealth Building Action Plan are expected to be met within existing resources.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 21/12/22

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The activities outlined in the Community Wealth Building Action Plan are consistent with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Standing Orders. Other initiatives will be assessed to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Name of lawyer consulted: Alice Rowland Date consulted: 16/12/22

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 None directly for this report. The development of a Community Wealth Building programme is intended to support and grow local communities and consideration of equalities issues will be fundamental to this work.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 None directly for this report. There are obvious synergies between the development of a Community Wealth Building programme and the city's Carbon Neutral 2030 Programme and the council has already committed to

exploring the potential for carbon reduction activity to support community wealth.

11. Other Implications

Social Value and procurement implications

- 11.1 CWB has social value at its core, and these implications have been considered through the work of the group. Procurement is also one of the pillars of CWB, and is considered within the action plan.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Proposed Community Wealth Building Action Plan

2. Background documents

1. Centre for Local Economic Strategies: Community Wealth Building in Brighton & Hove
2. Productive, Inclusive, Transformative: An Economic Strategy for Brighton & Hove 2018

