

## Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

<b>Report Title</b>	Anchor Institutions Update
<b>Item for decision or information?</b>	Information
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<b>Organisation</b>	Gloucestershire County Council
<b>Key Issues:</b>	
<p>Anchor institutions are large organisations that are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in their local area. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support their local community's health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities. Anchor institutions already influence the health and wellbeing of communities but they can have an even greater impact on the wider factors that make people healthy by choosing to invest in and work with others locally and responsibly.</p> <p>The purpose of this paper to is provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the progress made in developing a county wide approach to anchor institutions.</p>	
<b>Recommendations to Board:</b>	
<p>The Board is invited to note the progress made in developing the Gloucestershire anchor institutions approach.</p>	
<b>Financial/Resource Implications:</b>	
None	

## Anchor Institutions update for Health and Wellbeing Board

### 1. Purpose

Anchor institutions are large organisations that are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in their local area. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support their local community's health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities.<sup>1</sup> Anchor institutions already influence the health and wellbeing of communities but they can have an even greater impact on the wider factors that make people healthy by choosing to invest in and work with others locally and responsibly.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the progress made in developing a county wide approach to anchor institutions.

### 2. Background

The term anchor institution is most often used to apply to the public sector as these organisations typically have a fixed location, are around for the long-term, and are stewards of public funds. However, private and voluntary organisations can also act as anchors in their communities. Anchor institutions can broadly be considered in three categories:

#### Public sector anchors

Large, public sector organisations are unlikely to relocate and also have a significant stake in a geographical area, meaning they are effectively 'anchored' in their surrounding community. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support local community wealth building and development, through procurement and spending power, workforce and training, and buildings and land. There is also scope for public sector organisations to work together in their roles as system leaders to have further impact and influence on health inequalities.

#### Community anchors

Community anchors have been described locally through the work of the Barnwood Trust as organisations that hold a unique place within the community ecosystem. Recognised and trusted by local people and organisations alike, they interact with local decision-makers, the wider voluntary and community sector (VCS) within their community and informal networks on the ground. Advocating for the resources needed in the communities in which they are embedded, they use their skills to enable and retain power for local people to do things for themselves. They hold extensive local knowledge and, due to their trusted relationships, sometimes have access to funding from local decision-makers, the distribution of which is informed by the needs of the local community.

#### Business anchors

The mutual benefits of a healthy workforce and thriving economy to businesses and individuals is well documented and many private organisations are acting as anchors in their

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<sup>1</sup> The King's Fund (2021); Anchor Institutions and how they can affect people's health

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/anchor-institutions-and-peoples-health>

<sup>2</sup> Health Foundation (2019) Building healthier communities: the role of the NHS as an anchor institution

[https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2019/I02\\_Building%20healthier%20communities\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2019/I02_Building%20healthier%20communities_WEB.pdf)

communities. Gloucestershire's Local Industrial Strategy makes the case for using planned growth as a lever to tackle inequalities, close the gap and make sure that everyone can contribute and benefit.

### **3. Developing the approach in Gloucestershire**

Just over a year ago, the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board approved ten principles which set out publicly how the member organisations will act as anchor institutions for the local community going forward. The principles form a Gloucestershire anchor institutions charter for any organisations which consider themselves to be anchor institutions to pledge their commitment.

In November 2021, The Director of Public Health annual report, *Sources of Strength*<sup>3</sup>, was published and looked at how we could secure Gloucestershire's health and Wellbeing through an Anchor Institution approach. This outlined five key areas in which anchor institutions can add value:

- Employment, including recruitment and workforce
- Procurement and commissioning
- Use of buildings and capital
- Environmental sustainability
- Partnership working with communities and other anchors

These are practical ways that anchor institutions can think about how they influence the health of the local population and what changes they can make to ensure this impact is as positive as it can be.

In December 2021 a half day event on anchors was held to focus on how the approach could be developed in Gloucestershire and how the recommendations from the Director of Public Health annual report could be actioned. This brought together key partners from across Gloucestershire to discuss the five areas set out in the report and to identify additional opportunities for action.

As a result, in February 2022 the Gloucestershire Anchor Institutions Task and Finish Group was established. The purpose of the group is to agree how to implement the public sector recommendations (see appendix) of the Director of Public Health annual report across the system in Gloucestershire. The group is committed to meeting monthly for six months. It will then review progress and set next steps.

### **4. Public sector anchors - Gloucestershire Anchor Institutions Task and Finish Group**

#### Membership

The group consists of 'strategic leads' from public sector organisations including local authorities, NHS, police, Local Enterprise Partnership, housing associations, universities and colleges (see full list below).

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<sup>3</sup> Gloucestershire County Council (2021) Sources of Strength  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2111500/dph-report-2021-sources-of-strength.pdf>

### **Gloucestershire Anchor Institutions Task and Finish Group membership**

- Cheltenham Borough Council
- Cheltenham Borough Homes
- Cirencester College
- Cotswold District Council
- Forest of Dean Council
- GFirst LEP
- Gloucester City Council
- Gloucester City Homes
- Gloucestershire College
- Gloucestershire Constabulary
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS FT
- Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS FT
- Hartpury University & Hartpury College
- NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
- South Gloucestershire & Stroud College
- Stroud District Council
- Tewkesbury Borough Council
- University of Gloucestershire

Leads are accountable for taking forward internal actions to forward the anchor institutions programme and work collaboratively to establish joint priorities and contribute to system-wide interventions.

#### Purpose

The group aims to answer the following:

- What does 'good' practice look like under each of the five domains of being a public sector anchor institution?
- Where are there local examples of good practice and how is the learning from this shared?
- Are there key areas of practice which the majority of public sector anchors locally wish to strengthen and is there value in working collectively to do this?

By the end of the six-month period, the task group aims to have achieved the following outputs:

- A **clear narrative and communications** to raise awareness of the potential of anchor institutions.
- Member organisations have publicly committed to the Gloucestershire anchor institutions **charter** and have begun work to embed the principals internally.
- **Mapping** exercise has provided insight into existing examples of anchor institution activity and planned activity in the county.
- A better **understanding of what 'good' looks like** against each of the five anchor dimensions and awareness of where public sector organisations in Gloucestershire see themselves now, where they want to get to and the actions they can take to get there.
- Key areas of focus for **collective action** have been agreed system-wide priorities.

- **Actions** have been agreed to progress these key areas and Operational Leads have been identified to provide capacity.
- Mechanisms for **sharing good practice** and learning across the system have been established.
- Establish clear **next steps**.

#### Progress to date

Much of this work is already underway. To aid organisations to embed an anchor institutions approach internally, the group have adapted a self-assessment framework to suit local needs and priorities. The framework aims to help organisations to capitalise on their power and role as an inclusive anchor institution. It is designed to set **what good looks** like in terms of being an inclusive anchor means in practice. It uses the five dimensions to describe this and to then show against each why it matters, what difference it can make, what sort of things anchors can do to affect change.

It acts as a tool for organisations to use to self-assess where they are now against each dimension, and to then to support them in deciding where they want to be and the actions they can take to get there. It does this by using four steps – from basic start point (level 1) to best practice (level 4). The value of using the tool is in bringing together different stakeholders in open discussions about where the organisation currently is and where it could be, validating and benchmarking existing work, and applying a consistent approach to many different business areas. The task group member organisations have agreed to complete the self-assessment framework internally over the coming months and bring that learning to the rest of the group.

In parallel, the group have undertaken a **mapping exercise** to determine how much anchor activity is already underway across the county. This provides a resource and a potential community of support to assist organisations in implementing similar actions. It has also been used to highlight areas of existing strengths, gaps, and opportunities. The information, along with input from community anchors, will be used to develop system-wide interventions in cases in which a joined-up and place-based approach can add value beyond the actions of individual organisations.

Discussions have also begun on a **communications strategy** and online platform to promote the Gloucestershire anchor institutions approach, utilising the skills of local Further Education and Higher Education students.

## **5. Community anchors**

An initial meeting has taken place with a number of community anchors to explore how this approach could be further developed. Aspects of anchor institutions approach to explore further included:

- Community-centred commissioning – flexibility and proportionate administration
- Widening workforce participation – supporting people where they are
- Strengths-based working in partnership with communities
- Community access to buildings and outside spaces

## 6. Business anchors

Work is underway between GCC Prevention, Wellbeing and Community hub and GFirst LEP to scope the work to progress the business anchors initiative locally. GFirst LEP already support businesses with a range of programmes which contribute to the impact in each of these five areas e.g., SME Net Zero pledge, Employment and Skills Charter, etc. These offer a potential baseline of activities that could be used by businesses to evidence commitment to the anchor institutions pledge and key areas.

Further work is required to define 'business anchors' and develop a local approach which encourages these organisations to consider the five domains.

The project scope involves developing a coordinated approach to strengthening the role of business anchor institutions in Gloucestershire by:

- Designing and delivering a methodology to develop a clearer identity and roles for business anchor institutions.
- Identifying and testing a business engagement strategy and associated Key Performance Indicators and reporting structures within an agreed timeframe.
- Reviewing the project findings with the business community and the Health and Wellbeing Board to make recommendations for future delivery.

The outcome will be to have a clear business anchors methodology for long term engagement including 'renewal' process to maintain active engagement.

## 7. Conclusions

The Health and Wellbeing Board discussed anchor institutions just over a year ago and agree a set of principles which set out ways of working for such organisations. This paper has provided an update for the Health and Wellbeing Board on the progress made on the anchor institutions agenda. Over the last six months, there has been significant progress in developing the Gloucestershire anchor institution approach with the publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report and a set of recommendations, a multiagency event, a task and finish group being established, mapping of examples of good practice, development of a self assessment tool, scoping the work to develop a business anchors approach and initial discussions to explore the role of community anchors.

### Appendix: Director of Public Health annual report 2021/22 recommendations

1. The Prevention, Wellbeing and Communities Hub at Gloucestershire County Council to organise an anchor institutions event. This will bring together key partners from across Gloucestershire to discuss the five areas set out in the report and to identify additional opportunities for action.
2. Anchor institutions should reassess career access and development pathways to strengthen opportunities for people from underrepresented groups and young people. Consideration should be given to recruitment practices and supporting retention and workforce health and inclusion through fair pay and conditions.
3. Anchor institutions should consider and develop their social value policy in line with the Social Value Act. These should be aligned across the county to further strengthen the contribution to social, economic and environmental impacts.
4. Focus initially on strengthening the role of core (public sector) anchor institutions by these organisations:

- a. Identifying a strategic lead per organisation to help set the direction and priorities based on the five areas set out in the report.
  - b. Identifying an operational lead per organisation who can ensure that actions and recommendations are implemented at an organisational level.
  - c. Building the five areas set out in this document into corporate plans and wider policies and practices.
  - d. Develop locally agreed matrices to monitor and evaluate the contributions of core (public sector) anchor institutions.
  - e. Ensuring that contracting and monitoring requirements are proportionate to the size of the contract, to promote inclusivity for a range of organisation types.
  - f. Supporting more flexible commissioning and coproduction of services which puts power and trust in communities and recognises the value of local expertise and lived experience.
  - g. Committing to using our public buildings and spaces as community assets and ensuring that lease agreements make this viable.
5. Work through GFirst LEP (Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership) to develop a clearer identity and roles for business anchor institutions. Ensure anchor institutions are included in the refreshed Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).
  6. Develop a Gloucestershire Anchor Institutions Collaborative to ensure a coherent, system-wide approach for anchor institutions to develop across the five areas. This should report to the Health and Wellbeing Board annually.
  7. Publish the principles as an Anchor Institutions Charter to which organisations pledge and demonstrate their commitment to this approach.