

**HEADING** Kidsgrove Town Centre Community Interest Company  
**Submitted by:** Executive Director - Regeneration and Development  
**Portfolio:** Economic Development, Planning & Town Centres  
**Ward(s) affected:** Butt Lane, Kidsgrove, Newchapel, Ravenscliffe and Talke

**Purpose of the Report**

To update Members on the progress of the establishment of a Kidsgrove Town Centre Community Interest Company and Council support for this.

**Recommendations**

- a) That Cabinet endorses the Borough Council becoming a corporate director of the Kidsgrove Town Centre Community Interest Company and that Councillor Mrs Elsie Bates is nominated to the Board.
- b) That £10,000 is allocated to the Kidsgrove Town Centre Community Interest Company for the delivery of its emergent action plan, subject to the completion of a Service Level Agreement and an agreed arrangement for draw-down of defrayed or committed expenditure.

**Reasons**

In 2012 Cabinet approved the approach to establishing a Kidsgrove Town Centre Community Interest Company, therefore it is appropriate that Members are aware of progress and endorse the approach of Corporate Membership including the nomination of a representative to the Board. It is also appropriate to consider support for the development of the action plan and financial support for the emerging priority projects.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council's Economic Development Strategy seeks to support the development of businesses in the Borough. Officers and local members from Kidsgrove have been working with local community representatives to discuss ways of supporting the economic development of Kidsgrove. These discussions have led to the proposal that a Community Interest Company (CIC) should be established to support Kidsgrove Town Centre.
- 1.2 In September 2012 Cabinet sanctioned officers, "to proceed with the process of establishing a Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership based around a Community Interest Company Model (or similar entity), including the appointment of Directors, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centre."

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Local businesses are supportive of the development of a partnership based on the Community Interest Company model and following from a general meeting of the Kidsgrove Town Team in July 2013, it was agreed that a legal entity would be constituted. Five private sector volunteers have come forward to become founding Directors to establish the company:
  - Elliot Ashton – business representative and Town Councillor (Chair of the Environment & Infrastructure group)
  - Neil McNicholas – Co-op Bank
  - Mark Smithson – Smithsons Caravans business representative

- Ian Tervit – A Potter Tea (Chair of the marketing theme group)
  - Paul Waring – Town Councillor (Chair of event co-ordination; volunteer Company Secretary)
- 2.2 These five founding Directors have met subsequently with officers to discuss potential company formats and have agreed on a Community Interest Company, limited by guarantee (same as for the Newcastle TCP). The relevant forms have been submitted to Companies House and a certificate of incorporation is awaited. The registered address for the time being will be the Kidsgrove Town Hall. Once the CIC is formally constituted, a bank account will be set up with the Co-op bank.
- 2.3 It is appropriate that the Borough Council becomes a corporate director and supports the work of the partnership. The Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder has volunteered to be the named council representative as the Economic Development, Regeneration and Town Centres Portfolio holder is already involved with the Newcastle TCP.
- 2.4 For the time being, the shadow board has decided to keep the number of directors relatively small and engage with larger numbers of people through the theme groups. This will allow people with interest in specific projects to participate fully. The emerging key actions from these theme groups are:

Marketing Group

- Development of a town centre website including the use of Quick Response (QR) codes to direct traffic to the website, especially from canal and station users.

Event co-ordination Group

- Building a contact database for businesses, organisations and other interested partners to ensure information about events, activities and meetings is disseminated as widely as possible.
- Encouraging businesses to develop their own events.

Environment & Infrastructure Group

- Improving the canal infrastructure and links to the town centre and developing the heritage aspect (major project).
- CCTV coverage
- Signage
- Cleanliness and attractiveness

- 2.5 As part of the discussions it has become clear that it is appropriate for the Council to financially support the development of this company and in particular to give a grant to them to assist with the delivery of their action plan which will clearly contribute to the Council's corporate priorities. It is considered appropriate to award a grant of £10,000.

**3. Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 3.1 The Council has identified the development and improvement of the two main town centres (both Newcastle and Kidsgrove) as a clear priority. As part of this the Council wants to be able to support and develop the town centres as vibrant places where people want to visit, work, invest and shop. Consequently it is appropriate that the Council seeks to work in partnership with the local businesses to develop the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership.
- 3.2 The preferred solution is to complete the registration of the Council as a corporate member of the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership and that funding is allocated to support the partnership.

4. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 Outcomes from these actions will significantly affect the 'Borough of Opportunity' and Promoting Healthy and Active Community corporate priorities, and will have implications for the quality of life, regeneration, and sustainability of the town centre.

5. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 5.1 There is no statutory requirement to carry out these recommendations. The Council will become a corporate member of the newly formed Community Interest Company and a Service Level Agreement will be agreed with the company to ensure that the funding is utilised for the delivery of the action plan once developed.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out but the actions identified will help to make the Kidsgrove town centre more able to meet the needs of both residents and the business community.

7. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 It is considered appropriate to award a grant of £10,000 for the reasons and purposes described above. In particular it is envisaged that the grant will be the subject of some form of draw-down arrangement based upon delivery of activities contained in the emergent action plan. Additionally the Council has committed staff and Member resources to supporting the establishment of this business-led Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership and CIC (on the same broad basis as the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership).

- 7.2 The grant will be financed from additional income generated during the current financial year.

8. **Major Risks**

- 8.1 There is a risk that the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership will fail leading to reputational damage however the potential benefits of the partnership succeeding in contributing to the economic development of the area outweigh the risks.

9. **Key Decision Information**

- 9.1 This is not a key decision however the report outlines progress in delivering a key Council priority.

10. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

- 10.1 In September 2012 Cabinet sanctioned officers, "to proceed with the process of establishing a Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership based around a Community Interest Company Model (or similar entity), including the appointment of Directors, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres."

11. **List of Appendices**

11.1 None.