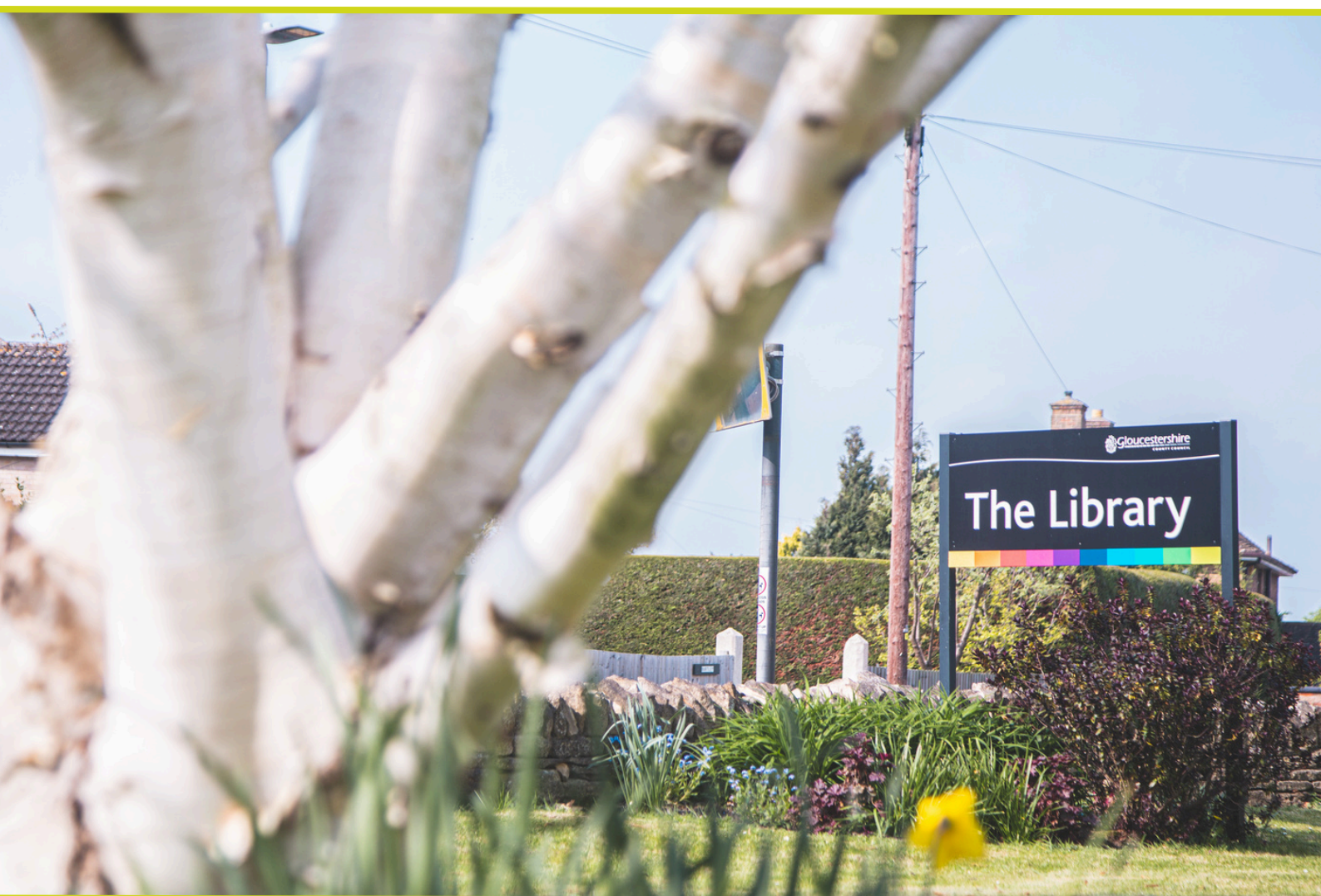


The Library

The role of the Advisory Board and Membership

January 2023





Gloucestershire Libraries celebrate £750k funding award

Gloucestershire Libraries have been recognised as a **National Portfolio Organisation** and awarded **£750,000 funding over three years by Arts Council England**.

Gloucester was singled out as a priority place for development and cultural ambition which formed the basis of the application for funding.

Gloucestershire Libraries will receive £250,000 a year over the three-year period to help continue its development to provide an ambitious and forward-thinking service for everyone in the county.

This will align with the new libraries in Gloucester, Stroud and Oakley in Cheltenham, as well as financially support the cultural elements of the newly drafted five-year Library Strategy (2023-2028).

The application was awarded on the basis that resources will be put into customer development, data and work with hard-to-reach groups.

Key partners involved with the project will include the University of Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucestershire NHS, Immersive Reality and many more.

There will be specific emphasis on new activity and engagement within Gloucester and the Forest of Dean as priority places.

The funding will begin in April 2023 and Gloucestershire Libraries will use the time over the next four months to develop project plans and set up a governance board to oversee the developments planned over the three-year funding period.

Cllr Dave Norman, cabinet member for libraries, said: "I'm delighted that Gloucestershire Libraries have been awarded this funding to continue the ambitious work that has been recognised through this investment from the Arts Council. "There are exciting new initiatives planned that will help the service continue to evolve and meet the needs of everyone in our communities in Gloucestershire."



About Gloucestershire Libraries

Gloucestershire County Council provides 31 council run libraries, a new digital immersive storytelling centre (from May 2023), access to a variety of online services and supports eight volunteer run community libraries. During 2019/20 Gloucestershire Libraries recorded over two million visits to their sites and over two million items borrowed both in person and online. Within six of our libraries there are labs with a host of high-tech equipment to work with customers on digital innovation.

Our libraries are more than a place to borrow books. The core purpose is to provide free access to a wide range of physical books, e-books and information, but on top of this library buildings are accessible, safe community spaces that offer a range of activities, maker spaces and digital equipment for residents of Gloucestershire to use free of charge.

A new five-year Library Strategy (2023-2028) is being produced with updated ambitions and a new vision. The vision, as developed with the staff team, for Gloucestershire libraries is that the service is welcoming, inclusive, innovative, and inspiring.

Gloucestershire Libraries aim to be vibrant safe spaces at the heart of the county's diverse communities, through the 32 buildings we aim to encourage connections and creativity. It is important to provide equality of access to reading, culture, technology, trusted information, and learning opportunities.

Collaborative and partnership working is at the core of what we do. We work with and for communities in Gloucestershire and will continue to adapt and respond to changing needs, championing sustainability, and promoting health & wellbeing.

In this strategy we have singled out five key areas that Gloucestershire will focus on over the next five years. These are titled the five C's - Core, Community, Connect, Climate and Creativity. These areas set out new ambitions to broaden the remit of what our libraries offer to local residents.

Our aims and objectives for the delivery of the Arts Council NPO 2023 - 2025

1

AGEING WITH CREATIVITY

A team dedicated to working with partners to deliver ambition through creativity with over 60s. Introducing the **Library Choir** and an **Intergenerational Project**.

2

SPACE TO CREATE

Digital masterclass over a three year period, working with **industry professionals** & younger people with the aim to help with career development with creativity.

3

FAMILY FOCUS

A team dedicated to working with early years children and families delivering on regular **non-digital Saturday Clubs** and the introduction of a **Family Festival**.

4

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Recruitment of a team of **paid ambassadors aged 14-21 years**, giving roles in advisory, project management, marketing as well as **shaping the future of the service**.

5

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Training for staff, specifically around **customer service and hard to reach groups**. A new **increased Development Team** to manage and support events.

6

DATA AND INSIGHTS

A model for **monitoring and evaluation** of how our ambition is going. Constant collection of customer data for use of **future funding and a legacy of the projects**.

7

PARTNERS

The delivery will include relationship building with key partners; **Uni of Gloucester, Gloucestershire NHS, Archives, Dementia Action Alliance**, and many more.

Purpose of the Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides a formal structure for stakeholders to oversee and provide independent assurance on the work of Gloucestershire Libraries National Portfolio Organisation and provide collaborative leadership in shaping its direction in order to improve the cultural offer for residents of Gloucestershire.

The Board does not have a legal status and is not expected to formulate service strategy but will be consulted on local priorities, artistic direction and content and invited to give views on the future strategic direction of the National Portfolio Organisation. The Advisory Board's focus is on cultural provision and the contributions the service makes to the Let's Create Strategy outcomes.

The financial responsibility for the NPO lies within Gloucestershire County Council. The Board will formally adopt the Terms of Reference and the conflict of interest Policy set out in this document. Both are reviewed annually.

The Board will:

- Meet regularly to maintain an overview of priorities for the Gloucestershire Library Service NPO, supporting delivery within the local, national, and regional context.
- Make recommendations regarding the cultural programme's aims and objectives based on the strategic priorities of Arts Council England and the stated aims and objectives of Gloucestershire Library Service.
- Play an active role in ensuring that the four Arts Council England Investment Principles are embedded in the culture and working practices of Gloucestershire Libraries. The Advisory Board will review progress against the Investment Principles ambition, priorities, and actions at quarterly meetings.
- Provide support and robust challenge to ensure that performance meets targets set in the Business and Activity Plans including outputs, targets and success measures. Progress will be monitored at quarterly meetings.
- Review the programme in terms of excellence; inclusion for diverse audiences; access provision; audience reach and artist support.
- Review management accounts, risk register, action plans at quarterly meetings, addressing any concerns. Final authorisation of the budget remains with the Gloucestershire County Council.
- Provide support and guidance to the Library Service to secure additional income generation to ensure sustainability and growth.
- Raise the profile of the activity programme with internal departments and external organisations with a view to generating new artistic and partnership opportunities.



Other Duties may include:

- Attend meetings with Arts Council England if requested.
- Attend any training that is relevant to the position.
- Attend Gloucestershire Libraries events throughout the year.

Most recent cash flow statement, including opening balances and a forecast to the end of the year.

Final (annual) financial statements.

- Updated risk register(s).
- Progress reports against the targets and success measures set out in the activity plan. These reports should identify any areas of activity where insufficient progress is being made and include appropriate plans and actions to be considered and approved by the board to help mitigate risks and/or increase progress and performance.

Reporting Responsibilities

Arts Council England expect Advisory and Board Minutes and papers to be reported quarterly.

The following papers will therefore be produced and considered by the Board, before Gloucestershire County Council (through its Head of Libraries and Registration) submits them to Arts Council England:

- Agenda for board meeting.
- Minutes from the previous board meeting.
- Up-to-date financial information, including:

The Board will make whatever recommendations it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed before Gloucestershire County Council submits the papers to the Arts Council England. It will also make decisions in order to progress matters of a timely nature.

Quarterly accounts which will include the original budget set for the year, the budget, and actuals for the period and to date, the resulting variances, and revised projections to the end of the year.



Provide collaborative leadership in shaping its direction in order to improve the cultural offer for residents of Gloucestershire.



Advisory Board Membership

The Advisory board consists of 12 individuals with a diversity of perspectives and expertise to ensure internal challenge and support.

There are clear distinctions between the role of the Advisory board and the operational management of Council officers.

Independent board members make up the majority of the Advisory board. Gloucestershire County Council Officers and Gloucestershire County Council's Cabinet Member, that sit on the Board hold ex-officio seats (non-voting).

The Board will consist of a Chair and Vice-Chair. The remaining roles will ideally be made up of people with a specific interest in the following areas:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Finance and fundraising
- Arts & Culture
- Health & Social care
- Marketing
- Human Resources
- Staff representation (non-voting)

Additional Duties of the Chair

- To liaise with Library Service officers regarding the agenda for each meeting.
- To conduct the quarterly meetings and ensure Advisory board decisions are carried out in line with the Terms of Reference.
- To give focus to the Advisory board on critical tasks.
- To attend annual National Portfolio Organisation review meetings alongside the Library Senior Leadership Team with Arts Council England.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will take place quarterly. Arts Council England release payments quarterly on the receipt of minutes and board papers of the Advisory board meeting and a financial statement.

Board meetings will be arranged to fall in line with this payment schedule.

Additional full board meetings may be required for important decisions.

Sub-groups to focus on a specific areas of development may be set up, as required. In these instances, volunteers from the Advisory board members will be sought and special requests made of particular individuals where their skill set would be valuable.



Recording of Meetings

All meetings are documented as formal minutes which are available to stakeholders and provided to Arts Council England quarterly.

The Board may meet remotely, via telephone conferencing and decisions and recommendations can be made via email. Notice of meetings held remotely will be three working days before the meeting, unless otherwise agreed.

Terms of Board Membership

The appointment of the Chair will be made by the Head of Library & Registration Services and Development Manager and will be held for 2 years with re-appointment possible after this period.

Appointments to the board will be made by the Head of Library & Registration Services and the Chair of the board and will be for a period of two years, but members may subsequently be appointed for more than one term.

A quorum of 40% external members in attendance is needed for key decisions to be agreed or declined. Advisory board Members can be asked for authorisation on decisions via email.

Where there is an equality of votes, with no clear majority, the Chair will hold the casting vote.

Each board member should endeavour to attend all board meetings during the year and are required to attend at least two of the scheduled meetings each financial year.

In the event of a board member failing to do this, or other persistent non-attendance then the tenure of that member should be reviewed by the other board members and their removal recommended to the Head of Library & Registration Services for final decision.

Other than by ceasing to be eligible, a board member may only be recommended for removal from office during a term of appointment by the unanimous agreement of all of the other members in attendance at the board Meeting where this is being considered. Board members can be removed on grounds of non-attendance, breach of code of conduct and non-participation. The final decision on a member's removal will be taken by the Head of Library & Registration Services. The removal of the Chair also requires the consent of the Head of Library & Registration Services.

Advisory boards do not have legal status so they cannot have responsibility for a budget, enter into contracts or legal agreements, or be held legally liable. These responsibilities remain with the local authority.

Recruitment Policy for Board Members

The recruitment policy is open and transparent with all opportunities advertised through the library website. Advisory board recruitment will be on an ongoing process, with any future recruitment may be undertaken to increase board membership as and when required.

At all times consideration should be given to the “balanced appointment” objective.

The “balanced appointment” objective referred to is the objective that members of the oversight board (when taken together):

- a) Are balanced in terms of equality and diversity;
- b) Are independent of the Council’s library officers and staff with exception of the ex-officio seats (non-voting)
- c) Have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to discharge the duties of the membership;

Board members must be at least 16 years of age and legally eligible, i.e. you must not be eligible for automatic disqualification by The Charity Commission.

Conflict of Interest

Advisory board members are required to declare any interests that are relevant and material to their role and which they might reasonably be expected to know about. Known interests should be declared on appointment or as soon as they arise or become aware of them.

A register will be kept relating to any board member potential conflicts of interest.

The Board will have a standing conflict of interest declaration item on the agenda and any conflict of interest relating to specific agenda items will be declared at the start of each Advisory board meeting.

Where an Advisory board member declares any direct or indirect financial interest in an item under consideration, the individual must withdraw from the discussion, leave the meeting and not be part of the quorum during any meeting in which a relevant matter is discussed.

Where an Advisory board member declares any other potential conflict, the board shall consider the relevant steps to be taken to manage any potential conflict which may include:

- Allowing the board member to be part of subsequent discussion and voting as normal.
- Taking part in the discussion but not the decision.
- Withdrawing from both the discussion and decision making.

Conflicts of Interest will be formally documented in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will include:

- The nature and extent of the conflict.
- An outline of the discussion.
- The actions taken to manage the conflict.

Complaints

Internal and external complaints can be made via the Gloucestershire County Council complaints system.