

## **Our Approach to Strategic Planning**

### **Governance**

The Aboyne Community Trust (ACT) is a community led and managed organisation, with legal entity as a company limited by guarantee and with charitable status. The governance framework includes our Memorandum and Articles of Association, our charitable status registration and the appointment of the ACT Board supported by project committees / working groups. Our financial governance includes reporting to the ACT Board, regular period reporting and end of year independently inspected accounts. Our planning arrangements sit within these governance arrangements, ensuring accountability and robust oversight.

### **Planning Approach**

The overall purpose of the ACT is to undertake projects in response to local need/priorities / concerns and thereby to deliver actions which benefit the community. For this reason, the ACT requires to operate flexibly in uncertain and unpredictable conditions, particularly due to the inconsistent nature of available funding. This means that the organisation requires to plan in ways which ensure adaptability, flexibility and responsiveness. A formal, top down approach to setting strategic objectives does not recognise these requirements. Consequently, the ACT adopts an emergent approach to planning, with the key features being:

- Flexibility;
- Pro-activity;
- Creativity;
- Experimentation; and
- Learning.

### **Purpose**

Our high level organisational objectives are set out in our Memorandum of Association (see Appendix 1). The projects within the ACT share a common overall purpose - to benefit the local community by:

1. Building community connectedness and social infrastructure.
2. Improving access to natural spaces, enhance the village centre and maintain & regenerate woodland areas.
3. Promoting positive community health and wellbeing.

### **Delivery**

Each project within the ACT has ways of engaging with the local community and with volunteers to identify issues, concerns and priorities. Over time, these emerge to be the focus of action, and this enables volunteers to seek funding to meet the identified need within the current context for the village.

### **Engagement, Feedback and Learning**

In progressing action plans, the ACT seeks to work collaboratively with other organisations to the benefit of the village. It also creates opportunities for direct engagement with the community about the work taking place and develops ways of seeking feedback to inform the next stage of planning. Regular reviews of our improvement actions and plans enables new learning, which further informs our approach.

The attached diagram summarises our community based approach to strategic planning.

**Extract from  
Aboyne Community Trust  
Memorandum of Association**

Our high level objectives include:

a) to relieve poverty and its effects, and to aid the disadvantaged, in order to promote social inclusion throughout the operating area,

(b) to improve public amenities and services within Mid-Deeside (the operating area), and to encourage projects and initiatives to that end, either directly or indirectly as agents or project managers,

(c) to partake in schemes directly connected with the benefit of the public within the operating area,

(d) to encourage education and training in skills of all kinds, and to promote research into topics of interest within the operating area,

(e) to co-ordinate, establish, promote and operate other schemes of a charitable nature for the benefit of the community within the operating area.

**References:**

1. Aboyne Community Trust: Memorandum of Association (15 January 2009)
2. Aboyne Community Trust: Articles of Association (2023)