



CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON

RELIGHTING OUR CITY

RESET, RECOVER AND RELIGHT



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OUT OF DARKNESS, COMETH LIGHT...OUR CITY MOTTO HAS NEVER BEEN MORE RELEVANT.
WE'VE BEEN HIT-HARD BY THE PANDEMIC, BUT WE WILL **RESET, RECOVER AND RELIGHT.**



FOREWORD



Good Start Jones Retail Revival Programme

We'll look after our own, together, as 'one city' and we'll be bold and ambitious about transforming the lives of our residents.

The council's five point 'relight' recovery plan will:

- Support people who need us most
- Create more opportunities for young people
- Generate more jobs and learning opportunities
- Grow our vital local businesses
- Stimulate vibrant high streets and communities

Our recovery commitment was developed with the people of the City of Wolverhampton at its heart. We have engaged with over 2,500 of you to understand your key priorities and the outcomes you want to see.

**COUNCILLOR
IAN BROOKFIELD**
Leader of the Council



RELIGHTING OUR CITY



OUR PRINCIPLES

We will underpin our work with the following key principles;



CLIMATE FOCUSED

This recovery commitment is aligned to our climate change strategy 'Future Generations' and our target to make the City of Wolverhampton Council carbon – neutral by 2028. We are committed to delivering on the recommendations of our Climate Citizen Assembly and to upholding the promises we made when the Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019.



DRIVEN BY DIGITAL

The city is at the forefront of digital infrastructure and innovation, Wolverhampton will be one of the first cities in the world to host a 5G accelerator hub making us truly a world leader in emerging technology. Now more than ever digital skills and connectivity are vital to ensure our residents can access services, interact with friends and family, and enter the job market.



FAIR AND INCLUSIVE

We will continue to tackle the inequalities in our communities which impact on the opportunities of local people. The Council's 'Excellent' rated equalities framework is at the heart of our recovery commitment. No community will be left behind as we transform our city together.

SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO NEED US MOST

The Council and other organisations have come together in the most incredible way during this time of crisis. Delivering meals and emotional support to the city's residents, rolling out testing in care homes and launching a fundraising drive for local charities and foodbanks are just a few examples of how we have worked as one city.

We will continue to support our communities as we live with and recover from Covid-19, using our outbreak control framework to keep local people safe, working with partners to build community resilience to the new challenges the pandemic has brought and harnessing the community spirit which has been so crucial during the city's response phase and will continue to be as we move to recovery.

TACKLING THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

YOU TOLD US THAT

YOU NEEDED SUPPORT FOR THE
**VOLUNTARY AND
COMMUNITY SECTOR**

**MENTAL HEALTH
AND WELLBEING**

**KEEPING OUR MOST
VULNERABLE SAFE**

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Working with our partners to keep the city's communities safe

- Continue to support residents to self-isolate and shield through our dedicated phone line which provides referrals for shopping, food or specialist services so that residents can keep themselves safe and well.
- Support our voluntary sector and community partners to safely reopen community settings so that they can provide vital support to local people.
- We are committed to ending homelessness in the city and we are working with partners to develop a comprehensive package of wrap around support for those at risk of rough sleeping.
- We will use local data and intelligence to target specific locations and communities who have a greater need for support and assistance so that we can ensure we are reaching those who need us most.

Using our outbreak control plan to prevent further outbreaks

- Establish a permanent national mobile testing site in the city with the Local Resilience Forum and regional partners, that removes barriers for local people who cannot 'drive thru' at other regional centres.
- Expand current infection prevention support to high risk settings so incidents receive timely response and support, this includes places such as nurseries, schools, universities and domiciliary care settings.
- Continue collaboration with Environmental Health to support businesses and other premises to operate safely as we adjust to new measures
- Provision of Face coverings for shielding and clinically vulnerable residents and high risk locations to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

Building resilience so our communities can adapt and thrive

- We have launched the One City fund in collaboration with Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council. To date over £85,000 has been raised for foodbanks, those financially at risk, homelessness and digital inclusion.
- We are developing a digital device lending scheme through our libraries and community centres to give more local people the opportunity to maximise the potential of digital connectivity.
- Work with community partners, health and social care providers, and mental health services to promote community resilience and ensure residents have the right advice and support when needed
- Utilising data and evidence we will reduce wider impacts and health inequalities linked to and amplified by Covid 19 through place-based interventions and co-producing capacity and sustainable solutions in communities

CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

At different times in their lives, children, young people and their families may need additional support and help. We know that this is particularly true right now. Our plan to relight will build resilience, by supporting families, children and young people to safely return to school and grow up in a secure home in a thriving community. We will strive to help families as early as possible and provide targeted support at the right time to ensure children and young people are safeguarded and their long-term outcomes improved.

Our ambition is that children and young people have the best possible opportunities to fulfil their potential. Through our #YES youth engagement strategy we will ensure that the voice of children and young people continues to be central in how we deliver services and relight our city.

TACKLING THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

YOU TOLD US THAT

YOU WANT TO HAVE YOUR
OPINIONS HEARD

MORE AND BETTER
OPPORTUNITIES

GOOD EDUCATION TO
FULFIL POTENTIAL

US TO SUPPORT SOCIAL,
EMOTIONAL HEALTH
AND WELLBEING

WHAT WE ARE DOING

We're investing up to £2.5m to create opportunities for our young people

- We're investing nearly £1 million in new youth engagement workers to go out into our communities and connect CYP to opportunities, including apprenticeships and jobs.
- Our **#GenerationWolves** fund gives youngsters opportunities to organise activities they want, with a ringfenced pot for our hardest hit communities
- We're investing a further £200,000 this year to safeguard our city's fantastic youth zone, The Way, bringing our total investment to £4million-plus.
- We'll develop a new WV Squad online platform for our city's young people with £100,000 investment to connect to activities, opportunities and advice.
- We'll develop a bold and ambitious digital inclusion support package, as part of WV Online, so that young people can connect to opportunities and develop essential digital skills
- Emotional well-being – after all that we've been through – is crucial for our young people so we will build on the success of HeadStart which has seen 3,000 youngsters' benefit.

We'll drive 'opportunity through learning', supporting our schools to drive up standards

- 13,000 more young people are learning in Good or Outstanding schools than five years ago – we will work to boost this number
- We'll continue the trend of improving early years outcomes, so we give children the best possible start in life as the foundation for their futures
- We'll build on our youngsters' achievements at key stage 2 and attainment 8 so that progress stays above regional and national averages

- Making sure our education provision is inclusive for all CYP with targeted support for our vulnerable learners
- We will ensure education within the City lays the foundation of high aspirations and ambitions for our young people so they have the right skills for local jobs.
- Moved by the issues raised by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, we have developed some core principles to tackle inequalities, improve educational and wellbeing outcomes and experiences for our Black, Asian and minority ethnic youngsters, including more post-16 and post-18 opportunities to address disproportionality within the care and youth justice systems.
- We will continue to work with our partners and schools in the city to provide sufficient, safe, high quality learning environments where our children can thrive educationally and socially.

We will continue to support our most vulnerable young people

- We will roll out our social workers in schools programme to further build relationships with schools and support children and families who need us most.
- We'll deliver one of the country's best packages of support for care leavers. Our 'House Project' is creating opportunities for home ownership. It's fully funded by the council, one of only six in the country.
- We will continue to work with partners to ensure that CYP and families are offered the right support at the right time.
- Ensuring that we have an inclusive joined up offer for our SEND CYP by working in partnership across the city.

GENERATE MORE JOBS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

For too many local people the pandemic has increased the barriers they face to employment, this is particularly true for our young people. We are committed to working with our partners to help people back into work and re-skill our existing workforce. Our nationally recognised employment programme Wolves at Work has responded rapidly to support those who have been made unemployed by the temporary downturn in our economy and will continue to work with a network of over 600 local business to secure new employment opportunities for local people. Wolverhampton remains a city of opportunity and working with further education providers and businesses we will identify the skills needed to drive forward the industries of the future and match skills to new jobs being created so that local people can achieve their potential.

TACKLING THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

YOU TOLD US THAT

**INVESTING IN JOBS AND
SKILLS SHOULD BE THE NO.1
PRIORITY FOR THE COUNCIL**

**WE NEED TO PREPARE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE**

**WE SHOULD MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL OF
THE GREEN ECONOMY**

WE NEED MORE GOOD QUALITY

**ADVICE AND SUPPORT
FOR THOSE OUT OF WORK**

WHAT WE ARE DOING

We're supporting local people into work, training or an apprenticeship

- We are expanding our Wolves at Work employment programme which has helped 5,150 local people into work in 3 years .
- Wolves WorkBox, our bespoke one stop digital hub will provide access to training and employment opportunities for residents and businesses. It has supported more than 5,000 people in the last three months.
- Our Black Country Impact programme has supported 15,100 school and college students with careers advice, and supported 392 young people into work, an apprenticeship or further education.
- We are working in partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority to grow and develop apprenticeship opportunities for our local young people and have already committed £100,000 to support new training opportunities.

We'll future proof our economy, building skills for the future

- The £100m Springfield regeneration will place the city at the forefront of the growing low carbon industry by transforming the historic brewery site into a National Centre for Sustainable Construction and Circular Economy.
- City Learning Quarter is a partnership between the City of Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton College which will establish a £43m skills and learning hub, safeguarding hundreds of jobs and increasing footfall in the city centre as the scheme will see thousands of students located at the new city centre campus.

National Centre for Sustainable Construction and Circular Economy



- Our city is going to be at the heart of sustainable construction and the circular economy. The council is supporting calls for £25m investment in a the UK's first National Brownfield Institute at Springfield, building on the University of Wolverhampton's £100m investment there.

Work with partners to create new jobs and opportunities

- I54 western extension will lever in up to £300m private investment on top of the £1bn invested so far at the award-winning business park. Once completed the western extension will deliver a further 1,700 jobs for local people as well as strengthening local supply chains.
- Our new commercial district is already delivering hundreds of great jobs at i10 offices and the i9 development will bring a further 350 new jobs to the city centre, which will be supported by our £150m investment in the new transport interchange.
- One in every fifth person in the city works in the health and care sector. We will work with education and training providers as well as employers to develop the health and care workforce to build a sustainable and resilient local care sector which looks after those who have given so much to help the city fight Covid-19.

GROW **OUR VITAL** LOCAL BUSINESSES

Businesses in the city are a key part of national and international supply chains with significant clusters in automotive, aerospace and advanced manufacturing. We have a diverse and entrepreneurial local economy with 96% of all businesses in the city small or micro enterprises. The global marketplace is changing rapidly, we are committed to working with our partners to support businesses to adapt and innovate, to be resilient to changes in the economy. Our flagship partnership with eBay supported 67 small businesses in the City of Wolverhampton to bridge the 'digital gap' between the high street and online retail. In the first year of the initiative the collective turnover increased by £7 million, propelling growth, job creation and business expansion. We will use our recovery plans to ensure our business support offer is aligned to our ambitious future skills agenda and our commitment to tackle climate change, safeguarding the city's environment for future generations and making our local economy more inclusive.

TACKLING THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

YOU TOLD US THAT

IT WAS **IMPORTANT TO
INVEST LOCAL**

**PREPAREDNESS TO ADAPT TO
CHANGING CONSUMER TRENDS**

HAVE **SUPPLY CHAIN READINESS**

**ENSURE SAFE TRADING
AND SOCIAL DISTANCING**

CAPITALISE ON NEW GROWTH AREAS

WHAT WE ARE DOING

We'll develop a bespoke business support offer tailored to local needs

- Build on the financial support programme which has seen 3,800 local businesses access £43.5m in vital grant funding and £30m of business rates relief to protect jobs and livelihoods in the city.
- Launched a comprehensive economic package, through our Wolves in Business digital platform to help businesses, voluntary and community sector groups and the city's residents access advice, funding and training opportunities.
- Bespoke support for SMEs in the city through our AIM for GOLD programme which has supported over 300 local businesses with advice and support since it launched.
- Exciting new business support framework which will offer advisory, financial and incubation support for existing or emerging businesses or organisations in target sectors. Supported by our new Enterprise Hub in the city centre.
- Delivering the City Charter to facilitate opportunities arising from business investment and local procurement to the residents and communities of the city
- Work with our city and regional partners to prepare and support local businesses to manage United Kingdom's transition from the European Union and to maximise the benefits of new trade agreements.

We'll grow our key sectors to diversify and build resilience in the local economy

- Working with our partners at the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership we are developing a suite of ambitious action plans for our key sectors in the city which will include opportunities to access finance, the changing labour market and post Brexit trading arrangements.
- We are committed to local purchasing so that we can ensure that growth and investment in the city benefits local people and will maximise social value from Council contracts.
- Continue to work with our regional partners at the Black Country Local Enterprise Hub and West Midlands Combined authority to access funding streams to help businesses adapt and thrive in a changing market place.



Flagship partnership with eBay

STIMULATE **VIBRANT** HIGH STREETS AND **COMMUNITIES**

We have a huge challenge to rebuild our high streets, with many of our shops, markets and attractions closed almost overnight. The pandemic has accelerated many trends that were already happening like online shopping, home delivery apps and cashless transactions. Working closely with local businesses and partners we have successfully and safely reopened our high streets, but now more than ever, it is vital that we continue to deliver our ambitious plans to reimagine and transform our city and town centres. We have a clear vision for the future, which builds on the fantastic assets in our local communities, a world class football team, excellent transport links and a growing reputation as a digital and cultural hub in the West Midlands.

TACKLING THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

YOU TOLD US THAT

YOU WANT **MORE CULTURAL
EVENTS** AND **EXCITING
PLACES** TO VISIT

MORE GREEN AND OPEN SPACES

BETTER **PUBLIC TRANSPORT** LINKS
AND MORE **CYCLE LANES**

SUPPORT FOR RETAILERS
TO ADAPT TO THE CHANGING HIGH STREET

GROW OUR **VISITOR ECONOMY**

WHAT WE ARE DOING. WE WILL DELIVER:

We're delivering our vision to be an events city

- £38m investment in our vital entertainment venues creating new jobs and consolidating the city's place as key cultural hub in the West Midlands.
- A new vibrant public events programme bringing thousands of people into our city and town centres which will include the launch of the prestigious British Art Show in March 2021.
- £2m investment in Bilston town centre to bring a thriving night time economy offer and Christmas events package.
- A package of support for our local retailers jointly developed with partners which will include a 'shop local' campaign.
- A new market offer, building on our £5m city centre investment and sustaining entrepreneurial local supply chains.



Wolverhampton Interchange

We'll continue to drive investment into our communities

- The UK's first city centre solar farm at Bowman's Harbour to provide our fantastic NHS colleagues at New Cross Hospital with clean, green energy for their life saving work.
- 1,000 new city centre homes underway in the next 2 years establishing a residential population in the core of our city, increasing footfall and support for local retailers.
- £5m investment to deliver full fibre network across the city alongside one of the first 5G accelerator hubs in the country making Wolverhampton a world leading 5G city.
- Council housing company WV Living, supported by investment of up to £40m, is midway through a programme to build 1,000 homes over five years. It is building the first Passivhaus - world's leading low-energy building standard - homes in the city.

Reimagining our High Streets

- £250,000 invested across our city and town centres to make Covid-19 adaptations giving confidence to visitors and ensuring businesses can continue to trade.
- £23m bid to access future high street funding from Government has been submitted which will transform the west of our city centre with fantastic public event spaces, a new 'box' park and bring 440 new jobs.
- Completion of phase 2 of our new train station and metro extension completing a £150m investment in our public transport links which will also support the development of the Wolverhampton to Walsall line.
- We're investing over £350,000 to improve walking and cycling routes between our high streets and residential areas.

NEXT STEPS

This document sets out our commitment as a Council to work as 'one city' to transform the lives our residents.

Our immediate next steps are to;

- Continue to engage meaningfully with our different communities in the city to understand their needs and ensure pathways into employment, training and education are created.
- Continue to engage with our local businesses across different sectors to understand their short, medium and long-term needs.
- Ensure that we align our activity with robust data so that the decisions we make are evidence based and our resource is targeted at those most in need.
- Deliver and support Public Health interventions that support the city to be a safe place to live, work, visit and study.
- Work with the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Government to secure the funding and powers the city needs to not only recover but thrive in a 'new normal'.

We want Wolverhampton to be a city for everyone by working with all of our partners to connect people, places and communities to unlock potential and create change.



WHAT IS OUR ASK OF **CITY PARTNERS**

1. To work with the Council to design and deliver innovative solutions to some of the challenges we now face.
2. To help us hear as widely as possible the views of communities and businesses by using your own networks to engage.
3. To provide robust data and evidence that you have for your area that could help ensure we are reaching those most in need.
4. To look at how you can support your community to relight, recover and reset.

KEY CITY INITIATIVES

Investor confidence in the city continues to grow. We have maintained momentum on our key regeneration schemes, which will bring new investment and jobs to the city.



NEW INTERCHANGE

The City of Wolverhampton is already one of the best rail connected locations in the West Midlands. This position has been further boosted by the £150m transport Interchange project, creating a single integrated city centre transport hub bringing together rail, bus and Metro services. Work on the Interchange is well underway. It will unlock rail capacity and speed up train times in the region and beyond, helping to raise productivity, unlock housing growth and support our transition to a 'net zero carbon' future.



i54 WESTERN EXTENSION

Our joint investment at i54 has secured hundreds of millions of pounds of investment and has brought thousands of jobs to the city. Of the 2,700 people currently employed at i54, half live within a ten-mile radius. We are now building on the success of what is already one of the UK's premier advanced manufacturing business parks. The i54 Western Extension will lever in up to £300m in private investment on top of the £1bn invested so far.



CIVIC HALLS

Our £38m investment in the Civic Halls will see the iconic Grade II listed building transformed into a world class entertainment venue. The halls are a vital part of the city's visitor economy, providing jobs and generating millions of pounds to the local economy. The works will ensure that it remains a thriving venue the city can be proud of for many years to come. Further consolidating the City of Wolverhampton's position as the cultural capital of the Black Country.

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL