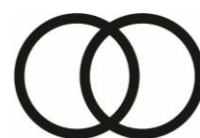


# Relighting Our City 'together' action plan

Embedding Community Wealth Building  
in Wolverhampton



**CLES**  
the national organisation  
for local economies

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# Executive Summary

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## About Community Wealth Building

As a fundamental driver of an inclusive economy, Community Wealth Building aims to reorganise and control the local economy so that wealth is not extracted but broadly held and generative, with local roots, so that income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being. CLES believes that community wealth building should be made central to the narrative and actions related to improving the local economy of Wolverhampton and, by extension, the lives and fortunes of Wulfrunians.

Community Wealth Building has a particular focus on the activities of anchor institutions, which we define as large established organisations, rooted in local communities. Conceptually, the notion of anchor institutions is rooted in the discipline of institutional economics and in the views of theorists such as Thorstein Veblen who critiqued organisational cultures that are focused on materialism and the drive for pure profit.

Anchor institutions can use their sizable assets to create economic and social value in their local community. Referred to as adopting an anchor mission, this approach is characterised by a commitment to intentionally apply an institution's place-based economic power and human capital, in partnership with the local community, for the long-term wellbeing and mutual benefit of both. Consequently, by using their procurement processes and spending power, their workforce and employment capacity, and their real assets such as facilities and land, anchors can impact positively on the local economy.

## About Wolverhampton

The Covid-19 pandemic caught the United Kingdom woefully underprepared. The present crisis has revealed the distressed state of our local economies and the brittle condition of the local public sector, following decades of underinvestment. At the same time, this dual public health and economic emergency has underscored the centrality of community to our everyday lives.

The Council and a range of anchor institutions, the community and voluntary sector and the wider citizenry have come together in the most incredible way during this time of crisis. From 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 Wulfrunians have worked as one. The Relighting Our City strategy sets out an approach which continues to support communities as we live with and recover from Covid-19, keeping local people safe and working with partners to build community resilience to the new challenges the pandemic has brought, harnessing the community spirit which has

been so crucial during the city's response phase and will continue to be as we move forward.

The Council's recovery commitment was developed with the people of the City of Wolverhampton at its heart. Over 2,500 people were engaged to build a shared understanding of the key priorities and the outcomes people want to see.

**We'll look after our own, together, as 'one city' and we'll be bold and ambitious  
about transforming the lives of our residents**  
– Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council,  
Relighting Our City.

## Relighting Our City 'together'

By applying Community Wealth Building principles to Wolverhampton's local context, we have developed an approach to Relighting Our City 'together' (summarised in Figure 1). This is an approach which is rooted in the collaboration of the major institutions of the city as a fundamental driver of an inclusive economy.

As we ready ourselves to rebuild and reconstruct, we must strive to make the economic recovery the starting point for an economic reform, which can help us to address the social, economic and environmental crisis' that we face as communities, as a country and as humanity.

The Covid-19 crisis has already brought about irreversible structural and societal change for our communities. The current crisis has laid bare the fragilities and failings of our national and local economies and has powerfully demonstrated that the economic development practices of the past cannot provide a road map for the task ahead.

We have proposed an approach which aims to start to reorganise and control the local economy so that wealth is not extracted but broadly held and generative, with local roots, where income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being.

CLES believes that Community Wealth Building should be made central to the narrative and actions related to improving the local economy of Wolverhampton and, by extension, the lives and fortunes of Wulfrunians. Through Community Wealth Building we can build a democratic, social and economic movement, which seeks to provide resilience where there is risk, local economic security where there is precarity and enables a fair and just transition to a low carbon economy.

Figure 1: Relighting Our City Together



# 1. Introduction

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The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) is pleased to present this Relighting Our City ‘together’ action plan to City of Wolverhampton Council. It builds on our earlier briefing papers and presentation to various boards, forums and groupings and advances the anchor network proposals for embedding Community Wealth Building in Wolverhampton’s economic recovery from Covid-19.

## What is Community Wealth Building?

As a fundamental driver of an inclusive economy, Community Wealth Building aims to reorganise and control the local economy so that wealth is not extracted but broadly held and generative, with local roots, so that income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being. Through Community Wealth Building we are seeing a democratic, social and economic movement, which seeks to provide resilience where there is risk and local economic security where there is precarity.

CLES believes that Community Wealth Building should be made central to the narrative and actions related to improving the local economy of Wolverhampton and, by extension, the lives and fortunes of Wulfrunians.

## Anchor approach to economic development

Community Wealth Building has a particular focus on the activities of anchor institutions, which we define as large established organisations, rooted in local communities. Conceptually, the notion of anchor institutions is rooted in the discipline of institutional economics and in the views of theorists such as Thorstein Veblen who critiqued organisational cultures that are focused on materialism and the drive for pure profit.

Rather than presupposing certain universal features rooted in human nature, the crucial insight is that the concrete characteristics of societies and forms of economic organisation considerably vary across space and time. Pursuing this view of the economy, institutional economists attempt to understand the concrete socio-historical factors that shape the functioning of the economy. One key feature for understanding the social and historical nature of economic organization is to identify the social institutions which shape place.

This theoretical bedrock has sparked a different way of thinking about institutions and the influence they have on people and society. It provides the theoretical frame which has informed the notion of the anchor institution as a powerful actor within a locality.

## Pillars of Community Wealth Building

Anchor institutions can use their sizable assets to create economic and social value in their local community. Referred to as adopting an anchor mission, this approach is characterised by a commitment to intentionally apply an institution's place-based economic power and human capital, in partnership with the local community, for the long-term wellbeing and mutual benefit of both. Consequently, by using their procurement processes and spending power, their workforce and employment capacity, and their real assets such as facilities and land, anchors can impact significantly on the local economy.

At the heart of the Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach are five pillars for harnessing existing resources to enable local economies to grow and develop from within by building a more generative economy.

### The 5 Pillars of Community Wealth Building



## Community Wealth Building in Wolverhampton

'Relighting Our City' is the key document sitting at the heart of Wolverhampton's economic recovery plan, which sets out the ambitions, vision and mission for the post-pandemic recovery. The document sets out the clear corporate priorities of the Council to develop a new approach for the economy to prosper whilst tackling inequality.

This recovery plan creates a fertile context upon which a deep and enduring commitment and programme of Community Wealth Building can be advanced within Wolverhampton. Community Wealth Building offers the City of Wolverhampton Council the opportunity to develop a new narrative that will offer meaningful ways to develop a fair and inclusive economy, supporting an economically just transition that delivers for 'Future Generations'.

The intention here is that Community Wealth Building becomes a frame through which local economic development activities are understood and evaluated. Community Wealth Building should be understood as a practical set of tools through which the Council's 'Relighting Our City' agenda can be 'made real' to a range of stakeholders, including; internally; to local anchors; and to local citizens.

This new approach will take time and will require deep collaboration internally across the Council, and externally with major players in the local public and commercial sector. CLES's recommendations are meant as a starter to get this process off the ground and running and locate the fruitful areas for Community Wealth Building in Wolverhampton. The intention here is to devise practical policies that can have a tangible effect on the Council's actions, and ultimately improve the local economy for everyone in the local area.



## 2. Wolverhampton context

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To identify where Community Wealth Building can be embedded within the economic, social and environmental recovery of Wolverhampton, we must first understand the key contextual issues, strategic documents and current activities the City of Wolverhampton Council is undertaking.

### Intelligence

The City of Wolverhampton Council have assembled a rich dataset of metrics around economic and social issues and development locally, with a focus on the impact of Covid-19. In this section, we present our reflections on this data.

#### Industry and Inward Investment

The central location of Wolverhampton within the UK, coupled with strong connectivity, has already made the city an attractive proposition to sector-leading firms such as Jaguar Land Rover, Marston's, Moog, UTC Aerospace and Wiggle. The i54 strategic employment site north of the city has attracted high quality jobs to the area, in addition to high levels of private and public investment generally (as of 2018, over £3.7 billion pounds has been injected into regeneration projects citywide, including £992 million pounds either on site or planned in the city centre alone<sup>1</sup>). Feedback from officers says that despite the pandemic there remains a high number of enquiries for industrial units and lease renewals, suggesting an under-supply. However, they also reflected a high degree of caution within the business community, so there should be caution exercised in terms of whether these trends will continue going forward.

#### Skills and Wages

The skills local residents have are a key factor in the choice of jobs available to them, and hence their income. There is a gap between the gross pay of residents (£500/week, lower than regional and national average) versus workers (£550, equal to the regional average)<sup>2</sup>, suggesting that whilst there are relatively well-paid jobs in the City, these are often filled by workers who commute into the area from elsewhere, whereas local residents tend to have lower paid jobs which reflect their lower-than-average skills. The City has a lower level of those with higher NVQ3+ qualifications and a higher percentage of those with no qualifications.

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<sup>1</sup><https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s78204/Enabling%20a%20vibrant%20city%20centre.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> ONS annual survey of hours and earnings 2019

As such, whilst there is a prevalence of high-value, high-skilled and highly paid jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector, mainly resulting from inward investment, there is also a prevalence of low-skilled low-paid jobs, in sectors such as Wholesale and Retail, which has 18.4% of employee jobs relative to 16.7% regionally and 15.2% nationally.<sup>3</sup> There is a general sense that the underlying drivers creating this 'two-tiered economy' have only accelerated since Covid-19, which should point to a doubling down of efforts to support residents into 'good' jobs with strong terms and conditions alongside robust employment and skills progression routes.

## Deprivation and Health

Whilst the City continues to build on existing strengths in its high value manufacturing and construction employment base, it continues to suffer from high levels of deprivation. It is the 21<sup>st</sup> most deprived local authority in the country, with around 50% of the population living in areas that are amongst the 20% most deprived nationally<sup>4</sup> in wards such as Bushbury South & Low Hill, St Peters and Bilston East. The City's population performs worse than average in most health statistics. For example, around 7% of the City is in very bad health against a national average of 5%. Around 20% are disabled or with long-term health problems. As such, health life expectancy for males was 56.4 years and females 59.5 years compared to the respective averages in England of 63.5 and 64.1.<sup>5</sup>

As Wolverhampton recovers from the Covid pandemic, these statistics underline the need to develop an approach to both employment and health inequalities and employment, with the increasing understanding around the social determinates of health.

## Demographics

Demographically, over 65s make up 16% of the population in the Wolverhampton compared to 13% in Birmingham and 11.9% in London. Wolverhampton has a lower than average population between the ages of 10 to 50 and higher than average 80+. These statistics are suggested to be partly a function of younger and more aspirational residents leaving the city to live and work elsewhere. Population projections show these trends are set to increase, with ONS statistics showing the number of those in age bands 70+ to increase by an average of 67% between 2014 - 2039, relative to an increase of 14% for all ages<sup>6</sup>.

## Ethnicity

Wolverhampton's Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) population is increasing. At the time of the 2001 census, 22% of the city's population (52,541 people) were from a

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3 ONS Business Register and Employment Survey 2018

4 <https://www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/about-us/publications-and-documents/>

5 [https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/Wolverhampton\\_City.pdf](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/Wolverhampton_City.pdf)

6 ibid

BME background, which increased to 32% (79,788 people) by the 2011 census. The largest BME groups in Wolverhampton are, according to the 2011 census:<sup>78</sup>

- Indian (32,162 people, or 12.9%) compared to 3.9% and 2.6% at the West Midlands and English level;
- Black Caribbean (9,507, or 3.8%), 1.6% and 1.1% at the West Midlands and English level respectively; and
- Mixed White & Black Caribbean (8,495 or 3.4%) 1.2 and 0.8% at the West Midlands and English level respectively

## Impact of Covid-19 on Wolverhampton

A larger older population combined with high levels of deprivation has meant that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the local people of Wolverhampton, and therefore a significant impact on the local economy.

- **Health impact** - Research ranked the city – alongside nearby Walsall, Dudley, Sandwell and Birmingham – among the most exposed in the country in terms of systemic risk from coronavirus. The rankings weighted healthy life expectancy, underlying health problems within the population, and existing pressures on health and social care systems<sup>9</sup>. There is a clear correlation between health and economic inequality, which highlights the importance of putting the local economy at the heart of the city's recovery plan
- **Labour market** - The labour market of Wolverhampton, with high rates of employment in the hospitality and retail sectors (relative to regional and national comparisons) mean that it has a high exposure of businesses impacted by the lockdown and pandemic-induced recession. The Council and other anchors have a huge role to play in terms of impacting not just the quality of employment of their direct employees and through their supply chain, but also in the provision of skills and training for those newly unemployed as a result of the pandemic
- **Commercial and Industrial Space** - The effects of the pandemic, in combination with the existing socioeconomic issues, presents Wolverhampton with a significant threat to the area's current and future model of development and puts at risk the idea of the city 'bouncing back' from the economic shock of Covid-19
- **Retail space** - In terms of retail units, Wolverhampton's city centre was feeling a strain; the city centre experienced a net loss of 13 stores in the first half of 2019, making it one of the hardest hit town centres in Britain<sup>10</sup>.

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7 ibid

8 2011 census

9 <https://www.progressive-policy.net/press-releases/press-release-places-most-at-risk-of-death-during-pandemic-revealed-in-new-index>

10 PwC and The Local Data Company

The pandemic has the potential for higher-than-average vacancy rates, in not just retail but also commercial units, to increase further. This is particularly acute in the city centre, given the on-going effects on high street retail and guidance relating to working from home.

Indeed, data is already showing the pandemic, in combination with Brexit uncertainty, in a reduction of WMGC inward investment pipeline,<sup>11</sup> together with deprived wards becoming more so as a result of Covid-19. This is not highlighted to stir up doom and gloom, but rather, to reinforce the need to seize the opportunities and put the health of Wulfrunians and the local economy at the heart of Wolverhampton's economic recovery plan, for example by using the National Centre for Sustainable Construction and Circular Economy (NCSCCE) to become a leader in green transition, focusing on developing an approach to health inequalities and employment, and reanimating the high street by focusing on the creative and night-time economy sectors.

## Strategy

Across the body of strategy<sup>12</sup> there is a recognition of both the strengths and weaknesses of Wolverhampton: good connectivity; a strong manufacturing base, and the presence of i54; and a strong sense of civic identity; and a collaborative council on the one hand – ingrained inequalities and deprivation, with social and economic outcomes, on the other.

These documents provide important contextual information for understanding the key strategic priorities and objectives underpinning and driving the work of ity of Wolverhampton Council. They encompass documentation covering a broad swathe of areas, and covering both the City of Wolverhampton Council as well as key regional bodies such as West Midlands Combined Authority and the Black Country Chamber of Commerce.

The impacts of both Covid-19 and, in turn, of Brexit – particularly on automotive and manufacturing supply chains – look set to add to the difficulties faced by many residents.

The plans put forward are progressive and – as noted in this report – the repeated focus on climate change is a great strength. One-point worth noting, however, is that there is also a particular focus of capital projects on physical development and property.

In a worst-case scenario, these plans could simply rebuild a type of economy – based on city-centre living, consumer consumption at leisure and retail facilities,

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11 West Midlands Weekly Economic Impact Monitor Issue 18

12 State of the Region 2020 Report, Wolverhampton Investment Plan – Towns Fund Submission, Future High Street Fund Submission, West Midlands Combined Authority Recharge the West Midlands – Investment Case to Government, City of Wolverhampton Strategic Economic Plan 2019-2024, City of Wolverhampton Council Plan, City of Wolverhampton Procurement Charter, Black Country Chamber of Commerce Business Impact Tracker articles, Black Country Chamber of Commerce Economic Recovery Prospectus, Relighting Our City (Cabinet documentation), Relighting Our City Recovery Plan, Citizens' Panel on post-Covid recovery priorities, Our Climate Commitment

and the attraction of inward investment – which was not delivering prior to Covid-19 in many places, and looks an uncertain bet going forward.

This is a small point in an otherwise impressive array of practice and strategy, but CLES see our role in partnership with the City of Wolverhampton Council as that of critical friends – aware of the difficulties faced by local authorities, but also helping to finesse and steer strategy and practice to ensure an equitable, sustainable, and socially just economic recovery.

We believe an effective way of ensuring this – in keeping with CLES's wider work across diverse localities – is by pivoting some of the emphasis in economic strategy towards Community Wealth Building, with a clear intent to retain existing wealth locally, alongside efforts to attract inward investment.

By pivoting in emphasis, Community Wealth Building offers a tried and tested form of local economic development, which has been shown to work in a crisis to turn around the fortune of a place.

Understanding the existing priorities and objectives of the council – and key partners - is a vital part of CLES's diagnostic work. This gives us the opportunity to better understand the context into which our work fits, and allows us to flex our recommendations and findings to ensure a bespoke fit with plans and initiatives already being progressed at the local level.

## Relighting Our City

Relighting Our City is the key document sitting at the heart of Wolverhampton's economic recovery plan. It sets out both the five areas of focus through which the council will work, and three cross-cutting themes which span all areas. The five focuses are as follows:

- 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

There is a clear 'recovery' theme in this document, with a strong emphasis on supporting communities in dealing with the challenges we are facing now; however, we feel there is space for a more far sighted view of how the recovery mechanisms that we put in place now, will shape how we are able to reform our local economy so that it is fit for the future and not locked into old models of doing things.

There are three themes which undercut all the five areas in the document:

**Climate focused:** The recovery commitment is aligned to the Council's climate change strategy 'Future Generations'<sup>13</sup> and the target to make the Council net carbon zero by 2028. Ambitious commitments to make the City of Wolverhampton Council carbon-neutral by 2028 could be supplemented with a focus on enabling local and community ownership of the mechanisms for delivering this ambition, retaining, and building wealth locally.

**Driven by digital:** The city is at the forefront of digital infrastructure and innovation, and now more than ever the importance of digital skills and connectivity is fundamental to the social and economic participation of the city's residents.<sup>14</sup> Digital inclusion strategies may need to be reviewed in the light of Covid-19, with access to IT and digital infrastructure causing greater hardship for the most vulnerable.<sup>15</sup>

**Fair and inclusive:** The Council will continue to tackle the inequalities in our communities which impact on the opportunities of local people,<sup>16</sup> growing the global supply chain sat at the heart of the City of Wolverhampton Strategic Economic Plan 2019 – 2024. However, the impact of both Covid-19 and Brexit on global trade, may call for a review of the emphasis placed on local markets.<sup>17</sup>

The Council have also convened a citizens' panel to give their thoughts and reflections on this plan. A number of key findings of this panel, worth recounting here, are: the recognition that there are significant interlinkages between the thematic areas; a recognition that the plan is welcomed by residents; and a feeling that the community spirit of the city represents a strength and opportunity to be drawn upon.

Indeed, this willingness to engage meaningfully with residents represents a wider operational strength which should continue to be harnessed as Wolverhampton seeks to recover and reform from the impact of coronavirus. The commitment within the economic recovery strategy to align with the citizens' assembly on climate change and subsequent climate emergency declaration are crucial here and should shape all developments which emerge and are progressed.

CLES's one initial comment would be on the section around stimulating the high street. We are aware work is underway in developing property in the city centre. This crisis has prompted many to reappraise what matters to them, and in turn

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13 [https://consultation.wolverhampton.gov.uk/cwc/climate-emergency-consultation/user\\_uploads/future-generations---our-climate-commitment\\_.pdf](https://consultation.wolverhampton.gov.uk/cwc/climate-emergency-consultation/user_uploads/future-generations---our-climate-commitment_.pdf)

14 <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/Wolverhampton%20Digital%20Infrastructure%20Strategy.pdf>

15 <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s11807/WCC%20Digital%20Strategy%202015%20-2018%20v1%201%20Final%20.pdf>

16 <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s96665/WCC%201775%20Strategic%20Economic%20Plan.pdf>

17 LES research suggested a hard Brexit would equal a -1.9% hit to GVA for Wolverhampton. [http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/85602/1/161017\\_NIESR\\_Brexit\\_Final.pdf](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/85602/1/161017_NIESR_Brexit_Final.pdf)

there has been a discernible turn away from city centre living, and office-based working.

Predicting the future – not least at a time as uncertain as this – is always a fool's errand. We now have a vaccine, which will allow a gradual return to something approaching normality. However, even if this were to occur, many of the changes we have seen in recent times may not be reversed – and we see this as being particularly acute around retail, housing demand (e.g., outdoor space) and home-working.

## Submissions to government

In the course of CLES's document review, we have looked at three documents addressed to central government. There are the Wolverhampton Investment Plan (Towns Fund), the bid to the Future High Street Fund programme, and – at the regional level – the West Midlands Combined Authority-wide 'Recharge the West Midlands' investment case to government.

An important part of the latter document is the dedicated focus on green manufacturing jobs. Particularly important here is the focus of fuel poverty reduction through retrofitting. Such an approach should be commended and – if at all feasible – progressed by the Council even in the absence of government support.

Such a scheme can be designed to ensure support, training and jobs for local people who are furthest from the labour market, making an immediate, discernible impact on the lives and livelihoods of local people whilst also working towards the green transition.

The Towns Fund submission document provides important contextual information as to the impact of Covid-19 on Wolverhampton's economy, as well as many of the long-running issues which had affected the area prior to the onset of the pandemic.

With lower earnings, wages, and productivity than the UK average, higher unemployment, and deprivation deepening as a result of Coronavirus, it is vital that the Council's plans are heavily targeted and turn the dial locally. To this end, it is encouraging once again to see references to clean growth.

## Climate

Wolverhampton has shown itself in recent years to be ahead of the curve in responding to the climate crisis. In July 2019, it became the first local authority in the Black Country to declare a Climate Emergency – this declaration was coupled with commitments to serious and consequential changes in policy and practice.

These range from ensuring all council activities are net carbon zero in 2028, to lobbying for greater powers to pursue a green transition. Several key milestones have already been reached: 2019 saw the appointment of a Member Champion for Climate Change, as well as all council buildings and street lighting becoming powered by renewable energy.



This climate focus is found throughout other, more recent documents – not least the ‘Relighting Our City’ economic recovery plan. It is important that this work takes its rightful role as key to the economic reform needed to ensure Wolverhampton builds back better.

## Procurement

A key part of Community Wealth Building strategies – indeed, one of the five pillars underpinning this approach – is a progressive approach to procurement. Even more pressing following the impact of coronavirus is ensuring the spend of local authorities – and other key anchor institutions in a place – is laser-targeted on ensuring that maximum social value is obtained, whilst also, where possible, helping support and nurture dense networks of local supply.

Wolverhampton is well-placed to undertake this work at the strategic level. The city-wide procurement charter – accepted by the city board – seeks to instil a progressive approach to procurement across the operations of the council and key local partners.

There are five key objectives within the Charter:

1. Develop and grow a skilled workforce;
2. Encourage healthy lifestyles and independence;
3. Support more people to be active in their communities;
4. Support business to develop and grow;
5. Support the reduction of the carbon footprint

All of these are – if anything – *even more* relevant since the onset of the coronavirus crisis. As such the area is still in the ‘rescue’ phase. However, there is still a need to ensure maximum social value from spending by City of Wolverhampton Council. Likewise, the crisis has shown tentative first steps have been made with some partners. Yet this agenda needs an investment of time and capacity to develop, and a maximising of collaboration where possible.

## Practice

We have found significant ongoing practice around regeneration and development, with a major pipeline of construction projects, which appears to have held up well. This is combined with a strong city-wide programme, Wolves @ Work, which seeks to support local people into skills and employment opportunities and is a very strong example of place-based working which had developed pre-Covid-19.

### Construction pipeline

Wolverhampton Council are involved in several regeneration and development projects across multiple different use-classes, including residential, commercial, transport, education, culture/leisure and public realm. Whilst some have secured funding from the council, others are joint ventures with other organisations, part-funded by the council to leverage additional external investment, whilst some are proposals drafted and submitted to request central government funding.



Selected projects of note include:

- Part of the University of Wolverhampton's ongoing £100million Springfield Campus development, the National Brownfield Institute (NBI) aims to research and develop new construction methods and ways of regenerating contaminated land. The Institute is a key element of the city's aim to cement its position as a leader in sustainable construction, circular economy and brownfield development.<sup>18</sup> In this regard, the recent government action on reforms to planning regulations and the 'Build Build Build' agenda are positive developments to feed into the city's strategic industrial focus.
- The (provisional) succession submission of a £15m bid to the Government's Future High Street Fund to progress the transformation of the city centre, creating public spaces and improving walking and cycling links and facilities.<sup>19</sup> The Council is also waiting to hear the outcome of the £48m Towns Fund proposal it submitted, which focuses not just on the city centre but also within projects in and around Bilston Market and Wednesfield Market and their High Streets, as well as canal towpath development.<sup>20</sup>
- Submission of plans for the construction of more than 50 new council homes in the Heath Town estate, part of a wider transformation of the area.<sup>21</sup> Other planned new council homes include up to 60 on small unused sites across the city as part of an £8 million scheme.<sup>22</sup>
- The advancement of the 'Bilston Urban Village' project of housing, offices, industrial uses, a new school and other amenities on 17 acres of land, following investment by the council, Homes England, and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership and land remediation work.<sup>23</sup>
- The renovation of the iconic entertainment venue Civic Halls, which had to be suspended as part of the pandemic lockdown.<sup>24</sup>
- Wolverhampton Interchange, a state-of-the-art transport interchange in Wolverhampton City Centre, providing a new hub for rail, tram and bus services, as well as 'i9', a mixed-use commercial development offering retail outlets, leisure facilities and public space.<sup>25</sup>

Covid-19 cost pressures are likely to have an impact across the council's entire capital programme, including projects that are planned for future years. Individual

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.blackcountrylep.co.uk/news/boost-for-wolverhamptons-national-brownfield-institute/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/politics/2020/12/26/50m-funding-announced-for-high-streets-across-black-country-and-staffordshire/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/news/board-set-submit-ps48-million-towns-fund-bid>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/local-hubs/wolverhampton/heath-town/2020/07/22/plans-for-next-phase-of-wolverhampton-estate-transformation-lodged/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/local-hubs/wolverhampton/2020/06/18/almost-60-homes-to-be-built-as-part-of-8-million-project-in-wolverhampton/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/property/2020/09/04/critical-strip-of-wolverhampton-land-poised-for-transformation-in-bid-to-create-300-jobs/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/black-country/wolverhampton-civic-halls-381m-refurbishment-18210434>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/local-hubs/wolverhampton/2020/06/11/building-work-about-to-begin-on-i9-office-development-in-wolverhampton/>

business cases are being assessed to determine the ongoing impact but council leaders are determined to maintain momentum. In June, Cabinet Resources proposed an emergency financial support package, funded through external borrowing, to ensure major projects get back on track and are “delivered in a timely and cost-effective way” while council leaders continue to lobby Government for further funding to cover cost pressures.<sup>26</sup>

## Wolves @ Work

The City of Wolverhampton Council and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) employment programme has now helped, as of February 2020, more than 5,000 local people into work since March 2017.

Around 45 per cent of those gaining employment are aged 18 to 29. More than 600 businesses have also pledged their support to Wolves @ Work and, as well as providing employment opportunities, have welcomed 800 people into Sector Based Work Academies, and 397 into work experience. Wolves @ Work also offers support to care leavers, former military personnel and ex-offenders.<sup>27</sup> Officers were worried that the progress that had been made with this scheme would not be maintained if the funding runs out, as expected, next year.

The work of both Wolves @ Work and Wolves WorkBox, as well as the Council’s work on the apprenticeship agenda, should both seek to dovetail with the commitments to future-proof Wolverhampton’s economy. A key part of the future-proofing must be working within environmental limits.

## Place-based working

Prior to the pandemic a Public Health led Task and Finish Group was established, bringing together stakeholders from the council, police, voluntary and housing sector, co-ordinating work around a community. This multi-agency approach, deployed within the context of the pandemic, has enabled a lot of good practice to occur.

For example, data sharing restrictions between LA and Health were lifted for the defined purpose to support those most vulnerable, targeting residents identified as ‘clinically vulnerable’ to enable the support, including essential provision, guidance and wrap around support.

This approach, if embedded across the city, has the potential to reduce wider impacts and health inequalities linked to, and amplified by, Covid-19. The sharing of intelligence, learning and system connections will enable evidence-based

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/westmidlands/news/2041628-council-set-to-borrow-money-to-kick-start-regeneration-schemes>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.blackcountrylep.co.uk/news/wolves-at-work-programme-celebrates-extension/>

interventions with partners (CCG, STP's, NHS, Police, VCS) whilst expanding out networks of stakeholders.

If the City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to helping those furthest from the labour market, it is critical they ensure sufficient attention is dedicated to drawing the lines between the current / committed capital projects (and the initiatives within them, such as the Brownfield Institute), employment initiatives such as Wolves @ Work and scaling up the positive multi-agency approach of the place-based working pilot.

### Moving forwards

While there is significant uncertainty about the wider global and national economy as we move through this global pandemic, we would propose placing a greater focus on drawing together the 3 strands of activity as identified above. How do we draw stronger lines between the development pipeline that is committed, securing a robust skills and employment support infrastructure in its broadest sense? One which brings in a wider range of partners on a secured financial footing and one which is targeted at those areas of greatest need, using micro level insight and intelligence gathered from a reframing of relationships with the wider citizenry of Wolverhampton through the Covid-19 pandemic.

# 3. Relighting Our City 'together'

By applying Community Wealth Building principles to Wolverhampton's local context, we have developed an approach to Relighting Our City 'together' (summarised in Figure 1). This is an approach which is rooted in the collaboration of the major institutions of the city as a fundamental driver of an inclusive economy.

We have proposed an approach which aims to start to reorganise and control the local economy so that wealth is not extracted but broadly held and generative, with local roots, where income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being.

CLES believes that Community Wealth Building should be made central to the narrative and actions related to improving the local economy of Wolverhampton and, by extension, the lives and fortunes of Wulfrunians. Through Community Wealth Building we can build a democratic, social and economic movement, which seeks to provide resilience where there is risk, local economic security where there is precarity and enables a fair and just transition to a low carbon economy.

Figure 1 summarises the approach, driven by the creation of the Wolves Anchor network to deliver on a commitment to intentionally apply an institution's place-based economic power and human capital, in partnership with the local community, for the long-term wellbeing and mutual benefit of both.

Figure 1: Relighting Our City 'together'



## Wolves Anchor Network

The City of Wolverhampton Council, City of Wolverhampton College, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton Homes and The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust have come together to form the Wolves Anchor Network.

It has been proposed that the anchor network will be established with a guiding and governing body with representatives from each institution. This board will meet on a quarterly basis during 2021, with a rotating chair nominated from within the group. We would recommend a rotating chair to ensure that the network is collaboratively owned, with each institution having an opportunity to shape and influence its agenda.

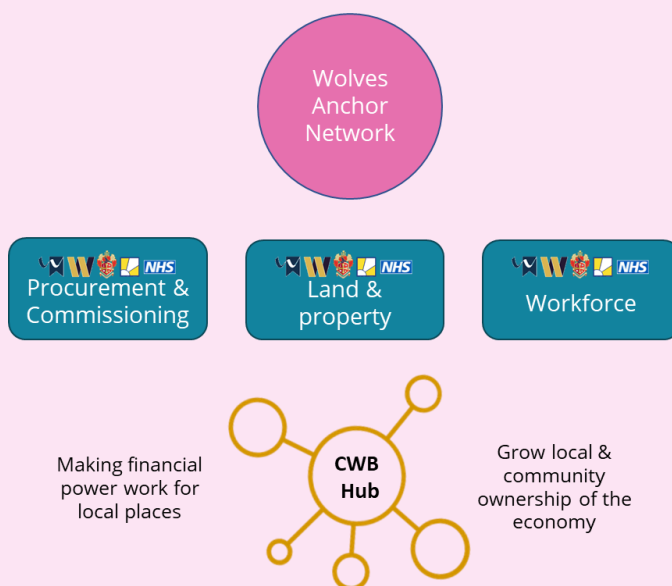
Underneath the Wolves Anchor Network, we have proposed 3 working groups:

- Procurement & Commissioning
- Land & Property
- Workforce

Each institution has been tasked to nominate up to 2 members of staff to sit on these working groups. We would expect departmental heads or assistant heads to join these groups to allow for an embedding of behaviour change throughout the institutions. CLES has proposed an initial engagement and training session for all nominated members, prior to the establishment of the working groups.

CLES has proposed the development of a Community Wealth Building Hub, which feeds from the Wolves Anchor Network and its working groups, collating knowledge, information and resources that can support the growth of local and community ownership of the economy (see following section for more details).

Figure 2: Proposed Wolves Anchor Network structure





**Preston**  
City Council

## Preston Procurement Practitioners Group

Preston City Council facilitates and leads on the Preston Procurement Practitioners' Group – a voluntary group of public sector anchor institutions, whose aim is to work towards economic development within Preston and its surrounding area.

The group measure local spend as a means of identifying and reducing barriers to SME and micro-organisations.

Preston Procurement Practitioners Group seeks to gain maximum value from procurement through the inclusion of economic, environmental and social value considerations in contract opportunities, with consideration of local economic impact and sustainability built into the pre-procurement stages, so that tenders are designed in a way that will produce the greatest local outcomes.

Preston Procurement Practitioners' Group have removed barriers to doing business with the anchor institutions and have proactively developed a deep understanding of the local market. The group identify forward spending wherever possible, using this data to inform pre-market engagement and supplier planning.

## Statement of intent (draft)

The first informal meeting of the Wolves Anchor Network (Dec 2020), CLES proposed a draft text which has been shared with the individual institutions for further comment. We have presented the draft statement of intent below in Figure 3, and this will be further refined in collaboration with the members of the Wolves Anchor Network.

### Figure 3: Statement of intent (draft)

We, the major institutions of Wolverhampton intend to:

- Make a long-term commitment to building community wealth in Wolverhampton
- To work collaboratively to develop behaviours and practices that support local people and the local economy wherever possible
- To leverage our institutional power to support a fair and just transition to a low carbon economy
- To work in partnership with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) and the private sector to build a more resilient local economy.

## Building an entrepreneurial & generative economy

An 'Enterprising City' is a key ambition of the City of Wolverhampton Strategic Economic Plan Framework and growing Wolverhampton's businesses base and improving job density is a key area of focus.

Large employers in high value manufacturing industries serve as a ballast for the economy, and they have long dominated the industrial and economic strategy of Wolverhampton, shaping and influencing investment for their sites e.g., road infrastructure. However, 99.5% of businesses in Wolverhampton are SME's, with 87.3% of businesses employing less than 10 people and considered as micro enterprises. SMEs account for three fifths of employment and around half of turnover in the UK private sector, so an economic strategy which focus' on providing a supportive environment for SME's will likely benefit more people.

### Anchor support for the local economy

We would recommend investing in building the intelligence around anchor spending to support the local economy. There is significant opportunity, working with key anchor institutions from across the city and the wider sub region, to develop a collective understanding of where anchor spending (procurement and commissioning) can support, develop and drive growth in local supply chains.

The five initial members of the Wolves Anchor Network have an annual spend of circa £835m a year.<sup>28</sup> Through the Wolves Anchor Network we can develop an intent to understand, shape and direct this spending so that it produces greater local economic, social and environmental benefit. The City of Wolverhampton has done some good work around the social value agenda, working collaboratively the Wolves Anchor Network it can develop a joint progressive procurement approach which builds wealth locally.

### Spend analysis - training/support

As part of the Procurement & Commissioning working group of the Wolves Anchor Network, we propose that each institution develops a spend analysis using a consistent approach. In essence, this would involve an examination of supplier spend for a fixed period (e.g., previous financial year) with an agreed threshold (e.g. contracts valued over £X, or the top X suppliers by value). A spend analysis would then examine each element of spend in terms of the ability to influence it (e.g., it may be delivered through a procurement framework which is fixed, or may be highly specialised) and the location of the firm which delivered the service/supplies/goods. Using postcode data and an analysis of firm branches/headquarters, we can develop an understanding of how much influenceable spend was spent within Wolverhampton, the Black Country/West

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<sup>28</sup> City of Wolverhampton budget is circa £200m. The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust has an operating budget of £374m. Wolverhampton Homes has an annual budget of circa £50m, Wolverhampton University £180m and City of Wolverhampton College circa £30m.



Midlands and further afield. This then serves as a baseline upon which progress can be measured.

CLES have proposed as part of the action plan to provide spend analysis training<sup>29</sup> and support to the members of the Procurement & Commissioning working group and would work with each institution to develop an individual and then collective spend analysis. This will require each institution to buy into the process, allocate staff time to its development and agree on sharing the data with the working group and Wolves Anchor Network.

### Supply chain mapping

Alongside the spend analysis, we have proposed developing a detailed mapping of the local firm base. This will draw together a range of public databases (e.g., Companies House, FCA Register, Charities Commission) with any locally held databases on the business base of Wolverhampton. This will draw together all available intelligence on the local firm base, exploring how this has changed over time and what impact Covid-19 may have had on business survival.

### Develop a gap analysis

Bringing together the spend analysis with the supply chain mapping will allow the development of a gap analysis. Essentially, this is an exploration of the areas of spend that are currently being directed outside of Wolverhampton and the Black Country/West Midlands and a detailing of either the presence of, or lack of, firms locally that may be able to supply the same needs. This intelligence can then be fed into a proactive business support landscape and the proposed Community Wealth Building Hub, to shape business engagement and business support programmes that can generate greater community wealth.

### Procurement & commissioning pipeline

Having shared existing/current spend details and developed a collective spend analysis, we would then advocate for the development of a shared procurement and commissioning pipeline. This would bring together an advance understanding of where each anchor institution is planning to spend in the coming years. This may look forward on differing timescales for differing areas of spend (e.g., 12-24 months for goods, 12-48 months for services, and up to 120 months on infrastructure). This collective procurement & commissioning pipeline should then be scrutinised by the Procurement & Commissioning working group alongside the findings of the collective spend analysis, supply chain mapping and gap analysis to influence procurement design. There will likely be areas for joint procurement and commissioning which can be both more efficient for the anchor institution and create new markets by presenting a new demand, but more significantly it provides

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<sup>29</sup> A series of tried and tested Excel based tools will be provided to each institution, which can then be used by future Anchors that join the network, and can also be used by private sector firms who may commit to localising supply chains.

an opportunity to re-design approaches to procurement and commissioning so that they better reflect the ability of the local supply chain to respond.

## Develop a Community Wealth Building Hub

Making an entrepreneurial and generative economy a key economic development principle will drive improved local economic, social and environmental outcomes and build community wealth. However, an eco-system of financial, technical and social support will be critical to the growth of local generative organisations.

A Community Wealth Building Hub can bring together all forms of traditional business support and VCSE sector support in Wolverhampton with the knowledge and intelligence of the Wolves Anchor Network to translate anchor power and influence into local economic opportunity, which is generative and builds community wealth in places where it is most needed.

A Community Wealth Building Hub would be able to leverage intelligence from the procurement and commissioning, public sector assets and workforce working groups to fix an information gap within the existing supply chain where it exists and provide intelligence to support the growth and development of new enterprise to fill in local gaps and supply emerging markets.

A Community Wealth Building Hub can share market intelligence both ways and can feedback into the Wolves Anchor Network to shape and influence behaviours and practices so that the local economy benefits to the maximum possible (e.g., through reshaping procurement and commissioning, public sector asset policy and workforce programmes). A Community Wealth Building Hub can support local firms to become fit to supply, and with intelligence from spend analysis, supply chain mapping and gap analysis, can develop programmes of support which are relevant and accessible to local firms.

The 'hub' may bring together knowledge and understanding of funding streams, grants and innovative financing models to support local business including new generative organisations in the city, making financial power work for local places.

A Community Wealth Building Hub would be driven by the strategic priorities of the Wolves Anchor Network and would work across thematic areas, connecting foundational, reform and growth sectors to skills support and training, e.g., supporting the creative sector with business skills or growth sectors with digital skills, or skills to support to transition to new business models in the green economy.

A 'hub' model can sit between the Wolves Anchor Network, the established business support landscape, the VCSE sector and place-based working to develop an approach which grows local and community ownership of the economy, with an emphasis on delivering outcomes for those people and places that are excluded from opportunity.

A Community Wealth Building Hub may be developed as a 'hub and spoke' model, developing a physical presence utilising public sector assets, such as existing

Council assets (libraries and community centres) but also NHS, University and College assets to deliver activity, building on existing place-based initiatives. Working in close partnership with the VCSE, a role can be carved out to deliver information and guidance through a wide range of community owned and controlled spaces, strengthening relationships and building trust with Social Enterprise Wolverhampton and Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council for example.

A Community Wealth Building Hub once developed, can start to engage with key strategic businesses in the city with a focus on advancing social value, strengthening local supply chains and developing the local workforce in the wider private sector, and can connect to processes of embedding social value across the city (see following section).

#### Figure 4: Generative businesses

“Generative” businesses create and share their wealth broadly between owners, workers and consumers, while increasing local multipliers as wealth flows through to local people and places. Worker-owned businesses, community organisations, social enterprises and locally rooted SMEs ensure local social and economic value is maximised. This is in contrast with those ownership models which are structured to deliver shareholder value as a priority.

The non-profit sector accounts for 4.4% of employment from 2.8% of the business base across Wolverhampton. A strategic intent to grow this sector can forge a more inclusive economy and deliver greater social value and social outcomes for all. Utilising intelligence on public sector spending can support strategies to grow this sector, especially in more foundational economy sectors such as food, care, security.

#### Mapping of business support

In developing a Community Wealth Building Hub, we would recommend undertaking a detailed mapping of the existing business support landscape in Wolverhampton. A detailed stakeholder mapping exercise, resource mapping (e.g., dedicated posts/advisors), mapping of the business support programmes/offer (from regional to sub regional to local) and a mapping of the associated funding streams and their longevity (e.g. EU funding), will highlight what business support looks like in Wolverhampton. This would need to cover the whole spectrum of business support from strategic sectors to start up social businesses.

A review of existing contracts and contract monitoring with the Black Country Growth Hub and West Midlands Growth Company would allow an exploration of the extent to which business support aligns with emerging priority sectors (e.g., foundational, reform, growth) and thematic areas (green transition, health & wellbeing economy, cultural and creative city).

#### Engagement with business support providers

Having developed a comprehensive map of the business support landscape, we would recommend engaging with the key stakeholders engaged in the

management and delivery of these services, looking to develop a more detailed understanding of the offer in place on the ground, the challenges faced in delivery in the current climate and the opportunities to address Community Wealth Building as an agenda and support the growth of a more entrepreneurial and generative economy.

Stakeholder engagement should be undertaken with key partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and with those engaged in the delivery of business support programmes and activity to understand where they believe the Council add most value through its business support function.

### Embedding business support in the Anchor Network/working groups

As part of a reshaping of business support it would be of value to have a direct connection to the Wolves Anchor network and its working groups, and while we have not developed a detailed mechanism for a Community Wealth Building Hub in Wolverhampton, this may involve key members of business support staff (e.g. Black Country Growth Hub, Social Enterprise Wolverhampton), VCSE infrastructure leads (e.g. Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council) and individuals from key business representative organisations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, FSB) engaging with the Wolves Anchor Network and its working groups directly as members.

## Embedding social value in the city

The Wolves Anchor Network has an opportunity in collaboration to harmonise its approach to social value, advance the agenda quicker in institutions that may have been lagging and present a unified message to the market about what is expected of those firms that benefit from public spending in Wolverhampton. The Wolves Anchor Network can set a platform from which it can engage with the wider private sector, to influence their own business behaviours and grow community wealth in Wolverhampton.

### Share existing Social Value practice

In much the same way that we have proposed that the Procurement & Commissioning working group share existing data on patterns of spending, we would recommend a similar task around social value, with each institution sharing its approach, its current practice and its aspirations to develop its own social value agendas.

### Collate & map existing approaches

We would recommend a collation and mapping of the processes used, the indicators employed and the methods used to measure social value across each institution, prior to the design and implementation of a shared approach. This would allow for the development of an approach which limits the barriers to implementation.

### Engage VCSE & private sector to co-produce

We would recommend co-producing a collective approach to social value in Wolverhampton with both the VCSE sector and the private sector. A strong and unified approach to social value has the potential to build stronger relationships locally between the public, private and third sectors, so that all three work together to realise benefits for the local economy.

The VCSE sector could be engaged as a valuable partner in the co-ordination and delivery of social value, building trust with the sector and providing it with an important role to play. Designing an approach with the private sector would allow the shaping of an approach with which they can engage and support and may even be able to adopt within their own practice.

A model could be developed where suppliers to the public sector in Wolverhampton are encouraged to work with the VCSE in developing their social value submission, which would lead to socially valuable, social value, targeted at areas of highest need. In this model you might end up with an IT firm delivering community-based training or helping to build back office systems rather than painting the community centre, or business consultants helping to develop business plans for community owned enterprises rather than volunteering on litter picks. While the displaced activity of course has value, arguably, drawing on firms' expertise has greater value. What you also get in this model is a partnership, where

they are held to account by a VCSE partner and an instant monitoring and reporting mechanism, which can highlight and celebrate the socially responsible businesses operating with public funds in Wolverhampton.

### A shared social value framework

A shared social value framework should be developed in a way that it can be adopted by any future anchor institutions that join the Wolves Anchor Network. It should have a clear set of outcomes and outcome measures with methods for monitoring and reporting these as part of any contract management processes. This would require the buy in of the anchor institutions, to commit to embed the framework within their working practices and to report back annually on the social value delivered.

### Develop a Social Value pledge

As a public statement of a commitment, the Wolves Anchor Network members may make a public pledge to deliver greater value for local people by adopting Community Wealth Building principles and using their power and influence over public spending, public assets and employment in public institutions to deliver more for local people. A joint, public commitment to delivering community wealth would serve as a powerful message to the wider world, setting out the role that residents and particularly local businesses can play in joining together to support Wolverhampton's recovery from the impacts of Covid-19, and build a more inclusive economy as we embark on a fair and just transition to a low carbon economy.

The relaunch of Wolverhampton Business champions, who represent the city's leading strategic businesses and act as ambassadors for the city and its businesses, provides an opportunity to explore the purchasing behaviour, supply chain influence and potential social value via the embedding of community wealth building principles.

We would envisage this including a significant communications element with the wider public and could connect with our proposed refresh of the Future Generations document, the development of a Health & Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan and the development of a Creative Improvement District. On the following pages we have included 2 case studies of similar public facing pledges or 'deals' with an example from the Salford Social Value Alliance and Wigan Council's Wigan Deal, which has Community Wealth Building principles embedded at its heart.

**10%**  
**BETTER**  
in Salford

## Salford 10% better

### Salford Social Value Alliance

In 2017 Salford's Social Value Alliance launched a campaign with the aim of making the city '10%' better by encouraging businesses to commit to making "small changes that will make a difference".

The campaign was initiated to improve wellbeing and the quality of life of people who live in the city. This is done through involving private sector businesses, public sector organisations, voluntary and community groups and social enterprises. All sectors are invited to consider the social value they bring to the city and to make a pledge to do 10 per cent more across 11 specific outcomes which span social, environmental and economic priority areas:

- For people: building community spirit (increased community strength and resilience)
- For the planet: improve environmental sustainability (improved impact of the local environment on people's wellbeing)
- For prosperity: increase local economic benefit (increased number of quality employment opportunities and reduced poverty for local citizens)<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.salford.gov.uk/your-council/social-value-in-salford/>

## Wigan Deal

### Wigan Council

As a result of austerity Wigan Council had to deal with substantial budget cuts and devise new ways to continue providing services and serving the community. As a result, Wigan Council created The Deal, which aimed to eliminate waste from its budget and reduce demand for services while improving the lives of citizens.

At its core, The Deal centres on a “new social relationship” between the council and local community and working with CLES they have embedded the principles of Community Wealth Building at the heart of the deal. Initially the council’s role in The Deal involved its pledge to freeze council tax and foster the development of community relationships, while encouraging residents to get actively involved in their local communities by recycling more, reporting local maintenance issues such as graffiti and illegal dumping, and volunteering in local groups. It has grown leaps and bounds from this initial reforming of the relationship between citizen and state, to focus much more on collectively building a resilient local economy.

As a result of the deal, Wigan Council has reduced its costs, improved services, frozen council tax, and improved health outcomes for its citizens.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> For more information see <https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/case-study/the-wigan-deal/>



## A leader in green transition

The City of Wolverhampton Council as an institution has an ambition to be carbon neutral by 2028, with a Wolverhampton wide target of 2041 for the city to reach net carbon zero. In addressing this climate ambition, exploring the areas that contribute the most to emissions, shows that the building stock in Wolverhampton is responsible for 832 tCO<sub>2</sub><sup>32</sup>, equal to 65% of total emissions. Wolverhampton's current Climate Commitment<sup>33</sup> does not however have significantly well-developed commitments to address building stock, the largest contributor to carbon.

Wolverhampton also has a very strong development and construction pipeline, so there will be significant construction in the coming years. While this aligns well with current central government emphasis on capital spending, boosted by the presence of key university assets and an extensive set of local SME construction firms, new construction and the retrofit of existing buildings must urgently adopt environmentally friendly methods and processes of construction and refurbishment, and adopt new technologies to support a reduction in emissions from the building stock.

Therefore, in Relighting Our City "together" where Wolverhampton commits to maximising the potential of the green economy, close attention needs to be paid to the building stock. A transition to a low carbon economy can provide opportunities for local employment and enterprise, not only for construction firms but also for businesses offering the technologies, materials and services required to green the new and existing building stock.

### Construction workforce/SME's

In Wolverhampton and across the West Midlands demand for construction employment is high.<sup>34</sup> Within Wolverhampton 57% of the workforce is within skilled trades and operative occupations, while the other 43% are within managerial, professional and office-based occupations which has grown quite significantly in recent years.

The construction workforce in Wolverhampton has been in something of a transition, with older workers moving out of the industry being replaced by a younger workforce. Workers aged 25-49 now account for 73% of the workforce, up from 50% in 2017/18. The number of young entrants to the sector had been stable for some time, however it has notably been falling in recent years.

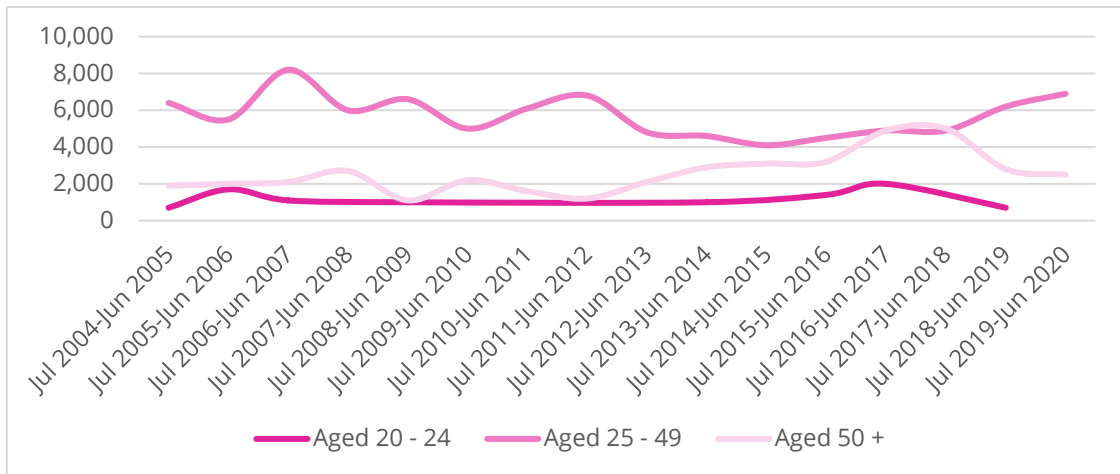
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<sup>32</sup> Domestic buildings (electricity and heating): 451 tCO<sub>2</sub>, Other buildings (electricity and heating): 381 tCO<sub>2</sub>. [https://consultation.wolverhampton.gov.uk/cwc/climate-emergency-consultation/user\\_uploads/future-generations---our-climate-commitment\\_.pdf](https://consultation.wolverhampton.gov.uk/cwc/climate-emergency-consultation/user_uploads/future-generations---our-climate-commitment_.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

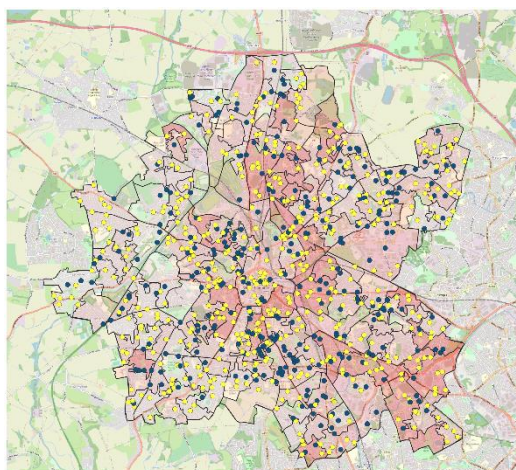
<sup>34</sup> CITB (2018) Construction skills gap analysis for the West Midlands Combined Authority area, CITB, <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/2235/construction-skills-gap-analysis.pdf>

Figure 5: Construction employment by age in Wolverhampton<sup>35</sup>



Wolverhampton had 1,379 construction firms registered at Companies House in November 2020, which was equal to 10% of all firms on the register. According to ONS, 930 of these were SME's and the vast majority (870) employed less than 10 people and are considered micro enterprises. Looking at the spatial distribution of the construction industry (see figure 6), we can see that 65% of these firms are based within LSOA's that fall within the 20% most deprived nationally (IMD2019). Examining construction firms by their stated Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes, we can see that there is a particular strength in the base of firms that are required for the retrofit industry. With 898 firms operating in 'retrofit' sectors (marked in yellow on the map below), and 63% of these operating from deprived communities, there would appear to be a clear opportunity for the green transition to support the growth of these local firms, supporting local employment and increased wealth circulating within the local economy.

Figure 6: Wolverhampton construction SME's



<sup>35</sup> Annual population survey - workplace analysis

## Establish/develop a green transition board/ repurpose existing board

The emerging National Brownfield Institute (NBI) will lay the foundation for the delivery of a National Centre for Sustainable Construction and Circular Economy (NCSCCE), which will focus on sustainability and the climate change emergency. We would suggest that these developments should spur the formation of a city-wide green transition board which includes representation from the members of the Wolves Anchor Network, but also as part of the NBI's proposed engagement work, it connects with business representative organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce/FSB, engages with schools/wider colleges from across Wolverhampton, and works with employment & skills programme leads e.g., Wolves @ Work.

An engagement plan will be critical to developing a coherent and city-wide approach to a fair and just green transition, by working together and building a detailed understanding of the local assets that can be brought together to deliver a green transition that supports the building of community wealth.

## Green construction

The NBI offers the potential to develop new construction methods and will research and develop new ways of regenerating contaminated land. CITB (2018) analysis of the construction sector highlighted opportunities to modernise construction and for the West Midlands to start to encourage and adopt new technologies and new practices like off-site and modular construction to help meet demand. The city has a rich manufacturing heritage and can seek to blend these strengths with developments in modular construction.

The NBI will be a world-class institute that provides the facility to develop advanced skills, technologies and methodologies through innovation and partnership with the construction industry. This is where Wolverhampton needs to make this national asset work for the local economy. Wolverhampton's SME's need to have clear path to access and benefit from this resource on their doorstep.

Wolverhampton has a number of 'green' buildings, with the councils Passivhaus School's programme an excellent example. However, an initial analysis (see Figure 7) of the main firms contracted in the delivery of these green building projects suggests none are based in Wolverhampton. How much this reflects the supplier base in Wolverhampton and what steps can be taken to build this expertise locally would be key questions for the green transition board.

## Business engagement mapping/strategy

The local construction sector does not appear to have a local supporting infrastructure. The Black Country Chamber of Commerce and the NBI would be well placed to coordinate business engagement and develop an understanding of the local SME base and their support and development needs in moving towards greener methods of construction. This business outreach would be able to establish the types of specialised firms that are lacking in Wolverhampton, with this intelligence feeding wider strategy around business growth.

Figure 7: Passivhaus buildings in Wolverhampton

Project	Year	Client	Architect	Mechanical & electrical consultant	Energy consultant	Structural engineer	Consultant	Contractor
Wilkinson Primary School		Wolverhampton City Council	Architype					Thomas Vale Construction (Now Bouygues UK)
Bushbury Hill Primary School	2011	Wolverhampton City Council	Architype	E3 Consulting	Elemental Solutions (Nick Grant & Alan Clarke)			Thomas Vale Construction (Now Bouygues UK)
Oakmeadow Primary School	2011	Wolverhampton City Council	Architype	Elemental Solutions (Nick Grant), E3 Consulting			Ion Acoustics	Thomas Vale Construction (Now Bouygues UK)
Wilkinson Primary School		Wolverhampton City Council	Architype	E3 Consulting Engineers	Elemental Solutions	Price & Myers	WARM: Low Energy Building Practice	Thomas Vale Construction (Now Bouygues UK)

- Architype – London, Hereford & Edinburgh, <https://www.architype.co.uk/>
- E3 Consulting Engineers – Bath, <http://e3ce.com/>
- Elemental Solutions - Herefordshire, <https://www.elementalsolutions.co.uk/>
- Price & Myers – London, Nottingham & Oxford, <https://www.pricemyers.com/about-us/people>
- Ion Acoustics – Bristol, <https://www.ionacoustics.co.uk/>
- WARM: Low Energy Building Practice – Plymouth, <https://www.peterwarm.co.uk/>
- Thomas Vale Construction (Now Bouygues UK) – French owned, head office in Birmingham, <http://www.thomasvale.com/>

## Retrofit 'industry'

Domestic buildings in Wolverhampton (electricity and heating) contribute 451 tCO<sub>2</sub> (35%), while non-domestic buildings (electricity and heating) contribute 381 tCO<sub>2</sub> (30%). The public sector in Wolverhampton is already taking a leadership role, but collectively how can building retrofit serve as an opportunity to build wealth locally and support those furthest from the labour market into sustainable, well paid jobs?

### Domestic buildings

Close to 22,000 houses are under local authority control, with a further 6,500 Housing Association properties across the city. Scaling up to a Black Country footprint, we have 72,000 local authority owned properties and 47,000 Housing Association properties. Not since the introduction of the Decent Homes Standard in 2000 have we had a significant and co-ordinated approach to stock upgrading, but with our climate commitments today, we need to address the emissions of this stock, supporting tenants and residents to lower their energy bills. The Decent Homes Standard no longer reflects present day concerns on energy efficiency (or safety).

The Charter for Social Housing Residents' white paper<sup>36</sup> indicates a review into the Decent Homes Standard to consider if it should be updated, including how it can better support the decarbonisation and energy efficiency of social homes. The government has committed to review the Decent Homes Standard by Autumn 2021 and if the evidence demonstrates a need, the government will consider the strategic, economic and management case for new criteria as a second stage of the review. This would suggest a new Standard could be expected by late 2022, however, given that time is so short, we should not be waiting for government standards before moving to develop a local retrofit industry that scale up quickly to meet our climate commitments.

### Non-domestic buildings

Wolverhampton City Council holds almost 2,000 physical assets covering over 32 acres of land. Among the list of council assets listed in the register are: 116 schools, 216 retail premises, 8 market buildings, 25 industrial sites, 16 libraries.

If we were to collate the asset registers of the major anchor institutions in the Wolves Anchor Network (Wolverhampton University, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, City of Wolverhampton College, Wolverhampton Homes) then this list would grow significantly. There are also a wide range of prominent public sector/quasi-public sector buildings in the city centre such as Wolverhampton Crown Court, Wolverhampton Magistrates Court, Wolverhampton Bus Station, Wolverhampton Civic Hall, Wolverhampton Youth Zone, West Midlands Police, Molineux House Jobcentre, which will likely require some level of retrofit to meet future energy standards.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper#chapter-6-to-have-a-good-quality-home-and-neighbourhood-to-live-in>

We know that with many of these old buildings it will not be viable to retrofit them to become carbon neutral, however with a collaborative approach to greening of public sector assets (and the production of green energy) we can offset some of these more difficult buildings. Willmott Dixon have been named preferred delivery partner to refurbish Wolverhampton's Civic Halls, with a £38m project to refurbish the iconic Grade II-listed building into a world-class venue. Willmott Dixon, based in Letchworth Garden City are one the UK's largest construction firms with interests around the world. You would expect the social value commitments of a refurbishment contract of this size to generate significant value for the local economy, where there are opportunities to support the local supply chain to invest, scale up and collaborate for future public sector refurbishment contracts.

### Building a Retrofit sector

Wolverhampton has 898 firms listed at Companies House within the SIC codes most closely connected with the retrofit of existing properties. 94% of these have less than 10 employees, and 64% are based in locations within the top 20% most deprived on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Supporting these firms to work collaboratively and develop a 'retrofit' offer to the market, combined with a committed pipeline of domestic and non-domestic building work can provide sufficient confidence to scale up operations to meet the local demand and employ local people to enable them to do that.

SIC Code	Description	Number of firms
41100	Development of building projects	275
41202	Construction of domestic buildings	154
43999	Other specialised construction activities n.e.c.	147
43210	Electrical installation	111
43220	Plumbing, heat and air-conditioning installation	77
43320	Joinery installation	32
43910	Roofing activities	28
43330	Floor and wall covering	23
43342	Glazing	21
43310	Plastering	17
43991	Scaffold erection	13
		<b>898</b>

A green transition board, through the NBI and NCSCCE if resourced properly, can build an effective partnership with the local 'retrofit' industry, working with board partners (e.g. school/colleges, business support, employment support, CWB Hub) to create a support programme that can enable these businesses to develop their offer to the market and grow, with a skills development and apprenticeship offer that can help build the local skills base required. Public sector anchors can seek to leverage financial support from the government through various current and future programmes and shape opportunities for local people in this sustainable growth industry.

*To hit targets, we need to be retrofitting 8 houses per day – Local key stakeholder*

## Community led retrofit – private homes

We know that if left to householders and small landlords to take individual decisions (even if they are helped by generous subsidies or tax breaks), the evidence is that progress is slow. Knowledge of green building makes it more likely that a householder will consider retrofitting, or that a tenant will encourage their landlord to retrofit or even undertake basic work themselves. Over the past few years, a number of community--led retrofit programmes<sup>37</sup> have developed, which start to address the majority of domestic properties that are in private ownership. Targeted at neighbourhoods using EPC data, it is possible to identify clusters of poor privately owned housing stock where schemes can be developed alongside the VCSE sector, starting to build knowledge around retrofit and address building energy performance. These programmes can work with local householders, local firms and the local college to support the (re)training of workers, especially those who have either been laid off post-Covid-19 or are from groups that are systematically disadvantaged from the labour market.

Working with VCSE partners (e.g. Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council and Social Enterprise Wolverhampton) and drawing on good practice examples (see People Powered Retrofit case study below), we can seek to find the energy within the local community to develop a locally owned and led approach to retrofitting private houses.

## Build market confidence

By harnessing the potential of the NBI and the NCSCCE, bringing together the collective power and influence of the Wolves Anchor Network and utilising the collective management of the public estate (and social housing over which it can influence refurbishment) with a deep understanding of the local supply chain, we can provide the right support to grow local firms and employ local people. The local supply chain will need to be provided with the confidence to invest and grow their businesses, and will only do so if they can see a strong and committed market.

On non-domestic buildings, the 'Procurement & Commissioning' & 'Land & Property' working groups of the Wolves Anchor Network should be tasked with developing a combined construction and retrofit ask of the market for the next 10 years. Sending such a clear signal to the market will provide confidence to invest.

We would suggest that on domestic property, by co-ordinating with Black Country partners an approach can be developed to pool budgets and support the growth of a local retrofit industry at scale around social housing, a scale which is viable for partners but also large enough for the supply chain to invest with confidence.

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<sup>37</sup> <https://carbon.coop/portfolio/people-powered-retrofit/>





# PEOPLE POWERED RETROFIT

## People Powered Retrofit

A partnership led by Carbon Co-op and URBED with funding from the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), 'People Powered Retrofit' is a householder-led approach to domestic energy efficiency retrofit in Greater Manchester.

Building on a retrofit track record, People Powered Retrofit is tackling many of the key barriers that homeowners face in commissioning work, including lack of appropriate contractors and concerns around the quality of works, taking a more localised approach to creating a market for energy efficiency.

The new end-to-end retrofit service being piloted includes advice, a My Home Energy Planner assessment and Retrofit Co-ordination to assist householders in procuring contractors and carrying out Quality Assurance.

People Powered Retrofit has established networks to support Greater Manchester-based contractors and consultants working in the energy efficiency sector.

The R&D phase research results were documented in a [People Powered Retrofit report](#), that was disseminated in print and online, receiving trade and local authority [press coverage](#). Carbon Co-op and URBED have [collaborated with CLES](#) to emphasise the Community Wealth Building aspects of the approach and the full service is now in operation in the Greater Manchester area with replication planned in a number of other areas of the UK.



## Green energy

The City of Wolverhampton Council has committed to purchase only renewable electricity for its estate and the Future Generations strategy sets out an objective to support the delivery of renewable energy facilities within the city and develop existing infrastructure to support an energy shift. The council is working with The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust to develop a solar farm that can power New Cross Hospital<sup>38</sup> and assist them in meeting their carbon reduction commitments.

There is huge potential to scale this type of activity up, and while there are not multiple old landfill sites to develop large scale solar farms, there are plenty of public/quasi-public buildings which could develop micro solar arrays to reduce local energy consumption from the grid.

### Green energy potential

Google's Environmental Insights Explorer<sup>39</sup> estimates a rooftop solar potential. With an estimated 3,440,000m<sup>2</sup> of roof top space, solar power could provide 434,000 MWh AC/yr. Google has identified 21 sites where roofs have solar potential in excess of 950kw.

Figure 8: Environmental Insights Explorer (Dunstall Hill Primary School)



<sup>38</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/local-hubs/wolverhampton/2020/03/04/solar-farm-plans-to-power-new-cross-hospital/>

<sup>39</sup> See [https://insights.sustainability.google/places/ChIJ\\_dclMtSACeRjgE4R5WgbVI](https://insights.sustainability.google/places/ChIJ_dclMtSACeRjgE4R5WgbVI)

## Develop Wolverhampton Energy Innovation Zone proposal

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is exploring how new Energy Innovation Zones (EIZs) could make energy costs cheaper for businesses and residents. EIZs will fast-track new clean energy technologies and pilot the smarter infrastructure necessary to give regional businesses a competitive edge. WMCA has unlocked grant funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to create a national template for EIZs – essentially writing the rulebook to allow communities to take greater control over their local energy system.

The philosophy is to be inclusive and offer any community the opportunity to nominate an area as an EIZ, provided it meets defined criteria such as willingness to accept innovative low carbon solutions and special regulatory oversight.  
West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy, p49

We would propose that the Wolves Anchor Network tasks the Land & Property working group to develop a collective proposal for an EIZ in Wolverhampton, which explores how a collective Wolves Anchor Network Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), utilising collective Wolves Anchor Network public assets<sup>40</sup> and an energy sleeving approach can provide locally produced green energy for the public sector.

A pool of patient capital could be established as an investment fund, which can provide loans to, or buy shares in, a locally owned energy enterprise which can be owned and run as a social business model to ensure profits are retained in the local economy and community wealth is built.

### Figure 9: Sleeved PPA

As a large organisation, a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is often the most accessible and effective way for an organisation to procure large amounts of renewable energy. In a sleeved PPA, an intermediary utility company handles the process.

The utility takes the (excess) energy directly from the renewable energy project (e.g. a public building) and “sleeves” it to the buyer (anchor institution) at its point of intake. If the purchased renewable energy is not enough to meet the buyer’s energy needs, the utility supply’s the additional power required from other green energy sources.

Working with VCSE partners (e.g. Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council and Social Enterprise Wolverhampton, Black Country Make CIC) and drawing on good practice examples (see Ovesco Sunny Schools case study below), a community owned and led vehicle to manage, operate and roll out a programme of micro solar arrays, utilising public sector assets could be developed. Established community energy groups such as Community Energy Birmingham, would be prepared to support and work with the local sector to support the growth of a local community energy sector.

<sup>40</sup> School buildings alone have 362,000 sqm of roof space.



## Sunny Solar Schools

### OVESCO

OVESCO Sunny Solar Schools is a not-for-profit community benefit society with 11 years of experience in developing community owned renewable energy in Sussex. The Sunny Solar Schools programme includes installing solar on schools, providing schools with educational monitoring screens which demonstrate how much energy the school generates and uses, using profits to provide educational experiences about renewable electricity generation at local schools.

OVESCO Sunny Solar Schools raises capital via community share offerings, with shares offered first to the local communities where the schools are located. Ovesco expect to be able to give investors a maximum of 4% interest pa on their investment, shares are redeemable and are expected to be repaid by the end of the 25 year term.<sup>41</sup> Any surplus income is placed in a community benefit fund to raise awareness of clean, renewable energy for schools and the local community.

The shares are a positive investment for many reasons as well as combating climate change and supporting a low carbon future. Every share purchased helps schools reduce their annual energy bills, removing 9 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per school per year; while also inspiring young people to be part of a sustainable future.

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<sup>41</sup> <https://transitiontownlewes.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/OVESCO-A5-Flyer-June-2019.pdf>

## Green skills plan

Greening of the building sector is often held back by skills shortages, so we would recommend a skills-led plan to drive forward the green transition. Green building, retrofit and green energy brings new construction techniques, and although most roles can still be filled by skilled workers from existing occupations, many workers require an upgrade in their skills. Electricians, for example, are likely to need to be able to install and wire in photovoltaic solar panels.

Also, many of the necessary skills are located outside the building construction sector and rely on other key parts of the value chain, such as those businesses engaged in the production and distribution of building products and materials. The new occupation of 'energy efficiency analyst' for example, something the NBI would very much be able to support the development of, with its visualisation and modelling tools is emerging, with an understanding of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, solar thermal and photovoltaic technologies, and the energy efficiency characteristics of materials.

The green transition will place a high demand on several highly skilled jobs which require a significant length of training before candidates become qualified. Architects, surveyors and civil engineers require higher level qualifications plus professional accreditation, so the effect of action now will only be felt in five to ten years' time.

A green skills plan developed by a green transition board, rooted in the NBI and the NCSCCE and bringing together the key educational institutions from across the city<sup>42</sup> can ensure the pipeline demand for green construction skills provides opportunities for local people; providing pathways at all ages, levels and across the wide diversity of roles required to support the decarbonisation of the building stock. The West Midlands construction skills taskforce has been critiqued for not being focused on high level skills, and while many local institutions offer built environment courses, apprenticeships and post 16 courses, the degree to which they are focused on low carbon expertise needs to be explored.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering at the University of Wolverhampton is home to the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, which offers a number of Built Environment courses at undergraduate and post graduate level. The University of Wolverhampton offers Chartered Surveyor, Building Control and Architectural Assistant Surveying Degree Apprenticeships.

A training centre that aims to help students follow a career path in the construction industry has launched in Wolverhampton. The plant training facility, based at City of Wolverhampton College's Wellington Road campus, features excavators, forward-tipping dumpers and ride-on rollers. It offers short part-time qualifications, NVQs and full-cost courses to train new staff – as well as boosting the skills of workers through the groundworks plant courses. The facility was

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<sup>42</sup> University of Wolverhampton (Higher), City of Wolverhampton College; Adult Education Wolverhampton; Wolverhampton Vocational Training Centre (SEN) 26x school based sixth forms

developed after a report by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) showcased a shortfall in skilled plant workers – and called for more training to meet the demand. The West Midlands Combined Authority is funding training at the centre through the Construction Gateway, offering unemployed people free construction training, as well as a guaranteed job interview.

We would recommend exploring where a ‘retrofit’ training facility could be developed given that the building stock contributes 65% of emissions (domestic buildings in Wolverhampton contribute 451 tCO<sub>2</sub> (35%), while non-domestic buildings contribute 381 tCO<sub>2</sub> (30%)). The impact on skills needs in a number of specific roles will be quantitative as well as qualitative: for example, an expansion of retrofitting will not necessarily require many new skills from trained carpenters, but it may well require an increase in the total number of trained carpenters.

### Refresh Future Generations: Our Climate Commitment

In July 2019, the City of Wolverhampton Council became the first local authority in the Black Country to declare a climate emergency. In January 2020 the council launched a draft climate commitment to lead a whole city approach to address the global climate emergency and work towards becoming a carbon neutral city. A consultation and a mini citizens’ assembly were held in early 2020.

As we move into 2021 and develop the Wolves Anchor Network we would recommend that the collaborative working and approaches to embedding community wealth building principles proposed in this report would provide a solid base for the Wolves Anchor Network to publish a refreshed version of the ‘Climate Commitment’ as a document badged with all institutions equally.

Building on the proposed ‘pledge or deal’, or as part of it, this new commitment should have Community Wealth Building principles embedded within it, and set out clearly not only the expected role of citizens and businesses, but also the opportunities that the green transition will present for local people and how a Community Wealth Building approach will enable local citizens and businesses to access (re/up)skilling opportunities, apprenticeships, business support to access local economic opportunities, support to start new, supported enterprises or how to get involved in/invest in green energy projects that will keep profits locally.

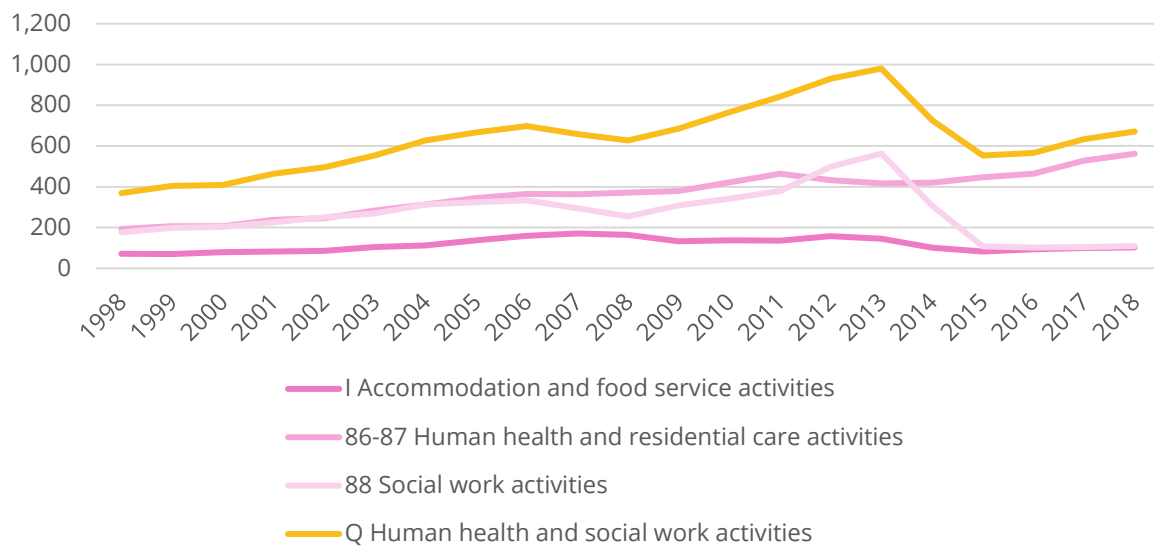


## A health & wellbeing economy

39% of the Wolverhampton workforce are employed in the foundational economy, equal to over 40,000 jobs, which is over 3 times more than the manufacturing sector. Food, retail, hospitality, care, these are all sectors which Covid-19 has forced us to reassess, sectors which underpin the health and wellbeing of us all. These sectors employ the most people, create the real value we need for our lives to function, yet they are often the most undervalued.

Given Wolverhampton's demographics, the health and social care sector is an important economic sector. Human health and residential care activities are responsible for 12% of GVA (2018), providing 15,000 jobs - greater than manufacturing - however, it does not attract as much strategic support or attention as a sector.

Figure 10: Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by NUTS1 region: UKG West Midlands current prices<sup>43</sup>



What would it mean to reorient our industrial strategy towards the parts of the economy where most people work – and whose activities give our lives meaning? Traditionally, when Local Authorities consider 'Health' as part of an economic strategy they consider the high-skilled and high-tech sectors. However, evidence from other parts of the UK suggests that approaches to local development that bet too heavily on 'high-value' high-tech sectors as the route to prosperity often fail to benefit the majority of local low-skilled residents. In addition, by doing so, they overlook the simple fact that the health sector is the biggest employer and the biggest procurer of goods and services in the country. Not only that, but it is also a sector that is constantly challenged to attract and retain sufficient employees. This

<sup>43</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva/datasets/regionalgrossvalueaddedbalancedlocalauthoritiesbynuts1region>

is a situation that is likely to get even worse post-Brexit given the sectors' dependency on overseas staff.

So instead of looking at the Health & Wellbeing economy as the opportunity to develop a few niche businesses, instead look at the sector as an asset to Wolverhampton that could provide 1000's of jobs and support 100's of businesses.

### Continue to develop approach to health inequalities and economic opportunities

The prize when aiming to unlock the Health & Wellbeing sector as a potential economic driver is, of course, that economic outcomes are also health outcomes. Provide someone with stable employment and you also address one of the strongest determinants of long-term health. In other words, there is the opportunity to create a 'virtuous circle' whereby creating jobs in the health sector also reduces demand on the health sector, thereby free-ing up health services to do a more effective job supported by a more stable workforce. To put it another way, there is the opportunity to create a win-win-win for Wolverhampton.

The challenge is that health and care organisations, however willing, do not have the resources or the organisational experience to realise these goals, but there are other agencies in Wolverhampton that do. Therefore, our first recommendation is to ensure that the Health & Wellbeing Together Board contains representatives from all of the relevant agencies responsible for Wolverhampton's health and economic prosperity. This board is responsible for setting priorities and committing resources and has been working towards an employment focus. We would recommend developing a more formal part of the governance and reporting relationships to lead on the employment opportunities from the Health & Wellbeing sector, and to explore how its actions can support the growth of new enterprise, tapping into the collective intelligence of the Wolves Anchor Network, its working groups and the proposed Community Wealth Building Hub.

Figure 11: Health & Wellbeing Together governance and reporting relationships



## Embed CWB in Executive Commissioning Group

The Executive Commissioning Group could take lead responsibility for driving this approach and embed Community Wealth Building principles into its ways of working. We would expect some crossover of membership here with the Procurement & Commissioning working group of the Wolves Anchor Network, so members would be abreast of the wider efforts across all areas of spending.

## Supporting local employment

When considering health sector employment, the question that has to be answered is – why is the health sector constantly challenged to attract and retain staff when unemployment is becoming such a critical issue? It has been observed that in Wolverhampton there are currently not enough jobs available for school leavers – this could be part of the solution.

From our consultation, some of the issues raised were:

- The market is very fragmented (100's of social care providers);
- The sector is just seen as low paid and low skilled. With an identified need to work with providers to help them modernise and make their jobs more attractive;
- Access to pensions and holidays does not seem to attract people nowadays - they want flexibility;
- Too many people are lost through the training process, we need to find out why;
- It is not just about adults; we need to get into schools and colleges to promote careers in the sector;
- Need to actively organise and co-ordinate apprenticeships and work experience opportunities (currently too ad-hoc);
- How the social care sector is organised (shift working, requires flexible staff) does not support apprenticeships. What can we do to help?
- Career pathways can be unclear. Wolverhampton University offers five different types of health and social care degrees.

However, it is not all negative. There were also positive observations that could be built on:

- There are existing staff shortages in health and social care that means there are job vacancies to fill;
- The health sector is good for people who do not want to go down the A-level/degree route but still want a technical qualification.;
- The Covid-19 crisis had brought commissioners closer to providers than ever before (in a good way), we must not go back. Need to change commissioning relationship to one of co-production by embedding CWB into the Health & Wellbeing Together Executive Commissioning Group;
- Many people do not realise that 50% of jobs in the NHS are non-medical. That means there are many career routes for people who want to switch or



have been made redundant and are looking to re-deploy from other sectors – administration, finance, maintenance, catering etc.;

- The Covid-19 crisis has raised the profile of keyworkers and keyworker careers. It has also created partnerships that must not be lost;
- The assets needed to link people to new careers in Health & Wellbeing are already there, they just needed joining up.

The Workforce working group of the Wolves Anchor Network could serve as the mechanism to address these issues and release this potential. This working group will already have identified key officers from each anchor network member needed to progress this agenda, and will have permission/delegated authority/time to commit to this work.

The Workforce working group will be tasked with looking at the three thematic areas, but in respect of health and wellbeing could identify immediate opportunities for developing successful inter-agency working, such as the recruitment of the Covid-19 vaccination workforce or delivering a project along the lines of 'Hospitality for Health' (see case study below).

The Workforce working group could start the process of workforce planning (and/or identify those who should be leading it and task them) for the sector to allow the development of planned employment pathways for Wolverhampton residents to access forecast job opportunities – i.e. work with providers to calculate a number for how many healthcare assistants are, on average, recruited across the city each year and the put in place planned pathways to meet that need.



## Hospitality for Health

'Hospitality for Health' is a local employment initiative that has been launched through the Birmingham Anchor Network. The main aim of the Birmingham Anchor Network is to support the Birmingham economy, particularly in response to the impact of Covid-19, by applying the principals of Community Wealth Building and finding employment for local people.

This initiative works by matching the needs and resources of two of the network members. University Hospital Trust, in response to Covid-19 and winter pressures, are currently looking to recruit significant numbers of staff at entry level positions, such as Healthcare Assistants. Pioneer Housing Group provide a service in a neighbourhood where residents are experiencing a disproportionate number of redundancies due to Covid-19, particularly from the hospitality sector.

The Hospital Trust has recognised that former hospitality employees may have exactly the skill set they are looking for to make great Healthcare Assistants. The Trust has little experience in delivering targeted recruitment at a neighbourhood level, while Pioneer has a local employment team but little experience in helping people switch careers and join the NHS.

The two institutions are now working together in a way that combines their strengths/experience to deliver a pre-employment course in the Pioneer neighbourhood that just welcomed its first ten participants. After the success of the partnership approach, the Hospital Trust are already in the process of developing three further employment initiatives in the East Birmingham area including the possibility of opening a community-based employment and skills centre in partnership with the City Council.

## Building care enterprises

Post Covid-19, with CWB principles embedded, we would expect commissioners to be looking at more localised and socially minded models of delivery. Key anchor institutions in the health and social care sector can work together to stimulate the development of alternative models and through commissioning, drive up the quality and dignity of care work and services. Closer collaboration between commissioners and providers will be needed to move beyond the current tendency to risk aversion. This will not only support the development of local business but also help make jobs in social care more attractive to local people (see above).

There is the opportunity to promote the development of social businesses and other forms of generative businesses in the foundational economy, and particularly the care sector. For example, supporting the development of CICs to deliver adult social care, building on the experience of Wigan could provide good quality employment and improve local wellbeing by improving the quality of locally available elder services. Stockport Council are developing a platform co-op that provides centralised services to local care co-ops, taking care of licensing and back office functions (see case study below).

Nurturing local CICs for care provision could also contribute to decarbonisation objectives, as care workers will have more opportunities to work locally and avoid lengthy car travel to work. At the same time, it could help to build local confidence to mobilise and form new organisations, and act as a kind of advert for the potential of social business in the town.

There are restrictions on what can be paid for social care through the single status agreement and social care jobs are dominated by the temp market that suits a lot of employees but undermines the sector (inconsistency of care, staff turnover, etc.). The Wolves Anchor Network Procurement & Commissioning working group could be the mechanism to explore these issues and develop the potential of the sector by initially pursuing these priorities:

- Identifying a suitable cross-section of officers that can represent the different elements of the sector, including providers, commissioners and training organisations.
- Conducting an initial analysis of the social care sector in Wolverhampton to establish how much is currently being delivered by local 'high social value' businesses as part of the collective spend analysis and identify areas for further growth.
- Exploring the potential of 'co-production' as a mechanism for both increasing local provision and also promoting attractive local social care jobs.



## Beehive Social Care Co-operative

Beehive Social Care Co-operative is seeking to redesign the social care workforce through the development of a platform Co-op. This model will offer care workers back office support via membership of a consortium co-op that will provide services including payroll, rostering, invoicing and other essential business controls, while also acting as the central Registered Management for Care Quality Commission (CQC) purposes.

Beehive Social Care Co-operative will replace the costly agency model with a series of individual co-ops working as members of the larger consortium. Each new homecare cooperative will be aligned to a Stockport neighbourhood, working with health and social care colleagues as part of a multidisciplinary team.

## Wolverhampton Care Skills & Enterprise Plan

Developing the 'skills' part of a Wolverhampton Care Skills & Enterprise Plan would be an extension of the work started by the Workforce working group. Looking to forecast the likely annual availability of jobs in Wolverhampton in the health and social care sector, and then developing a comprehensive strategy to ensure there are an equivalent number of Wolverhampton residents (both school leaver and adult) in a position, with the right qualifications and support to access those jobs. Working with existing partners in Wolverhampton to build coherent pathways into these careers would include working with the Wolves Anchor Network, schools/wider colleges from across Wolverhampton and employment and skills

programme leads e.g. Wolves @ Work, and the healthcare providers operating in the city, to workforce plan across the health and social care sector as a whole – and not just for medical jobs, but across all career routes such as administration, maintenance and catering.

The ‘Enterprise’ part of this plan would leverage on the collective knowledge and intelligence gathered by the Wolves Anchor Network Procurement & Commissioning working group and the proposed Community Wealth Building Hub, setting out an area of focus and direction of travel for supporting the growth of locally and socially owned enterprises.

### Develop Wolverhampton Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan

Having worked through and conducted the types of intervention described above could then be supported by an embedding of this working into the strategic frame for the city, with an action plan based on Community Wealth Building principles developed as an addendum to the Wolverhampton Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2023.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>

<https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s80182/DRAFT%20Joint%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%202018-23.pdf>

## Cultural & creative city

As we have moved through the Covid-19 crisis, the role of our city centres has changed. New patterns of behaviour are likely to stay, the way we work and the way we shop is unlikely to go back to how it was before the pandemic, however many would argue that Covid-19 has only accelerated pre-existing trends. As we all work and shop from home, or closer to home, the retail and office space of the city centre will be underutilised, and our city centres are at risk of decay. We urgently need a new vision for the city centre and in Wolverhampton the creative and cultural sector has the potential to create immense economic, social and place value.

### The value of the cultural & creative sectors

#### Economic value

The creative and cultural sector has the potential to increase economic value via increased visitor numbers and spend to the city and/or surrounding towns. It has the ability to create jobs and new businesses and encourage a local supply chain; local creative businesses are more likely to use local employees and suppliers of their own compared with larger firms and/or firms acquired through a traditional inward investment approach. It tends to increase the quality of life and attract further investment into the place.

The risk of these benefits is that there is 'overtourism' and an associated loss of authenticity. Work in these sectors tends to be poorly paid, and there can often be a lack of diversity in its workforce. The sector faces high rates of business failure, and there may be a potential of a lack of "trickle down" from investment.

#### Social value

The creative and cultural sector has the potential to increase social value via encouraging community cohesion, good health and high life satisfaction, which have all been linked to engagement in the arts. Those participating in the sector develop skills, and it has been linked with increased educational outcomes for young people. It can also encourage, inspire and break down barriers to the labour market.

The risk to this is that local people may feel alienated, with an "us and them" culture emerging. Volunteering and apprenticeships can also become exploitative and restrict the diversity of new entrants to the sectors.

#### Place value

The creative and cultural sector can restore property values in depressed town/city centres, and provide a cornerstone to the revival of vitality to town/city centres.

The risk to these benefits is that rents and rates will be financially restrictive to new creative entrants. Property values may rise beyond the reach of existing and new tenants, forcing businesses out. Mixing new uses for the high street will cause

tensions between residents and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this approach may only work in some places and not others.

### Wolverhampton's existing cultural offer

Wolverhampton already has a strong cultural offer, with 6 venues classified as national/regional cultural assets, plus nationally significant clusters in music, performing and visual arts. Creative and digital sectors are important to the city's economy, contributing £209 million GVA and 4,394 jobs.<sup>45</sup> The council is also investing heavily in its cultural offer through a £38.1 million transformation of the historic Civic Halls and support of the Grand Theatre's growth ambitions.<sup>46</sup>

Based upon the assumption that culture has a key role to play in transforming the city centre into a vibrant and attractive place to live, work and visit, in 2019 the Council secured funding from Arts Council England to put in place a 'Cultural Compact champion' to support the further development of the city's strong cultural offer.

The officer's remit is to develop a relationship with wider partners to embed culture into the vision for the city, wider regeneration and economic growth activity. This is done, for example, by embedding cultural projects within applications for Stronger Towns, Future High Streets Fund etc., as well as lobbying West Midlands Combined Authority to include culture within their bids.

Wolverhampton is a host city of the British Art Show in 2021, which (even in light of the Covid-19 pandemic) can expect to attract around 60 thousand visitors to the city for both the main curated show as well as fringe activity. This event should serve as an opportunity to showcase Wolverhampton's cultural offer, as well as the vision of Wolverhampton as an 'event city' (such as the Annual Literature Festival or the hosting of elements of the Commonwealth Games).

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/news/city-earns-cultural-compact-champion-funding>

<sup>46</sup> Ibid



## Cardiff as a Music City

When Huw Thomas moved to Cardiff after finishing his degree in music, he didn't know anyone. Joining a choir acted as a social network and taught him the social value of the arts in a place. Thomas knew about the cycle of creatives moving to run-down areas for their cheap rents, only to become priced out by developers, who capture the value as the area becomes a nicer place to live and work.

Thomas entered politics to try and give music the true value within place that he felt it deserved; to ensure music, or the arts more generally, is seen as infrastructure which creates vibrant, exciting communities and builds an international profile. As leader of Cardiff Council, he has declared Cardiff a 'music city'. He is developing a strategy to put music at the heart of the city's future with the aim to provide a healthy ecosystem (using this term as opposed to industry in acknowledgement of the fact that music has a social as well as an economic value), and to establish itself as a leader in the Music Cities movement, a standard of urban development which champions and promotes music as a tool for growth rather than a by-product of it.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.sounddiplomacy.com/cardiff>



## Embed Community Wealth Building principles within the Cultural Compact

The Cultural Compact has been beneficial in developing relationships with, and conversations between, wider partners to embed culture into the vision for the city, wider regeneration, and economic growth activity. It has shifted the debate from the cynical 'we've been here before', where partners see the benefits of a holistic approach, having a conduit into the Council, WMCA and wider stakeholders. Thus, the Council's priority should be to build upon the existing progress of the Compact, by embedding Community Wealth Building principles within the Compact. This can be done by placing a renewed emphasis on how each partner can benefit the local economy. Other than the continued support of the Compact, the Council should do this by engaging Wolverhampton's development partners in the Cultural Compact at an early stage, in order to see what opportunities there are for such partners to benefit through, for example, the procurement process.

## Develop a shared and detailed understanding of sector demand

For the CID 'ask' and 'offer' to be as effective as possible in addressing the needs of the city, there must be a strong understanding of the types of spaces and infrastructure (physical and services) required for creatives to flourish in the city. The Cultural Compact has been good in identifying this so far (where, unlike bigger cities, these cultural and cross-sector stakeholders had not been brought together to understand this clearly), so this is already well understood. However, consultation with the board should be ongoing to assess whether the pandemic has changed the needs of the sector. Once this 'demand' is well understood, a matching exercise can be undertaken, pairing the property and/or infrastructure identified from anchors and other partners with what creatives require.

## Develop Wolverhampton Cultural & Creative Skills Plan

Whilst having spaces available for creatives is critical, so is upskilling creatives in the skills they require to thrive in the modern creative economy. From our wider research elsewhere more 'generic' business support packages available to creatives is not tailored enough to provide the support needs for creative business skills. The CID board should look to undertake a high-level audit of business service provision, again aided by sector representatives, and see where the gaps are, before developing a Wolverhampton specific 'Cultural & Creative Skills Plan'

## Develop a shared understanding of suitable and available property/infrastructure

While most landlords are unwilling or unable to flex on rents or lease terms, the local authorities and anchor institutions are better placed to appreciate the value that the creative and night-time economies bring to their places, beyond their yield. Across the UK, the public sector owns an estimated 17% of all city centre high street properties.

An immediate priority of the CIDs project should be to identify which public sector owned assets exist in the city and town centres that could be suitable for creative and night-time sector start-ups. Whilst the primary focus should be on Council-owned assets, a strategy for engaging the owners of appropriate private properties should also be developed, with a view to securing reduced or peppercorn rent for entrepreneurs on either a temporary or long-term basis.

Further research should be undertaken to determine a mechanism by which entrants into the CIDs programme collectively organise to ensure the long-term viability of the creative and night-time industries in their places. This could entail the entrants forming a co-operative or social enterprise with a remit to keep rents stable, via organised representation or even purchasing property. Wolverhampton City Council should commit resources to exploring the routes to support the CIDs entrants in this process until such time as a vehicle is established, and with whatever ongoing support they may require. This work should be undertaken by the assets anchor working group.

### Develop a Creative Improvement District (CID)

There are many clear benefits to Wolverhampton's economy, society and sense of place as a result of making the creative and cultural economy a key tenant of Wolverhampton's development and recovery plans going forward.

However, in order to ensure the associated risks from such an approach are mitigated, the city needs to take a strategic view of the sector and develop a bespoke support mechanism to ensure both the benefits accrue whilst the potential risks from such an approach are mitigated. CLES believes the formation of a 'Creative Improvement District' has the ability to do this.

A 'Creative Improvement District' is a model for growing this sector locally and capturing its value for the local community. It repurposes and builds upon the 'Business Improvement District' concept<sup>48</sup> and has two key objectives:

- 1) Growing and harnessing the value of the creative and night times sectors by facilitating their expansion into the city centre and outlying town centres.
- 2) Increasing prosperity in the city and surrounding towns, particularly for high streets and centres experiencing high vacancy rates and economic uncertainty.

The Creative Improvement District would be a 'programme'. Entrants will be recruited via a public campaign, which will focus on the idea that they will be entering into a place (either an area of the city centre or a town around the city) as a cohort of organisations and agreeing to the following package, that will allow them to establish their business securely, support their own and each others' business longevity and create significant positive social impact. The key challenge

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<sup>48</sup> Some Birmingham based BIDs such as those in Colmore & Southside Business District have both embraced and supported local arts programmes  
[https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Improving\\_Places\\_final\\_web\\_Nov\\_2017.pdf](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Improving_Places_final_web_Nov_2017.pdf)

will be in ensuring that any prosperity generated is widely felt by the creative and night-time “actors” and by the residents of the places the project will serve.

### The CID board

The aims of the CID are ambitious, so having a robust governance arrangement is critical to the success. The Cultural Compact has already developed a comprehensive board containing representatives from the city’s key anchors (including the Council, the NHS Trust, commercial organisations) together with the BID, LEP, Commonwealth Games etc., so we feel the CID project could be aligned with the Compact Board to prevent duplication, perhaps with the addition of the Director of Regeneration.

The Board’s role would involve determining the offer and ask (we have suggested items below but they should be tailored to the exact needs and requirements of the local area), overseeing and co-ordinating the marketing campaign, and ensuring key partners have buy-in.

### Suggested CID ‘offer’: supporting entrepreneurs to get a foothold and secure a strong future

- **Reduced or peppercorn rent** - Vacant properties from anchors should be prioritised in advance to ensure that programme entrants are able to secure tenancies at reduced or peppercorn rent for a minimum of one year. Tenancies should be flexible in the short term but care should be taken to ensure that the needs of the tenants are taken into account. Particular notice should be taken of the implications of short tenancies – the project is to create a long-term growth sector in places and entrants should be looking to develop long-running businesses, not pop ups.
- **Rate relief** - As above, discretionary rate relief should be secured for tenants for a minimum of one year and entrants should be supported beyond the early phases of the programme to continue generating and demonstrating the social value required to continue to receive this relief beyond that time.
- **Bespoke start-up support** - Creative and night-time entrepreneurs should be offered a package of business model development training and support (delivered by the Community Wealth Building Hub) that recognises the unique challenges of their industries, particularly as relates to ensuring that they are able to generate sufficient revenue to pay themselves and staff at - as a minimum - the Living Wage. To ensure that support services are efficient and effective at reaching their targets, it could be advantageous to identify a dedicated council staff-member to coordinate interactions with creatives around, for example, licensing and property management.



## Baltic Triangle, Liverpool

In Liverpool, a Community Interest Company (CIC), 'Baltic Creative', used ownership of buildings as a way to break the cycle of creatives leaving areas as they become gentrified. Established in 2009 with support from the City Council, they took long term leases on former warehouses and industrial premises in the Baltic Triangle area. Over time they converted these buildings into small units and rented them out exclusively to digital and creative industries, with profits reinvested into their three core objectives: providing additional space for creative and digital industries; being an advocate for the creative and digital industry; and playing a role in the wider regeneration of the Baltic Triangle.

- **Ongoing support system** - Membership of an organisation offering tailored support to independent creatives and night-time entrepreneurs should be offered to entrants in the pilot areas for up to 12 months. Basic membership of IndyCube<sup>49</sup>, for example, offers cashflow support and management, smart invoicing, HR and legal support.
- **Support to organise** - Entrants will be supported to work collectively to ensure the longevity of their industries in the city. This will be bespoke to the place but may include: capacity building and training on forms of organising; business model generation; and, business plan support for an organisation to be formed that represents the interests of the creative and night time industries in the area, particularly as relates to keeping rents stable and optimising opportunities to put the wealth generated by any rise in property value into the hands of the entrants themselves.

#### The CID 'ask': entrepreneurs creating social value and supporting the town

- **Meaningful employment that addresses local needs** - Entrepreneurs employing staff should agree that they will all be paid - at a minimum - the Living Wage and not to employ any staff on zero hours contracts. They will work with the local authority to understand which geographical and demographic areas are currently underrepresented in the workforce in the town, and tailor recruitment practices to recruit from those areas where possible.
- **Workforce development** - Entrepreneurs will be asked to work alongside the local authority to support staff on their payroll to develop training plans that recognise their individual aspirations, either within or outside of the organisation. Once a plan is agreed the employer should work alongside the local authority to facilitate the employees' access to this training as far as possible. This could be by arranging mentorship or paid work experience for the staff member, identifying free or low-cost training opportunities or supporting them in exploring funding opportunities for paid training/education.
- **No exposure!** All work, apprenticeships and "guest" opportunities (DJs, artwork in food and beverage establishments) will be paid at an appropriate rate. The notion of exchange of services or goods for exposure - including the reverse stream, offering free meals or other services to influencers - will be outside of the vernacular of the entrepreneurs.
- **Develop a meaningful and accountable community engagement programme** - Entrepreneurs should work with the local authority, existing arts organisations in place, schools and the third sector to develop a community engagement programme that is bespoke to the needs of the place. This could include mentoring services to young people, free or discounted space hire to community organisations, programming that is

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<sup>49</sup> <https://www.indycube.community/>

sensitive to cultural differences or specialist programmes in schools or with youth groups. The community engagement plan should be documented, available on the organisations' website/social media and publicised via local media. Members of the community should be encouraged to respond to and engage with the organisation on the thinking behind the approach and its progress.

- **Organise to put down roots** - Entrants must display intent to form an organisation that will act to secure their own long-term future and that of other creative and night time entrepreneurs who may be attracted to the area. This will likely relate to keeping rents stable and may include collectively purchasing property.

### **Develop a marketing plan to attract a critical mass cohort**

It is crucial that a critical mass of entrepreneurs is built into the areas of the CIDs project quickly. To address this, we propose a participant dependent recruitment campaign, whereby a minimum number of entrants needs to be secured in order for the project to go ahead in that place (i.e. the city centre or a surrounding town). The recruitment campaign would be public, targeted at audiences likely to contain budding creative and night-time entrepreneurs, and explicit about the idea that they will be entering into the place as a cohort of organisations and agreeing to the following package, that will allow them to establish their business securely, support their own and each other's business longevity and create significant positive social impact

### **Develop KPIs that recognise the value being sought**

In developing this approach Wolverhampton City Council must take care to ensure that stakeholders are fully cognisant of the prize that is being sought here: that is, not an increase in "cool" that results in inward investment or property value increases in the city or town centres. Instead, communication and KPIs should recognise that the CIDs programme is attempting to develop a sustainable business core for creatives that offers economic and social advantages to the people already living in those places. KPIs for CIDs should, then, focus on business sustainability, engagement of local people in the arts, meaningful employment and training opportunities. The existing work of Creative Black Country (who also sit on the Compact Board) in this area should be harnessed.

# 4. Action plan

## Establishing a Wolves Anchor Network

We have proposed the development of a Wolves Anchor Network with a membership of five major public institutions initially,<sup>50</sup> however we anticipate that over time additional public, private and social institutions will join the network. Between quarterly meetings of the network, a series of working groups will be tasked to develop collective approaches to Procurement & Commissioning, Land & Property and Workforce.

Activity	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
The first informal meeting of the proposed Wolves Anchor Network	8th												
Meeting 1 - Wolves Anchor Network		TBC											
Working groups (Procurement & Commissioning, Land & Property, Workforce)													
Meeting 2 - Wolves Anchor Network					TBC								
Working groups (Procurement & Commissioning, Land & Property, Workforce)													
Meeting 3 - Wolves Anchor Network								TBC					
Working groups (Procurement & Commissioning, Land & Property, Workforce)													
Meeting 4 - Wolves Anchor Network											TBC		
Working groups (Procurement & Commissioning, Land & Property, Workforce)													

<sup>50</sup> City of Wolverhampton Council, City of Wolverhampton College, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton Homes and The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

## Building an entrepreneurial and generative economy

The Wolves Anchor Network Procurement & Commissioning working group will be tasked, with the support of CLES, to conduct a series of data and intelligence gathering activities to build up a detailed understanding of public spending in relation to the local economy. Developing a proposed Community Wealth Building Hub will examine how business support can be reshaped, drawing on this intelligence to support local firms, local SME's and the local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to build wealth locally.

Activity	Involved	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spend analysis training/support	All (Procurement leads)													
Supply chain analysis	Council, CLES													
Develop a gap analysis	Council, CLES													
Procurement & commissioning pipeline	All (Procurement leads)													
Mapping of business support	Council, CLES													
Engagement with business support providers	Council, CLES													
Embedding business support in working groups	Council, CLES													
Develop Community Wealth Building Hub	All, CLES													



## Embedding social value in the city

The Wolves Anchor Network Procurement & Commissioning working group will also be tasked, with the support of CLES, to bring together current approaches to generating social value and develop a shared social value framework for the City of Wolverhampton. This should be produced in a way in which additional public, private and social institutions can adopt and utilise the same framework as we move forward, providing a clear and consistent message to the market about the responsible business practices expected when working in the city. A public facing 'social value pledge' should make this 'deal' clear to all stakeholders and drive commitment to rebuilding a more inclusive local economy.

Activity	Involved	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Share existing Social Value practice	All (Procurement leads)													
Collate & map existing approaches	All (Procurement leads), CLES													
Engage VCSE & private sector to co-produce	CLES													
Develop a shared Social Value Framework	All (Procurement leads)													
Finalise and sign off	All (Procurement leads)													
Develop Social Value pledge	All (Procurement leads/HR leads)													

## A leader in green transition

The City of Wolverhampton Council have set a target of 2041 for the city to reach net carbon zero. Given that Wolverhampton’s building stock is responsible for 832 tCO<sub>2</sub> (equal to 65% of total emissions) the city has a strong and committed development pipeline and also has the National Brownfield Institute coming online, we recommend an approach to green transition that builds on these strengths and pursues green construction, retrofit and green energy, with the Wolves Anchor Network utilising its collective power and influence to drive a growth in local firms which can support and benefit from the green transition and build wealth locally.

Activity	Involved	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Establish/develop a green transition board/ repurpose existing board	All													
Business engagement mapping/strategy	All, CLES													
Build market confidence	All (Asset leads/Procurement leads)													
Community led retrofit – private homes	ALL (in partnership with the VCSE)													
Develop Wolverhampton Green Skills Plan	All													
Develop Wolverhampton Energy Innovation Zone proposal	All (Asset leads)													
Build connections to emerging CWB Hub	All													
Refresh Future Generations: Our Climate Commitment	All													

## A health & wellbeing economy

39% of the Wolverhampton workforce are employed in the foundational economy, equal to over 40,000 jobs, which is more than 3 times more than the manufacturing sector. Food, retail, hospitality, and care, are all sectors which Covid-19 has forced us to reassess, sectors which underpin the health and wellbeing of us all. The Wolves Anchor Network can collectively drive the growth of the care sector specifically - a sector suffering from staff shortages and with an ageing population, a sector that will only grow. Collectively the Wolves Anchor Network can support local people into work and can support the growth of locally and socially owned business models which provide higher standards of care, higher standards of employment for local people and circulate and retain wealth locally.

Activity	Involved	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Continue to develop approach to health inequalities and employment	Council													
Embed CWB in Executive Commissioning Group	All													
Supporting local employment	All													
Building care enterprises	All													
Explore the opportunity to develop Wolverhampton Care Skills & Enterprise Plan	All													
Build connections to emerging CWB Hub	All													
Develop Wolverhampton Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan	All													

## Cultural & creative city

As we have moved through the Covid-19 crisis, the role of our city centres has changed. New patterns of behaviour are likely to stay. The way we work and the way we shop is unlikely to go back to how it was before the pandemic, however many would argue that Covid-19 has only accelerated pre-existing trends. As we all work and shop from home, or closer to home, the retail and office space of the city centre will be underutilised, and our city centres are at risk of decay. We urgently need a new vision for the city centre and in Wolverhampton the creative and cultural sector has the potential to create immense economic, social and place value.

Activity	Involved	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Embed Community Wealth Building principles within the Cultural Compact	All													
Develop a shared and detailed understanding of sector demand	All													
Develop Wolverhampton Cultural & Creative Skills Plan	All													
Develop a shared understanding of suitable and available property/infrastructure	All (Asset leads)													
Build connections to emerging CWB Hub	All													



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