

**Community
Wealth Building**

**The Deal
2030**

**Growing an economy
that works for all the
people of our borough**

Vision & Principles



Our Wigan borough partnership
for community wealth building



Wigan borough Primary
and Secondary schools

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Introduction

In early 2020 and prior to the pandemic we were about to launch our community wealth building strategy to address the economic inequalities in Wigan borough. The Covid-19 crisis postponed that launch but as we now enter late 2020, the stark situation we find ourselves in makes the need to create a fairer and more equal local economy even greater. That is why community wealth building is the central basis of our recovery plans.



Councillor Keith Cunliffe
Deputy Leader
Wigan Council

We want community wealth building to be the catalyst to put more economic control in the hands of local people

and in so doing create an inclusive economy which nurtures and sustains all our citizens. The vision and principles of this approach are set out in this document and show the scale and scope of our ambition and how it forms a natural next phase of The Deal. Our partnership with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) has been essential to establishing Wigan's own unique version of community wealth building.

The crisis has seen a surge in our communities coming together to support each other, with many volunteers coming forward and local businesses changing the way they work. Indeed, in many cases it has been the local community businesses that have provided the resilience we needed. Many bigger national and multi-national businesses will be able to 'ride the storm' of the recession while local businesses and workers will be hit hard. This in turn will make our local businesses vulnerable from failing or for a predatory national organisation to take them over. We cannot sit and wait for national state intervention or even a Greater Manchester

economic recovery plan to support us - we have to help ourselves.

That is why the idea of moving back to 'business as usual' is not an option. The longer-term impact that the economic and societal effects of the pandemic present gives us an opportunity to bring about a transformational change and embed new social norms. Austerity was a stimulus to successfully change and transform our culture through The Deal, we now face a much bigger challenge. Without explicitly recognising it elements of community wealth building have been present in our approach to date as part of the Wigan Deal. Our investment in community organisations, social enterprises and community businesses and our raising of standards in adult social care through commissioning differently via an ethical homecare framework have led to improved outcomes for individuals and communities.

Having got these great examples of community wealth building work in specific areas, we are now expanding our ambition - putting community wealth

building at the heart of how the council operates. In partnership with all anchor organisations in the borough we will act to put our supply chains, our workforce and our assets at the forefront of creating a truly inclusive economy, one that will be more resilient in a turbulent post-Covid society.

In our plan for recovery we need to recognise the role we can play, as a council and a leader of place, in bringing about fundamental change and reform to benefit our communities and take more strident steps toward our ambitions to contribute to climate change and our green economy. We need to harness the social

capital that has been built up and accelerated beyond anything that has gone before, capitalise on the energy and commitment of individuals, organisations, and communities that we have seen in recent months.

Any crisis is a motivational stimulus to change things for the better. We owe it to the people of our borough to show the organisational and political leadership to deliver that change to ensure that we recover from this crisis stronger than we went into it. Putting community wealth building at the centre of our recovery plan will enable us to build a stronger more resilient borough for the future.



Leigh Town Hall, Leigh



Wigan Town Hall, Wigan



The Wiend, Wigan



Introduction

In 2019 CLES began working with Wigan Council on their aspiration to build on the success of the Wigan Deal and apply the principles, thinking and behaviours of the Wigan Deal to economic activity.



Frances Jones
Associate Director,
Centre for Local Economic Strategies

While much of the council's reputation comes from their pioneering work on public service reform, this focus on the local economy represents a significant and powerful step change.

Across the country we're seeing growth in the take-up of community wealth building as a powerful approach to building inclusive local economies. In 2018 we established the CWB Centre of Excellence to accelerate

and deepen that process and are now working with local authorities, city regions, devolved administrations and governments across all nations of the UK. What always strikes me about Wigan is that its route to CWB has been through doing.

Across adult social care – in the great work to grow local, ethical suppliers in the home care market, decisions to bring services in house and in the approach to provide high quality, secure employment for local people – Wigan has reorganised the way the local care economy operates.

It's great to see Wigan taking the lessons from this work to build a bold new approach to community wealth building that underpins a much stronger Wigan Deal for the borough in the era of Covid-19.

This is a step change in approach, putting a strong intent to build an inclusive local economy front and centre rather than as an aspect of public service reform.

This is what I find most exciting about the prospects for Wigan's emerging CWB approach. CWB is about anchor institutions with their significant economic clout

becoming conscious and intentional economic agents, working for the economic benefit of citizens and communities in the economy.

In Wigan I see an underlying conviction that power should be shared with citizens and solutions co-designed.

To apply this ethos to the economy points to a new kind of municipalist role for local government, one which uses the levers of the local state to advance economic justice.

This is part of a reimagining of how we can make the towns, cities and their local economies work, underpinned by a commitment to return economic power to local citizens.

The Covid-19 crisis has laid bare the fragilities and failings of our national economy and powerfully demonstrated how the economic development practices of the past cannot provide a road map for the task ahead.

In Wigan this is being met with a hugely expanded ambition to combine the economic firepower of the council and other anchors, with an ethos of using this power to create economic agency within communities.

This combination presents an extremely powerful route not just to recovery but to a profound change in the way the borough economy functions.

It's inspiring to see local government play this role in shaping local economies, a profoundly democratic role.

This goes beyond enabling community power as a key tenet of public service reform.

Rather it's strong partnering with community to build community ownership within commercial economy and counteract wealth extraction: central tenets of CWB.



Our story so far

Wigan has been practising elements of community wealth building for years. We may not have recognised it, or even intended it, but its ethos is one that aligns strongly with what it means to be Wigan.

Through examples such as the community investment fund, supported employment, community asset transfers, Deal for Business and many more we

have supported local people to access work, create local jobs and run local buildings and facilities for the benefit of their community. This success has involved partnership working across the public, third and private sector.

The Covid-19 pandemic has radically changed how we function as a borough and has served to amplify underlying inequalities in

our local economy. Yet the solution to address the enormous challenges ahead remains in the strength of our partnerships in Wigan Borough and a united ambition and approach to tackle economic inequality. The immediate emergency response to the pandemic locally and the ability of citizens, communities, businesses and the public sector to work collectively together, highlighted

The Deal's next chapter

The Deal staff behaviours which have been adopted and applied over a number of years not just by council staff but across the health and care sector will apply strongly to community wealth building.

These behaviours encompass the positive attitude and behaviour of staff; the willingness to talk to people about what will make a difference to their lives; knowing communities better, permission to innovate and working in co-located settings based on neighbourhoods.

Business showing the way

Businesses showed their strong values and commitment to our local community through the pandemic. Many changed their operations to ensure residents were able to have deliveries of essentials.

Others made donations to community hubs and health facilities ranging from cash donations, equipment, food, supplies and also providing volunteers. Harnessing this good local economy of businesses with shared values for the borough is a key pillar of our CWB vision.

Public support

Our citizens have shown they support a renewed focus on supporting the local economy and are prepared to do their bit too. A Covid-19 Impact Survey was carried out by the council and 4,600 people took part.

The vast majority 93% supported prioritising local businesses and employment, 83% said they would change their own shopping habits to help local businesses and jobs.

the strength of these partnerships. Businesses rooted here, owned by people who care about our borough came to the fore to support isolated residents, provide vital food and even manufacture PPE.

These businesses included food producers, local shops, independent restaurants, construction firms, farms, haulage firms, housing developers, sporting clubs

and many more. We're seeking to harness this energy and work with these businesses which share our values as well as the Wigan family of anchor institutions to keep 'the Wigan pound' in the borough and create new training and job opportunities for all.

The public overwhelmingly back this approach. In our Covid-19 resident impact survey, which was completed

by 4,600 residents, 93% said they supported an approach by the council on prioritising local businesses and employment in the future.

This is a ringing public endorsement for community wealth building. This is the next chapter in our story of The Deal – one in which we tackle the issue of inequality in wealth in our borough head-on.



Our challenges

Over recent years, the challenge in Wigan, like in many local economies, has been that while there is wealth, this has not translated into good lives and thriving communities for all.

The Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare these weaknesses and now threatens lasting damage to the borough economy on which we all depend and the livelihoods of our citizens.

Pre-Covid-19

Prior to Covid-19, we had record levels of employment too often that work didn't pay. In January 2020, a third of the borough's jobs paid below the Real Living Wage.

Over recent years average earnings had fallen and employment insecurity had increased. The growth of the Wigan and Greater Manchester economies didn't benefit many people in

Wigan and we have seen the levels of deprivation and gap between the richest areas and the poorest increase over the last five years.

The wealth that does exist too often flows out of that economy – so while profits are made, some of this profit doesn't benefit people or the local economy - wages don't mirror that success (they stagnate), instead profits flow out of the place.

While more homes are being built across the borough some of these homes become a source of investment income, not primarily somewhere to live.

Annual targets for the supply of affordable housing have only been met twice since 2011. This has meant that too many people have been struggling to make ends meet, working multiple jobs and juggling these with family life.

Covid-19

The impact of the pandemic has already hit our economy with job losses leading to a doubling of unemployment, increases in rent arrears and homelessness.

There is a risk of a deep recession, with loss of valuable local businesses, further increases in unemployment and downwards pressure on wages and deterioration in job security.

Without a proactive approach at scale there is a risk that we will see long term damage to the borough economy. Community wealth building offers a powerful means of minimising these risks and - instead - make local economic recovery a moment for profound and lasting change.

Our shared purpose

Our residents do not fully benefit from the money, jobs, assets and opportunities available across the borough.

We can do something about it. We will enable Wigan borough residents to own and benefit from the assets and wealth here, on which the borough's future will be built.

“We want to use the public money that is intended for Wigan to tackle our greatest challenges and create an economy that is fairer.”

The council alone spends

£350m

on goods and services, employs 4,500 people and owns 20% of the borough's land.



40%

of that is spent with Wigan based businesses. If we increase it by 11% that would mean an additional

£30m

spend on Wigan businesses.



These businesses in turn would spend approximately another

£13m

with their own suppliers and employees in the borough.



An increase of 12% in Wigan and neighbouring borough suppliers (from 53% to 65%) would equate to an approximate

£33m

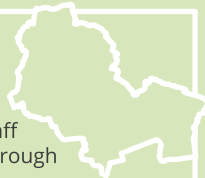
additional spend with local businesses



Currently,

74%

of council staff live in the borough



20%

live in neighbourhoods in the top 20% most deprived nationally

11%

live in the top 10% most deprived nationally.



We can make a difference

by increasing the proportion of people in secure, living wage paid jobs, from our neighbourhoods with the greatest potential.



We can increase the community use and control of council owned land and assets, particularly those which are currently under utilised



We can significantly reduce carbon-based energy in

22,000

homes and our other buildings and across our fleet with investment in locally based green businesses.



We can grow **economically generative** local businesses, including cooperatives, social enterprises and employee owned businesses



As an anchor partnership we increase our power to achieve these ambitions significantly.

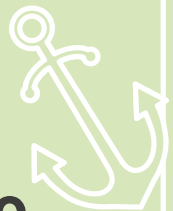
There is an estimated

£1bn

of public spending and

22,000

employees working for Wigan's anchor institutions.



This shows the transformative power of a Wigan anchor partnership for community wealth building.

A partnership approach

In community wealth building we will harness the combined power of local communities, local anchor institutions and businesses to rebuild an economy that works for us all.

Citizens / communities

The economy shapes the lives of all of us in Wigan. But too often it feels distant and beyond our power to influence. In community wealth building we are seeking to enable local people and communities to own and control more of the economy.

The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the kindness, neighbourliness and solidarity that exists across our communities. From volunteers dedicating hours to delivering food parcels, to streets coming together to organise activities and give comfort to the isolated.

The first phase of the Wigan Deal was about enabling this great wisdom and power in our communities.

The opportunity now is for this energy to drive a wider mobilisation of this community power – one focused on enabling

workers, consumers and citizens to own and control parts of our economy.

Businesses

Core to community wealth building are locally rooted businesses. These businesses are the building blocks of a flourishing local economy.

They share common characteristics including:

Having local social and economic value as core objective in their business operations

Distributing the wealth they create through the local economy, for example by ensuring high rates of local employment and spending in local supply chains, investing in local assets and sharing the surpluses they generate with workers, consumers and beneficiaries.

Covid-19 has shown the strength of these locally rooted businesses, with their economic and social contributions, but also the challenges they now face.

Through community wealth building we want to nurture these ‘businesses of the

future’, so that they become major players in our local economy. We also want to see a greater diversity of businesses in which wealth is both created and shared between owners, workers and consumers. This will include more employee owned firms, community business and social enterprises.

Anchor institutions

Anchor institutions are large organisations rooted in place with significant spending power, workforces and financial and physical assets.

They are at the heart of CWB because their economic firepower means they can have big impacts on the economy.

For example, CLES’ work with a group of six anchor institutions in Preston has seen the use of progressive anchor strategies, particularly in relation to procurement, transform the local economy.

Working to a shared statement of intent, over four years the partnership moved from just 5% of their combined spending on goods and services going to

Preston based businesses to 18%, while spend with Lancashire based businesses grew from 39% to 79%.

In part as a result of this approach, Preston has moved out of the top 20% most deprived local authority areas in the UK and was in 2018 named 'most improved city in the UK'.

While Preston remains the most high-profile example of community wealth building in the UK, these ideas are being taken up and applied by a wide range of organisations across all regions and countries of the UK.

But this is not a one-size fits all approach. Wigan's partnership will be unique

to Wigan, based on the strong partnership working that already exists in the borough. It will be co-produced so that all partners will be able to shape, contribute and benefit from its success.

Our areas of focus

The Wigan Pound & our shared values



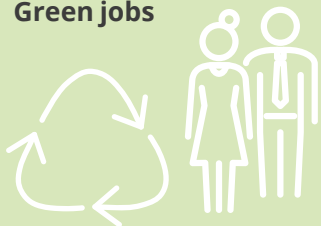
A good job here for all



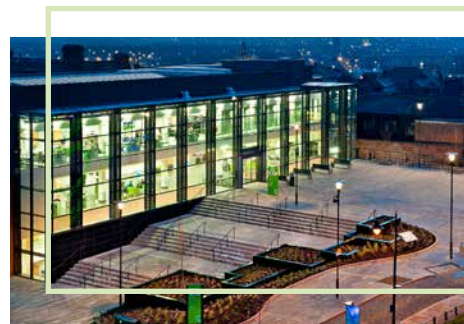
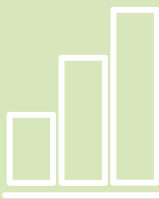
Housing



Green jobs



Working with business



Wigan Life Centre, Wigan

A Wigan partnership for
**Community
Wealth Building**



**Growing an economy
that works for all the
people of our borough**

- > Recruiting from all our communities
- > Procuring from good, local businesses
- > Ownership of the economy by local people
- > Developing new growth sectors
- > Skills training to match a new economy
- > Shaping markets to benefit local people

The Wigan Pound & our shared values

Where we are now

Covid-19 has brought sharply into focus the need to drive as much value for the Wigan economy out of our public sector procurement. There are almost 8,800 SMEs in Wigan Borough making up the vast majority of local businesses.

The challenge facing the borough is stark with unemployment widely predicted to be at risk of increasing very significantly in coming years and smaller businesses being much more vulnerable to closure during the recession. Even after the recession is over the long-term future of the local economy will be very uncertain.

During the pandemic we saw ethical businesses step up to give back to their communities. This 'good' local economy will be a cornerstone of our CWB approach. We already have some great examples of being progressive and innovative with our procurement processes on which we can build and scale up. The council's ethical homecare framework has been described by CLES as the best example in the country of reshaping commissioning on a

community wealth building footing. Its principles of talking and listening to local and passionate businesses committed to Wigan Borough and its people prior to any procurement framework been drawn up is a model which can be applied across sectors and organisations.

The framework has meant that in this sector our money is now being spent with companies with shared ethical values and a true commitment to Wigan and the people they are serving. We must use this trailblazer to create models that are mutually beneficial – the right choice for the council and its partners and the right choice for the borough and people who live here.

Where we want to be

An improved community wealth building partnership approach will work closely with locally-rooted businesses to ensure they are able to access public sector supply chains. This will be achieved through a two-pronged approach.

We will make sure that every pound spent in Wigan borough works hard for our citizens. The council alone spends £350m annually on

goods and services. An 11% increase of that spend with businesses that are rooted here will create an extra £30m circulating within the local economy.

Secondly, having effective and targeted support in local growth sectors will enable local companies to be in a much better position to succeed in public sector procurement processes. The benefits of this 'market shaping' will then be felt in the local economy. Our ambition is that the benefit will be especially felt in those communities where access to the employment market is the most challenging.

We will not compromise on the value to the tax-payer and the quality of the service. In fact, experience shows that a successful local approach results in better quality and service as well as achieving good value.

Our procurement model will also enable different forms of business to be delivering goods and services such as social enterprises, co-operatives and voluntary and community organisations. This will promote a plural economy that retains wealth here and invests in its people.

Case study

Ethical homeworkare

In 2018/19 Wigan Council invested £110 million in care and support packages for around 5,000 people. This included £311m for homeworkare.

The system prior to this involved 25 providers operating across the borough at a varied cost and quality, disconnected from local communities and a poorly valued and rewarded workforce.

The ethical homeworkare framework changed all this through working with providers who were committed to the borough.

This created a co-designed, affordable and sustainable model that was respectful

of profit and return for businesses but also ensured investment in local people and the place. The selection process for companies was values-driven but with strong procurement support to ensure it was robust.

One ethical provider which successfully applied to be on the framework was Cherish UK. Peter Watson, chairman, said: "The way Wigan shaped the ethical homeworkare framework with organisations before going to market really showed the art of the possible.

"Being a part of what Wigan has created has been a win-win for Cherish. We now have greater retention rates of local staff, more longer-term employees and greater consistency.

We have good relationships with other providers in Wigan as we are no longer feel like we are competing against each other but are working together.

"We have cut down the need for staff to travel significantly and now have five staff travelling to clients on bikes."

The response to Covid-19 from homeworkare providers has been praised too with staff displaying great compassion, dedication and care.

Peter added: "People from across the country are looking at what Wigan has done. We love being here in Wigan and we are here stay."



Peter Watson - Cherish



Short Breaks Summer Holiday Club



Staff at Cherish

A good job here for all

Where we are now

A new-found flexibility in our workforce to respond to the pandemic saw hundreds of council staff redeployed to help the Covid-19 effort. Showing a commitment and dedication unparalleled in recent decades staff left their usual jobs to work in care settings and frontline roles.

As an anchor partnership we have enormous leverage to support our citizens into work especially in the growing sectors of health and social care.

The influence of public sector organisations in the local labour market is significant. As an example 74% of Wigan Council's staff base live in the borough with 20% of council staff living in neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived areas nationally, and 10% living in the top 10% most deprived areas nationally.

The council is committed to delivering inclusive employment and promotes equality of opportunity through a 'blind recruitment' process which ensures no preconceptions are made during the application process, and its status as a Disability Confident employer demonstrates its commitment to the

employment of disabled people.

Inclusive practise is at the heart of BeWigan behaviours; staff are believed in and encouraged to build progression routes for employees to grow by supporting apprenticeships and further training opportunities.

Where we want to be

In a borough changed by Covid-19 our Wigan anchor partnership will be a source of good, stable employment especially in the health and care sector.

We have the capacity to break down the barriers to employment faced by those in deprived areas to bring real social improvement to our local communities and lessen demand on our services by reducing the level of people who are economically inactive.

Progressive employment opportunities are central to increasing the inclusivity of our collective workforce through the creation of recruitment routes for people who may not have traditionally accessed them. As part of our broader approach to tackling barriers to employment, there is

potential to undertake activities to promote inclusive employment practise from the earliest stage of recruitment.

We need to understand why those with protected characteristics, in addition to carers and veterans, do not apply for our vacancies, either at all or in a lesser number, or fall off somewhere in the process.

Actions to ensure employment works for those who want to engage are crucial. We need to go further in utilising our permission to innovate and re-design, by considering how flexible we can be in creating jobs to support those who face challenges to entering employment, such as carers.

Together we can aim to create work placements with the potential to look at paid and sustainable employment for those with disabilities or learning difficulties.

Anchor organisations can also increase the availability of in-work progression pathways for local people, creating employment that works for people with good pay and conditions and progression across the borough.

Case study

Ricia Mullen

Ricia Mullen, 22, from Beech Hill, had always aspired to work in health and social care but struggled to access opportunities in the sector due to her lack of confidence. Now, she is thriving in a new job having secured a permanent role at Heathside Residential Centre in Leigh working with older residents with dementia.

Having been diagnosed as an 18-year-old as high-functioning autistic, the unease she had experienced meeting new people or being placed outside of her comfort zone began to make sense. Before her diagnosis, Ricia sat her GCSEs and Health and Social Care Level 2 but didn't achieve the expected grades.

Wigan Council's Confident Futures programme, which supports care leavers,

helped her to gain the skills and qualifications she needed to find employment. Ricia also engaged with the 'Aspiring Futures' programme, which helps the borough's young people make connections in the working world and helps them choose a career pathway for them.

She said: "I knew I wanted to work in care, so I spoke with Jan, my progression advisor, and she helped to make that happen.

"Through the Confident Futures programme and with help from the Aspiring Futures team, I was able to attend employability training and undertake placements to gain work experience, complete my GCSEs, and secure an apprenticeship.

"Before, I struggled to find a job. I didn't have the necessary skills or

experience" she added. "My apprenticeship increased my confidence in the workplace. It has given me independence."

Ricia is now able to look forward and focus on developing her career in health and social care.

The team at Heathside are continuing to build progression routes for Ricia to grow in her role by supporting her with further training opportunities.

She is now looking forward to completing upcoming courses. The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic has strengthened Ricia's passion for care work. "I am proud of my work and being able to help the residents at Heathside during the crisis. Coronavirus has shown how valuable our work here is" she says. "I can see my future at Heathside."



Housing

Where we are

Wigan Council is a major player in the local housing market, with 22,000 existing council homes, a programme of house building, significant land holdings and powers to regulate housing development. In managing the 22,000 homes in the borough, we spend significant amounts with suppliers and contractors and are committed to making this spend work hard for the Wigan economy.

In recent years we have focused on delivering apprenticeships and training opportunities in the construction sector for local people. For example, in 2018/19 the council's annual spend on the bathroom upgrades programme 23 people were supported into apprenticeships and trainee roles.

A key achievement of the activities undertaken in housing development has been the launch of the new housing contractor framework. The framework, set up in 2019, has been procured to include a range of contractors, including SME and local companies. The contractor framework includes 35 local suppliers. In order to facilitate contractor

engagement with Wigan based suppliers, a 'meet the buyer' event was held last September to encourage the eight contractors on the framework to utilise the local supply chain by sourcing services and materials locally where possible.

Our house building programmes are contributing to meeting affordable homes targets and high- quality specialist housing for people with dementia and autism have been delivered. Beyond our own housing building activity we have been working proactively to enable local SME builders to play a bigger role in the local housing market. We have launched a developer hub and forum, to assist small and medium sized builders to deliver schemes in the borough.

Where we want to be

The increased demand on social housing caused by the pandemic is only likely to intensify as the recession leads to evictions of tenants renting privately and people losing their own homes through unemployment.

Key to our work in this area is the acceleration of the delivery of affordable and social rent homes in the

borough.

We want to make the building of these homes a driver of a thriving, construction sector which contributes to the wellbeing of the borough. This will mean increasing the market share of locally rooted housing and construction firms and growing good quality employment opportunities for local people.

Through this we will create more apprenticeships and employment opportunities to support our people, work with large contractors to encourage maximum use of the local supply chain, and further work with local SMEs via the hub to identify the challenges and barriers they face in order to build the capacity of Wigan based businesses to bid for opportunities.

We can set a standard for energy efficiency in existing and new homes and grow the expertise in supply among Wigan business in the low carbon house building and retrofit. Finally, we will seek to develop the local housing market by diversifying and scaling up alternative models for home ownership in the borough.

Case study

The developer hub

Wigan Council have created an information hub to support SME housing developers who want to build new homes in Wigan Borough.

There is untapped potential in small and large sites around the borough and there are opportunities to create thriving places for people to live, providing greater opportunity and choice to access homes and bring stalled and unused land back into use.

The council recognised that removing or helping to mitigate the barriers that SME developers can face would assist in increasing the number of additional homes being built in the borough, secure local economic growth and jobs in both the local supply chains and on

sites. The council undertook a piece of work to identify barriers that SME developers face and identified: finding land, accessing finance and negotiating the planning process to be key issues.

Therefore we launched the forum to provide information and access to council services and launched the online hub for signposting and advice all in a quest to support these companies.

The Developer Hub brings together the key elements of the development process such as: Access to land opportunities, access to finance, support to navigate the planning process and addressing training and skills needs.

The information in the hub also includes access to the Greater Manchester

(GM) Housing Investment Fund which is a loan fund operated by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to support SME developers.

A first SME developer forum was held in February that brought together 18 small developers who are either from Wigan or have interests in the borough.

We see the value that smaller companies have in terms of supporting local supply chains and employing local people, we also see the value that they can add in terms of bringing forward smaller more difficult housing sites that larger house builders may not be interested in, thus increasing local economic growth and accelerating housing delivery in Wigan.



Riding Close, Hindley

Green jobs

Where we are

All public sector organisations and partners in the Wigan anchor partnership are aiming to reduce their carbon footprint. This will involve reductions in energy consumption for buildings and transport.

The drive for further drastic reduction in carbon emissions will not only be good for our borough but will also untap significant opportunities for local businesses to support public sector bodies in achieving their targets.

The challenge is to foster a green, low carbon business sector in the borough which has the capacity, knowledge and skills to be in a position to take on these opportunities. By declaring a 'climate emergency' Wigan Council has demonstrated that it is prepared to take immediate action to make the changes required.

As a corporate landlord with over 22,000 homes, the council has invested in improving the fabric and insulation of our housing stock, installed over 18,000 energy efficient gas

condensing boilers, and as a result, its homes have increased their energy rating. More than 36,900 streetlights across the borough have been replaced with new LED derivatives, reducing CO2 emissions by over 3,400 tonnes per year and saving the Council over £1m on its annual energy bill.

There has been an increase in awareness of environmental issues caused by lockdown. Our Covid-19 impact survey highlighted how 80% of people in the borough experienced a better local environment and 78% support the prioritising of environmental issues by the council such as reducing our carbon footprint, air quality and encouraging walking and cycling.

Where we want to be

Research conducted by the Local Government Association has found that with the correct support from Government 700,000 green jobs could be created by 2030.

It is crucial that Wigan borough shares in this growth and that the green economy benefits everyone

– as consumers (saving money on energy bills), workers (in new green jobs) and citizens (in a borough which is cleaner, greener and more resilient).

We have real businesses in the borough who are experts. As an anchor partnership we need to tap into their skills and expertise. Bringing this sector together and working with them at an early stage to develop appropriate frameworks is a priority so that the capacity and skills are there locally when needed.

There is a huge amount of work to do in this sector with skills providers and we can use the apprenticeship levy and skills pathway to grow the sector. We need to update our labour market intelligence to detect and reflect green jobs.

We need to work with schools on the growth of the green economy to shape young people's aspirations and develop careers advice on green jobs and pathways into them. We need to support skills providers to understand green skills gaps and design programmes for Wigan residents.

Case study

Moss Bank Nurseries

Moss Bank Nurseries in Leigh has been a long-term partner with the council in helping to make the borough look beautiful.

The family run businesses is a great example of a locally-based company which shares the same values as the council, invests in the employment and training of local people and is now adapting its offer to support the council's low carbon ambitions.

Moss Bank has been contracted for many years

to supply plants for the borough's wonderful parks as well as hanging baskets for Wigan In Bloom.

They have recruited apprentices as part of the contract and are always supportive of the training of the council's horticultural apprentices and the principles of The Deal in supporting local community groups.

The nurseries are now supporting the council's move to a more naturalised borough with more perennial plants and wildflowers being planted

which reduces the carbon footprint of the operation compared to annual planting.

The nurseries are using their expertise to support the council in this approach.

The future partnership between the council and Moss Bank will build on the training and employment opportunities available to people locally while also helping to create a low carbon and greener borough.



Working with business

Where we are

Wigan Borough has vibrant business sector with the vast majority being small to medium enterprises. There are almost 9,000 SMEs from a huge range of sectors, creating wealth, jobs and driving productivity in the borough.

There are also 30 large companies employing more than 250 people. On top of this there are more than 240 social enterprises and community interest companies proving different models of business with social outcomes can thrive in the borough.

There are existing strong partnerships between the public sector in the borough and the business sector. Throughout Covid-19 we have expanded our interaction to the business community through the distribution of thousands of grants and further advice and support to help our businesses through an incredibly challenging time.

We have also worked in partnership with businesses to help isolated people in our communities and some local manufacturers have even adapted to address shortages in PPE in the health and care sector. Wigan Council's business engagement team supports hundreds of businesses every

year and connects them with specialist advice on recruitment, accessing financial support and specialist digital advice particularly through its links with the Business Growth Hub.

The Deal has enabled the team to have a different conversation with businesses and open up ways in which they can support their local community.

They have brought private sector businesses and community interest companies (CIC) together bringing much needed advice and support to community businesses and helping them become sustainable.

Where we want to be

The borough has strong foundations on which to grow even further the economy between the locally committed private, public and third sector. As an anchor partnership we can harness the collective wisdom, experience, energy of Wigan borough to grow our local businesses.

The response to Covid-19 must help develop a new ecosystem of support for locally rooted businesses focused on growing generative and carbon neutral sectors.

We need to do more to support different models of business

such as small enterprises, community organisations, cooperatives and municipal ownership. This must involve more available expert support so that locally owned and socially minded enterprises can become sustainable and prosper.

As a partnership we must involve community businesses at a strategic level so we understand the barriers they face and develop co-produced solutions.

Having strong knowledge and relationships with sectors and businesses in the borough is essential to an effective progressive procurement approach. Using a local supplier to provide goods or services can lead to employment opportunities and job creation, as well as sustain existing jobs.

This can tackle the cycle of deprivation supports other businesses through the local supply chain and is important for skills and apprenticeships. A proactive approach of an anchor partnership to engage with and support local sectors prior to major procurement will help enable local businesses to successfully be part of the procurement process. Ultimately we want public procurement opportunities to be accessible to our best local, ethical suppliers.

Case study

Abram Ward Community Co-operative – Made in Wigan project

Abram Ward Community Co-operative was established in 2013 to create a 'bottom up' approach to growing the community, and also Wigan Borough.

It is based at Platt Bridge Community Zone, from which it completed a community asset transfer in 2014.

From there, it provides advice, support and training to the local community to help establish social enterprises and community businesses. The

co-operative has developed a neighbourhood planning forum to allow the community to have their say on both economic development and health and well-being.

It has also developed the Wigan Borough Social Enterprise Network, and works with it to address issues identified by the community. Abram Ward Community Cooperative is now leading on the campaign to designate Wigan Borough as a Social Enterprise Town, via Social Enterprise UK's kitemark.

The co-operative is one of six organisations across the country that are part of the

Power to Change 'Empowering Places' programme. Through this, it has created a Local Wealth Building project named 'Made in Wigan', which aims to reduce inequality via the growth of community businesses.

Made in Wigan is a project that aims to work with all Anchor Institutions and the Private Sector to ensure there is a 'line of sight' of Social Enterprise's and Community Businesses that will empower local people to spend locally, whilst be trained to showcase their 'special something' and turn it into a service that meets the needs of the local community.



MissPlaces - Made In Wigan



Dave Baxter - Made In Wigan



Wigan Warriors visiting Men's sheds

Next steps

- 1.** Commit with ambition as an anchor partnership to take community wealth building approach across the whole public and third sector in Wigan borough and engage proactively with the private sector.
- 2.** Embed community wealth building into our procurement policies, recruitment processes and way we manage our assets and drive forward our ambitions on green jobs, housing, and working with businesses of all kinds.
- 3.** Bring together community, citizens and businesses to make this happen and create the conditions for community wealth building to thrive and change to happen.

“If you wish to build a ship, do not divide people into teams and send them to the forest to cut wood. Instead, teach them to long for the vast and endless sea.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



The Wigan borough partnership

