Wigan Council

Community Wealth and Health Building through Social Value and Beyond: Progress with Unity

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Community Wealth Building through Social Value

Our New Era for Wigan Borough – Progress with Unity - defines our two core missions as a council: to create fair opportunities for all our children, families, residents and businesses, and make all our towns and neighbourhoods flourish for those who live and work in them. Community Wealth Building is an integral component of our new era, recognising that community wealth is community health. It is a key priority for the Council, and we are taking a progressive and creative approach to social value and how we make the most positive impact for the people that live and work here through our commissioning and contracting.

We recognise that there is huge potential for us as an anchor institution to influence the social and economic determinants of health in the borough. We are committed to working individually and collectively as partners on different projects to boost economic, social, health and education prospects for local communities. We see social value as a key lever in harnessing this potential and have developed a new approach and policy to help deliver our ambitions.

This brochure sets out how Wigan Council will use its purchasing power to maximise the local impact of our spend. This will ensure that every pound we spend has the most value for our communities and residents, which is even more important in a time of continued austerity and increasing demand for services. This means making decisions that are not just based on financial cost but look at benefits to the wider community.





Introduction to Wigan Borough

Wigan Council is proud that over the last decade, we have shown a exciting new phase of reform for the council and our place partnership. We launched Progress with Unity, our new era, which was co-created with our residents, staff and partners.

Within our borough long-standing economic, social and health inequalities remain – in fact many have worsened over the past decade. The pandemic and cost of living crisis have brought new challenges and deepened inequalities, and, like many councils, we are experiencing increasing demand on our services, particularly in social care, combined with on-going funding restraints.



The Face of Wigan, The Wiend, Wigan.

We now have two core missions that as a borough partnership we will unite to tackle in the decade ahead:

Mission 1

Create fair opportunities for all children, families, residents & businesses.

"Together, we will break down the barriers that create financial, health, education and environmental inequalities in our borough"

Mission 2

Make all our towns and neighbourhoods flourish for those who live and work in them.

"Together, in genuine partnership with our residents and businesses, who know our communities best, we will help each town and neighbourhood in the borough to celebrate and maintain their identity whilst understanding and helping to achieve what is needed to thrive."

We are stronger together when we...

As a whole place movement, Progress with Unity is built on relationships, shared commitments and ways of working that have developed from 10 years of person-centred asset-based approaches.

We have developed a whole place framework for our shared ways of working. We want suppliers we work with to share these and embrace our approach, and commit to tackling inequalities in our Borough in this way:



See the person

Take a person-centred approach by putting people at the heart of every conversation, recognising their strengths and assets.



Listen deeply

Recognise that communities know best about what matters to them and design public services together.



Know this place

Focus on what helps prevent problems and connect up data and local insight to target when and where solutions are needed.



Connect to neighbourhoods

Place important services that span all generations close to where people call home and around our schools and GPs.



Do the right thing

Set the conditions for great ideas to flourish and for everyone to 'do the right thing'.



Show our love and pride

Show our love and pride for our work and borough and demonstrate this through our values and behaviours - Be Accountable, Be Courageous, Be Positive, Be Kind.

We want to work with businesses and providers who share our values and are invested in and committed to the Borough. Businesses that do a brilliant job delivering the best possible quality and outcome for our residents is something we expect of all our contracts and the people we work with. But we want more than that too.

We want to move beyond traditional social value delivery though more creative commissioning approaches that really work for and create opportunities in our communities. We want to build on the assets and skills of the people that live here and reduce health inequalities in our borough. There is already some great work going on, but we want to really strengthen and build on this.

The success of this approach is well-demonstrated in the CQC's assessment of our adult social care provision, which has been rated Outstanding, and the highest rated of all local authority assessments to date. This success has been made possible by the approach we have taken to commissioning our Ethical Homecare Framework, reinvesting £520 million in our Borough through local suppliers, alongside delivering excellent care outcomes, and a diverse range of social and workforce positives.

We are keen to work with people that want to work with us to achieve these ambitions; good businesses where this kind of thinking is naturally in their DNA - to do the best for the people that live and work here. We are looking to create equal partnerships, inspire businesses to be creative, think beyond the contract and bring their own ideas. We are happy to work with businesses looking to make a healthy profit, if they also care about and give back to the borough as much as we do. We want a good match for us both. This is not a "tick box" exercise; we will ask you to commit to a proportionate social value contribution as part of our tender processes as you would expect, but we are looking to go beyond just a percentage approach – we are looking to develop long-term commitment and authentic partnerships between contractors and communities, making a genuine impact in local areas.

Tackling Inequalities

We are committed to tackling the challenges and inequalities that we know our borough faces. We know that there are a set of key elements that can make a huge difference to the health of the people that live here. Things like good jobs, access to education, a decent place to live, connections to the community are huge building blocks that can really improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. We see the potential that harnessing community wealth building through social value can help support in our ambition to reduce health inequalities across our fourteen towns. And we want to work with businesses and suppliers who are keen to help us make a difference in achieving our ambitions around building community wealth and health.

Some of the inequalities faced by some of the residents of our Borough are stark. Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides data illustrating deepening local challenges and demographic trends, creating more demand on public services:

17.5% of residents live in communities in the 10% most deprived nationally.

33% of people in Wigan borough live in the 20% most deprived areas of England.

Child poverty has increased from 16% to 23% in the past eight years.

People are dying on average 10 years sooner in one part of the borough compared to another.

Life expectancy has worsened for both men and women over the past five years.

The percentage of working age people in employment has dropped significantly over the past five years and at 70% is below regional and national average.

We have the fastest ageing population in Greater Manchester with the number of people aged 85 years and more is set to grow 90% by 2040.

Those aged 65 years and older make up 20% of the population compared to 18% nationally.

Through our partnerships built together, we are empowering local businesses and SMEs to work with us to address these inequalities through improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing. Over time, this approach will improve population health and contribute to reductions in health inequalities. We need to improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing and distribute social value opportunities and benefits fairly across our communities to make sure we impact on inequalities.

We have codesigned an approach to social value to help bring this to life. We have developed a suite of social value expectations outlining the practical commitments that we want businesses that we work with to contribute to. We want to make it clear and easy for our commissioners and contract managers as well as our contractors when awarding contracts – this is our social value expectation, let's deliver it together. Social value delivery through our contracts is to be truly rooted in local communities, tailored to what will work best in neighbourhoods and to be creative and accessible across businesses, SME's and VCFSE organisations to maximise opportunities to benefit from the sharing of community wealth across the borough.

The list will not be exhaustive, and we will be expecting contractors and businesses to come with their own creative ideas of how they can directly address our inequalities and deliver social value. Get to know the place, the people that live here -what do the community want and need - we want to co-design some of this with our communities – what skills and assets do they have that we can connect together.







What Wigan can Offer

Wigan is one of the best located boroughs for business in the Northwest half-way between Manchester and Liverpool, on both the M6 and the West Coast Mainline. We are connected, outward looking, proactive and business orientated.

We are a supportive Borough for new and existing businesses, smaller enterprises, and the VCSFE Sector. A flagship example of our 'Progress with Unity' collaborative approach to improve participation in education and training is our Wigan Education and Skills Partnership (WESP). The partnership was founded in 2020 and is a collaboration between Wigan Council, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WWL), Wigan and Leigh College and Edge Hill University.

In 2023, all partners of WESP signed a historic Civic University Agreement that placed Edge Hill as Wigan Borough's university and deepened the partnership between all four organisations. The WESP is an example of outstanding education providers working together with key employers.

Future Apprentices for Business Grant

Funding is available for businesses to take on apprentices, as part of our ambitions to increase skills and opportunities for our residents. Wigan Council launched the Future Apprentices for Business (FAB) grants programme in February 2023 to support businesses to create new apprenticeships.



With grants of £3,000 for general recruitment or £5,000 when you recruit a local young person from our talent pool, visit our FAB webpages for more information and details of how to apply.

The FAB programme is designed to help employers afford to invest in their business, meet recruitment needs and attract a higher calibre of applicants to apprenticeship roles. The council itself is the only council in the country to be in the top 100 apprenticeship employers list. We have a Business Consortium that meets regularly to explore ways of working together, and for the council to listen to people's experiences.

Invest in Wigan Team

We have an Invest in Wigan Team who provide free, independent advice to start, run or grow a business. They work closely with external organisations who can support businesses to develop and grow.
The Invest in Wigan Team work with colleagues and external partners to offer support with recruitment, workforce training and development, business planning, digital growth, identifying premises through our Find a Property Service, networking, and employee wellbeing and more.

The team can arrange an initial appointment to identify and access relevant support. Following this, a named, single point of contact will provide ongoing support and notify your business of future opportunities and developments.

The team can also discuss the 'Believe in Business Charter' a voluntary agreement between the council and a local business which signifies a joint commitment to support inclusive economic growth within the borough.



The Believe in Business Charter encourages sustainable growth, collaboration, identifies new opportunities and celebrates the achievements of our local businesses. If you would like to discuss how the Invest in Wigan team may be able to support your business, please call **01942 489190** or email business@wigan.gov.uk, or visit our webpages.

Good Trader Scheme

Businesses can also become members of our Good Trader Scheme, which is run by Wigan Trading Standards and helps local people find reputable traders - and supports local businesses.

Become a member and join around 200 local businesses already enjoying the benefits of being on the Scheme.

Community Wealth Building and Co-Design: Working with Businesses that care about our community

Working together, the Council's Programme Office and the Central Procurement Team have co-designed our approach to social value with the people that it has the most impact upon: our residents, our local VCSFE sector, our local businesses, and our own staff. We are committed to making sure we understand local needs within different communities, and we will use a range of data (including our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) and local community insights to inform the design of services and development of contracts.

The council recognises the value of our VCFSE sector in terms of their actions to address inequalities and we are committed to building even stronger relationships with our VCFSE sector organisations, for example to increase or improve contracting opportunities and encourage consortium or collaborative arrangements between VCSFE organisations when bidding for contracts.

We also recognise and celebrate the fact that our borough has some incredible talent and skills within our VCFSE sector, alongside our local business sector - and we are keen to connect these assets and skills up within our social value approach.

To co-design work we asked a set of key questions tailored to assets and experiences:

- What should we ask for in terms of social value
- What will make the biggest impact in your community?
- What should we be looking for when we spend council money?
- Which kinds of businesses would you choose?
- How can we make process as easy as possible to get the right people working with us?
- How does it feel working with us as a Council? How could we make it easier?

We have used this invaluable feedback to really help us shape up our social value approach so we can be sure we are asking businesses and contractors to deliver on what matters to the people in this place. The overarching theme that underpinned all this feedback was that need for businesses to have a real sense of connection with, and love and pride in our borough. We have weaved this feedback into our approach:

What people that live here told us...

"Work with businesses that care about our community."

"Ask us what we would want in our local area – if the work is taking place in a community, ask the people that live there what would make a difference."

"Different areas will want different things; we are all different. "

"Tell us what's been agreed so we know what to look out for."

"Local jobs please"

"Use local suppliers – keep the money local."

"Local first, even if it's a small company, work with them and give them chance to grow."

"Don't just go with the cheapest, think about what will work best for the local area in the long run."

"Make sure you follow up; did they do what they said they would."

"Climate change is important to us".

"Tell us what great things have happened through social value and contracts, we want to hear the difference it is making for people living here."

"More volunteering opportunities – people need a pathway into employment"

"Jobs and opportunities for all, some people need more help that others so let's help them".

"In kind support as well as financial would be great."

"Sponsor community events please"

"14 towns in the borough – we probably all want different things – so ask us, and we will tell you."

"We need well paid apprenticeships"

"Work experience for young people"

Our local Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise groups told us...

"It's a great thing to make sure that every pound that the Council spend has the best impact on the local community."

"We would love more support from businesses to help us continue to run our brilliant projects."

"We have some amazing skills and experiences within our organisation; we would love to see more businesses buy our skills and expertise to help improve what they do and how they do things."

"Make sure businesses get to know us – ask us what would make a difference in our local area, we have some amazing knowledge you could tap into. "

"We could be a good reference if we know you are genuinely invested in the local area."

"Make sure the process is as easy as possible."

Local Businesses told us...

"We want to deliver social value in the way that makes the best local impact."

"It is fair and should be a part of the process that businesses/ contractors get to know the local area, find out what people want."

"A clear and descriptive menu of options will help us know what is needed.

"Make sure that the process and requirements don't unintentionally exclude smaller businesses."

"Make sure you ask the right questions. This should not be a tick box exercise."

"It is fair and should be a part of the process that businesses/ contractors get to know the local area, find out what people want."

"Measure the impact that these things have on real people, not just the numbers."

Match My Project

Having really listened to what people have told us, and to make sure we generate a good match to what our communities want and need, we have invested in a platform called Match My Project.



Match my Project is an online platform which connects businesses to voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCSFE) organisations in Wigan Borough.

Communities Organisations can reach out with requests to help run their projects in the best possible way. This can be anything from financial contributions, donations of equipment, building improvements, staff volunteering or skill matching to offer expertise etc. And it's a really user friendly way of businesses knowing that they are offering things that will genuinely help and make a difference in communities. The expectation will depend on the size and nature of the contract and is just one of the ways you will be expected to play your part building community wealth and health through social value commitment.



Making a real difference

We would love you to join us. So please get in touch:

	Building a future workforce	Building Community Wealth & Health through the local economy	Supporting our local communities	Addressing environmental impact
1	More local people in employment	No. of FTE local employees hired or retained	Number of local residents to be employed on contract (FTE)	Reporting of gender pay gap Paying real living wage
2	Opportunities for disadvantaged people	Number of hours to be dedicated to supporting unemployed and/or economically inactive residents into work No of employees (FTE) to be hired on the contract who are not in employment, education, or training (NEETS) as a result of a recruitment programme	Developing Skills and Future Employability Building stronger community links Creating Economic benefits locally	
3	Employment & Economic Inclusion	No of supported employment opportunities to be provided No of local apprentices (to be turned into permanent position) SEND work experience / future job opportunities No of supported internships No of care leavers to be employed	Support for carers Inclusive & accessible recruitment practices Building confidence, independence and social skills Greater inclusion, diversity, and equal life chances for SEND residents Reduced youth unemployment and improved long-term employment outcomes A skilled, stable local workforce and stronger local economy	Measures to tackle inequality in employment, skills and pay (recruitment practices, progression routes, working conditions, retention practices) Reduced inequality Stronger local economy Improved Wellbeing Better social outcomes
3	Education, Skills & Engagement	Number of work experience placements, study visits, and talks with local schools and further education colleges No of hours spent on local school and college visits	Local Schools – believe in your future – Wigan initiative with Y9 – Construction, Health and Social Care Local Schools – sponsor school trips, pay for	Strengthens future local workforce Improves access to opportunities for all young people

		supporting pupils e.g. delivering careers talks	transport, pay for swimming lessons etc	Breaks down barriers to employment
4	Training and workforce development	Number of weeks of staff training that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported	Sponsor course / training in local areas based on skills related to the types of jobs coming up Sponsor a job – e.g. if can't accommodate supported employment / care leaver in the business then expectation to sponsor and fund a role with another local business to create opportunities	Creates fairer access to economic opportunities for smaller, local organisations Enhances community capacity and access to resources Delivers visible improvements tailored to community needs Promotes inclusive engagement and reduces access to barriers
5	Supporting local supply chain	No of meet the buyer events hosted Opportunities provided for local SMEs (advice, mentoring, partnerships)	% of contract value subcontracted to local businesses % of total spend within Wigan Borough supply chain	Reducing barriers for smaller and local organisations Reduces economic inequality
6	Supporting VCFSE Sector	Financial contribution to the VCFSE sector – amount Donations / In Kind contributions to local projects Number of projects committed to deliver in communities via our Match My Project Programme	Donation of laptops/IT/mobile data allowance equipment to VCSFE groups, care leavers, care homes, home care customers, local schools supporting living etc Supporting our VCFSE groups through donation of fixtures, fittings and furniture Purchase training / motivational / team building / mediation from our VCSFE sector to upskill / enhance your own workforce / organisation	
7	Community engagement & Facilities	Number of Community spaces to be rented for consultations / meetings		

		Number of staff volunteer hours to support community projects		
8	Community Sponsorship & Social Impact	Sponsorship of community & cultural events Needs… what facilities / sponsorship would help	Local Sports Teams, kit sponsorship, sponsorship of trips, improving facilities	Stronger, more connected communities
9	Supporting vulnerable groups	Supported Living / In House Services – sponsorship of trips, holidays, transport	Tailored opportunities for care leavers, SEND individuals, and disadvantaged groups	
10	Offer Mental Health Support to your employees	Promote health & wellbeing (better understanding through training, practical help e.g. Gym membership or ways to improve physical & MH of workforce) Presence of a workplace mental health champion	Fund mental health support / counselling sessions in local area to meet need	
11	Contribute towards Carbon reduction & Sustainability	Committed to carbon reduction plan Number of hours volunteer time provided dedicated to environmental improvement	Number of miles driven in low or zero-emission staff vehicles on project	Solar panels Green tariff energy supplier Schools, wildlife gardens Low energy light bulbs
12	Sustainable operations	Training/educate around reduce waste	Implementation of waste management scheme focussed on recycling, reducing waste, and circular economy solutions	Percentage reduction in single-use plastics
13	Sustainable transport	Number of miles driven using low/zero-emission vehicles		Walk to work scheme Cycle to work scheme Bike Schemes
14	Additional Standards	Good Employment Charter accredited		
15	Focusing on projects in high demand or serious need of support (e.g. food bank, homelessness)	Invest in local initiatives	Community Food pantries to be supported through donations on a monthly basis	