



Sunderland Community Wealth Building

Annual Report 2020/2021



‘Developing assets, of all kinds, in such a way that the wealth stays local. Using local assets to make communities more vibrant. Aiming to help individuals, families and communities control their own economic destiny’


Sunderland
City Council





1. Introduction and Foreword

2. Community Wealth Building Delivery Plan

1. Demonstrating our Commitment

2. Developing the role of Anchor Institutions

3. Socially Productive Asset Management

4. Community Empowerment, Engagement and Involvement

5. Business Growth and Investment (inc Voluntary and Community Sector)

6. Increasing Social Value through Procurement and Wider Activity

7. Improving Community Resilience

3. 2021 and Beyond





Introduction and Foreword

Following Cabinet's approval of Sunderland's Community Wealth Building Strategy in March 2020, no-one could have predicted how quickly our lives would change, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From Tuesday 24th March 2020 onwards, our communities mobilised themselves like never before, looking out for each other and working together to support our most vulnerable. Communities continued to support each other throughout the pandemic, and the subsequent restrictions and lockdowns.

The Council, key partners and our Voluntary and Community Sector quickly and pragmatically established Area Community Hubs. These hubs coordinated supported to our residents, ringing them to check on their welfare if they were shielded, knocking on their door if we were unable to contact them by phone. A communication campaign was launched, to ensure all residents knew how to access help and support.

As the saying goes, 'necessity is the mother of invention' – and the creativity demonstrated throughout the city to support communities and businesses has been outstanding.

Throughout the Sunderland Community Wealth Building Annual Report 2020, we have highlighted the efforts made across our communities to support our most vulnerable residents, whilst also bringing significant investment into the city, continuing to create jobs and opportunities for our residents - growing local businesses and creating social enterprise, demonstrating the Council's commitment and determination to move forward, at pace, to ensure the Community Wealth Strategy is delivered successfully across the city.

A big thank you to all the Officers, Elected Members and Partners who are driving forward the Community Wealth Delivery Plan we appreciate the hard work of the Community Wealth Steering Group who are consistently moving the agenda forward.

We look forward to continuing our Community Wealth Building journey and here's to 2021 and beyond!



Cllr Graeme Miller

Leader of Sunderland City Council



Patrick Melia

Chief Executive





Community Wealth Building Delivery Plan

- 1. Demonstrating our Commitment**
- 2. Developing the role of Anchor Institutions**
- 3. Socially Productive Asset Management**
- 4. Community Empowerment, Engagement and Involvement**
- 5. Business Growth and Investment (inc Voluntary and Community Sector)**
- 6. Increasing Social Value through Procurement and Wider Activity**
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Demonstrating our Commitment

Following the approval of the Sunderland Community Wealth Building Strategy by Cabinet in March 2020, the Council has demonstrated its commitment to drive forward delivery of the strategy, working alongside partners, residents and business.

A Community Wealth Delivery Group was quickly established incorporating key senior officers from across the Council alongside the Cabinet Member for Vibrant City the Deputy Leader of the Council and representation from other political groups. Each of the five Area Committees also agreed to further support the Community Wealth Building Strategy, appointing their Area Committee Chair as the 'Community Wealth Champion' for the Area.

The Delivery Group meet monthly and follow a detailed delivery plan to ensure all elements of the strategy are developed and delivered. Community Wealth Building must also be considered as part of every Council decision and the strategies core principles are embedded into all service delivery plans, as well as staff performance and appraisals.

During 2020, the Council has:

- ✓ Established Community Wealth Building Delivery Group and action plan including clear metrics to measure performance and success
- ✓ Created Community Wealth Building Champions across the City supported through the Area Committees
- ✓ Launched a volunteering platform, which was used to coordinate the thousands of volunteers required to support the COVID Community Hubs
- ✓ Introduced an apprenticeship levy transfer scheme, to fund new apprenticeships with other employers, to support the development of skills and jobs within the City
- ✓ Became the first Council in the Northeast to be an Accredited Living Wage Employer in August 2020 and now formulating an action plan to make the City of Sunderland the first Accredited Living Wage city in the Northeast
- ✓ Embedded our Resident Engagement Strategy 'Let's Talk, engaging with over 50% of the population, which informed Neighbourhood Investment Plans and Community Wealth journey

Councillor Graeme Miller, Leader of Sunderland City Council, said: "We are delighted to receive the Living Wage accreditation which shows the Council's commitment to recognising the value of our workforce and ensures that a hard day's work receives a fair day's pay. Paying a living wage will not only benefit the lowest paid individuals providing public services but also the wider local economy, communities and the city."

This will lead to increased pay rates for hundreds of contract staff for example in security, care and support, highways, building services, stewarding for events, and in care homes. We would encourage other local employers to also commit to ensuring people receive a living wage."





Developing the role of Anchor Institutions

Sunderland Partnership Board brings together the city's anchor institutions from the public, private, voluntary and community sector, working collaboratively for the overall benefit of the city.

The Community Wealth Building Delivery Group are now focusing on extending the range of local employers currently considered as Anchor Institutions aiming to work with large businesses in the city.

The Sunderland Partnership Board are committed to the development of a Community Wealth Building Charter and linked with the City Plan. Anchor Institutions are part of the overall governance arrangements for Community Wealth Building delivery across Sunderland.

The Community Wealth Building Charter will focus on

- ✓ Fair Employment - creating fair and meaningful employment opportunities by recruiting from priority groups, paying the living wage and building progression routes for workers
- ✓ Reduce Carbon Emissions - committing to becoming a net-zero carbon organisations
- ✓ Procurement - committing to using all spend to support a diverse local business base
- ✓ Land and Asset Management - committing to the productive use of land and assets to support communities and enterprises
- ✓ Financial Power - committing to harnessing and growing local wealth

Sunderland Low Carbon Framework

Climate change represents a significant challenge for our generation. Over the past 50 years, the average global temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history and the trend is accelerating. 2019 was the second warmest year on record, according to the World Meteorological Organization. It is a global issue in relation to which every person, every organisation and every place has a role to play. Sunderland is committed to playing its part in tackling the global climate change emergency. Young people across the city identified the environment and climate change as their number one priority in the Young People's State of the City Debate held in November 2019, and the council declared a Climate Emergency earlier that year in March 2019.

We have set up a partnership-wide 2030 Shadow Board, chaired by the Leader of the Council, with representatives from partner organisations to ensure a co-ordinated and strategic approach to low carbon across the city. The 2030 Shadow Board's purpose is to work collectively to drive forward Sunderland's ambitions and commitment to tackling climate change. They have shaped the development of the Sunderland Low Carbon Framework (www.Sunderland.gov.uk/lowcarbon) which was adopted by the City Board in December 2020.

The 2030 Shadow Board brings together organisations including the council, Together for Children, Sunderland Youth Parliament, South Tyneside and Sunderland's NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, the University of Sunderland, Sunderland College, Gentoo as well as the Police, Fire Service, Transport for the North, and business partners through the North East England Chamber of Commerce, together with councillors representing each of the political groups on the Council. The Low Carbon Framework focuses activity around seven strategic priorities, putting people at its heart - changing our behaviours, changing our organisational policies and practices, and setting out five thematic areas under which work will be taken forward. These focus on the built environment, green economy, low carbon energy generation and storage, consumption and waste and low carbon and active transport.





Socially Productive Asset Management

Effective use of community assets is critical to a well-functioning place and vital for our city's public services. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year, we have seen how valuable these assets are in creating strong and resilient communities. Sunderland Council recognises that as community leaders, we have a responsibility to make sure that local assets are well used, well-maintained and are supported with a sustainable business model. Sunderland Council has long been committed to ensuring our city's assets provide real value for our residents and visitors. We are proud to work with local community groups, including those that have taken on community assets, working together to deliver social value.

One of the biggest challenges councils and communities face is how to sustain valued local community assets in the face of ongoing austerity. A solution that has been proven to work for communities is asset transfer

Beyond budgets: drivers of asset transfer

Sunderland Council believes community asset transfer is fundamentally about giving local people and community groups greater control in the future of their area and their community in line with promoting the Council's community wealth strategy. If local groups own or manage community buildings and land, such as community centres, sports pitches, allotments or changing rooms for example, it will help foster a sense of belonging and bring together people from different backgrounds. Community ownership of buildings can also play a part in raising local people's aspirations, in enhancing the local economy, environment and have the capacity to strengthen the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector.

Sunderland Council is taking the following actions to deliver this priority:

- ✓ Auditing existing asset portfolio to identify opportunities to increase social benefit – mapping across the city and across neighbourhoods
- ✓ Reviewing existing Community Asset policy to ensure community lease and rent arrangements are working effectively
- ✓ Determining a more proactive approach to communities taking ownership of assets including upskilling in business planning and governance
- ✓ Supporting management of assets linked with Community Support Workers and growing capacity within Sunderland's Voluntary and Community Sector

Elmore Green Space and Social Enterprise

Elmore Green Space is a circa 60-hectare site which is Allocated Open Countryside. The site, which was a former golf-course had the potential to allow for several uses to be introduced, creating useable green space as well as protecting the natural habitat for future generations.

Sunderland City Council, following significant resident consultation through 'Let's Talk' are now committed to developing the site and supporting the creation of a social enterprise, that will coordinate the running and activities held within the site. Future developments and activities will include:

- Pocket forests which are 'owned' by schools and community groups





- Café – opened within the former golf club on site (social enterprise)
- Visitor / Exhibition Centre which highlights history of the area - opened within the former golf club on site
- Garden Centre – grow and sell plants – opened within the former golf club on site and utilising adjacent open green space
- Community Gardens and Allotments
- Training opportunities linked with Café; Exhibition Centre; Land Management; Garden Centre; Community Gardens
- Walking and cycling routes and enhancing the comprehensive route which is already in place linked with Stephenson Railway which travels from Elemore to Silksworth and the River Wear. Stephenson Railway will be 200 years old in 2022.
- Car Park and cycling provision / stands / potential cycle hire – improving and making safe the car park on site and installing cycling provision
- Leisure activities and Mini Festivals – operated and arranged by social enterprise within the open green space, utilising café and visitor centre, working with local schools and communities
- Wildlife corridors and opportunities to observe wildlife in natural habitat – design must support and nurture wildlife in the area to ensure no further biodiversity decline – link with ‘Eco Tourism’





Community Empowerment, Engagement and Involvement

The Sunderland Neighbourhood Investment Plans were written in consultation with residents and partners from across the city. The plans were developed to demonstrate a commitment to real change and investment within our neighbourhoods, across all partnerships to create solutions, alongside residents which will improve the local area. Each of the plans has been allocated funding to support delivery, alongside Area Committee Neighbourhood Funding.

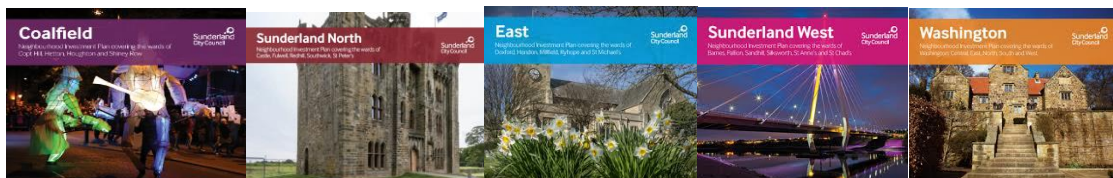
During 2019 we launched our resident engagement strategy – Let’s Talk Sunderland, we asked residents what they liked about their neighbourhood, what they’d like to change and how they could become more involved within their community. We received an excellent response from residents of all ages and communities. Clearly the residents of Sunderland love their neighbourhoods and their city – however they feel it could be better cared for; with more enforcement against those who don’t care about the city. They value the strong community spirit and they want to support vulnerable communities including improving financial wellbeing. Significant investment is ongoing across Sunderland creating an exciting and vibrant, healthy and dynamic city for everyone - we must however bring back the vibrancy of our neighbourhoods too, ensuring all residents share the journey.


Sunderland Council also continues to

- ✓ Promote and grow Volunteering opportunities through the Volunteering platform
- ✓ Promote and support community projects through Crowdfund Sunderland - over £411k raised so far
- ✓ Seek opportunities and external funding to respond to “left-behind” communities – working in partnership with the Northeast Funding Network to continue to support and develop the five Area VCS Networks
- ✓ Increase capacity within the city to support the Voluntary and Community Sector through the co-creation of a VCS Alliance and implementation of targeted and dedicated additional community development support across the 5 geographical Areas in the city, in partnership with Sunderland Clinical Commission Group and Gentoo
- ✓ Encourage active resident participation in local decision-making – online Council meetings and wider resident consultation and involvement through Let’s Talk



- ✓ **CROWDFUND Sunderland** launched in early 2020 and to-date 23 projects supported with over £243,578 raised to support communities across the city
- ✓ 100,000 residents consulted through Let’s Talk to inform the Neighbourhood Investment Plans



- ✓  Volunteer platform launched and over 1,500 residents actively volunteering in Sunderland





Business Growth and Investment including the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

Supporting VCS infrastructure across Neighbourhoods

Discussions have been ongoing for some time to determine arrangements which would support a thriving VCS sector in Sunderland. Currently there is no single voice, no strong strategic direction, and no investment strategy.

The diversity of the current support arrangements are recognised and the detrimental impact this has on the ease of engagement both for local commissioners and national funding organisations. A Cabinet report submitted earlier in 2020 recognised the commitment of the Council, alongside Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group and Gentoo as partners, to the development and funding of a VCS Alliance which would be the pivotal group for engagement with the sector and with external organisations.

All local VCSE organisations have had the opportunity to inform developments. The impact of Covid-19 on the VCSE sector, both positive and negative and this learning has featured as part of consultation, specifically in the “State of the Sector” work which recognised both the threats and opportunities and noted the considerable role the sector has played in the City’s community response.

The consultation and engagement process have proved beneficial in understanding more about the sector and the individual organisations within it, and it is clear that the views and needs of the VCSE organisations across the city are diverse – so a one size fits all approach will not work. But we must start somewhere, and the neighbourhood approach is agreed as an ideal place to start.

VCSE Alliance partners are now pressing ahead with the Alliance which will include representation from the three partners, with representation of the sector through an Alliance Manager responsible for driving the Alliance agenda and engaging with the sector through the Area VCSE Networks. Depending on the areas for discussion additional representation would be invited to shape the discussions as a partnership - this might be by theme e.g. mental health, youth or by locality or some other area of focus.

As part of these developments funding has been secured through the EU Community-led Local Delivery Programme which has VCSE capacity building as one of its priorities, to part-fund an area Community Support Worker in each of the 5 localities. The Community Support Workers will focus on supporting the area networks and the VCSE organisations within a given locality and in delivering the priorities of the Alliance. The key objectives of the posts are as follows:

- ✓ supporting VCS organisations to build their capacity and add value to current initiatives
- ✓ attracting additional funding from external sources, including identifying potential funding sources, supporting the development of funding applications, and providing training to build the capacity of organisations in responding to fund raising and local commissioning opportunities
- ✓ ensuring organisations have the capacity to recruit, support, train and retain volunteers
- ✓ engaging and building relationships with residents ensuring they are involved in sharing their views and shaping the community
- ✓ identifying and promoting opportunities to improve the wealth of local communities by the most effective use of local assets

Key outputs:

- ✓ Funding secured and five Community Support Workers supporting the VCSE
- ✓ VCS Alliance Developed





Expanding local SME sector and co-operative enterprise, as part of the Small Business Action Plan

The Business Investment Team continues to offer a wide range of business support services to local SMEs to promote start up and growth. Support services include housing local SMEs in our business centres (Evolve, Software Centre and Washington Business Centre), providing information, advice and guidance, land / property searches, referral to wider local and regional support available, as well as financial assistance where possible to promote the growth of key sectors. The team works with local and regional partners including North East Local Economic Partnership (NE LEP), University of Sunderland, North East Business and Innovation Centre (NE BIC), Sunderland Software City and RTC North to ensure that Sunderland based SMEs access as much joined up support as possible. A small business action plan has been developed in recent years and is being reviewed and updated in line with adoption of the Community Wealth Building Strategy to bring additional focus to social enterprises and cooperative businesses.

The team is currently administering a £337,500.00 Innovation Grant scheme, part funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), for SMEs who are developing new products or services to the market / to the business. Eligible SMEs can access up to £25,000 of grant funding, up to 50% of the total project cost. To date, £229,039.50 of grant funding has been offered across 18 SMEs within the city including one social enterprise (case study below). The programme is due to end in June 2023.

Evidence from local economic development partners indicates that enquiries regarding business start-up have increased in 2020, in part at least as a result of increased job uncertainty and redundancies attributed to the impact of the pandemic. The NE BIC and Social Acumen continue to offer one to one start-up advice to individuals looking to set up a social enterprise or co-operative via specialist advisors, with the NE BIC also providing wider business start-up advice and guidance.

Case Study - Special I Apps

In 2020, Special I Apps, a social enterprise based in The Old Rectory in Houghton le Spring which develops educational apps for children with special educational needs and disabilities including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Downs Syndrome, was awarded an ERDF Innovation Grant to support the development and marketing of their apps, creating new employment as a result.

In addition, a bid has been developed and submitted for a pilot project to strengthen the support ecosystem for social enterprises, encouraging people (especially those experiencing health issues), to start and grow social businesses, and creating 'Healthy Enterprise'. If successful, this intervention will pilot inclusive forms of business advice, incorporating principles of counselling and coaching to develop confidence and resilience amongst entrepreneurs. The bid has been developed in partnership with the NE Local Enterprise Partnership, University of Sunderland, the NE BIC and the Council to the Health Foundation's 'Economies for Healthier Lives' funding programme (EOI due 29/01/21) with up to £500,000 available to pilot a number of economic interventions focussed on reducing health inequalities.





Progressing all opportunities to support improved resilience of SME sector (COVID grants and stats)

Since March 2020, the Business Investment Team's main role has been to support local SMEs during the pandemic. They have liaised with over 1200 businesses across all sectors since early March 2020. This has included supporting them to access government grants, where they are eligible, as well as signposting them to other forms of support including the Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Scheme (CLBILS), and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs).

The Council set up dedicated web pages for businesses and employers (<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/Covid-19Business>) with links to key information, advice and guidance to help ensure the city's businesses were able to maximise the take-up of the support for which they are eligible. This has been maintained on a regular basis, with social media regularly signposting businesses to updates.

A range of support measures have been introduced by Government in relation to Coronavirus and its impact on businesses, from March 2020 onwards. These measures have included:

- ✓ additional business rates reliefs, waiving charges to the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sectors as well as Nurseries for 2020/21;
- ✓ loan programmes (Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Bounce-Back Loan Scheme);
- ✓ deferral of VAT payments;
- ✓ changes to Statutory Sick Pay;
- ✓ the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme;
- ✓ the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (allowing businesses to furlough employees) with the subsequent associated Job Retention Bonus;
- ✓ the Kickstart job placement scheme.

Covid-19 Business Support Grants

There has also been a number of cash grants made available from government (Small Business Grant Fund, Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund, Discretionary Fund, Local Restrictions Support Grant schemes, Additional Restrictions Grant, Christmas Support Payment for Wet-led Pubs and the Closed Business Lockdown Payment). These have been administered by the Business Rates Team and Business Investment Team with support from colleagues across the Council as appropriate. A summary of this support and the impact it has on the city's SME community is noted as follows:

- ✓ Small Business Grant Fund and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund – over 4,000 payments made with a value of over £45.5m to eligible businesses and organisations (NB RHLG was also open to larger companies within State Aid limits)
- ✓ Discretionary Grant – Phase 1 – £725,000 (117 SMEs)
- ✓ Discretionary Grant – Phase 2 – £1,685,000 (94 SMEs)
- ✓ 36 grants awarded to charities and CICs through the Discretionary Grant schemes
- ✓ Local Restrictions Support Grant schemes – Government schemes (to date, including the Christmas Business Lockdown Payment) - £13,031,983.06





- ✓ Local Restrictions Support Grant – enhanced scheme (covering businesses without their own rateable value and direct suppliers to the eligible sectors) through the Additional Restrictions Grant (to date, including the Christmas Business Lockdown Payment one-off payment) – £ 1,557,863,67
- ✓ Total number of SMEs paid through LRSG overall - 2,436
- ✓ 19 grants awarded to CICs through overall LRSG scheme

In addition to the grants detailed above, the Government announced additional business rates reliefs for eligible properties in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sectors as well as Nurseries. The Business Rates team have awarded reliefs totalling over £41.96m to 1,528 eligible properties which benefits small businesses as well as larger companies.

BREEZ - Business Renewables Energy Efficiency Sunderland



In addition to COVID-19 related support, the Council is working with SMEs to reduce their energy costs via a European Regional Development Fund project (<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/Breez>). As part of the project, SMEs are provided with a fully funded energy audit / energy savings opportunities report setting out recommended energy-saving measures, indicative upfront costs and the return of investment period from the reduction in energy bills. SMEs may also qualify for 50% grant funding towards the cost of installing the recommended measures. Typically, the scheme offers funding towards microgeneration (eg photovoltaics), insulation, heating upgrades and LED lighting.

The programme has effectively engaged with a total of 74 SMEs to date, with 10 projects completed. A further 11 businesses are currently installing energy efficient measures and a further 20 are undergoing the quoting process.

Sunderland Gift Card

In November 2020, Sunderland became the first city in the North East to launch its own gift card scheme, as part of its on-going commitment to boosting the local economy. The card enables recipients to spend the value at a range of outlets citywide, including shops, beauty salons, hairdressers, restaurants and bars. It has proved to be very popular Sunderland residents and businesses of all sizes including a number of the city's independent businesses. 120 businesses have signed up to take part so far, with £26,441 in total gift card sales from November – December 2020 and £7,465 spent in local businesses so far. Small businesses Ibbitson's Butchers and Thoburn Fresh Produce are in the top 10 for Gift Card expenditure to date, alongside larger brands including Primark, Greggs and Marks & Spencer. The Sunderland Gift Card is part of the Reopening High Streets Safely project, which is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.



Developing new business, mutual and social enterprise start-ups as well as existing co-operatives looking to expand, using our Community Development Fund as funding support and opportunities to match fund with CLLD

A range of discussions have taken place during 2020 and are ongoing to enable delivery to come forward as part of the CLLD programme, with work continuing to seek to identify suitable match funding.





Existing business start-up support delivered by the BIC includes the Prospecting for Enterprise Initiative project, funded through the Community Led Local Development programme and funding allocated by the Council's West Area Committee, which is designed to take the expert support of advisers from NE BIC to the west of Sunderland. By delivering workshops and one-to-one meetings in the community, the project aims to reach as many people as possible who live in the Pallion, St Anne's, Barnes, Silksworth, St Chad's and Sandhill areas who have an idea to start up a business or want to explore self-employment.

Advisers are also helping to strengthen voluntary organisations and support social entrepreneurs. North Star Counselling CIC based in Sunnyside is the first business to launch after accessing the programme and now aims to reach children who are struggling with mental health issues.

Apprenticeship Levy Transfer

The Council has highlighted social enterprises as a priority within its Apprenticeship Levy Transfer scheme alongside key sectors such as engineering and manufacturing, digital and creative, health, social care, and financial and customer services. Demand for levy transfers has so far been led by companies in the engineering and manufacturing sectors. As a key driver of jobs and investment in Sunderland this is very welcome, but we are also keen to encourage demand from co-operatives and social enterprises. This is done with a view to supporting their upskilling agenda and thereby raising the capacity of the sector. To achieve this a communications plan is being rolled out from January 2021 to generate positive awareness of the transfer scheme and encourage new applications.

Through the apprenticeship levy transfer scheme, the Council supports Level 3 Apprenticeships or above in key sectors of the economy which lead to skilled and well-paid employment. To this end recipient organisations are located in the Sunderland City Council local authority area and are engaged in one of four priority sectors:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Digital and Creative
- Health, Wellbeing and Social Care
- Financial and Customer Services





Increasing Social Value through Procurement and Wider Activity

Since the introduction of the Public Services (Social Value) Act, the council has committed to make best use of its powers when considering how the goods, works and services we procure over the quotation threshold of £5k might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Social value potential is considered at the preparation stage of procurement and where opportunities are apparent, the target measures and evaluation methodology approach are incorporated into the procurement documentation which is then monitored through contract management arrangements.

The integrated, systematic approach which is based on the National TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) Framework used by the council has led to several positive social value benefit outcomes to support residents, communities and businesses, such as employment for young people not in education, employment or training and the increased use of local sub-contractors.

Sunderland has also reviewed the TOMs framework to reflect wider types of social value in different sectors aligned to City Plan priorities and the five Neighbourhood Investment Plans, ensuring that all residents continue to benefit from investments in the city.

Through procurement activity undertaken during 2019-20, the Council secured a total commitment of £78,279,842 Social Value community benefits.

Sunderland Council is currently working with the National Social Value Task Force chaired by the Local Government association and supported by Cabinet Office and Crown Commercial Services to consider how social value can be embedded into the planning process in order to unlock more value for our communities.



Sunderland Council also continues to:

- ✓ Review procurement processes specifically in relation to requirements to engage with SMEs locally;
- ✓ Review all council services to ensure community wealth building aspirations are embedded within procurement activity and considered through Cabinet decision-making;
- ✓ Consider future commissioning requirements to inform the potential to develop supply chains of local enterprises to respond;
- ✓ Consider social value for all procurements over £5k; and
- ✓ Identify opportunities to increase social value wider than procurement e.g. planning conditions, affordable workspace, space for local workers and residents in major economic developments.

Key outputs:





Strategic Transport Corridor Phase 3 (Sunderland)

Sunderland City Council used NEPO211 Civil Engineering & Infrastructure Works to appoint a contractor for a £35m project to improve Sunderland's road networks.

Durham-based Esh Civils, the civil engineering division of Esh Construction, were appointed to deliver the ambitious project.



The new road, which will improve community connections, is part of the £1.5bn package of city-wide public and private sector investment projects that Sunderland has planned.

The Strategic Transport Corridor project includes the construction of 1.2 miles of retaining walls and structures that will be nearly 12 metres high.

Social value commitments within this project include:

- Local employment and local supply chain usage
- Support for unemployed people
- Apprenticeships and staff development
- School engagement initiatives

City Hall

As part of the riverside Sunderland City Council procured and awarded a contract to Bowmer and Kirkland for the design and construction of the City Hall office development, together with associated external works. In addition to building the new City Hall Bowmer and Kirkland also committed to £34,492,358 social value worth including:

- Employing more local people by employing long term unemployed and those not in employment, education or training (NEETS);
- Improving skills and employability for both young people and the wider local community.
- Working with the community by volunteering and donating to community projects
- Reducing the impact on the Climate by reducing CO2 emissions and reducing air pollution by reducing the use of high carbon vehicles

Achievements to date:

- Already reached target of 10 local employees of which 5 are NEET;
- 40% of the workforce are within a 40-mile radius;
- Schools poster competition encouraging children to make a poster about what keeps children happy during lockdown. The response from the schools was very positive resulting in a small class of key worker children (ages 4-11) having their posters displayed on a Mental Health Awareness Board located in the site welfare cabins, this board will offer contacts/help/awareness to anyone on site.
- Workshops were held in September 2020 with Sunderland MIND to support the wellbeing of staff, due to the positive outcome the workshops are being arranged at 3-month intervals.
- 461,000 car miles saved due to staff working from home or cycling to work;
- Plastic drinking water cups on site have been replaced with paper cups whilst encouraging staff to bring their own reusable drinking vessels to work; and
- Recycling old hard hats to use as plant pots.

Sunderland Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Harm Minimisation Service

In 2020, Sunderland council awarded a contract for integrated drug and alcohol recovery and harm minimisation services to Change Grow Live Services Ltd. The contract enables the council to reach out into communities to identify those in need and to deliver outreach interventions based on Service User's





needs, initially focusing work with Primary and Secondary Care with the aim of strengthening the role of identification, secondary prevention and treatment of Drug and Alcohol Misuse.

In addition to providing the service, Change Grow Live Services Ltd also committed to £4,314,222 of social value worth including:

- Employing more local people;
- Providing more opportunities for disadvantaged people;
- Improving skills for local people;
- Providing more opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs by spending more with local supply chains; and
- Improving staff wellbeing by dedicating time and training to improve staff wellbeing.

The Real Living Wage

In July 2020, Sunderland council was accredited by Citizens UK and the Living Wage Foundation as a 'UK Living Wage Employer'.

The real Living Wage is the only UK wage rate that is voluntarily paid by organisations and businesses who believe their staff deserve a fair day's pay for a hard day's work. The Real Living Wage, which is calculated on actual living costs, which is higher than the National Living Wage.

As a Real Living Wage Employer, Sunderland City Council has committed to:

- Pay the real UK Living Wage to all directly employed staff over the age of 18.
- Ensure all our third-party contracted and sub-contracted regular, on-site staff are paid the real UK Living Wage
- Increase the wages of these employees and contracted staff to the Living Wage, if appropriate, within six months of any rise in the calculated Living Wage rates.

Security Guards and Key Holding Services

In 2020, Sunderland council awarded a contract to Support Services Group Ltd (SSG) worth an estimated £1,251,657 for security guarding and key holding services to 14 locations in the city. This industry is predominantly made up of local employees and pays the National Living Wage (£8.20 to £8.72) to security guards for their services. In accordance with the council's policy as a UK Living Wage Employer, this was the first procurement resulting in the real Living Wage (£9.30) to be paid to all low wage employees working on the contract, giving a boost to the local economy.

In addition to the increase to the wages of employees SSG also committed to a further £1,181,695 of social value worth, including:

- Employing more Local people;
- Providing more opportunities for disadvantaged people; and
- Improving skills for local people.

Although the Covid19 pandemic has changed the focus for Support Services Group Ltd they have still provided the following to date:

- Local suppliers engaged on this contract has exceeded the target of 43 by 8 bringing the total to 55
- All staff have access to the company's mental health portal, which advised them how to maintain their mental wellbeing and signpost them to support organisations.
- Working with Centrepoint to ensure there is support for staff who find themselves homeless
- Currently working to be 100% paper free, currently achieving 98%





Improving Community Resilience

Now more than ever, ensuring the residents and communities of Sunderland are resilient is incredibly important. The impacts of years of austerity compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic will be far-reaching and will affect every community across the city.

Sunderland Council in partnership with the voluntary and community enterprise sector has worked incredibly hard to improve community resilience during the last year, through the implementation of the following:

- ✓ Published our Statement of Intent for fuel energy measures to address fuel poverty/ energy efficiency in privately owned homes
- ✓ Launched an affordable credit solution for all residents and staff
- ✓ Recommissioned advice provision for benefits, debt, employment and housing across neighbourhoods
- ✓ Developed and expanded 'Making your money go further' toolkit
- ✓ Adopted a standard financial assessment by the council and key partners and a coordinated approach to debt support
- ✓ Implemented a financial resilience service to support the new Council Housing Service in creating sustainable tenancies
- ✓ Reviewed Adult Learning specifications to reflect a better aligned curriculum with meaningful progression pathways for learners to achieve their work and life goals
- ✓ Increased resident participation in digital opportunities

Key outputs

Over £1 million in Financial Gains for Sunderland residents achieved by Welfare Rights Service & First Tier Advice Providers

15 organisations' FareShare subscriptions paid for by council – providing over 78 tonnes of extra food for residents . Up to 18 organisations being supported in 2020/21

Over 650 Credit Union members

Over 2000 Local welfare provision Crisis and Community Care awards, and Discretionary Housing Payment awards made by the council to financially insecure or vulnerable Sunderland residents

33 organisations provided with funding worth £19,500 to purchase essential care items for their own customers

34 organisations given 3000 council Resilience Packs to give to their own customers – which included Tesco cards worth a total of £60,000





2021 and beyond

As we move forward swiftly through 2021 and beyond, Sunderland City Council alongside our partners continue to demonstrate our commitment to delivering the outcomes within the Community Wealth Building Strategy.

Demonstrating our Commitment - in relation to staff volunteering we will ensure that this is actively promoted, to support local Sunderland projects and voluntary and community sector organisations. We will embed Staff and Elected Member Training & Development in relation to co-operative council values and support our Area Committees to continue to 'champion' growth in Community Wealth.

Developing the role of Anchor Institutions – we will set up a city-wide Community Wealth Building sub-group of the current City partnership board to launch and embed the Community Wealth Charter, whilst also working hard to become the first Accredited Living Wage City in the north east and reducing carbon emissions through the ongoing delivery of the Sunderland Low Carbon Plan

Socially Productive Asset Management – we will move forward with the pioneering Elemore Green Space and Social Enterprise project, ensuring that all learning from the project informs future community asset management policy developments. We will also map all community assets across the city to maximise their use and enable growth of voluntary sector partnerships

Community Empowerment, Engagement and Involvement – we will launch the Sunderland progressive App and continue to pro-actively engage with residents through 'Let's Talk Sunderland'. All council meetings will continue to be live streamed for public viewing and we will develop and launch the 'Sunderland Pledge' with all residents, communities, partners and businesses across Sunderland.

Business Growth and Investment (inc Voluntary and Community Sector) – we will continue to support the SME sector as well grow capacity within the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), creating a Sunderland VCS Alliance to ensure our VCS are directly involved in the development and delivery of the City's priorities

Increasing Social Value through Procurement and Wider Activity - The Council's policy to consider social value for all procurements over £5k continues to support the achievement of local third party spend; either directly from the Council or indirectly through the supply chain. Throughout the next year we will further increase social value through the creation of local neighbourhood partnerships between community and voluntary sector organisations and local businesses, connecting 'people with people', to build back better. We will also identify opportunities to increase social value within planning conditions, affordable workspace, space for local workers and residents in major economic developments.

Improving Community Resilience – Sunderland Council will ensure the continued support for residents and struggling families as we emerge from the COVID pandemic, continuing to use COVID Recovery Funds, and working closely with our voluntary and community sector partners through our community hubs.

