

Prosperity for all

Wolverhampton's City Strategy 2011-2026

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Welcome to Wolverhampton's City Strategy

What is it – and what's it for?

Think of the City Strategy as a roadmap, setting out a clear sense of direction for Wolverhampton over the next fifteen years. It's also a plan for how we can breathe new life into our city by working together.

It's built on our vision for making Wolverhampton a great place to live, to run a business or to visit and reflects our values of supporting and empowering local people.

It's all about creating new opportunities for local people, local communities and local businesses – and it focuses on the most important goal for our city: *prosperity for all*.

What does *prosperity for all* mean?

The two parts of this goal depend on one another...

Prosperity

Wolverhampton's people have told us that they want new job opportunities more than anything else.

For these opportunities to come, the city

needs to create the conditions for business to thrive – because it's business that will create jobs for the future.

We need all types of business and enterprise to flourish, including small businesses owned and run by local people. Wolverhampton's different communities need a variety of job opportunities.

For all

It's vital that everyone benefits from the prosperity we create, including the most vulnerable people in our community.

We want to close gaps in skills, health and well-being – not widen them.

However, prosperity for all depends on opportunity for all.

Local people and businesses have to be ready to take advantage of new openings as they come up. Wolverhampton's people need the right skills and qualifications and businesses must get the support they need to succeed.

A 21st century city needs the right infrastructure – transport, communications, high-speed broadband connections – to support businesses of all sizes, from global companies to local enterprises. This will also benefit Wolverhampton's residents.

Encouraging a stronger sense of belonging and pride in our city is also vital to Wolverhampton's future. For that, we can look to our diversity, creativity, culture and heritage.

If we're going to attract new investment and the jobs it creates, we also have to promote and market Wolverhampton in a positive way.

The City Strategy matters to you if...

You're in business in Wolverhampton

Whatever the size of your business, the City Strategy aims to create the right conditions for it to thrive and grow.

You live in the city

The City Strategy promises to bring more and better opportunities for you and your family to enjoy life – and to prosper.

You work for one of the city's public-sector organisations

The City Strategy will show you how Wolverhampton's public-sector agencies can make a difference by working together.

You're part of Wolverhampton's voluntary and community sector

You'll see in the City Strategy opportunities to have more influence over your neighbourhood's development – and to deliver services.

You're a regular visitor to the city

The City Strategy sets out a plan for a city that gives you reasons to visit more often – and to stay longer.

What will the City Strategy do?

The City Strategy will attract more investment to the city, creating new and better jobs. It will also help people live longer and healthier lives – and cut child poverty in Wolverhampton.

These are worthwhile targets in themselves, but it's the way they work together that makes the difference.

More and better opportunities for local people to get work, and to progress in work, together with the benefits that come from better health and well-being will lead to attractive neighbourhoods, supportive communities and a thriving city.

Why are these things important?

The recession has hit Wolverhampton badly. Nearly 4,000 jobs have been lost since 2007 and spending cuts mean that several thousand more public-sector jobs may go in the near future. New, well-paid jobs are a key priority.

Life expectancy in Wolverhampton is in the lowest 20% nationally. The gap between us and Britain's healthiest cities must be closed.

In 2007, 1 in 3 of Wolverhampton's children and young people were growing up in poverty – the second highest level in the West Midlands. With the recession, this figure is likely to have gone up even further. We can't allow this to continue.

Who decided these priorities?

You did.

The City Strategy was developed using feedback from local people.

You've asked for new and better job opportunities, better chances for local people to live longer and healthier lives and a brighter, more prosperous future for our children and young people.

No single local organisation could achieve what you have asked for on its own. The Wolverhampton Partnership brings together the city's public and private sector and voluntary and community organisations. They have drawn up this Strategy together and included things in it to help make happen what you want to see for the city and its people.

So what will the City Strategy succeed in doing?

First, we listened to what you told us and then developed the actions we're going to take in the light of what you said.

You will see...

- An increase in the number of jobs
- An increase in the proportion of people who are employed
- Longer and healthier lives
- Less families living in poverty

As we've already said, these results are connected. Local people can't take advantage of new job opportunities if they aren't fit, healthy and qualified. If they're growing up in poverty, our children and young people can't focus on getting the education they need to reach their full potential.

By achieving these results, we'll create a happier, healthier and more prosperous city – one that we can all be proud of.

The City Strategy will benefit everyone in Wolverhampton – whatever age you are, whatever you do and wherever you live.

Making this happen

Wolverhampton Partnership will concentrate on three major themes...

- Encouraging Enterprise and Business
- Empowering People and Communities
- Re-invigorating the City

Why were these themes chosen – and what will we do together to make these things happen?

1. Encouraging Enterprise and Business

Why is this important?

Wolverhampton needs well-paid jobs. The city currently has a low-wage economy, which does not help to tackle its long-term child poverty problems. In fact, since 2008, Wolverhampton is the only area in the UK to see a fall in average weekly pay for residents.

What are your priorities?

You want to see Wolverhampton...

- **Attract new businesses**
So together, we will concentrate on attracting businesses with potential to expand.
- **Support businesses to develop and grow**
So together, we will help to develop Wolverhampton's own new, local companies by supporting start-up businesses and encouraging individual enterprise.
- **Support our industries to innovate and compete**
Wolverhampton's industries like aerospace manufacturing have an enormous influence on its ability to create more high-quality jobs.

So together, we will help these companies stay ahead of the game – and to encourage them to buy more supplies locally where they can.

- **Create the right conditions for business to flourish**

For local businesses to stay competitive, they need an improved transport network, flexible accommodation and high-speed broadband connections.

So together, we will help to create the right conditions for these developments to take place.

- **Develop and grow a skilled workforce**
Qualifications are a basic requirement for getting and keeping a job – and to earning a decent living. Currently, 1 in 5 of the city's workforce has no qualifications.

So together, we will take a whole life approach to education, to help local people to compete in the jobs market, meeting the needs of existing and future employers.

2. Empowering People and Communities

Why is this important?

Too many children in Wolverhampton are born into poverty and don't have the support they need to succeed in life.

Poverty doesn't just hold people back – it's estimated to cost the whole community at least £30 million a year.

Coupled with poverty are problems of ill-health and low life expectancy, for which Wolverhampton is in the lowest 20% nationally.

So as well as giving local people the skills they need to take advantage of new opportunities as they come along, partner organisations need to support people to live happier, healthier lives.

What are your priorities?

You want Wolverhampton to focus on...

- **Early intervention and prevention**
So together, we will invest in good quality early years provision and intervene earlier to support families in challenging circumstances. As well as becoming involved earlier to support vulnerable adults.
- **Supporting financial inclusion**
So together, we will work to reduce debt,

improve access to affordable credit and improve people's understanding of financial matters. All these things will help overcome barriers to employment. They will also result in more money being spent in the local economy.

- **Encouraging healthier lifestyles and independence at all stages of life**

If people live longer and healthier lives, they'll be more productive in work.

So together, we will promote healthier lifestyles, improve access to and participation in sport and recreation and support more vulnerable and older people to live independently.

- **Supporting more people to be active within their communities**

So together, we will encourage more people to have a voice in designing local public services and become involved in activities like volunteering.

Longer term, community activity can lead to the creation of local enterprises, boosting job opportunities.

- **Encouraging the voluntary and community sectors**

New resources are being made available to the voluntary and community sectors by the Government. So together, we will make sure that Wolverhampton is in a position to take full advantage of these.

3. Re-Invigorating the City

Why is this important?

If Wolverhampton is to attract new industries, we must develop a distinct and attractive offer based on things like the quality of housing, culture, recreation and leisure facilities.

What are your priorities?

You want the city's partner organisations to...

- **Develop diverse and welcoming neighbourhoods**

So together, we will create neighbourhoods that are welcoming, environmentally friendly, safe and well managed.

- **Improve the city centre**

For investors and visitors, the city centre is the flagship for the city as a whole. So together we will make a city centre that local people can be proud of.

- **Tackle crime in the city centre and across the city**

People's perceptions of crime have a strong influence on whether they want to live, work, invest in or visit a place. It also has a significant impact on everyday life.

So together, we will provide crime and community safety services that are targeted where they are needed most. We will also involve communities in fighting crime and improving the local environment.

- **Market and promote the city's cultural and creative sector**

So together, we will continue to build Wolverhampton's national and international profile, cultural festivals and events, encourage visitors and promote a positive image of Wolverhampton.

- **Increase local belonging**

Traditionally, the people of Wolverhampton have a lot of civic pride – they love their city and want only the best for it.

So together, we will build on this tradition, encouraging greater community involvement and participation.

Keeping you in touch

The City Strategy is designed to produce results.

To make sure the Strategy is achieving its promises, the Wolverhampton Partnership will:

- report progress every year
- continually check back with local people to make sure that the Strategy's working from their point of view
- review the Strategy every year to make sure that we are achieving what we set out to, adjusting our actions if we need to.



Want to know more?

If you'd like to find out more about the City Strategy...

Visit www.wton-partnership.org.uk
e-mail enquiries@wton-partnership.org.uk
or call 01902 556044