WASHINGTON AREA COMMITTEE **Item 2**

17th December 2020

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS & CABINET MEMBER COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING CHAMPIONS

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Washington Area Committee of the next steps, following Cabinet Approval in March 2020 of the Sunderland Community Wealth Building Strategy, taking into consideration the additional action to be taken to continue to grow community wealth across our communities.

2. Background – Sunderland Community Wealth Strategy

2.1 Community Wealth Building is an approach to economic and social regeneration, which focuses on actions that support communities to create wealth and retain more of the benefits of economic growth locally. It is an approach that recognises that the way money circulates in a local economy is important and that growth needs to be shaped and directed.

2.2 Community Wealth Building aims to re-organise and control the local economy so that wealth is broadly held within the city and is generative, with local roots, so that income is recirculated, communities are put first, and people are provided with opportunity, dignity and well-being. The approach seeks to create resilient communities and local economic security.

2.3 Sunderland defines community wealth as follows:

'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'

2.4 Whilst Sunderland City Council has been a co-operative council since 2014 and has embedded these values across all areas of practice, a recent assessment by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) suggests that the Council needs to continue to move from an approach of "doing for" to "doing with" the residents of Sunderland. Transforming the Council's relationship with its communities to one of collaboration will lead to increased trust and effectiveness of services and reduce demand.

2.5 Much is happening already both across Council services and by other partners in the city. Through delivery of the Community Wealth Strategy, Sunderland Council seeks to harness what is already happening in addition to future opportunities to maximize impact in the City and to use our knowledge, and that of others, to inform what we need to do next, both from an economic and social perspective.

2.6 It now more important than ever to enable residents to respond to the local economic shock of the Covid-19 pandemic. Through delivery of the Community Wealth Strategy, the council aims to respond to the immediate crisis and the urgent imperative to rebuild

local economies which are more fair, inclusive and secure than those that existed before.

2.7 There are 7 key areas for focus for our activities to achieve our vision as part of the Community Wealth Strategy Delivery Plan, which link directly to the principles of community wealth building:

1. Demonstrating our Commitment
2. Developing the role of Anchor Institutions
3. Socially Productive Asset Management
4. Community Empowerment, Engagement and Involvement

Business Growth and Investment (including Voluntary and Community Sector)

5. Increasing Social Value through Procurement and Wider Activity
6. Improving Community Resilience

3. Demonstrating our Commitment - Community Wealth Champion

3.1 This report focuses upon the first key activity – 'demonstrating our commitment' to growing community wealth in Sunderland.

3.2 Elected members can champion the community wealth approach in their own areas by highlighting the significant benefits. This includes assisting the council to understand local issues and helping to target employment opportunities.

3.3 Elected members can encourage the council and partner anchor institutions to become accredited living wage employers. In addition to employment, elected members can encourage the council to continue to develop their procurement strategies that contain measures for the use of 'community benefit' clauses and 'local supplier development'.

3.4 Inward investment activity can be targeted at developing the local supply base, and a means of monitoring where this spend goes and the impact it has should be monitored. In addition, council procurement spend with local companies should continue to be enhanced wherever possible and spend out of the local area continuously reviewed to identify any additional local opportunities.

3.5 Finally, elected members can encourage the council to consider the impact of their assets on inclusive economies and how they can contribute to socio-economic development objectives and build resilient communities. For example, linking asset management to neighbourhood plans and identifying how to support local people to take over council assets for the benefit of their communities. This can be achieved through promoting community asset transfer and exploring where this can be used to support area-based regeneration priorities, supporting capacity building for communities currently less able to take on and manage assets.

3.6 To ensure all elected members are supported to become Community Wealth Champions, it is proposed that each of the Area Committees Chairs become the 'Area Community Wealth Champion' – working alongside the Area Arrangements Team and Community Wealth Steering Group to develop a training and induction programme for all elected members, as well as ensuring the principles of community wealth are adopted by the Area Committee whilst delivering their Area Committee Delivery Plan priorities.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Note the contents of the report and acknowledge the work undertaken to support the growth of Community Wealth across Sunderland and agree to continue to support the delivery of the Sunderland Community Wealth Strategy.

4.2 Agree to support the Area Committee Chair to deliver their Community Wealth Champion role on behalf of the residents of Sunderland, demonstrating the commitment of Washington Area Committee to support growth.