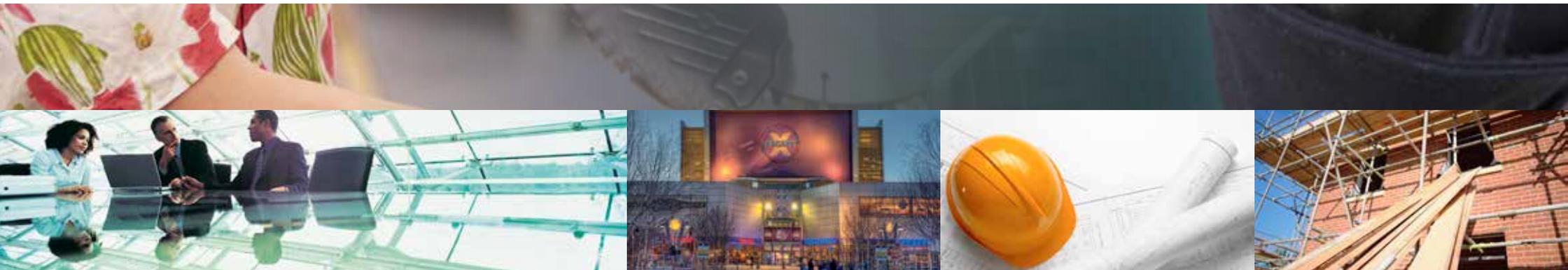




Wakefield District Good Growth Action Plan



Introduction



Peter Box
Leader of Wakefield Council

The economic crash of 2008, followed by the imposition of austerity has hit both families and communities hard across the UK. Wakefield has been no exception to this. One of the things I'm most proud of as Leader of Wakefield Council and Chair of the Wakefield Together Partnership was our response to this; working together as public services to protect our District and our most vulnerable people.

Since then, Wakefield has been working hard to grow our economy, attracting significant investment into the District and continuing to develop our city and town centres.

We're now the 30th largest economy in England, adding over £6.4bn a year to the UK economy and we are one of the fastest growing areas in the Leeds City Region. We've also developed a national reputation for working well with business and supporting the development of local firms and employers.

This Good Growth Plan is the next phase of our economic strategy - and the next step in guaranteeing the long term success of our district. We've attracted employers and jobs, now we want to build on that. We want to attract more higher skilled jobs and build better opportunities for the people of Wakefield.

Good Growth will not only give local people better opportunities but a better quality of life. Growing our economy also helps to tackle crime, improve health, improve educational achievement and improve the quality of our housing.

We're not just strengthening our economy; we're putting the wider building blocks in place for long term economic success. We're working with the Government to get more local control over transport, skills and regeneration funding, and we'll use that to further benefit our local economy and to give our residents the chance to have their say in local decisions.

Good Growth is not just good for communities and residents - it's good for business. Businesses with strong local roots and strong local partnerships are more successful.

We want business to play a full role in the wider success of our District, working with both the public services and voluntary and community groups. Everybody working together for a strong and prosperous Wakefield, with strong and prosperous communities.

30th
**LARGEST ECONOMY
IN ENGLAND**

***Public and private sector working together
for a better Wakefield***

Devolution

Devolution is giving us greater control of skills, transport and regeneration funding - both regionally and at a local level. This will help us better direct spending to greater effect and focus on what will make the most difference to growing our economy, and tackling low skills and low pay.

A partnership between public and private sectors

I'm proud to support the Wakefield Good Growth Plan.

Wakefield First has played a pivotal role in the growth of the Wakefield economy during my time as Chair with Wakefield now boasting one of the fastest growing economies for GVA in the Leeds City Region. This growth has been key to replacing business stock and reducing unemployment post-recession; however we can work harder to direct that growth to those that need it most. This plan is the first step in a long process that will help to influence investors choosing Wakefield, growing a sustainable economy that benefits residents and communities.

This plan is intentionally simple with clear priorities and actions for what we will deliver, it acknowledges our successes in growing the economy, whilst also being honest about the challenges we face in the future. We are all working in an environment where resources are under constant pressure which means that now more than ever, we need to be clear on our priorities and focus on those areas that deliver the best results.

It is vital that we recognise the shared responsibility across both the public and private sector. During the economic recovery, the gap between Wakefield district and national key indicators has widened. We need to address key challenges such as the average weekly wage for a local resident and the percentage of knowledge intensive business. No one organisation can solve the issues that we face alone, but by working in partnership we can develop holistic and sustainable solutions.

As the Chair of the Wakefield Economic Partnership I think it would be irresponsible to ignore the impact that business can make on this agenda. Businesses have a responsibility to the place in which they operate and to the communities around them, a healthy balanced economy benefits everyone. This plan shows the private sector what it means to do business in Wakefield and the critical role they play in the future.

Good Growth may be a simple idea, but there is no easy answer. This plan represents the start of a journey and a transition in the way we do business. But I am confident, that by working together we can deliver better jobs and prosperity that will improve the lives of our residents and deliver a vibrant economy. I am looking forward to the next five years and hope to see a stronger, more resilient Wakefield by 2020.



Paul Reid

Chair of the Wakefield Enterprise Partnership

Public Sector Procurement

Wakefield Council alone spends nearly £70m a year in buying goods and services from local firms. Aligning the buying power across local partners and working with local companies to secure contracts will further support local jobs and apprenticeships and develop our economy.



8500
BUSINESSES
ACTIVE IN
OUR DISTRICT

Why 'Good Growth'?

The Challenge

In many ways Wakefield has recovered well from the last recession. In 2014/15 we secured over £207m of investment into Wakefield, reduced the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance by 22% and have over 8,500 businesses active in our District.

The Wakefield economy is worth around £6.37bn a year. We are now the 30th largest economy in the UK in terms of turnover.

However, what this doesn't measure is the impact of overall growth on the earnings and quality of life on ordinary families and communities.

Gross average earnings in the Wakefield district in 2015 were £460 per week, putting us 21st from bottom of the 64 cities in the 2016 Centre for Cities Index. Average pay in Wakefield is 8.1% less than the Yorkshire average.

Over 14,000 children in Wakefield live in families in poverty even though the majority of these families have at least one member in some form of work.

Low wages also lead to higher costs to the taxpayer. In 2015 alone, over £170m in Working Tax Credits to top up wages and £120m in Housing Benefit to support the housing costs went to Wakefield residents.

The task for us now is to ensure that economic growth makes more of a difference to our residents and communities - particularly our more deprived ones.

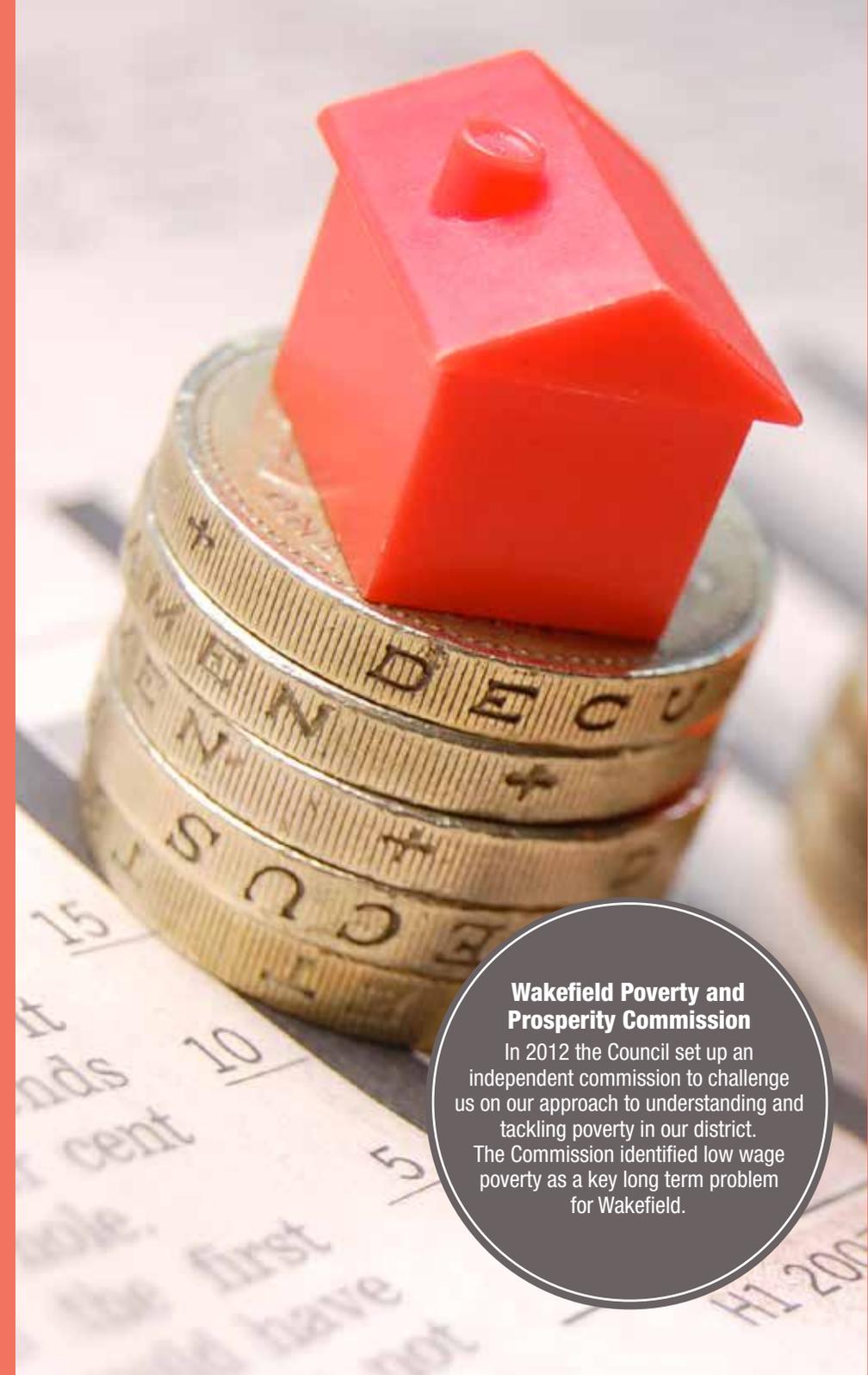
This is the task of our Good Growth Action Plan.



£142k

**AVERAGE DISTRICT
HOUSE PRICE**

Higher skills, better jobs



Wakefield Poverty and Prosperity Commission

In 2012 the Council set up an independent commission to challenge us on our approach to understanding and tackling poverty in our district. The Commission identified low wage poverty as a key long term problem for Wakefield.

Delivering long term and lasting change



We recognise that change won't come about overnight. This is why the Good Growth Action Plan sets out a number of long term outcomes, and ways to check progress against those outcomes.

Good Growth can't be delivered just by one team or organisation alone. All partners and services will need to play a full part in making Good Growth happen in Wakefield.

To give just one example, making sure Wakefield residents are ready for work could involve skills and training providers, health services (to ensure they're fit for work) and transport providers (to make sure they can get to and from work quickly and affordably). Being in work will then not only improve income for a person and family, but also their health, the quality of their housing and life chances for their children.

This plan recognises that all partners can and should know how they can help Wakefield deliver Good Growth. As such, in the future Good Growth outcomes and interventions will be a key element of all our plans and strategies.

Wakefield Good Growth Charter

The Wakefield Enterprise Partnership will work with businesses in the District to develop a Good Growth Charter. This will cover key commitments around pay, training and investment to support the Good Growth Plan. In return, businesses signed up to the Charter will be able to access bespoke business growth support from local public sector experts.



What do we want to do?

Our ambition is to build and sustain an economy that works for everyone in Wakefield. To do this, we've set three Good Growth Priorities, each with two outcomes. These priorities recognise that Good Growth requires business, residents and local services to all play their part, and that people, places and business all benefit by working and prospering together.

Each of the priorities has two outcomes. We will use these outcomes as tests of Good Growth to challenge ourselves and all our services and partners as to how they are contributing to the Good growth agenda. They are:

Priority 1 - Growing Good Businesses

- **A more diverse Wakefield economy** - Having a wider range of businesses and industries will help protect the Wakefield economy against future economic downturns and help us take advantage of future opportunities.
- **Infrastructure supports Good Growth** - Better transport links and housing in our district will attract and keep businesses, jobs and people in Wakefield.

Priority 2 - Growing Good Places

- **More socially responsible employers** - Businesses that work well with their employees and local communities are more productive and profitable.
- **Quality places for Wakefield residents to live and work** - Good quality neighbourhoods and city and town centres help keep local people healthy, safe and well

Priority 3 - Growing Resilient Communities

- **More Wakefield residents are job ready** - Employment improves health and wellbeing and supports stable families and communities.
- **More higher skilled Wakefield residents** - Higher skilled people attract higher wage industries and employers and have better job and career opportunities.

Economic growth that benefits all

Breathing Space Mortgage Scheme

Set up in 2009, Wakefield's innovative mortgage rescue scheme provides advice and loans for householders in difficulty. Since that time it has saved over 360 families from becoming homeless. Wakefield now manages this service on behalf of 17 Councils across our region.



BUSINESSES

A more diverse Wakefield economy

Maximise emerging opportunities

Increased business support for target sectors

Deliver university led incubation space

Bring new high quality businesses to the District

Infrastructure supports good growth

Planning that supports business

Deliver City Fields and the Prince of Wales Development

Better transport for residents

Reshape local housing provision

More socially responsible employers

Develop a 'Good Growth Charter' for Wakefield

Get more residents into work

Tackle low pay

Encourage local trade

Quality places for Wakefield resident to live and work

Deliver Community Led Local Development

Build on success of Early Help Hubs

Deliver Healthy Towns Plan

Vibrant cultural offer

More Wakefield residents are job ready

Link businesses and education

Support those with multiple barriers to work

Encourage youth enterprise

Grow social enterprises

More higher skilled Wakefield residents

Future proof our skills offer

Achieve University status for the District

More high level apprenticeships

Retain talented young people

PLACES

COMMUNITIES

Making a difference

How will we know how we are doing?

Our Good Growth annual progress statement will measure, benchmark and report six key measures important to local people and communities:

ONE	Average wages within the Wakefield District.
TWO	Percentage of Wakefield's working age population who are economically active.
THREE	Percentage of Wakefield residents in work employed in low skill/low wage 'elementary occupations'.
FOUR	Percentage of Wakefield residents with higher level skills.
FIVE	The balance and diversity of the Wakefield economy.
SIX	Housing affordability for Wakefield residents.

The statement will also set out what we've achieved in terms of our actions and what we intend to do next. Our long term ambition is to progress against all these measures, not just in real terms, but also against other areas in the UK, addressing inequalities between Wakefield and the wider region and our peers.

Top ten interventions

What we will do differently

- **Redefine the district around high skill/high wage sectors**
- **Influence Leeds City Region and Central Government to better support Good Growth in Wakefield**
- **Attract and maintain more high quality employers in district.**
- **Create more opportunities for high skill employers through the Local Development Framework**
- **Develop municipal power generation**
- **Support local employers and organisations in tackling low pay**
- **Redefine our town and city centres to respond to changing demands**
- **Deliver Community Led Local Development**
- **Create a clear pathway for school to higher education**
- **Develop a 'Good Growth Charter' for Wakefield businesses**

By 2020 we will seek to:

- Close the gap in weekly average wages in the district (currently £460) against the regional average (currently £480)
- Increase the proportion of economically active working age Wakefield adults (currently 75.8%) above the regional average (currently 77.2%)
- Narrow the gap in Wakefield adults with higher level qualifications (currently 20.7%) against the regional average (currently 29.7%)
- Reduce the percentage of Wakefield people employed in 'elementary work' (currently 17.1%) against the regional average (currently 12.3%)
- Keep housing affordability in the Wakefield district (currently 6.18 years average earnings) better than the regional average (currently 6.54 years average earnings)
- Increase the percentage of knowledge intensive businesses (currently 6.4% of our local economy) and manufacturing (currently 11.8% of local economy) in the Wakefield economy to catch up with the regional averages (9.3% and 12.6%)

“ I don't want the high life, but I do want a decent life for me and my kids. I want to live without counting the pennies every week and without being nervous that I can't afford what's in my basket when I get to the checkout. I want to live without being scared of having no job, no money and no future. ”

Wakefield resident: Wakefield Poverty and Prosperity Commission Report 2012

University Centre

Wakefield College and the Council are securing funding to set up a University Centre for the district. This will provide places for more local young people to study for degrees and other higher level qualifications.