

## ROCHDALE STRONGER TOGETHER LEADERSHIP GROUP: MEETING SUMMARY



**Date:** 9.30 – 11.30am, Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Venue:** Holden Suite Board Room, Rochdale Infirmary

*Rochdale Stronger Together is an ambitious whole community approach to transform Rochdale Borough. It is about bringing residents, communities, local institutions and businesses together to forge a good local economy and spread community wealth. That means driving investment in jobs that people want, communities where people want to live and opportunities for young people to aspire and achieve.*

Rochdale Stronger Together lead partners met on 26<sup>th</sup> November at Rochdale Infirmary. The Group has representation from the co-operative, social enterprise, health, education, social housing and leisure sectors as well as the local authority.

### **Recent progress on Building a Good Local Economy**

- ❖ **Rochdale Borough Social Enterprise and Co-operative Forum** have launched a funding campaign to raise funds for a full-time programme director to accelerate and scale up the delivery of social and economic impact across the Borough.
- ❖ **Hopwood Hall College** held *Shape the Future of Skills in Rochdale* at its Middleton Campus on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Attended by local politicians, businesses and organisations, the event's goal was to encourage attendees to co-produce high-quality technical training and education to better shape the future of skills across Rochdale Borough.
- ❖ **Rochdale Sixth Form College** received a new Principal in June this year and since then has been participating in Rochdale Stronger Together's Audit of Spend. The audit will see how much money anchor organisations are currently spending with local and non-local suppliers. The aim then will be to try and increase the amount spent with local suppliers.
- ❖ **Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH)** now has a Social Value Strategy which focusses on creating community wealth. It will do this by growing local skills, employment and supply chains to help generate prosperity for the Borough and its people. RBH has also published its first ever [Support Guide for Suppliers](#) to help smaller businesses apply for contracts with them. RBH is also providing a Social Enterprise Advisor to Hopwood Hall in support of Andy Burnham's [Bridge GM](#) programme. RBH has also reviewed its recruitment policy, and now all local candidates who meet the requirements of a job specification are guaranteed an interview.
- ❖ **STAR Procurement**, which manages all procurement for Rochdale Borough Council, has analysed the Council's spend between 2016/17 & 2017/18. This has shown spending with local businesses has increased from 12% to 23%; an extra £13.3M staying in the Borough's economy.
- ❖ **Northern Care Alliance with HMR Clinical Commissioning Group and Rochdale Borough Council** are transforming how health and social care are delivered in the Borough. One Rochdale Health & Care is breaking service delivery frameworks out of their silos so that care is joined up and reaches deeper into local communities. The organisation has a budget of £360 million. Making sure as much of this is spent with local suppliers could have a major positive impact on the local economy as well as the health of local people who are then employed by those suppliers.



### ***Understanding Rochdale's Local Economy***

A team of five international MBA students from Alliance Manchester Business School (MBS) spent 400hrs delivering a project called Understanding Rochdale's Local Economy. The aim is that better understanding the economy will help businesses to set up and thrive in the Borough. Some headline findings are:

- £323M of construction goods and services are being imported into the Borough.
- The main reason why construction businesses do not source locally is the lack of knowledge of the local market.
- Only 200 of 1054 (19%) construction sector businesses in the Borough have an online presence (approximately half the UK construction sector average).

### ***Spending with Local Suppliers...***

Work is progressing on auditing the spending of Rochdale Stronger Together's anchor organisations. Early indications show organisations are achieving different levels of local spend. The anchors have agreed to work together to adopt and enhance practices that increase the local spend. The group reviewed a short list of principles aimed at clearly setting out the common approach to local procurement. This won't mean procuring with local suppliers at any cost however, but it will mean offering support to local businesses so that they can become more competitive.

### ***Rochdale Stronger Together becomes a Permanent Partnership...***

Rochdale Stronger Together partners who have met five times since the initiative's launch, have decided it is time to go formal by establishing a Leadership Group that will meet three times a year. The Group will review progress and set new objectives for building a good local economy in Rochdale. The initiative is a whole community approach and so the Group has representation for Social Enterprise and Co-operatives and is also reserving a place for a charitable and voluntary organisation representative.

The Leadership Group adopted the International Co-operative Alliance Values and Principles.

### ***Taking Shape...***

In addition to setting up the Leadership Group, workstreams are being established: Buy Local, Learn & Hire Local, Live Local and Connect Local. The first two are now established and will have contributions from the partner employees who will focus on delivering aspects of the Rochdale Stronger Together Workplan. Through their work, workstreams will engage with the community and build awareness of Rochdale Stronger Together and its objectives. Community members with the relevant skills and experience can join the Rochdale Stronger Together workstreams.

### ***And Finally Evidence of a Borough Working and Succeeding Together...***

Hopwood Hall College Graphic Design students have run a brand design competition to find the future look of Rochdale Stronger Together. First and second year students participated, providing over 20 designs for the Leadership Group to choose from. The winner will be publically announced soon.

Rochdale Borough's very own internet service provider, Zen Internet is now generously providing Rochdale Stronger Together with a web domain and domain name. Richard Tang, Zen's founder and owner, is a strong advocate for reviving Rochdale Borough's economy. You can now find our website at [www.RochdaleStrongerTogether.org.uk](http://www.RochdaleStrongerTogether.org.uk).

### ***Staying informed...***

Partners recognised how essential it is for Rochdale Stronger Together's work to be open and accessible. To help socialise the initiative's work the Leadership Group will publish minutes of its meetings on the Rochdale Stronger Together website.

The Leadership Group next intends to meet in March 2019.