

Key area findings from Economic Work

- Pontesbury and Minsterley are active and 'healthy' communities with a diverse range of social activities, community groups and local services.
- There is a strong 'buy local' culture within the area with households spending a significant proportion of monthly income within the local area.
- The area has a large number of businesses, most are small, locally run and employ local people.
- There are opportunities to improve local buying of businesses and undertake work to see if more local supply chains can be developed.
- There is a strong local awareness of issues within the community but the economy does not feature strongly within local decision making and decisions are not necessarily made with an awareness of economic implications.
- There are economic opportunities in the areas of tourism/visitor economy, promotion of local retail and food, development of public information and creation of affordable housing.
- There is a lack of clear understanding of where economic responsibilities sit between tiers of Government and potential to grow local economic leadership.
- There is a need to consider how the work of multiple agencies comes together to influence the local economy and consider wealth creation within the community, within businesses, among individuals (focusing on skills, employment, affordable housing, avoiding debt etc.) and strategically through inward investment and work that creates the conditions for economic growth.
- There may be opportunities to use existing resources more effectively and build on the fact that the area has a strong, locally focused economy (home grown businesses with business leaders embedded in the local community).

Key headline findings for the community theme include:

- A focus on the procurement power of Shropshire Council and the way Shropshire Council does business as a means of generating economic growth (e.g. use Public Services (Social Value) Act).
- The role Shropshire Council can play as an economic leader – e.g. messages about the living wage, good employment practice, buying locally etc.
- The role Shropshire Council and key partners (including the VCS) need to play in creating the conditions for economic growth – aligning key policies, developing strategic projects, considering interconnections and impact between themes e.g. skills and housing and business growth.
- Better use of local strengths and building on what Shropshire has and is – e.g. a focus on small businesses with a small number of employees and how we can support businesses to support each other and access new opportunities.
- The need to think of the economy as more than business growth and consider:
 - Personal wealth – e.g. the way we support people out of debt and into work etc.
 - Business wealth – removing the barriers faced by businesses etc.
 - Community wealth – how we align community held budgets to maximise impact and support communities to put the economy at the heart of decision making.
 - Strategic wealth – aligning and growing strategic investment for maximum impact.