Harnessing the power of anchor institutions – a Progression Framework

This document sets out a **Progression Framework** to help organisations capitalise upon their power as anchors. It describes what they can do in practice on five dimensions of being an anchor organisation:

- **Employer**
- **Procurement**
- **Environment and Assets**
- **Service Delivery**
- **Corporate and Civic** behaviours

For each, the framework explains the context and shows what anchors can do based on a four-step journey from basic start point (level 1) to best practice (level 4). This is intended to help organisations self-assess where they are now, decide where they want to get to, and to plan the actions needed to make the transition.

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CITY COUNCIL

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What is an anchor institution?

Anchor institutions are big and locally rooted organisations like councils, FE colleges, universities, hospitals and big businesses with local HQs. Because they employ many people, spend substantial amounts of money, own and manage land and assets and often deliver crucial services, they have a weighty impact on local communities and economies. And as they have a long history in their places and are unlikely to move, they are intrinsically connected to them and are pivotal to their success and wellbeing.

In addition, smaller community organisations, often in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, can act as 'community anchors' in their own areas. These have a positive and lasting local presence, support local communities and connect their residents to opportunities.

Why do they matter and what can they achieve?

Because of their size, anchor institutions make a positive contribution to a local area by just being there. But the decisions they take about how they operate can make that contribution a far bigger one, and one which can support growth and inclusion hand in hand. The way in which anchors run their businesses, deliver services, buy goods and interact with other local organisations and the community can add significantly to local employment, business growth, skills, incomes, health and wellbeing. It can contribute to climate change and environmental goals. And it can support recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and help places to thrive and become ones where people want to live and businesses want to invest, setting them on a path to long-term success and shared prosperity.

How can anchor institutions make a difference?

There are lots of ways in which anchors institutions can act. These will vary in emphasis and over time for different organisations. However, there are five areas of activity where all anchors can make a difference and themselves gain benefits:

- As an **employer** – policies on recruitment, pay & conditions, progression and health can support inclusion goals and lower paid workers – and help organisations to recruit and retain staff and fully tap the talents of their workforce.

- Through **procurement** of goods, services and infrastructure – which can be designed to support local business and job opportunities, recirculate wealth and bring community benefits – while still getting buyers the right price and quality, and often improved supply chain resilience, responsiveness and relationships.

- Through **environment and assets** – by adopting targets, policies and actions to respond to the climate emergency, reduce energy, waste and pollution, and create better built and natural environments; and collaborating in place making and using assets to support local communities – all of which can also reduce inequalities.

- Through products and **service delivery** – public sector and community anchors can deliver services in ways designed to help those facing poverty and disadvantage.

- Through **corporate and civic behaviours** – organisations can embed 'anchors thinking' across their own ethos, planning and actions, and work with other anchors to systematically share good practice, help each other succeed, and deliver enhanced positive impacts for their people and places.

What does it mean to be an inclusive anchor organisation?

Areas for action

Dimensions	Includes content on	Anchor institutions can…
Employer	• Recruitment • Pay and conditions • Training, development and progression • Healthy workplaces	• Recruit in ways that provide equality of opportunity and maximise scope for local people to secure good jobs, including young and unemployed people • Pay the real living wage, go further to support people in stretching take home pay e.g. via pensions and non-pay benefits, and provide secure work • Commit to lower paid staff reaching their potential via inclusive personal and professional development, flexible working, transparent progression pathways and excellent management • Support mental and physical health, e.g. via facilities, policies, culture, advice
Procurer	• Local supply chains • Social Value (SV) from procuring goods and services • New buildings and developments	• Engage with local suppliers and increase the proportion of spend with them • Use procurement processes to deliver social value, e.g. for communities, employees, environment • Procure developments in ways which benefit the environment and create local jobs and skills with focus on young people and those facing disadvantage
Environment and assets	• Climate change • Energy, waste and resource use • Transport, built & natural environment • Social benefit from estate and assets	• Adopt stretching environmental policies, targets and management systems • Take action on energy, resource use, waste and pollution • Enhance impacts related to transport and the built and natural environment • Design/manage land, buildings and other assets to maximise local and community benefits
Service delivery	• Core service delivery and disadvantaged communities • Links to community anchors • Links to local businesses and education	• Design and deliver services so that they reach and benefit disadvantaged communities • Work with local 'community anchor' organisations to better deliver and gain uptake of services, especially by disadvantaged communities • Contribute resources or expertise to support the local economy, businesses and education, e.g. through supporting innovation or building links to schools
Corporate and civic	• Internal anchor ownership • External civic role and partnerships	• Recognise the organisation as being an anchor, then embed inclusive anchor dimensions into organisational vision/mission, values, culture/communications, behaviours, leadership, corporate planning and budgeting • Champion anchor collaboration, take civic responsibility, learn, share, promote the services of other anchors, lead by example

Anchor action: employer

What does it cover?

- This dimension is about what anchors can do to provide good jobs for all their employees, and in particular those who work in lower paid roles. It covers how anchors recruit, the pay and conditions they provide, the training and development they offer and the emphasis they place on health and wellbeing.

Why does it matter and what can it achieve?

- 'Good' jobs are defined by decent income, fair terms and appropriate flexibility and security; where effort is recognised and rewarded, and where people have the opportunity to learn, contribute, progress and work in a safe and healthy environment. Given the numbers of people that anchors employ, providing good jobs has the potential to reach and make a positive difference to the lives of many thousands of people, and go on to benefit their families and the communities they live in.

- Good jobs are good for business too. They help to attract and retain talented people; reduce levels of sickness and stress; and boost staff engagement and morale. They can underpin competitiveness and help drive productivity gains that in turn lead to higher wages.

- Low pay is a feature of our national labour market. Today, eight million working-age adults live in poverty, earning too little to make ends meet and relying on in-work benefits. There is much more employers can do – at little or no cost - to help their lower-paid workers to stretch their take-home pay. Tackling low pay is good for the economy – it brings about a lower social security bill, a higher tax take, and stimulates more local circulation of wealth.

What types of things can anchors do?

Recruitment

- Reach out to a wider pool of candidates and think innovatively about how to support these people to secure roles then monitor and track your success in doing so

- Find ways to recruit a diverse range of apprentices, using pre-apprenticeship support, paying a decent salary and offering clear onwards progression

- Commit to making more quality part time and flexible jobs available at all levels and use it to attract and progress the best talent

Support people to stretch their take home pay

- Become an accredited Living Wage Foundation employer, or if not immediately possible, plan to move towards it

- Target pension take-up amongst lower paid staff and help people to access good financial support

- Provide a non-pay benefit package that helps to reduce the cost of living then make sure it is widely communicated and accessible not solely via IT

Training, development and progression

- Make opportunities accessible to all. Do this by creating and communicating clear progression pathways. Use tools such as redesigning roles to be shared or flexible, job rotation and softer skill development to help people build confidence. Back this up with excellent, open leadership and management and recognition of great work.

Health and wellbeing

- Make the physical and mental health and wellbeing of staff a priority, provide facilities or support at work to do that, and develop a culture of care

Progression framework: employer

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
a) Recruit in ways that minimise discrimination, provide equality of opportunity and maximise scope for local people to secure good jobs	Methods of recruitment	Meets legal requirements of Equality Act 2010 preventing against unlawful discrimination	Some additional efforts made to draw attention to roles from a wider pool of candidates	Clear job descriptions that welcome all applicants, advertised in accessible formats and wide range of outlets, removal of specific information from applications to avoid bias	As 3, plus targeted local outreach and work with local partners to reach potential candidates, innovative interview techniques, targets set for diversity in recruitment at all levels then monitored and reported on. Use Equality Impact Assessments
	Nature of apprenticeship and work experience offer	No or minimal action, meet legal requirements on conditions and pay appropriate to age and stage of apprenticeship	Standard offer, but with some extra allowances (e.g. for travel) and wage progression over time	Pay at least National Living Wage, with wage progression reflecting role and experience. Ethos of investment in future workforce, and commitment to quality on and off job training and mentoring. Work experience available but no specific policy in place	As 3, but pay Foundation Living Wage and with same terms and conditions as wider staff. Diverse and innovative routes for engaging and recruiting candidates including in targeted communities and cohorts e.g. part-time apprenticeships. Strong pastoral care. Celebrate success. Participate in local Apprenticeship Levy transfer schemes. Policy on fair access to work experience and paid internships, proactively used to engage young people
	Flexible working	No policy in place and any instances of flexibility are isolated and 'earnt'	Some flexibility, but discretionary and not applied evenly across organisation or roles	Flexible working more widely spread, specific goals to open up more jobs to be quality part time and flexible working	Specific policy to use wide range of flexible working tools, applied at all levels to attract and progress the best talent, advertised as this at point of hire, monitored and targeted

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
b) Pay the living wage and then go further to support people in stretching take home pay	Living Wage	National Living Wage employer	As 1, but taking action to raise pay of staff	Pay real Living Wage but not accredited by the Living Wage Foundation	Accredited Living Wage Foundation employer
	Pensions	Auto-enrolment to workplace pension for those staff who are legally eligible	As 1, with some proactive communications on the benefits of saving	Review of pension information through low pay perspective, proactive communication of benefits and options	Analysis of low take-up groups, targeted focus on enrolment (including for casual workers) including at point of contract, shared practice, use of technology to demonstrate value, work with Credit Union to deliver good financial education
	Non-pay benefits	No package in place	Standard package, open to all staff	As 2, but proactively communicated, mainly via staff intranet, use of technology to demonstrate value. Some effort to include elements that benefit low paid staff and to promote these	Package explicitly designed and procured to support lower paid, shared practice, reinvestment of salary sacrifice savings in benefits for lower paid, active engagement to drive take-up and design offer going beyond IT systems where necessary
	Contract types	No or little consideration of social impact in determining contract types	Zero hours contracts generally avoided but with contingent temporary/casual workforce used	As 2, plus focus on shift to more secure contract types. Better planning of work schedules, notification in advance and guaranteed minimum hours. Engagement with workers/unions in agreeing contract types and conditions. Pay for all hours worked, including additional time	As 3, plus no use of zero hours contracts unless mutually favoured and if so regularly reviewed, agency/casual workers protected from effects of low pay and used as a route to more stable employment where relevant, no use of exclusivity clauses or 'false agencies', work with supply chain, paid time off and sick pay. Autonomy within roles encouraged and scope to vary work explored

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
c) Commit to lower paid staff reaching their potential	Training, development and progression ☐	No or limited provision in place and generally focused in and above mid-level roles	Ad hoc training, including but not specifically targeted at lower paid roles and at this level typically focused on skills needed to do the current job. Internal jobs advertised.	Skills enhancement opportunities targeted at lower pay bands including provision for basic (ESOL, literacy and numeracy) and softer/transferable skills and delivered so as to avoid barriers to access, e.g. shift patterns or location. Internal progression supported and encouraged. Skills recognised as central to driving productivity	As 3, with strong communication of offer and its links to progression. Inclusive strategy for personal and professional development in place to attract and retain talent with delivery via a range of solutions including via Unions. Focus on reducing institutional barriers and monitor progress. Use of specific tools e.g. functional flexibility, skills matrices, job rotation, career pathways, coaching, celebrating success
	Leadership and management ☐	No or limited provision in place	Systems in place for developing leadership and management at top end of organisation and with ad hoc application	Awareness of need for leadership and management spread throughout organisation. Efforts being made to ensure even application via corporate set of leadership expectations, monitoring of consistent application of HR policy. Some element of good practice adopted	Even and visible use of leadership and management to build positive work environments and open communication at all levels of the organisation, where effort is recognised and there is focus on engendering pride, trust, teamwork, values, confidence, wellbeing, management performance assessed. Use of specific tools to assist progression, improve job quality, boost wellbeing and performance, excellent use of communications to give staff voice and influence
	Measuring performance ☐	No or limited provision in place	Performance management system in place but ad hoc in its application and not used to its potential	Regular appraisals and one-to-ones with managers to assess performance, progress towards agreed goals and development opportunities	As 3, but actively connected to corporate values and competencies and to progression with use of innovative tools in communicating, acknowledging, rewarding high performance

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
d) Support mental and physical health through facilities, policies, culture, advice, etc.	Supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and resilience	Statutory requirements in place	Health, safety and wellbeing included in induction and monitored, plus sporadic training. Some positive policies in place, such as return to work policy to prevent presenteeism, taking breaks, promotion of national campaigns	As 2, but with senior management buy-in, staff engagement and positive policy and practice in place. Alignment to training, and encouragement of behaviour change, e.g. showers and secure cycle parking places to encourage exercise, access to mental health support, positive/pleasant work environment	As 3, with health and wellbeing prioritised with charter in place recognising different life stages, and culture embodied by leaders. Health & wellbeing offer for all that is widely communicated and targeted. Environment that supports healthy choices and physical activity. Pride in being a caring and supportive employer, with workplace health related campaigns/activities; mental health champions; provision for health and eye tests; and signposting and assistance for wider support including financial wellbeing

Anchor action: procurement

What does it cover?

- This dimension is about what anchor institutions buy. It covers the goods, services and buildings and infrastructure they procure, the processes they use to do this, and how they engage with suppliers.

Why does it matter and what can it achieve?

- Decision about what to buy, how it is bought, and who it is bought from can make a surprisingly big difference to local areas.

- Buying more from local businesses (or social enterprises) will help them to survive, grow, employ more people and pay better wages. Over years, this recirculation of money in the local economy can amount to many millions of pounds and help meet local goals on jobs, apprenticeships, incomes and community wellbeing. It can also improve supply chain resilience in the face of economic shocks, changes or barriers to international or long distance trade.

- It is also possible to design the specifications for what you buy, and the processes for choosing and engaging with suppliers, to take account of your organisation's goals on the community, environment and economy – summed up as 'social value'. This will help make the most of your money by directing it to suppliers who can deliver goods and services at the required price and quality *and* advance your wider social value goals.

- A well-designed procurement process for new infrastructure can create opportunities for local people, including those who have not been in work, to secure a job or apprenticeship. It can encourage construction companies to engage with schools and colleges, subcontract with local businesses and set high environmental standards.

- Doing all of this involves some technical work on policies, specifications, tender scoring systems, monitoring processes, etc. It takes time and there are some rules and limitations to stay within. But it is wholly possible and has succeeded elsewhere. Get the detail right and there are big dividends that can be reaped.

What types of things can we do?

Local Supply Chains

- Monitor your spending using a consistent and comparable method so you know how much you are spending locally, can track change and benchmark with others

- Help SMES with cash flow by insisting that your suppliers pay subcontractors promptly, and by splitting big contracts into smaller lots to make it easier to bid for them

- Communicate with potential local suppliers so they know what opportunities are coming up, how to bid, and what you expect of them (e.g. on social value)

- Identify key areas of spend where there are no or few local supply options, and see if new enterprises or groups of local firms working together can close them

Social Value

- Adopt a social value policy, build social value into most or all contract specifications, and award a significant proportion of tender scoring (e.g. 15%+) based on this

- Include fair pay and conditions for workers as one of the scored criteria – covering points such as the real living wage, skills/progression and good employment practice

- Include wider criteria such as social/community, health and environmental impacts and benefits and include clear criteria and goals on these

- Monitor and enforce the implementation of the actions that contractors said that they would deliver, and track and share any wider good practice by suppliers

Progression framework: procurement

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
a) Engage with existing and potential new suppliers of resources, products and services and increase the proportion of spend with local suppliers	Monitor/analyse local spending	No or minimal action	Sporadic analysis of % local spend	Annual analysis of local spend using consistent methodology	As 3, plus analysis benchmarked against other localities and stretching targets set to increase local spend
	Enable SMEs to submit proposals	No or minimal action	Pay contractors promptly; very large contracts sometimes broken into lots	As 2, plus clauses on prompt payment of subcontractors; large contracts often split into lots, avoidance of complex application forms/processes and of unnecessary types or levels of insurance	As 3, but large contracts routinely split into lots; SMEs engaged in designing standard application processes, and fast payment of all suppliers/subcontractors
	Engage with local suppliers on contract opportunities and requirements	Local suppliers invited to tender, but no more so than others	Basic or ad hoc communication of some contract opportunities to local suppliers	Proactive and routine engagement with local suppliers to communicate opportunities and identify their current SV (good) practice	As 3, plus sessions and advice for local suppliers on SV and other requirements and how to meet them
	Identify and address local supply gaps	No or minimal action	Ad hoc identification of areas of spend that lack local supply options	Thorough analysis of main local supply chain gaps	Plug large local supply chain gaps by connecting businesses, helping relevant SMEs to expand, or supporting new social enterprises

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
b) Use procurement to deliver social value (for communities, employees, environment)	Apply SV goals and scoring widely in competitively tendered contracts	Usually only included when legally required (EU threshold+) with just a few exceptions	Not systematically applied, but SV goals made clear and scoring often included in large contracts (e.g. £100k+)	Systematically applied to all contracts above £50K with just a few exceptions	Systematically applied to all contracts above around £25k
	% of total marks allocated to SV in scoring of tenders	Less than 5%	5%-9%	10%-19%, often with some factors also core requirements of contract	Always 20%+, with some elements also covered in core requirements/subject matter of contract
	Coverage of workforce issues – employment, pay and conditions	No specific criteria or scoring of workforce issues (e.g. real living wage, fair conditions, progression, health)	Part of overall SV criteria - taken account of in scoring at a general level but not singled out	Specific goals/scoring on workforce pay & conditions, including reference to real living wage, contracts, training and progression. Local job/apprenticeship opportunities sought where work will be done locally	As 3, but payment of real living wage sought as far as legally possible (e.g. in contracts where budgeted for or through seeking prices with and without living wage compliance). Specific and strengthened clauses on recruitment in and around the area for contracts that require local work
	Coverage of wider social, health and environmental issues	No specific criteria or scoring of social, health and environmental issues	Identified within SV criteria and taken account of in scoring at a general level	Specific goals and criteria set out and scored on social/community benefits, health and environmental good practice	As 3, but with more stretching specifications and a wider range of specific goals cited under each of the main categories (social/community, health and environment)

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
	Extent and nature of supplier engagement (with new and existing suppliers)	No or minimal action	Communication of SV requirements in contract information, ad hoc engagement with suppliers on SV	Engage with suppliers for larger new contracts to communicate SV requirements. Engage with existing suppliers to identify current SV (good) practice	As 3, but done for all significantly sized contracts, and with sessions for potential and current local suppliers on how to meet SV requirements and to discuss what they can do to go beyond their current (good) practice
	Monitoring and enforcement	No or weak monitoring and enforcement	Some monitoring and reporting of delivery, but not systematic. No follow up if SV actions are not delivered	Regular monitoring and reporting of delivery of SV in all relevant contracts. Consequences for non-delivery specified in contracts	Strong and systematic monitoring for all contracts, with evidence of delivery sought and verified. Reporting of benefits at senior level at least annually. Enforcement with penalties for non-compliance
c) Procure new developments in ways which deliver social value and local benefits	Use procurement to create jobs and skills benefits from the construction and end use of large developments	No additional requirements set out in tenders and contracting	Ad hoc approaches to specific contracts, to create local job / apprenticeship opportunities	Requirements to create local work opportunities via large construction projects (e.g. 12 months+ or £1m+ in value) included in core contract subject matter	As 3, but applied more widely – contracts of £500K+, and to end use of developments as well as design and building work
	Put focus on those who most need work and skills – e.g. unemployed people and those leaving education	No requirements or specific emphasis on these groups	Encouragement and ad hoc measures to reach this audience, but no specific requirements or incentives to do so	Specific focus on this and requirements for employment of 'first job opportunity' workers/ 'new entrant trainees' e.g. 26-person-weeks per £1m of spend	As 3, plus supply side and brokerage mechanisms to help developers recruit from this group locally, and higher person weeks targets applied (e.g. 52 person-weeks per £1m and more for labour intensive contracts)

Anchor action: environment and assets

What does it cover?

- This dimension is about the impact that anchor institutions have on climate change and the environment and the impact of their land, buildings and operations on the places and communities they are based in or near, or otherwise influence.

Why does it matter and what can it achieve?

- Anchors can have a major impact on environmental quality and targets – including leading the way in tackling the climate emergency. Their practices around energy and resource use, waste generation and management, transport, buildings, green spaces and wildlife can have a big influence on the health and wellbeing of local communities (including disadvantaged ones often worst affected by poor environments), and make a positive local contribution to tackling global environmental issues.

- The design specification and location choices for buildings, spaces and other infrastructure can make a massive difference to how accessible and well used they are by communities, and can support or hinder physical activity and mental health and wellbeing. Opening up assets for community use can provide hubs for people and groups to meet, run session or do activities such as education, training, sport and leisure. It can strengthen communities and help people to be active. There is also potential for some anchors (e.g. local authorities) to use asset transfer to turn potential liabilities into community hubs and thriving resources.

What types of things can we do?

Adopt stretching environmental policies, targets and management systems

- Adopt ambitious targets and actions to respond to the climate emergency and achieve net zero carbon

- Put in place robust systems to identify, manage, reduce and monitor environmental impacts across operations and areas of influence

Take action on energy, resource use, waste and pollution

- Minimise energy use through efficiency measures and insulation, generating renewable energy on or off site, and buying energy via 'green tariffs'

- Minimise waste, non-renewable resource use and pollution – including through waste avoidance and re-use, recycling and circular economy collaborations

Enhance impacts related to transport and the built and natural environment

- Reduce car/vehicle mileage, use clean/low carbon vehicles, promote cycling, walking and public transport, and use online working and local sourcing to reduce travel

- Manage and retrofit buildings/estate to improve environmental impact and create healthy, high quality workplaces. Design new buildings to high standards.

- Create, enhance, manage and provide access to green spaces and wildlife habitats, support tree planting, and reduce flood risks (e.g. through sustainable drainage)

Design/manage land, buildings and other assets to maximise local and community benefits

- Build positive 'good neighbour' relationships with local communities and enable local groups/people to use buildings/land for enjoyment and positive uses

- Embrace high quality design and collaborate with other anchors on current estates, new developments and place making

Progression framework: environment and assets

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
a) Adopt stretching environmental policies, targets and management systems	Climate emergency response	No carbon emissions targets or monitoring in place	Carbon monitoring and reduction goals or targets adopted, but no net zero ambition	Long-term net zero carbon target adopted, with actions identified and being taken and monitoring in place	Ambitious net zero carbon target for 2035 or earlier, with carbon offset elements of this kept to a minimum. A plan to achieve targets and monitoring in place, and good progress being made
	Environmental Policy and Environmental Management Systems (EMS)	Environmental policy either not in place, or not supported by action or an EMS	Significant environmental policies, actions and monitoring in place, but not systematic or ambitious	Clear and substantive environmental policy backed by targets, actions an EMS/ monitoring and delivering tangible progress. But could be higher priority, more ambitious and better communicated	As 3, but with high levels of ambition, progress and priority apparent; strong communication and training in place across the organisation; and valuation of environmental benefits taken account in decision making. Demonstrable success in reducing impacts year on year
b) Take action on energy, resource use, waste and pollution	Energy use and efficiency and renewables	Little or no action to reduce energy use or utilise renewable energy	Significant but patchy actions to reduce energy use, improve efficiency, generate renewable energy and buy energy through 'green' tariffs	Strong, systematic actions to reduce energy use, improve energy efficiency, generate renewable energy and buy energy through green tariffs	As 3, but with a clear goal to achieve net-zero non-renewable energy use and actions to achieve that, backed by internal training and communication, and ongoing innovation and partnership
	Waste, resource use and pollution	Little or no action to reduce resource use, waste and pollution	Significant but patchy actions to reduce resource use, waste and pollution	Strong, systematic actions to reduce resource use, waste and pollution, including via procurement choices (e.g. of 'green' products)	As 3, but with zero waste to landfill achieved or in sight; ongoing training, communication and innovation; and involvement in circular economy collaborations (e.g. to use waste as resource)

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
c) Enhance impacts related to transport and the built and natural environment	Transport	Little or no action to reduce impacts from work related travel (freight, travel during work, and commuting)	Fuel efficient vehicle fleet, some remote working, some policies to support public transport use and active travel	Vehicle fleet largely non-petrol/diesel, strong policies to promote public transport use (e.g. discount schemes) and active travel by staff (e.g. showers, good bike parking). Avoidance of car dependent locations. Frequent remote working	As 3, but vehicle fleet entirely non-petrol/diesel, office/site locations close to main bus and rail stations, car parking minimised, financial incentives to use active travel or public transport, reduction in vehicle mileage a factor in procurement decisions
	Buildings and infrastructure (existing and new)	Little or no work to improve environmental impact of estate. Basic standards adopted for new build (e.g. BREEAM 'Pass' or 'Good')	Some works to improve the impact and working environment of the current estate. Raised if unambitious specifications for new build (e.g. BREEAM 'Very Good')	Significant scale retrofit/works to enhance estate and its environmental performance, and the health and wellbeing of workers. Very high standards for new build (e.g. BREEAM 'Excellent')	Proactive, large scale retrofitting to enhance the current estate, its quality as a healthy and productive workplace, and its environmental performance. Leading edge, top level specifications for new build (e.g. BREEAM 'Outstanding')
	Natural Environment/ Green Infrastructure	Basic maintenance of green spaces, but access to them and habitat value a minor concern	Some work to manage and improve wildlife value of sites and land, and to provide staff access to green/open space	Sustainable land management to support biodiversity. Proactive in improving staff access to green/open space. Support off-site tree planting or peat restoration	As 3, but with work to create and enhance green infrastructure throughout the estate (buildings as well as land) and support flood risk reduction, sustainable drainage systems, and positive health and wellbeing impacts

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
d) Design/manage land, buildings and other assets to maximise local and community benefits	Community use of facilities and 'good neighbour' role	No community use of facilities now or planned. Impact of activities on neighbouring communities rarely considered	Low level community access to some facilities (e.g. for recreation or meeting space). Effort to minimise any adverse impacts on neighbouring communities	As 2, but with a significant level of community use/access, including for disadvantaged and diverse users. Positive communication and links to neighbouring communities. Some asset transfers to communities if appropriate to the anchor's role/estate	As 3, but with some assets operating as multi-use facilities that benefit many users and communities, including disadvantaged and diverse ones. Potential users involved in design of new facilities. Excellent connections to local communities and good use of asset transfers where appropriate
	Strategic planning, regeneration and good design	Little or no interaction with others in the locality. Design quality a minor concern	Some discussion with neighbouring land/asset owners around management and planning of current and future estate. Good design quality and attractiveness sought but not a priority	A good level of cooperation with neighbouring land and asset owners to plan together, improve an area and support regeneration. Effort to use good design to enhance perceptions of a place and create good working environments	As 3, but proactively participate in strategic partnerships as part of masterplanning and place shaping. Align development and use of land and assets, and insist on high quality design to maximise benefits e.g. to enhance a town/city centre and its attractiveness or regenerate an area

Anchor action: service delivery

What does it cover?

- This dimension is about how anchor institutions deliver their core business. It will differ depending on the type of institution, so the content here is general in nature. But the principle is – are you going about your business in a way that delivers the best possible inclusive outcomes for the economy, people and places you serve?

Why does it matter and what can it achieve?

- This is best demonstrated through an example such as healthcare. A local hospital exists first and foremost to treat and care for people, including high numbers of people from its immediate community. As demand for its services grow, the hospital has a vested interest in understanding the determinants of health in its local area. We know that too often this pressure is borne through the growing gap between the best and worst off. Being poor or living in poverty unequally affects your health.

- From an anchor perspective, the hospital can use its size and scale to shape these determinants, allowing it to intervene earlier to transform the lives. As well as via its hiring and purchasing, understanding the make-up of the local community, allows for more intelligent design, delivery and targeting of services – a win-win scenario.

- It follows that aligning across anchors also makes sense. So, for example, how can a hospital work with a Council to deliver employment and skills support to help local people secure good employment; or with a college to promote health and wellbeing; or with a university to create the conditions for business growth and innovation?

- Anchors can innovative in their partnerships and can work with local businesses, communities and schools. Community anchors have a rich track record in reaching people and communities that big agencies often struggle to get to. Partnering on this basis can extend impact across many policy areas, and across the lives of many. It can also in the long term manage demand for public services by building community capacity and resilience and creating opportunities to deliver services differently.

What types of things can we do?

Design and deliver core services so that they reach and benefit disadvantaged communities

- Know your place and your audience/service users and their needs, including communities facing poverty and disadvantage

- Use this intelligence in setting strategy and the design and delivery of services then monitor take up and impact, especially by those in poverty and disadvantage

- Work with other anchors to co-design, simplify and streamline solutions that will extend your reach and impact, and deliver multiple outcomes more effectively

- Communicate widely and make your services real to people

Work with community anchors

- Recognise and draw on the reach/influence of community anchors, and tap into their ability to communicate, broker dialogue and facilitate community-led solutions

- Support them to be the best they can be, maximising their role as a driving force for community renewal and social change in geographically defined neighbourhoods

- Connect community anchors to the strategic debate and formalise the relationship so they can influence the decisions that affect their communities

Contribute knowledge, resources, data or expertise to support the local economy, businesses and education

- Support local business growth and resilience through sharing your expertise and intelligence and fostering innovation

- Forge strong and supportive links to schools, colleges and universities, including focus on disadvantaged areas, students and social mobility

Progression framework: service delivery

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
a) Design and deliver core services so that they reach and benefit disadvantaged communities	Knowing your place and service users, including those facing poverty and disadvantage	Little intelligence on diverse needs, hard to identify and reach different groups and places as a result	Some mining of data to generate a high level picture of need and some segmenting of approach	Ready access to reliable data/baselines with target groups and communities mapped and fed into strategy for service delivery	As 3, with wider techniques used to gather intelligence, targeted consultation to identify need and barriers, refreshed regularly to see how needs change over time
	Reviewing service delivery to reach and benefit diverse and disadvantaged communities	No review or targeting of activity, universal provision	Universal provision but with some additional efforts to communicate offer and then support specific groups	Evidence based review of activity and delivery and enhancements made as a result. Strong communication of how to make services relevant to different lives, use of non-standard venues	As 3, with co-design of services, regular review of take up and outcomes, innovative use of diverse communication channels including trusted community intermediaries, and extensive multi-agency working to connect services, align priorities and link to mainstream services in targeted/priority places

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
b) Work with local 'community anchor' organisations to better deliver and gain uptake of services, especially by disadvantaged communities	Embedding joint working	No joint working, reluctance to share or collaborate	A number of links and projects with community organisations, but somewhat sporadic	More comprehensive, strategic and ongoing work with local groups to better reach disadvantaged people and places e.g. via volunteering, engagement and community assets	As 3, with long-term evidence based strategic ambition, shared delivery objectives and policy in place. Regular sharing of information and referrals, and a one-stop-shop style of joint working to connect services. Focus on developing long-term financially viable community capacity
c) Contribute knowledge, resources, data or expertise to support the local economy, businesses and education	Support local business success through expertise and innovation	No sharing of expertise or resources to support local businesses	Occasional sharing of expertise or resources to support local businesses	Reasonably frequent and extensive connection with local businesses to help them innovate or otherwise support their success	Frequent, wide and strong connection to local businesses to help them innovate or otherwise support their success
	Build links with local schools, colleges and universities e.g. via talks, projects, funding, curriculum input, careers links or work experience	No activity that assists educational bodies and their students	Occasional and limited activity that assists educational bodies and their students	Significant scale of activity that assists educational bodies and their students, including those facing disadvantage	Extensive and involved activity to collaborate with and support educational bodies and their students, with most focus on those facing disadvantage

Anchor action: corporate and civic

What does it cover?

- This dimension is about recognising yourself as an anchor and translating that into how you run your organisation. It is also about how you apply your anchor role in the place you are based, considering how you interact with other anchors to share practice, help each other succeed, and to collectively make your places better ones.

Why does it matter and what can it achieve?

- First an institution needs to recognise its own anchor potential. Often, and by the nature of its business, it will already be doing many things that are helping the local economy, people and places. This is not about starting from scratch. In many cases it will be about refining existing activity. In others it will be about spotting scope to do something new or different. Either way, what matters most in many ways, is the internal reflection that gets you there.

- This is fully realised when the organisation then makes a conscious commitment to embedding anchor thinking into corporate mindset and priorities, from senior leadership to key positions throughout the organisation to the core culture, values and behaviours all staff believe in and demonstrate.

- Anchors can act as testbeds for new ways of working to support better outcomes for the local economy, people and places. They can take this learning, experience and practice and use it to influence others to do the same. This can rapidly multiply impact and drive a powerful positive agenda for change.

- Better relationships at all levels between large and smaller community based anchors can only be a good thing too – helping to understand challenges, focus effort efficiently where it is most needed, share practice and act at the right scale to make a lasting difference.

What types of things can anchors do?

Make an institutional commitment to being an inclusive anchor

- Reflect internally on where you are on your anchor journey. Define what you want to achieve and what you need to do as a result.

- Establish commitment at the highest level, and back this up with the right people in the right places throughout the organisation to deliver

- Rethink your resource allocations to make sure they align with your anchor vision and define the level of social return on investment you want to see

- Make it the norm – build your anchor commitments into your culture, values and behaviours and put the right systems in place to deliver, monitor and track impact

Collaborate with other anchors

- Tell others what you are doing and celebrate the difference it is making to your organisation and the people and places it serves

- Look for opportunities to share practice and learn from others

- Get the right people involved from other anchors in your local area or across a wider peer network and identify the champions who can oil the wheels of change

- Define where working together will deliver greater impact, identify shared issues to address or opportunities to respond to then make a collective commitment to it

- Play to your strengths, recognising the capacity, reach and influence others bring

- Look for early wins to help prove the concept and generate momentum but be patient, this takes time

Progression framework: corporate and civic

Anchors can...	Feature	1	2	3	4
a) Recognise the organisation as being an anchor, then embed inclusive anchor dimensions into organisational vision/mission, values, culture, communications, behaviours, leadership, corporate planning and budgeting	Corporate leadership and commitment	No or minimal awareness of, or commitment to, being an inclusive anchor	Aware of concept, some senior level thinking and discussion about how to apply it, commitment to act but not well embedded or followed through	Good understanding and integration with CSR policy. High level review of opportunities for action, annual consideration of progress at Exec and Board level, lead role and senior responsibility allocated, clear commitment to action and good examples of its impact on decision making	As 3, but with detailed review of opportunities, regular consideration at Exec and Board level, Director level champion appointed backed by a lead role who can deliver it practically and with wider staff/team support, strong and explicit commitment evident which is routinely considered in decision making, clearly making a difference, monitored and reported
	Inclusive anchor thinking evident in values, behaviour, culture and communications	None or minimal	Organisational culture and Values/ Behaviours statements that show some support for inclusivity, diversity and making a positive local impact. Some local volunteering in work time accepted but not encouraged. Reliance on digital communications	Culture and values/behaviours statements in clear support. Open and supportive culture that engages with and looks after those staff facing challenges. Supportive attitude to local volunteering, community links and sharing of learning. Some adaptation of communication tools to better reach lower paid staff	As 3, but with inclusive anchors thinking to the fore. Highly supportive, inclusive, open and respectful culture. Strong focus on bringing out the best in everyone – especially those facing challenges. Local volunteering and community links encouraged and expected, including in a professional capacity. Many employees with links to local organisations. Pronounced learning and sharing culture. Communication style that actively seeks input from all and does not exclude lower paid staff via digital only communications

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
	Incorporation into key documents and statements – vision, mission, corporate plan, etc. ☐	None or minimal	Corporate/Business plan includes some content on how the organisation will act – i.e. use its capacity as an anchor to support inclusive growth	As 2, but well developed content within corporate/ business plan and inclusive anchor thinking reflected in vision and/or mission statement	As 3, but role and aims as an inclusive anchor as the centre of the organisation's mission and visions and across corporate documents
	Manage financial assets to create positive impacts ☐	Funds and assets managed only on basis of maximum financial gain	As 1, but some investments excluded if in firms with negative societal impacts (e.g. tobacco, environmental damage)	As 2, but positive criteria also set out to support investment that has positive societal impacts and which will still generate a good return	As 3, but with opportunities to invest in local companies, social enterprise and projects explored and exploited where these will also offer good long term returns
	Resource allocations that support impact as an inclusive anchor ☐	Inclusive growth and anchor roles not taken into account in budget setting	Opportunities considered in budgeting, and some modest allocations typically made for supportive activities	Inclusive anchor goals roundly considered in budget setting, with sufficient resources made available to progress priority areas	As 3, but with thorough review of existing and future budget allocations, and inclusive anchors goals a key factor in determining resource allocations

Anchors can…	Feature	1	2	3	4
b) Act as a champion for anchor collaboration, civic responsibility, learning, sharing, promoting the services of other anchors and leading by example	Collaborate with other local anchor institutions (e.g. within the local authority area)	Little connection with other local organisations	Sporadic connections and relationships with a few key partners	Strong connections with many large organisations and community anchors, with some instances of heightened influence and action as a result	Excellent relationships with nearly all large local institutions and community anchors; frequent collaboration to respond to issues, spot opportunities and plan ahead. Significantly enhanced influence and action
	Collaborate and share experience beyond the local area	Little connection with other organisations beyond the local area	Sporadic connections with a few key partners (e.g. peer organisations) beyond the local area. Occasional sharing of learning and practice	Strong connections with peers (i.e. same type of organisation) elsewhere in the region and some national links. Significant sharing of learning and practice, and some positive impacts from collaboration	As 3, but wider connections, deep relationships with peers and other exploratory and opportunistic links, including international. Strong and sustained sharing of learning and good practice, frequent collaboration and significantly enhanced influence and action as a result. Shared objectives on inclusive growth goals

About this framework – development and acknowledgements

The Framework is designed to align with and cross reference other tools and expertise, and to match the realities of how anchor organisations themselves think about areas for action – e.g. it links to departmental structures. Development of local case studies to show what anchors are already doing in practice can also be helpful.

Using this framework

The Framework is a tool for organisations to use to assess where they are now, where they want to be and how to get there. It combines high level summaries aimed at decision and policy makers and a depth of detail aimed at practitioners and specialist functions. It is designed to set out what being an inclusive anchor means in practice and to demonstrate how anchors can affect change.

We recommend that organisational leaders and senior management teams take overall responsibility for using the Framework, as it is inherently about an organisation's vision, mission, priorities and behaviours. This is likely to involve three steps initially and then an annual review process:

i)   an initial discussion about the 'inclusive anchor' idea, the dimensions it involves and commitment to using this Framework to support and make progress

ii) carrying out/commissioning a review of current organisational practice against the dimensions and features within the Framework, scoring each 1-4

iii) informed by this baseline information (a score of 1-4 on each dimension), setting annual and long-term goals for progress and how to move these forward

Each year, a review of progress should be completed and enable leaders/management teams to assess progress, refine targets and plan future actions.

How to Calculate Scores against the Framework

Scoring is used so organisations can internally self-assess and set goals, not for any competitive or sharing purpose. Scores can be calculated at a range of levels:

- For individual features within each of the five dimensions, just take the score directly from the column that fits your position best (i.e. 1-4)

- For each 'Anchors Can' statement, an average score can be calculated by totalling the scores from the features within it and dividing by the number of features

- For each Dimension, the average score is the total of the scores for the 'Anchors Can' statements divided by the number of 'Anchors Can' statements in the Dimension

- The overall average score is the total score of the 5 Dimensions divided by 5

We recommend that scoring is rounded to one decimal place, and that leadership teams focus on results for the 5 Dimensions, 'Anchors Can' statements and the overall score, with practitioners drilling down into individual features. Bear in mind that the discussion, thinking and action the process prompts matter more than the numbers.

For further information

For more information, guidance or support on the use of this Framework or on developing anchor practices, please contact: Les Newby (les@lesnewby.com) or Nicky Denison at Wordfern Ltd (nicky@nickydenison.co.uk)

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