



South Tyneside Pledge

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(Policy, Engagement & Insight Team)

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Monday 15th July 2026



Supported by



South Tyneside Council

Spread the word!

THIS IS
SOUTH
TYNESIDE



Policy, Engagement & Insight Team

Core Functions:

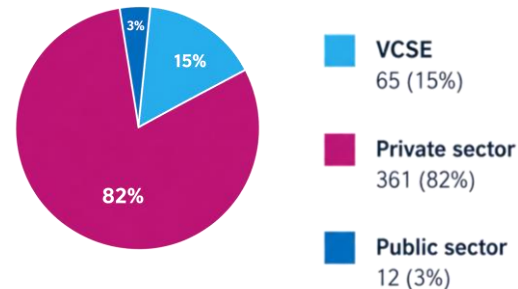
- **Policy & Insight** – analyse Government policy, manage input into North East Mayoral Strategic Authority, deliver Council's Anti-Poverty and Child Poverty strategies, coordinate the South Tyneside Pledge, lead on the Council's corporate strategy, service planning and Data Observatory (producing reports on economy and labour market).
- **Performance** – produce and analyse Council-wide performance data through the Corporate Performance Framework, along with data analysis to support Children's and Adults Social Care reporting requirements.
- **Communications** – strategic communications including PR, emergency comms, marketing, design and print, internal comms and support for community engagement (including Armed Forces) and consultation.

Key Projects:

- South Tyneside Pledge
- Reviewing Corporate Performance Framework
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- North East MSA
- Corporate Strategy Review

The South Tyneside Pledge is a shared commitment to driving inclusive growth, local investment, and stronger communities by encouraging organisations to take practical action such as local spending, recruitment, and support for residents.

The Pledge brings together **nine flexible commitments** without strict targets, enabling organisations of all sizes to contribute in ways that work for them.



2022

2023

2024

2025

2026



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Spend South Tyneside by aiming to:

1. Increase the proportion of procurement spending in South Tyneside and the wider area and, if relevant, explore joint procurement and commissioning.
2. Support South Tyneside small businesses to bid for opportunities with larger organisations.
3. Encourage employees to spend, shop and eat in South Tyneside and to visit, and engage with, our attractions.

Recruit South Tyneside by aiming to:

4. Hire more South Tyneside residents, advertise jobs locally and take action on gender pay gaps.
5. Provide job opportunities, apprenticeships or careers guidance to local residents, with a real focus upon Care Leavers, carers and those with mental health needs and learning difficulties.
6. Promote healthy lifestyles and sign up for the Better Health at Work Award.

Support South Tyneside by aiming to:

7. Encourage employees to volunteer with South Tyneside organisations.
8. Implement a climate change action plan that includes carbon reduction targets and the use of environmentally-sustainable supply chains.
9. Use our green spaces and cultural offer.

Pledge Commitments



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Supply Chain & Community Network



Local Suppliers



Workforce & Skills

Staff, apprenticeships, training providers, colleges

Customers & Clients



Operations & Delivery



Community & Volunteering



Charities, CICs, local initiatives, social value work



Professional Services

Accounts & Marketing



Technology & Systems



Local Economy & Networks

Business groups, referrals, collaborations



Examples of Pledge events over past 12 months.

Pledge Networking @ EMMAUS NE

VCSE/Speed Networking – in collaboration with Inspire

Social event @ The Criterion – Business story telling

Procurement event – in collaboration with STC Procurement team

Festive Fayre – South Shields Football Club Xmas celebration event

Connect2Thrive – in collaboration with anti-poverty/public Health

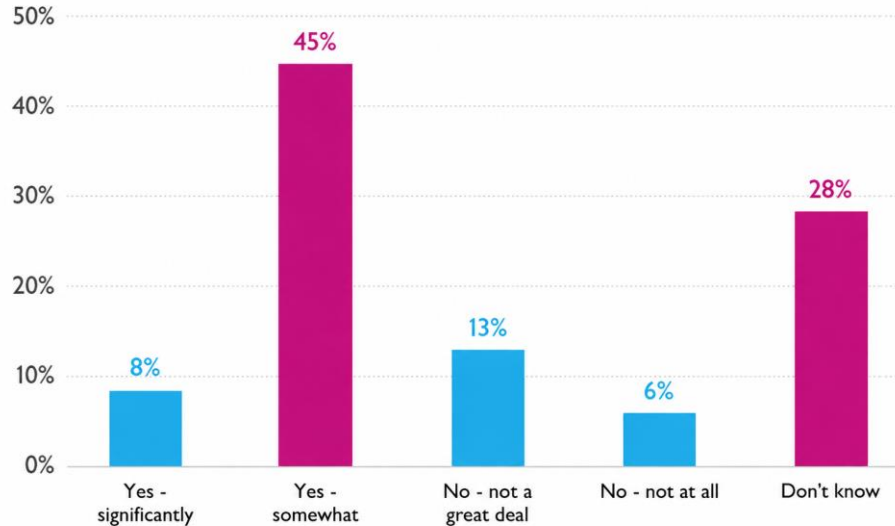
Grief, loss and bereavement training – in collaboration with Inspire ST and delivered by St Oswalds

Connect2Five – in collaboration with anti-poverty/public Health

Support South Tyneside



Recruit South Tyneside



“We’ve made South Tyneside first port of call. We have managed to find good people locally. The Pledge gave us a reason to take this approach.”

Barry Cooper – *Pentagon Assurance*

Data taken from recent Pledge evaluation showing whether the Pledge has made it easier to offer work, apprenticeships or work experience opportunities, to local people.

Source: Ortus Economic Research analysis



Pledge Steering group

Steering Group established to represent members and guide development.

The Steering Group meets monthly with the Pledge Support Officer.

Evaluation – Ortus Economic Research

Key aims:

- Assess impact over the past three years
- Measure progress against nine commitments
- Identify improvement opportunities
- Develop evidence and case studies for future use

Survey and consultation focus:

- Motivations and engagement
- Events and delivery
- Behaviour change and benefits
- Impacts linked to commitments
- Future focus

Desk

documents, website and
internal reviews

Survey

56 valid responses from
437 members

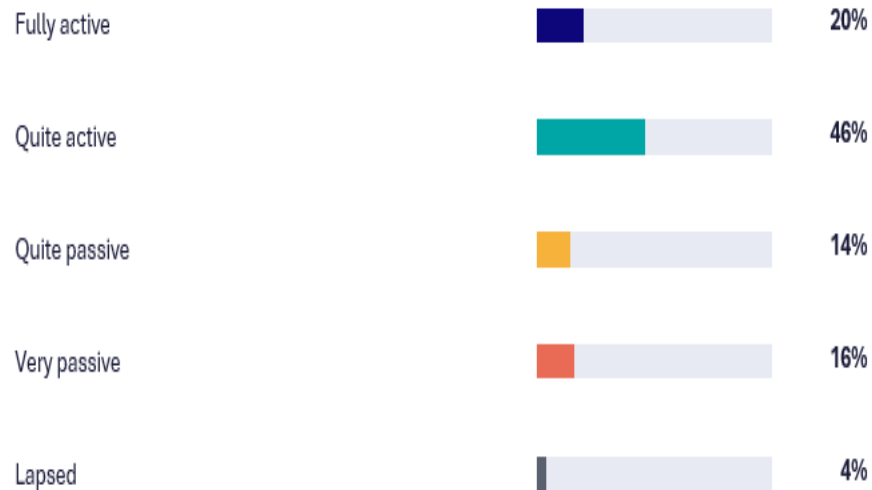
27

stakeholder interviews
and discussions



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Key Findings



- A committed core is driving much of the visible activity and value
- Some members support the ethos but engage only lightly (or not at all)
- Newer, smaller and less confident members need clearer entry routes and support

82%

members are private sector

15%

members are VCSE

3%

members are public sector



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Pledge- Connecting Organisations

- Events are inclusive, practical and valued
- Members meet organisations they would not otherwise encounter
- Cross-sector contact is a distinctive strength
- Connections need clearer routes into tangible outcomes

80%

had attended a Pledge event

90%

said events developed local connections

62%

developed partnerships or collaborations

73%

more focused on local community engagement



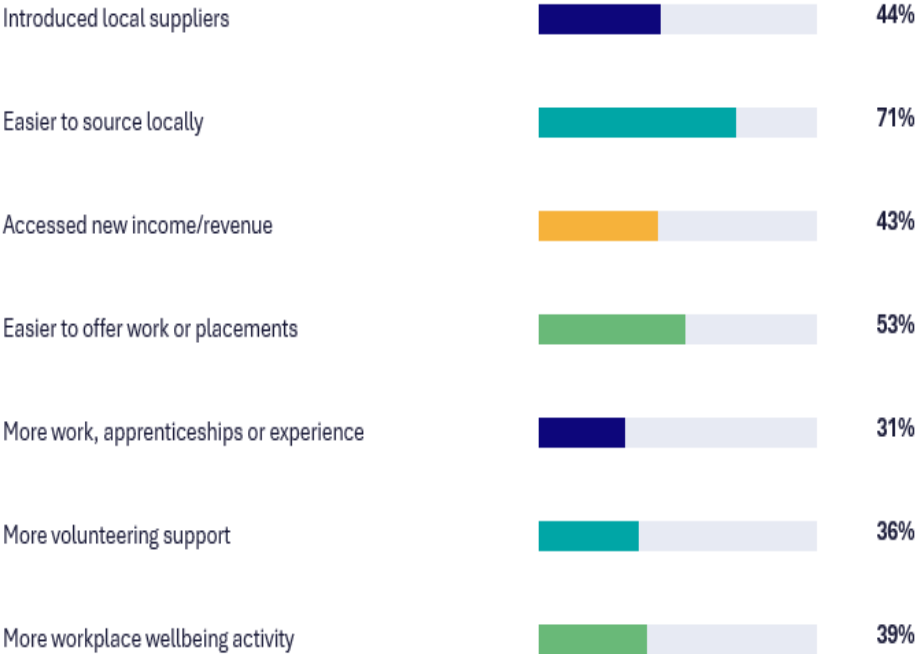
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Overall assessment:

- The Pledge has legitimacy and a recognisable local identity
- It is strongest at building the foundations of community wealth
- Its next task is consolidation, deeper engagement and clearer routes to outcomes
- The Council is both sponsor and one of the key levers for future impact



£10.3 Million –
Estimated annual net additional impact



“It’s a stipulated set of commitments and an ethos that’s documented. We use it as a guiding star of our strategic approach.”

Barry Cooper – *Pentagon Assurance*

“We’ve got some relationships built from that with other pledge members. It’s great to connect as a networking tool.”

Chris Pickering – *Our 1 Community*

“My first port of call, now, always - and it wasn’t initially - is let’s look at the Pledge [membership] first.”

Ruth Parker – *EMMAUS N.E.*

“It’s great getting together with people who you wouldn’t normally be in a room with.”

Wayne Rambo Groves – *The Red Bench Project*

“We’ve met other organisations that were on our doorstep that wouldn’t have been introduced to or been aware of. That’s been fantastic.”

Lesley-Anne Kirk – *Northern Rights*

“What we’re doing as a community, what we’re achieving as part of the Pledge, is really admirable.”

Garry Thompson – *Port of Tyne*



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Recommendations



For the Council:	• Prioritise active engagement • Strengthen capacity • Improve onboarding • Develop thematic events • Strengthen procurement, jobs, volunteering and monitoring
For members:	• Move from passive support to action • Use the network more fully • Share opportunities and successes • Think contribution as well as benefit
For the Steering Group:	• Provide strategic challenge • Agree annual priorities • Act as ambassadors • Identify/communicate strong case studies • Explore introduction of a 'buddying' systems for new member
Cross-cutting priorities:	• Treat hard and soft outcomes as connected • Set consolidation as the primary goal, with growth as secondary • Build on what works rather than reinventing the model • Repeat evaluation in 2028 to track progress

Next Steps ...

- Input/challenge/suggestions from yourselves
- Continue with Events –
Networking/Connect2Summer, Procurement event
etc
- Steering group to take a more strategic role – looking
at what they can influence/implement – ‘buddy
system’ support with Procurement event.
- Continue to build business directory
- Work with internal teams around Social Value

