

SOCIAL VALUE POLICY

2022-25

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INTRODUCTION

The 2050 Vision for Central Bedfordshire is simple, ensuring that it is a great place to live and work. The aspiration for this vision is detailed in our Corporate Plan through a series of Outcome and Ambition statements.

The four Outcome statements define what we want life in 2050 to be like:

- We live in a unique and special environment
- We have a prosperous and innovative economy
- We have the best quality of life
- We live in thriving communities

Achieving these outcomes as an organisation requires CBC to collaborate across sectors and develop truly cross-cutting initiatives that build on existing strengths and address multiple challenges at once.

One such cross-cutting tool CBC can use to significantly contribute to the 2050 outcomes is to apply The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (“the Act”). The Act is an opportunity to measure the additional economic, community and environmental benefits that can be delivered through our procurement activity – commonly known as ‘social value’. This Policy intends to make a further commitment, by going beyond the Act’s requirements and implementing this policy into all aspects of our commercial and service activity, such as planning, wherever practicable.

WHAT IS SOCIAL VALUE?

Social value is any additional economic, community or environmental benefit generated through how CBC delivers its activity and services, including when procuring goods, works or services from the Council’s suppliers. In order to realise these added-value benefits and improve on current practice, we and our suppliers will collaborate to plan how contracts and projects can be delivered in ways that generate outcomes that contribute to the 2050 vision, for example by:

- creating jobs or apprenticeships for local care leavers and disabled people
- donating to or working with local charities, schools, social enterprises, etc.,
- supporting more with local businesses, especially micro and small businesses and social enterprises
- reducing carbon footprint over time, e.g. by switching to hybrid or electric vehicle fleets,
- increasing commitment to recycling or composting waste
- reducing inequalities through reducing gender pay gaps
- improved employability for young people through meaningful work placements and careers support

These additional benefits can be measured through financial and non-financial metrics and can encompass the entire supply chain. This means that for every £1 spent by CBC, our suppliers can calculate the added-value return over and above the £1 cost. In some cases, our suppliers may already be delivering these added-value benefits, so the implementation of this Policy is an opportunity to capture and report this for our local communities too.

POLICY PURPOSE

This policy sets out how we will work together as an organisation to deliver social value for Central Bedfordshire. Including how all staff, partners and suppliers can play their part. This Policy applies to all spending on third-party contracts and single purchases by CBC Procurement and Contract Management. In future, there may be decisions outside of commissioning and procurement, such as planning, grants, joint ventures and frameworks when this Policy could also apply, and where significant social value could be unlocked.

Beyond our organisation, we are also committed to working with partner organisations, including the NHS, Fire and Police and SEMLEP to increase the amount of social value delivered collectively by Central Bedfordshire anchor institutions through jointly agreed approaches.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the social value policy are to maximise the local impact of the Council's spending to:

- Provide an outcomes-based measurement framework that connects the Vision 2050, Fairness Taskforce, Strategic plan, Equality and Diversity Plan and Economic Strategy
- Introduce a social value management tool that supports the delivery these strategic priorities for the people and environment of Central Bedfordshire
- Provide a consistent approach to measuring and reporting social value throughout the provision cycle, including continuous improvement
- Define and implement a robust, transparent and efficient digital solution for assessing and awarding the social value component of tenders, and managing relevant supplier performance during the contract lifecycle
- Allow organisations to compare their own social value performance by sector and build, over time, industry benchmarks to understand 'what good looks like' in Central Bedfordshire
- Reduce the uncertainty surrounding social value measurement for organisations, allowing them to make informed decisions based on robust assessments and hence to embed social value into their corporate strategies.

SOCIAL VALUE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

The National Social Value Measurement Framework (the 'Measurement Framework') will underpin and empower the objectives of this policy, by allowing us to unlock, measure and report the social value during project cycles. The Measurement Framework is also known as the "National TOMs" because it is built around a set of Themes, Outcomes and Measures, and in recent years has become the most commonly used framework in the UK. The National TOMs were first launched in 2017 by the [National Social Value Taskforce](#), chaired by the LGA, with over 40 members from organisations representing central and local government, the private sector and the third sector.

The National TOMs provide a flexible, measures-based calculation framework designed to articulate social value outcomes in terms that can be objectively assessed. It was conceived and developed to be evidence-led and applicable over the 'whole life' of a contract or single purchase, as well as throughout the provision cycle.

Central Bedfordshire Council TOMs

THEME	OUTCOMES
Employment and skills for the future	More local people in employment
	More opportunities for disadvantaged people
	Improved skills
	Improved skills for disadvantaged people
	Improved employability of young people
A prosperous economy	More opportunities for local MSMEs and VCSEs
	Improving staff wellbeing and mental health
	Reducing inequalities
	Ethical Procurement is promoted
Thriving communities	Creating a healthier community
	Vulnerable people are helped to live independently
	More working with the Community
Environmental sustainability	Carbon emissions are reduced
	Air pollution is reduced
	Safeguarding the natural environment
	Resource efficiency and circular economy solutions are promoted
Encouraging social innovation	Other measures (TBD)

Figure 1: CBC Social Value TOMs framework

Each of the Measures behind the Outcomes have been assigned a proxy value which allows organisations to report their delivery in financial and non-financial terms. These values were agreed by the National Social Value Taskforce and stem from public sector data sources such as the Unit Cost Database (UCD), following benefit analysis techniques as outlined in the HM Treasury Green Book and other relevant monetary valuation techniques, such as benchmarking of market prices.

There are several benefits to using both the National TOMs and the tendering and contract management portal, known as the Social Value Portal (“the Portal”) for CBC. We will be able to:

- ✓ Objectively compare and benchmark year on year social value delivered between contracts and services, to seek sharing of best practice and drive better performance
- ✓ Gain a deeper understanding of where social value is being generated within our suppliers and areas - as well as where more social value could be unlocked to improve outcomes
- ✓ Puts a common language (the £) against the positive impact our spending brings to the area, to inform service planning and commissioning
- ✓ Being better informed, about where further social value could be unlocked locally, will develop and support our communities, in turn creating a more resilient, healthier and prosperous workforce to contribute to a thriving Central Bedfordshire.

See Appendix for the full Measurement Framework.

UNLOCKING SOCIAL VALUE: PROCUREMENT & CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

In order to maximise the effectiveness of this social value policy, while still maintaining the efficiency of the provision cycle, a minimum spend threshold has been set at £100,000. The threshold assessment should be conducted at the start of the provision cycle and be based on the estimated spend during the contract or purchase’s whole lifecycle.

There will be a minimum standalone weighting of 10% of overall scoring, of which:

- Quantitative assessment of the bidder’s social value commitments (Themes/Outcomes/Measures) – 60%

- Qualitative assessment to demonstrate how social value commitments will be delivered – 40%

Any proposed contracts or single purchases below this threshold can proceed through the provision cycle without needing to comply with the requirements of this policy. All contracts or single purchases above this threshold will need to comply with the requirements of this policy, unless an exemption waiver has been obtained.

CBC is committed to a performance and evidence-based approach to unlocking social value, which will ensure that suppliers' tender responses and/or proposals are assessed fairly and independently. The Council will be using the Portal during the tendering process, as well as to monitor supplier performance in the delivery of this added social value during the contract lifecycle:

- Candidate bidders will receive an Invitation To Tender (ITT) document(s) and be able to enter the details of their social value bid response onto the Portal by the deadline, ready for bid evaluation and business award processes.
- When using the Portal during the bid evaluation and business award processes, the Council will review the additional social, economic and environmental benefits that candidate bidders have offered to deliver for local communities. This will form part of the decision-making process, alongside the separate evaluation of Price and Quality undertaken by the Council directly. This will result in the award of business to the winning bidder, and they will then become a council supplier.
- The new supplier will have a performance management account created for them on the Portal. This account will be used periodically during the contract term by the supplier and CBC, to keep track of the delivery of the social value offer made during the earlier tender exercise. The supplier's performance data will be available in unit measures and converted into £ GBP value, enabling useful analysis and purposeful discussion to take place.

Existing suppliers, whose contracts have already started, can still choose to submit social value proposals onto the Portal, and to have their delivery performance monitored against these proposals for the remaining duration of their contract with CBC. This will enable the Council to unlock this added social value more quickly than waiting for each tender exercise to take place as scheduled.

FURTHER POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

As part of applying the Act, CBC is taking further steps to embed a social value approach throughout our operations, including:

1. Map our TOMs framework to delivery partners and initiatives to ensure that efforts are focused and not duplicated. At the same time providing guidance to bidders.
2. Publishing a dedicated social value webpage to clearly communicate the components of this Policy, to ensure it is 'live', always updated and easily accessible
3. Resource bank and training programme for staff and partners e.g. circulate best practice case studies
4. Provide a 'Qualitative Delivery Plan' template for contract bidders
5. Undertake early market engagement to inform suppliers of our evolving social value application
6. Publish a Local Needs platform to help partners better target their benefits delivery
7. Publish a [Social Value Statement](#) annually
8. Include social value performance metrics as part of Cabinet reporting
9. Engage with local anchor networks in a joined-up approach

Accessibility

We are taking steps to improve the accessibility of the procurement process itself, to encourage a diverse range of bidders to participate in tenders relevant to them. It is important that e.g. sole traders, SMEs, start-ups and companies with minority ownership or management are well-supported and feel included as they build their experience, as this will increase the likelihood of their participation in future. We also ensure that such businesses have fair access to participate in relevant tenders alongside their national and global counterparts, and our established supplier base.

GOVERNANCE

Executive Member for Sustainability and Transformation is to be ultimately accountable for the delivery of this Policy. They are supported by the Resources Director.

The Resources Director to ensure:

- Responsible for Social Value Policy implementation
- Cross Sector Advisory Group* develops and manages the delivery of joined up social value actions
- The Social Value Officer coordinates activity and strategy implementation
- All relevant staff to have suitable social value KPIs as part of the review process

The Cross Sector Advisory Group includes representation from Fairness Taskforce, Corporate team, Planning, Procurement, Commissioning, HR, Investment, Employment & Skills, Environment, EDI, Heads of Service.

APPENDIX

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL TOMs FRAMEWORK AND USEFUL LINKS

TOMs Framework

Theme	Outcome (strategic objective)	Ref	Measure
Employment and skills for the future	More local people in employment	NT1	No. of full time equivalent direct local employees (FTE) hired or retained for the duration of the contract
	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT3	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are long-term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer)
		NT3d	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract that are survivors of modern slavery
		NT4	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are NOT in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs)
		NT4a	No. of full time equivalent 16-25 y.o. care leavers (FTE) hired on the contract
		NT76	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) hired on the contract who are registered as unemployed
		NT5	No. of full time equivalent employees (FTE) aged 18+ years hired on the contract who are rehabilitating or ex-offenders.
		NT6	No. of full time equivalent disabled employees (FTE) hired on the contract
	Improved skills	NT8	No. of staff hours spent on local school and college visits supporting pupils e.g., delivering career talks, curriculum support, literacy support, safety talks (including preparation time)
		NT9	No. of weeks of training opportunities (BTEC, City & Guilds, NVQ, HNC - Level 2,3, or 4+) on the contract that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation until completion in the following years
		NT10	No. of weeks of apprenticeships or T-Levels (Level 2,3, or 4) provided on the contract (completed or supported by the organisation)
	Improved skills for disadvantaged people	NT9a	No. of weeks of training opportunities (BTEC, City & Guilds, NVQ, HNC - Level 2,3, or 4+) on the contract that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation until completion in the following years - delivered for specified groups (e.g., NEETs, under-represented gender and ethnic groups, disabled, homeless, rehabilitating young offenders)
		NT10a	No. of weeks of apprenticeships or T-Levels (Level 2,3, or 4) provided on the contract (completed or supported by the organisation) - delivered for specified groups (e.g., NEETs, under-represented gender and ethnic groups, disabled, homeless, rehabilitating young offenders)
		NT11	No. of hours of 'support into work' assistance provided to unemployed people through career mentoring, including mock interviews, CV advice, and careers guidance
	Improved employability of young people	NT12	No. of weeks spent on meaningful work placements or pre-employment course; 1-6 weeks student placements (unpaid)
		NT13	Meaningful work placements that pay Minimum or National Living wage according to eligibility - 6 weeks or more (internships)
		NT14	Total amount (£) spent with VCSEs within your supply chain

A prosperous economy	More opportunities for local MSMEs and VCSEs	NT15	Provision of expert business advice to VCSEs and MSMEs (e.g. financial advice / legal advice / HR advice/HSE)
		NT17	Number of voluntary hours donated to support VCSEs (excludes expert business advice)
		NT18	Total amount (£) spent in local supply chain through the contract
		NT19	Total amount (£) spent through contract with local micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)
	Improving staff wellbeing and mental health	NT21	Equality, diversity and inclusion training provided both for staff and supply chain staff
	Reducing inequalities	NT40	Number and type of initiatives to be put in place to reduce the gender pay gap for staff employed in relation to the contract (describe and document initiatives)
	Ethical Procurement is promoted	NT43	Initiatives taken throughout the local and global supply chain to strengthen the identification, monitoring and reduction of risks of modern slavery and unethical work practices occurring in relation to the contract (i.e. supply chain mapping, staff training, contract management)
Thriving communities	Creating a healthier community	NT26	Initiatives taken or supported to engage people in health interventions (e.g., stop smoking, obesity, alcoholism, drugs, etc.) or wellbeing initiatives in the community, including physical activities for adults and children
	Vulnerable people are helped to live independently	NT27	Initiatives to be taken to support older, disabled and vulnerable people to build stronger community networks (e.g., befriending schemes, digital inclusion clubs)
	More working with the Community	NT28	Donations and/or in-kind contributions to specific local community projects (£ & materials)
		NT29	No. of hours volunteering time provided to support local community projects
Environmental sustainability	Carbon emissions are reduced	NT31	Savings in CO2e emissions on contract achieved through de-carbonisation (i.e. a reduction of the carbon intensity of processes and operations, specify how these are to be achieved) against a specific benchmark.
		NT82	Carbon emissions reductions through reduced energy use and energy efficiency measures - on site
	Air pollution is reduced	NT32	Car miles saved on the project as a result of a green transport programme or equivalent (e.g. cycle to work programmes, public transport or car pooling programmes, etc.)
	Safeguarding the natural environment	NT86	Volunteering time for environmental conservation & sustainable ecosystem management initiatives
		NT85	Resources (on the contract) dedicated to creating green spaces, improving biodiversity or helping ecosystems.

		NT87	Total volume of reduced plastics against a relevant benchmark
	Resource efficiency and circular economy solutions are promoted	NT72	Hard to recycle waste diverted from landfill or incineration through specific recycling partnerships (e.g. Terracycle or equivalent)
		NT88	Reduce waste through reuse of products and materials
Promoting innovation in Central Bedfordshire	Social innovation to create local skills and employment	NT50	Innovative measures to promote local skills and employment to be delivered on the contract - these could be e.g. co-designed with stakeholders or communities, or aiming at delivering benefits while minimising carbon footprint from initiatives, etc.
	Social innovation to support responsible business	NT51	Innovative measures to promote and support responsible business to be delivered on the contract - these could be e.g. co-designed with stakeholders or communities, or aiming at delivering benefits while minimising carbon footprint from initiatives, etc.
	Social innovation to enable healthier safer and more resilient communities	NT52	Innovative measures to enable healthier, safer and more resilient communities to be delivered on the contract - these could be e.g. co-designed with stakeholders or communities, or aiming at delivering benefits while minimising carbon footprint from initiatives, etc.
	Social innovation to safeguard the environment and respond to the climate emergency	NT53	Innovative measures to safeguard the environment and respond to the climate emergency to be delivered on the contract - these could be e.g. co-designed with stakeholders or communities, or aiming at delivering benefits while minimising carbon footprint from initiatives, etc.

Useful links

- [The National TOMs: The Nationally accredited measurement framework for measuring Social Value through partnership with the LGA](#)
- [Short films from the Local Government Association on how to use the TOMs](#)
- [Guidance document for Bidders: Social Value Portal's bidder guidance](#)
- [National Social Value Taskforce: An open network which welcomes any organisation to get involved](#)