

Commercial and Procurement



Social Value Policy

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Introduction

This Policy sets out the Authority's commitment to ensuring that the principles of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 are applied in a way that enables the Authority to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits for our communities in Kent and Medway from our work. The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted inequalities in Kent and Medway, with a disproportionate impact on many already disadvantaged communities. It is therefore more important than ever to take positive action.

The Social Value Act requires public bodies to consider opportunities for social value when procuring all goods and services.

Social value can be defined as increasing the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people we serve. When the concept of social value is included within our procurement activity, it is important to consider more than just the cost and direct benefits of a contract, but what value a contract might add to our communities. Social Value aims to move beyond making decisions based on financial cost or price alone. Instead, it advocates seeking 'value for money' in its widest sense by considering potential social benefits (involving people, culture and interactions), economic benefits (such as money flow and financial resources) and environmental benefits (involving the place in which people live, the planet and use of resources). In summary, this may be in terms of;

- Promoting local skills and employment for all;
- Supporting the growth of responsible local business;
- Fostering healthier, safer and more resilient communities;
- Providing cleaner and greener spaces by promoting sustainable procurement and safeguarding the planet,
- Promoting new ideas and social innovation.

Considering Social Value during decision-making is not a replacement for evaluating the financial return or quality of core objectives, but an opportunity to do more social good alongside the generation of the wider benefit. The embedding of Social Value principles in service, investment and commissioning appraisals can result in more effective approaches to achieving the Authority's strategic objectives and tackling our most difficult challenges. The positive social impact of the investment should be fully evaluated alongside service quality and the investor return on investment.

This document sets out the policy on the Authority's approach to Social Value and is closely aligned to the Authority's Commercial and Procurement Strategy 2021 – 2025, specifically its priority "to consider inclusion and social value impacts and initiatives in all procurement opportunities", in conjunction with the Government's Social Value Model.

Scope

This Policy applies to all colleagues, volunteers and Members of the Authority.

Service Policy

Social Enterprise UK defines Social Impact as “The effect of an activity on the social fabric of the community and wellbeing of the individuals and families”, and **Social Value** is what is created.

The Authority recognises the leverage created through spend with suppliers, and turn that leverage into specific commitments to deliver positive impacts for the benefit of our Customers and communities within Kent and Medway.

The Authority will therefore:

- Seek to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits in line with the Social Value Model for our communities within Kent and Medway.
- Collaborate with our supply community and charitable organisations to facilitate and encourage new, innovative and positive outcomes with regards to Social Value initiatives.
- When procuring contracts: Develop our requirements in a way that is proportionate and maximises the delivery of Social Value benefits, including suitable contractual obligations and monitoring procedures to ensure initiatives are delivered as promised.
- Seek to recognise the role that Small Medium Enterprises can play in delivering our contracts (either directly, or as sub-contractors to our suppliers).
- Seek Social Value contributions from existing suppliers.
- Measure, record and report on the value that our approach to Social Value delivers (monetary value and non-monetary benefits), recognising that non-monetary benefits can be extremely valuable to society.
- Have due regard for our primary responsibility to achieve value for money for public funds, and avoid a net increase in costs as a result of seeking additional Social Value.
- The Authority will also consider the inclusion of Social Value initiatives that may benefit other communities across the UK when leading on collaborative national projects.

We will communicate this policy to our colleagues, supply chain partners, other Fire and Rescue Services Sector and relevant interested parties, and review it on an annual basis to ensure agreed outcomes have been met and lessons learned captured to facilitate continuous improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of this policy.

Legal consequences

The Public Services (Social Value) Act became law on 8 March 2012 and requires Public Sector organisations to consider the potential for suppliers to deliver services that enhance the area and people with whom they are working. This Act therefore places an obligatory emphasis on Social Value questions in tender documentation.

Our drive to achieve greater equality and inclusion is central to our approach to Social Value. This approach is underpinned by the public sector Equality Duty, which applies when we consider Social Value as part of a commissioning exercise or activity. The Equality and Inclusion Policy sets out how the Authority will meet the statutory obligations defined within the Equality Act 2010, which are to:

- Eliminate discrimination;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between different people.

This Social Value policy is also complemented by the Authority's commitment to eradicating modern slavery.

Our Key Social Value Objectives

A new Social Value Model was launched from 1 January 2021 by the Government's Commercial Function that focusses on the following five Social Value priorities for procurement, also known as 'themes';

- Supporting COVID-19 recovery;
- Tackling economic inequality;
- Fighting climate change;
- Equal Opportunity;
- Wellbeing;

These priorities support the Government's commitments to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2015 to end poverty and protect the planet, support compliance to The Equality's Act 2010 and the elimination of Modern Slavery, creating new jobs, promoting skills, and growing and diversifying supply chain opportunities in line with its Industrial and Civil Society Strategies.

There are 8 policy outcomes which flow from these themes whilst also supporting our Customer Safety Plan of Working Together, Saving Lives and Reducing Harm. This model will be used by the Authority to review and select with internal customers and other stakeholders those themes most appropriate when procuring contracts.

Themes	Theme Description	Link to Customer Safety Plan	8 Policy Outcomes
Theme 1	Supporting Covid 19 Recovery	Promoting Behaviours Objective and working with partners to tackle social isolation.	1. Help local communities to manage & recover from the impact of Covid 19.
Theme 2	Tackling Economic Inequality	Supporting Businesses Objective of helping businesses stay in business and safeguarding vulnerable people.	2. Create new businesses, new jobs and new skills. 3. Increase supply chain resilience and capacity.
Theme 3	Fighting Climate Change	Environment and Assets Strategy	4. Effective stewardship of the environment.
Theme 4	Equal Opportunity including the delivery of the Authority's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Modern Slavery Policies.	5. Reduce disability employment gap. 6. Tackle workforce inequality. Additionally supporting the Authority's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments as detailed in the Authority's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 and Modern Slavery Policy.

Theme 5	Wellbeing	Promoting Behaviours Objective of having Community Engagement/Station Open days.	7. Improve health & wellbeing. 8. Improve community cohesion.
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How we will apply Social Value to decision making

The Government's Commercial Function mandates that central government departments give a minimum of 10% of the overall weighted score to social value questions in tenders. The Authority is currently not bound by this mandate, but shall discuss with its customers as to the most appropriate weighting on a case by case basis.

We will take a rigorous and pragmatic approach to applying Social Value that's dependent on the type of decision being made. Some key principles should always be applied;

- **Aligned:** Social Value measures should always be aligned with the 8 Policy Outcomes
- **Relevant:** Assessments should be based solely on the Social Value that could reasonably be expected to flow from delivering the core objectives of a decision. We should consider engagement with our communities for any major decisions.
- **Proportionate:** The resources that the Authority and stakeholders spend on identifying, assessing and monitoring Social Value should be proportionate to the additional Social Value that could be secured.
- **Accessible and inclusive:** Social Value application and evaluation processes must be designed to be as straightforward and accessible as possible. Particular efforts should be made to encourage and support applications from a diverse range of individuals and organisations.
- **Transparent:** A framework should be defined, documented and published (as appropriate), setting out: how Social Value will be assessed, how any scoring will be applied and how this will contribute to the overall decision. The Authority will also ensure Social Value is included in early supplier engagement to assist in the design of specifications and tender evaluation, and secure buy-in from external partners, bidders & suppliers. An audit trail of decisions should also be retained. Wider discussions with other external agencies and blue light partners will assist in identifying collaborative opportunities for developing and delivering additional Social Value initiatives.
- **Monitored:** Delivery of Social Value commitments should be monitored by the Budget Manager/Contract Manager, supported by the Commercial and Procurement Team and reported to the Corporate Services Strategy Board.

Training

Our People:

A primary factor in building and sustaining a successful approach to Social Value is the extent to which our people recognise and embrace the concept, and then help turn the concept into specific actions and outcomes. Our aim is to make the concept of Social Value something that everyone wants to actively and fully participate in, not something that they feel they must do. To give Social Value the focus and platform needed to help deliver a successful and sustainable programme of activity the Commercial and Procurement Team will work with the People Team to inform and train every one of the benefits and opportunities for the delivery of Social Value. It will provide learning materials to help everyone understand the concept of Social Value, how to recognise opportunities for its inclusion within our tenders based on their expertise and knowledge of their work streams and external partners. In addition,

ensure that Budget Managers/Contract Managers develop the skills sets necessary to manage Social Value commitments within their contracts with suppliers.

Social Value Toolkits, assessment templates and practical guidance will be developed and made available by the Commercial and Procurement Team to support and guide users through the Authority's processes for applying Social Value to decision-making.

Commercial and Procurement Team

Specific training will be provided for members of the Commercial and Procurement Team to further develop their skills and knowledge of Social Value. This will include training on how Social Value should be included within our tender documentation through the development of specific questions appropriate to the Social Value theme(s) and how Social Value commitments from suppliers are subsequently monitored and delivered throughout the contract management phase to ensure that all suppliers meet their contractual obligations.

Governance

To achieve maximum impact Social Value must be seen as an extension of our business as usual activity (rather than a standalone pursuit). It is important we collectively fully adopt the principles of Social Value in order that we can fulfil our policy promises.

Monitoring: While all Social Value commitments the Authority makes should be delivered, monitoring and reporting on our delivery is crucial in cases where Social Value commitments have influenced the allocation of public funds (e.g. when awarding a contract). Third parties (such as suppliers) should therefore be monitored and held to account for the delivery of Social Value commitments they have made to the Authority.

Reporting: Our performance against our policy shall be reported into the Corporate Services Strategy Board and recorded for audit purposes.

An annual statement will be prepared and published to demonstrate the difference that the Authority has made as a result of its Social Value approach to delivering its services to our Customers.

Compliance with this Policy

The adherence to the Social Value Policy is the responsibility of everyone within the Authority.

Publication

Each Social Value statement must be approved by Corporate Management Board, and the Authority, dated with the financial year it refers to and be made public on the Authority's website and include a link to the statement in a prominent place on the website's home page.

Supporting Information

Details	Link to material
Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)
Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority's EDI Strategy Policy 2021-2025	Our EDI Challenges for 2021- 2025 (sharepoint.com)
Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority EDI Policy	To be updated

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority's Modern Slavery Policy	Modern Slavery Policy_V1.0_Jan21.pdf
Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority's Customer Safety Plan –2021-2031	Customer Safety Plan 2021-2031 Kent Fire and Rescue Service (fire-uk.org)
Environment and Assets Strategy 2021-2025	
The Social Value Model 2021	Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2015	Take Action for the Sustainable Development Goals – United Nations Sustainable Development
The Equality's Act 2010	Equality Act 2010 (legislation.gov.uk)
Industrial and Civil Society Strategies.	Policy paper overview: Civil Society Strategy: building a future that works for everyone - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Document Audit Information	
Senior Officer Accountable	Tina Butler
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Date Implemented	
Review by	
Amendments required to	None
Related documents [if any]	Commercial and Procurement Strategy 2021 to 2025 Customer Safety Plan 2021 to 2025
Replaced documents	None
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Version change summary	