



**The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012**

**A Social Value Policy for  
Wirral Council**

## 1 **Background:**

- 1.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (the 'Act') requires commissioners and Category Managers to consider securing additional economic, social, or environmental benefits (Social Value) when procuring services (including goods and works contracts procured in combination with services), to which the Public Contract Regulations 2015 apply.
- 1.2 To comply with the Act, commissioners and category managers must think about what they are buying, how they are going to buy it, and how this could realise additional Social Value benefits; before going out to procurement.
- 1.3 Statutory requirements of the Act only apply to contracts above European thresholds. However, in order to incorporate the good practice associated with Social Value outcomes into mainstream commissioning and procurement practice, the Council will provide through this policy a consistent approach to deliver social value through procurement, making every pound of Council spend go further.
- 1.4 The Council will embed this policy within all commissioning arrangements wherever possible and through procurement activities valued at £100,000 and above wherever proportionate and feasible to do so or to lower values if applicable.
- 1.5 The Council has developed a range of suggestions that could be considered when procuring services and has made the commitment that Social Value will be considered as part of all procurement exercises, not just those to which the Public Contract Regulations 2015 apply.
- 1.6 Alongside this Policy, a Social Value framework has been created, which will guide the questions asked as part of all procurements, so that the added value of any contract procured can be defined and measured. The Council recognises that Social Value is key to maximising the impact of public expenditure across the borough and will underpin the achievement of its 20 pledges.
- 1.7 The Social Value framework provides different ways in which to identify and measure Social Value. Commissioners and category managers will work together, in consultation with the relevant contract managers and Portfolio holders, to identify which area(s) will be included, at the pre-procurement stage, selecting those that are most relevant to the specific procurement exercise and agreeing the weighting they will be given within the procurement documentation. Usually this will be between 5% and 20%, but specific circumstances may require a higher or lower figure.

## 2 **Wirral Council Social Value Definition**

- 2.1 The Social Value Act itself does not define 'Social Value'. Therefore the Council has adopted the definition of Social Value defined as:

*A commitment to using our influence and commissioning resources to help deliver the Wirral Plan; to drive economic growth, improve the local environment and support vulnerable people – while ensuring the best possible value for money when buying goods and services for the people of Wirral.”*

## 3 **Wirral Council Priorities:**

- 3.1 The twenty pledges below are linked to the three priority themes within the Wirral Partnership's five year plan: Taking Wirral Forward – A 2020 Vision:

### **PEOPLE - protecting the most vulnerable:**

1. Older people live well
2. Children are ready for school
3. Young people are ready for work and adulthood
4. Vulnerable children reach their full potential
5. Reduce child and family poverty
6. People with disabilities live independently
7. Zero tolerance to domestic violence

### **BUSINESS - driving economic growth:**

8. Greater job opportunities in Wirral
9. Workforce skills match business needs
10. Increase inward investment
11. Thriving small businesses
12. Vibrant tourist economy
13. Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future
14. Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral's businesses

### **ENVIRONMENT - improving the local environment:**

15. Leisure and cultural opportunities for all
16. Wirral residents live healthier lives
17. Community services are joined up and accessible
18. Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents
19. Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe
20. Attractive local environment for Wirral residents

#### **4 When will the Social Value Act apply?**

- 4.1 Social Value will be considered in every procurement for a services contract or services framework agreement (including goods and works contracts procured in combination with services) valued at £100,000 and above; subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015, or to lower values if applicable.

Social value considerations in specifications and evaluation criteria must be linked to the subject matter of the contract, will be proportionate and not discriminate against out of Borough suppliers or be a means of artificially restricting competition. As per the requirements of European procurement law as set out in the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

- 4.2 In exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed that the inclusion of Social value is not appropriate, a statement setting out why Social Value is not being considered will be included within the procurement documentation.
- 4.3 The weighting of Social Value may vary between procurement exercises and will be published as part of the procurement documentation.

#### **5 How the policy will be implemented?**

- 5.1 The Council will:

- Include Social Value in all procurement exercises apart from in exceptional circumstances, where a statement setting out why the inclusion of Social Value is not appropriate will be recorded within the procurement documentation.
- Raise awareness of the benefit of Social Value by communicating the Council's Social Value approach internally.
- Raise awareness of the benefit of Social Value with Partners, Providers/ potential Providers through consultation and engagement.
- The Council will, wherever applicable or appropriate, take into consideration the Unison guide to Ethical Procurement.

- 5.2 It is the intention of the Authority that the Council's Social Value approach evolves, so that it can respond accordingly as and when corporate priorities shift or the performance monitoring arrangements tell us that we need to make changes.

- 5.3 This policy aligns with the Councils 'Wirral together Strategy' which recognises the essential role that active citizens and volunteers play in building strong communities. Further details of the strategy can be found on the below link; <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50041984/Wirral%20Together%20Strategy.pdf>

- 5.4 The policy reflects the Council's commitment to its Ethical Framework as part of its structure and operating model, which will enable long term sustainable services for Wirral. Council services will embody quality, efficiency, local

employment, equality and diversity. They will drive an efficient, commercial and value-driven approach to public services. Further details of the Ethical Framework can be found in the Cabinet Report link at Appendix one <http://s03vs-intrcm.core.wcent.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50031738/Cabinet%20-%20Transformation%20Approach%203.pdf>

**6 Additional information is available from:**

- Communities Count: Four Steps to Unlocking Social Value: <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/advice-services/publications/communities-count-the-four-steps-unlocking-social-value>.
- Social Value hub: <http://socialvaluehub.org.uk/>
- Social Value Portal: <http://socialvalueportal.com/>
- SEUK and IVAR's health related work: <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/policy-campaigns/policy/public-services> and <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/policy-campaigns/policy/delivering-social-value>
- Social Value Act Information and Resources: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-value-act-information-and-resources/social-value-act-information-and-resources#introduction>