



**COUNCILLOR
CHRISTINE SPRIGGS**

CABINET
6 NOVEMBER 2017
SOCIAL VALUE POLICY

Councillor Christine Spriggs, Cabinet Member - Delivering Differently, said:

“This council invests more than £200 million a year into improving Wirral. We commission services, improve roads, bring specialist people and organisations in to support residents. This Policy is about maximising the benefits local people feel from these investments.

“We want our suppliers to recruit local people, to invest in Wirral, to put their resources, time and expertise back into the local community to make sure our money goes further and our residents get every possible benefit from public resources in Wirral.

“This Policy puts the mechanism in place to ensure we can do just that. All new contracts at Wirral Council – every contractor, every supplier, every organisation we commission to do work in Wirral – will have to demonstrate how they will not only achieve best value for the work they do, but how they will use the contract to provide wider benefits to our residents.”

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with a Social Value Policy 2017-2020. The Policy is used to make sure Wirral Council is able to maximise the benefits for local people and businesses through all of its commissioning, procurement and purchasing activities. It will be used for external organisations and service providers to explain what we expect from them when they work with the Council.

This policy affects all services, all commissioned activity and all procurement the council undertakes. It impacts on the delivery of all 20 Pledges – particularly in relation to supporting small businesses.

The matter therefore affects all wards within the borough. It is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Cabinet are requested to:

- (1) Approve the Social Value Policy and associated guidance and framework
- (2) Instruct officers to use the Social Value Policy in all procurement, commissioning and purchasing activity

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure the Council's approach to social value is communicated in a clear and consistent manner and that opportunities to deliver social value through commissioning and procurement are maximised to benefit Wirral residents.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The term Social Value is derived from the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which requires all local authorities and other public bodies in England and Wales, to consider the social implications of the procurement and commissioning of services. 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"

3.2 The aim of the Act is not to change commissioning and procurement processes but to ensure consideration is given to the broader impact of service delivery. The Act allows authorities to choose a supplier under a tendering process who not only provides the most economically advantageous service, but who goes beyond the basic contract terms and secures wider benefits for residents and communities. The Social Value Act and this policy provide an opportunity to deliver a consistent and flexible approach to generate Social Value through innovative commissioning, public procurement and contract management.

The Council views social value as an extension to its three priority themes - .protecting the most vulnerable; driving economic growth; improving the local environment. Where commissioners are already choosing a sustainable procurement route, they will also be providing social value to their area.

3.3 Having a robust, comprehensive Social Value Policy in place allows the Council to fully maximise community benefits from contracts and commissioned work. The Policy will ensure tenders to complete work on our behalf will not only have to demonstrate they can achieve best value, but also how they will impact on the quality of life and opportunities our residents can access, through employment opportunities, environmental improvements or wider economic, social and cultural benefits.

3.4 Following the introduction of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 there is a legal obligation on public sector commissioners and procurers to consider social value when making decisions about how and by whom public services should be delivered. In addition to this legal requirement there is now a real opportunity to use public commissioning and procurement processes to deliver

positive outcomes for individuals within our communities – and in these times of spending constraint it is more important than ever that we embrace this.

- 3.5 In addition to the legislative requirement, commissioners and those involved in redesigning service delivery models should consider social value when determining appropriate use of resources. This should inform whether buying or making is the best approach and should also influence the design of the services required. This opportunity should be used to rethink outcomes and the types of services to commission as part of the options appraisal process at the first stages of the commissioning and procurement cycle
- 3.6 There are likely to be opportunities to incorporate Social Value benefits into existing contracts as well as new ones. The council will review existing contracts and ensure every opportunity to maximise these are taken.
- 3.7 The Council has an opportunity to embrace the concept of social value and to maximise its impact for the benefit of the communities of Wirral. By adopting an innovative approach to our definition of what constitutes social value in Wirral, and by recognising changing priorities, we can radically improve outcomes for our neighbourhoods.
- 3.8 The intention behind Wirral Council's policy is that it will support a consistent approach across the borough. If Wirral Council is clear about what we expect, it will support us to secure commitment from the organisations we work with.
- 3.9 Wirral's Social Value Policy 2017-2020 is linked to the Wirral Plan 2020 pledges and provides examples of the types of activity we consider to be social value. We hope that these examples will encourage the organisations we work with to be as creative and resourceful as they can be.

Social Value Implementation

- 3.10 It is proposed Social Value is considered by the Council in every commissioning/ procurement exercise for services, and where possible, supplies. (i.e. every tendering process and every contract) valued at £100,000 or above, where proportionate and relevant; allowing exemptions where there are sufficient reasons to do so. Alongside the Council's Social Value Policy is a Social Value Framework (see Appendix 1) which outlines the policy objectives and gives examples of social value outcomes which might be achieved, suggested delivery mechanisms and ways to measure Social Value.
- 3.11 Training support for commissioners will be developed and applied to ensure that the Council achieves defined outcomes from the Social Value policy. This will include the creation of an eLearning module and the delivery of a programme of workshops/training events
- 3.12 Commissioning officers will apply the principles and approach set out in the Policy and guidance documents to ensure Social Value is consistently considered and applied wherever possible throughout the commissioning process.

- 3.13 Guidance documents for providers and suppliers will be published on the Council website.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None arising as a direct result of this Policy, but there are anticipated financial and social benefits arising for all Wirral communities as social value principles are embedded throughout all contracts,

5.0 LEGAL

- 5.1 The incorporation of Social Value into the procurement evaluation process has to be completed proportionately, fairly and in a transparent manner. Once the Policy has been adopted, the council will need to ensure it conducts its Social Value duty lawfully.

Social value considerations in specifications and evaluation criteria must be linked to the subject matter of the contract, be proportionate and not discriminate against out of Borough suppliers or be a means of artificially restricting competition.

These are the requirements of European procurement law as set out in the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 None arising as a direct result of this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 If Wirral Council does not sign off this social value policy, there is a risk that information and advice communicated both internally and externally will be inconsistent and/or incorrect.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

- 8.1 We are currently engaging with suppliers during the pre-procurement stages to ensure wider acceptance of the policy and maximise benefits which can be achieved for local people through procurement processes. Trade Union colleagues have also been encouraged to feed into the policy.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The purpose of Social Value is to seek to address or provide support to areas of equality for all people within protected characteristic groups.

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APPENDICES;

- **Social Value Policy 2017**
- **Wirral Social Value Approach**
- **Appendix one Social Value guidance**

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date