



Social Value and Sustainability Charter

Mid Sussex District Council

March 2024



What is Social Value?

The term 'social value' is increasingly used across all sectors to describe the total positive impact of an organisation or a project. Social value moves beyond using money as the main indicator of value and encourages us to also consider the social, economic, and environmental benefits which are possible in the present and for a sustainable future.

The Public Sector (Social Value) Act 2012 places a duty on public sector organisations, in certain specified circumstances, to consider how what is being procured might improve the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the area and how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement. The Cabinet Office subsequently developed a Social Value Model. This enables social value to be evaluated and given weight in procurement exercises so that social value can be judged on an equal footing with cost and quality, ensuring maximum value in public spending is achieved.

Adding social value might mean, for example, sharing building space with community groups, purchasing equipment from local suppliers who employ and develop local people, providing free commercial advice to local businesses and charities, encouraging schemes which reduce carbon emissions and/or enabling those who want to re-enter the workforce to gain valuable work experience.

Social value:

- Is not just 'social' value; it means creating benefit for the health and wellbeing of people and communities, for the local economy and the physical environment.
- Involves a measurable change for the better.
- Is achieved by sharing resources and working together.
- Redefines "value for money" from cost-saving to value adding.

Our Aim

This Charter proposes to extend the scope of social value considerations to cover all the Council's commissioning and procurement activities to ensure the Council gets maximum value from the public money it spends. The aim is to deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits for the betterment of our area and to deliver the Councils' commitments outlined in the Sustainable Economy Strategy and Action Plan (as amended from time to time).

Whilst the Charter is new, the principles contained within it are not – the Council is already working to make them a high priority. It is a useful and transparent reference tool for organisations wanting to understand the Council's values. All organisations wanting to work with the Council are encouraged to show a commitment to the Charter by signing up voluntarily for lower value projects or on a mandatory basis for higher value contracts (see the Charter Tender Requirements section below).

This Charter is guided by the principles set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, which seeks to deliver value for money services and help to create a strong economy, environment, and community by delivering:

- effective and responsive services;
- sustainable economic growth;
- strong and resilient communities; and
- financial independence.

In addition to the Council’s own priorities, the Charter reflects national strategic priorities for public procurement, as set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement June 2021, which are:

- creating new businesses, new jobs, and new skills;
- tackling climate change and reducing waste; and
- improving supplier diversity, innovation, and resilience.

Guiding Principles

Mid Sussex District Council’s Social Value and Sustainability Charter has four principles. Each principle has several commitments we want suppliers to work to achieve. Further details of each commitment and when it applies is set out at the end of this document in Table 1.

1	<p>Improve the social wellbeing of local communities, raising their aspirations and promoting access to high quality jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide local residents with opportunities to gain new skills and experience through training, including work experience and apprenticeships • Promote careers to young people to raise their aspirations • Work with underrepresented groups, or those excluded from mainstream routes, to support their entry into the workforce (e.g. NEETs, BAME, veterans, Carers) • Support and enable local community participation
2	<p>Support local community organisations and businesses and sustainable economic growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create employment opportunities for local residents within Mid Sussex • Open up supply chains to local businesses, particularly enabling SMEs and third sector organisations • Provide training/mentoring/support to SMEs / local / third sector organisations including understanding the procurement process to enable them to access opportunities.
3	<p>Be a responsible employer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encourage staff to reduce their own carbon emissions in carrying out their work • Be inclusive – support underrepresented groups into the workforce and promote equity and diversity within the workforce • Promote the safety, health and wellbeing of staff and within our supply chain • Provide fair employment contracts and wages and help foster a loyal and motivated workforce by complying with the Governments Living Wage. Minimise the use of zero-hours contracts and work towards abolishment. • Enable staff to support projects in Mid Sussex by volunteering their time during working hours.
4	<p>Promote the benefits of sustainability practices and encourage action to support achievement of Carbon Net Zero to create healthier, greener and more sustainable places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement good environmental business practices • Demonstrate progress towards achieving net zero emissions • Engage with new technologies to improve environmental outcomes • Promote the use of responsibly sourced materials

- Demonstrate implementation of the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle)

What does successful delivery of Social Value look like?

Social Value can bring long-term benefits to Mid Sussex in many ways including:

- Creating local employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed or those not in education, employment, or training
- Offering work placements to school children and young adults
- Providing career advice and information on specific careers
- Offering curriculum support to schools
- Creating supply chain opportunities for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector organisations
- Encouraging community engagement
- Supporting local and national initiatives that target hard to reach groups
- Developing cohesive communities
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Making facilities available to groups that would otherwise struggle to meet
- Reducing carbon emissions
- Leveraging additional investment into Mid Sussex

Social Value Weighting

We have made the commitment to ensure that a weighting of at least 10% will be applied to tender responses relating to social value wherever it is appropriate to do so (see the Charter Tender Requirements section below). However, it is recognised that to drive change, the emphasis and weighting of social value may need to increase over time. It is, therefore, our intention to embed social value throughout our practices, review and evaluate the effectiveness of them and increase the weighting further as we develop our approach. The National Procurement Strategy will help inform and guide us on furthering our social value ambitions.

Implementation of the Charter through the Councils Procurement Process

The Council regularly undertakes procurement processes for the supply of goods, works and services. Details of the Council's contract and procurement processes can be found [here](#) and in the Council's Contract Procedure Rules at Part 4(ix) of the Council's Constitution which can be found [here](#).

The Council is keen to ensure that, through its procurement processes, it delivers value for money along with wider benefits for the environment as well as the local economy and community.

Under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Council has a legal duty to consider social value in all relevant procurements. This Charter is a reference tool to ensure the Council is meeting these legal requirements. Therefore, the Council strongly encourages all contractors to adopt this Charter voluntarily for lower value projects or requires them to adopt this Charter on a mandatory basis for higher value contracts (see the Charter Tender Requirements section below).

In some sectors, the Council appreciates that it might be difficult to deliver on some of the commitments, which is why the Council includes a reasonable endeavours approach. For example, if you are a contractor that is not based locally, you may not be able to recruit or provide apprenticeship opportunities directly within Mid Sussex District.

Each procurement process is unique, and this Charter ensures a proportionate and flexible approach is taken. The expectation is that the contractor will confirm their willingness to deliver on the commitments (tier 2 and 3) as part of the self-declaration in the tender documents. Suppliers may also be asked as part of the quality evaluation to set out what their organisation can commit to deliver throughout the lifetime of a contract. This will be evaluated as part of the tender process.

Charter Tender Requirements

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Type and value of the contract	Contracts for goods and services below £50,000 Contracts for works below £100,000	Contracts for goods and services between £50,000 and £200,000 Contracts for works between £100,000 and £2,000,000.	Contracts for goods and services above £200,000. Contracts for works above £2,000,000
When does the Charter apply? See full commitments at the end of the document in Table 1	Charter is not mandatory, but contractors may sign up voluntarily	Charter is mostly applicable in a “reasonable endeavours” approach, but some requirements are mandatory	Charter is applicable on a mandatory basis
How do we evaluate against the Charter in the procurement process?	Discretionary. The Council may require contractors to sign up to identified elements of the charter. Quality questions might be used, depending on the nature of the contract.	The contractor will be asked to confirm that they meet any mandatory requirements of the Charter and will be assessed on a pass/fail basis Specific questions relating to social value and sustainability may be asked as part of the quality assessment if relevant and proportionate	The contractor will be asked to confirm that they meet any mandatory requirements of the Charter and will be assessed on a pass/fail basis Relevant and proportionate questions as part of the quality assessment are used to test commitment to social value and sustainability
Monitoring arrangements	Not applicable unless it is a voluntary signatory, in which case annual update will be required through the contract management mechanisms	Monitoring arrangements to be agreed by contract manager to ensure commitments are delivered Contractors are required to provide an annual report capturing achievements made where appropriate	An action plan is drawn up by the contractor during the contract implementation phase Contractors are required to report and monitor progress and outcomes throughout the lifetime of the contract and at least annually

The procurement team and the Council's contract managers will consider how best to apply this Charter on a case-by-case basis, regardless of the tiers above, by assessing the relevance and proportionality of social value and sustainability commitments to each individual contract/project.

Contractors are encouraged to be innovative in considering how they might achieve social value and sustainability outcomes for Mid Sussex District.

Some of the practical initiatives a contractor's organisation could consider are:

- Monitor and report on the carbon emissions generated as part of the contract and have a plan to reduce these year on year.
- Create apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities as part of your work in Mid Sussex or through the supply chain. Attend apprenticeship events to promote these opportunities. Be clear on how many placements you support.
- Provide work-based learning such as work shadowing, work experience placements and interactive work "taster" events.
- Create volunteering opportunities for your organisation's employees to help community projects/environmental initiatives within Mid Sussex.
- Work with schools and colleges to promote your sector, such as by providing career mentoring, mock interviews and careers talks.
- Promote health and wellness initiatives, pay real living wage and/or encourage flexible working.
- Identify opportunities to do business with the local supply chain and commit to setting a target for sourcing a percentage of work from the local community.
- Recruit within Mid Sussex District – set targets to employ residents in Mid Sussex and/or have a local supply chain.
- Minimise impact on air quality by implementing sustainable travel to work policies – develop a staff travel plan, efficient route plans and change fuel type or engines.
- Deliver diversity training to staff, contractors, and subcontractors.

Monitoring Progress against the Charter

It is important that contractors are actively delivering against any Charter commitments they make.

Contractors who have committed to deliver against the Charter should report progress to the Council at least annually. This will help the Council to understand what has been achieved and also what is planned for the future. The carbon data that is provided by contractors (where relevant) will form part of the Council's annual reporting on its carbon emissions.

Further Information

As part of a relevant procurement process, contractors will be asked about their commitments to the Social Value and Sustainability Charter. Further information about our Procurement processes, new opportunities, and becoming a supplier to the Council can be found on the [Mid Sussex District Council website](#). Any queries about this Charter should be directed via email to our Shared Procurement Service (procurement@horsham.gov.uk)

Table 1 – Social Value and Sustainability Charter – Charter Commitments in Detail

Key: V – voluntary B – “reasonable endeavours” Y – mandatory

Social Value and Sustainability Charter Tier		Tier 1	Tier 2			Tier 3		
Types and value of contract		All goods and services contracts below £50,000 and all works contracts below £100,000	Services Between £50,000 and £200,000	Goods Between £50,000 and £200,000	Works Between £100,000 and £2,000,000	Services Above £200,000	Goods Above £200,000	Works Over £2,000,000
Principle	Charter Commitments – as an organisation we will:							
1) Improve the social wellbeing of local communities, raising their aspirations and promoting access to high quality jobs	A) Provide local residents with opportunities to gain new skills and experience through training, including work experience and apprenticeships	V	B	V	B	Y	Y	Y
	B) Promote careers to young people to raise their aspirations	V	Y	V	B	Y	Y	Y
	C) Work with underrepresented groups to support their entry into the workforce (e.g. NEETs, BAME, Carers back into work)	V	B	B	B	Y	Y	Y
	D) Support and enable local community participation	V	B	V	B	Y	Y	Y
2) Support local community organisations and businesses and sustainable economic growth	A) Create employment opportunities for local residents within Mid Sussex	V	B	V	B	Y	Y	Y
	B) Open up supply chain to local businesses, particularly enabling SMEs and third sector organisations	V	V	V	Y	Y	Y	Y
	C) Provide training /mentoring/ support to SMEs/local/third	V	B	B	B	Y	Y	Y

	sector organisations to help them understand the procurement/ tendering process and enable them to access work							
3) Be a responsible Employer	A) Support and encourage staff to reduce their own carbon emissions in carrying out their work	V	B	B	Y	Y	Y	Y
	B) Be inclusive – support underrepresented groups into your workforce. Promote equity and diversity within your workforce.	V	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	C) Promote the safety, health and wellbeing of you staff and within your supply chain	V	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	D) Provide fair employment contracts and wages and help foster a loyal and motivated workforce by complying with the Governments Living Wage. Minimise the use of zero-hours contracts and work towards abolishment.	V	B	B	Y	Y	Y	Y
	E) Enable staff to support projects in Mid Sussex by volunteering their time during working hours.	V	B	Y	B	Y	Y	Y
4) Promote the benefits of sustainability practices and encourage action to support	A) Implement good environmental business practices	V	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	B) Demonstrate progress towards achieving net zero emissions	V	B	B	Y	Y	Y	Y
	C) Engage with new technologies to improve environmental outcomes	V	V	B	B	Y	Y	Y

achievement of Carbon Net Zero to create healthier, greener and more sustainable places	D) Promote the use of responsibly sourced materials	V	V	B	Y	Y	Y	Y
	E) Demonstrate implementation of the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle)	V	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y



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