

# North Somerset Council Social Value Policy – 2024

## 1. Introduction

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 came into force on 31st January 2013. Public Authorities are required to “consider, prior to undertaking the procurement/commissioning process, how any services procured might improve economic, social and environmental well-being”. The Act applies to all public service contracts over the FTS (Find a Tender Service) threshold.

This document provides further information on how Social Value should be considered and applied within the council’s procurements and includes detail on what constitutes Social Value for the council.

## 2. Corporate Plan

The corporate plan sets out the council's vision and overall priorities. The plan identifies four key ambitions which we want to achieve for local people:

1. Our children and young people are cared for, safe, supported, and are given equality of opportunity to thrive
2. Our communities are caring, healthy and safe, where people help each other to live well.
3. Our towns and villages are thriving and sustainable places to live, work and visit.
4. Our council delivers consistently good services and value for money to support our community.

## 3. What Social Value means to North Somerset Council

Social Value should support the overall priorities of the Council described within the corporate plan. North Somerset Council has developed their own set of TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) which align with our Corporate Plan ambitions. These can be found within the Social Value Appendices, copies of which can be found on the council’s website. It is important that what the Council is seeking to achieve from Social Value is clear to potential suppliers who are bidding for council contracts and commissioners will ensure that the Social Value commitments required from suppliers are specific, relevant, and achievable.

## 4. Delivering Social Value through procurement

The overall approach to delivering Social Value through the Council’s suppliers is to agree proportionate and relevant social value outcomes with suppliers during the procurement. There are two different, but complementary routes through which this can



be achieved. Firstly, Social Value can be built into the contract as a performance obligation within the requirements/specification. Secondly, suppliers can be asked to be innovative against a set of defined measures around how they might deliver additional Social Value through the contract, and their responses are assessed as part of the overall evaluation process. Note, that these routes are not necessarily independent i.e. both may be used within the same procurement process.

The inclusion of Social Value within a tender process is not mandatory for contracts with a value below £160,000.

#### Performance Obligation route

The commissioner, in developing the requirements/specification for the contract, should consider the nature of the contract and the areas of potential Social Value. Where the commissioner considers that specific additional Social Value obligations are appropriate and relevant then these should be included in the requirements/specification. It is important that these obligations support the Council's overall strategic ambitions and are proportionate to the goods and/or services being delivered under the contract.

Examples of Performance Obligation Social Value requirements are:

- a construction contract that includes the ability to target local recruitment and training for construction related skills.
- a catering contract which requires the use of seasonal, locally sourced ingredients.
- a grounds maintenance contract requiring the use of indigenous plants only.

#### Evaluation route

Tender documents, including the Social Value element, will be developed with Commissioners.

Depending on the value, term, and complexity of the contract, two Social Value approaches will be considered.

Option 1 – is a purely quantitative model that allows the supplier to commit to social value outcomes identified by commissioners. This model is intended to be used for contracts below £160,000 (where applicable) or for short term or one-off purchases.

Option 2 – is a quantitative and qualitative model. Suppliers will be asked to submit a Social Value response against the TOMs. Commissioners can add specific social value outcomes they consider relevant and appropriate to the contract, selected in conjunction with other areas of the council and/or the local community, or allow suppliers to add their own commitments.

Suppliers can offer a number next to any measures they wish to offer and an explanation of their process and evidence of capability to do so. This route provides greater transparency to suppliers around Council priorities and the value of their offer and does not restrict suppliers to considering Social Value benefits within the constraints of the scope of the contract. Commissioners may have identified some specific Social

Value outcomes that have been deemed a priority within the contract but these are not mandatory. Examples of Social Value that might be offered by suppliers through this route include:

- North Somerset residents hired to resource a contract.
- Time spent volunteering to support local community projects.
- Financial or in-kind donations to support local groups or initiatives, eg. Laptops to schools or driving lessons or mobile phones for care leavers.

Commissioners and their Procurement Leads will ensure that procurement documents include instructions on how suppliers should complete their Social Value submissions, which includes how responses will be assessed and evaluated.

### Weighting

During the planning stage of a procurement, consideration should be given to the weighting that should be applied to Social Value compared to other criteria. As a recommendation, this should be a minimum of 10% of the total element of the evaluation, this could look like the following:

Quality- 40%

Cost- 50%

Social Value- 10%

## **5. Sustainable Procurement**

The Council has developed a Climate Emergency Procurement Policy. A Climate Emergency Risk Assessment should be undertaken as part of every procurement process where the total contract value exceeds £160,000 or where there are known risks to the environment as a result of carrying out the contract. This will identify the risks and opportunities that need to be considered during the procurement and allow the project team to build in mitigations throughout the procurement process, from specification forming through to contract management. In some instances, there may be an element of residual risk following the procurement and as such, this should be picked up within the Contract Management Plan, produced by the Procurement Lead following the contract award phase.

## **6. Measuring Social Value**

Social Value measurement is about understanding the additional value, over and above the core value provided by the service being procured, that is provided by the supplier as part of the contract.

Where the Performance Obligation approach is used, Commissioners will need to be clear about what needs to be measured and how this will be done. Where the Evaluation route is used, potential providers will need to set out their intended measures in their tender submission, using the process specified within the tender documents.

When evaluating Social Value for contracts above £160,000, the council will consider both quantitative and qualitative elements of the supplier's response, to credit both the value of the commitment and the confidence imparted that the supplier has the capability and experience of delivering it.

The overall measurement process needs to be appropriate to the services and provider organisations using them, clear, proportionate, and realistic.

## 7. Support provided to suppliers

This policy is intended to allow all suppliers equal opportunity to offer Social Value. However, it is recognised that, in some cases, smaller suppliers may need support to allow them to optimise their potential contribution. The following bodies are able to provide support and advice:

1. Voluntary Action North Somerset
2. Quartet Community Foundation
3. The Local Government Association website

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the North Somerset Council Procurement Team [Procurement.contracts@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Procurement.contracts@n-somerset.gov.uk)

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