

- 7. experience and/or employment opportunities for: –
 - People with Disabilities
 - People with Learning Difficulties
 - Care Leavers
 - Young People who are not in Education, Employment or Training,
 - Others who may find access to employment more challenging or who may be under-represented in the workforce e.g. ex-offenders
 - 8. Supporting schools through the provision of business support services
 - 9. Reducing the health and social care inequalities between our Priority Neighbourhoods and the rest of South Gloucestershire
 - 10. Achieving a service delivery model which uses, engages or supports the local community and voluntary sector including ideas such as adopting a local voluntary organisation as the provider’s ‘charity of the year’
- SGC say that in tender documents they will set out how social value will be assessed as part of the Evaluation Model and will subsequently agree proportionate and relevant social value outcomes with suppliers. You can find out more at <http://bit.ly/2tShk24>

Further reading

Author/publisher	Report Title	YEAR	URL
Bath and North East Somerset Council	Social Value Procurement Policy	2012	http://bit.ly/2CdajfE
Bristol City Council	Social Value Policy	2016	http://bit.ly/2sMce6V
Bristol City Council	Social Value Toolkit	2016	http://bit.ly/2EJDsfX
Cabinet Office	Social Value Act Review	2015	http://bit.ly/2oit4Wj
NAVCA	Introduction to Social Value	2011	http://bit.ly/2sQKQ84
NCVO	Social value in commissioning and procurement	2012	http://bit.ly/2krE7J2
National Voices	Healthy commissioning: How the Social Value Act is being used by Clinical Commissioning Groups	2017	http://bit.ly/2ojj3IN
Social Enterprise UK/Cabinet Office	Social value act: impact and measurement	2015	http://bit.ly/2HDwHyv
VOSCUR	Social Value Policy and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector	2015	http://bit.ly/2BILnM1

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What is Social Value?

Social Value is a variant of the idea of Public Value, an idea developed in the 1990s as a way of thinking about public benefits including social capital, social cohesion, social relationships and cultural identity (see National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), 2011). Social Value is this idea brought to bear on the commissioning process, which occurred for the first time during the national Social Value Commissioning Project led by NHS North-West in 2010, who defined Social Value as:

“.....[the] additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes”

The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012)

The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012) embeds the idea of Social Value in law by mandating public bodies such as:

- local authorities
- housing associations
- NHS agencies (including clinical commissioning groups)
- central government departments
- fire and police services.

to consider how to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area served by them through procurement, and how to undertake the process of procurement with a view to securing that improvement. The Act and related guidance does not define social value, instead focussing on the three “pillars” of well-being: physical, emotional and nutritional.

Patchy take-up

In their 2015 review of the act, The Cabinet Office wrote that the act was having a positive impact where it had been taken up, but identified that take-up was ‘a mixed picture’. The report recommended that commissioners should be careful that they asked for outcomes that were proportionate and relevant to what the bidders do as part of their core business. In 2016 NAVCA

conducted research which backed up the claim that merely asking local authorities to ‘consider’ social value was insufficient; indeed, their report – Procuring for Good – showed that ‘only one in three councils routinely considered social value in commissioning’. (NAVCA, 2016) The picture for Clinical Commissioning Groups is even worse. Research conducted by National Voices, a coalition of health and social care charities, and Social Enterprise UK, the umbrella body that represents not-for-profit organisations, found that only 13% of (CCGs) can clearly show that they are actively committed to pursuing social value in their procurement and commissioning decisions.



the care forum

Why is success so mixed? Partly because – both in the legislation and in the research – social value is something that is very hard to measure objectively, and therefore needs to be defined and embedded in the local context by an ongoing conversation with the public about what it is that they value (NAVCA, 2011). Austerity has emphasised both the savings made by those authorities that have embraced social value and the up-front costs of those who haven’t yet, ‘creating a division between the commissioning authorities that are already sold on the additional savings and benefits social value brings, and will continue to commission in this way, and those which are yet to see the positive outcomes.’ (Social Enterprise UK/ Cabinet Office 2015)

Pointers for the VCSE

Following from the above point, voluntary sector organisations are advised to work with each other – and with statutory partners, through bodies such as the local compact – to make sure that there is a healthy and locally agreed social value policy (NCVO, 2013). They provide the following action checklist:

1. Work together to agree a definition of social value for your local Compact or include a

commitment in renewed Compacts to this end. Work towards a joint definition of social value that reflects the social outcomes desired, and clarify what can be achieved by voluntary organisations.

2. Talk to statutory partners, in particular commissioning teams, about how they understand social value. It may be that contracting authorities have differing understandings of social value and how it should be implemented.
3. Find out what social value frameworks have been established by local public bodies. Where a decision has not been made, seek an opportunity to jointly agree an approach that accounts for locally agreed priorities.
4. Remind signatories of their commitment to ensure reporting expectations are reasonable and proportionate.
5. Recognise that a requirement to collect accurate information on the social value you provide is reasonable.
6. Gain commitment from statutory partners to extend the requirement for considering social value to all procurement opportunities.
7. Train commissioners and procurement officers in understanding the Compact, and highlight the link between implementing both the Act and the Compact.
8. Provide a voice for the community and service users. (National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), 2012)

Among other good examples of this practice NCVO cite Bristol City Council's commissioning of new Community Transport, saying that 'by adopting an outcomes-based commissioning process, Bristol City Council was able to engage with service users, providers and other commissioners to design contract specifications for its community transport services'.

Approaches by local public bodies

Bristol Council

Bristol Council, working in partnership with VOSCUR, has developed a Social Value Policy and

accompanying Social Value Toolkit, providing guidance for both commissioners and providers. The policy outlines the following five main objectives the authority will pursue:

1. Involve local people and organisations in determining social value outcomes by beginning engagement and/or consultation at the earliest possible opportunity in a commissioning process.
2. Agree proportionate and relevant social value outcomes with the marketplace at pre-procurement stage, and ensure that they are linked to the strategic priorities in the Corporate Plan.
3. Apply a methodology that ensures 10% of the quality element of the price/quality ratio will be allocated to social value, when it is identified in the commissioning process that additional social value outcomes are relevant and appropriate.
4. Spend at least 25% of the Council's total procurement budget with micro, small and medium size businesses, social enterprises and voluntary / community organisations in 2016/17 and be ambitious in our endeavour to improve on this figure.
5. Work with internal staff, the marketplace and communities to improve understanding of social value.

Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council

B&NES Council's Social Value Policy states that 'the Council's initial priority is to implement this Social Value Procurement Policy in relation to targeted recruitment and training and targeted supply-chain opportunities. Implementation will be extended to other social value outcomes where the following tests are met:

- seeking those social value outcomes through a contract and/or the commissioning process itself appears to the Council to be likely to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Council's administrative area or any part of it;

- the Council has access to appropriate expertise in the 'social value outcomes to be secured, either internally or through a partner organisation, so that proper support can be given to both the procurement team and service teams during the commissioning process and in the delivery of the contract;
- the potential benefits to the Council or to the target community justify any additional work and expense incurred by the Council;
- the proposed requirements are affordable; and
- the social value outcomes are not inconsistent with the Council's wider policy goals (including the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Procurement Strategy, and/or the Council has identified the outcomes as a specific policy goal.'

North Somerset Council

North Somerset Council have provided the following list of components of social value that they feel to be particularly important:

- Increased employment to local people
- Increased employment to those most removed from the labour market
- Increased employment to young people
- Increased use of local supply chain
- Reducing negative and promoting positive environmental impacts
- Increased health and wellbeing for all
- Supporting schools and life-long learning
- Developing cultural heritage
- Stronger local voluntary/community sector

They have some helpful resources, including an outcomes table which suggests how these objectives might be achieved, at <http://bit.ly/2ltkQTO>

South Gloucestershire Council

South Gloucestershire Council has targeted the following ten areas for delivering social value.

1. Promoting the local economy through optimising the use of local suppliers and the voluntary and community sector, and creating and sustaining new local jobs and apprenticeships
2. Contributing to carbon reduction targets to become carbon neutral and to help mitigate climate change, taking account of resilience to climate change and using resources wisely, including energy, land, water and materials
3. Conserving and enhancing the environment, supporting biodiversity, minimising pollution and waste and making best use of the environmental opportunities of work undertaken by our suppliers
4. Promoting the personal and physical health and the mental and emotional well-being of people within South Gloucestershire e.g.
 - Offering initiatives that support social or physical activities
 - Tackling social isolation by providing opportunities to reconnect people with activities in their local communities
 - Enabling citizens to make a valuable contribution to society
 - Supporting family carers to remain in paid employment
5. Supporting schools and colleges e.g. through new work placement schemes, providing mentors or assisting in mock interviews.
6. Increasing participation in the Children's Commissioner Takeover Challenge, find details here: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/takeover-challenge/>7. Providing training, workplace