

Bracknell Forest Council

Social value policy and procedure



1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 came into force in January 2013. The Act states that public authorities must consider how public contracts (contracts above procurement threshold limits) may have an economic, social or environmental wellbeing impact. To fulfil its duty, the council must consider:
 - a) how the procurement proposal might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area; and
 - b) how, in conducting the procurement process, it might act to secure that improvement.
- 1.2. The council must consider under subsection (b), above, only matters that are relevant to what is proposed to be procured. In doing so, it must consider what is proportionate within the circumstances.
- 1.3. While there is no obligation for public authorities to consider social value in other procurements, such as capital works, there is equally no prohibition. However, the procurement process must be fair, equitable and transparent and the principle of proportionality and relevance must be applied.
- 1.4. One objective of the Public Contract Regulations (2015) is to enable procurement to be used more strategically, offering new opportunities for social value to be considered throughout the procurement process. The new Procurement Act 2023, which will come into force in October 2024, goes further than this, making social value a specific objective that should be achieved through procurement.



2. Aims and scope of this policy

- 2.1. Bracknell Forest Council's aim in adopting this policy is to go beyond the Act requirements and seek to drive social value in all aspects of its procurement and contracting activity where it is practical and proportionate to do so, to support a more inclusive local economy and help address the climate emergency.
- 2.2. Due to the wide range of services provided by the council there is no 'one size fits all' model that can be used to calculate or recommend any social value sought through Council activity, for example x apprentices for y contract spend/ size of activity. This is especially the case for procurement and contracts where, as outlined above, any social value sought and obtained should be relevant and proportionate to the contract being tendered.
- 2.3. To inform social value commitments sought through procurements and provide a consistent reporting standard for measuring social value delivered, the council is proposing to adopt a local target social value framework. For both officers commissioning contracts and organisations seeking to submit bids, it provides a clear indication of what social value measures are of most important to the Bracknell Forest community. [\[link\]](#)
- 2.4. The Bracknell Forest Council local target Matrix contains all social value priorities that have been identified for delivery. A weighted 'BFC SV Score' is assigned to each priority. This is not intended to be a fixed position. It will be updated annually to reflect changes to the Bracknell Forest community and its priorities.
- 2.5. It should be noted that no contract is expected to deliver all local targets. Officers commissioning contracts will select several from the matrix, which are most relevant and proportionate to what they are commissioning. Organisations submitting bids then prepare the social value offer they wish to make against the listed local targets.
- 2.6. All contracts greater than £100,000 must contain social value local targets as part of their evaluation criteria. All contracts greater than £50,000 must consider the inclusion of social value local targets as part of their evaluation criteria. Where social value is included, it must constitute at least 5 per cent of the overall evaluation criteria.



3. Application

- 3.1. Guidance has been provided regarding the application of the matrix, which officers should refer to when preparing their procurement documents.
- 3.2. Officers should identify their approach to social value when seeking approval to procure – further detail is provided within the guidance.
- 3.3. Once awarded, social value local targets become part of the contract’s performance regime, like any other key performance indicator (KPI). Officers may be required to report on the delivery of social value local targets in the contracts they are responsible for – further detail is provided within the guidance.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1. The responsibilities for securing and ensuring delivery of social value align with the council’s overall model for procurement and contracts.
- 4.2. The council’s corporate procurement team will provide strategic guidance and support on seeking social value through procurements (including the review and update of the council’s contract procedure rules to refer to the policy, as appropriate).
- 4.3. Commissioners and contract managers across the council will ensure that suppliers are made aware of social value requirements within contracts. They will track delivery against the social value commitments through regular performance reporting with suppliers, once the contract has been awarded.
- 4.4. Commissioners and contract managers will also be responsible for updating the corporate contract register and any other reporting tools regarding social value outcomes.

