

Social Value Working Group (SVWG)

DRAFT Terms of Reference

1.0 Background

Belfast has a vision to be a city that will be re-imagined and resurgent, a great place to live and work for everyone. This means supporting people to reach their potential and creating a successful place for everyone across the city. Social value is about maximising the impact of public expenditure to get the best possible outcomes. This can in part be achieved by ensuring that, where practicable, the money spent on procuring goods, works and services benefits the people, the communities and the economy of Belfast.

Since 2013 the Council has integrated social clauses within relevant council procurements primarily focused upon the provision of employment and work placement opportunities, ring-fenced for the unemployed and increasingly accessibility to supply chain opportunities for smaller enterprises (including social enterprises). Whilst the current Social Clause Policy provides a mechanism to integrate some element of social value through BCC contracts, the approach is limited and members have expressed the desire to evolve our existing approach to a more encompassing social value model. Focusing upon ensuring that economic prosperity is as inclusive and widespread as possible whilst ensuring the efficient use of resources and value for money.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this working group will be to inform and lead on the development of the Councils approach to integrating social value through procurement process. The scope of responsibility for this group will include:

- Supporting the principals and achievement of the Belfast Agenda and inclusive growth commitments through procurement spend;
- Reviewing best practice approaches to the integration of social value within procurement processes;
- Creating a robust and ambitious approach for the integration of social value through the Councils procurement processes, with consideration given to financial affordability, legal implications and the maximisation of impact;
- Supporting the adoption of the recommended approach through engagement with internal and external stakeholders;
- Development and delivery of an implementation plan for the adopted approach with consideration given to staffing resources, management and monitoring arrangements etc.

For the purpose of this working steering group Social value is defined by the Social Value Hub as:

“the additional benefit to the community over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes”

For commissioning and procurement this means that social value should be at the heart of all goods, services and works which are designed, procured and delivered. The intention through social value will result in bringing a wide range of benefits for Belfast to include but not restricted to creating jobs and apprenticeships, volunteering opportunities, and undertaking initiatives that have a community benefit or will deliver environmental improvements.

3.0 Governance

The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this steering group and for the delivery of social clauses is the City Solicitor, John Walsh. However it is recognised scope of responsibility for this group resides across the Council and is explicitly linked to the Council's Procurement Strategy, managed and resourced through Finance & Resources Department. Additionally the support structure for contractors to deliver upon their commitments exists across the Council principally through the Place & Economy Department. Delivery is therefore dependent upon collective ownership and delivery across Council departments.

Reporting on the activities of the steering group and its activities will be directly to the Commercial Panel, Chief Officers Management Team and the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.

4.0 Membership

The membership of the SVWG is as follows:

- John Walsh, City Solicitor (Chair)
- Head of Commercial and Procurement Services (Finances & Resources Department)
- Director of Economic Development (Place & Economy Department)
- Strategy, Policy & Partnership Manager (City & Organisational Strategy Department)
- Director of Physical Programmes (Physical Programmes Department)
- Operational Director of City & Neighbourhoods (City & Neighbourhoods Services Department)
- Divisional Solicitor (Legal & Civic Services Department)
- Head of Audit, Governance & Risk Services

5.0 Meetings & Frequency

The working group will take place on a monthly basis and will be chaired by the John Walsh or their nominee. The purpose of the group will be to:

- Investigate the options available to the Council for the integration of social value within procurement processes, taking into account best practice from elsewhere;
- Review the financial and legal implications of the integration of social value and mitigate any risks identified;
- Maximise the potential economic, social and environmental benefit to be derived through procurement practices, with consideration of the risk factors identified;
- Identify the resource implications of implementing, managing and monitoring social value through procurement;

- Develop a Social Value Procurement Framework aligned to the ambitions of the Council through the Belfast Agenda and Inclusive Growth Strategy;
- Support the approval and adoption of the framework through council channels and if relevant public consultation process;
- Develop and support the implementation plan for this framework with internal and external stakeholders. Ensuring effective mechanisms are in place integrate, manage and measure social value impact;
- Ensure sufficient supports exists through the Council to support the delivery of the framework.

6.0 Reporting

The SVWG will be accountable to the Commercial Panel, directly reporting to the panel with monthly updates provided on progress to date. The Commercial Panel will support the working group by directing and informing the work programme of the group. Internal approval of the social value approach will be undertaken initially through Commercial Panel, prior to seeking Chief Management team approval and elected member engagement/approval.