

WHAT IS SOCIAL VALUE?

In the context of this project social value is the added benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes.

This guide is intended for commissioners, procurers and providers of public sector services.

WHAT DOES THE TOOLKIT DO?

The Toolkit sets out the steps which commissioners can use to:

- Capture where social value is already being created, and/or
- Assess where social value can be identified and delivered through commissioning activity.

This Toolkit includes a number of steps, with specific tools and guidance for each step, allowing organisations to develop and capture social value alongside their traditional commissioning activity.

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

- 1. Introduction** – A brief overview of the social value concept is provided.
- 2. Self Assessment** – What do I and my organisation know about social value and why is it relevant to us?
 - *This step asks you to look at your own knowledge of and engagement with social value to identify and help grow social value through your commissioning activity.*
 - An organisation (or individuals and groups within an organisation) should undertake a self assessment exercise to help understand the possible barriers or opportunities to using social value. It will help you to identify key development areas in the use of social value.
 - This assessment is a competency based approach, linked to competencies found in World Class Commissioning. A Self Assessment Tool has been provided to support this process.
 - The self assessment exercise should be repeated at periodic intervals. This allows you to measure your own progress over time in understanding and encouraging awareness and development of Social Value.

3. Prioritisation and Measurement Framework – If I am going to capture social value through the services I commission and procure, what should I actually look for that meets the needs of my local area?

- A Prioritisation and Measurement Tool is provided which encourages you to think about the needs of your local stakeholders; and to think about how encouraging social value through commissioning will **help meet your requirements** and **support your own commissioning agenda**.
- The following themes have been identified as the key areas to focus upon.

INCOME - EMPLOYMENT – HEALTH – EDUCATION – HOUSING – ENVIRONMENT – CRIME PREVENTION

- **But how do I go about establishing what is appropriate for my area?**

This section asks you to establish your local priorities from sources such as the Sustainable Communities Strategy; the Local Area Agreement; the national policy agenda; as well as from local needs assessments and from public consultation. At this stage you should work in tandem with local service users and communities to establish their real needs.

4. **Develop Understanding with Providers** – How do I get service providers and suppliers to actually deliver social value alongside the services we traditionally commission and procure from them?

- A critical step in capturing social value is to work closely with your providers of services and goods, to develop a shared understanding of social value and why it is important to you as a commissioner.
- **The Toolkit sets out the steps you can follow to:**
 - Allow providers to understand what social value they can bring which is valued by you
 - Encourage the concept to be embedded within their organisations
 - Work with them to ensure that they are offering core services which also deliver social value
 - Ensure that they are generating new ideas which provide you as a commissioner with social value which meets the local need.

5. **Evaluation Framework** – How do I assess which providers could deliver the best social value?

- When procuring services, you will traditionally undertake an assessment process which measures what your different providers are offering and assists you in selecting the provider who meets your requirement.
- At this stage, it is important to also consider what they are offering in terms of social value – allowing you to ensure that social value is being captured and delivered.
- We have designed a Tool which helps you to measure competing tenders and identify which provider offers the best option (regarding social value). This is an options appraisal which looks at both:
 - The impact of the social value activity
 - The likelihood of it being achieved
- This section of the Toolkit includes criteria against which you can measure 'social value' offered by providers, and a step-by-step guide in how to complete the assessment process.

6. **Monitoring Framework** – How do I assess if, and how well, social value is being delivered?

- This stage of the Toolkit provides some practical advice to support you to monitor the effectiveness of social value which is being realised through the services and goods you have commissioned and procured.
- Whilst the Toolkit acknowledges that some elements are easier to monitor than others (some of your providers deliverables will be possible to assess, others not so much) it is important to do so as there may be financial implications for you as a commissioning body; for other public bodies and at a national level.
- Measurement of social value being delivered allows you to identify the wider financial benefits gained. This can be achieved by a number of other supportive methodologies, such as Social Return on Investment, and the toolkit includes a link to guidance on how this can be achieved.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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The social value toolkit, evaluation report, easy read guides and further information can be found at:

http://www.northwest.nhs.uk/whatwedo/socialvalueproject/social_value_project.html