

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Special Cabinet Advisory Committee

Date: 27 February 2024

Reporting officer: Head of Community Support

Subject: Social Value

Purpose and summary of report:

To present Members with a draft Social Value Policy, Statement and Framework which, if adopted, will enable the Council to develop its Social Value approach and achieve greater benefits.

To discuss the Council's contribution to Social Value through a year of volunteering in 2024

Recommendations:

Members are asked to :

1. Review and comment on the Policy and supporting documents
2. Discuss the approach for Gravesham's contribution to Social Value

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
Legal	The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to consider how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. The Act also requires a minimum 10% weighting on Social Value in procurement contracts above the public procurement threshold.
Finance and Value for Money	This report presents a series of documents that will support the Council to achieve additional value for money for the Borough and encourage voluntary social value contributions from the wider business sector and other bodies with an interest in the Borough and its community

Corporate Plan	#3 Progress: an entrepreneurial authority; commercial in outlook and committed to continuous service improvement, underpinned by a skilled workforce and strong governance environment
Climate Change	There are no climate change implications; although some of the social value measures achieve through the development of this work will have a positive affect on climate change and reducing emissions.

1. Background

- 1.1 Social Value is the added value generated for communities over and above core business functions. It includes anything that positively contributes towards social wellbeing, the economy or environment.
- 1.2 Social value is often linked to procurement and contracts, but it can also be achieved through voluntary input from local organisations, such as staff volunteering, contributions of resources or funding donations.
- 1.3 With the significant financial pressures being faced by Local Authorities, it is more important than ever to draw on opportunities to maximise social value in order to deliver functions and activities within the limited resources available. But the benefits of social value go much wider than Council related outcomes ranging from tackling climate change, delivering significant community developments, to increasing work related skills and access to work or improving health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 1.4 Organisations who commit to deliver social value outcomes are also reporting an upturn in attrition and retention with more people considering the ethos of an organisation to be just as important as pay.

2. Current position

- 2.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force on 31 January 2013, requiring those who commission public services to consider how they could also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This is linked to the procurement process and requires commissioners to think about whether the services they are procuring could secure these benefits for their local areas and communities. The Act also requires a minimum 10% weighting on Social Value in procurement contracts above the public procurement threshold.
- 2.2 To support the Procurement Strategy, Gravesham developed a Social Value Policy in February 2023. However, this was relatively high level and whilst it focussed on the opportunities that may be derived from procurement activity, it does not recognise those wider opportunities of contract management or voluntary Social Value contributions.
- 2.3 Through developing the Social Value approach that recognises opportunities from procurement, planning, compulsory and voluntary routes, far greater benefits can be achieved.

Compulsory – existing procurement processes, but also through wider contract management including Service Level Agreements and grant funding

Voluntarily – working with businesses, groups and organisations to recognise and deliver opportunities that contribute Social Value benefits to the local community

- 2.4 The LGA recognises the support Local Authorities need to develop their Social Value opportunities and developed the National Social Value Taskforce; a sub-group of the National Advisory Group for Procurement
- 2.5 The Taskforce also partnered with the Social Value Portal to develop templates and a toolkit including draft Social Value Policy, measurement framework information (Themes, Outputs and Measures), draft wording for inclusion in tender documentation, and information on how to evaluate bids and tips on good contract management.
- 2.6 The Social Value Portal have also developed a maturity index; a means of assessing where an organisation is now and where it aspires to be in the next 3-5 years in relation to achieving Social Value. An output from the maturity index is a suggested action plan which sets out the key steps to take. Not all of the actions will be appropriate, but it can be used as a good starting point for developing our own work.
- 2.7 Whilst these templates and toolkits are welcome, there are still opportunities to explore attracting Social Value outputs from other sources, such as the wider business community or local, voluntary and community organisations who equally want to deliver against their own social value commitments and support the local community. In many cases organisations are not aware how they can contribute or where they should focus their attention.

3. Proposed approach

- 3.1 The Council is in a position to develop its own social value commitments and to support other organisations in achieving outcomes that benefit the Borough. Through collaboration the potential of what social value could deliver are significant. There are potentially four key areas:
 - Set out our own commitment to deliver Social Value beyond procurement and planning - the Council can start by developing its own commitment around Social Value, which should also include what the Council can give back, not just what it can leverage through procurement. As an example, staff volunteering hours which could be directed to mentoring over a number of weeks can make a significant difference to individuals or organisations.
 - Map existing social value outcomes – by undertaking a mapping exercise we could start to identify the value of delivered social value outcomes. These would include the returns the Council has already achieved through arrangements with suppliers, but also start to identify the breadth of social value being delivered by others, but not necessarily identified or reported as social value.
 - Understanding community wants and needs – community engagement is key. We need to engage with the wider community and understand what they want and need. This could range from support for small groups or organisations (pro-bono services), it could include manpower or materials to maintain and upgrade facilities, creating new public use spaces or deliver community projects. Suppliers and local businesses will need our support through this data and a potential 'menu of options' to help direct support to where it is needed and, in some cases, where organisations are too small to deliver an outcome themselves, they become one of a number of delivery partners who collectively deliver.
 - Develop strategy and policy – undertaking to develop key documents that set out our vision, commitment and approach to Social Value, including how we

will enhance deliverables through procurement or the planning process will enable the Council to embed Social Value in all areas of work and to support other local stakeholders in developing and delivering their own outputs:

- A Social Value Statement
- A Social Value Action Plan
- A Social Value Policy
- A Social Value Framework
- Social Value Monitoring

4. Policy & Framework

- 4.1 To progress this work, a draft Social Value Policy, Statement and Framework have been prepared and are appended to this report.
- 4.2 The Policy (Appendix I) sets out our principles, and how we will adhere to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 by including Social Value in our Procurement exercises; but also how we will further commit by including it in contract management arrangements and supporting local organisations to deliver and achieve their own social value outcomes.
- 4.3 The Statement (Appendix II) aims to communicate key messages and secure support from staff, partners, suppliers and other locally based organisations to help create social value benefits for the community.
- 4.4 The Framework (Appendix III) is a list of priority areas which can be shared with other parties to help focus Social Value outcomes on areas that are important to us and our community.

5. Mapping & Community Engagement

- 5.1 Some work has been undertaken to start recording Social Value outcomes that we are aware of, such as the Solahaus units from The Hill Group or the financial contribution to a local charity by Jacksons Civils who are leading the Bath Street project; but more work needs to be done to ensure we are hearing about Social Value outcomes so they can be included.
- 5.2 There have also been some informal discussion with community organisations through our networking meetings, and with members of the public at Big Conversation events, starting to explore their understanding of social value and what outcomes might be most welcomed by them. As our work in this area develops, both the recording and engagement around this will start to mature.

6. Council Contribution

- 6.1 2024 is the Council's Year of Volunteering and discussions have already been taking place about how Officer volunteer days can be used to support social value achievements across the Borough. There is scope to partner with other organisations and local employers to increase volunteer capacity and achieve greater outcomes.
- 6.2 The Community Involvement Team have started collating a list of opportunities and will be working with officers to roll out projects over the Council's 50th anniversary year.

7. Supporting Local Organisations

7.1 Whilst relatively light touch, there has been some support provided to organisations working within the Borough. As highlighted above, the team have engaged with Jacksons Civils and helped link them with community organisations; one who benefited from a financial contribution, another who received 2 days building support to repair and maintain a canopy at the entrance of their community centre. Some conversations have also been had with local businesses about social value, but more work needs to be undertaken to help them understand the opportunities; but also recognise where they are already contributing e.g. apprenticeships

8. Next Steps

8.1 As well as formal adoption of the Policy, next steps will include development of an action plan to focus direction of travel and support delivery of social value outcomes. This will be done by using the Social Maturity Index (Appendix IV) which is designed to assist organisations in understanding their current position and what actions they can take over the next 3-5 years to further develop Social Value outputs and achievements.

9. Appendices

Appendix I – Policy

Appendix II – Statement

Appendix III – Framework

Appendix IV – Maturity Index

10. Background papers

LGA Social Value Toolkit - [Social Value Statement | Local Government Association](#)

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Secondary Implications	
Risk Assessment	There are no risks associated with this report, which focusses on the development of a Social Value Policy and associated documents to develop the Council's journey and support it can provide locally
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links.</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk. N/A</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications
Digital and website implications	There are no implications
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	There are no implications