

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Report Title	Social Value Policy 2025 - 2027
Meeting / Date	Cabinet, 9 September 2025
Cabinet portfolio	Councillor Paul Douglas, Portfolio Lead Member for Finance & Resources
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Wards affected	All
Public access	Open
Appendices	Appendix 1 Social Value Policy 2025 – 2027 Appendix 2 – Equalities Screener Appendix 3 – Sustainability Implications

Summary

- 1.1 The Council's Social Value Policy 2025–2027 builds upon the foundations of the previous policy introduced in 2021. This updated policy aligns with the Council's corporate priorities by setting out clear guidelines and commitments to maximise the additional value generated through procurement activities.
- 1.2 It outlines the Council's dedication to considering economic, social, and environmental impacts when procuring goods, works, and services—ensuring that value for money is achieved in a holistic and sustainable way.
- 1.3 The Social Value Policy 2025–2027 reflects on our progress to date, reaffirms our ongoing commitments, and identifies key areas for continued improvement in how we deliver and embed social value across all procurement processes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Social Value Policy 2025-2027 (Appendix 1 to the report) for publication.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Council's previous Social Value Policy was introduced in 2021. The new policy, set out in Appendix 1, builds on that previous policy, aligns with current corporate priorities and reaffirms the ongoing

commitment to maximising additional value for the public benefit as required by the Procurement Act 2023.

- 3.2 The key objectives of the Social Value Policy 2025 – 2027 are:
 - 3.2.1 Align with the Leader's Emerging Policy Priorities: Integrate the Leader's strategic priorities to enhance the adoption and impact of social value across Council operations.
 - 3.2.2 Continue use of a Bespoke TOMs Framework: Apply a tailored version of the national Themes, Outcomes, and Measures (TOMs) Framework to reflect local priorities and ensure meaningful, measurable social value outcomes.
 - 3.2.3 Utilise the National TOMs Framework: Where appropriate, continue to reference the national TOMs Framework to maintain consistency with broader best practices and benchmarking.
 - 3.2.4 Continue use of the Social Value Portal: Leverage the Social Value Portal as a key tool for capturing, managing, and reporting social value delivery in a transparent and accountable manner.
- 3.3 The bespoke TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, and Measures) Framework is a locally tailored version of the national TOMs model, designed to reflect the specific priorities, needs, and aspirations of our communities. While the national TOMs provide a standardised approach to measuring social value, the bespoke version allows the Council to:
 - Align with Local Priorities: Incorporate strategic objectives and community needs unique to the borough, ensuring that social value outcomes are relevant and impactful.
 - Enhance Relevance and Flexibility: Adapt themes and measures to better suit the types of contracts and services the Council procures, allowing for more meaningful contributions from suppliers.
 - Improve Measurement and Accountability: Provide a more precise and context-sensitive framework for evaluating social value, enabling clearer reporting and stronger performance management.
- 3.4 The new policy also introduces a structured framework for monitoring and enforcing the delivery of social value commitments across Council contracts, ensuring accountability and maximising community benefit. These commitments will be legally binding in the contracts and must be delivered in full over the life of each contract.
- 3.5 Therefore, the Council will include in contracts appropriate remedies to deal with non-delivery of the social value commitments. Where commitments are not met and no acceptable alternatives are agreed, the Council may apply:
 - Liquidated damages – where the right to charge a genuine pre-assessment of loss for non-delivery of the social value has been included in the contract

- Withholding of final payments – where the right to withhold or set off has been included in the contract or may otherwise be exercised as contractual damages for breach of contract
 - Exclusion from future procurement opportunities – where to exclude is lawfully possible as a discretionary exclusion ground under the Procurement Act 2023
 - Public disclosure of non-compliance – where to disclose is reasonable and proportionate
- 3.6 These measures may also apply to failures in delivering agreed alternative remedies, including contributions to the Social Investment Fund.
- 3.7 This framework strengthens the Council's ability to hold suppliers accountable, ensures early visibility of delivery risks, and reinforces the borough's commitment to meaningful social value outcomes.
- 3.8 This tailored approach ensures that social value is not only measured consistently but also delivered in ways that genuinely benefit our residents, businesses, and environment.

4 Options & Alternatives Considered

- 4.1 Not producing a Social Value Policy is not a viable option. Social value in procurement is not only a local priority, but also a mandatory requirement under national public sector procurement regulations.
- 4.2 From 1 October 2025, all in-scope public sector organisations are required to apply the updated Social Value Model as outlined in Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 002 1. This model mandates the inclusion of social value considerations in the award of contracts, ensuring that public spending delivers broader benefits to society, the economy, and the environment.
- 4.3 Failure to adopt a Social Value Policy would place the Council at risk of non-compliance with national procurement obligations, undermine our ability to deliver on local strategic priorities, and reduce our capacity to secure meaningful outcomes for our communities.

5 Council Strategic Priorities (and other National or Local Policies or Strategies)

- 5.1 This policy is fully aligned with the Council's strategic priorities and is a key driver behind its renewal. It embeds economic, social, and environmental principles into the procurement process, ensuring that every pound spent delivers meaningful, long-term benefits for the local area—both now and for future generations.
- 5.2 The policy is underpinned by a robust framework of national legislation and international best practices. It supports and aligns with:
The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which mandates the consideration of social value in public procurement.

- 5.3 DEFRA's Sustainable Procurement National Action Plan, promoting responsible sourcing and environmental stewardship.
- 5.4 International Best Practice, including the European Commission's Green Public Procurement (GPP) agenda. While no longer a legal requirement post-Brexit, the GPP provides a valuable benchmark for environmentally responsible procurement and continues to inform the Council's sustainability ambitions.
- 5.5 Maximise Community Benefit: Unlock additional value for local communities through Council contracts, directly supporting the ten missions outlined in Mission Waltham Forest 2024 - including building an inclusive economy, tackling the housing crisis, and creating safe, green neighbourhoods
- 5.6 Enhance Impact Across Key Areas: Drive measurable improvements across social, economic, and environmental domains, in line with the Strategy's commitment to sustainability, equity, and community resilience.
- 5.7 Integrate with Broader Council Strategies: Highlight both achieved and planned social value, ensuring alignment with related Council policies and strategic goals, including:
 - Modern Slavery Statement
 - Air Quality Strategy
 - Housing Strategy
 - Sustainability Framework
 - Return on Social Investment
 - Climate Change Action Plan
 - And the overarching Mission Waltham Forest vision for a more equal borough

6 Consultation

- 6.1 In compiling and updating these documents the social value team has engaged with a range of stakeholders from across the Council, such as those with responsibility for commissioning services and setting policy. In addition, feedback from third parties, including community groups and the Council's supply chain have been consulted.
- 6.2 The creation of Mission Waltham Forest has begun to break down organisational silos within the Council and identify shared goals for initiatives. There are strong benefits in utilising social value to support Stronger Communities, both in terms of supporting outcomes as well as protecting the Council's financial position by utilising the Council's supply chain to fund/undertake locally relevant initiatives.

7 Implications

7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

- 7.1.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the contents of this report.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 The development of the Social Value Policy is directly informed by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which provides the legal foundation for embedding social value into public procurement. The Act requires all public authorities, including local councils, to consider how the services they commission can improve the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of their communities. The Act sets out a number of requirements that public authorities must comply with before starting the procurement process including considering:

- how what is being procured might improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing of its area.
- how the improvement might be secured and whether to have a consultation on the potential improvement themselves or how they be secured

- 7.2.2 Under section 12 of the Procurement Act 2023 the Council as a contracting authority must have regard to the importance of maximising public benefit when carrying out procurement. Under section 13 of the 2023 Act the Council must also have regard to the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) and the NPPS has as a priority that 'contracting authorities should deliver social and economic value that supports the Government's missions including by working in partnership across organisational boundaries.

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

- 7.3.1 An EA Screening was completed and is attached at Appendix 2. The main conclusion is that there will be no negative impacts on equalities. It is believed that this policy will have a positive impact where it relates to social and economic sustainability. For example, it advocates asking suppliers to train and hire apprentices and economically disadvantaged groups.

7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

- 7.4.1 The policy champions a sustainable approach to procurement and commissioning ensuring that environmental considerations are embedded into decision-making and delivery. It focuses on achieving measurable, long-term outcomes. The Sustainability Implications Guidance matrix has been completed (Appendix 3).
- 7.4.2 The policy promotes a sustainable approach and focus on sustainable outcomes including:

- i) Measured Tonnes of Waste Reduction through recycling, diverting waste from landfills or incineration or/and the re-use of products and materials.
- ii) Savings in CO2e emissions achieved through de-carbonisation.
- iii) Car Miles saved through cycling to work scheme, car-pooling programmes or the use of public transport on projects.
- iv) Training on Climate Change and Carbon reduction for all supplier staff on contract.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

7.5.1 There are no specific impacts on Council infrastructure arising from this report.

Background Information (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None