

## SOCIAL VALUE AND SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

REPORT OF: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE and DIRECTOR RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Wards Affected: All

Key Decision: No

Report to: Cabinet  
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### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to present the Council's Social Value and Sustainability Charter and explain the background to and development of the document.

### Recommendations

2. **Cabinet is recommended to approve the Social Value and Sustainability Charter as shown at Appendix 1, subject to any agreed changes.**
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### Background

3. In April 2022 Mid Sussex District Council (the council) approved the Sustainable Economy Strategy (SES) and Action Plan. This document combined the council's ambitions for a thriving and growing economy with its commitment to sustainability and to ensuring the impacts were reduced on our environment and climate change through the actions and activities of the council as well as those living, working and visiting the district.
4. The SES sets out the goals of the council and proposed actions to deliver these goals in a series of 14 objectives within an Action Plan. Each objective is directly linked to the relevant UN Sustainability goals, which guided the development of the strategy and the objectives of the action plan.
5. Under Objective 3 "*Strive to reduce pay inequality and improve access to senior roles for underrepresented groups in Mid Sussex*" is the action to "*adopt a Social Value and Sustainability Charter to ensure that there is a commitment to support economic, environmental and social improvements from Council suppliers and contractors*". The document at Appendix 1 is the Charter described.

## **Policy Context**

6. The Public Sector (Social Value) Act 2012 places a duty on public sector organisations, in certain specified circumstances, to consider how what is being procured might improve the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the area and how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement. The Cabinet Office subsequently developed a Social Value Model and a Procurement Policy Note stated that it should be applied to all new procurements from 1 January 2021. This enables social value to be evaluated and given weight in procurement exercises so that social value can be judged on an equal footing with cost and quality, ensuring maximum value in public spending is achieved. The suggested minimum weighting is 10%.
7. Previous procurement exercises have used the Sustainable Economy Strategy to guide bidders on what the Council is seeking in terms of social value from our contracts. In the case of the MSDC Green Spaces Management contract a commitment to deliver £2.1m of social value during the initial contract term (first 5 years) including increasing expenditure within the district, targeted employment and apprenticeship opportunities promoted within the district, and donating materials and volunteer hours to local projects in addition to delivering 2 community-based initiatives per year. And through the Place and Connectivity programme delivered by Balfour Beatty there was significant social value achieved including 10 local people employed specifically for the project and 1 local engineering student on work experience, 3 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were engaged on the project and ran a competition with children at a Burgess Hill Primary school to champion the benefits of cycling and walking to school.
8. So, whilst the aim of achieving social value from our contracts is not new to the procurement process at Mid Sussex District Council, the Social Value and Sustainability Charter is a way of more clearly articulating the social, economic, and environmental benefits that we are seeking in our District.

## **Guiding Principles of the Social Value and Sustainability Charter**

9. There are four Guiding Principles proposed in the Charter. These are:
  - a) improve the social wellbeing of local communities, raising their aspirations and promoting access to high quality jobs;
  - b) support local community organisations and businesses and sustainable economic growth;
  - c) be a responsible employer; and
  - d) promote the benefits of sustainability practices and encourage action to support the achievement of Carbon Net Zero to create healthier, greener, and more sustainable places.

The development of these principles has involved reviewing the council's Corporate Plan, the 14 Objectives contained within the Sustainable Economy Strategy and Action Plan, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals which underpin it as well as the National Social Value Model and National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) Framework.

## **Other Options Considered**

10. The SES sets out a commitment to developing a Social Value and Sustainability Charter, therefore no other options were considered.

## **Next steps**

11. Following approval of the Social Value and Sustainability Charter, we will develop a monitoring protocol to ensure that the Social Value and Sustainability Charter is implemented, and the outcomes are captured.

## **Financial Implications**

12. There are no financial implications associated with the preparation of this report.

## **Risk Management Implications**

13. The council has approved the Sustainable Economy Strategy and Action Plan. Therefore, it is important to be clear and transparent about the work that has been undertaken and progress made against the agreed Actions. Without this, there is a risk of reputational damage to the Council.
14. As the upper values of the Tier 2 works contracts is £2,000,000, we expect potential suppliers to deliver across a range of social value areas. However, due to the range of values for Tier 2 works contracts (£100,000 to £2,000,000), this could result in significant requirements for relatively low value contracts. This could deter SME suppliers from engaging with the council in our procurement activities. In order to mitigate this, officers will provide training on what we would seek, providing examples and explaining this new process as part of our procurement exercises.

## **Equality and Customer Service Implications**

15. There are no equality or customer service implications.

## **Other Material Implications**

16. There are no other material implications.

## **Sustainability**

17. Sustainability is embedded within the SES. In particular Objective 6: Promote the benefits of sustainability practices and encourage action to support achievement of Carbon Net Zero and Objective 13: Reduction in Carbon Emissions articulate the specific actions we need to take to improve the overall sustainability of Mid Sussex. Progress against these targets is set out in Appendix 1.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – the Social Value Charter

## **Background Papers**

[Sustainable Economy Strategy and Action Plan](#)

[SES Progress Report](#)