

“The Act”

The [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

As a minimum, public sector bodies have to consider the wider benefits of ‘Social Value’ during the purchase of services where the contract value exceeds £181,302.

Defining Social Value

Social value has been defined as ‘*the additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes*’.

Scope

The West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges operates on behalf of seven Further Education Colleges in West Yorkshire. We are ‘The Colleges’ Company’.

We are committed to creating a sustainable inclusive society actively managing our operations in ways which optimise our value to the communities in which we work.

Social Value is therefore intrinsic to everything we do, for this reason we manage Social Value through a suite of interdependent policies and procedures which collectively deliver our objectives. This policy applies to all WYCC employees, suppliers and contractors who undertake activity for and on our behalf. It applies to the goods and services we procure, our operations and the services we provide to our customers.

Purpose

We are a values based organisation whose purpose is to deliver exceptional service with passion; creating a future where individuals have the chance of a better quality of life, through enabling businesses to invest in new skills and development opportunities for our regions workforce.

We bring businesses, organisations and training providers together to deliver workforce training and skills support, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). These programmes contribute to the economic growth of the Leeds City Region, tackle social mobility and connect the education and business sectors.

This policy provides an effective framework for realising our commitment to maintaining and where possible enhancing the Social Value we create in the communities we work within, both as an employer and a provider of services.

European Social Fund - Cross Cutting Themes

There are two regulatory cross cutting themes for all European Structural Fund (ESF) funded programmes, gender equality and equal opportunities; and sustainable development (which incorporate environmental sustainability).

EU regulations require these themes to be promoted during the implementation and delivery of ESF programmes.

WYCC is monitored and measured against its performance in delivering equal opportunities and supporting sustainable development.

As such, we support and deliver gender equality, equal opportunities and sustainable development in the management and delivery of our projects. We actively take the environment into account when delivering our services and that of our delivery partners.

Responsibilities

All employees, delivery partners and suppliers are responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to.

Policy

We recognise that our activities have wide ranging and interconnected impacts on the Social Value we generate in the communities we serve.

In recognising this we are committed to contributing to a more sustainable society and to continually improve the positive impacts we make. We recognise the contribution we can make to increasing social value through our own direct impact as an employer, including:

Our environmental impact

We have identified key aspects where we have a negative impact on the environment, namely: heating and cooling, travel, IT and paper; and systems in place to manage and reduce these impacts.

We have a Sustainable Development Policy which sets out WYCCs firm commitment to promoting sustainable development and compliance with relevant environmental legislation whilst delivering ESF activities within the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme.

Our organisational development

We use our recruitment processes and procedures to ensure roles are designed such that the broadest possible range of individuals can apply and are advertised in ways to ensure they are aware of the opportunities.

On joining the organisation staff are able to access a structured learning and development programme to increase their knowledge and skills and benefit from progression and continued professional development opportunities.

These areas are covered by a range of supporting documentation including a suite of Human Resources and Organisational Development policies and standards.

Our support for local communities and suppliers

WYCC makes a positive difference through the services we provide by:

- Ensuring we continually review how we can make improvements to the Social Value we create, in the communities we support.
- Paying suppliers within our standard payment terms.

This includes supporting:

- People to realise their potential in higher paid roles by increasing their skills
- Procuring services locally wherever possible.
- Developing and retaining staff in fulfilling roles, including recruiting and supporting training and development opportunities.

How WYCC will make a positive impact

Through the services we provide, we will make a positive impact to:

- Encourage and engage participation from individuals and communities by working with Colleges, Universities, Industry and Stakeholders
- Provide CPD, skills and training opportunities to all staff to advance workplace skills and support in-work progression
- Encourage and support the use of sustainable 'green travel' options for staff and promote environmental sustainability by limiting/reducing energy consumption
- Pay our suppliers in accordance with the Prompt Payment Code
- Commit to paying staff the Real Living Wage
- Promote equity and fairness in the workplace

To realise our objectives we recognise the need for and are committed to communicating these objectives to our delivery partners, staff, customers and wider stakeholders.

This is achieved via our procurement and recruitment processes and communication channels including newsletters, meetings, staff induction processes and engagements with employers and stakeholders.

Making a Positive Impact - Regional Priorities

WYCC supports the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Positive Impact initiative.

To help deliver growth that benefits everyone the Leeds City Region, a set of nine objectives have been produced by these organisations to help businesses across the private, public and third sector make a positive impact. The objectives are as follows:

- Inspire the next generation by working with schools and/or colleges
- Develop a skills plan including apprenticeships
- Provide training to low paid staff to help them progress
- Provide work opportunities to local people with disabilities or health issues and/or those who need extra support to work
- Provide more sustainable 'green travel' options to employees
- Complete an energy audit and to identify ways to reduce energy, water and waste use
- Complete a supply chain audit to identify opportunities to buy more from local suppliers
- Pay small business supplier in accordance with the Prompt Payment Code – including a commitment to pay all suppliers within 60 days and to commit to 30 days as the norm
- Commit to paying staff the Real Living Wage.

WYCC will support the achievement of these objectives to increase the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of our local communities both through the delivery of contracts and also through partnership working.

WYCC will encourage its delivery partners, suppliers and stakeholders to support these objectives and, where possible, deliver services differently that will impact positively on the local community and the environment.

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