

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Enterprise Partnership

Social Value Charter – DRAFT 07.10.20

Background

Our LEP has an ambition to thrive and succeed based on a progressive & diverse economy, through an inclusive vision for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to be the best place to live, learn, work and do business. To achieve the best possible outcomes for local residents and businesses, we will promote social value to maximise the impact of our strategies and to secure added value from our significant capital investments and revenue programmes.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires that public bodies, including LEPs through their Assurance Frameworks, have regard to improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. As a small, partnership organisation we can only achieve this by working collaboratively with others.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the guiding principles behind our commitment and to promote social value with our partners and suppliers. We aim to achieve this through embedding these principles in our organisational strategies & business practices, procurement of goods & services and allocation of funding & grants.

Policy Drivers

- Maximising social value and improved outcomes for our residents and businesses at our core, enabled through 5G, zero-carbon economic growth, modernisation of business and collaboration.
- *Place - The best place to live, learn, work and do business*, enabled through investment in our towns and cities, physical & digital infrastructure and improved outcomes in well-being, employment & housing.
- *Future Workforce - Satisfying work and a pipeline of opportunity*, enabling our residents and local businesses to “start anywhere, go anywhere” and to prepare for the jobs of the future. We are investing in skills, progressive employment, education, advice & guidance and jobs recovery.
- *Growing Business - Accelerating business evolution* through investment in flexible, market-driven space & accommodation, business growth, modernisation & adaptiveness, inward investment and economic resilience.
- *Innovation - World class innovation, adaptive businesses* enabled through research & development, adoption of innovation and development of an ecosystem of collaboration, support for SMEs, investment and leadership.

Principles

Employment and skills

We are committed to:

- Protecting and creating local jobs with an emphasis on opportunities for satisfying work and higher pay.

- Creating opportunities for training and progression through access to advice and guidance, work experience, reskilling, upskilling and multiskilling.
- Proactively seeking opportunities to work with our local schools, colleges, civic universities and independent training providers to ensure that our young people and our existing workforce have the right skills for the current labour market and are prepared for the jobs of the future.

Green and sustainable

We are committed to:

- *Green energy* – minimising waste and energy consumption, promoting innovation and sustainable energy sources.
- *Green growth* – protecting the environment and efficient use of resources as we grow our economy, promoting zero-carbon growth in manufacturing, construction, business operations and logistics.
- *Green places* – improving the attractiveness and quality of our places through protecting and creating green spaces, conserving biodiversity, reducing noise pollution, improving air quality and investing in sustainable transport & housing.
- *Ethical procurement* – working with contractors, partners and suppliers who adopt green and sustainable policies, practices and resources.

Championing local

We are committed to:

- *Local businesses* – purchasing from local providers, wherever possible, to support local jobs & our economy and to reduce our carbon footprint.
- *Local growth* – investing in local start-ups, retention of graduates & skilled workers and supporting established businesses wanting to evolve and grow in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.
- *Local resilience* – providing investment and support for our local businesses to increase their resilience to unprecedented or rapid change (such as Brexit and Covid-19).
- *Inward investment* – creating the right conditions locally and effective marketing to maximise investment into Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Communities

We are committed to:

- Creating employment and training opportunities for local residents, targeting areas of high unemployment, low educational attainment and social disadvantage, prioritising high quality work placements, apprenticeships, mentoring and traineeships.
- Working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to build capacity and capability to deliver services and to increase access to sub-contracting opportunities for the benefit of local residents and businesses.
- Working in partnership with organisations that promote positive and non-exploitative employment practices (including diversity and anti-discrimination policies, Living Wage, guaranteed contracts, safe and satisfying work).
- Improving health and well-being of our local communities through investment in local facilities and activities, encouraging business engagement in mentoring, volunteering and sponsorship.

Taking Action

This document sets out very broad principles that will need to be refined for commissioning and contractual purposes. The LEP recognises that its expectations for social value should be proportionate to the financial value of its contracts and appropriate to the nature and purpose of the project or scheme. Therefore, we will develop specific and measurable objectives for social value to sit alongside the traditional funding criteria on a case-by-case basis. This will allow us to monitor and evaluate the economic, social and environmental impact of our public expenditure and improve outcomes for local residents and businesses.