

**West of England Local Enterprise Partnership  
Board meeting – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January**

**Social value**

**Purpose of the report**

1. To consider how we can maximise social value in the region in order to drive the best outcomes for communities in the West of England.

**Recommendation**

2. It is recommended the LEP Board discuss the opportunities to strengthen social value through the work we do across the region, highlighting insights from their own experience that could be applied to regional work.

**Background**

3. Social value is a means to creating additional social, economic, and environmental wellbeing above and beyond the 'core' value of the good, service or work.
4. Social value a key lever we have to tackle core regional challenges. Further embedding social value in decision making and our investments will enable the region to maximise economic, social, and environmental benefits for the West of England. Embedding social value helps ensure that every pound we spend, and the decisions we take, positively impact people and communities in the West of England. While we are meeting our legal requirements around social value and procurement (see paragraph 5) we do not have a social value framework in place. This would help ensure we take a more consistent and strategic approach to social value.
5. The 2012 Social Value Act requires public authorities to consider economic, social, and environmental well-being in procurement processes. Essentially, it seeks to ensure that public spending not only delivers the intended goods and services but also contributes positively to broader societal goals. But social value is not just about procurement, it's the mindset of an organisation and what it identifies as wanting to achieve for the wider benefit of its residents and the region.
6. We have identified three prime social value levers:
  - Our role as a commissioner, procurer, and investment organisation – how we can generate additional value through our investments.
  - Our role as a regional anchor institution - the wider value we can create as a regional civic leader.
  - Our role as an employer – how our recruitment practices and employment approach can create additional value.

7. Procurement however remains a prime lever to drive consistent social value outcomes and benefits. The spending power of the region is growing quickly. With this growing spending power, the potential to flex our procurement muscle to achieve wider regional objectives has never been stronger.
8. Other regions are using social value as a key lever to tackle long-standing economic, social and environmental challenges. For example, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority align their social value framework with the priorities from *2010 Marmot Review* into health inequalities. They also produce an annual social value report which provides an assessment of what is working well. Greater Manchester Combined Authority's social value framework is built around three areas, making the region greener, fairer, and more prosperous. To aid social value efforts in their region they have set up a social value network, created a social value checklist to help organisations maximise social value and built a social value reporting tool.
9. Some Local Authorities create annual social value impact reports which help capture the impact of their social value approaches. For example, Lewisham Council's 2023 social value report shows their efforts, primarily through partnership and procurement, to increase social value in the local community has led to over additional 800 jobs being secured for local people, and 82% of the Council's spend now staying within the London regional economy.
10. To ensure social value efforts are addressed at the West of England's regional social, economic and environmental priorities, we are looking at creating a social value framework which identifies our social value priorities. The framework will help us take a more consistent and strategic approach to social value. It will ensure that our social efforts and those of our suppliers and partners, are directed at our key regional challenges. The framework will also identify how all parts of our organisation can contribute to maximising Social Value and how social value can be embedded in decision making. A draft of what our social value priorities could look like is shared below.
11. Views from members of the LEP Board on the potential areas of focus we could prioritise in this work, drawing on the approaches taken in their own organisations will help us consider next steps.

# Our Social value priorities (Draft)

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| <p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Creating good jobs &amp; accessible career pathways for residents</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support young people in the region towards high skilled jobs and meaningful careers</li> <li>2. Support people to access green jobs and bring more green jobs to the region</li> <li>3. Support the creation and retention of meaningful, well paid and sustainable jobs, for people which pay at least the real living wage</li> </ol>                |
| <p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Reducing health inequalities and improving quality of life</b></p>        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Deliver improvements to Public Health as defined in priorities published by West of England Local Authorities' Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies</li> <li>5. Support economically inactive people to move closer to the workforce and reduce labour market inequalities</li> <li>6. Give residents greater accessibility to green space</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Increasing regional economic resilience</b></p>                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. More opportunities for SMEs, VCSEs and local companies</li> <li>8. Support businesses to transition to low emission and sustainable practices</li> <li>9. Strengthen economic resilience through enterprise support to help businesses start, grow and innovate</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Tackling the climate and ecological emergency</b></p>                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Meaningful action to reduce emissions aligned to achieving net zero by 2030</li> <li>11. Support nature recovery by creating new and improving existing spaces for nature including pollinators</li> <li>12. Help our communities &amp; businesses adapt to the impacts of climate change building greater resilience</li> </ol>                      |

**Questions for LEP Board**

12. What would you like to see from our approach to social value?
13. What do you think are the biggest opportunities to be gained by maximising social value in the West of England?
14. Do your organisations measure and track your social value impact and if so, are there particular tools you are using?

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