

## AT A GLANCE

### SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL VALUE

(11<sup>th</sup> March 2025, (in-person, Coventry & Warwickshire CDA, Coventry))

Please see below the session summary of notes from the March 2025 Social Economy FORUM meeting focused on 'SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL VALUE'.

**OUR HOSTS** | This session opportunity was kindly hosted by [Coventry & Warwickshire CDA](#) at their Enterprise House offices, Coventry CV6 5NX.

**OUR EXPERT INSIGHTS** | The invited experts for this SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL VALUE session are gratefully acknowledged for their time and contribution:

- [Simon Veasey](#) Adult Social Care Strategic Commissioning at [Coventry City Council](#).
- [Gabriela Matouskova](#) Chief Executive Officer at [Hope 4 The Community CIC](#).
- [Mandy Bygrave](#) CEO at [Coventry & Warwickshire CDA](#)

**OUR FACILITATOR** | [Sarah Beaumont, BSSEC CIC](#)

## INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

### PROCUREMENT DRIVERS

The launch of the NPPS (National Procurement Policy Statement), together with the Procurement Act, represent the biggest changes to public commissioning in a generation. The Government agenda is clear – to see procurement as a key driver in delivering its missions and in shaping a growing and inclusive economy.

The NPPS sets clearly the vital role of VCFSE's in public service delivery with Government keen to engage VCFSE's in the procurement process.

### SOCIAL VALUE

Social Value refers to the broader impact that a business has on society, focusing on improving social, economic, and environmental wellbeing. It's not just about doing good, but about creating measurable, positive outcomes for local communities. Public procurement contracts in the UK now often require companies to demonstrate how they deliver social value.

Adding the term 'sustainable' means today we are considering the longer-term strategies that can reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of our work. We are considering not just practices like energy consumption and reuse, but social equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are considering our legacy. With a better understanding of social value, better reporting in social economy organisations, and mainstream businesses, can we make our impact work harder in Places?

As Local Authorities develop their procurement strategies, are we going to see new approaches and requirements? For example, we are seeing housing associations piloting the commissioning of an employment service, which will provide their Grounds Maintenance contract, putting the social value creation at the front and centre of the process.

**"Biggest changes to public procurement in a generation."**

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#### INSIGHTS SPEAKER 1:

**Simon spoke about the changing face of social value and evidencing it from his perspective as a commissioner within Coventry Council.**

**Simon Veasey | Coventry City Council**

There is a lot going on in Coventry in terms of [procurement](#) and how the Council approaches sector engagement, contract commissioning, and contract delivery and management. The new Procurement Act 2023 is going to be really important to us all.

The best approach is to 'work together' to build social value into contracts and service delivery. Collaboration and co-production models are shown to be effective. Approaches might include:

- Closer engagement with, and understanding of, the VCFSE sector.
- Provider Forums for [earlier engagement](#) in the commissioning process.
- Transparency and readiness, keeping the VCFSE sector and providers informed.

*\*Adult Social Care commissioning at Coventry City Council has [Provider Zones](#) to enable the third bullet point.*

Social value and intended outcomes (social impact) should be defined ahead of the procurement process. The social value legacy created through contract delivery should be reviewed at key stages of contract roll out to ensure it is then understood and embedded in year 2/continuous delivery of service(s).

Arguably, there is a need to upskill commissioners and procurement leads in Councils in the area of social value and the opportunities that can be levered through the VCFSE sector alongside SMEs and other providers.

#### INSIGHTS SPEAKER 2:

**Gabriela shared her approach to the production of her recent social value report and to describe the experience of doing it. She also shared her perspective of H4tC CIC to create additional impact in Coventry working with commissioners.**

**Gabriela Matouskova | Hope 4 the Community CIC**

Social value was new to H4tC CIC when the social enterprise was established in 2015, and social value wasn't asked for in contracts. Now, everyone is talking about social value – it's no longer a 'nice to have', it's essential.

When approached by a 1<sup>st</sup> tier construction provider to be involved in delivery, it became a 'lightbulb moment' that social value was more than being a social business that pays the [Living Wage](#) or is accredited as a [Disability Confident](#) employer.

H4tC CIC first impact report was produced in 2023 and driven by a bid submission. Working with [Make An Impact CIC](#), it showed for every £1 invested in H4tC CIC, we deliver £4 of added social value. More than that, organisational social value now runs through the whole business and includes areas such as green energy (for H4tC CIC and for our team), green web hosting providers, 80% of our team have lived experience of physical and/or mental health conditions.

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**“We have become more ‘intentional’ about social value, what we create and our organisational spend. Social value is now ‘business as usual’ for us.”**

#### INSIGHTS SPEAKER 3:

**Mandy gave her perspective as a business support organisation supporting social business throughout their journey, how they consider social value, C&W CDA’s role in preparing VCFSE’s for the changes ahead.**

**Mandy Bygrave | Coventry & Warwickshire CDA**

Coventry has a relatively unique social economy landscape with no significant social businesses of size or scale but hundreds (even thousands) of micro and small enterprises. It’s a vibrant locality of social economy engagement and collaboration but some of the social businesses are keen to grow.

C&W CDA provides [support](#) services and delivers a number of training workshops, some based on social value. We recognise we need to do more, understand new forms of social value better, and engage with the changing landscape of social value including [Public Sector \(Social Value\) Act](#) and the new [Procurement Act](#) coming into force.

The role of C&W CDA is that we run a number of contracts across the locality and social value is within the tender/contract submission. However, social value is often not followed up in contract delivery. Social value, as part of any tender or contract submission, should be subject to implementation, delivery, and monitoring. We’re interested in how national imperatives around social value translates to local delivery.

Social business can be used within contracts as token listing/engagement and delivery can require 3 months delivery before payments can be drawn down. That’s a real challenge for a VCFSE organisation, or any micro-business.

Heid Fisher book, [Impact First](#), is the C&W CDA ‘go to’ reference book on social value and has a ‘social value checklist’ download that’s a really good resource for any social business. It’s made us think about social value in a different way and look to embed in our organisation and our recommendations to the VCFSE’s we provide support to. Wanting to achieve both the idealism of social value, and the realism of social value, is a challenge. This is where the social value checklist has been invaluable.

In terms of place-based cluster delivery as part of [West Midlands Combined Authority](#), we find some incongruities ie. Coventry people being sent to Birmingham to access The Bike Project when Coventry could meet this need locally. So, more to do but C&W CDA is proud and committed to being the [cluster lead](#) for the Coventry area.

In recognising the importance of building social capital, C&W CDA is community-led and driven to ensure that social value implemented for the benefit of our Coventry residents.

**“We need to make sure social value actually happens!”**

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## OPEN DISCUSSION

### What's your experience of producing social value reports?

- **Midland Mencap**
  - › We don't currently produce a social value or impact report. We perhaps need to start doing one.
  - › We want to ask suppliers if they are VCFSE organisations to capture their trading status and how that may impact the social value they are delivering.
  - › Local Authorities all want something different when it comes to social value – that can make it difficult to report.
- **Coventry City Council**
  - › From a commissioning/procurement perspective, it can be easier to stay with organisations we know (in compliance with procurement strategy/requirements).
  - › It's a challenge for VCFSEs and smaller businesses to become visible to Heads of Service and the appropriate procurement lead for a contract.
- **Pattigift Therapy**
  - › We don't 'do' social value in explicit terms – we're busy getting on with stuff.
  - › We have a lot of information we're not making good/best use of.
- **C&W CDA**
  - › We've looked at [Social Return on Investment](#) which has been useful.
- **Centre for the New Midlands**
  - › Social value in commissioning/contracts can appear biased to larger providers to deliver 'everything' in a contract more easily than making contracts an open playing field for small/VCFSE providers.
- **BSSEC CIC**
  - › Social value should be commensurate with the size of the organisation.
  - › BSSEC CIC has produced [impact graphics](#) for the first time based on evidence of social value delivered aligned to agreed and sustainable KPI's and based on their [Theory of Change](#).
- **H4tC CIC**
  - › Should grant givers be managing social value in the same way that commissioners and procurement do?
  - › Social value should be proportionate to the size of the organisation.
  - › Multi-year contracts are important for continuity, and for scaling social value, and creating legacy impact.
- **Better Pathways**
  - › Identify what social value you are really delivering – often more than you realise.
  - › Identify Social Value Managers in large organisations such as HS2 and make contact, be pro-active!

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- **C&W CDA**
  - › Large contracts can be easier for commissioners and procurement leads to tender, deliver, and monitor.
  - › Lotting contracts down to smaller areas of service delivery can open up contracts to SMEs including VCFSEs.
    - *Example: Midland Heart estates and facilities given by BSSEC CIC.*
  - › Concern that short-term grants/contracts end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 but as yet no confirmation of funding renewal for year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 but still expected to continuously deliver services - 14 jobs at risk.
- **BSSEC CIC**
  - › [Consortiums](#) are a viable consideration for both commissioners and providers of [public sector contracts](#).

## RESOURCES & LINKS

- [Transforming Public Procurement - GOV.UK](#)
- [Transforming Public Procurement - planning and preparation checklist - GOV.UK](#)
- Contract complaints: [Public Procurement Review Service: scope and remit - GOV.UK](#)
- Contract complaints: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/organisations-we-investigate/complaint-standards/nhs-complaint-standards>
- Context for local government: [National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England 2022 | Local Government Association](#)
- Guide for suppliers: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67b5f15ebd116e3d7b1cf2d4/20250224\\_Act\\_No\\_w\\_A\\_guide\\_for\\_suppliers\\_A4\\_v2.0\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67b5f15ebd116e3d7b1cf2d4/20250224_Act_No_w_A_guide_for_suppliers_A4_v2.0_FINAL.pdf)
- Role of VCSE in public procurement: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-role-of-voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-vcse-organisations-in-public-procurement/the-role-of-voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-vcse-organisations-in-public-procurement>
- Claire Dove (DCMS, VCSE Representative): <https://www.gov.uk/government/people/claire-dove>
- Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility: [https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50209/birmingham\\_business\\_charter\\_for\\_social\\_responsibility](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50209/birmingham_business_charter_for_social_responsibility)
- Good Finance 'outcomes matrix': <https://www.goodfinance.org.uk/measuring-social-impact/outcomes-matrix/app>
- Global Value Exchange: <https://globalvaluexchange.org/>



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Our thanks to all who attended this SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL VALUE session, our speakers and for the engaging contribution to this topic.

