

**Report to:** Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change

**Date of meeting:** 5 December 2025

**By:** Chief Operating Officer

**Title:** Update to the Social Value Policy

**Purpose:** To seek approval for the proposed updated Social Value Policy

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Lead Member is recommended to approve the updates to the Social Value Policy set out in Appendix 1 of this report.**

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## **1 Background**

1.1. The East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Social Value (SV) Policy was approved by the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change at his decision-making meeting in September 2022.

1.2 In February 2025 the Procurement Act 2023 (the Act) and National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) came into force requiring contracting authorities such as ESCC to have regard to the priorities and outcomes set out in the NPPS, including social value.

1.3 The government also issued a revised Social Value Model which although not mandatory for local authorities, sets out a common approach to delivering social value in procurement and contract management in the public sector (see background documents).

1.4 In light of these developments a review of East Sussex County Council's social value practices has been conducted.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 Procurement Officers as well as other Council stakeholders have considered the approach to securing social value in the Council's procurement activity. The approach was set out in the original Social Value Policy (approved in 2022) and has been reviewed against the requirements under the Act, the current effectiveness of the approach, and how improvements could be made to align ESCC's social value approach in contract procurement with local priorities. Doing so would aid the delivery of tangible additional benefits to communities in East Sussex.

2.2 In line with recommendations made by the Place Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on [23 September 2024](#) and further consideration by the Committee on [27 November 2025](#) , it is recommended that an ESCC Social Value Model -which changes a quantitative approach to evaluating social value in tenders to a qualitative approach evaluated against the Council's desired priorities and outcomes - is considered for inclusion within the Council's Social Value Policy.

2.3 The move to a qualitative Social Value Model would be beneficial to East Sussex communities. A recent trial of the Social Value Model in Adult Social Care procurements led to positive feedback from local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary, Charity and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) and commissioners. Participants reported that the approach allowed them to better compete with larger organisations and better promote the social value that they are aligned with. Commissioners reportedly found it easier to target priorities that would add the most value and evaluate bids accordingly.

2.4 Suppliers benefit when there is a more consistent approach across the public sector as it reduces their costs of participation and barriers to entry, streamlines their social value activity, and helps magnify total social value through aggregating effects.

2.5 The qualitative model aligns with best practice and strategies being adopted by many local, regional and national organisations. Central government also mandates a qualitative approach for central government departments, and the NHS have adopted a qualitative approach based on the Social Value Model. A recent consultation on the newly implemented Procurement Act 2023 would also suggest that government is considering mandating such an approach across the public sector. Surrey County Council has also recently endorsed the implementation of a social value model based on their Authorities strategic priorities.

2.6 The principles and overall objective of the Social Value Policy remains the same as commissioners and service leads are still required to consider social value when procuring goods, services and works to ensure that relevant weighting and importance is given to this objective when evaluating bids.

2.7 With Lead Member approval the Policy would be amended as set out in Appendix 1 and the changes can be summarised as follows:

- To remove references to the Social Value Measurement Charter which is based on a standardised national framework of SV Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) and the associated methodology for its use. (The Charter assigns a proxy monetary value to each SV measure, and the tender is evaluated on a quantitative basis.)
- These are proposed to be replaced by reference to the East Sussex Social Value Model, and requiring commissioners to consider the model's priorities and outcomes and select those which are most appropriate and relevant to the goods, services or works being procured.
- To continue to require, unless not relevant or proportionate, a minimum weighting of 10% of total evaluation criteria to social value.

### **3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change is therefore recommended to approve the updates to the Social Value Policy set out in Appendix 1, which have been revised to align with the East Sussex Social Value Model and best practice.

**ROS PARKER**  
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#### LOCAL MEMBERS:

All

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Procurement Policy Note 002: The Social Value Model \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)