

A practical guide to socially responsible public procurement.

Delivering real benefits to communities through Buy Social

Integrating social value into contracts can deliver benefits and opportunities to communities. Examples include:

- Targeted recruitment and training for people who are long-term unemployed and leaving education
- Providing unwaged work experience opportunities
- Opportunities for people with disability or learning difficulties
- The provision of skills
- Work with schools and colleges to enrich the curriculum

You can also structure your buying so that it can deliver more for your money in your local community.

On 5th November 2015 the Procurement Board agreed the Buy Social Construction model for implementation from April 2016. From this date onwards the Buy Social requirements are to be used in procurement above £2m for buildings contracts and above £4m for civil engineering contracts.



"I'm lucky and privileged to have been given the chance to work locally on such a prestigious and complex restoration as the Guildhall.

Since joining H&J Martin as a site engineer, I have been promoted to Assistant Site Manager and gained valuable managerial experience. I have now secured a permanent position as an engineer with H&J Martin."

Ryan Gillespie, H&J Martin



Common Myths Dispelled



01 Is it legal?

Yes. It is legal to 'Buy Social' provided care is taken to accommodate UK and EU procurement frameworks. The Central Procurement Directorate has issued guidance on how this can be achieved.



02 Does it cost more?

Incorporating social benefits into contracts need not make them more expensive. Ensuring the social benefits requirement is proportionate to the size of the contract helps to minimise cost implications and contractors can seek industry/government training resources.



03 Will delivery of the contract be more difficult?

If social benefits are defined clearly at the outset there is no reason why they can't be delivered as part of the contract. Again, they should be in proportion to the contract value but also within the expertise of the types of contractors likely to be interested in your contract.



04 Are there any risks?

If you clearly describe the social benefits you are buying as part of the contract, all bidders should be clear as to what they are tendering for. Best practice is to be as explicit as possible at the very outset. To mitigate any risk, you should also consider 'meet the buyer' events to fully explain the process and requirements.

For a copy of the full
'Buy Social' Toolkit
visit our website
www.buysocialni.org

BUY SOCIAL

A practical guide to socially responsible public procurement.

Download the Buy Social Toolkit from www.buysocialni.org



The Toolkit will equip you with the know-how to procure for social benefit.

Why do we need a 'Buy Social' Toolkit?

The 'Buy Social' Toolkit is a practical guide to help those with procurement responsibilities to generate benefits to society and the local economy through the contracts they let. It helps those who are purchasing goods, services and works to achieve value for money in their contracts whilst at the same time making a difference to everyone in Northern Ireland.

Who is the Toolkit for?

The 'Buy Social' Toolkit is aimed at Public Sector bodies and Contracting Authorities that are subject to Northern Ireland Procurement Policy and to the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

For more information, visit www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/5/contents/made

What is 'Buy Social'?

"Buy Social" is a means of maximising the personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and equal opportunities elements of sustainable development, from all public procurement.

www.buysocialni.org

Social procurement in Northern Ireland

The Executive's Programme for Government 2011-15 'Building a Better Future' provides the strategic context for the inclusion of social benefits in publicly procured contracts. On 5th November 2015 the Procurement Board agreed the Buy Social Construction model for implementation from April 2016. From this date onwards the Buy Social requirements are to be used in procurement above £2m for buildings contracts and above £4m for civil engineering contracts.

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01 Consider proportionality and appropriateness

02 Think about possible social benefits at the earliest stage of your project.

03 Social benefits should be reasonable and achievable.

04 Link the social benefits to the subject matter of the contract.

05 Think innovatively about which social benefits will have the most impact.

Five Key Considerations

01 Think Carefully

Think carefully about what you can do and make sure you can do it well. If you want social benefits to be achievable, you need to ensure they are proportionate to the contract value and appropriate to the sector. It may not be possible to seek social benefits from some contracts but ensure you have given the possibility adequate consideration. It is better to do a few things well than overload the contract.

02 Act Early and Seek Advice

Consider how social or economic outcomes can be achieved as you define your overall objectives. Seek advice from the Buy Social team by emailing info@buysocialni.org

03 Make it Achievable

Recruitment and training requirements should be deliverable in the context of the overall workforce required for the contract. To open up the market, consider leaving elements that could be better met by small businesses outside the main contract.

04 Be Relevant

Ensure that you link the social benefits to the subject matter of the contract. This can be achieved by making a link between your organisation's core aims and how these relate to the NI Executive's jobs, growth and social inclusion policies. Larger contracts will lend themselves to providing targeted recruitment and training opportunities for long term unemployed people, apprentices, and students.

05 Innovate

Don't be afraid to be creative. Integrating social benefits is more than providing employment and training opportunities. They can also include things like reducing waste, purchasing fair trade products, increasing levels of recycling materials, and building capacity among SMEs and SEEs.



Ulster Hospital

The Toolkit provides an understanding of Northern Ireland's legislative framework and gives a step by step approach to achieving tangible local benefits.

For more information contact info@buysocialni.org or telephone 028 9090 9422



"When a social clause contract was written into the contract for Graham Construction on the Ulster Hospital redevelopment project, I was fortunate enough to get work experience through the Youth Employment Scheme. This has led to new skills and experience and a permanent job. I would encourage other young people to get involved in these types of initiatives."

Chelsea Waterworth, Graham Construction