

Social value through collaboration

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is leading work with partner organisations to develop a 'toolkit approach' to supporting social enterprise and meeting corporate objectives.

Newcastle Partnership brings together different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors, collaborating to support each other and work together to improve the quality of life for local people and communities.

A team from the partnership reviewed the best way to support social enterprise and help achieve economic growth. They identified three themes:

- Procurement – reviewing how public procurement could be revised to maximise the opportunities represented by the Act
- Commissioning – where could social enterprise be developed or their capacity expanded to respond to future opportunities
- Support – to consider the current support available to social enterprises and look to address any possible gaps in services.



Simon Sowerby, business improvement manager at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, said: *"At the start, responses from the varied stakeholders were mixed, but in the main were positive. This is clearly a new area for development for some and our aim is that the toolkit will support this development and*

engagement of social enterprises. We hope it will also develop social value as part of future procurement and commissioning."



Newcastle-Under-Lyme town centre.

Social enterprises sometimes feel the commissioning and procurement process fails to seek out the additional social, environmental and economic benefits that providers can bring. The toolkit aims to reduce such obstacles while still offering transparency.

Partnership members recognise the need to embed social, economic and environmental value in decision-making processes. Members see that social enterprises can help local authorities and partners by:

- providing better public services
- contributing to economic development
- supporting community development and cohesion, and addressing social exclusion.

The toolkit will be disseminated across the local partnership and through the 'Hello at Social Enterprise Staffordshire campaign' and the BuySe website.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council will be identifying Social Value Champions within its organisation at both officer and member level and will be urging its partners to consider the creation of such champions within their own organisations.

It will also encourage organisations across the partnership to register and place their procurement opportunities on www.BuySe.co.uk website.

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