

Appendix 6: Considering Social Value in Commissioned Social Care Services

CCPS & Scotland Excel Short Life
Working Group 2024/25



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Background

CCPS and Scotland Excel convened a Short Life Working Group between November 2024 and March 2025 to address recommendations of the CCPS report, 'National Frameworks and the Role of Scotland Excel: CCPS Provider Feedback and Proposals'.

Management information and data collection was agreed as an area for joint review, therefore a data subgroup was established to consider key issues, meeting four times in late 2024 and early 2025. This included a dedicated session to consider community benefits attended by Scotland Excel's lead officer for community benefits in addition to sub-group members.

Requirement

Section 25 of the [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act](#) requires a public body to "consider" community benefit requirements for all contracts valued at £4 million or more, section 24 stipulates that this is "in a way additional to the main purpose of the contract". Chapter 4 of the '[Guidance under the Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)' provides statutory guidance on community benefits, stating that:

"Community benefit requirements may not always be appropriate and a contracting authority must consider their use by taking into account the nature of the contract, its duration and local factors. In line with the sustainable procurement duty, community benefit requirements should be used in instances where a risk and opportunity assessment identifies that they are the appropriate benefit to seek in a contract or framework..."

Care should be taken to ensure the requirements do not place a disproportionate burden on economic operators or have wider, unintended consequences"

Scotland Excel currently requests community benefits information from social care providers, separately to other management information, on a 6-monthly basis.

Feedback from CCPS members

CCPS member providers were clear in their position that the current way of collecting data to demonstrate the social value of commissioned social care, through the delivery of 'community benefit', is inappropriate.

Providers highlight that their services inherently create a significant positive impact on communities. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care described social care

support as an investment in Scotland's people, culture and economy. Social Return on Investment (SROI) studies also demonstrate the link between social care investment and community benefits; research on the Independent Living Fund (ILF) in Scotland in 2023 found that for each £1 spent, £13 was generated in social value. There was agreement that there is a need to have better data on the impact that investment in social care can have on communities, however, the current approach of trying to capture 'additionality' was thought to be inappropriate.

In addition, providers note the challenging financial pressures faced in delivering essential public services through contracts which have often faced years of real-terms cuts. There is a clear desire to prioritise the reinvestment of any additional resource into the workforce and service development.

Some individual authorities would seem to agree with this view and have published recent local contract opportunities alongside a statement confirming community benefits will not be required due to the nature of the service provision.

Frustration was also highlighted in relation to the current standardised approach to community benefit data gathering.

Scotland Excel position

The achievement of social value is important to Scotland Excel's members and is a key goal of the organisation. Scotland Excel's members have a general expectation that community benefit should be delivered in a fair and proportionate manner across contracts where there is significant public spending. While all parties recognise the social value inherent in the delivery of social care services, community benefit is defined as benefit in addition to the main purpose of the contract.

Community benefit is only one aspect of social value, however, and Scotland Excel will consider where alternative approaches to considering social value are more appropriate, in line with Scottish Government's Wellbeing Economy aspirations.

Scotland Excel recognises the challenging financial landscape in social care and the need to ensure that community benefit or other social value requirements do not add an additional, unnecessary burden.

Anecdotally, it would appear that many providers do deliver community benefits, in addition to the main purpose of their contracts, but may not recognise these as such.

Social value approach

Balancing all of these factors, Scotland Excel proposes the following approach in relation to delivery of social value benefits in social care contracts.

1. An appropriate approach to ensuring delivery of social value will be considered as part of all new contract strategies. This may determine that community benefits are not best suited and that alternative social value considerations will be included within a strategy.
2. Where community benefits are incorporated into future social care contracts, this will be on a voluntary basis. Providers will not be required to evidence the delivery of community benefits but will be encouraged to do so. Where an existing contractual commitment exists, the specific terms of the relevant contract will continue to apply.
3. A social care specific approach to community benefit collection will be developed. This will include social care specific guidance and examples.
4. Scotland Excel will work with CCPS to ensure maximum benefit from the information gathered. Anonymised data may be used to highlight the value added by the sector.

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Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) is the voice of not-for-profit social care providers in Scotland.

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