

Social Value Policy

Background

The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

This document sets out how the Norse Group intends to incorporate the principle of social value into our service delivery. It is designed to encourage a commitment to social value across all aspects of the business and is the first stage in developing a full policy.

What we understand by “social value”

For the Norse Group, social value means delivering services in ways that produce wider benefit to the local community and capture longer-term savings for our clients and partners.

We are committed to considering how the services we deliver might improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing; to the principle of social value provision as part of the procurement process; and to working with our partners and clients to ensure that the desired local outcomes are delivered.

Our purpose as a business is to improve the lives of people who live in the communities in which we operate, through our buildings, services and care homes. We also have responsibilities to our people, our business partners, our communities and our shareholder. When we meet these responsibilities, we create shared social value by delivering benefits to society and our business.

Our approach

The Norse Group has developed a Group-wide Corporate Social Responsibility strategy (attached), which is integrated throughout our business operations. It helps us to create financial and social value by enhancing our competitive advantage and building stronger relationships with our stakeholders.

Our programme, which we call **the Norse Way**, is designed to offer a balance of benefits to society, to individuals and to our business, and applies to how we act as an employer, a contractor, a supplier, a business partner and as individuals. It is a positive and determined ethical stance that guides our principles and behaviours and applies to everyone in the organisation.

Our priorities

Our priorities in terms of delivering social value are guided by three principles:

- Focusing on what matters most – to our partners and clients, our people and our shareholder
- Aligning with our core business areas
- Responding to the key societal issues affecting our business and the communities we serve in the long-term

Our current Group-wide priorities include the following focus areas, however, local activities will be developed to respond to identified local community need and we are committed to involving stakeholders and communities in decisions that affect the services we deliver:

Local Regeneration: supporting the local economy, creating local jobs and boosting the supply chain, in particular through the use of local suppliers and SMEs

Employment and Youth Opportunity: working with local young people to develop their skills and removing barriers to work for vulnerable groups. Examples include creating apprenticeships, work with schools, and working with ex-service personnel and the long-term unemployed

Making a contribution to communities through **volunteering**, including the use of our professional skills to support local charities and community groups

Wellbeing and obesity: supporting the communities we serve to live well and eat healthily

Caring for older people: enabling older people to live well and participate and building understanding between different generations. Examples include facilitating school/care home partnerships and supporting staff to become Dementia Friends

Environmental Management: reducing our direct impacts by working with our employees, clients and suppliers. We are committed to efficient utility use and reducing our percentage of waste to landfill. We are also committed to sustainable design.

What does this mean

Our commitment to social value needs to be put at the heart of service delivery and built into the decision-making process of every function and operation. Our approach is to draw up an agreement with each local partner/client at the outset, ensuring that we understand the specific local needs and deliver projects that are aligned with this.

Some examples across different functions:

- Procurement decisions need to be made considering the percentage of local spend and providing opportunities for SMEs.
- Recruitment should consider targeting vulnerable groups, who might not access traditional recruitment methods.

Operational Directors must think about what projects will deliver social value in the communities where services are to be delivered.

Measurement

Our Group-wide approach is new, so we are currently focusing on recording fundamental measures that capture the value we are creating through our activities (eg. Number of apprentices supported, number of volunteering hours delivered). However, over time we will look to effectively measure the impact of our activities and will work towards using Social Return on Investment (SROI) mapping to put a financial value on our impact in local communities.



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