

# Progressive procurement of goods and services



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## Key messages

- Since 2016, 3,924 public sector contracts have been awarded in Northern Ireland at a combined value of £3.57 billion. There is an opportunity to shift the culture across the local social economy to identify, plan, and win public sector contracts that 'align with a social purpose' for those organisations for whom it works.
- Further research is needed to better understand the presence and success rate of development trusts and social enterprises in the local procurement market, and the potential social value that could be added by this activity.
- Development trusts argue that the structure, size, and type of contracts are barriers to bidding, especially where social outcomes are a priority.
- Many also point out that their capacity to understand the procurement market as well as to bid competitively for public contracts is weak. Increasing readiness in areas such as finance (e.g. pricing services), contract management, and accounting for social impact are priorities for the sector.
- Local commissioning groups have worked well but are limited in terms of service scope, regional coverage, and organisational support.
- Research on Preston and Manchester demonstrates the value of 'procurement anchor networks' when managed by progressive local authorities in partnership with a range of public sector providers.
- Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 01/21 shows progress in Northern Ireland in terms of how tender award criteria (albeit at a threshold) will now account for social value. However, there are lessons to be learnt from other parts of the UK, particularly the north-west of England, which could strengthen the regulatory environment, and help develop a local Social Value Act.
- The links between social enterprises through consortia or private sector supply chains are emerging areas that could be developed to advance Community Wealth Building. However, this will require better systems, brokerage skills, and financial support to enable such development in the short, medium, and long term.
- The priorities include: promoting networked development by deepening collaboration and understanding between commissioners and social enterprises; developing the technical capacity of the sector to bid, manage, and evaluate contracts; building potential between social enterprises and the private sector where it offers competitive social advantage; structuring contracts in a way that social enterprises can deliver effective and efficient social, as well as financial, outcomes; and shaping local commissioning to impact on outcomes rather than simply deliver contracts.



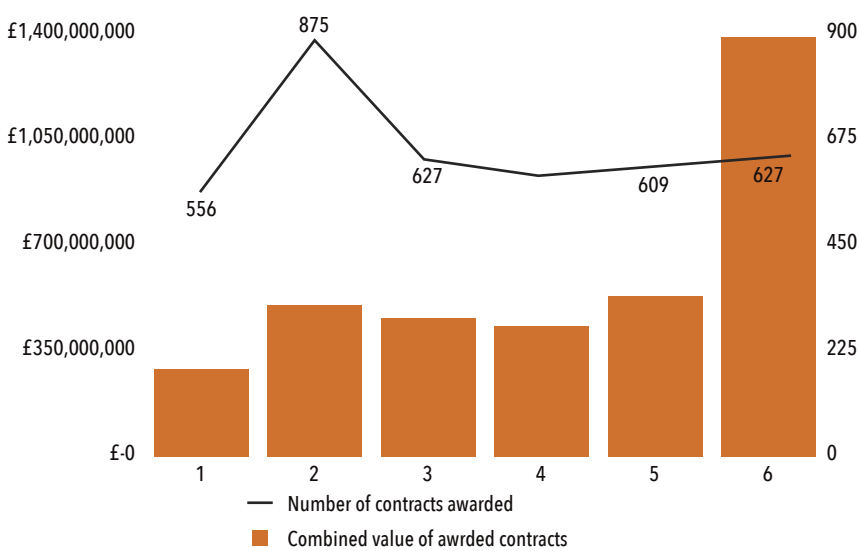
# Background

Public sector procurement is a significant driver of local economic development, and a key instrument in building community wealth, ethical supply chains, and the capacity of the social enterprise sector. Social value in procurement has been slow to evolve, but weighting has now been introduced in government contracts by the Department of Finance; the Department for Communities has brought in 'fair funding' to support living wage costs on grants; and the Strategic Investment Board has developed the Buy Social initiative. There is a need to make the high value procurement market work more effectively to support community businesses, impact on local areas, and keep money recycling within the Northern Ireland economy. This technical advisory paper looks at the size and scale of the market, barriers and opportunities, as well as the experiences of development trusts in contracts and bidding processes. There are good practices and important initiatives, especially around local commissioning, but these need to be scaled and replicated to help secure more sustainable community wealth outcomes for the region as a whole.

## Profile of the procurement market

The procurement market and the delivery of public contracts offers a direct route for organisations that have the potential to create social impact to engage directly with government. Figure 1 summarises the number and value of public contracts awarded by Northern Ireland government departments from 2016 to 2021. It also includes those awarded by health trusts, regional education colleges, the Public Health Agency (PHA), the NI Tourist Board, and regional bodies such as the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), and Victims and Survivors Service (VSS).

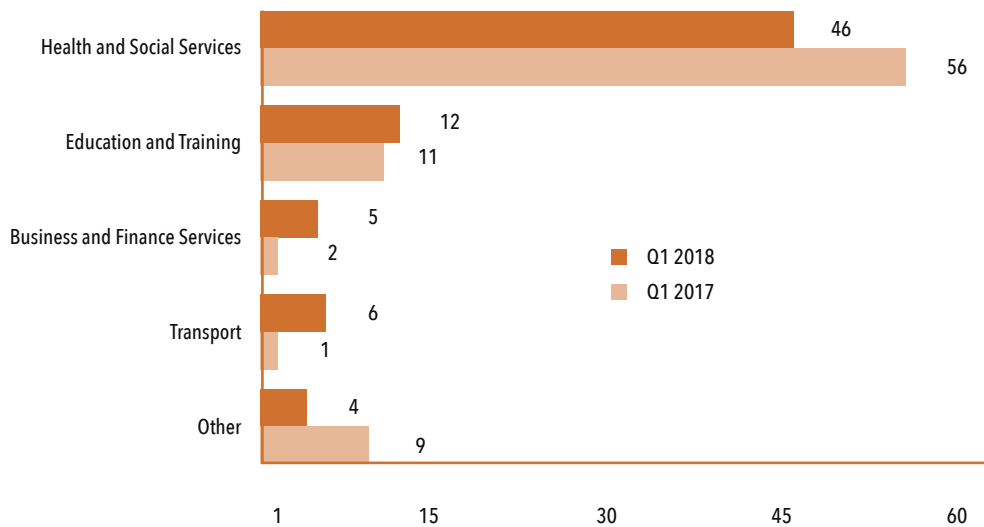
Figure 1 Total number and combined value of NI public sector contracts awarded from 2016-2021



Since 2016, 3,924 public sector contracts have been awarded across Northern Ireland at a combined value of £3.57 billion. Between 2016 and 2020 the average contract awarded increased by 62% from £528,722 to £857,133. In 2021, this average figure increased to £2.2 million, with a combined award value of £1.4 billion, which represented 37% of all tenders in the 5-year period. The pandemic has created new procurement opportunities from 2020 – 2021, especially for services and goods related to the health and social care sector. This analysis of the NI procurement market does not include tenders under £30,000. In most instances, these are administered via supplier frameworks within local authorities, so the actual extent of the market in Northern Ireland is larger. Suppliers, including Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs), can register for these local supplier frameworks by subscribing to specific CPV Classification Codes on portals such as eTendersNI and e-sourcing NI.

Further research is needed to better understand the presence and success rate, as well as the experiences of VCSEs engaging with the procurement system. In England, Tussell (2018) compiled a Social Enterprise UK Index to examine the success of CICs in the UK, and showed how they only win a small proportion of government contracts – 0.4% of all advertised tenders in Q1 2018. Interestingly, CICs won just 1.1% of contracts marked as ‘suitable for VCSEs’. Local authorities accounted for most contracts, awarding 42 to 35 different CICs. Figure 2 shows how health and social services represented the sector with the largest number of contracts awarded to CICs whilst business and finance services and transport represented the least. The analysis highlights the limited participation in the procurement market by VCSEs, as well as their lack of success in competitive bidding. Those contracts that are won, generally focus on delivering low value services such as training, and social care, and less in sectors with growth potential, such as digital technology or financial services.

Figure 2 Contracts (number) awarded to CICs across the UK by sector Q1 2017/201



The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) carried out several UK metropolitan studies to analyse where public sector procurement expenditure flows, and the effect it has on local economies. Using a LM3 methodology, CLES worked with Belfast City Council (BCC) to map out how it could better use its spending power but also influence the behaviour of other anchor institutions across the city. The analysis (based on 2012/13 data) presents the economic impact of council expenditure across three rounds, below.

- In the financial year 2012/13, Belfast City Council spent nearly £141million on suppliers, wages, grants, and overheads.
- Fifty-three per cent of revenue expenditure was with organisations based in the Belfast City Council boundary, and 80% was within Northern Ireland.
- Twenty-five per cent of the spend with capital suppliers was with organisations based in the council area, and 90% was within Northern Ireland.
- Suppliers to BCC re-spent 36p in every £1 in the council area, and 45p in every £1 back in Greater Belfast.
- Combining Belfast City Council expenditure on salaries, the LM3 ratio for the Belfast boundary was £1 to £0.76, meaning that for every £1 spent by Belfast City Council, 76 pence is spent or re-spent in the city.

The LM3 exercise provided Belfast City Council with a baseline to help measure and evidence progress around their procurement practices. CLES argues that this aims to change the culture among buyers by adapting processes to support local suppliers, and by aligning buying with clearer outcomes, such as poverty alleviation, and employment for hard-to-reach groups. By adapting their procurement processes and decision making, anchor institutions can create dense supply chains where local enterprises, SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, and co-operatives can work more effectively together. For example, CLES (2018) cites the Preston model to demonstrate how such businesses are more likely to support local employment, and have a greater tendency to recirculate wealth locally, as well as contribute to key environmental targets such as reducing carbon emissions.



Preston's efforts to localise the impact of collective spending amongst the city's anchor institutions has brought millions of pounds back into the local economy. The recirculation of over £200m spent with local suppliers, because of the changes in procurement behaviour across anchor institutions, has had a positive multiplier effect on local jobs, health, and wellbeing. This is partially reflected by the fact that in 2018 Preston was named the Most Improved City in the UK.



In Belfast, the Procurement and Commissioning Anchor Network was set up by the council, and includes health trusts, the police, the Public Health Agency, the two universities, the Housing Executive, and the Harbour Commissioners. They prepared the Belfast City Charter, which sets out a range of commitments, such as protecting pay and employment conditions, supporting local businesses and social firms, and maximising the impact of spending on local communities. In 2018, the council's spend was £90m revenue and £38m capital, and their draft Social Value Procurement policy aims to use this spending power to 'drive inclusive growth, improve the local environment, and support vulnerable people' across the supply chain.

## Local procurement challenges and experiences

In 2015, NICVA commissioned RSM McClure Watters to research procurement opportunities for the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Northern Ireland. This was driven by mixed experiences with the local procurement market, and RSM identified a range of related barriers facing the sector:

- **The emphasis on price.** The evidence showed that price was being given too high a weighting, even for contracts with a smaller size and more explicit social purpose. This was despite guidance that emphasised quality and environmental and social impact. VCSEs argue that this price bias was forcing them to significantly reduce their final quoted price, which tightened profit margins, and limited their capacity to reinvest into their organisations, sustain operational costs, and remain innovative. Moreover, over half of the tenders reviewed in the research (55% of the 156) did not outline budget information, which was contrary to recommended procurement practice.
- **Varying level of indemnity required.** The research showed a significant variation in the level of insurance requirements on contracts delivering comparable services advertised at a similar value.
- **Complexity of tender responses.** Bidding VCSEs expressed concern at the level of input, time, and resources required to compile a tender response, which was often the same, regardless of the monetary value. In general, departmental specifications demanded a more sophisticated tender response compared to those of local councils, regardless of price and technical complexity.
- **The value of pre-tender consultation.** Contract opportunities should be advertised well in advance to allow VCSEs time to put together the resources, expertise, and consortia to make a competitive bid. The recent delivery of the Communities in Transition programme demonstrates the value of an extended lead in period so that government departments can consult more comprehensively on longer or more complex procurement processes.

The Communities in Transition programme (CIT) was co-ordinated by The Executive Office between 2019-2021 under the T4 Tackling Paramilitarism, and the thematic strands were delivered by several area-based VCSEs. For groups, the programme represented a positive example of procurement (especially during the lead-in phase) that undertook a comprehensive consultation with targeted communities before contracts were advertised. This process was crucial, as a) it helped the department to better understand the community need across the different CIT strands, b) it created time for local VCSE groups to mobilise resources or build consortia to bid, and c) it allowed space for the department to deliver a series of bid-readiness sessions that helped build capacity of groups that often had limited tendering experience.

- **Inconsistent use of social clauses.** A number of development trusts highlighted inconsistencies in the way that social clauses were used, often restricting opportunities for social enterprises to demonstrate value added against commercial companies. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted many sectors, but it has clearly caused a downturn in construction activity across the UK, especially in Northern Ireland. This has subsequently limited the scope across procurement contracts to deliver social clauses through vocational apprenticeships and work placements. It will also be important to explore how they might be better utilised or aligned to address the local skills gaps that CHAS (2020) have shown to emerge post-Brexit.

Envision (2015) places these barriers in a wider structural analysis of the procurement market in Northern Ireland. They argued for broader changes that would encourage risk taking, develop capacities, and measure outcomes differently, which would be important for social value considerations. However, they also placed considerable emphasis on the need for a culture of collaboration, information sharing, and more effective communication between the buyer and the seller (and between providers across sectors). Specifications tailored to the needs of social enterprises where social impact is a priority help the commissioner, the beneficiary, and the sector to deliver better services. Their five-point plan, below, highlights the need for an integrated approach that engages stakeholders in a more co-operative approach to the design, delivery, and evaluation of government contracts, especially where they tackle social and community challenges.

**Theme 1: Knowledge and Skills, in which the public sector should commit to the development of commissioners' and buyers' market knowledge.**

**Theme 2: Communication, to facilitate greater understanding between commissioners and buyers, including social enterprises and voluntary organisations. Theme 3: Collaboration, across departments and between suppliers to increase their capability. Theme 4: Removing, Reducing and Managing Risk, in order to encourage innovation within the public sector, and provide confidence to new entrants to the procurement market. Theme 5: Changing Tender Practice, with a stronger commitment to the use of outcome-based specifications.**

Source: Based on Envision, 2015, p.7.

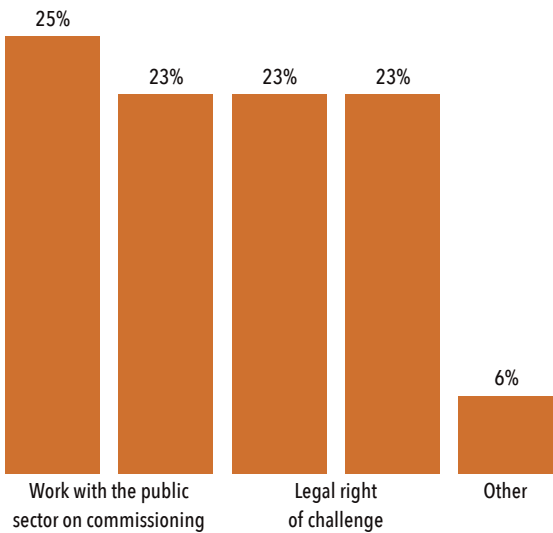
Theme	Barrier to Innovation	Aspiration
<b>Knowledge &amp; Skills</b>	A lack of public sector knowledge of specific industries A lack of demand in the public sector for innovative products and services	Public sector commissioners and buyers with greater market knowledge Greater commercial skills within the public sector
<b>Communication</b>	A lack of pre-procurement market engagement between buyer and supplier A lack of buy-in from commissioners	Greater communication between commissioner/buyer and suppliers
<b>Collaboration</b>	A lack of cross-departmental budgeting to facilitate cost savings	Cross-departmental budgeting
<b>Removing/Reducing Managing Risk Risk of legal challenge from suppliers</b>	Buyers too risk averse	A public sector which can encourage innovation without the threat of the following risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge and litigation</li> <li>• Delaying contract commencement</li> <li>• Financial loss</li> <li>• Personal/professional risk</li> </ul> A public sector equipped to manage risk in the procurement of innovation
<b>Changing Tender Practice</b>	Too restrictive tender specifications  A lack of understanding of the processes available to procure innovative products and services. A lack of adequate consideration of total life costs	Contracts with less restrictive specifications in order to encourage innovative solutions  Terms of Reference which explicitly demonstrate how total life costs have been considered when setting the weighting for cost



# Priorities for development trusts

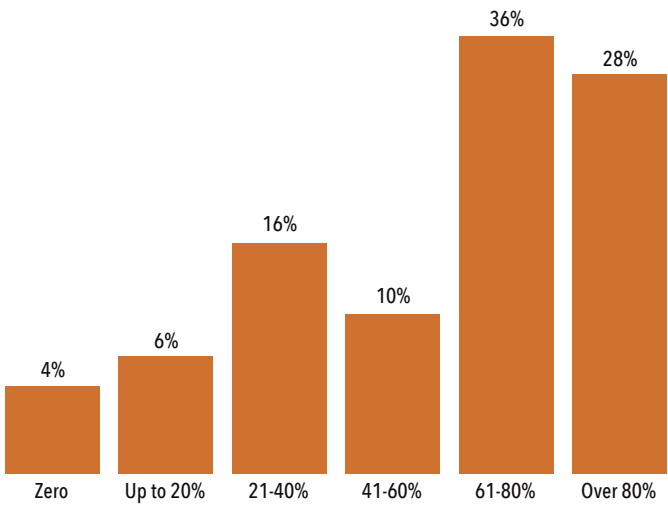
The DTNI survey of development trusts also emphasised the need to build a stronger procurement ecosystem that includes social value legislation, and engages better with the sector through commissioning groups, specifically in the design of service-level agreements and local government contracts (see figure 3). Government departments and councils could also explore the use of reserved contracts, where there is a clear social value outcome to the work.

Figure 3 How to engage communities in contract design and commissioning (%)



Several groups criticised the lack of engagement, where the expertise of local organisations is paid lip-service in contract design and service specifications, especially in relation to extended or rolling procurement programmes. When surveyed on options, organisations felt that there needed to be stronger representation on community planning partnerships in contract specifications (23%); a closer link with the public sector in commissioning policies (25%); and better skills to respond to invitations to tender (23%). Figure 4 explores the extent of internal trading across the social economy and SMEs, and shows that 64% procure more than 60% of their goods and services from such sources. There is an appetite amongst some development trusts to explore how such consortia arrangements could be formalised, strengthened, and scaled.

Figure 4 Proportion of goods and services from other local SMEs and social enterprises



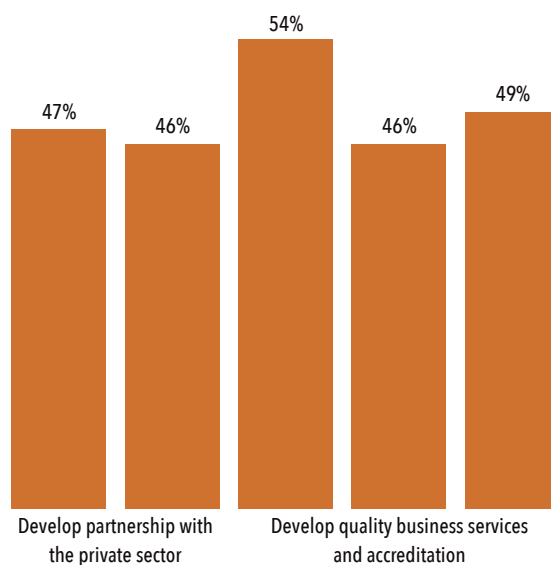






It was also recognised that there are problems within the sector, with smaller development trusts feeling exploited or undervalued by VCSEs when bidding for higher value contracts. It is often the smaller community groups at the grassroots level, particularly in deprived areas, who have access to clients, hard-to-reach beneficiaries, and workers, but they are not valued (especially financially in the form of management fees) for such capacity. Again, the need for reserved contracts, particularly on services to groups with specialist client needs (i.e., adults with learning difficulties), was highlighted as a way of better matching the tender with the right expertise and track record. The time, capacity, and resources needed to bid for contract work are often beyond the capacity of smaller development trusts, and stronger networked bids would be one way to share costs, risks, and learning across the sector. Figure 5 shows that there is interest in developing the market (54%), in support with tendering processes (49%), and in better links with the private sector via improved supply chains (47%).

Figure 5 Support needs in tendering to the public sector (%)



## Procurement and social value in Northern Ireland

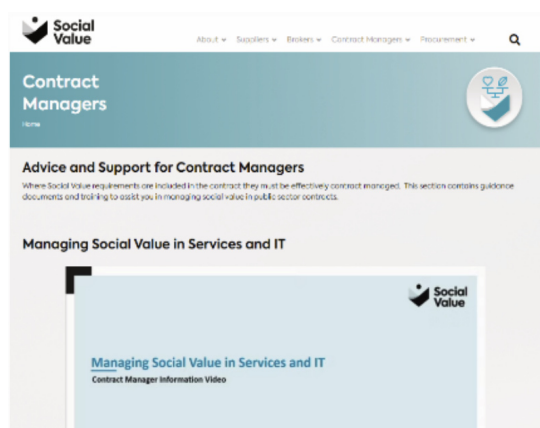
Agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive, Procurement Policy Note 01/21 mandates that from June 2022, tenders must allocate a minimum of ten per cent of the total contact award criteria to social value. This minimum weighting will apply to the thresholds set out in the Public Contracts Regulations, and service contracts valued above £123,000, as well as construction contracts valued above £4.7m. A review of the policy will take place in 2023, with the intention of increasing the minimum weighting to twenty per cent, subject to the approval of the Executive. This new criterion should help government departments and their stakeholders to explore different ways to deliver on the outcomes of the Programme for Government, but also maximise social, economic, and environmental benefits through public procurement. The call for social value procurement has been part of a campaign by the sector, which has collaborated via an All Party Group on Social Enterprise to build better supports for the social economy.

In January 2017, the then Minister of Finance, with the support of the Northern Ireland Procurement Board (NIPB), agreed to bring forward proposals for the establishment of a Social Value Act; however, progress was halted within days following the collapse of the Northern Ireland Executive. Despite this, Social Enterprise NI continued to co-ordinate a lobby for such legislation via its role as Secretariat of an **All-Party Group on Social Enterprise**. Working with other social enterprise leaders across the sector, this campaign has ensured a continued political focus on the need to bring NI into line with other UK regions with respect to its social value legislation.



Prior to the publication of these legislative amendments, the Strategic Investment Board established a Social Value Unit. The aim of the unit is to support government departments to increase the delivery of social value through public contracts, but also report on how these requirements are being achieved. They have developed the Buy Social website which offers stakeholders across the public, private, and third sectors a collection of resources, training modules, and model procurement documentation to ensure consistent practice across the process. The support is shaped around the delivery of four broad social value themes that include: 1. increasing secure employment and skills, 2. building ethical and resilient supply chains, 3. delivering zero carbon, and 4. promoting wellbeing. The Buy Social website has also developed a brokerage function which can help connect suppliers to social enterprises, or organisations (especially those working in the employability sector) that may help them deliver maximum social value, as well as fulfil their social clause requirements.

Public sector suppliers across Northern Ireland can access the Buy Social database to find a local broker who may be able to assist them to deliver social value. Some of these brokers are organisations that provide employability services, whilst others are social enterprises that can offer work placements, volunteering opportunities, or part- and full-time work for individuals traditionally excluded from the labour market.



The Social Value Unit has also pilot-tested social considerations on ICT service contracts, whilst Land & Property Services (LPS), and Construction & Procurement Delivery (CDP) included several social value considerations on the LPS LandWeb contract extension.

**Buy Social, and LPS Landweb contract.** The social considerations required the private sector contractor (BT) to deliver targeted recruitment and training opportunities for unemployed individuals, or support the development of people aged under 25, in areas related to ICT. In 2019, BT recruited nine new employees under this clause, and provided business education across Belfast through work placements, skills workshops, and curriculum support for primary school teachers on computational thinking. Some of the new employees were recruited as backlog technicians, which included recent graduates from non-traditional IT disciplines.

There have been a range of initiatives to increase the capacity of sole traders, start-ups, and SMEs to access the public procurement market. For example, the Tender for Growth initiative was launched under the Belfast City Council Enterprise Framework, and is part-funded by Invest NI and the then EU Investment for Jobs and Growth. In addition to learning how to access public and private sector procurement opportunities, the programme includes hands-on support (4.5 days) with a live bid once a contract opportunity has been identified by the participant. The Go For It programme (also funded by Invest NI) provides a similar tender support function, and is delivered in partnership with councils in Northern Ireland. It also offers support on business planning, marketing, and financial strategies that can help to accelerate the growth of the company, especially via the procurement market. There are also emerging initiatives aimed specifically at social enterprises, including ProcurementPro, developed by Queen's University Belfast through a KTP (Knowledge Transfer Partnership) with Innovate UK and Ashton Community Trust.



ProcurementPro was developed as an online toolkit to help social enterprises learn more about the tender preparation process and prepare bids to specific programmes. It also housed several tender support functions to help social enterprises manage their procurement practices, as well as tender submissions, more effectively. These interactive functions included a procurement market tracker, a tender library, template tender documents, and a pricing matrix tool.

In 2021, SustainableNI published a toolkit which provides practical guidance and suggestions on how social value, including environmental outcomes, can be incorporated into bids.

The Social Value Toolkit is an important resource for buyers and suppliers, as it provides them with tangible examples of the indicator outcomes that could be used in public contracts. It also offers sample indicators to measure and track the delivery of social value throughout the process. The toolkit has collated a series of local case studies which demonstrate good practice, and how social value has been realised in a range of public service contracts across Northern Ireland. The integration between social, environmental, and financial outcomes is especially important for development trusts.



One of the case studies profiled in the toolkit is Clanmill Housing Association, which in 2017 won an award at the National Government Opportunities for Excellence in Public Procurement as well as winning the Social Enterprise NI Prove it: Social Impact Award in 2016. The table below summarises the social impact of Clanmill across the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial year.

Year	No. of Projects	No. of Units	Work Placements	Apprentice-ships	Community event sponsorship	House welcome pack	Community days
2015/16	12	207	36	15	£11,000	£6,620	40
2016/17	12	341	21	8	£19,750	£15,940	49

Further to supporting employment through work placements and apprenticeships, Clanmill provided welcome packs to help tackle fuel poverty by educating residents on ways to heat their new homes more efficiently. The table also shows how the association co-ordinates community and labour days across its schemes to assist other groups to deliver minor works projects. These might include community allotments, clean ups, or initiatives that help encourage physical regeneration and restore civic pride across the area.

# Implications

The potential to extract further social value from local procurement has been enhanced by recent changes in social weighting brought into supply contracts by the Department of Finance. The implementation of a Social Value Act would strengthen the enabling environment, provide clarity to suppliers and social enterprises and shift the culture to one where social impact is embedded in the use of public money. There is an opportunity to build on progressive initiatives and to extend the access that development trusts have to public sector contracts. This includes:

**Promoting networked development.** There is potential to draw on the legislative progress, to develop procurement anchor networks involving public sector agencies and social enterprises across local councils. Progressive procurement represents an opportunity to build community wealth, by engaging directly with those that supply goods and services to anchor institutions, who can then spend directly back into the local economy. Since 2008, CLES research (2010) and (2017) has shown how Manchester City Council has successfully adopted its own social value frameworks, designed by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities procurement hub. This hub is an important resource for ensuring that the expenditure of council budgets generates as much economic, social, and environmental benefit for the city as possible.

Manchester City Council has recognised that social value needs to be considered at all stages of the procurement cycle. To facilitate this, the council established a cross-departmental procurement group tasked with embedding social value throughout the process. The council now uses a 20% social value weighting in tenders, and hosts regular 'meet the buyer' events, where they emphasise their priorities on reducing worklessness, and promoting socially beneficial outcomes. As a result, the council created 1,579 new jobs, 562 apprenticeships, and 7,730 employment opportunities for hard-to-reach groups, including access to pre-employment training (in 2017).



**Developing sector capacity.** The supply side is only one part of the approach needed, as there are challenges among development trusts about their scale and contract readiness to provide services in the procurement market. The DTNI research with development trusts shows that there are specific issues that need to be addressed, including managing the VAT implications of contract work, creating more commercial legal entities, securing indemnity cover, and developing legal arrangements with sub-contractors. Some development trusts have the capacity to manage procurement contracts, but investment is needed to acquire the necessary skills, operating systems, and consortia working to support those organisations with an interest in growing in this way. The development of training opportunities by the Strategic Investment Board and the UK Commissioning Academy has been important, and a number of government departments have initiated pilot schemes in social value commissioning. However, a more ambitious 'public sector transformation academy' for Northern Ireland could bring together academics, practitioners, and sector representatives to strengthen capacity for both commissioners and development trusts.

**The potential of private sector engagement.** The Buy Social Unit and their brokerage function should make it easier for private sector firms working in NI to partner with local development trusts to deliver social clauses and maximise social value outcomes. McFarlane (2014) has shown how, historically, social clause activity is heavily aligned to construction contracts. The Covid-19 pandemic led to a UK-wide downturn in construction, which has limited the scope for private sector firms to deliver on social clauses through work placements, apprenticeships, or part- and full-time employment. More could be done by intermediaries to leverage commitments from private sector businesses, and in England, a similar approach was adopted in the context of the Buy Social Corporate Challenge.







The Buy Social Corporate Challenge is a government-supported initiative that aimed to encourage private sector businesses to improve their engagement with social enterprises through procurement. Led by Social Enterprise UK, in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, the Challenge has since partnered with 24 large businesses, created 1,253 direct or indirect jobs, and leveraged £91.6 million in expenditure across supply chains with social enterprises since 2016.

**Tailor the supply side to social enterprises.** This TAP has also highlighted that many contracts are bundled and are too large for most social enterprises to bid for. Contracts need to be packaged by size and service specification to suit smaller and medium-sized concerns, with clearer guidance that it is social enterprises (rather than minimum social clauses) that should be included in contract bids. Moreover, where service-level agreements are in place, they need to cover real costs, in the same way as they would for a private provider. The development trust survey showed that some contracts within the social enterprise sector are often treated by officials as grants, with disproportionate audit, vouching, and evaluation, compared to contracts delivered by the private sector.

**Commissioning services.** CLES research has shown that when commissioning frontline public services, the consideration for delivering maximum social value should prompt a discussion around whether a service should be outsourced or provided in-house. When there is an opportunity to go to the market, commissioners could take a more 'activist' position within the procurement process to ensure that participation from development trusts, and community groups more generally, is maximised.

**Knowsley Council** procured the delivery of a community navigation service to improve local access to support services located within the community. Following a tender exercise, the contract was awarded to the local CIC, Innovate Volunteering. Within the tender document, the council stated that 'the service should be located firmly within the community, fostering community connections and relations for the benefit of the community residents.' They also specified that the community navigators should be a recognised and valued resource in the community. A related tool in Knowsley, was the council's use of local expenditure policies, whereby any spend classified as low value (under £5,000), or intermediate value (up to £181,000), has a criterion that prioritises awarding contracts to local providers.

In Northern Ireland, local commissioning groups are being used by health trusts to assess and understand health and social care needs, so that the delivery of services is tailored to meet these local demands. They have a range of representatives from health and social care, PHA, and local government, as well as the community and voluntary sector, and place a premium on maximising social as well as financial value. This planned intervention, that aligns the needs of suppliers with the potential of development trusts, could be replicated where social value is important to service delivery. This is especially the case where community planning partnerships often bring anchor organisations together with local government and the VCSE sector.

# Resources

CHAS (2020) *Tackling the Skills Shortage in Construction*, CHAS. [Read More](#)

CLES (2013) *The Economic Impact of Belfast City Council's Local Spend*, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) *Findings Report*.

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Jackson, M (2010) *The power of procurement, Towards progressive procurement: the policy and practice of Manchester City Council*, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES).

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RSM McClure Watters (2015) *Public Procurement Practice in Northern Ireland*, Centre for Economic Empowerment/NICVA.



Queen's Communities and Place (QCAP) (2022) Progressive Procurement of Goods and Services, Belfast, Development Trust NI and Queen's University Belfast

Queen's Communities and Place | QCAP uses research and teaching to help tackle the complex challenges of socio-spatial deprivation. Our social economy strand works with people, NGOs and government to build a more inclusive approach to area-based regeneration.



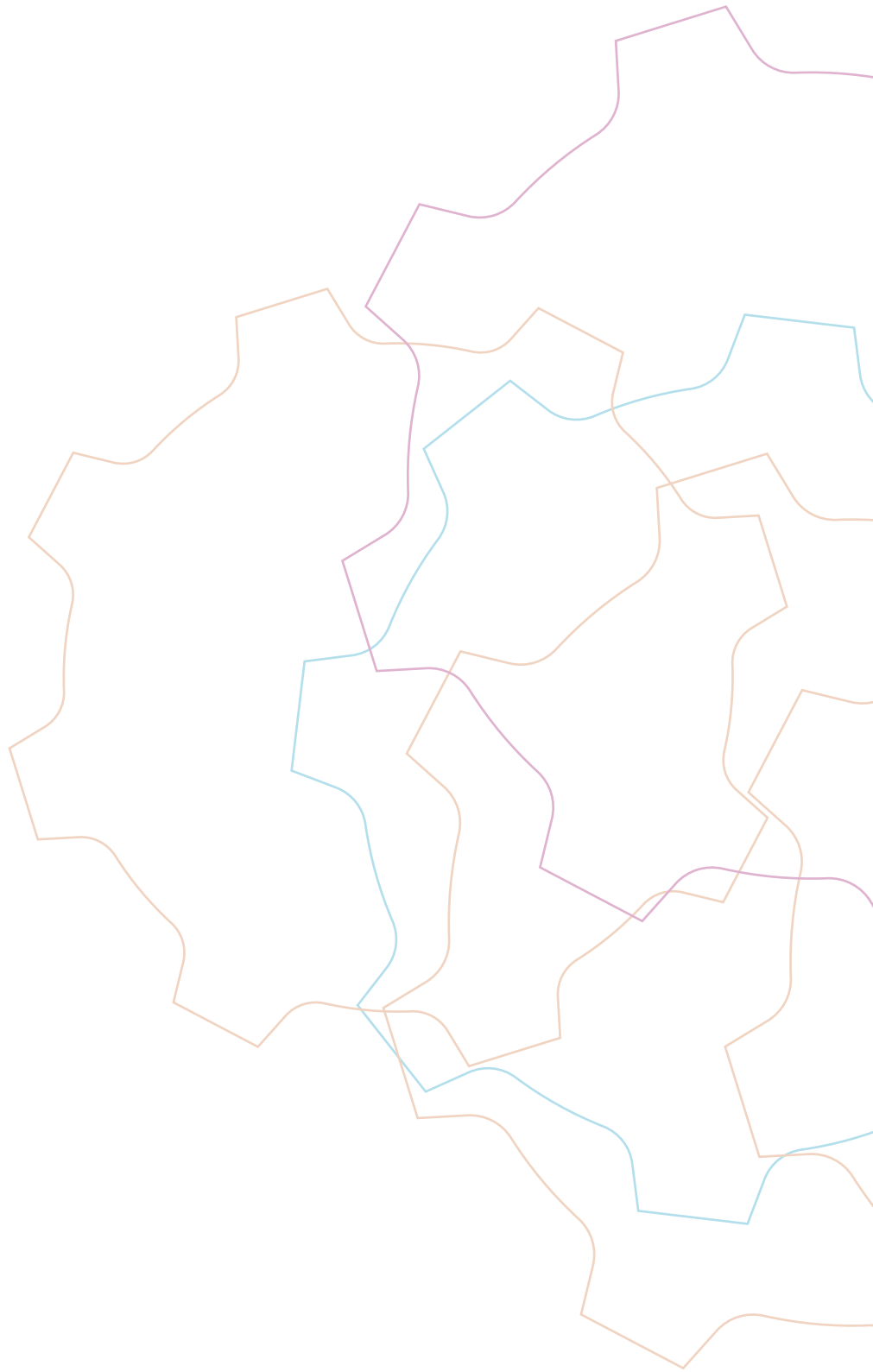
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*Thanks to the Department for Communities for supporting the production of these advisory papers which DTNI hopes will be taken into account in the formulation of future policy. It should be noted that the papers have been derived from research and conversations with the voluntary and community sector and other interested parties, and the conclusions and recommendations are the authors' own.*