



Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility

The Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (Charter) is a set of guiding principles which the Council adheres to and invites all organisations to adopt as a mechanism for managing how they deliver social value.

Charter signatories will consider and describe how they can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Birmingham that result from their activities. This includes indirect outcomes through commissioning and procurement.

Commissioning and contracting decisions will take account of the principles of this Charter and it forms part of the terms of new BCC contracts, and Conditions of Grant Aid (COGA).

The strategic context for the Social Value outcomes identified in this Charter is derived from the key Council policy drivers. These are:

- **Children**, A great city to grow up in. We want to make the best of our unique population and create a safe and secure city for our children to learn and grow up in.
- **Homes**, A great city to live in. Provide housing in a range of types and tenure, to meet the housing needs of all of the current and future citizens of the city.
- **Jobs & Skills**, A great city to succeed in. By 2031 Birmingham will be renowned as an enterprising, innovative and green city.
- **Health**, A great city to lead a healthy and active life. Helping people become healthier, especially relating to physical activity and mental wellbeing.

Charter Principles:

- Local Employment
- Buy Local
- Partners in Communities
- Good Employer
- Green and Sustainable
- Ethical Procurement

Local Employment

Charter signatories will create employment and training opportunities for local people especially in target areas:

- Commit to create employment and training opportunities for local residents, targeting areas of high unemployment and groups facing disadvantage, including people with disabilities through activities such as work experience placements, apprenticeships, internship and mentoring.

- Seek opportunities to work with schools and colleges to help to ensure that the local young people are equipped with the right skills to match the requirements of the labour market.
- Advertise employment opportunities through the Employment & Skills Services at the Council to ensure that those opportunities are targeted at those furthest from the job market.

Buy Local

Charter signatories will take account of the social, environmental and economic impacts of buying locally when commissioning and contracting, thereby reducing unemployment and raising the skill level of the local workforce.

- Support the local economy by choosing suppliers close to the point of service delivery where possible.
- Use Find it in Birmingham as the primary method of sourcing suppliers for contracts in Birmingham, increasing the accessibility of opportunities to local businesses throughout the supply chain.
- Encourage their suppliers to endorse the principle of Buy Local throughout their supply chains.
- Where possible, commit to purchasing from businesses on the Find it in Birmingham website and from social enterprises and small businesses.

Partners in Communities

Charter signatories will play an active role in the local community and support organisations, especially in those areas and communities with the greatest need.

- Build capacity by supporting community organisations with resources and expertise in areas with the greatest need, for example mentoring and working with youth organisations and services.
- Make a local impact by improving local facilities and areas, for example staff volunteering schemes.
- Provide support to third sector organisations and work with third sector organisations to deliver services and contracts.
- Have a shared sense of responsibility; consider good citizenship and safeguarding issues relating to children and vulnerable adults.
- Work with schools and colleges, offering work experience and business awareness to students, especially those from disadvantaged areas or communities.
- Make accessible all sub-contracting opportunities to a diverse supply base including the third sector and local suppliers and provide mentoring and support to assist these organisations to tender for and deliver these supply opportunities where necessary.
- Help to support the health and wellbeing of communities in which the business operates by for example linking with local schools and colleges, other local businesses and residents' groups to help run or sponsor activities / events, which will directly benefit those living there.

Good Employer

Charter signatories will support staff development and welfare within their own organisation and within their supply chain.

- Ensure that employees are given a fair reward for their labours and help foster a loyal and motivated workforce by adhering to the Council's Living Wage Policy.
- Recognise employees' rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining, including not using blacklists in recruitment processes.
- Provide a safe and hygienic working environment.

- Shows a clear intent and positive commitment to the health and wellbeing of employees, which encourages healthy lifestyle choices that assist with addressing health issues through the adoption of policies such as the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.
- Promote diversity and inclusiveness, not discriminate in respect of recruitment, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination of employment or retirement based upon race, caste, national origin, religion, age, disability (including learning disability), mental health issues, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.
- Not operate exploitative zero hour contracts
- Have and comply with a whistle blowing policy, safeguard against harassment or intimidation

Green and Sustainable

Charter signatories will commit to protecting the environment, minimising waste and energy consumption, using resources efficiently and contributing towards Birmingham's Clean Air Zone. These commitments will also apply to their supply chain.

- Reduce Carbon footprint – be aware of main impacts on carbon emissions including the indirect carbon used in manufacturing processes and the direct impact of operations and logistics.
- Measure carbon emissions and ensure a plan to reduce emissions, where possible, is being implemented using carbon measurement tools. Specific targets to be included in major contracts.
- Eliminate unnecessary waste by adopting the “reduce, reuse, recycle” philosophy.
- Be a good neighbour, minimise negative local impacts (noise, air quality), improve green areas (e.g. biodiversity, visual attractiveness).
- Protect the environment and minimise adverse impacts and instil this approach throughout the supply chain.

Ethical Procurement

Charter signatories will commit to the highest ethical standards in their own operations and those within their supply chain.

- Work to the highest standards of business integrity and ethical conduct.
- Pay their fair share of taxes
- Ensure the well-being and protection of work forces in the supply chain, which must be supported by robust systems and procedures.
- Uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Fundamental International Labour Organisation Conventions; including the use of child and forced labour
- Adopt best practice when procuring goods and services, e.g. procure low energy products, buy Fairtrade and avoid the use of rainforest timber from unmanaged sources.
- Pay suppliers no later than the terms stated in the primary contract if contracted to the Council, otherwise adopt a similar policy such as the Prompt Payment Code.

Implementation:

Charter signatories will consider and describe, in an action plan, how they can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their locality that result from their activities. This includes indirect outcomes through the supply chain.

Approved projects that address the Council’s key priorities and are relevant to the contract will be provided for inclusion in action plans. Supporting these projects will need to be the primary focus of the action plans.

The Council requires all of its suppliers and grant recipients to adopt this Charter subject to thresholds below and invites all other organisations to do so voluntarily. The Charter will be applied proportionately according to the table below:

	Tier 1 Charter does not apply	Tier 2 Light touch application tailored by contract or grant type	Tier 3 Fully consider Social Value and all action plan measures
Contract value or grant value as appropriate			
Contracts for Services	<£200k	£200k to £750K	Over £750K
Contracts for supply of Goods	< £1m	£1m to £5m	Over £5m
Contracts for execution of Works	< £1m	£1m to threshold in Article 4(a) Directive 2014/24/EU*	Over threshold in Article 4(a) Directive 2014/24/EU*
Grants	< £200k	£200k to £750K	Over £750K

* For current EU thresholds refer to www.ojeu.eu/thresholds.aspx

Where the contract is a mixed contract [e.g. a contract for the supply of goods and services], then the contract type that characterises the main subject matter of the contract in question will apply.

All Contractors, subcontractors and grant recipients are required to adhere to the Council’s Living Wage Policy.

Action plans need to include commitments and actions that are proportionate, relevant to the contract, specific and measurable and cover the contracted period. Progress on them will be monitored via an annual report. Action plans must be approved prior to the award of contract or issue of grant.

Organisations without a contract or grant are encouraged to sign up to the Charter.

Where a framework agreement is established by the Council that covers an area wider than Birmingham, participating Contracting Authorities are able to achieve social value outcomes for their relevant areas.

What is meant by Local under Local Employment and Buy Local is context dependent, however, as guidance, 30 miles from the point of delivery is reasonable.

Visit www.finditinbirmingham.com/charter for further guidance and the action plan template.