

An Outcomes Based Approach to Commissioning: How social enterprise accreditation can help public sector commissioners to embed social value in procurement

The public sector commissioning landscape is undergoing substantial changes; maintaining public confidence and positive perceptions is a constant challenge – one that needs to be managed if initiatives are to be delivered successfully.

At a time when positive social and environmental outcomes are increasingly important motivators in personal and business decision making, we understand the challenges faced by public sector commissioners when contracting for vital public services, such as healthcare and social care.

We realise that, in addition to the core service being contracted, you are looking for positive social outcomes, which have a lasting impact and can be clearly demonstrated to stakeholders.



You may call this **“sustainability”, “social value”, or “social impact”** – whatever the terminology, it is all about the same thing – **delivering more than just a bare bones service**. For example, creating additional jobs, delivering increased skills, reducing homelessness....the list goes on!

Budgets are tighter than they ever have been. However, by choosing an accredited social enterprise you can look beyond the motivations of immediate short term cuts. Choosing social enterprise is a business choice that will lead to:

- a) a financially sustainable service that will put patients and service users first (not profit)
- b) add other benefits that enhance the basic commissioned service eg developing joint health and social care outcomes and reinvesting profits to subsidise other public health innovations



UPHOLDING THE STANDARD FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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The challenges you face

Following The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 coming into force, commissioners are under increasing pressure to consider how services they commission can contribute to wider economic, social and environmental well-being.

We realise that, although budgets are tight, you are also looking for lasting added social outcomes, and consider providers based on the total outcomes created, rather than purely on cost. We understand that you need to know that service providers are giving more than just lip service to producing a true outcomes-based approach.

However, how can you be sure that providers will actually deliver the added social outcomes and outputs that they tell you they will?

The solution



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GOLD MARK
ACCREDITED FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE



THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK
TRADING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

Social Enterprise Gold Mark and Social Enterprise Mark accreditation can help to embed an outcomes-based approach to commissioning public services, and can demonstrate consideration of the Social Value Act in your processes.

Ask for the **Social Enterprise Gold Mark** in your commissioning criteria to ensure that a service provider is not only focused on outcomes, but that they have the ability, track record, capacity, and future plans to consistently deliver social value.



This is all in addition to demonstrating excellence in key business areas, such as employee engagement, governance, and financial transparency.

Ask for the **Social Enterprise Mark** for an externally assessed guarantee that a service provider is committed to maximising income and allocating profits towards achieving wider social outcomes.

These internationally recognised accreditations are subject to a robust assessment process, overseen by an independent Certification Panel. Approximately 30% of organisations who pursue Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark accreditation are assessed as ineligible. Accredited organisations are regularly reassessed, to ensure they continue to meet the criteria.

What does it mean?

All organisations that have been awarded the Social Enterprise Mark or Gold Mark have met a baseline measure to demonstrate their social value – they have proved they are committed to using income and profits to maximise social/environmental benefit, which takes precedent over generating dividends for owners and shareholders.

All applicants are required to prove their commitment to investing a principal proportion of annual profits into defined social purposes, and are required to submit Social Impact Statements, illustrating how they have created benefits for society and/or the environment.

By embedding these accreditations in your commissioning criteria and in stakeholder communications, you can clearly demonstrate your commitment to achieving wider economic, social and environmental impact through contracted services.

Look out for the Mark!

You can search for accredited social enterprises in our online directory:

<http://www.socialenterprisemark.org.uk/directory-certified-social-enterprises/>

To find out more, please visit our website www.socialenterprisemark.org.uk or call our helpline on **0345 504 6536**.