



Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility Guidance (BBC4SR)

On the following pages you will find information on what the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (Charter) is.

What is the Charter (or BBC4SR)?

The BBC4SR forms part of the terms of Birmingham City Council (BCC) contracts and Conditions of Grant Aid (COGA) and all commissioning and contracting decisions will take account of the Themes within it.

In addition, any organisation can become Charter accredited on a voluntarily basis (i.e. not through a contract or grant process and subject to meeting Charter criteria). Often organisations use the Charter to help them manage their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activity.

The BBC4SR has 2 main objectives which are delivered through 6 Themes:

(i) **Promote good practice.** The BBC4SR is a set of guiding Themes which the Council adheres to and invites all organisations to adopt as a mechanism for managing delivery of their social value. These may not all be measured but will reflect the ethos and standard of best practice of an organisation which we would expect from a BBC4SR accredited organisation.

This is particularly the case of the Good Employer and Ethical Procurement themes where organisations' adoption in line with the BBC4SR are not enforceable under the Council's contract (other than those which are legally required), but are promoted here as best practice in doing business.

(ii) **Seek relevant and proportionate commitments related to the subject matter of the contract.** In accordance with PCR15 Regulation 70 which allows for inclusion of special conditions, which may include economic, social and environmental considerations. These commitments form the basis of a Social Value Action Plan that covers the life of the contract and is robustly managed throughout the contract period.

The thresholds below apply to bidders when tendering for Council contracts or applying for a grant.

	Tier 1	Tier 2
Contract value	<PCR15 Threshold	>PCR15 Threshold
Grants	<£200,000	>£200,000

PCR15 thresholds are published by Crown Commercial Services and are subject to change in January every 2 years. The most recent change was in January 2022.

All bidders and grant applicants are required to pay the Real Living Wage to employees servicing Council Contracts, regardless of contract / grant value. The rules governing which employees qualify and the Real

Living Wage rates are set by the Living Wage Foundation ([Living Wage Foundation](#)). The Council's Living Wage policy provides more information on the Living Wage.

The Match My Project portal ([Match my project](#)) is where businesses offer support to community organisations by completing a project that they need help with. Those with contracts and grants in tier 1 are encouraged to complete at least 1 project from the Match My Project portal within the duration of the contract. Tier 2 contractors and grant recipients are required to deliver at least 1 project from the Match My Project portal, per year of the contract/grant.

Tier 2 contractors and grant recipients are required to complete a Social Value Action Plan. The template for the action plan can be found on the Charter pages [BBC4SR](#).

Why become accredited?

There are a number of reasons why organisations should become accredited to the Charter:

- It is a requirement that contracted organisations to the Council comply with the Charter
- By becoming an accredited signatory it will help to manage the organisation's Social Value
- Under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 it is mandatory for contracted suppliers and voluntary accreditations to demonstrate social value.
- Driven by the public sector, it is a mandatory requirement to become an accredited signatory for sub-contractors.
- The Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility is recognised in the marketplace as a means to demonstrate best practice in securing Social Value outcomes for citizens.

How does my organisation become accredited?

At the heart of the Charter process is a Social Value Action Plan. Any organisation wishing to become Charter accredited needs to complete an action plan. The action plan template can be downloaded from [Birmingham City Council Charter webpage](#)

There is further guidance on the first sheet of the action plan about the specifics for completing it. If your organisation is becoming Charter accredited as a result of a successful tender process then the action plan would have been submitted as part of the tender return. If your organisation is applying to become Charter accredited separately from any tendering process (as a voluntary charter accreditation) then the action plan needs to be emailed to the Council's Charter team mailbox (at bbc4sr@birmingham.gov.uk). Council staff will work with you to shape your action plan in order for it to be acceptable for accreditation. Once this is done you will receive a certificate and will be added to the list of Charter accredited organisations on the Council's web site. If you require any help during the process then contact the Charter team on bbc4sr@birmingham.gov.uk

What am I committing to when I become Charter accredited?

When you become Charter accredited you are committing to deliver the commitments that you have specified in your action plan.

What makes a good action plan?

An action plan needs to be relevant, proportionate, specific and measurable.

The actions contained in an action plan need to be relevant to the contract if contracted or to the business of the organisation if not contracted. The social value evaluation contained in the tender process will make it clear which aspects of the Charter are most relevant.

Action plan commitments need to be proportionate to the size of the contract if contracted (noting that ward and evaluation weightings may increase the financial proxy score over the contract value) and the size of the company's UK operation if seeking voluntarily accreditation.

Each action needs to be very specific in terms of exactly what the organisation will do. The action plan template is designed to make the actions measurable. The target date and target volume columns within the action plan are very important to ensure that there is sufficient time to complete the actions.

The Charter action plan is for the life of the contract if contracted, or a period of 2 years if voluntary. An annual report detailing the progress must be submitted and this is done using the same action plan form. The columns on the right of the action plan capture the quantity and date achieved as well as a final achieved flag. Contracted organisations and grant recipients will hold regular reviews of progress against the plan with their Council contact, at regular intervals – ideally quarterly.

Targeting:

The value (and impact) of the activities will be greater if they are targeted at areas / groups with the greatest need. The action plan contains a list of Birmingham wards in order of deprivation. Depending on the level of deprivation, each ward has a multiplier which is applied to the measure, increasing its value. The outcomes of the measure **must** benefit the residents or businesses of the specific ward or groups of wards **directly**, otherwise a ward multiplier of 1 should be used.

There are some other measures that are targeted at specific groups. These are NT3, NT4, NT5 and NT6 in the table of measures below. However, Local Employment and these measures are not the only areas where you can target your activities.

When planning your social value offer, within every measure and activity, consider how you can target the benefit to:

- Children, particularly those in care and care leavers
- Elderly people in poor health and in need of support
- Homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless
- Young unemployed people from deprived wards of the city
- Disabled people in need of support
- People suffering from fuel poverty, food poverty, period poverty and digital poverty
- People experiencing modern slavery or at risk of exploitation

Targeting the activity on groups most in need will increase the impact of the social value activity. Which groups you focus your activity on should be relevant to the subject of the contract.

Targeted groups need to be relevant to the activity and could include children in care, care leavers, homeless, elderly, those experiencing fuel poverty and/or on low income, Black and Minority Ethnic communities, those with a disability, LGBTQ+, etc...

'Period poverty' (or menstrual hygiene management, MHM) refers to having a lack of access to sanitary products due to financial constraints. It is a harsh reflection of poverty and inequality which is often suffered in silence. Consider donating products to food banks and working with schools to provide free

products to those who need it. The Active Wellbeing Society (theaws.co.uk) can provide more information and provide ways that you can donate locally.

What does each of the Themes mean?

There are 6 Themes within the Charter and each has a set of actions to help identify what may be most relevant to a contract or a company. This section describes the spirit of each theme and contains some guidance and contact details on each theme.

Theme: Local Employment

BBC4SR accredited organisations will create employment and training opportunities for local people especially in target areas and groups.

- 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.
- Advertise employment opportunities through the Employment & Skills Services at the Council to ensure that those opportunities are targeted at those furthest from the jobs market.
- 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. For opportunities relating to the Built Environment work with the Building Birmingham Academy at the Council.
- Seek opportunities to sign up to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#) to show a commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community

Theme: Buy Local ¹

BBC4SR accredited organisations 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
- Support the UK Steel Charter where appropriate

Theme - Good Employer

BBC4SR accredited organisations 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.

- Contractors and their supply chains should provide a safe and hygienic working environment and where appropriate work collaboratively with the appropriate trade unions to identify and implement reasonable real-world initiatives related to safety in the workplace.
- Show 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.
- Have an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy
- Have a policy that explicitly bans discrimination, bullying and harassment based on age, disability, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other protected characteristics and regularly monitor incidences of bullying and harassment based on these.
- Look to introduce a Transitioning at Work, or Transgender Inclusion Policy if not already implemented. You can find support and guidance on this on the Stonewall website.
- Not operate exploitative zero hour contracts that require exclusivity
- Have and comply with a whistle blowing policy, safeguard against harassment or intimidation

Theme: Ethical Procurement

BBC4SR accredited organisations 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. Birmingham City Council has joined the Councils for Tax Mark and requires the corresponding standards in tax conduct from its contractors.
- Ensure the well-being and protection of workforces 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.
- Comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 wherever it applies, and consider publishing a voluntary Modern Slavery Transparency statement where Charter accredited organisations are under the turnover threshold for a compulsory statement.
- Ensure there is a whistle-blowing policy in place which enables staff to raise concerns around any suspected examples of modern slavery
- Consider the comprehensive guidance given under the government's Procurement Policy Note (PPN), and implement as appropriate where modern slavery is considered to be a possible issue.
- 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.
- Contractors and their supply chains within the construction industry should work collaboratively to provide responsible industry-wide solutions aimed at supporting and sustaining the construction industry for the benefit of the local economy and communities.
- Contractors and their supply chains should promote and encourage the recognition of the right

of all construction workers to be employed under and to be protected by the appropriate national industry collective agreement applicable to the construction industry.

- Contractors and their supply chains should support the banning of single-use plastics in their place of work and in the goods and services they provide.

Theme: Partners in Communities

BBC4SR accredited organisations will play an active role in the local community and support organisations, especially in those areas and communities with the greatest need.

- Use the [Match my project](#) portal as the primary channel to provide support to community organisations.
- 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, particularly those organisations working for the prevention of homelessness.
- 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.

Theme: Green and Sustainable

BBC4SR accredited organisations will commit to protecting the environment, minimising waste and energy consumption, using resources efficiently and contributing towards Birmingham's Route to Zero (R20) policy and Brum Breathes anti-air pollution strategy. These commitments will also apply to their supply chain.

- Develop a plan for a Carbon Neutral position
- 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), and improve green areas (e.g. biodiversity, visual attractiveness).
- Protect the environment and minimise adverse impacts and instil this approach throughout the supply chain.

¹ What is meant by "Local" under the Local Employment and Buy Local principles is context dependent, however, as guidance, 30 miles from the point of service delivery is reasonable. Though tenderers will respond to the Social Value outcomes in the Council's commissioning and procurement activities and describe how they can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being within Birmingham.

The following table sets out the Themes, Social Value Outcomes and Measures that (i) align with the Council's priorities (ii) align with national SV measures (NT refs) and (iii) demonstrate the fiscal benefit to the public sector by including a financial proxy for most interventions.

These outcomes will form the basis the Social Value requirements in all tenders where the BBC4SR applies.

Themes, Outcomes and Measures Breakdown

Themes	SV Outcomes	Ref National TOMS	Measures	Units (How measured)	Financial Proxies
Good Employer	A fair level of pay	BCC1	Pay the Real Living Wage to employees servicing Birmingham contracts in accordance with the BCC LW Policy	No. uplifted to the RLW	Record only
Ethical Procurement	Sustainable procurement is promoted	NT23	Percentage of procurement contracts that includes commitments to verify anti-slavery and other relevant requirements.	% of contracts	Record only
Ethical Procurement	Sustainable procurement is promoted	NT35	Percentage of procurement contracts that includes commitments to use local produce, reduce food waste, or other relevant requirements and certifications.	% of contracts	Record only
Ethical Procurement	Sustainable procurement is promoted	BCC2	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.	% of suppliers paid	Record only
Local Employment	More local Employment	NT1	No. of local people (FTE) employed on contract for one year or the whole duration of the contract, whichever is shorter.	No. people FTE	£31,461
Local Employment	More local Employment	NT2	% of local people employed on contract (FTE) that live within 30 miles of where the service is being delivered	%	Record only
Local Employment	More local Employment	BCC3	How many opportunities will you advertise with Birmingham City Council Jobs and Skills team (eateam@birmingham.gov.uk)	No. of opportunities	Record only
Local Employment	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT3	No. of employees (FTE) taken on who are long term unemployed (unemployed for a year or longer)	No. people FTE	£20,480.68

Themes	SV Outcomes	Ref National TOMS	Measures	Units (How measured)	Financial Proxies
Local Employment	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT4	No. of employees (FTE) taken on who are not in employment, education, or training (NEETs)	No. people FTE	£14,781.56
Local Employment	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT5	No. of employees (FTE) taken on who are rehabilitating young offenders (18-24 y.o.)	No. people FTE	£24,527.15
Local Employment	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT6	No. of jobs (FTE) created for people with disabilities	No. people FTE	£16574.32
Local Employment	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT7	No. of hours dedicated to supporting unemployed people into work by providing career mentoring, including mock interviews, CV advice, and careers guidance -(over 24 y.o.)	no hours *no. attendees	£105.50
Local Employment	Improved skills for local people	NT8	Local school and college visits e.g. delivering careers talks, curriculum support, literacy support, safety talks (No. hours, includes preparation time)	no. staff hours	£16.09
Local Employment	Improved skills for local people	NT9	No. of training opportunities on contract (BTEC, City & Guilds, NVQ, HNC) that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation to completion in the following years - Level 2, 3, or 4+	No. weeks	£286.47
Local Employment	Improved skills for local people	NT10	No. of apprenticeships on the contract that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation to completion in the following years - Level 2,3, or 4+	No. weeks	£224.07
Local Employment	Improved employability of young people	NT11	No. of hours dedicated to support young people into work (e.g. CV advice, mock interviews, careers guidance) - (under 24 y.o.)	No. hours *no. attendees	£105.50
Local Employment	Improved employability of young people	NT12	No. of weeks spent on meaningful work placements or pre-employment course; 1-6 weeks student placements (unpaid)	No. weeks	£168.72

Themes	SV Outcomes	Ref National TOMS	Measures	Units (How measured)	Financial Proxies
Employment					
Local Employment	Improved employability of young people	NT13	Meaningful work placements that pay Minimum or National Living wage according to eligibility - 6 weeks or more (internships)	No. weeks	£168.72
Buy Local	More opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs	NT14	Total amount (£) spent with VCSEs within your supply chain	£	£0.12
Buy Local	More opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs	BCC4	How many procurement opportunities will you post on Finditinbirmingham?	No. of opportunities	Record only
Buy Local	More opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs	NT18	Total amount (£) spent in LOCAL supply chain through the contract. (within 30 miles of the point of service delivery)	£	Record only
Buy Local	More opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs	NT19	Total amount (£) spent through contract with LOCAL SMEs (within 30 miles of the point of service delivery)	£	Record only
Partners in Communities	Crime is Reduced	NT24	Initiatives aimed at reducing crime (e.g. support for local youth groups, lighting for public spaces, private security, etc.)	£ invested including staff time	£1.00
Partners in Communities	Creating a healthier community	BCC5	Number of individuals in fuel poverty assisted with energy efficiency measures	No.	Record only
Partners in Communities	Creating a healthier community	NT25	Initiatives to be taken to tackle homelessness (supporting temporary housing schemes, etc.)	£ invested including staff time	£1.00
Partners in Communities	Creating a healthier community	NT26	Initiatives taken or supported to engage people in health interventions (e.g. stop smoking, obesity, alcoholism, drugs, etc) or wellbeing initiatives in the community, including physical activities for adults and children.	£ invested including staff time	£1.00
Partners in Communities	Vulnerable people are helped to live independently	NT27	Initiatives to be taken to support older, disabled and vulnerable people to build stronger community networks (e.g. befriending schemes, digital inclusion clubs)	£ invested including staff time	£1.00

Themes	SV Outcomes	Ref National TOMS	Measures	Units (How measured)	Financial Proxies
Partners in Communities	More working with the Community	NT28	Donations or in-kind contributions to local community projects (£ & materials)	£ value	£1.00
Partners in Communities	More working with the Community	NT29	No hours volunteering time provided to support local community projects	No. staff volunteering hours	£16.09
Partners in Communities	More working with the Community	NT15	Provision of expert business advice to VCSEs and SMEs (e.g. financial advice / legal advice / HR advice/HSE)	No. staff expert hours	£101.86
Partners in Communities	More working with the Community	NT16	Equipment or resources donated to VCSEs (£ equivalent value)	£	£1.00
Partners in Communities	More working with the Community	NT17	Number of voluntary hours donated to support VCSEs (excludes expert business advice)	No. staff volunteering hours	£16.09
Green and Sustainable	Carbon emissions are reduced	NT44	Programme to achieve net zero by 2030	Yes / No	Record only
Green and Sustainable	Climate impacts are reduced	NT31	Savings in CO2e emissions on contract (specify how these are to be achieved).	tonnes CO2e	£70.43
Green and Sustainable	Better places to live	NT34	Voluntary time dedicated to the creation or management of green infrastructure, to increase biodiversity or keep green spaces clean	No. staff volunteering hours	£16.09

It is a requirement that all employees working on Council contracts are paid the Real Living Wage in respect of those hours. The details will be reflected in the terms and conditions of the contract. Birmingham has become a Living Wage City, so we encourage organisations to become a Living Wage Foundation accredited organisation in their own right. You can find out how to do this by visiting [Living Wage website](#)

The Living Wage is **not** the same as the National Living Wage. The Real Living Wage is set independently by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University as the minimum required for a wage to live on. The current rate can be found on [Living Wage website](#).