

Position paper:

# Social value act



April 2013



## At a Glance.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 became law on 8th March 2012 and came into force in January 2013.

It encourages public authorities to consider economic, social and environmental well-being when commissioning and procuring services. This will help to highlight the difference between a contract's cost and its value by asking questions in new tenders that will reveal the bidder's intended social and environmental impact.

The Act should have a positive effect on how new contracts are awarded with public bodies (such as local authorities, government departments, NHS Trusts, rescue services, and housing associations). The reasons for this are two-fold:

- It will level the playing field for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises that can satisfy the Act's criteria for proven social value.
- It also presents an opportunity for larger organisations that, in addition to offering competitive rates, may also have numerous social and environmental activities in place.

## Where we Stand.

As an environmental services provider, acting responsibly is our *raison d'être*.

When contracts are up for tender, it's important that bidders outline the potential positive social and environmental impact they will have on the local area. But calculating social value will be problematic as there is currently no recognised model to measure it. With this in mind, we urge Government to set up a task group (with representatives from various stakeholders, including business and local authorities) to develop such a model. That way we can ensure that the process is transparent and bids are easy to compare. Without it, the Act has the potential to create an unlevel playing field where purchasers will not be comparing like-for-like.

# The Situation.



The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 **became law** on 8th March 2012 and came into force in January 2013.

It encourages public authorities to consider economic, social and environmental well-being when commissioning and procuring services. This will help to highlight the difference between a contract's cost and its value by asking questions in new tenders that will reveal the bidder's intended social and environmental impact.

So what effect will the Act have? Until now, private firms promising low cost services were the most attractive option because we live in a culture that defaults to the lowest cost. But this has been at the expense of providers that could benefit their communities through bringing real value.

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- It will level the playing field for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises that can satisfy the Act's criteria for proven social value.
- It also presents an opportunity for larger organisations that, in addition to offering competitive rates, may also have numerous social and environmental activities in place.

Finally! Contract providers that put quality services and the **prosperity of the community first** get the green light.

Where we  
**Stand.**



As an environmental services provider, **acting responsibly** is our raison d'être. We welcome the Act as an opportunity to showcase our existing social and environmental efforts.

These are demonstrated through our Corporate Responsibility programme, **Go further together**, which sets demanding environmental and social targets for the communities where we operate and live.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 provides a much-needed framework to assess which public services contracts are likely to have the most desirable impact on economic, social and environmental well-being. The fact that there is now a mechanism within the commissioning process to take this into account should benefit bidders that have projects like ours in place.

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The Act encourages greater collaboration between third sector/community organisations and the private sector. That's something that we are proud to champion. In fact we're already involved in a wide variety of social and environmental programmes. There are just a few examples shown on the next page.



**42%** of our employees volunteered in 2012, donating over **20,000** hours to charities and local community causes.

### Volunteering

We donate staff time to help community projects, which make a difference to the local environment. 42% of our employees volunteered in 2012, donating over 20,000 hours to charities and local community causes. From helping to clean up local areas to working with schools or raising precious funds, our people went the extra mile to demonstrate our commitment to being a good neighbour.

### Community Giving

For over 15 years we have been supporting community and environmental projects throughout the UK by awarding grants through the Landfill Communities Fund. The Veolia Environmental Trust was established in 1997 under the Landfill Communities Fund.

We support a wide range of community and environmental projects throughout the UK. The money we use for grants is made available through the Fund. Veolia Environmental Services has supported this initiative by contributing £50m which has been used to help 1450 local community projects.

### Waste Awareness Projects

In 2012 we held 40 Open Days, opening up our facilities to members of the public so they could see exactly what we do and how good waste management benefits us all. In addition we also hosted our Carbon Boot Print educational programmes in conjunction with Fulham FC and Derby County FC. This is in addition to our team of education officers who work with hundreds of schools to raise and educate children on matters of the environment.

### Apprentices

More than 300 apprenticeships were undertaken at Veolia in 2012 alone. It's all part of our training and development programme to nurture local talent for our organisation – with opportunities for both young and adult apprentices. Local employment is a perfect example of a sustainable commitment to the local community.

### Charity of the Year

In 2011 and 2012 we partnered with the mental health charity, Mind. From donating clothes to Mind's local charity shops to taking part in major fund raising events like the Three Peaks Challenge, we raised over £100,000 for the charity. Our work also helped to raise awareness and reduce the stigma that people with mental health problems often have to deal with.

For more information on Veolia's social and environmental activities please see our Annual Review website at:

[www.gofurtherthetogether.co.uk](http://www.gofurtherthetogether.co.uk)



Where do you stand?

Join the debate at: [www.veolia.co.uk](http://www.veolia.co.uk)

