

Community Benefits Task and Finish Group

Communiqué (29/4/13)

Embedding delivery of 'community benefits' in all appropriate public procurement expenditure is a Programme for Government commitment. The 'Community Benefits Task Group' has been commissioned by the Finance Minister to strengthen the associated policy and ensure the widest possible social and economic outcomes are secured for Welsh citizens. In the current economic climate there is a recognised need to push the boundaries of what can be achieved. Martin Mansfield (TUC) chairs the group with internal membership that includes SPFP (Value Wales & Strategic Investment), SF (Regeneration), LGC (Communities First), DfES (Youth Employment), BETS (Entrepreneurship and Sectors); external membership includes Business Wales, I2i, Construction Skills, and RCT Council.

1. The fourth meeting of the Community Benefits Task Group ('the Group') was held on 29th April 2013. Much of the discussion took place around the agreed Milestones with good progress having been made.
2. The group heard that opportunities from the EU directives had been identified and further work would be undertaken to map social enterprises in Wales. It was suggested that information be drawn from the "Mutuals" commission before commissioning further work.
3. Value Wales guidance had been reviewed to reflect the flowchart making the 'core approach' as the default. The group agreed that the flowchart now represented an easy to use summary. The guidance would be re-issued in July and would refer to all models including i2i and the Client based approach developed by Construction Skills.
4. The group heard that a lot of work had been done to improve the offering of training to the public sector. The Value Wales team had gone through the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (WIIP) and given the projects a RAG status based on their knowledge and understanding of delivering Community Benefits. The projects status would be verified before being shared with the Welsh Government Director Generals.
5. Both the positive and negative experiences of Contractors were discussed and the group felt that support available for contractors should be mapped. There would also need to be an exercise in identifying champions within organisations at the appropriate level to push this forward.
6. It was recognised that 18 projects had been completed and had tracked their outcomes using the Measurement Tool. The average spend retained within Wales was now 82% with over 12,500 training weeks provided and 384 people had been helped to gain employment. The WLGA agreed to support greater monitoring our Local Authority outcomes.
7. The Chair advised that he would shortly be providing the Finance Minister with a report on progress.

Next meeting:

- 29th July 2013: 2pm – 4pm Merthyr WG Office

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