



Empowering Organisations to embed Social Partnership

Introduction

This partner pack is designed for organisations that are not subject to the Social Partnership duty but wish to embed a culture of Social Partnership. The Welsh Government is committed to supporting and promoting Social Partnership working as the Welsh Way, an approach characterised by shared ownership and a commitment to developing consensus and compromise on areas of mutual interest.

It is a model that transcends barriers, and it shouldn't be restricted to settings nor organisations captured by the legislation. The voluntary adoption of Social Partnership can enhance organisational effectiveness and promote a positive workplace culture. By engaging the workforce in key decisions, fosters a motivated and committed workforce which is critical to the effective delivery of services.

Giving workers a stronger voice in the delivery of services should lead to improved job satisfaction, increased productivity, and better overall service quality. When workers feel heard and valued, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, which can result in more innovative solutions and a more positive work environment. Additionally, involving workers in decision-making processes can help identify and address issues more effectively, leading to more efficient and effective service delivery.

What is Social Partnership?

Social Partnership is a behavioural framework for collaboration between employers and employee representatives or recognised trade union(s) aimed at promoting mutual benefits and ensuring inclusive decision-making. It is based on trust, respect, and shared goals, fostering an environment where all stakeholders work together towards common objectives.

There will be certain matters that cannot be agreed through Social Partnership mechanisms but that does not negate the overall benefits of this approach in developing long-term, trust-based relationships between social partners.

The Benefits of Social Partnership

Enhanced Communication:

Open channels of communication between management and employees lead to better understanding and quicker resolution of issues.

Increased Employee Engagement:

Involving employees in decision-making processes boosts morale and productivity.



Improved Workplace Relations:

A collaborative approach can reduce conflicts and foster a more harmonious, trusting work environment.

Competitive Advantage:

Aligning with Social Partnership principles can enhance reputation, stakeholder trust, and public procurement opportunities.

Why Social Partnership makes good business sense

1. It Future Proofs Your Organisation

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 is reshaping how public bodies operate. While not all organisations are legally bound by the Act, aligning with its principles positions you ahead of the curve. It signals readiness and demonstrates alignment with Welsh Government priorities like fair work, well-being, and socially responsible business.

2. It Builds Organisational Resilience

Social Partnership fosters trust-based relationships between employers and workers. This is especially valuable in times of uncertainty, whether economic, environmental, or social.

3. It Enhances Workforce Engagement and Retention

Organisations that give workers a voice in decision-making report higher morale, lower turnover, and better service delivery. This is particularly relevant for sectors facing recruitment and retention challenges.

4. It Strengthens Your Social Value Proposition

Whether you are bidding for public contracts or engaging with communities, demonstrating a commitment to fair work, inclusive governance, and ethical procurement enhances your credibility. Social Partnership is a practical way to embed these values into your operations.

Conclusion

Adopting the Social Partnership approach can transform your organisation, fostering a culture of collaboration, trust, and mutual respect. By following the steps outlined in this partner pack, even organisations not subject to the Social Partnership duty can benefit from this progressive and inclusive framework.

Adopt and embrace the principles of Social Partnership and experience the positive impact on your workplace.

Useful Resources

Animation: Social Partnership – The Welsh Way <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB-Elb17sto>.

Case Study: [Retail Forum](#).

Newsletter sign up: [Subscribe to the Social Partnership newsletter | GOV.WALES](#).







Online Learning: [Social Partnership and Public Procurement \(Wales\) Act: free online learning leaflet | GOV.WALES](#).

Further information

Contact the Social Partnership team at Welsh Government by emailing SPEFW@gov.wales, or visit our website at gov.wales/social-partnership-and-public-procurement-wales-act.



Scalable Social Partnership Framework

Steps	Light-Touch Approach	Scalable Enhancements
 1. Form a Social Partnership Team	Identify a single point of contact (e.g. HR lead or team manager) to act as a liaison for partnership activity.	Create a cross-functional working group with rotating employee reps.
 2. Undertake a Self-Assessment	Use a simplified checklist or 15-minute pulse survey to gauge current engagement and communication practices.	Adopt the full Self-Assessment Toolkit from Chapter 4 (Page 8) of the <u>Social Partnership Handbook</u> .
 3. Engage in Social Partnership Learning	Watch the 3-minute <u>Welsh Way animation</u> and share it in a team meeting.	Enrol staff in the full <u>Learning@Wales course</u> and host a reflection session.
 4. Develop a Social Partnership Agreement	Create a one-page “Ways of Working” statement co-developed with staff.	Develop a formal Social Partnership Agreement with review cycles.
 5. Promote Inclusive Decision-Making	Add a standing agenda item for staff input at team meetings.	Establish regular forums or digital suggestion platforms for structured feedback.
 6. Monitor and Evaluate Progress	Use quarterly team check-ins or anonymous polls to gather feedback.	Implement KPIs and integrate feedback into HR or governance reviews.