



Department of
Finance
An Roinn
Airgeadais
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Social Value Strategy

2025-2027

Progress Report (May 2026)



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Introduction

1. The Department of Finance (DoF) [Social Value Strategy 2025-2027](#) was published on 1 May 2025 and sets out the social value goals and ambitions for the Department up to 31 March 2027.
2. The Strategy defines 'social value' as the wider financial and non-financial impacts on the wellbeing of individuals, communities and the environment. This incorporates ethical and sustainable supply chains, community benefits and wealth building, job and skills creation and efforts to combat climate change.
3. The Strategy includes **57** enabling actions to be delivered over the 2 years under the following 4 themes:

Theme One: Increasing secure employment and skills (14 Actions)

Securing employment and skills through our procurement spend and delivering a five-year people strategy to ensure the Civil Service attracts, retains and develops its diverse and inclusive workforce. The five-year people strategy will help address skill shortages in key areas and support people with disabilities to enter and remain in work.

Theme Two: Building ethical and resilient supply-chains (16 Actions)

Maximising security of supply for critical goods and services and reducing barriers for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) tendering for government contracts.

Theme Three: Delivering Climate Action (18 Actions)

Working towards net zero emissions in the Civil Service Office Estate; minimising the impact on our climate through the goods, services and works contracts procured; and assisting Departments to achieve Climate Change Targets by updating finance and HR Policies.

Theme Four: Promoting Well-being (9 Actions)

Supporting well-being through our contracts and within communities; and in the Civil Service by supporting diversity networks and updating HR policies and systems.

4. This is the second progress report. The first progress report¹ was published in September 2025.

¹ <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/social-value-strategy-2025-2027>

Purpose

5. The purpose of this report is to outline the progress made against the actions to be delivered between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
6. The publication of the progress report seeks to encourage stakeholders to provide feedback to the Department on its performance to date and to help inform actions and targets beyond 2027.
7. The next progress report will be published by the end of June 2027.

Summary of Actions

8. There were **37** actions to be delivered by 31 March 2026. The table below shows the status of these actions against the target dates stated in the Strategy.

Completed	To be completed outside the Target Date	Not completed
28	8	1

9. The Report is structured in two sections:
 - i. Completed Actions; and
 - ii. Actions to be completed outside the target date published in the Strategy.
10. As outlined in the summary table, there is one target that was not achieved. This relates to a target of 100% of valid DoF invoices would be paid within 30 days of receiving the invoice during financial year 2024/2025. The figure achieved was 96%, which was an improvement of one percentage point on the previous financial year. The Department continues to strive to achieve this target each year.

Section 1

Completed Actions

11. The table below outlines the **28 completed** actions in each of the Themes:

TABLE 1: COMPLETED ACTIONS

Theme One: Increasing secure employment and skills (8 Actions)

- I. Publish a five-year people strategy which will set a clear direction and focus to ensure the Civil Service can attract, retain and support its people to deliver high quality public services
- II. Start delivery of the five-year people strategy with a focus on actions to be delivered within the first two years
- III. Allocate 15% of the maximum weighted score to delivering secure employment and skills through the collaborative contract for Agency Workers
- IV. Allocate at least 15% of the maximum weighted score to delivering secure employment and skills through the collaborative contract for Postal Services
- V. Allocate at least 5% of the maximum weighted score to delivering secure employment and skills through the collaborative contract for Travel Management Services
- VI. Deliver the year one commitments in the five-year People Strategy
- VII. Report on our actions in the NICS Diversity Action Plan 2024/25 and continue to strengthen our equality, diversity and inclusion efforts to ensure they are at the heart of everything we do and become embedded into the culture of the Civil Service
- VIII. Allocate at least 10% of the maximum weighted score to delivering secure employment and skills through the collaborative contract for Electronic Records Management Support

Theme Two: Building ethical and resilient supply-chains (7 Actions)

- IX. Agree the focus for next phase of Dormant Assets Fund grant programmes with the National Lottery Community Fund for delivery in 2025/26 to further build capacity, resilience and sustainability in the third sector
- X. Publish an updated Procurement Policy Note on Scoring Social Value to reduce barriers for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs)
- XI. Refresh the overarching Procurement Policy Framework to increase the focus on accessibility for SMEs and SEs and increase transparency on public spend

- XII. Revise the guidance on Land and Property Service's Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property to further clarify and simplify Community Asset Transfer disposals
- XIII. Use social enterprises for on-site hospitality services
- XIV. Establish an initiative for DoF strategic suppliers, to identify opportunities for mentoring for social enterprises or micro businesses to help build resilience
- XV. Review the Procurement Policy Note 02/21 Procurement of Social and Other Specific Services

Theme Three: Delivering Climate Action (11 Actions)

- XVI. Report on progress made in climate action during 2024/2025
- XVII. Develop a DoF Climate and Sustainability Action Plan for 2025/2026
- XVIII. DoF works projects for new buildings targeting BREEAM Outstanding level credits in terms of Energy Efficiency; and DoF refurbishment works projects targeting BREEAM Excellent level credits in terms of energy efficiency, where feasible ; and DoF works projects will consider the feasibility of achieving the relevant performance targets in the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standards (UKNZCBS) and will be required to undertake all aspects of carbon reporting as required under the standard.
- XIX. Including green public procurement criteria and /or eco-labels in all contracts where it is relevant and proportionate to do so.
- XX. Undertaking a waste audit of the waste generated across DoF occupied buildings and develop a waste action plan where any weaknesses are identified
- XXI. Using non-fossil fuel alternatives for all replacement DoF vehicles (where these are available)
- XXII. Publishing the Supplementary Business Case guidance on incorporating Environmental and Climate Considerations
- XXIII. Improving awareness and understanding of climate action among DoF staff by conducting a Climate and Sustainability staff survey; delivering a communications programme; and promoting online carbon literacy training
- XXIV. Working in conjunction with DAERA to strengthen NICS departmental guidance for sustainability reporting
- XXV. Publishing data alongside Budget 2025/26 on initial links between Budget and Programme for Government (including climate commitments)
- XXVI. We will report our actions in the DoF Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2025/26 and publish an action plan for 2026/27 continuing to strengthen our commitment to climate action.

Theme Four: Promoting Well-being (2 Actions)

xxvii. Develop a baseline to capture the number of volunteering days and activities carried out by DoF staff

xxviii. Require DoF contractors to develop a staff well-being framework to ensure staff have access to appropriate support and well-being service

Section 2

Actions to be completed by Outside the Target Date

12. The table below provides details of the **8** actions which cannot be achieved by the original target date. These actions will be carried forward to year 2 (2026/2027).

13. There are no actions under Theme 3 (Delivering Climate Action) to be completed outside the target date.

TABLE 3: ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED OUTSIDE TARGET DATE	
Theme One: Increasing secure employment and skills (1 Action)	Target date
i. Allocate at least 10% of the maximum weighted score to delivering secure employment and skills through the collaborative contract for Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)	31 March 2026 Revised Date: Under Review as a decision was taken to not proceed with this collaborative contract yet.
Theme Two: Building ethical and resilient supply-chains (3 Actions)	Target date
ii. Allocate at least 10% to social value of the maximum weighted to build resilient supply chains through the NICS Portering and Furniture Storage contract	31 March 2026 Revised Date: 1 st February 2027
iii. Work with other departments to provide guidance on Grant Standards to ensure consistent application of grant funding across all departments	31 March 2026 Revised Date: 31 December 2026

iv. Update the Social Value Supplementary Business Case guidance and Social Value Tool with regards to building ethical and resilient supply chains.	31 March 2026 Revised Date: 31 March 2027
Theme Four: Promoting Well-being (4 Actions)	Target date
v. Review the actions within the Civil Service People Plan People Pillar two: 'support and improve health and wellbeing'	1 April 2025 Revised Date: 31 December 2026
vi. Reaffirm the Civil Service commitment to the Mental Health Charter	1 April 2025 Revised Date: 31 March 2027
vii. Increase the number of volunteering days by 10%	31 March 2026 Revised Date: 31 March 2027
viii. Continue to implement the Civil Service Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as a key commitment in the Civil Service five-year People Strategy, building a positive health and wellbeing culture for all civil servants	31 March 2026 Revised Date: 30 May 2026

Stakeholder Feedback

14. The commitment to develop a Social Value Strategy is included in the Procurement Policy Note [PPN 01/21 - Social Value in Procurement](#). The Department of Finance is the first Department to publish its [Social Value Strategy](#) and is therefore leading the way for other departments.
15. The Department is keen to gather feedback from stakeholders in terms of the goals and ambitions outlined in its Social Value Strategy to help inform future strategies.
16. If you wish to provide feedback, please email procure.policy@finance-ni.gov.uk.