# SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGY

1. **Introduction**

**WHAT IS MEANT BY SOCIAL IMPACT?**

Social impact is a process for planning, measuring, and attributing positive social change to an organisation's work and actions and creates opportunities that are otherwise unavailable to the minorities or underprivileged.

In recent years, the push for businesses to be about more than only making profit and to embrace a social purpose has risen. Executives, employees, customers, and even investors are looking beyond the bottom line and asking for the organisation’s social impact.

At the heart of the Chamber is our engagement and involvement with members and the local business community, in a range of collaborative networks that support the development of opportunities, relationships and the local economy. Through representation, connections, and promotion, we ensure members increase their profile, gain business and have access to responsive and relevant business solutions to enable them to thrive and grow.

In addition, the Chamber supports all businesses within the local community by providing a range of relevant services and opportunities to engender greater economic success and a positive, thriving sense of place.

To fully understand the influence the Chamber’s activities have on the local community, focus on these key areas, and measure their impact more effectively, a social impact strategy has been developed.

We also understand the importance of building employee, customer and community trust, thereby helping to create an environment in which the Chamber can thrive and in which employees are proud to work

This policy has been developed through feedback and consultation with our employees.

1. **Our Commitments and values**

Vision:

“Working with the whole businesses community, to build sustainable economic growth in Herefordshire and Worcestershire”

Mission:

“To provide access to solutions that local businesses need to achieve their goals, through engaging, influencing and connecting. To be responsive to the external environment, offering responsive and relevant approaches”

Values:

Nurture

Passionate

Colourful

Unity

The Chamber places a high level of importance on its social impact, demonstrated in the existing business plan, which confirms the organisation’s commitment to:

* Increasing commitment to social impact and sustainability strategies
* Implementing, reviewing, and monitoring a Social Impact strategy and action plan.

**3.0 Strategic Priorities and Measures of Success**

As the organisation looks to the future, social impact will play an integral part within the organisation’s success. Our commitment, ongoing actions, development strategies and measurements to these key areas can be seen in the attached table, under the following themes:

1. Community
2. People
3. Planet

The above themes are the focus areas which form the organisation’s strategy and action plan.

This strategy has also been aligned to the recent Investors in People (IIP) report following the organisation’s Platinum accreditation in February 2022. The report included recommendations to help support our corporate social responsibility/social impact activity and therefore the IIP report recommendations will be included in the regular review process (see section 4.0) to ensure alignment and rollout of those recommendations.

Of particular importance is our companies commitment to serve our local community and in line with the B Corp recommended guidance, we will strive to:

* purchase core products (at least 50% of non-labor expenses) from independent suppliers local to where the product will be used or where the company operates
* serve at least 75% local and independent clients or customers.

**4.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONAL PROCESS**

In order to fully implement our social impact strategy, an action plan with associated responsibilities/leads has been agreed and will be operated. The actions will align to the focus areas in this document and will be formally monitored and reviewed to ensure consistent progress against the plan and to enable formal evaluations to be carried out to report upon to our stakeholders (employees, board and externally to our members).

Therefore the action plan should be read in conjunction with this document.

The action plan will be co-ordinated and monitored by HR.

**5.0 EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT**

5.1 Time off

All employees are allowed 1 paid day per year (7.5 hours) to take part in a charitable activity of their choice. This includes any personal charitable involvement they wish to make if this time falls within their normal working hours. The charity will be personal choice of the employee and does not have to be a Chamber member.

Time may be taken as 1 day or broken down into hours over a number of days. For part-time employees the time allowed will be pro-rata’d in line with their contractual working hours.

The organisation reserves the right to refuse a request due to operational and business constraints or if the cause is considered to be immoral or unethical or there are legal implications in taking part.

Any request for time off in respect of personal charitable involvement must be made through CINTRA and manager approval obtained.

**6.0 TRACKING AND MONITORING**

The organisation’s action plan which supports this document shares tasks and responsibilities across the organisation, each team or individual has been identified as best placed to lead on a particular area and/or having the skills needed in order to develop, execute and deliver the tasks to achieve required outcomes. The plan is reported on monthly to the Leadership team via the output spreadsheet.

In order for the organisation to fully understand the progress and, ultimately, the impact of these activities, it is important to review on a regular basis the progress made and the benefits gained.

Therefore, actions will be completed by to those delegated to on the action plan and monitored by the Leadership team with the organisation’s other performance and outputs). Thus ensuring full ownership across the company.

When and where appropriate, HR will collate information on progress on activities.

The reviews and subsequent reporting will include progress against the recommendations in the Investors in People report as referred to in section 3.0.

This information will also be shared on a regular basis with employees either via staff briefs or email bulletins/newsletters.

**7.0 COMMUNICATIONS**

As well as the internal communications detailed in the previous section, an element of external communication will take place (e.g. via social media and the companies website) about the activities which have taken place.

This will include a social impact flyer outlining, with the use of graphics, the main achievements for the year against targets set. The graphic will also include targets for the following financial year, building on our achievements.