

CSR COMPLETE ACCREDITED, LEVEL 5 FULL CSR AND ESG ASSESSMENT REPORT

DATE: 22 May 2026

Accreditation Level: CSR Complete Level 5

Organisation: Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce
Overall Position: Embedded Responsible Practice

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Website: <https://staffordshirechambers.co.uk/>
CSR Diary: <https://staffordshirechambers.co.uk/news/>
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Section 1: Executive Summary

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce has been assessed against the CSR Complete accreditation framework and has been formally awarded CSR Complete Level 5 accreditation, the highest tier available within the framework. This places the organisation at the Embedded Responsible Practice level, meaning that responsible business conduct is not simply documented in policy but is actively demonstrated through consistent operational behaviour, verified community activity, and a governance structure that assigns real accountability for CSR and ESG outcomes.

For a procurement reviewer, a council officer, or a due diligence lead, this accreditation provides strong and independently verified assurance that Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce operates to a high standard across all three ESG dimensions: environmental responsibility, social responsibility, and governance. The organisation does not treat CSR as a compliance exercise. The evidence reviewed during this assessment confirms a pattern of deliberate, sustained, and publicly visible responsible practice embedded into the day to day running of the organisation.

The key finding of this assessment is that Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce demonstrates a mature and credible CSR position characterised by active workforce and community engagement, proportionate environmental management, and clear accountability at leadership level. The breadth and volume of verified diary activity, combined with the consistency between stated policy and observable practice, supports the award of the highest

accreditation level.

This report is suitable for submission to council procurement panels, public sector tender processes, supplier onboarding procedures, and commercial due diligence reviews. It provides an independent, evidence led assessment of where this organisation stands and why that position has been awarded.

Section 2: About the Organisation

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce is the principal business membership organisation serving the Staffordshire region. It operates as a not for profit membership body and provides a wide range of business support services to its member organisations, which span the full range of commercial sectors active across Staffordshire. The Chambers sits at the heart of the regional business ecosystem, connecting businesses with each other, with training and skills providers, with public sector bodies, and with national policy influencers through its affiliation with the British Chambers of Commerce network.

The organisation delivers services across several distinct operational areas. These include business networking and events, international trade advisory support, skills and employment programmes, advocacy and business representation, and access to accredited training. The Chambers also plays an active role in convening local stakeholders on economic development issues, acting as a conduit between Staffordshire businesses and regional and national government.

In terms of workforce scale, Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce employs a team that is representative of a professionally run regional membership organisation of this type. The workforce is engaged across programme delivery, business development, marketing and communications, finance, and operations. The organisation operates from fixed premises in Staffordshire and delivers activity across the county and beyond through its national network affiliations.

The operational context relevant to CSR and ESG assessment is shaped by the nature of the organisation's role. As a membership body that actively advises and supports other businesses on responsible practice, the Chambers carries an additional degree of accountability. Member businesses and public sector partners reasonably expect the Chambers to model the standards it promotes. This creates a clear leadership obligation, and the evidence reviewed during this assessment confirms that this obligation is taken seriously.

Section 3: Accreditation Position and Assessment Methodology

CSR Complete is an independent accreditation framework designed specifically for UK organisations seeking to assess, verify, and formally evidence their corporate social responsibility and ESG position. The framework operates across five levels, with Level 1 reflecting initial and emerging CSR awareness and Level 5 representing fully embedded responsible practice across all three ESG dimensions.

Assessment at each level draws on a structured evidence review that examines written policy, operational documentation, governance arrangements, and verified activity records. The CSR diary, which in the case of Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce takes the form of the publicly accessible news section of the organisational website, provides the primary source of live operational evidence. Policy documents and accreditation reports provide the supporting framework and governance context.

The methodology used in this assessment involved a systematic review of the policies submitted for accreditation, the accreditation report previously issued to the organisation, and the CSR diary as maintained and published at the time of assessment. Evidence was assessed for credibility, specificity, and consistency across ESG

dimensions. Particular weight was given to evidence of operational behaviour that aligns with stated policy, and to the volume, variety, and regularity of verified activity entries.

Level 5 accreditation is awarded where an organisation demonstrates all of the following: clear and operational policy across all ESG dimensions; verified and sustained community and social activity; proportionate and improving environmental management; and a governance structure that assigns named accountability for CSR performance. Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce meets all of these criteria and has accordingly been awarded CSR Complete Level 5 accreditation.

Section 4: Environmental Responsibility

This report provides a full evidence based assessment of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental, social and governance (ESG) position of Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce at the time of assessment.

In terms of environmental responsibility, the organisation's approach is proportionate to its operational profile and reflects a clear commitment to managing and reducing its environmental footprint in practical and realistic terms. Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce operates primarily as an office based and events led organisation. Its principal sources of environmental impact are associated with energy consumption at its premises, transport and travel activity connected with events and stakeholder engagement, the procurement of goods and services, and the environmental footprint of the events it delivers for members and partners.

The organisation has in place an environmental policy that acknowledges these areas of impact and commits the organisation to identifying, monitoring, and where possible reducing them. The policy is written in terms that are appropriate to an organisation of this size and type. It does not overstate ambition or commit the organisation to targets that would be unrealistic within its operational context. Instead, it establishes a clear framework of practical commitments: reducing unnecessary energy use at premises, encouraging more sustainable travel choices where practicable, considering environmental criteria when procuring goods and services, and embedding environmental awareness into the broader culture of the organisation.

The events activity delivered by the Chambers is a material consideration in environmental terms. The organisation delivers a significant volume of events throughout the year, ranging from large scale business awards to regular networking and training sessions. Each of these events carries an associated environmental footprint connected with venue use, catering, printed materials, delegate travel, and waste. The evidence reviewed in this assessment indicates that the Chambers gives consideration to these factors in its event planning, including choices around venue accessibility, the reduction of single use materials, and the use of digital alternatives to printed collateral where practical.

The organisation also demonstrates environmental awareness through the content it communicates to its membership. Coverage of sustainability themes in the CSR diary confirms that the Chambers regularly features, promotes, and engages with environmental issues as part of its business support and advocacy role. This is relevant because it demonstrates that environmental responsibility is not treated as an internal back office matter but is integrated into the outward facing role the organisation plays in shaping regional business behaviour.

At Level 5, the assessment does not require the organisation to have achieved net zero or to have completed formal carbon accounting exercises. What it requires is evidence that environmental responsibility is taken seriously, managed proportionately, and integrated into both policy and operational practice. Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce meets this requirement clearly and consistently.

Section 5: Social Responsibility and Workforce Conduct

Social responsibility is the dimension in which Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce demonstrates the greatest depth and breadth of verified evidence, and it is in this area that the organisation's Level 5 accreditation is most firmly grounded.

Workforce Wellbeing and People Management

The organisation operates with a clear commitment to the wellbeing of its workforce. Its people management approach reflects an understanding that staff who are well supported, fairly treated, and appropriately developed are both more effective in their roles and more likely to demonstrate the kind of professional conduct that reflects well on the organisation externally. The workforce policies reviewed as part of this assessment cover expected standards across conduct, dignity and respect, flexible and hybrid working arrangements, and access to development and progression opportunities.

The organisation's commitment to staff development is evidenced not only in policy but in practice. Training and professional development activity is a consistent feature of the organisational diary, and the Chambers invests in the skills of its own people alongside its wider role in supporting skills development across the region. This dual role, as both a provider of skills support and an employer that takes skills seriously internally, reinforces the credibility of the organisation's social responsibility position.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce has a documented commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion that is clearly articulated in its policy framework. The policy addresses recruitment, workplace conduct, progression, and the organisation's external engagement with diverse communities and business populations. The Chambers is active in promoting inclusive business practice through its member engagement work, and this is evidenced across a number of diary entries that reflect deliberate engagement with underrepresented groups and communities.

The organisation's approach to EDI is practical and proportionate. It does not use performative language that lacks operational substance. Instead, the evidence reviewed confirms that equality considerations are embedded into how the organisation recruits, how it communicates, and how it designs and delivers its member facing programmes. This is the level of integration that the CSR Complete framework requires in order to satisfy the social dimension at Level 5.

Community Contribution

Community contribution is an area in which Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce goes significantly beyond what would be expected of an organisation of its size and type. By the nature of its role as the principal business voice for the Staffordshire region, the Chambers is inherently a community asset. However, the evidence reviewed confirms that this community role is actively and deliberately exercised, not simply incidental to the organisation's commercial operations.

The CSR diary contains a substantial volume of verified entries confirming community engagement through events, partnerships, charitable initiatives, skills and employment programmes, and advocacy on behalf of the regional business community. The organisation works closely with schools and colleges, with public sector bodies, with voluntary and charitable organisations, and with businesses of all sizes. This breadth of community engagement is a distinguishing feature of the Chambers' social responsibility profile and is one of the primary reasons the Level 5 accreditation position has been awarded with confidence.

Section 6: Governance and Accountability

The governance dimension of this assessment examines how responsibility for CSR and ESG is assigned, exercised, and reviewed within the organisation. This is a critical area for public sector procurement purposes because it determines whether the responsible practice evidenced elsewhere in this report is genuinely embedded or merely aspirational.

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce assigns responsibility for CSR and ESG matters at leadership level. The organisation's senior leadership team holds accountability for the delivery and review of the commitments set out in the policy framework, and there is clear internal ownership of the CSR diary as a live and maintained record of responsible practice. This accountability structure is appropriate for an organisation of this size and type. It does not require a formal committee or dedicated ESG resource to be credible at Level 5. What it requires is that named individuals at an appropriate level of seniority are responsible for ensuring that policy commitments are being met and that the evidence record is kept current.

The CSR diary maintained at the news section of the Chambers website serves both an internal accountability function and a public transparency function. By publishing activity in an open and accessible format, the organisation creates a visible and verifiable record of its responsible practice that can be reviewed by any stakeholder, including procurement officers and due diligence reviewers. This level of transparency is a positive indicator of governance maturity.

The organisation's policy documents are reviewed on a defined cycle, and the commitments within them are consistent with the operational activity evidenced in the diary. This alignment between documented policy and observed practice is one of the most important governance signals that this assessment considers. Where a gap exists between what an organisation says in its policies and what it demonstrably does in practice, that is a governance weakness. In the case of Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce, no such gap has been identified. The policies are credible, operational, and matched by evidence of real activity.

The Chambers also demonstrates governance maturity through its engagement with external frameworks and its affiliation with the British Chambers of Commerce network. This affiliation brings with it reputational accountability and access to national policy thinking on responsible business practice, both of which reinforce the internal governance arrangements of the organisation.

Section 7: CSR Diary, Verified Activity Record

The CSR diary for Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce is maintained through the news section of the organisational website and constitutes the primary source of live operational evidence in this assessment. The diary has been reviewed across a representative period and contains a substantial volume of entries that are relevant to the ESG assessment across all three dimensions.

The following verified activities have been identified and are recorded here as part of the formal accreditation evidence base.

The Chambers has actively promoted and hosted a wide range of business and community facing events throughout the assessment period. These events span business networking, sector specific roundtables, training and development sessions, awards ceremonies recognising business excellence in the region, and events designed to connect businesses with public sector partners. The volume and regularity of this activity confirms a consistently active role in the regional business community.

The organisation has featured and supported skills and employment related activity across multiple diary entries. This includes engagement with apprenticeship and trainee programmes, collaboration with further and higher education providers, and promotion of workforce development initiatives relevant to Staffordshire businesses. This activity is directly relevant to the social dimension of the ESG assessment and reflects a genuine and sustained investment in the skills of the regional workforce.

The diary contains evidence of charitable and community fundraising activity, including participation in and promotion of events that raise funds and awareness for local and national causes. This community contribution sits alongside the organisation's primary membership role and demonstrates a commitment to giving back that goes beyond the transactional obligations of a business membership body.

The Chambers has consistently covered regional economic development themes in its diary content, including coverage of infrastructure investment, inward investment opportunities, and the advocacy work it undertakes on behalf of Staffordshire businesses at a regional and national level. This advocacy function has clear relevance to the governance dimension of the ESG assessment, as it reflects an organisation that takes seriously its role in shaping the conditions for responsible business growth.

The diary also evidences the Chambers' engagement with international trade support activity, including guidance and events related to export opportunities, customs and compliance, and the practical challenges facing businesses trading internationally. This activity reflects the breadth of the Chambers' operational role and its relevance to a diverse and geographically distributed membership.

Environmental and sustainability themes appear in the diary record with sufficient regularity to confirm that the Chambers treats these issues as a legitimate and ongoing part of its member engagement work. This is particularly relevant in the context of the environmental dimension of the ESG assessment, as it demonstrates that the organisation's environmental commitment is not restricted to internal operations but is actively communicated and promoted outwardly.

Across all diary entries reviewed, the evidence is consistent in tone, credible in content, and specific in detail. There is no evidence of inflated claims or superficial reporting. The diary record as a whole presents a picture of an organisation that is genuinely active, genuinely engaged, and genuinely committed to responsible practice in a way that is visible, verifiable, and sustained over time.

Section 8: External Credibility and Procurement Readiness

This final section provides a summary of the overall evidence position across all three ESG dimensions and sets out the procurement readiness assessment that follows from the findings of this report.

Across the environmental dimension, Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce demonstrates a proportionate and credible commitment to managing its environmental footprint. The policy framework is appropriate to the organisation's operational profile, and there is evidence of environmental considerations being integrated into event planning, procurement, and the content the organisation communicates to its membership. This is a solid and credible environmental position for an organisation of this type.

Across the social dimension, the organisation demonstrates an exceptionally strong and well evidenced position. The volume and variety of community and workforce related activity confirmed through the CSR diary is among the most compelling social responsibility evidence reviewed at this accreditation level. The organisation's inherent role as a regional business champion is reinforced and extended by the deliberate and sustained social contribution it

makes through its programmes, partnerships, charitable engagement, and skills activity. This is a genuinely impressive and commercially credible social responsibility profile.

Across the governance dimension, the organisation demonstrates clear accountability, transparent public reporting through its diary, and alignment between policy commitment and operational practice. The governance arrangements are appropriate to an organisation of this size and type and provide a credible basis for the responsible practice evidenced throughout the assessment.

For procurement purposes, Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce presents as a highly credible and fully accredited responsible business. The organisation holds CSR Complete Level 5 accreditation, the highest level available, and has demonstrated the breadth, depth, and consistency of evidence required to sustain that position. Procurement officers, council panels, and due diligence reviewers can rely on this report as a current, independently issued, and evidence based assessment of the organisation's CSR and ESG position.

The organisation is assessed as procurement ready across all standard CSR and ESG evaluation criteria. There are no material gaps, inconsistencies, or concerns identified in this assessment. The evidence reviewed supports a confident and