

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT POLICY

Organisation: **Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce**

Document Prepared By: CSR Complete

1. Introduction

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce (hereafter referred to as "the Chamber") is committed to creating meaningful and measurable positive impact within the communities we serve across Staffordshire and beyond. This Community and Social Impact Policy outlines our commitment to responsible business practice, our approach to community engagement, and our intention to support the economic and social development of the region in which we operate.

The Chamber recognises that our role extends beyond the provision of business services. As a membership organisation dedicated to supporting, connecting, and growing businesses across Staffordshire, we occupy a position of influence and responsibility within the regional business ecosystem. Our members, partners, and stakeholders look to us for leadership not only in business excellence but also in social responsibility and community stewardship.

This policy applies to all staff members, board members, volunteers, and representatives of the Chamber. It sets out the principles that guide our decision making, the priorities we have identified as important to our communities, and the practical mechanisms through which we deliver community and social impact.

The policy recognises that sustainable business growth is intrinsically linked to thriving, healthy, and economically resilient communities. By strengthening the business environment, supporting entrepreneurship, and contributing to local prosperity, the Chamber contributes to the wellbeing of Staffordshire residents, families, and communities.

2. Current Activity

The Chamber already undertakes significant community and social impact work through the core delivery of our services and through targeted community engagement initiatives. This section documents our existing activities and impact.

2.1 Business Support and Economic Development

The Chamber's primary contribution to social and economic impact is delivered through our core business services. These include the provision of international trade and export documentation that enables Staffordshire businesses to access global markets, thereby creating employment and economic opportunity. Our business training programmes, including the Chamber AI Academy, equip business leaders and employees with practical skills that enhance productivity, innovation, and competitiveness.

Through our events, business forums, and networking activities, we facilitate valuable connections between businesses, suppliers, customers, and partners. This connector role strengthens the regional business ecosystem and supports knowledge sharing, collaboration, and business growth. Our expert advocacy ensures that the voices of Staffordshire businesses are heard by local and national policymakers, enabling policies and regulations to be shaped with awareness of local business needs.

These activities generate significant social and economic impact by supporting job creation, business survival, business growth, and the development of skilled workforces across the region.

2.2 Current Community Engagement

The Chamber supports community initiatives through:

- Participation in local business improvement districts and town centre regeneration efforts
- Sponsorship of community events, business awards, and celebration of local enterprise
- Collaboration with educational institutions to promote enterprise education and career awareness in young people
- Provision of pro bono business advice and mentorship to social enterprises and community interest companies

- Support for diversity and inclusion initiatives that widen opportunity within the business community
- Engagement with local economic development partnerships and strategic planning bodies

2.3 Member and Staff Engagement

The Chamber actively encourages members to engage in community and corporate social responsibility activities through our forums, events, and communications. Staff members are supported to volunteer within the community through paid volunteer leave, and the organisation recognises and celebrates these contributions.

2.4 Current Impact Measurement

The Chamber currently tracks impact through membership numbers, event attendance, business training participation, and feedback from members and participants. We maintain records of international trade documentation processed, export values facilitated, and business outcomes reported by training participants.

3. Future Intent

The Chamber is committed to strengthening and expanding our community and social impact activities over the coming years. This section sets out our priorities and commitments.

3.1 Strategic Priorities

Over the period 2026 to 2027 and beyond, the Chamber will focus on the following strategic priorities:

Priority One: Supporting Inclusive Economic Growth

We will work to ensure that economic growth and business opportunity is accessible to underrepresented groups within the business community, including women entrepreneurs, individuals from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, disabled entrepreneurs, and people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. We will develop targeted support, mentorship, and networking opportunities for these groups.

Priority Two: Skills Development and Employment

We will expand our training and development offerings to address skills gaps identified by our members and local employers. We will work with educational partners to strengthen the pipeline of skilled workers entering the labour market and to support adult skills development and career progression.

Priority Three: Business Resilience and Sustainability

We will support our members to adopt sustainable business practices, including environmental sustainability, financial resilience, and responsible supply chain management. We will provide training, guidance, and peer learning opportunities in these areas.

Priority Four: Community Prosperity and Town Centre Vitality

We will actively support the vitality and prosperity of Staffordshire's town centres and communities through business support, advocacy for local business friendly policies, and collaboration with local partners on regeneration and development initiatives.

3.2 Specific Commitments

In pursuit of these priorities, the Chamber commits to:

Commitment A: Enhanced Data Collection and Impact Measurement

By the end of 2026, we will implement improved systems for collecting data on the impact of our activities. This will include tracking of business outcomes (job creation, business survival rates, turnover growth), diversity metrics for our programmes and events, participant feedback and satisfaction, and qualitative case studies of impact. This enhanced measurement will enable us to evidence our contribution to community and social outcomes and to identify areas for improvement.

Commitment B: Development of Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

We will develop a detailed action plan focused on widening access to our services and opportunities, particularly for underrepresented groups in business. This will include review of our events, training programmes, and communications to ensure they are accessible, welcoming, and actively promoted to diverse communities. We will set targets for participation by underrepresented groups and track progress against these targets.

Commitment C: Expansion of Training and Development Offerings

Building on the success of our Chamber AI Academy, we will identify skills gaps and training needs through member consultation and labour market research. We will explore opportunities to develop new training programmes or to partner with other providers to deliver relevant training. We will prioritise training that supports business competitiveness, sustainability, and inclusive recruitment practices.

Commitment D: Strengthened Partnerships with Community Organisations

We will develop partnerships with local community organisations, charities, social enterprises, and public sector partners to identify shared priorities and to deliver joint initiatives. These partnerships will enable us to extend our reach, combine expertise and resources, and deliver more significant impact.

Commitment E: Advocacy for Inclusive and Sustainable Business Policy

We will use our advocacy role to champion policies that support inclusive economic growth, sustainable business practices, skills development, and community prosperity. We will engage with local and national policymakers on these issues and will communicate members' experiences and needs.

Commitment F: Employee Volunteering and Engagement

We will establish a structured employee volunteering programme that provides paid time for staff to contribute to community initiatives. We will celebrate and recognise these contributions and will seek to align volunteering opportunities with the Chamber's strategic priorities where possible.

Commitment G: Transparent Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

We will communicate our community and social impact activities and outcomes transparently to members, partners, and the broader public. We will publish an annual Community and Social Impact Report detailing our activities, outcomes, and learnings.

3.3 Resource Allocation

The Chamber recognises that meaningful community and social impact requires dedicated resources. We commit to allocating appropriate staff time and financial resources to support the implementation of this policy. The specific allocation of resources will be determined

within our annual operational planning process.

4. Responsibility and Review

4.1 Governance and Oversight

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Chamber's leadership team. The Chief Executive Officer is accountable for ensuring that the commitments set out in this policy are met and for reporting on progress to the board.

A designated staff member will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the policy and to coordinate community and social impact activities across the organisation. This individual will report regularly to the Chief Executive Officer and will liaise with relevant committees and forum groups.

4.2 Stakeholder Engagement

The Chamber will engage with members, partners, and community stakeholders in the implementation of this policy. Member feedback and input will be sought through our regular forums and through specific consultation on the development of new initiatives.

4.3 Annual Review and Reporting

This policy will be formally reviewed on 22 May 2027 and thereafter on an annual basis. The review will assess our progress against the commitments set out in the policy and will identify any necessary revisions or refinements.

An annual Community and Social Impact Report will be published, typically in the second quarter of each year. This report will detail:

- Activities undertaken in the preceding twelve months
- Quantitative outcomes and impact metrics
- Qualitative feedback and case studies
- Progress against specific commitments
- Learnings and areas for improvement

- Priorities and plans for the forthcoming year

The report will be made available on the Chamber website at <https://staffordshirechambers.co.uk/> and will be communicated to members and stakeholders.

4.4 Continuous Improvement

The Chamber is committed to continuous improvement in our community and social impact work. We will actively seek feedback from participants, members, and partners, and we will use this feedback to refine our approach and enhance our effectiveness. Staff members involved in community and social impact activities will be supported through training and development to maintain and enhance their skills.

4.5 Policy Compliance

All staff members, board members, and representatives of the Chamber are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and to ensure that their work is aligned with its principles and commitments. Any queries or concerns regarding the implementation of this policy should be raised with the Chief Executive Officer.

Effective Date: 22 May 2026

Next Review Date: 22 May 2027

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