



Creating Social Value

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Technology Makes it Possible, People Make it Happen



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Social Value Review

Executive Summary

Having had the pleasure to interview a highly motivated Management Team from across Avanti West Coast (AWC) it was obvious from the outset that sustainability and social value is active within the business with full encouragement and endorsement by Andy Mellor MD, who clearly understands the wider Industry need to demonstrate our social purpose within society. Andy's participation within the workshop demonstrates both the Boards and the DfT's ambition to stimulate and champion greater social value (SV) in order to engage and educate taxpayers on how we as a sector deliver shared value creation.

It is clear from their Social Value Report 2023 that AWC understand that the prosperity of business and society are intrinsically linked, one cannot succeed without the other. They are proud to have a record of encouraging a customer-centric culture, which actively inspires social value benefits impacting far beyond their operational route. However, like many businesses a high percentage of the SV activities are created from the Community Champions who through continual community engagement clearly recognise that we operate in a complex, fast changing landscape with shifting social and environmental pressures and changing consumer values and choices. As one of the UK's leading Operators this is both their immediate and long-term business challenge and I am confident that the wider Senior Management Team will embrace the importance of delivering social value across all their departments if they are to leverage greater social value to achieve their ambitious (but achievable) target of £1 billion worth of social value by 2031.

The findings in this analysis are based on my initial two-hour consultation with key leads from across the business focusing on the following four pillars of social value: Community; People, Planet and Marketplace. In addition to this report, I have been asked to review the Social Value Report 2023 which will follow this analysis. Combined it is hoped that the warts-and-all review will provide Theresa Roberts a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the business together with areas for consideration to drive continual improvement.

Following the review, colleagues from RSSB and I will advise Theresa in the use of the Rail Social Value Tool, which will continue to provide methods of data collection from across each department to ensure all social value activities are accurately captured and measured.

This report is a gap analysis which allows both the participants and the Executive Board an overview of what is required to develop a more structured approach. Once developed this process will effectively recalibrate and complement the established business strategy, inspiring greater leverage from across the business to support AWC continual improvement towards their 2031 £1 Billion Challenge.

Chris Leech MBE

Head of Responsible Business Practice, Tracsis Transport Consultancy Ltd

Introducing Social Sustainability

Social value is a relatively new area of study - there's currently no legal or commonly accepted definition. The UK Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 talks about securing wider social, economic, and environmental benefits. The UN Global Compact covers identifying and managing the impacts of business (both positive and negative) on people.

But at its simplest, social sustainability is about measuring impact on the welfare and wellbeing of both individuals and wider society. From rail's point of view social values are the principles or standards that guide the behaviour of individuals, groups, or organisations in society. They reflect what is important or desirable for the common good. Businesses can demonstrate social values by contributing to social, environmental or economic causes that benefit their stakeholders and the wider community.

As previously mentioned in our meeting, many of the top FTSE 100/250 businesses now recognise the significance of social value and how it can positively engage and influence their markets. This is visible across all marketing platforms as these businesses now prioritise promoting both their social value impacts and shared value creation above the promotion of their products and services.

Shared value creation

A business' social license to operate depends greatly on its social sustainability. We need to consider not only our current social value, but the social value we could offer in an ever-changing marketplace. When public subsidy is used then economic arguments for new projects or activities are no longer enough: we need good social ones that educate our communities on the wider positive impact's rail projects bring to society. This includes understanding how transport projects affect: the environment and biodiversity; cultural heritage; access to housing; mental and physical health; crime and safety; inclusivity and distribution of opportunities; and social capital.

Measuring social sustainability isn't about cost savings but added value. This aligns perfectly to AWC established "Every Penny Counts" programme. The more we measure, the more we can communicate - not just to policymakers, or indeed our current customers but also to attract future generations of rail workers to sustain our growth and innovation.

UK Rail was created to provide a social purpose, however, since privatisation and changes in operational practices and political leadership it genuinely feels like we are all on the start of the social value journey. The core purpose of our business hasn't changed, but the context of business is changing. Greater scrutiny and pressures are shining a spotlight on how businesses related to UK make their money, on the impact they have on the communities they serve and on the importance of creating long-term shared value. Therefore, the more we humanise our industry through the drip feeding of positive communication, the greater community leverage we will build and a better position our sector will be in to deliver mutual benefits for both business and society. From levelling up to reducing our carbon footprint and supporting those most in need, transport has the power to affect significant positive change to those we serve.

Therefore, having been introduced to your organisations Leads I am positive your ambitious target of £1 billion by 2031 will be met if the integration of social value into all commercial decision making is implemented.

Overview of key issues for Avanti West Coast by impact areas:

Community	Planet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Ambassadors continue to generate significant SV. - AWC recognise that community represents the largest proportion of SV impacts. - As demonstrated at Runcorn, utilisation of station assets can generate targeted SV which aligns to both commercial and community needs. - Opportunity to review commercial decision making processes to ensure SV is generated . - Integration of social enterprises within station is viewed as a significant benefit to society. Considering target stations for a pilot would generate the data required to influence perception within the commercial dept. - AWC support 20 CRPs across the route. Are all the CRPs both accountable and measurable on delivering SV. - Could AWC provide commercial support to ensure CRPs are commercially focused when delivering projects to support their future post reform - Encourage CRPs to measure SV via RSVT - Greater collaboration on delivering against the 10 objectives. This should be achieved through periodical support to encourage Dept Heads and to recognise and provide support on areas of weaknesses and drive continual improvement. - Consider recalibrating the SV mission statement with HR Guiding Strategy to actively educate and encourage SV ideas that can generate mutual benefits for the business and community. - Develop a clear charitable giving “criteria” which can then be tracked and reported on. - Opportunity to align community investment with challenges in business e.g. Princes Trust/Disability groups - Programmes in place but not joined up - Need to gain employee buy in to business benefits - Opportunities to measure impact - Create CO2 Ambassadors in the community - Opportunity to train Community Ambassadors - Develop a community comms strategy which clearly articulates AWC vision and values this can be published both on-line and passenger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zero to landfill target - Introduce a metric of reuse. - Some sites leased so more difficult to affect efficiencies. - Recommend “Green champions” within the workplace. - Environmental work is more structured than similar operators however alignment to overall business strategy would ensure quality of reporting and KPI’s are met. - Create CO2 Ambassadors in the community - No targets for onboard waste - No view of suppliers impacts on waste although AWC know they have the largest Environmental impacts - AWC are 14001 and 50001 certified. - Targets set to reduce 2.5% electricity consumption per year. - Opportunities to transfer Liverpool best practice of driver braking techniques if agreed with ACAS - Potential greater opportunities to create greater collaboration within shared depots

<p>magazines. “Responsible business page” to help humanise your business activities across all aspects of SV.</p>	
<p>Marketplace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a procurement policy which reflects AWC vision and values around SV - Currently no SV KPI’s integrated into tendering process. - No SV Tendering Framework to create greater leverage and collaboration. - Currently reviewing procurement process in order to mitigate risk in the supply chain. - Opportunity to integrate social/economic and environmental considerations into tendering processes. - SV vs Commercial opportunities presents a challenge for SV maturity. - No SV considerations are currently embedded within procurement policies, procedures and decision making. - Minimum marketing and communication on SV shared value creation. 	<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of new People Strategy provides good opportunity to integrate their SV impacts which clearly defines AWC vision and values to attract and retain staff. - SV to be integrated into Guiding Strategy to ensure accountability and measurability. - SV to be integrated in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy - SV to be integrated in Performance and Talent Succession Strategy - Opportunity to strengthen diversity within management and senior exec team. - Opportunity to provide a clear and honest narrative which articulates the SV in supporting career progression with AWC. - Data Insights can be generated to map changes in attitudes and culture during times of disruption, such as strikes, winter pandemics and during economic uncertainty recession. This insight can then influence future engagement. - Opportunity to review the Leadership Strategy to align content to SV strategy - Opportunity to empower employee-led SV activities. This can include volunteering which can be acknowledged celebrated and measured RSVT - Opportunity to offer work placements, interviewing techniques and CV completion as part of Community investment within socially isolated regions - A majority of staff highlighted SV/Sustainability very important. - Opportunity for SV to compliment the future Wellbeing Strategy - Opportunity to understand absence touch points - Work-life balance can be an issue within management - Excellent benefits package to all employees. - Staff engagement opportunity to review - Talent Academy could be used to actively promote SV impacts from across the network - 1-2-1 Appraisals could be more consistent to ensure accountability, transparency and recognition.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health & Wellbeing but currently no analysis on impact. - Recognised that currently trust and confidence across their employees is low, and that Virgin was strong on SV therefore greater emphasis should be considered to promote SV through targeted employee engagement. - Opportunity to agree SV objectives for HR to ensure SV is monitored and measured on Education, Wellbeing and retention. - Future proof the strategies to acknowledge future reform and mitigate potential risks to the business.
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Key Focus Areas to consider going forward:

Educating your Department Heads and wider company employees on social value.

- Consider developing a series of workshops with Dept Heads/Leads. Using the RSVT as the primary benchmarks, the structure of the workshops should focus on individual departments to support the understanding of how SV can be effectively integrated into each department to yield best results without impacting operational performance.
- Consider integrating SV into Dept Heads/Leads KPI's. This should be introduced in a way that positively encourages SV participation with year-on-year objectives to reduce the perception that SV is a bolt-on to business-as-usual across Departments.
- Consider integrating SV into your Guiding Principles under a sub-heading of "Shared Value Creation".
- Consider creating periodical reports which capture activities across each department to ensure Board endorsement is given to drive continual improvement.
- Consider developing an internal communication programme that aims to educate the employees on:
 - a. What Social Value is and its relevance to the sustainable development of the business.
 - b. How Social Value is integrated into every part of the business.
 - c. Captures the excellent progress made within the 2023 SV Annual Report
 - d. Encourages employees to seek new and innovative ways to increase SV activity across the business (brand ambassadors)

Consider using these six recognised Social Value business benefits of social purpose when engaging employees:

1. Social Capital - Strengthen Operating Context and Increase Trust.
2. Employee Engagement - Recruit, Retain and Motivate Employees and Build Employee Brand Advocacy.
3. Financial Performance - Enhance Financial Performance; Increase Access to Capital and Manage Risk (especially through periods of change)

4. Stakeholder Relationships - Strengthen Third-Party Relationships and Enable Collaboration
5. Innovation Generation - Increase Innovation; Enable Business Transformation and Enhance Resiliency.
6. Customer Commitment - Attract and Retain Customers and Build Customer Brand Advocacy.

To accelerate the Internal education programme, consider utilising all internal communication assets (Staff Room notice boards, screens, internal media-platforms etc) to drip feed the relevance Social Value brings to the business whilst celebrating your continued improvements highlighted within your Annual SV Report.

Procurement Department

Due to the nature of UK Rail's operation, procurement represents a significant area of business to generate SV for both TOC's and IM's. Procurement departments are often overlooked as a source of SV generation however, public sector bodies such as the DfT and Local Authorities now view this department as a key delivery opportunity for driving SV through responsible leadership.

If we are to look at suppliers' data shows that SMEs represent 99% of businesses in the UK. Defined as having up to 249 employees, they are a vital for employment and supporting the economy. Ultimately, SMEs represent a positive opportunity for AWC to leverage greater SV to achieve their goals.

Unfortunately, we only had a short amount of time to cover procurement processes however, it was clear from the discussions that there is a need to educate the Procurement Department on how SV can help positively impact their relationships with suppliers whilst supporting AWC achieve their long-term SV goals. Whether its through reducing the barriers to support greater engagement with SMEs along their operational route, creating KPI's in the procurement tendering process to set out clear objectives to support AWC long-term SV objectives, this needs to be a focused review.

- Consider hosting an SV workshop with the Procurement Department to explore how through simple changes within the procurement process SV can be generated.
- Consider making the objectives aligned to AWC 10 guiding principles on SV and contractual.
- Consider periodical engagement with suppliers to monitor activities which could generate greater outcomes and opportunities for collaboration.
- Celebrate joint value creation with suppliers
- Review the Runcorn Post Office project. Identify barriers and perceived challenges which unnecessarily prolonged the introduction of the project.
- Once identified consider changes in the decision-making process to generate more value creation.
- Consider reviewing assets to generate new and emerging opportunities to utilise station assets beyond their original design.
- Consider the introduction of SV KPI's within procurement to support the points highlighted above.

Human Resource Dept

It was obvious from our meeting that Amanda Young and the HR Team are keen to integrate SV into their new policies and strategies and I would consider urgent intervention to deliver a more focused SV workshop provided. This intervention would aim at accelerating opportunities to support the HR Team in delivering and encouraging SV across their portfolio of activities which include Education.

- Opportunity to review the Leadership Strategy to align content to SV strategy . This should include the new Leadership Competency Framework.
- Consider integrating SV in your new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy
- Consider integrating SV in your new Performance and Talent Succession Strategy
- Opportunity to empower employee-led SV activities. This can include volunteering which can be acknowledged celebrated and measured via RSVT
- Consider Future proofing the agreed strategies to acknowledge future reform. The inclusion of which will mitigate potential risks to the business in the future.

Conclusion

Captured within a two-hour workshop the information gathered provides AWC a clear snapshot of just some of the opportunities and challenges around the creation, implementation and celebration of social value within their business.

By educating Dept Leads on the opportunities social Value generates and the provision of a departmental SV Champion will ensure all SV activities generated will be effectively captured. The data insights generated should encourage greater participation and innovation.

Due to the limited time, I feel that there are more opportunities for the Sustainability team however, the points raised for consideration should provide the base for continued discussions across the departments to encourage continual improvement.

Useful Links

[Sustainability Tools and Resources \(rssb.co.uk\)](https://www.rssb.co.uk/sustainability-tools-and-resources)

[RSVT-2-page-summary.pdf \(networkrail.co.uk\)](https://www.networkrail.co.uk/rsvt-2-page-summary.pdf)

[Training Videos and Guidance for Supply Chain Users \(rssb.co.uk\)](https://www.rssb.co.uk/training-videos-and-guidance-for-supply-chain-users)

[Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431232/Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf)

[Measuring social value - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/measuring-social-value)

[Building Social Value Competence in Rail \(rssb.co.uk\)](https://www.rssb.co.uk/building-social-value-competence-in-rail)

Presentation and review of our findings

We will share the report with you and ideally the SMT and yourself to close the gap between where Avanti is now and where it is striving to be.

We will also offer ideas and advice of projects and work that can be undertaken to close the gap. We firmly believe that the actions which come out of this session will be achievable by Avanti, but if required we will provide additional assistance to ensure a successful long-term outcome.

Based on practical experience the close out session will offer additional advice on how to recalibrate current activities to ensure proposals can be integrated into a live operation with the minimum disruption.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Social Value?

Social Value is measuring the impact of activities on people and wider society's welfare and wellbeing. So, it involves looking at things like the impact of local supply chain spend, increased employment, training, and on how we support our local people and wider societal impact created by our day-to-day operation.

Choosing from the four pillars of social value; **Community, Marketplace, Planet and People**, our evaluation is based on a detailed discussion with the client's senior team which would highlight both the issues of concern for the business, where the business is in terms of managing these issues and opportunities for improvement. The confidential review is not an audit of your activities but aims to identify the key gaps in the company's approach to managing corporate responsibility and how it is integrated within the strategic management process to deliver, measure and amplify your social value.

What is the EFQM European Foundation for Quality Management

The gap analysis developed in this process adopts a management system approach which has been derived from the **European Foundation for Quality Management's (EFQM)** which covers the four key areas Approach, Deployment, Assess and Review Results.

The process widely used by organisations such as Business in the Community (BITC), also provides an initial first step for a company which may wish to enter the public Corporate Responsibility Index or the Rail Social Value Matrix Tool with clarity and focus.

Review of Annual Social Value Report 2023

The findings below have been captured following a review of AWC Social Value Report, which is an annual account of social value creation presented to key stakeholders including The Department for Transport.

The summary (pg5) refers to the release of AWC Responsible Business Plan 2021.

AWC have chosen to align their SV work streams to 10 Key impact areas of SV therefore for the context of this review, this report will focus on these impact areas:

1. Employment, training and skills
2. Educational attainment
3. Supply chain resilience and capacity
4. Rail accessibility
5. Workforce equality, diversity and customers
6. Community and charity
7. Stakeholder engagement and customers
8. Safety, health and wellbeing
9. Economic development
10. Climate and environment

1.0 Employment Training and Skills

Environment Clear evidence is demonstrated on AWC knowledge of the emerging skills gap across the sector. The retention of corporate memory represents the largest risk to UK Rail therefore focusing on this area is critical for the long-term sustainable growth of AWC and the wider sector. Businesses are constantly with different communities, from employees to local residents and beyond. Being a diverse and inclusive business not only supports these communities but supports businesses too.

Consider the following activities to support the sustainable development of this project as highlighted within the report (pg 9)

- Opportunity to review the Leadership Strategy to align content to SV strategy. This should include the new Leadership Competency Framework.
- Consider integrating SV in your new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy
- Consider integrating SV in your new Performance and Talent Succession Strategy
- Opportunity to empower employee-led SV activities. This can include volunteering which can be acknowledged celebrated and measured via RSVT.
- Consider Future proofing the agreed strategies to acknowledge future reform. The inclusion of which will mitigate potential risks to the business in the future.

Additional areas for consideration:

- **Community Frameworks:** Develop new and innovative collaborative frameworks with key organisations from either industry or from along your line of route, that can support your aims and objectives. As with all community frameworks this can harness expertise, platforms and innovation to accelerate the SV impact whilst securing match-funding to ensure a sustainable model is formed.

- **Employee empowerment:** Actively encourage employee participation in the design, development and delivery of key projects to support this agenda. This can build trust, resilience and loyalty whilst mitigating future challenges across employee relationship as highlighted (pg 9)
- Consider developing a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Further Education facilities that can amplify your EDI programmes whilst educating young people on the diversity of skills required to create a sustainable, safe railway.
- Consider creating an annual partnership with organisations that represent marginalised groups. For example, groups who represent Autism or Dyslexia or ex-offenders. These groups could be given the opportunity to understand how they could secure routes into rail.

2.0 Educational Attainment

Opportunities for consideration:

Current activities across education are obviously having a marked positive impact on those in attendance however, the impact of SV creation is limited due to capacity, time, and cost. Considering the following actions could provide measurable outcomes that accelerate and amplify your wider SV activities across the business.

- Consider developing an AWC Education Zone which can be bolted-on to the corporate website.
- The Zone could include Rail Safety aimed at key stages 4-7/7-11/11-16 providing FREE downloadable educational resources which support and amplify current activities.
- By effectively marketing this online resource platform can then reduce operational costs and increase engagement through schools, Colleges, and Community Groups, providing the perfect engagement platform on which to support the education, health and wellbeing of young people.
- Key focus areas could include Safety, Consequences of route crime, Sustainability, Routes into Rail and much more.
- Additional benefits would include helping to humanise your businesses whilst addressing some of the immediate and long-term societal challenges. Wider collaborations could be formed to encourage greater engagement to support other initiatives such as “Feel Good Field Trips”.
- All activities can be monitored to capture data-insights and trends. In turn this data can help shape future engagement and commercial drive on School/Community Group Travel.
- Feel Good Field Trips: Consider using a similar model and extending this to special educational needs (SEN) groups such as those living with Autism, partially sighted or those who require assistance travelling with limited mobility. These groups and many others could be prioritised to ensure social mobility is actively promoted across the network. Transport for Greater Manchester invest heavily on supporting young people with SEN to gain access to Further Education. In many cases these young people have to rely on private Taxi’s or Council run coaches to access FE facilities. A high percentage of these people could access FE via public transport, if they had the opportunity to practice their routes to build their confidence. This would complement activities defined in section **4.0 Rail Accessibility**.
- AWC may wish to consider partnering with Education Authorities, CRPs and other transport providers to create a pilot scheme to address this issue. Funding would be matched by Education Authorities to ensure a sustainable and measurable outcome is secured.

3.0 Supply Chain resilience and capacity

With 53% of their 691 suppliers being classified as an SME, AWC have achieved a significant level of engagement with the SME marketplace. This engagement, which was largely established during Virgin Trains reign, could be accelerated further through the implementation of KPI's to support achieving their £1billion target.

As highlighted on page 8

- Consider hosting an SV workshop with the Procurement Department to explore how through simple changes within the procurement and tendering process SV can be generated.
- Consider making the objectives aligned to AWC 10 guiding principles on SV and contractual with new and potentially existing suppliers (during contractual reviews or extensions).
- Consider periodical engagement with suppliers to monitor activities which could generate greater outcomes and opportunities for collaboration.
- Consider embedding KPI's into contractual agreements to ensure greater leverage and positive shared value creation is delivered throughout the lifespan of the contract awarded.
- Consider a review of station assets to locate 2 spaces (rooms) where social enterprise could flourish. This could be facilitated by organisations such as Community Foundation UK who can help match the right organisation to the location for mutual benefit. Alternatively using your CRP network consider creating a retail space with shared profit contracts similar to models created between Northern and Settle to Carlisle Railway Development Company CRP www.settle-carlisle.co.uk

AWC may wish to consider

4.0 Rail accessibility

It's obvious that AWC have accelerated their focus to support accessibility across their category A & B1 stations and fleet of Pendolinos through new and innovative technology. Brandon Peat holds periodical meetings with user groups in collaboration with HS2 and others continue to yield positive results. In addition the Travel Companion programme provides good use of technology to support confident travel for disabled customers.

- Consider using the information gained during these site visits together with advice from third sector organisations to develop rich advisory content which could be placed on the AWC TeachingZone. Once compiled these FREE resources could be actively promoted to community groups and advisory services along the route.
- The knowledge Transfer Partnerships created by Brandon will provide opportunities to establish new processes and policies to reduce the impact of future restructuring of staff. Consider hosting future workshops with key focus groups to create a collaborative road map. The outcome and data-insights will underpin future investment.
- To ensure the good work is not impacted in the future consider reviewing the passenger assists to ensure the technology at stations and process flows are robust and functioning. This will mitigate future risks when changes to Ticket Offices and employee structure is eventually introduced.
- Consider actively promoting Travel Companion, through your focus groups and wider corporate network. This technology is revolutionary and therefore constant education to new and existing

customers is required to build confidence, trust and also to reduce perceived barriers people from marginalised groups often feel when

5.0 Workforce equality, diversity and customers

AWC have led by example on this agenda. Your continued efforts need to be actively promoted to secure immediate and long-term employees who can enrich the workplace.

- Consider EDI Champions who can promote your activities and achievements. Telling their story through a range of B2B B2C channels is a powerful message which I would urge you to consider.
- Consider expanding your activities to encourage people with neurodiversity. We are all neurodiverse. Neurodiversity simply refers to the diversity of our minds, we are all unique and our brains work in a different way from one another. Neurodiversity is an umbrella term that can also be used to describe people with Asperges, Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia Dyslexia and OCD among other neurological variations. As with other EDI, consider hosting employee sessions. The aim will be to raise awareness of what neurodiversity is and the different ways it can present to create a more inclusive workplace where neurodivergent individuals can thrive.
- To achieve the above Tracsis have created some valuable resources, in partnership with Talking Minds who have supported other sector organisations such as Network Rail.
- The sessions would include:

What neurodiversity is

The strengths and struggles of neurodiversity.

Strategies and how we can provide support in the workplace.

Working with your brain and other peoples too.

The importance of understanding and working with your teams' brains to create synergy in which all staff feel comfortable and empowered.

6.0 Community and Charity.

Led by Jo Buckley this area of SV is arguably the one area that has the greatest impact to both employees and the communities you serve.

- The broad range of activities reflects the changing face of society. Consider the creation of a AWC Community Foundation. This would define your social value and accelerate your activities with wider community groups that can underpin your sustainable growth.
- Investing in a Foundation provides businesses the opportunity to celebrate their achievements whilst forming new and innovative collaborations that can provide expertise and match funding to your goals. To create a Foundation a minimum investment of £25k is required to establish the Foundation. Further information can be provided if this is something you would like to consider in the future.
- With a reduction of Grant Funding, consider developing a workshop for CRPs to provide critical guidance and mentoring to support their financial independence in the future. This could be an online programme, providing advice and support from financial management, grant application advice and marketing and communications.

- Consider the development of the AWC-Teachingzone to support the promotion of your activities/create a on-line community of registered community groups and educational facilities (schools/colleges). This will help amplify your SV projects and harness new and innovative technology/expertise and support to broaden your programmes.

7.0 Stakeholder engagement and customers

AWC Stakeholder engagement has been well received by those engaged. Consider encouraging those engaged to support the following:

- Amplifying your achievements through their own communications channel
- Encourage stakeholders to buy-into your vision and create collaborative frameworks to encourage greater collaborative partnerships with set KPI's
- Create thought-leadership blogs which can help drive your ambitions and inspire stakeholders to support your aims. This includes Heads of Departments.
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8.0 Safety, health and wellbeing

AWC have chosen well not to promote the monetised value of some areas of workplace safety.

- The creation of a partnership with Amulet could be enhanced through data-capture of incidents. This approach has seen a huge improvement with Northern and Amulet's, partnership where the collation of data-insights has enabled a pro-active approach to resourcing at hotspot areas of across their network.
- Consider developing the Teachingzone highlighted earlier in my report to support your proactive approach to health and safety on your network.
- The Teachingzone can also promote AWC as a great place to work to future potential employees along the communities you serve.
- Consider developing a partnership with an art college to assign them a project to develop a Peer-to-Peer marketing campaign. The knowledge Transfer Partnership is a great opportunity to educate the students on the consequences of route crime in order for them to develop a marketing campaign which speaks their language.

9.0 Economic Development

The use of dedicated Regional Growth Managers is a powerful message to key stakeholders that AWC are passionate about supporting and stimulating socio/economic growth.

- Consider working with each of the Passenger Authorities along the line of route to review their SV Frameworks and tendering processes. TfGM are a good example of how (through tendering and contractual renewals) they are now pressing for greater SV along their supply chain. As highlighted earlier in this report, this could be replicated within your procurement process to enable joint outcomes. This may be variable but there will be good practices to replicate.
- Utilisation of station assets beyond their original design. As highlighted earlier this is an area of significant SV growth. With the foreseeable changes in ticket offices, it is crucial that we maintain

a level of safety, security and community purpose at stations. AWC have arguably some of the greatest assets on UK Rail. Only 2/3rds of the assets are used, yet they remain heated and lit with no social purpose.

- Working with the wider community engagement team the integration of a SV asset strategy could yield greater community leverage and economic value. In addition, if promoted with social purpose, these assets similar to Oxenholme could provide a social hub which will ultimately generate invaluable ROI for SV to support your 2031 target.
- If considering the above, focus on simple projects such as storage for YMCA or similar community groups/ Incubators for new-business start-ups or even Council run projects such as Libraries or Pop-up surgeries for Banks and Third sector support services.
- Consider actively promoting your Regional Growth Managers activities on local social media platforms. The response maybe subjective but by continually promoting good activities within a local area, helps humanise your organisation and increase ethical purchasing and footfall. People buy into a brands values!

10.0 Climate and environment

Consider Climate change increases the frequency and severity of extreme weather conditions, which can introduce additional safety risks for rail colleagues and the public, damage assets and disrupt services. Under the management of Melanie AWC are accelerating their environmental programmes and in doing so have carved new benchmarks for the sector. However due to limited time at the workshop I would like to speak to Melanie further (45mins) to explore opportunities to enhance the programme, educate their customers on AWC sustainable achievements and aspirations for the future. In addition, I would like to review the perceived barriers within AWC from Melanie's perspective to be able to offer any additional advice of worth within this section of the annual report.

In summary

As previously highlighted at the top of this report, it is obvious that SV is proactively supported by a majority of department leads however, there needs to be greater understanding of what SV is and the impacts each department can make to support the sustainable growth of both the business and the communities it serves, one cannot succeed without the other.

Sustainability and SV is one of the buzzwords we hear all the time, and it can often be used so frequently that it can become "white noise" to both corporates and communities. There is a common misconception that being sustainable is purely about the environment, and about safeguarding our natural resources to minimise climate change and support and sustain an ever-increasing population. Yes, its partly about that, but beyond the natural environment, sustainability is a concept that has a much broader scope – jobs, people, the local economy and even money and this is where SV plays a pivotal role within a responsible business. To be considered sustainable a business must look beyond its immediate needs and acts in a way that protects the needs of future generations.

But it's not a selfless act. Whilst considering the long-term future of the local community and natural resources, it's also about conserving the long-term future of your own business and its ability to grow in line with societies expectations. AWC are passionate about creating resilient communities and a thriving

workplace. As the industry goes from rescue to renewal, now is the time for AWC to actively promote their achievements made within the SV Annual Report and I would urge the marketing and comms team to explore the drip feeding of positive informative messaging to help positively influence their ethical customers and their employees, similar to 90% of the FTSE 100/250 businesses that advertise their values over their products.

The recommendations made within this report are based on the evidence presented and I am sure that through the integration of a coordinated approach, supported by clear and accountable KPI's for each department will aid Theresa Roberts and the Exec Boards aspirations to achieve their target of £1billion of SV by 2031.

Frequently Asked Working with Tracsis Rail Consultancy



Tracsis Rail Consultancy is a leading provider of professional services across the operational and strategic planning horizon. The technical expertise that we provide guides critical business decision making, enabling our clients to deliver the most efficient and resilient operation for their customers. We combine this specialist service offering with a substantial in-house software development capability to support capacity planning, timetabling and resource allocation across the industry.

Our strength is in our depth, with the largest specialist team of rail operations planners and analysts of any provider in the UK. Our hand-picked team is made up of a wide range of specialists who combine their knowledge to deliver a first-class consultancy service. We have significant timetabling, rolling stock diagramming, operational analysis and performance modelling expertise, working with complex and specialised tools (used by multiple TOCs and owning groups to plan and allocate resources to their timetables). Utilising established systems and bespoke software solutions, our team endeavour to identify creative solutions to the problems of today's railway.



We seek a collaborative approach with our clients and a great working relationship is of paramount importance to us. As such, our current Net Promoter Score is +64, which is rated as *Excellent*.

I trust that report meets your requirements. Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

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