

The Catalyst

2 Time to up the game on social value

3 Social Entrepreneur Donata Magrin innovating waste management

5 Procurement at the cross roads – time for a major rethink?

6 EELGA Talent Bank - Britain's best kept secret?

7 WasteGuru - the educational recycling app

Editor's Letter

Time to up the game on social value

Last year, near where I live, I attended a public consultation on a major economic regeneration programme worth many millions of Pounds. I managed to ask some of the council officers present, including someone with 'commercial services' in his job title, whether they would be seeking social value gains during the tender process. To my astonishment, I was given an answer about 'considerate contractors'. Clearly, I had not expressed myself very well and specifically mentioned the Public Services (Social Value) Act and how it can be used in the public bidding process. Needless to say the response to my question remained unchanged, except with even more detail about considerate contractors and a brief nod to materials recycling.

Readers will have undoubtedly experienced similar situations. The recent LGA diagnostic in support of the [2018 National Procurement Strategy](#) showed that nearly 5 years after the legislation went live, 'obtaining social value' is one of the areas where many councils at both tier 1 and 2 are still seeking definite improvement. Even though the LGA, CIPS, etc. have been actively promoting the benefits of Social Value and organisations such as the Social Value Portal have even published a comprehensive list of [Themes, Outcomes and Measures](#) (TOMs), underlying problems still abound. At tier 1 level it is mainly about persuading commissioners to include it in their bids, and in some cases ensuring promised benefits are delivered. At tier 2 level it is about chief officer awareness.

While some councils are on the ball and making huge strides with delivering social value, many more are struggling to make the case for including it in their major bids. Common concerns and misunderstandings

that I have heard expressed include:

- ▶ It will cost us more money as contractors will simply charge us
- ▶ We don't have the time to include it as timescales are tight
- ▶ We already encourage the use of apprentices, so have got it covered
- ▶ It is not possible to evaluate social value

Experience shows that simply 'turning up the communication volume' or issuing more guidance to councils is not the answer. The answer lies in a combination of:

- ▶ Providing member/ chief officer based briefings
- ▶ Establishing a business case for including it all major procurement exercises over a given threshold
- ▶ Educating providers and suppliers as to what it means on the ground

The last point is very important as many suppliers and providers simply aren't aware of the many manifestations that social value can take. The business case is important too. However, it needs to be framed in terms of new sources of social revenue / benefit rather than simply trying to express it in financial terms.

The case for encouraging and seeking social value is robust and has all Party agreement; such a rarity today. Utilising social value in its many forms is, to use a vernacular, a 'no brainer'. It is indeed time for every council to up their game in making it a reality.



Ken Cole, FCIPS
Editor

Ken has had a highly successful career in procurement and IT project management spanning 35 years across the public and private sectors. He has been responsible for many high profile initiatives in procurement and commissioning, delivering high profile results and changing management thinking. He is a founder and director of SPS Consultancy Services and enjoys producing whitepapers and public speaking on strategic aspects of procurement.

Keynote Interview

Drinking coffee with a social entrepreneur on a mission Donata Magrin, WasteGuru

The LGA Procurement Expo in London at the end of the year provides an excellent opportunity to catch up with former colleagues and acquaintances as well as hearing about new and interesting developments. As might be expected, exhibitors are mainly consortia and larger companies interested in local government business. However, at the most recent Expo, I visited a small exhibition stand in the midst of these large exhibitors.

New to local government, Donata Magrin saw the Expo as a good starting point to pitch her business proposition. She had developed a new waste app and what she lucidly explained to me in five minutes convinced me that her ideas and app were something worth exploring. So, some three months later I caught up with Donata in central London to find out the story behind the app that Way to Eco is promoting. [see [Back Page Briefing](#)].

“I studied geology at the University of Padua”. (Founded in 1222 and situated near Venice, this is one of Italy’s most prestigious Universities.) “Part of my postgraduate studies included doing some investigation on the effects of waste on the environment in a site near Rome.” Working for the Municipal Waste Management Company gave her the opening that she was looking for. “The Rome to Naples high speed rail link involved cutting across a large illicit dump filled with hazardous waste

(both industrial and commercial). I was involved in working with the remediation team for two years”. In Italy, waste has been a big issue particularly with the scale of illegal dumping that has occurred for many years. “The first Italian legislation concerning the waste classification and disposal was approved at the beginning of the ‘80s, we had to wait until the end of 1999 to see the Italian parliament approve a legislation concerning the remediation of contaminated sites.” This aspect of geology really appealed to Donata who started to familiarise herself with the techniques of what is known as remediation – the reversing of the environmental damage that large scale dumping causes.

Later, as a technical manager for almost three years at the Environmental Department of the Municipality of Rome, she helped design the waste management policies and introduced waste management contract KPIs and targets. Her husband’s work commitments took her to the USA where she was able to do postgraduate research on remediation at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the renowned institution next door to Harvard in Boston.

She arrived in London after working on similar projects in Italy “I was struck how the UK has a totally different attitude to waste disposal and



“ I was struck how the UK has a totally different attitude to waste disposal and dumping compared to mainland Europe. In mainland Europe people are more conscious about recycling in general and new businesses have grown around waste mining.”

Contact Donata at:

donata@waytoeco.com

07375 863033

www.waytoeco.com

Continued >>

<< Continued

dumping compared to mainland Europe”, she explained. “In mainland Europe people are more conscientious about recycling in general and new businesses have grown around waste mining”. (Waste mining is where landfill sites are purchased and “quarried” for the materials contained in them as a commercial venture.) Part of the reason for this may be because in Italy and other European countries residents are fined if they put the wrong waste in bins, but it cannot completely explain the significant differences that exist.

It was the experience of working for an environmental charity plus a desire to help influence attitudes in this country that led Donata to look at the possibility of using an app. “People here are faced with real barriers to recycling. Not only do all councils have different recycling policies, but there is also confusion as to what can and cannot be recycled – different types of plastic being a good example. I was searching for an IT partner to develop a recycling app for the UK market and eventually found one already in use in Italy”.

Donata is enthusiastic about this app. “It is used by more than 500 councils in Italy and has 425,000 users. The app connects each council to the database capturing their recycling policies and collection times. Scanning a bar code will tell the person whether it can be recycled or

“People here are faced with real barriers to recycling. Not only do all councils have different recycling policies, but there is also confusion as to what can and cannot be recycled – different types of plastic being a good example.”

not”, she explains. I am puzzled, surely many things don’t have bar codes, what then? Donata anticipates my question. “Uploading a photograph of the item brings rapid identification and logging onto the database. The technology works and people in Italy really like that they can do their bit”.

My initial reaction is that this is the UK not Italy. We all get upset when we see sea creatures suffering as a result of our throwaway society and disregard for our planet, but that is easily forgotten as we return to our daily business.

Yet further reflection makes me feel that this approach might just be coming of age. The government’s new [waste strategy](#) published last year is seeking to bring about a massive change in social attitudes. Councils too are under constant financial pressure to improve recycling rates. How will this pan out? We won’t know until politicians stop obsessing about Brexit to the detriment of every other policy issue. But change is coming for sure.

Donata is really passionate about this. “The app is backed by a sound business model. It is commercially viable and allows people to do their bit and councils to improve recycling rates and reduce contamination. Above all it brings local councils and their residents closer together, working towards a common goal”.

Her challenge today is finding the right person in the right council with the vision to work on a pilot to introduce the excellent Way to Eco app into the UK market.

I had always wondered what a social entrepreneur looked like. As we parted company I realised that I had just met one.

The Catalyst and GDPR

We take the **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** seriously and will ensure that we handle your data in line with your wishes. We keep our policies and procedures under continuous review to ensure that we comply with all regulations.

We confirm that:

1. SPS only holds email addresses from people that have consented to receive updates from us. No other personal information is held on any reader.
2. All our files and records are stored on secure servers and are never accessible to any third party.
3. We will never pass on any names, email addresses or other information to any third party without your written consent.

If you have any questions or wish to **unsubscribe** please do contact us at catalyst@sps-consultancy.co.uk.

Procurement at the cross roads Time for a major rethink?

IACCM President, Tim Cummins, is renowned for his incisive and hard hitting articles which he publishes on his [blog](#). One such article that he published on 15th April is entitled '**Procurement is not Commercial**'. In it, he describes how some procurement managers are attempting to absorb 'commercial' into their functional area of responsibility, before making the point that "commercial is cross-functional in its nature. It cannot be some bolt-on to specific functional activity". He rightly points out that some procurement specialists, along with those from other disciplines, have made the transition to become commercial managers.

Thanks to IACCM, contract and commercial management is gaining visibility globally across all sectors. Here in the UK, local government is being forced to think and act commercially in order to generate new sources of much needed revenue and central government appears to have gone one step further in creating the Government Commercial Function (GCF). But stop there. A visit to the GCF [website](#) says that the GCF "is a cross-government network procuring or supporting the procurement of goods and services for the government". A closer look at its 36 page Government Functional Standard GovS 008: Commercial, suggests that what we are in fact looking at is a rebranded Government Procurement Service (GPS) with a bit of project / risk management included.

Almost in parallel to this, I received an email from my professional body (CIPS) of 40 years telling me that, "CIPS are pleased to be working with GCF ... to continue to raise the profile and value of the procurement profession, and would urge you and your team to follow their initiative and upgrade yourself to Chartered status."

So what does chartered status mean? Again to quote yet another CIPS

email it "enables current FCIPS members to evidence commitment to their professional career, and ethical procurement and supply practice. Having Chartered status verifies your currency, experience and knowledge in the profession."

According to the CIPS website FCIPS is "the highest grade of CIPS membership - an accolade that recognises your outstanding level of achievement, knowledge and experience in procurement." Yet now, both MCIPS and FCIPS "can step up to evidence (sic) a commitment to their professional career and ethical procurement and supply practices." Apparently for FCIPS members, this can be done by attending various seminars and gatherings which can also yield CPD points (I prefer Nectar points personally).

I do not plan to explore the merits, or otherwise, of chartered status but, no doubt for some, it is their desired career goal. However, I do think it is time that the procurement function reconsiders its entire value proposition and how it is best delivered to meet the complexities of a global economy, where technology is a major driving force. Much of the MCIPS professional syllabus is still focused on manufacturing, while the services sector (the majority of UK wealth generation) gets very little attention. Similarly, focusing on ethical issues is highly laudable, but it is just one of many pressing issues facing procurement managers.

Speaking personally, I genuinely believe that the procurement function and CIPS should be learning from the likes of IACCM to improve its value proposition. As Tim says, this should not be a case of adopting the 'commercial' tag, but actually changing both the professional syllabus and

The Catalyst would like to thank **Christine Barnicoat** for her continued editorial support. Christine is a copywriter and editor for both public and private sectors. Her background includes editorship of GC Forum, the OGC's online magazine and its predecessor, GP Forum. She was editorial consultant for the Public Sector Benchmarking Service, a joint venture between the Cabinet Office and HMRC. She has contributed to Government Opportunities, The Private Finance Initiative Journal, Overview and WiredGov. Christine was a civil servant for 30 years in overseas development, environment and HM Treasury's Central Unit on Procurement. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply. Christine can be contacted through The Catalyst.

The Catalyst would also like to thank **Wendy Timoney** for proof reading this and previous editions.

Continued >>

<< Continued

the way we market ourselves. The starting point of this change has to be – what skills and knowledge sets do private and public bodies want now? Yes, they want people with high ethical standards, but they also need people who can negotiate, create deals and build strong business relationships. They are certainly not looking for those whose focus is on compliance with an ability to calculate an economic order quantity to replenish a warehouse.

The procurement function has already spent a lot of time working out how it sits with commissioning folk and is doing likewise with contract managers. Our value proposition is now about broadening our business horizon and joining the cross functional teams required to support 21st Century businesses.

The East of England's best kept secret

Getting hold of top quality consultants and experts to advise on the array of management challenges faced by English local government can be an expensive business, particularly if brand consultancy firms are engaged to do the work.

However, Councils in the East of England, and even beyond, have a far more viable and cost effective option known as the [EELGA Talent Bank](#). The Talent Bank comprises sector experts and proven consultants that have operated at the highest level during their careers. At present there are 63 registered associates that advise on subjects including:

- ▶ Commercialisation
- ▶ Asset Management
- ▶ Service Transformation
- ▶ HR and Organisational Development
- ▶ Procurement / Contract Management
- ▶ Public Service Reform



They can be hired individually or in groups and EELGA can create a team to meet multi-specialist demands. They primarily support councils in the East of England region as a part of their subscription benefit, but they do support clients in the wider public sector. There are many advantages of using the EELGA Talent Bank including:

- ▶ **Value for money** – they are far more cost effective than conventional consultancy firms.
- ▶ **Teckal compliance** – for councils in the East of England, they can use the service without the need for a procurement process.
- ▶ **IR35 compliance** – no need to worry about whether you are breaching this legislation.
- ▶ **Proven and Referenceable** – there are abundant case studies and testimonials from highly satisfied clients.
- ▶ **Package availability** – many standard services are now packaged and available for a fixed price, avoiding the risk of cost overruns.

An added benefit is that you will be able to access these services and other 'public to public' services on line.

If you are interested in finding out more about EELGA and the Talent Bank Services, contact Senior Manager, Eddie Gibson - eddie.gibson@eelga.gov.uk, 01284 758300.

WasteGuru

The educational recycling app

[Way to Eco Ltd](#) is an innovative environmental consultancy with the ambition of encouraging waste prevention, enhancing recycling and fostering the circular economy.

Based in London, the company has been set up to help local authorities, businesses and consumers achieve truly sustainable waste management.

The consultancy offers a broad base of services to assist target customers with the overall goal of reducing the environmental footprint of waste management.

For local authorities: plan or advise on campaigns to drive engagement and behaviour change and tackle recycling contamination, littering and fly tipping.

For businesses: implement waste audits and design tailored waste prevention/recycling strategies.

For consumers: change their perception about recycling and help shift to less waste production and consumption patterns.

As we believe in the power of communication to educate, engage and alter behaviour, in addition to the above, the company promotes an educational recycling app (for smartphones).

Brits admit confusion concerning what items are appropriate for recycling. When “unsure”, only 33% take the time to research before throwing items in the correct bin. Unsurprisingly, for some local authorities, recycling rates are low with high contamination in the recycling bin.

“ Let the goods of today be the resources of tomorrow. ”
Helen MacArthur
Foundation



Way to Eco

WasteGuru is the perfect combination of informative waste management in an easily accessible format. The app provides end-users with tailored answers making it easier to manage their post-consumer waste effectively and responsibly. Highly adaptable, the app is already in use in other countries and is a beneficial tool specifically designed to support local authorities, waste management companies and businesses to meet their recycling targets.

A great feature of the app is its ability to instruct end-users with clear information on how to sort each packaging material at a given location reducing the confusion due to different recycling schemes in different areas. WasteGuru helps make sure citizens know what to recycle, when to do it, where to recycle and, most importantly, how to recycle.

With the China restrictions on recyclables in place since 2018, making the right choice at the beginning of the recycling supply chain has become increasingly important to guarantee higher quality material. While this can lead to excellent results including environmental and financial benefits for communities and businesses, the wrong choice can result in problems such as low recycling rates, contamination at the material recovery facility, rejected loads and significant costs for the society and the environment.

www.waytoeco.com



Back Page Briefing

Here we summarise topical reports, products and services that are likely to be of interest to procurement and commissioning staff. The appearance of any item or product in this briefing does not signify approval or endorsement by *The Catalyst* or its publisher SPS Consultancy Services Ltd.

If there are any products or developments that you would like to nominate please email the details to:

catalyst@sps-consultancy.co.uk