



Partners in improving local health



North of England
Commissioning Support Unit



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy 2019 – 2021

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1. Foreword

Our initial 3-year CSR Strategy has now come to an end and we look to build on the work we have already done with a renewed and refreshed CSR Strategy to take us forward to 2021 with our social purpose at its heart:

To make life changing improvements – creating jobs and generating wealth for our communities.



Stephen Childs

Managing Director

Our vision is ‘To make life changing improvements to communities’

Our business model is committed to making a difference to the health and wealth of the communities we serve.

In 2019 we are now an organisation with a truly national footprint and as a growing business we have growing opportunities to achieve our aims and live our values.

We have an extended offer providing managed services, products, tools and advisory services to our customers. We are delivering solutions to meet the challenges of health and social care systems as well as continuing to support to health commissioners, and we are supporting and collaborating with other Commissioning Support Units (CSUs) to deliver high quality, cost effective national offers that better equip customers to meet very challenging business demands.

Our business strategy describes how we do business; our CSR strategy sets out what difference we strive every day to achieve.

I am proud to commit to our CSR strategy.



Michelle McGuigan

Organisational Development
& Corporate Services
Director.
CSR Group Chair

2. 'NECS 2021' CSR Strategy



In 2016 NECS teamed up with WRM, consultants in sustainability, to provide us with support to develop our first CSR strategy. We teamed up with WRM again in 2018 to review a range of strategic and operational sustainability issues and refine our areas of focus for NECS 2021.

Our 4 key areas of focus for NECS 2021 are:

- Travel and Transport
- Social Value
- Supply chain
- Natural resources
- Engagement and communication – *underpinning enabler*

NECS 2021 is about what we value, how we do business and what difference we make. As we continue our CSR journey we recognise the great challenges and opportunities there are ahead of us.

We are proud of what we have achieved and we are confident that future success will be grounded on the same core themes that have been fundamental to our success to date. Our core values, vision and social purpose define who we are, how we will behave and the commitment we have to making life-changing improvements to the communities we serve.

This CSR strategy sets out NECS CSR ambitions for 2021 and details how we will get there.

NECS 2021 underpins the NECS business strategy 2019-2021 and the NECS Estate strategy 2018-2023.

Outcomes from implementing NECS 2021

NECS 2021 will help us to become a more efficient and responsible organisation and allow us to meet local and national legislation and guidance.

Who we are and what we do

NECS is unique in the health and care sector. As an arm's length NHS organisation we operate as a 'not for profit' business in shadow form as a social enterprise customer owned Community Interest Company. We are continuously improving healthcare through supporting system wide working with extensive engagement across a range of customers including STPs, CCGs, Trusts and Integrated Care Systems (ICS). We offer core service portfolios designed to reflect all the key elements of the commissioning life cycle providing an integrated, flexible and expert service.

Sustainable business is at the heart of our success to date and our plans for the future.

NECS is 1 of 5 English CSUs, (originally there were 21) while NECS was originally conceived to enabled clinical commissioners in the North of England to benefit from high quality 'back office' support and resilience, through the 2012-2013 NHS reforms, it is now offering a radically different and higher value proposition to our customers:

- We provide managed services, products, tools and advisory services
- 50% of revenue is now received beyond Cumbria and North East
- We have a UK-wide delivery footprint
- We deliver solutions to meet the challenges of health and social care systems
- We support and collaborate with other CSUs to deliver high quality, cost effective national offers that better equip customers to meet very challenging business demands.

3. NECS 2021 Sustainable business is good business

The Sustainable Development Strategy for the Health and Social Care System 2014 - 2020 sets out the vision of sustainable health and care:

'A sustainable health and care system works within the available environmental and social resources protecting and improving health now and for future generations. This means working to reduce carbon emissions, minimising waste and pollution, making the best use of scarce resources, building resilience to a changing climate and nurturing community strengths and assets.'

At NECS we share this vision. Our explicit strategic aim is 'to be a sustainable and profitable business'. In 2019 we set out our strategic ambitions for delivering a sustainable business model in the NECS business strategy and in NECS 2021. We will continue to work with our existing and new customers and supply chains on the areas where we can influence or directly deliver a sustainable and positive impact, and we will be accountable for the difference we make.

Business sustainability is often defined as managing the triple bottom line - a process by which organisations manage their financial, social and environmental risks, obligations and opportunities. These three impacts are often referred to as the triple bottom line - **'People, Planet and Place'**.

NECS is committed to being a sustainable business making best use of resources and maximising our positive impact, now and for future generations across our business footprint.

NECS 2021 underpins the NECS business strategy 2019 -21, NECS people strategy 2018-2021, the NECS Estate strategy 2018-2023.

This strategy sets out what we want to achieve, our priorities for CSR, and what success looks like.

Our ambition with NECS 2021 is that it enables us to continue to deliver and expand our quality products and services, drives improvement and cost efficiencies and helps us address the challenges facing our customers.

4. NECS 2021 GOVERNANCE

We have an established CSR Group comprised of NECS representatives from Estates, IT, Governance, HR, Communications, NECS Council and the Health and Safety, Fire & Security Committee. The CSR Group is chaired by Michelle McGuigan, NECS Organisational Development and Corporate Services Director.

The CSR Group meet at least 4 times a year and is accountable for the effective delivery of the objectives and success measures detailed in the underpinning action plans. The delivery of NECS 2021 CSR Strategy will be overseen by the NECS Integrated Governance and Risk Committee.

Each of our 4 areas of focus is underpinned by a detailed action plan and each plan is owned and implemented by a member of the CSR Group.

We have allocated a % weighting to each area of focus. The weighting reflects where we can make a direct impact or influence, the resource associated with delivery and the impact potential on our overall NECS 2021 CSR strategy.

5. AREAS OF FOCUS

AREA OF FOCUS 1.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT (People & Planet 40%)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

NECS has over 1100 staff working across 50 locations.

Since 2008 the move towards a more sustainable health system has been supported by the development of a carbon footprint for the NHS in England. This carbon footprint includes emissions from building energy use; travel to and from sites; as well as goods and services purchased by the NHS. Every organisation should routinely and systematically review the need for staff, patients and visitors to travel; consistently monitor business mileage; provide incentives for low carbon transport; and promote care closer to home, telemedicine, and home working opportunities.

<https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/engagement-resources/nhs-carbon-reduction-strategy-2009.aspx>

Within healthcare, sustainable development has largely been estates-based, focusing on energy use and other measures in buildings. However, this contributes only 20% to the NHS carbon footprint (figures from 2015). The vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions arise from the manufacture and supply of drugs and equipment, and from staff, patient and visitor travel.

<https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/reporting/nhs-carbon-footprint.aspx>

Measures of Success: (impact statement/s)

All NECS estates will have a sustainable travel plan

We will reduce our carbon impact from staff journeys by up to 30%

Priorities for 2021:

- The rollout and promotion of IT video conferencing software (to replace non-necessary staff travel)
- The promotion of sustainable travel. Promoting public transport options and active travel options for visitors and staff
- The provision and promotion of active travel schemes
- NECS Estates Strategy 2018-2023 focus on sustainability to ensure asset management has a positive impact on the environment
- Work with Carbon Trust to measure our Carbon reduction impact

SOCIAL VALUE (People and Place 40%)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

At NECS our social purpose is: ***To make life changing improvements - creating jobs and generating wealth for our communities***

Our business strategy is founded on maintaining existing and developing new healthy and effective partnerships (ICS, STPs, CSUs, NHS England, Streamliners in New Zealand and all of our customers) which is the basis for NECS building stronger communities and broadening the reach of our impact through the work we do.

We are proud of what we have achieved and we are confident that future success will be grounded on the same core themes that have been fundamental to our success to date: our core values, vision and social purpose. They define who we are, how we will behave and the commitment we have to making life-changing improvements to the communities we serve.

Social and cultural value

Social Value gives a framework for all partners to design a health and care system that actively and systematically adds social value to the local communities they serve, the care they commission and the products they procure. This means going beyond the simple provision and commissioning of services by ensuring core activities have a positive effect on peoples' lives and maximise investments.

<https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/areas-of-focus/social-value.aspx>

Measures of Success:

% Surplus invested back into ICS/ICP work annually including through our dividends to our Customer Owners

Introduce Graduate Management schemes, Apprenticeships and Internships

Maintain a rightsized/ right-skilled workforce

Priorities for 2021:

- Generate surplus to Invest a % into ICS programmes of work including an emphasis on Prevention
- Maintain a rightsized/ right-skilled workforce
- Explore and adopt best Social Value Framework to demonstrate NECS impact
- Introduce Graduate Management schemes, Apprenticeships and Internships (2 NHS Graduates per annum - 6 new apprenticeship programmes per annum - 5 Graduate recruits per annum (1 per Directorate)
- Meet criteria of a 'Times top 100 places to work' organisation
- Health and Wellbeing awards
- NECS Training programme – skills investment
- Time for Change – mental health campaign
- Review potential to provide volunteer opportunities



AREA OF FOCUS 3.

NATURAL RESOURCES (Planet 10%)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

Within healthcare, sustainable development has largely been estates-based, focusing on energy use and other measures in buildings. However, this contributes only 20% to the NHS carbon footprint (figures from 2015). The vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions arise from the manufacture and supply of drugs and equipment, and from staff, patient and visitor travel.

<https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/reporting/nhs-carbon-footprint.aspx>

Natural resource is an area where our direct impact is limited as NHS Property Services (NHSPS) act as our landlords across our estate; in some cases we may lease a building from a third party. This makes an accurate baseline for energy consumption, waste and water usage very challenging.

We have focused our priorities on the areas where we can have a direct impact while continuing to lobby and influence through our estates contracts for improved data to help inform future priorities.

Measures of Success:

More than 50% of the workforce are paper light and using one note effectively

Priorities for 2021:

- Remove single use plastic from ALL NECS estate
- Remove all bottled water facilities where an alternative fresh drinking water source is available – in ALL NECS estates
- Each NECS estate has a recycle champion
- Identify and implement energy and water saving techniques and products
- Ensure the Waste Hierarchy is implemented across all our sites (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Create energy, Dispose)

AREA OF FOCUS 4.

SUPPLY CHAIN (Planet & Place 10%)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

NECS contract with Shared Business Services (SBS) to procure goods. Our direct impact on supply chain is tied in with the contracts that are in place currently, and to the opportunities we have to engage with local suppliers within the communities in which we operate for best value contracts.

SBS are committed to working with us to ensure that the requirements of the 2012 Social Value Act are integrated into all appropriate procurements conducted on our behalf and that we promote ethical purchasing..

We will work with SBS to build suitable evaluation methodologies to allow assessment of all appropriate Tenders on how the delivery of the required services, goods or works will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area in which they are performed.

We will continue to invest in our relationships with our supply chain providers and our strategic partners.

Measures of Success:

Employ a robust evaluation methodology to enable sustainability of required services, goods or works to be assessed.

Priorities for 2021:

- Review the NECS agreement with SBS to ensure that Social Value considerations remain a core and guiding principle of supply chain procurement decisions
- Assess opportunities for engaging with local suppliers and small organisations, particularly for opportunities under £10,000 which are not advertised on recognised frameworks

ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION (Underpinning enabler)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

The objectives of NECS 2021 CSR strategy will be realised primarily with and through our people.

Results of the NECS staff survey undertaken in 2018 highlighted that we have a way to go to ensure our CSR strategy is understood and that our people are or can be involved in our CSR objectives.

The purpose of an engagement and communication work stream is to provide a framework to connect our people to CSR, to drive involvement though engagement and achieve our business goals.

We will utilise multiple channels to drive:

Awareness – Understanding – Support - Involvement Commitment

- **Awareness**
Do people know this strategy exists?
- **Understanding**
Do our people have a detailed insight, know what it means and why we have committed to these priorities and understand their role in delivering them?
- **Support**
Have our people got the right tools, training and leadership?
- **Involvement**
Can we tell our CSR story with tangible examples of delivery through our people?
- **Commitment**
Are our people happy and fulfilled working in NECS? Is CSR their daily business?

Measures of Success: (impact statement/s)

ALL NECS staff have at least one objective that helps us achieve our CSR ambitions

We deliver a programme of opportunities for all NECS staff to engage with CSR through campaigns and raising awareness

We are able to measure and report impact against all areas of focus achieved by NECS peoples contribution to our CSR goals

NECS meets criteria of a “ Times top 100 places to work” organisation

NECS is a happy and fulfilling place to work

Our Customer Board is engaged with and endorses our CSR Strategy