



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT POLICY

STATEMENT

The Council views sustainable procurement as a continuous improvement process whereby it can meet its needs for goods and services by working in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life cost basis, complies with any applicable regulations and minimises any adverse environmental, social and economic impact. The Council achieves this by:

- purchasing goods and services that reflect best practice specifications or standards for environmental or economic or social sustainability;
- considering the whole life cost of products and services when it seeks a supplier (energy efficient products for example, often have an increased capital cost that is more than offset over time by the reduced operational cost);
- not buying products that are harmful to the environment if a less damaging alternative is available, ie never uses tropical hardwood that is not independently certified as being from a sustainable forest;
- specifying goods, products and materials that cause minimum damage to the environment including the impact of their manufacture, distribution, use & disposal;
- promoting sustainability within contract and tendering documents where possible;
- continually reviewing the purchasing of goods and services through its contract specifications, with the intention of decreasing its environmental impact and increasing positive impacts on society, the local economy and producer.
- drawing this Policy to the attention of key suppliers and communicates it as widely as is practicable to the potential supply market.

AIMS

The Council is committed to ensuring that sustainability is embedded throughout its daily business. It recognises that products/services/projects can have an impact on environmental, social and economic development:

1. **Environmental:** climate change, resource consumption, pollution, reduction in habitat quality or biodiversity, reduction in local air quality;
2. **Social:** fair wages, minimum standards of working conditions, labour standards and child labour;
3. **Economic:** health and safety, legal and environmental compliance, “best value”.

and that it is able to influence sustainable practices and policy in its area of operations. Alongside key considerations of cost and quality, the Council is committed to secure contracts and buy local, fair-trade, recycled, plastic free, repairable, and sustainable products wherever possible/available.

POLICY

This Policy explains how the Council aims to incorporate sustainable procurement into tendering procedures, contracts and purchases.

APPROACH

Although this differs depending on the product or service being considered, the Council's standard assessment considerations are:

- sourcing materials – impact – natural resource depletion, habitat damage;
- manufacture – energy consumption, impact greenhouse gas emissions, contamination of water supply, effect on air quality;
- packaging – impact – natural resource depletion, habitat damage, greenhouse gas emission, increased landfill;
- transport – impact – greenhouse gas emission, effect on local air quality, increase demand for fuel;
- disposal (biodegradability, re-use, recycle) – impact – habitat damage, visual intrusion, increased burden on landfill.

Whilst it is impossible to eliminate 100% of the above impacts when selecting a product or service, the Council aims to try to make a purchase which removes/mitigates as many as possible.

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Council's purchasing decisions are based around the following fundamental principles of need and best practice availability:

- is this product/service/project necessary?
- can the need be met in another way?
- can the requirement be met by renting or sharing, rather than procurement?
- is the quantity requested essential?
- does the product/service/project need to meet the specification currently used?
- can the product serve a useful purpose after its initial use?
- can one, or more outcomes, be linked to this service, ie, tasks carried out plus training/skills acquired?

If the product/service/project must be purchased or provided, then the Council applies the following criteria:

- buying locally wherever possible – either distributed from a local supplier or manufactured locally. Whilst a local distributor may have had the products they sell brought in from elsewhere, buying locally from them restricts the miles that the product has travelled;
- considering the closest location option where buying local is not possible;

- checking the credentials of the supplier, manufacturer or product via their website – the ethical consumer website is also a potential resource www.ethicalconsumer.org;
- checking whether the supplier, manufacturer or product is associated with known environment issues;
- checking whether the product requires certification – many sustainable products require certain standards or certification (such as FST timber). If so, ensuring that the purchasing choice has the certification;
- checking whether the product is fairtrade;
- considering the end-of-life options for the product – disposal, recycling, re-use.

BUSINESS CASE (REPORTS TO COUNCIL)

The Council considers sustainable alternatives as part of its reporting, specification and subsequent competitive tendering and procurement processes. Suppliers are encouraged to offer alternative products or services which have improved environmental performance but meet the service specification. This enables suppliers to bring forward solutions which the Council may not have considered.

Where a business case is to be considered by Council, reports must include an assessment of potential climate emergency implications.