



Sustainability Policy

Discussion Draft

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Sustainability Policy

Introduction

- 1 The UK Government's 2005 Sustainable Development Strategy sets out the ambitious goal to make the UK a leader in the EU in sustainable procurement by 2009. City of York Council recognises its commitment to sustainable development through its sustainable procurement policy is vital in helping to deliver this strategy and meet the Governments aim
- 2 The Council's vision is for York to be an exemplary sustainable city. Sustainable development for York is about creating a better quality of life for York's communities now and in the future.

Background

- 3 The Council's approach to sustainability in the procurement process has evolved on a piecemeal basis over a number of years and there has been no consistent approach setting out how the Council wishes to consider sustainability in delivering value for money procurement in the absence of an overall sustainability policy for the authority to date.
- 4 The development of a sustainable procurement policy at the Council will ensure that key principles of best practice are embedded universally across the Council. This policy applies to all business areas of the Council, including direct service provision to stakeholders, procurement of goods and services, works, joint ventures with third parties, partnering and collaboration, sales and disposals

Definition of Sustainable Procurement

- 5 To ensure clarity and consistency this policy adopts the definition of sustainable procurement as set out by the Sustainable Procurement Task Force in its publication 'Procuring the Future':

'Sustainable Procurement is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment'.

Policy context & outcomes

- 6 The purpose and provisions of this policy are consistent with the ambitions set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy and should be viewed in that context. They provide a means of helping to support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities for improvement generally with specific reference to the following Direction Statements and Priorities that underpin

the overall philosophy and intention of the Corporate Strategy in itself as set out below.

Direction Statements

- We will seek to place environmental sustainability at the heart of everything we do

Priorities

- Reduce the environmental impact of Council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same
- Decrease the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going into landfill
- Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport
- Improve the economic prosperity of the people of York with a focus on minimising income differentials
- Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects

Extract: CYC Corporate Strategy 2007-2011 (25 Sept 2007)

Policy Statement

- 7 This council is committing itself to sustainable procurement. Sustainable procurement is not only a question of improving efficiency, it is also about using market power to bring environmental and social benefits both locally and globally.
- 8 Climate Change affects all areas of the council's activities. We need to consider how we use natural resources, and how our procurement activities affect biodiversity and poverty. Every product or service has an environmental impact throughout its life-cycle – from the extraction of raw materials and manufacturing, through to a products use and disposal. Smart procurement decisions can make a huge difference, with the benefits being felt both locally and globally.
- 9 The public sector has a hugely significant role because its purchasing power can drive the market towards more sustainable goods and services. Our purchasing actions also have social implications – improving working

conditions, supporting Fair Trade, working against Child Labour, providing employment opportunities for marginalised groups.

- 10 It is recognised that certain key areas of local authority activity provide clear opportunities for improving efficiency, reducing environmental impacts and saving money. These include: Energy, Cleaning Services, Catering, IT, and Construction. We are committing ourselves to transforming our procurement procedures in these areas, among others.
- 11 Smart procurement also means efficient procurement. We can no longer simply consider initial purchase price when buying products and services, ignoring energy and water costs, maintenance expenditure and disposal costs. We will now move to a 'whole-life' approach to procurement.
- 12 We recognise and embrace the leadership role the Council has in moving our city towards a more sustainable way of life. Much work has already been done to put in place the mechanisms that will enable us to properly monitor our procurements and, thereby, manage the change to a more sustainable procurement process.

Policy Objectives

- 13 The objectives of this policy are to ensure that when a decision has been taken to procure consideration is given to:
 - a) exploring opportunities for working with voluntary and community sector organisations in supply and service delivery;
 - b) continuing to develop our procurement processes to ensure they are transparent and open to the whole of the supplier community;
 - c) promoting greater supplier diversity in the private sector;
 - d) promoting fair employment practices;
 - e) promoting workforce welfare;
 - f) improving the economic prosperity of the people of York with a focus on minimising income differentials;
 - g) increasing people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects;
 - h) promoting ethical sourcing practices;
 - i) seeking to reduce waste through reviewing the amount and type of materials purchased and by exploring the opportunities to purchase refurbished, recycled and recyclable equipment, products and materials;

- j) sourcing green energy wherever possible and adopt appropriate energy management measures across all City of York Council sites;
- k) procuring organic food and drink where practicable;
- l) supporting the Fair-trade principles of alleviating poverty and sustainable development
- m) ensuring that vehicles procured have low emissions of local air pollutants and climate change gases, and take account of the need to minimise emissions and exposure to air pollution in purchasing goods and services;
- n) where appropriate, examine the environmental management practices of our current and potential suppliers.

Policy Framework

- 14 This policy adopts the Sustainable Procurement National Action Plan 'flexible framework' as the basis for measuring sustainable procurement practices. This will ensure City of York Council takes a consistent approach to embedding sustainability into its procurement practices, encouraging the organisation to capture opportunities and stimulate innovation in its supply chain.
- 15 The aims of the Flexible Framework have been integrated into the Corporate Procurement Strategy continuum in respect of sustainability and additional actions added to the supporting medium term action plan.
- 16 The policy also adopts the Procura+ Manual 'A guide to Cost-Effective Sustainable Public Procurement' as the practitioners guide to delivering sustainability in procurement. The manual provides clear, easy to understand guidance on how to implement sustainable procurement in practice.

Policy Exceptions

- 17 The complex and multi-functional nature of the Council means that there will be areas where exceptions to the principles of this policy may have to be made these may include:
 - Listed buildings
 - Civic regalia
- 18 It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of where exceptions may apply and the principle should be to always consider a sustainable procurement solution. Advice should be sought from the Council's Corporate

Procurement Team and the S151 Officer if officers believe that an exemption is necessary for any reason.¹

¹ The request for an exemption would be in exceptional material cases only i.e. when listed building regulations may override the policy principles. It is not intended that non-material issues would be referred where local discretion can be used applying VFM principles as per Financial Regulations.