



Sustainable Procurement Policy

Date of report: 20 December 2021

Background

A new Sustainable Procurement Policy has been developed, which in this context refers to the environmental sustainability of the goods, services and works the Council buys in order to deliver services to citizens.

Context

The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and set out ambitious targets in its climate strategy to become carbon neutral for its own operations by 2025 and in its wider footprint and as a city by 2030. It committed to addressing the One City Ecological Emergency goal of reducing consumption of products that undermine health of wildlife around the world. The Council generates around 6 times more carbon emissions from the goods and services we buy than from our direct operations. The Council has committed to taking a lead in the city in terms of moving to Carbon neutrality, including our supply chain. Carbon neutrality is when carbon emissions caused by an entity have been eliminated or balanced by removals of carbon (e.g. offsetting). There are a number of commitments that have been made in the ecological emergency strategy which can be influenced by the goods and services we buy such as no single use plastics and phasing out of peat in park and garden maintenance.

Current approach to environmental sustainability in contracts

Currently, the Council takes an inconsistent approach to building environmental requirements into tender specifications when procuring a new contract. There are environmental measures within the Social Value assessment (e.g. car miles, waste reduction and CO2 emissions), but suppliers bidding for contracts often choose not to offer these specific measures.

Weaknesses of this approach are that we are missing opportunities to secure environmental gains and we have no policy to refer suppliers to if we need to defend including sustainability requirements in specifications. This means we aren't currently using procurement to lead, encourage and reward suppliers towards meeting our 2030 targets.

What environmental requirements can we place in contracts?

To address the weaknesses in the current approach, we have developed a Sustainable Procurement Policy Statement, together with a set of environmental requirements for contract specifications, based on the Government Buying Standards (GBS) and targets within Bristol's One City Climate and Ecological Strategies.

The Council's suppliers will be in different states of readiness to meet our goals. The Council's stated aim is to encourage and support suppliers towards meeting our 2030 targets. If environmental requirements are made mandatory too early, this could result in excluding all or some (particularly local) suppliers and/or in unbudgeted price increases. It's therefore important to get the balance right.



Sustainable Procurement Policy

Sustainable Procurement Policy Statement

Scope

Bristol City Council frequently procures work, goods and services. The procurement of these items has an impact on our carbon emissions and wider environmental footprint. If we want to reach higher standards of environmental sustainability then must make sure the suppliers of our work, goods and services are also contributing towards our environmental goals.

We aim to:

- meet or exceed all relevant environmental sustainability government buying standards (GBS)
- encourage and enable suppliers to contribute towards our Climate and Ecological Emergency targets

To do this, the council will:

1. Devise a toolkit of standard environmental requirements for contracts based on the government buying standards as well as One City Climate Strategy and Ecological Emergency Strategy targets.
2. Use information on market readiness to categorise each of the standard environmental requirements as Information Only, Scored or Mandatory within tender processes.
3. Update the wording and categorisation of the toolkit of standard environmental requirements every two years based on supplier maturity data (or more frequently if appropriate) with the aim of encouraging our supply chain to keep developing.
4. Make sure that officers carry out a Sustainability Pre-specification Assessment before procuring in order to identify key environmental opportunities in higher value contracts.
5. Mandate that any environmental requirements from the toolkit that are relevant for the particular contract must be included in any tender specification.
6. Make sure that environmental requirements are embedded into our contracts and contract monitoring.
7. Move towards measuring the carbon emissions and savings that result from the council's contracts.
8. Promote and support the response of local partners and suppliers to the climate and ecological emergency.
9. Incorporate the requirements of the Good Food and Catering Procurement Policy.

Toolkit of environmental requirements

A “master toolkit” of 36 environmental requirements has been compiled from the Government Buying Standards and targets set in the One City Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategies.

Prior to starting a tender process to let a new contract, a sustainability assessment will be carried out. This will identify which of the requirements from the “master toolkit” are relevant to the contract and therefore must be applied to the tender process. Each of the standard environmental requirements within the “master toolkit” has been categorised as being Information Only, Scored or Mandatory when included into tenders, based on an overall assessment of market readiness:

Information-only	Scored on quality	Mandatory pass/fail
Situation: market not yet ready (very few suppliers, and/or significant cost impact)	Situation: many suppliers able to meet this without significant cost impact	Situation: almost all suppliers able to meet this as standard
Aim: signal BCC’s future intent to suppliers, and signpost towards information and resources	Aim: reward suppliers who can meet this, whilst encouraging others to move in that direction	Aim: secure the benefit for the city, push stragglers to progress
In practice: criterion would guide bidders but would not affect the immediate tender outcome	In practice: criterion would affect tender outcome, but a bidder could still win overall without scoring well against it	In practice: bidder would be excluded from consideration if they are unable to fully meet this criterion

The proposal is to review the list of requirements and market readiness every 1-2 years with the aim of them becoming more embedded as time goes on and suppliers develop:



Evidence of current market readiness was gathered in the following ways:

- **Supplier survey:** over 2600 current suppliers were invited to feedback, as well as efforts to reach a wider audience via organisations including the Black South West Network, Voscur, Care & Support South West, Business West and the Federation of Small Business. We received 326 responses including 75% Micro and Small organisations, 15% Medium and 10% Large organisations (250 employees or more) from across the Voluntary, Charitable and Social Enterprise (VCSE) and private sectors
- **Supplier interviews:** in-depth conversations were carried out with 12 suppliers
- **Subject matter experts** have been consulted to sense check the criteria and market readiness
- **Desktop research:** We have supplemented stakeholder feedback with desktop research

Specifically, for each requirement in the toolkit, we have tried to gather data on whether organisations are:

- Already able to meet a particular requirement
- Could meet the requirement but at extra cost
- Can’t meet the requirement currently, but hope/aim to meet the requirement within a period of time
- Not considering meeting the requirement

At a high level, the categorisation numbers are as follows:

Information-only	Scored on quality	Mandatory pass/fail	Depends on contract value
4	25	5	2

Implementation plan

Training and communication materials are under development and will be launched once policy and environmental requirements are endorsed.

The main activities, some of which have been taken directly from the draft policy, are listed in the below table with who is responsible and when they are due to take place:

What	Who	When
Policy approval	Cabinet	Feb-22
Internal training	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Launch in early 2022 and then update after two years.
External training	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Launch in early 2022 and then update after two years.
Internal Communication	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Annually or as required.
External Communication	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Annually or as required.
Involvement in tender evaluations	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Initial integration and then ongoing.
Make sure that environmental requirements are embedded into our contracts and contract monitoring.	Service Areas. Strategic Procurement	Initial integration and then ongoing.
Ensure that Officers carry out Sustainability pre-specification assessment before procuring.	Service Areas/ Strategic Procurement	Ongoing task
Ensure that mandatory environmental requirements are included in tender specification.	Service areas/ Strategic Procurement	Ongoing task
Ensure scored requirements are included in tender evaluation weighting.	Service areas/ Strategic Procurement	Ongoing task
Ensure information only requirements are included in standard documents - ITT, RFQ and so on.	Service areas/ Strategic Procurement	Ongoing task
Move towards measuring the carbon emissions and savings that result from the Council's contracts.	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Ongoing task
Promote and support the response of local partners and suppliers to the climate and ecological emergency.	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Ongoing task
Incorporate the requirements of the Good Food and Catering Procurement Policy (as updated)	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Policy and toolkit review in the first six months.

Subject matter update	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Policy and toolkit review in the first six months with the intention of moving to two yearly.
Reconsider market readiness	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Policy and toolkit review in the first six months with the intention of moving to two yearly.
Update environmental requirements and notify relevant board and communication tbc	Sustainable Procurement Project Manager (Links to Sustainable City and Climate Change Service)	Policy and toolkit review in the first six months with the intention of moving to two yearly.

Annex 1: Environmental Requirements for Tenders				
Subject	Theme	Requirement	Measure	
Office furniture and Buildings	Ecology	Timber must be 100% sustainably sourced, using Forest Stewardship Council certification.	Mandatory	
Parks and gardens	Ecology	All products, services and works procured must comply with the latest version of the Horticultural Code of Practice covering invasive non-native plants.	Mandatory	
Parks and gardens	Waste	All plant containers must be reusable, recyclable or biodegradable.	Mandatory	
Food and catering	Carbon and climate resilience	Initiatives such as Meat Free Mondays, plant based and culturally specific menus shall be offered.	Mandatory	
Food and catering	All	Within the Bristol region catering providers will meet Bristol Eating Better Gold Award (BEBA). <i>The provider will have achieved BEBA gold within the first 12 months of the contract.</i>	Mandatory	

Food and catering	All	Catering providers will meet the requirements of at least the Soil Association Food For Life Served Here (FFLSH) silver award or if a food supplier will meet the requirements of the Food For Life Supplier Scheme. <i>The provider must be accredited to the appropriate level within the first 12 months of the contract.</i>	Mandatory if above Procurement threshold	
Cleaning consumables, furniture, office stationery, workwear, food and catering, ICT equipment	Waste	Describe how you will prioritise reusable packaging within the contract. Detail whether packaging and labelling will be easily separated into single-material parts. It should be noted whether any cardboard packaging used will consist of more than 80% recycled material.	Scored	
Cleaning contracts	Waste	Describe how you will reduce waste and water whilst delivering cleaning activities within the contract. <i>Such as use of reusable microfibre cloths and dry-cleaning techniques.</i>	Scored	
Electrical items	Carbon	Describe how you will aim to provide energy efficient equipment as deliverables or to provide a service within the contract. <i>The aim should be at least D rated using the new energy ratings which before 2021 was A+ rated for efficiency.</i>	Scored	
Food and catering and laundry	Carbon	Describe how you aim to provide water efficient equipment provided or used within the contract. <i>Note that a standard sized dishwasher (for up to 14 place settings) volume per cycle should not exceed 8 litres, washer driers 70 and washing machines 45 litres.</i>	Scored	
Office furniture and ICT equipment	Waste	Describe how you will prioritise reuse, repairability and recyclability of the products supplied within the contract.	Scored	
Parks and gardens	Ecology	Outline your plan to phase out peat as a soil improver within the contract.	Scored	
Parks and gardens	Carbon	Describe how you will prioritise environmentally friendly powered parks and garden machinery. <i>Including use of biofuels if applicable.</i>	Scored	
Office stationery and printing	Waste	Detail where recycled paper will be used in the delivery of the contract, noting any exceptions.	Scored	
Textiles	Waste	Describe how you will aim for textile products to have a low environmental impact within the contract. <i>Such as organic, fair trade or from recycled sources.</i>	Scored	
Textiles and Buildings	All	Show evidence of life cycle thinking for the selection of materials and equipment used or provided within the contract. Demonstrate the environmental impact of getting the raw materials needed, manufacturing processes, transportation, use and disposal.	Scored	
Transport	Carbon	Provide a green travel plan applicable to vehicles being used to deliver the works, goods or services within the contract. <i>This should detail your decision making process for whether vehicle procurement needed and how vehicles are selected and used efficiently.</i>	Scored	
Transport	Carbon	Describe how vehicles used to deliver the works, goods or services within the contract will be compliant with the Bristol Clean Air Zone (CAZ) apart from in exceptional circumstances. Show that priority has been given to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) where appropriate.	Scored	

		Bristol's Clean Air Zone charges and vehicle checker - bristol.gov.uk		
Transport	Carbon	Describe how you will minimise vehicle mileage within the delivery of the contract through mode shift towards public transport, walking and cycling; commercial vehicle mileage reduced through freight consolidation. The 2030 aim is for a total of 40% reduction in vehicle miles. <i>Not to include employee commuting.</i>	Scored	
Transport	Carbon	Describe how you can contribute to the target of all cars and 90% of all other vehicles used within the City to be Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) by 2030 within the contract. By 2029 its expected that most deliveries within the city centre are made by freight consolidated electric vehicles. <i>By 2038 all freight movements into the city centre are made by electric vehicles, with consolidation centres situated at all key access routes to the city centre.</i>	Scored	
Transport	Carbon	Describe how you will reduce total carbon emissions from international and domestic air travel associated with the delivery of the contract.	Scored	
Buildings	All	For the application of BRE's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards for major projects (above 1000m2) of new-build non-residential: Detail how you will achieve an "excellent" rating for a new building or "very good" rating for a major refurbishment as applicable.	Scored	
Buildings	All	For residential schemes show evidence of how the project can achieve an equivalent rating to BREEAM. <i>Such as WELL standard, Building with nature.</i>	Scored	
Buildings	Carbon and climate resilience	For new buildings: Describe how the building has been designed to be capable of delivering zero carbon heat and power and resilient to expected changes in climate during the lifetime of the building.	Scored	
Food and catering, textiles	Waste	Indicate how you will minimise waste associated with the contract (particularly for food, textiles, and plastic). You should aim for at least 65% of waste is repaired, reused or recycled.	Scored	
All	Climate resilience	Describe how your organisation will improve resilience to climate hazards whilst prioritising provision of services to the most vulnerable in society during contract delivery. <i>In emergency planning or business continuity.</i>	Scored	
Buildings	Ecology and climate resilience	Describe how the development will use appropriate blue and green infrastructure to increase resilience to potential changes in climate.	Scored	
Buildings	Ecology	Describe how the development will provide biodiversity net gain and enhance the sequestration potential.	Scored	
Food and catering	Carbon	Describe how locally sourced and seasonal produce will be used to deliver the contract.	Scored	
Parks and gardens, Buildings	Ecology	Describe how you will reduce pesticide use and consider alternative methods of management within the contract.	Scored	
All	Waste	Describe how you will aim to minimise single use plastics during contract delivery.	Scored	

All	Carbon	There is a Climate Strategy target to make sure that the council is carbon neutral for all emissions by 2030 and supports the city in its aim to do the same. Where scored this would change to: Detail a carbon reduction plan and targets for the contract and describe how you intend to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 as an organisation.	Information only; Scored above Procurement threshold	
All	Carbon	Bristol has a 2030 target in the Climate Strategy for all businesses and organisations in Bristol to be carbon neutral (direct and supply chain emissions) and to annually record and measure scope 1, 2 and 3 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in accordance with the GHG Protocol.	Information only	
Textiles	All	Manufacturers of textile products should be looking at ways to demonstrate innovative approaches to encourage more sustainable practice in use phase of textiles, which will be passed through the supply chain to where they are being used.	Information only	
Food and catering	Carbon	There is a Climate Strategy target for 2030 for all food supplied and distributed within the Bristol city region to be carbon neutral.	Information only	
Food and catering	Carbon	There is a Climate Strategy target that food supplied and distributed within the Bristol region is resilient to potential changes in climate.	Information only	