

Supplementary Strategy 2: Sustainable Procurement

2007 - 2010

1. Introduction

In its 2005 Sustainable Development Strategy, the Government stated that it aims to be the leading EU nation on sustainable procurement by 2009. To achieve this, the Government recognises that there would be the need for a step change in thought and performance by businesses and the public sector and in 2007, agreed a National Sustainable Procurement Action Plan. The Government stated that it would begin the process of sustainable procurement within the Government Estate.

As this strategy was developed, the Authority was in the process of undertaking a major procurement programme with a value of more than 3.5 billion pounds. The Authority took the positive decision to include sustainability criteria in the requirements for the submission of Outline and Detailed Solutions for contracts.

1.2 What is sustainable procurement?

Sustainable procurement is about purchasing products and services in line with sustainable principles i.e. procurement that takes into account environmental and social factors as well as costs when making decisions. It is about looking at what products are made of, where they have come from and by whom, how they are made and working conditions. Fundamentally, it is about whether a purchase is even necessary! Sustainable procurement can be defined as

A management process used to secure an acquisition of goods or services in a way that ensures there is the least impact on society, resources and the environment through the full life cycle and the whole life cost of the product.

Sustainable procurement is essential in the move towards a more sustainable society. From both public and private sector organisations there are needs to reduce costs, secure long-term supply chain partnerships, and to manage risk and reputations. Organisations are finding that the introduction of sustainable procurement measures can help them make progress in all areas.

1.3 Sustainable Procurement Aim

The aim of this strategy is to;

- **Ensure that social, economic and environmental well being is considered as part of Best Value which the Authority purchases its goods and services.**

Using the National Sustainable Procurement Flexible Framework, our objectives are to:

- **Benchmark progress against other JWDAs and public and private bodies/organisations;**
- **Reach level 3 (Practice) of the flexible framework in all areas; and**
- **Practice sustainable procurement across all our activities**

1.4 National Sustainable Procurement Action Plan

The Sustainable Procurement Task Force in presenting their plan, set specific target years and objectives for local authorities to achieve. The years and objectives are as follows

- **Target Years**
 - **April 2007** All public sector organisations to reach **level 1** of the flexible framework;
 - **April 2008** Benchmarking of progress nationally and internationally; and
 - **April 2009** all public sector organisations to reach level 3 (or above) of the flexible framework with leadership (level 5) in at least one area by December 2009.

The Task Force believes that the public sector in general, can start immediately on the process of integrating sustainable procurement into current working practices. The flexible framework contains 5 levels that increase in compliance and relate to 5 key areas

- People
- Policy, Strategy & Communications
- Procurement process
- Engaging suppliers and
- Measurements & results

It is not a pre-requisite that all key areas of each of the levels are attained at the same time. This flexibility enables certain areas to be targeted and prioritised.