

## **PROCUREMENT POLICY**

Stroud Town Council procures goods and services to a value of over £350,000 each year. All purchasing must comply with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which cover, amongst other things: the number of quotations required and tender rules.

The purpose of this policy is to provide additional guidance on the factors that will be taken into account when purchasing goods and services.

### **Sustainable procurement**

- 1) The Council recognises the importance of sustainability and will take into account the environmental, social and economic impacts of its purchasing decisions.
- 2) The Council is required to consider social value in all services contracts above the EU threshold, but recognises that this is good practice for all contracts.
- 3) The Council recognises its duty to protect biodiversity under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. To meet this duty the Council will wherever possible purchase products or specify working methods that protect biodiversity.
- 4) The Council will, wherever possible, purchase goods that meet international Fairtrade standards (or similar).

### **Local procurement**

- 5) The Council recognises the benefits to the economy of using local and SME businesses and, where appropriate, the voluntary sector. The Council will seek out local contractors and suppliers wherever possible and make the tender process SME friendly.
- 6) The Council pays a living wage to its employees and will encourage its suppliers to do the same.
- 7) All procurement will be in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 8) The Council understands the importance of paying suppliers promptly and will wherever possible settle accounts within a maximum of 30 days, or earlier, by agreement.

### **Health and safety and insurance**

- 9) All contractors and suppliers working on Council sites will be required to comply with the Council's Health & Safety policy and any rules specific to the site of operation, for example Cemetery Regulations.
- 10) Provision of suitable risk assessments and method statements may be a condition of contracts involving work on Council properties or sites.
- 11) The Council requires all contractors working on Council sites and properties to maintain adequate insurance, including but not limited to: Public Liability insurance

for £5 million and, where relevant, Professional Indemnity insurance at a level commensurate with the value of the contract.

## **Community engagement**

- 12) Where relevant the Council will consult with residents and service users to better understand what is needed, who will use it and what the essential requirements are for an item of capital expenditure. Examples of when this will apply include: provision of new play areas or modifications to Council buildings.
- 13) Where appropriate the Council will invite residents and community groups to join project working groups making procurement decisions.

## **Selection criteria**

- 14) The following factors may be taken into account in the Council's selection process:
  - Health and safety record
  - Health and safety procedures
  - Financial accounts
  - References
  - Location of supplier
  - Organisational structure and staffing levels

## **Procurement procedures and guidance**

- 15) All contracts estimated at over £8,000 will be advertised on the Council's website.
- 16) All contracts estimated at over £25,000 will also be advertised on the Contracts Finder website.
- 17) In accordance with Standing Orders the Council is not obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quotation or estimate, but must give reasons for not doing so.
- 18) The Council maintains monthly accounts with suppliers of regular purchases. All purchases on Council accounts may only be made by authorised Council officers who must either provide a purchase order or be provided with a receipt. Limits will be set on each account on the maximum value of individual purchases and the overall balance on the account. Expenditure over these limits must be authorised in advance.
- 19) Where additional guidance is needed the following documents will be taken into account:
  - Joint Practitioners' Advisory Group (JPAG) (March 2014), *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils A Practitioners' Guide (England)*
  - NALC (2015), *A Guide to Understanding Procurement*

## **Review**

- 20) This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Council's Finance, Community and Policy Committee every 3 years or in response to changes in legislation.