



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROCUREMENT POLICY

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

'Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh'

March 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is one of the largest councils in Wales and spends in the region of £232 million a year with private and third sector organisations on the goods, services and works needed to deliver public services.
- 1.2. The ways in which local government organisations procure is evolving. Previously there was a focus predominantly on financial determining factors, however as a result of the forthcoming Procurement Bill, there will be a greater shift away from the traditional 'price and quality' evaluation (i.e. 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender') towards a much broader approach that also considers economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being outcomes for each procurement process (i.e. Most Advantageous Tender). As a public sector organisation financial prudence remains a prerequisite, we must therefore continue to deliver value for money, however, also now seek to ensure that we are delivering wider sustainable outcomes that benefit the communities we serve.
- 1.3. Ethical, fair and responsible practices must be in place throughout our procurement processes and our supply chains. The Council is committed to being open, transparent, and fair to all. To maximise the wider potential benefits while contracting with external organisations, it is essential that the delivery of social value, reducing our carbon footprint, and supporting our local business to tender are considered as part of the procurement process.

2. AIM OF THIS POLICY

- 2.1. The procurement expectations contained within the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill begin with an overarching duty on contracting authorities to seek to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their areas by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way. This means taking action to achieve the well-being goals and the fair work goal (together, the 'socially responsible procurement goals'), for as many contracting processes as possible.
- 2.2. This Policy sets out the overarching framework for delivering the socially responsible procurement goals.

3. THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The Council agreed its new corporate priorities and a new Corporate Plan for 2020-24, '[**Making a Difference**](#)' at its meeting held on 4th March 2020. Council also agreed that these three corporate priorities would be the Council's Well-being objectives, which the Council is required to set by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 3.2 The Council's agreed Vision, purpose and priorities are:

Vision – *For Rhondda Cynon Taf to be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy, and prosperous.*

The Council's **purpose** and the reason why it exists is:
“To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous.

The Council's Corporate Priorities and Well-being Objectives are:



- 3.3 In addition to setting out the 3 Priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, the Corporate Plan identifies one of the biggest challenges the Council faces:

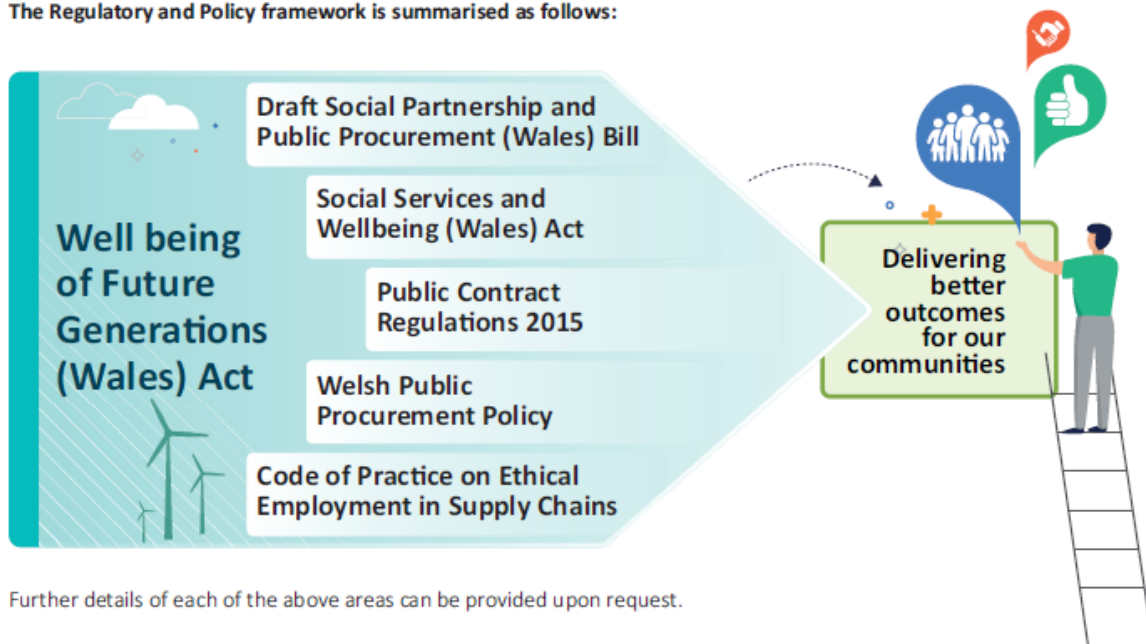
Our greatest challenge will be to deliver the Council's commitment to being “A netzero Green House Gas Council by 2030” which is 20 years earlier than the recommendation of the UK Committee on Climate Change. This is a challenge we are taking seriously, and we look forward to receiving the support from all local residents and businesses in working together to change the way we live our lives to achieve this aim.

- 3.4 The Council's [Commissioning, Socially Responsible Procurement & Contract Management Strategy 2021-2024](#) identifies 3 strategic themes that demonstrate how the Service will help support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. These themes include actions that will help deliver social value, ensure ethical and fair treatment, reduce our carbon footprint and seeks to procure locally wherever possible.

4. PROCUREMENT REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1. The Regulatory framework is summarised as follows (*further details are contained within the Council's Commissioning, Socially Responsible Procurement & Contract Management Strategy 2021-2024*):

The Regulatory and Policy framework is summarised as follows:



5. THE COUNCIL'S 'ETHICAL PRACTICES' FRAMEWORK

Ethical Employment & Fair Work

- 5.1. The 'Ethical Employment in Supply Chains' Code of Practice was launched in 2017 by the Welsh Government. It aims to support the development of more ethical supply chains delivering contracts for the Welsh Public sector. All public sector organisations are encouraged to sign up to the Code, and businesses in public sector supply chains are encouraged to adopt it. The aim of the Code is to ensure that workers in public sector supply chains are employed ethically and in compliance with both the letter and spirit of UK, EU and international laws. The code has 12 commitments that are designed to eliminate modern slavery and support ethical employment practices.
- 5.2. The Council is committed to ensuring a high standard of ethical trade practices, across its procurement activities. The Council expects its suppliers, service providers and contractors to observe the Code's commitments and to demonstrate a similar commitment to an ongoing programme of ensuring and, where necessary, improving ethical practices locally and wider.
- 5.3. The Council will proactively work to ensure that all goods, works and services it procures are sourced ethically in terms of both the way the Council procures and in terms of the standards that we expect our suppliers, service providers and contractors to meet.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- 5.4. The Council has a zero-tolerance threshold to [Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking](#) occurring within its supply chain. In accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the Council recognises that it has a responsibility as an

employer to be aware of the potential for instances of modern slavery and to report such instances or concerns to the relevant bodies.

- 5.5. As part of its tendering and contracting processes the Council will seek assurances from potential suppliers that they have suitable and robust processes in place to mitigate risks associated with modern slavery within the organisation. The Council will expect that suppliers take responsibility to seek similar assurances from their own supply chains.

Whistleblowing

- 5.6. The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure in place. Within the Policy 'workers' refers to all those that deliver services on behalf of the Council and also those organisations that provide services to the Council – i.e., Employees, Contractors and Suppliers.
- 5.7. The Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure has been produced to encourage and enable workers to [report a concern](#), rather than overlooking a problem.
- 5.8. The Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure is intended to cover serious wrongdoings, such as:
- unlawful, corrupt or irregular use of public money or resources,
 - conduct that poses a serious risk to public health, safety, the environment or the maintenance of the law,
 - any criminal offence,
 - gross negligence or mismanagement by public officials

Corporate Safeguarding

- 5.9. The Council's [Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#) provides a framework for every Service within the Council, including those services delivered by third parties, on behalf of the Council. The Policy sets out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk as well as the methods by which the Council is assured that it is fulfilling its duties.

6. A CARBON NEUTRAL COUNCIL

- 6.1. The Council is committed to becoming "A Carbon Neutral Council by 2030".
- 6.2. The Council needs to reduce its carbon footprint across all activities in order to meet its carbon neutral ambition. The carbon footprint associated with procured goods and services accounts for the largest proportion of the Council's overall footprint.
- 6.3. The Procurement Strategy identifies key actions that will help inform how the carbon footprint associated with our procured goods and services can be reviewed and hopefully reduced.

7. REDUCING SINGLE USE PLASTIC

- 7.1 The Council is committed to reducing the use of single use items wherever possible.
- 7.2 Specific items have already been removed from the Councils e-procurement system, with more sustainable / reusable products being now available for staff when ordering. Working closely with suppliers and service areas, the Council intends to promote and explore, the use of other sustainable alternatives.

8. A FAIR-TRADE COUNTY BOROUGH

- 8.1 The Council promote the use of Fair-Trade products such as Tea, Coffee and Sugar, making these items readily available on the Councils eProcurement system.
- 8.2 The Council also supports the local Community Fair Trade Group, run by local Volunteers at the Big Bite annual event in Pontypridd.

9. PROCURING LOCALLY

Welsh Procurement Policy Notice (WPPN) 07/21 Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) friendly procurement

- 9.1 The WPPN 07/21 sets out how contracting authorities in Wales should support SMEs. It highlights and builds on the principles within the [Opening Doors Charter for SME Friendly Procurement](#). Whilst these principles are not directly specified within the recent Wales Procurement Policy Statement they still apply to the Welsh Public Sector and SMEs.
- 9.2 Wherever possible and practicable, the Council continues to welcome the opportunity to do business with SME's, by ensuring fair, open and transparent competition that does not discriminate against SME's.
- 9.3 The Council is committed to ensuring all processes create a level playing field for SME's.

10. DELIVERING SOCIAL VALUE

RCT Social Value Framework

- 10.1 The requirement to develop and implement robust arrangements to deliver 'social value' across the Council's contracting arrangements is a key theme of the Draft Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill.
- 10.2 For use in all tenders over £75k, the Council has 32 measures that support the well-being objectives of the WFGA. These measures are specific and targeted to the Council's needs and aim to maximise additional value to the local area. These measures are also aligned to Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Wellbeing outcomes.

10.3 The Council seeks to ensure that all contracts over the relevant threshold (£75k) include Social Value outcomes, as these are evident in having a positive impact towards supporting its residents, communities, environmental sustainability, and the economy.

10.4 Resources are in place to monitor and report progress.

11. REPORTING & MONITORING

11.1 The Procurement Service will prepare an annual report that sets out how it has delivered the key principles contained within this document. A copy will be made available on our website.