



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council currently spends in the region of £300 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. Whereas previously there may have been a particular focus on looking towards procurement to deliver financial savings, there is now a shift away from the traditional 'price and quality evaluation' towards also ensuring that economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being outcomes are considered for each procurement process. Being a Local Authority will demand that we continue to be prudent with public funds and therefore look to achieve 'value for money', but also now seek to include broader factors that support delivery of 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. AIMS

- 2.1 The procurement duties contained within the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 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 document 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 2024-30, 'Working with our Communities'](#) at its meeting held on 24th April 2024. Council also agreed that these four 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:

The Council's **Vision** is for a Rhondda Cynon Taf where:

"All people, communities, and businesses can grow and live in a healthy, green, safe, vibrant, and inclusive County Borough where they can achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives and work, both now and in the future."

The Council's **Purpose** and the reason why it exists is

"To provide community leadership and deliver high quality public services, working alongside residents, communities and our partners so that people, businesses, and the environment can thrive and prosper."

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



3.3 The Council's [Procurement Strategy](#) identifies 3 key themes that demonstrate how the Service will help support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. These themes include actions that ensure best practice, ethical and fair treatment, putting in place socially responsible procurement activities including reducing our carbon footprint and delivering social value, monitored through robust contract management.

4. PROCUREMENT REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

4.1 The procurement of goods, services and works is covered by the following legal and regulatory framework. Details of each are provided at the following links:

- [Local Government Act 1972](#)
- [The Procurement Act 2023](#)
- [The Social Partnership and Public Procurement \(Wales\) Act 2023](#)
- [Wellbeing of Future Generations Act](#)
- [Welsh Public Procurement Policy](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

5. THE COUNCIL'S 'ETHICAL PRACTICES' FRAMEWORK

Ethical Employment & Fair Work

5.1 The [Code of Practice - Ethical Employment in Supply Chains](#) 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 and international laws. The code has 12 commitments that are designed to eliminate modern slavery and support ethical employment practices.

5.2 In 2023 the Council became an accredited living wage employer and this is also extended to our supply chains and relevant clauses are inserted into each tender.

5.3 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.

- 5.4 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

- 5.5 The Council has a zero-tolerance threshold to [Modern Slavery](#) 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.
- 5.6 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

- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 The Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure has been produced to encourage and enable workers to report a concern rather than overlooking a problem. 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](#) arrangements 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 NEAUTRAL COUNCIL

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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. PROCURING LOCALLY

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

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 The Council is committed to ensuring all processes create a level playing field for SME's, to encourage this, a [Local Business Directory](#) has been developed that notifies local businesses when any appropriate tender or contract opportunities arise.

8. DELIVERING SOCIAL VALUE

- 8.1 The requirement to develop and implement robust arrangements to deliver 'Social Value' across the Council's contracting arrangements is a key theme of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act.
- 8.2 For all tenders over £75k and where appropriate, The Council has developed a set of standard social value measures to be included in all relevant tenders and these are mapped against the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act Goals. These measures have been developed and chosen to reflect some of the specific needs of the Council and the communities it supports.
- 8.3 Resources are in place to monitor and report Social Value outcomes.