

London Borough of Sutton

Sustainable commissioning and procurement policy

Background

Sutton Council aims to be London's most sustainable borough. As a significant consumer of goods and services, the Council commits to aligning its procurement and commissioning activities with its sustainability aims. This is recognised in the Council's Procurement Strategy 2023-2027.

Sustainable and responsible procurement enables the Council to meet its needs for goods and services in a way that achieves value for money on a whole-life basis and generates benefits for society, the economy and the environment, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Using its purchasing power, the Council has the opportunity to positively influence supply chains and drive the sustainable change needed to achieve its vision. The Council will encourage and work collaboratively with contractors to adopt practices that increase positive environmental and social impacts.

This policy supports the key priorities of Sutton's [Corporate Plan: Ambitious for Sutton 2022 - 2027](#), outlined below:

- Action on climate change where Sutton will be a sustainable, green borough, with everyone taking responsibility for their impact on the environment.
- An inclusive place for everyone where Sutton will be a place where people from all backgrounds feel included and get on well together, with support for its young people, families, older people, and vulnerable residents.
- Having quality and affordable housing where more people in Sutton will live in safe, high-quality, and affordable homes.
- Strong and fair economic growth where Sutton will have more quality jobs and thriving local businesses.
- Campaign for quality services where the Council will continue to seek the best possible deal for Sutton's residents, communities and businesses on health, transport, the economy and the environment.
- An efficient and well run Council which will continue to deliver the best possible services within the resources available, making the most of its assets, workforce and digital innovation.

The Council's ambitious response to the climate emergency: [Sutton's Environment Strategy 2019-2025 & Climate Emergency Response Plan](#) builds on and supports the Council's corporate priorities. It sets the Council's commitment and actions pathway to reducing Council and borough carbon emissions to net zero.

The London Borough of Sutton sets out its Sustainable Procurement commitments, as follows:

London Borough of Sutton's Sustainable Procurement Commitments

The Council commits to weight supplier assessment scoring to favour responses that can evidence measurable plans supporting the following commitments:

1. Cleaner air : Sutton's air will be clean and safe

- The Council will identify opportunities for reducing the emissions that contribute to poor air quality associated with purchases of products, works and services. This includes phasing out the use of fossil fuels from its fleets and from vehicles used in fulfilling its contracts and transitioning to electric vehicles as well as reducing mileage and route optimisation.

2. A greener borough : More than half of Sutton's space will be green space.

- The Council will maximise opportunities to exceed Local Plan requirements for increasing overall green space coverage by including it in: private developments, through the planning process; estate regeneration and renewal projects and Council housing schemes; transport / Local Implementation Plan schemes; relevant Business Improvement District projects; flood prevention schemes; other Council-led schemes e.g. schools; and in the Public Realm Design Guide.
- New contracts will support the Council's commitment to plant 2,000 trees each year.
- New contracts will seek to maximise Biodiversity Net Gain in areas of the borough most deprived of high quality biodiversity and nature-rich green space.
- New contracts will support delivery of Sutton's Local Nature Recovery Plan - to ensure green spaces are better connected and multi-functional.
- New contracts will support the Council's commitment to create habitat banking sites in Council-owned parks.

3. Achieving net zero carbon : The borough will have net zero carbon emissions.

- The Council will take steps to reduce its energy use and encourage its suppliers to do the same.
- All electricity procured by the Council will be generated from renewable sources and the Council will encourage its suppliers to do the same.
- Buildings planned within the borough will need to meet zero carbon standards compliant with Local Plan Policy requirements or provide carbon offset payments, which will be used for carbon reduction schemes.
- As appropriate opportunities come forward, Council buildings will be replaced with certified exemplar, net zero carbon buildings and retrofit measures will be specified for the remainder.
- Through delivery of regeneration and development projects above UK Procurement Threshold values, the Council expects the supplier to:
 - Provide goods, works and services to ensure climate resilience, the lowest possible whole-life carbon impacts, and deliver year-on-year improvements in carbon and energy intensity.
 - Devise and offer innovative solutions that support our journey to achieve net zero carbon.
 - Provide accurate data to help us disclose our GHG (greenhouse gas emissions) in a clear and transparent way.

4. Creating a circular economy : Waste will be reduced and a circular economy created.

- The Council will take steps to reduce consumption of virgin materials and reduce waste and encourage its suppliers to demonstrate how they will do the same.
- The Council will reuse as much office furniture, stationery and building fabric as possible.
- The Council will not buy products that cannot be easily reused or recycled.
- The Council will not buy single use plastic items (except for medical purposes).

- Council let catering contracts will require action on reducing food mileage, energy use and waste, particularly single use plastic packaging and food waste. Actions will also be required to increase the proportion of seasonal and local produce used.
- Council construction and regeneration projects will follow circular economy principles, prioritising building reuse, repurposing and refurbishment over demolition. Full life cycle carbon assessment of materials will inform consideration in their selection. Development design will be optimised to ensure that resources (both material and energy, particularly fossil fuels) used and wasted are minimised during both the construction and operation of the buildings.

5. Tackling climate change : By taking urgent action, the Council will prevent the worst effects of climate change on people and infrastructure caused by flooding, heatwaves and loss of biodiversity.

- New developments will avoid the risk of flooding and be fully adapted and resilient to the future impacts of climate change through compliance with the relevant Local Plan Policies.

London Borough of Sutton's Sustainable Procurement process

Sustainability will be embedded in the Council's procurement process in the following ways:

1. By educating all Sutton Council staff about climate change, with additional sustainable procurement training for commissioning or other staff who may undertake or assist procurement.
2. Through consideration of alternative and innovative options, by the project lead, during the initial procurement appraisal.
3. By asking suppliers in all categories to identify significant environmental impacts, risks and opportunities within the contract. They will also be asked to identify the scope for improvement, which will be proportional to the supplier business size, relevant to the magnitude of the risk, their leverage to influence their own supply chain and the performance of their competitors. Suppliers will be encouraged to find their own innovative solutions.
4. Based on the above or contract manager and sustainability team market knowledge, insertion of relevant questions within the selection qualification and/or tender documents and weighting of selection criteria. As a minimum this will screen for supplier ability to support Sutton Council's Sustainable Procurement Commitments, as outlined in LBS Sustainable Commissioning and Procurement policy. The Council commits to weight supplier assessment scoring to favour responses that provide clear, measurable plans as to how the supplier will support those commitments whilst delivering the contract.
5. Through the specification of relevant, proportional, achievable and measurable product and service KPIs in the contract, based on the outcome of 3, above and industry best practice standards.
6. Through the specification of environmental requirements within the Contract Standing Orders, as set out in the Council's constitution.
7. Via Added Social Value evaluation weighting requirements, where mandatory (contract value over £100,000) or proportional to the impact of the goods or service and not already 'baked in' to the contract.
8. During contract management, through monitoring and review of the key performance indicators which have been specified over the lifetime of the contract.
9. By reporting progress on sustainability targets and social value outcomes set within the contract back to the procurement and sustainability teams, to enable monitoring of the Council's progress against its targets and to inform standard setting for new procurements.

This process is detailed further in the Sustainable commissioning and procurement strategy.

Implementation of this policy - accountability

The Council commits to embedding the consideration of sustainability into its procurement process, (as stated in the Council Procurement Strategy 2023-2027) and to develop, review and maintain guidance, monitoring protocols and training to support this across the organisation.

To ensure effective implementation of this policy the Council will:

1. Share Sutton Council's Corporate Strategy and Climate Emergency Response plan with its suppliers so they are clear about what the Council needs to achieve and how they can support it to do this.
2. Communicate and review this policy and the Sustainable commissioning and procurement strategy and its benefits across the Council and its supply chains, taking a leadership role in responsible procurement in Sutton.
3. Make appropriate financial and staff resources available to train and support its staff to continue to successfully implement sustainable procurement.
4. Engage with its suppliers to identify opportunities for business and market development that can be realised from sustainable procurement, and provide support and guidance to help them comply with its policy.
5. Collaborate with other public procurement bodies, such as other London boroughs, to align procurement requirements and take a coordinated approach towards the shared goal of net zero and to streamline the associated administrative compliance burden on shared suppliers.
6. Monitor the implementation of this policy through effective contract management and by means of a procurement Added Social Value database, which will log the specified sustainability requirements and KPIs. This data will be used to report on the Council's progress in reducing carbon emissions and to understand lessons learned through each contract.