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Hayfield Parish Council Environmental Sustainability Policy – Sustainable Procurement Action Framework

1. The Council's Climate Emergency Working Group was charged with developing an 'action framework' to ensure the precepts of the Council's Environmental Sustainability Policy (ESP) were embedded in council operations. The result of work done is attached, to help steer future council procurement activity.
2. The proposals reflect work looking at best practice in a range of councils, and take account of the Parish Council's own expenditure. In a full 12 months, around one third of all council expenditure items were under £100 and only four procurement items were for over £1,000. The Working Group has accordingly sought to develop an action framework which is proportionate to the council's procurement activities, largely involving local suppliers. It proposes an ascending hierarchy of expectations of contractors, aligned to the value of contracts being considered. The proposals made are considered by the Council Clerk to be workable.
3. The Council's ESP also set out the commitment to see those organisations seeking grant aid from the Council addressing the precepts set out in the ESP. It made clear that the ESP itself should be sent, with the grant aid application form, to all seeking financial assistance. Reference to that has been made on the front of the application form, also attached, and a section inserted into the form inviting them to identify how they seek to embed good environmental practice in their operations. No other substantive changes have been made to the content of the application form.

Hayfield Parish Council Environmental Sustainability Policy – Sustainable Procurement Action Framework – Draft Guidance for Council Personnel

1. This guidance is intended to help structure sustainable procurement activity undertaken by Council personnel, to help deliver the council's Environmental Sustainability Policy in practice.

2. Sustainable procurement is where procurers meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis. This means generating benefits not only to the council, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

3. The Parish Council¹, in policy and practice, seeks to:
 - Achieve net zero carbon emissions from its own operations;
 - Enhance resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts by asking suppliers to ensure goods and services they supply do not increase the parish's vulnerability
 - Promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling by encouraging suppliers to act to reduce waste and promote re-use, remanufacture and recycling of resources employed, and by the Council specifying products which, where available, are sustainably sourced, are made from recycled materials or can be recycled or reused, are locally sourced, make reduced use of packaging, and can easily be repaired
 - Encourage suppliers to consider the biodiversity impacts of their operations and take steps to mitigate these;
 - Encourage suppliers to consider the air quality impacts of their operations and take steps to mitigate these;
 - Promote the sourcing of 'fair trade' alternatives where these are available;
 - Encourage suppliers to communicate with their supply chain, to raise awareness of the importance of doing business sustainably;
 - Work with suppliers who can demonstrate commitment to employee fair reward and welfare;

- Encourage those seeking grant funding from the Council to similarly assess their own operational practices for their impact on the environment;
- Follow best practice guidance in this field and comply with the provisions of The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and relevant sector-specific Government Buying Standards.

The Council seeks to do this in ways which are proportionate to the value of services procured.

4. Council personnel should accordingly seek evidence about contractors' environmental credentials, rising with size of contract.

5. Hayfield Parish generally distinguishes how it procures goods/services according to value:

- the Council Clerk has delegated authority to spend on single items up to £500, where these relate to lines in the council budget or concern maintenance/repair/renewal items;
- the Council's Finance Committee has authority to spend on single items over £500 and up to £1,000.
- above £1,000, items should go the full Parish Council for its determination..

6. FOR ITEMS COSTING UNDER £500:

The Council Clerk should seek to procure goods and services from suppliers who meet the objectives in para 3 above. To do so, the *Clerk will determine if, and how, to advise suppliers of the Council's interest in seeing such objectives embedded in their own operations and sourcing of materials*. The Clerk will be asked, at year's end, to demonstrate examples of her/his actions;

7. FOR ITEMS LIKELY TO COST £500-999

The Finance Committee considers, and instructs The Clerk as appropriate, to seek from suppliers evidence of their own commitment to the objectives set out in para 3 above. This will be via a *simple request asking the prospective supplier to 'please set out what you do to ensure sound environmental practice, avoidance of waste and recycling of materials (max 200 words)'*. Replies will inform decisions about award of 'contract'.

8. FOR ITEMS LIKELY TO COST £1,000-£3,000

The Council will specify the service to be procured, proceed to securing several quotes and *ask prospective suppliers to provide evidence of any environmental policy they have and how often it is reviewed. If prospective contractors cannot supply this, the Council will ask them what specific initiatives they take to ensure the sustainability of their service and limit its impact on the environment*. Evidence supplied will inform decisions about award of 'contract'.

9. FOR ITEMS LIKELY TO COST OVER £3,000

The Council *will specify the service to be procured, proceed to securing several quotes and require prospective suppliers to answer, as part of their quote, service-specific questions identified in advance, drawn from established best practice, which reflect the extent to which they meet sustainability tests for the works/goods in question.* Answers will be scored and contribute to wider evaluation of tenders received. Scoring will apportion weight to the following criteria in bids received, as set out below:

- a) Price - 40%
- b) Quality (warranties, references, experience and previous work examples)- 30%
- c) Environmental Impact/sustainability - 30%

10. Details of how scoring will be undertaken must be agreed in advance of bids being received. These will reflect on best practice available. A scheme of 0 (no evidence supplied) -5 (best) against each criterion is simple to administer. In general, a scoring system which looks like that below is commended:

Tender Supplier(name):			
Criterion	a) Tender weighting	b) Supplier evaluation score (0-5, where 0= no evidence supplied)	c) Supplier weighted score (a x b)
Price*	40%		
Quality	30%		
Environmental Impact/Sustainability	30%		
Total Supplier Score (max 500)			

* for price, council personnel will need to establish in advance whether they wish to simply rate tenders on a 'league' basis (cheapest = 5, most expensive=1, or whether to use notional markers (e.g. under £4,000 = 5, £4,001-£5,000 = 4, £5,001- £6,000 = 3, £6,001-£7,000=2, £7.001 and over =1), taking account of likely value of service to be procured. The highest scoring supplier will normally be preferred bidder.

Whilst this general approach should be followed, there may be exceptional circumstances (e.g. where some suppliers are unable to provide the goods /services in an acceptable time frame), where considerations other than simple scoring may need to be taken in choosing a preferred supplier.

11. BEST PRACTICE

To ensure that suppliers are progressively moving towards established best practice in their field, the council needs itself to understand where it can access details of such best practice.

12. Sources are likely to include, specific to tests of sustainability:

- * Kite marks specific to the industry/service area;
- * eligibility tests for membership of trade-specific 'sustainability organisations';
- * achievement of B Corp status (companies verified to meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability);
- * the Local Government Association's Procurement Strategy and associated toolkits;
- * the relevant sector-specific [Government Buying Standards \(GBS\) - GOV.UK](#);
- * evidence from other councils – their sustainability or procurement policies and practices.