



Aberdeen City Council

Sustainable Purchasing Policy Statement – February 2001

1. Introduction

The City Council is a major purchaser in the north east of Scotland and recognises that its purchasing decisions have major socio-economic and environmental implications, both locally and globally, now and in generations to come. These range from the pollution and biodiversity loss arising from the manufacture of goods and services purchased, to the potential employment and economic benefits of purchasing locally manufactured goods.

This Policy is designed to address the full range of concerns relating to the socio-economic and environmental impacts of goods and services purchased by the City Council. It will require continuous development in light of new research information, and will be adopted by all Council Departments.

2. Aim

It is the aim of the Sustainable Purchasing Policy to ensure that all purchasing decisions take the following five key factors into account:-

- The **financial resources** available
- The need to achieve **value for money** (Best Value)
- The **socio-economic and environmental implications** of goods and services purchased
- Links to relevant **City Council policies and strategies**
- Any relevant **legal requirements** relating to procurement

The most appropriate way to effectively balance these different factors is to evaluate individual goods and services in terms of their **whole-life costs**. In other words, buyers must be able to clearly demonstrate quality and economy throughout the complete life cycle of each particular product or service contract. Product life cycles incorporate manufacture, use/maintenance as well as eventual disposal. Quality in this respect incorporates not only fitness for purpose and value for money, but also, importantly, any demonstrable socio-economic and environmental benefits. Procurement decisions should never be based on any one factor alone, such as price.

3. Objectives

The principle objectives of this Policy are to:-

- conserve energy, water, wood, paper and other resources, particularly those which are scarce or non-renewable, while still providing a safe and comfortable working environment;
- reduce waste by purchasing refurbished and recycled products and materials where such alternatives are available, affordable and fit for their purpose;
- phase out ozone-depleting substances and minimising releases of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds, vehicle emissions and other substances with the potential to do damage to health and the environment (e.g. through the purchase of energy-efficient work equipment and low emissions vehicles);
- minimise pollution resulting from the manufacture, use and eventual disposal of goods purchased;
- maximise the socio-economic and environmental benefits of goods and services purchased, particularly through the use, where practicable, of locally-sourced goods and services;
- ensure that any products derived from wildlife and other natural resources, such as timber, plants and leather goods, are from ecologically sustainable sources that comply with EC and other international trading rules such as CITES (the Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species);
- ensure that all suppliers, contractors and fund managers support the welfare and rights of both their own employees and those of subsidiary companies supplying components and raw materials used in the manufacturing process;
- work with contractors to improve their social and environmental performance where this is relevant to the contract, and to the achievement of value for money;
- encourage manufacturers, suppliers and contractors through specifications to develop socially and environmentally preferable goods and services at competitive prices.