



Galway City Council



GREEN PROCUREMENT POLICY 2022

Contents

1	Introduction:.....	3
2	Aim of the Policy.....	4
3	Key Objectives	4
4	Scope	5
5	How is sustainability considered?	5
6	Life cycle	6
7	European Union.....	6
8	National Level:.....	8
9	Benefits:.....	10
10	Implementation.....	10
10.1	Procurement Operations.....	10
10.2	Environmental Impact	11
10.3	Waste reduction, re-use and recycling.....	11
10.4	Water.....	11
11	Training:.....	12
12	Communication:	12
13	Reviewing	12
14	Conclusion	13

1 Introduction:

Green Public Procurement (GPP) is **a process, whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.**” This policy provides the framework for the procurement of goods, services and works to ensure that Galway City Council (GCC) obtains best value for money whilst achieving legislative compliance, transparency, probity, and environmental objectives.

In 2019 Galway City Council signed the Climate Action Charter with Central Government. Galway City Council and the Government acknowledges in the Climate Action Charter that Galway City Council as a Local Authority will with the support of Central Government implement Green Public Procurement Strategy and procedures across all business areas. The 2020 Programme for Government: Our Shared Future sets a commitment that by 2023, all procurement using public funds will need to include green criteria.

Sustainable procurement is the process of making purchasing decisions that meet an organisation’s needs for goods and services in a way that benefits not only the organisation but society as a whole, while minimising its impact on the environment. GCC is committed to taking responsibility of its own impact on the environment and society. GCC recognises that our purchasing of goods, services and works has sustainable implications and we are actively working towards reducing the negative effects these purchases may cause. The Council will embed the principles of sustainability throughout its procurement activities to ensure that only value for money goods, services and works are selected. Working with our suppliers is key to delivering the aims of this policy. We will monitor and measure their performance, encourage them to conduct their operations in line with the council’s commitments and embrace continuous improvement.

2 Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that GCC employees and suppliers are aware of the Council's commitment to long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

GCC is committed to the responsible management of its procurement process in order to deliver value for money, whilst actively pursuing environmental goods, services and works.

3 Key Objectives

GCC aims to achieve this by:

- Taking into account the need to minimise emissions and reducing the negative impacts of transportation when purchasing goods, services and works.
- The tendering process is equally accessible to all suppliers.
- Sustainability is taken into account at the earliest stages of the procurement process.
- Aim to promote sustainability within all our contracts and tendering documentations.
- Taking steps to minimise carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions through the detailed consideration of products and services procured, to support the Climate Action Plan 2019.
- Value for money is delivered through the full consideration of quality and whole life costs.
- Considering the environmental performance of all suppliers and encouraging them to conduct their operations in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Maximising the use of recycled products and products derived from reclaimed materials.
- Seeking to select goods/services /works that have minimal effect on the depletion of natural resources and biodiversity.
- Giving a preference to Fairtrade, or equivalent, and ethically sourced and produced goods and services.
- Ensuring all relevant procurement contracts and tenders contain sustainability specifications as appropriate to the product or service being procured.

- Comply with all EU & National statutory regulations and legislation and ensuring our suppliers do the same.
- Training all procurement staff on sustainability considerations.
- Communicate the policy to all staff, suppliers and partners.
- Continually review our purchasing of goods, services and works through our contract specifications.

4 Scope

- This policy applies to all purchases, procurement activities, management of ongoing contracts, and frameworks across GCC.
- The principles of the policy will also apply where the GCC utilises procurement services offered by others, such as the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) where we should seek to influence frameworks and contracts to enhance sustainability outcomes.
- Consideration must be given, not only, to the impact of the initial procurement, but also to the ongoing impact through to end of life of any goods, services and works procured, any decommissioning of equipment, and any other aspects which would constitute a whole life approach to assessment of sustainability impact.

5 How is sustainability considered?

We can address sustainability through a number of “levers” in the procurement process, primarily:

- Asking relevant, targeted sustainability questions at the Selection Questionnaire stage of major procurements.
- Asking specific, target-setting questions at the Invitation To Tender (ITT) stage of relevant procurements – allowing bidders to propose specific targets and delivery plans to reduce emissions and provide other sustainable outcomes.
- Including sustainable requirements as part of the specification where possible.
- Ensuring the procurement process is accessible to bids from consortia or partnerships.
- Engaging in supplier engagement with the market, prior to major tender exercises.

6 Life cycle

Green Tenders seeks to promote life-cycle thinking, in conformity with that supported by current Government guidelines on, e.g. appraisal of capital projects and Cost Benefit Analysis. Analysis on this basis enables public procurers, their suppliers and the other procurement stakeholders better to take into account the longer-term environmental impacts associated with the purchase and all associated costs, operating costs and end-of-life of goods and services.

7 European Union



Since 2008, the Commission has developed more than 20 common GPP criteria covering various product and service groups. The priority sectors for implementing GPP were selected through a multi-criteria analysis including: scope for environmental improvement; public expenditure; potential impact on suppliers; potential for setting an example to private or corporate consumers; political sensitivity; existence of relevant and easy-to-use criteria; market availability and economic efficiency. Europe's public authorities are major consumers. By using their purchasing power to choose environmentally friendly goods, services and works, they can make an important contribution to sustainable consumption and production. Although GPP is a voluntary instrument, it has a key role to play in the EU's efforts to become a more resource-efficient economy. It can help stimulate a critical mass of demand for more sustainable goods and services which otherwise would be difficult to get onto the market. GPP is therefore a strong stimulus for eco-innovation.

GPP can be applied to contracts both above and below the threshold for application of the Procurement Directives. The 2014 Procurement Directives enable public authorities to take environmental considerations into account. This applies during pre-procurement, as part of the procurement process itself, and in the performance of the contract. Techniques such as life-cycle costing, specification of sustainable production processes, and use of environmental award criteria are available to help contracting authorities identify environmentally preferable bids.

GPP has been endorsed in a number of EU policies and strategies, reflecting its recognised potential to encourage a more sustainable use of natural resources, establish behavioural changes for sustainable consumption and production, and drive innovation. The Circular Economy Action Plan, adopted in December 2015, highlights GPP as one of the measures necessary to ensure more effective and efficient use of resources.

To be effective, GPP requires the inclusion of clear and verifiable environmental criteria for products and services in the public procurement process. The European Commission and a number of European countries have developed guidance in this area, in the form of national GPP criteria. The challenge of furthering take-up by more public sector bodies so that GPP becomes common practice still remains. As does the challenge of ensuring that green purchasing requirements are somewhat compatible between Member States - thus helping create a level playing field that will accelerate and help drive the single market for environmentally sound goods and services.

EU Sustainable Development Strategy

The overall aim of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy is to identify and develop actions to enable the EU to achieve a continuous long-term improvement of quality of life through the creation of sustainable communities able to manage and use resources efficiently, able to tap the ecological and social innovation potential of the economy and in the end able to ensure prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion.

8 National Level:

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 provides for a national climate objective, which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally-sustainable and climate-neutral economy.

The Act requires that the first two five-year carbon budgets proposed by the Climate Change Advisory Council should equate to a **total reduction of 51% in greenhouse gas emissions over the period to 2030**, relative to a baseline of 2018.



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

The act requires Local Authorities prepare individual Local Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures and will be updated every five years. Local Authority Development Plans must be aligned with their Climate Action Plan. A key element of Local Authority Climate Action will be using public procurement to deliver change.

Green public procurement has a key role to play in delivering on ambitious climate goals and national targets and there is an obligation on every public body to play its part. Under the Programme for Government, all procurement using public funds will have to include green criteria by 2023. New legislation now applies to the procurement of many goods & services, including vehicles; building works; and energy-using products. Current Irish policy on GPP encourages public bodies to implement green elements into their procurement processes and to consider full life cycle costs.

The protection of our environment and the sustainable use of our natural resources are essential to the health and wellbeing of everyone across Ireland, and indeed globally. Our shared responsibility for the world's resources is behind the government's commitment to sustainable development and the reduction of environmental pollution in all its forms.

The government is building these policies around:

- a circular economy, where resources are utilised for as long as possible and the production of waste is minimised through greater waste prevention and recycling

- promoting greater environmental awareness
- engaging every aspect of society in the process: citizens, businesses, communities and organisations
- supporting and funding environmental initiatives on a local and national level

The protection of the environment is a major undertaking, and requires a great deal of effort and support from across Ireland, and the rest of the world.

Current Irish GPP policy includes:

- The Climate Action Plan 2019 which outlines various proposals to reduce Ireland's greenhouse gases including a number of GPP measure.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ccb2e0-the-climate-action-plan-2019/>

- Guidance on Green Procurement published by the Environmental Protection Agency.
<https://www.epa.ie/publications/circular-economy/resources/GreenPublicProcurementfinalwebv2.pdf>
- Circular 20/2019: Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement which instructs Government Departments and bodies under their aegis to consider including green criteria in public procurement processes in certain circumstance and requires relevant green procurement measures to be incorporated into planning and reporting cycles.

<https://ogp.gov.ie/circular-20-2019-promoting-the-use-of-environmental-and-social-considerations-in-public-procurement/>

- The National Action Plan – ‘Green Tenders’ (January 2012) which outlines examples of GPP best practice to assist public bodies in implementing GP.

<https://www.etenders.gov.ie/Media/Default/SiteContent/LegislationGuides/13.%20Green%20Tenders%20-%20An%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Green%20Public%20Procurement.pdf>

Office of Government Procurement (OGP)

The Government has agreed that there will be a phased introduction of green criteria targeting priority products and services as well as building appropriate green criteria into OGP frameworks and providing support and guidance to procurers.

9 Benefits:

The benefits of having a Green Procurement Policy in place for GCC are:

- Meeting green policy goals on climate change and energy efficiency
- Increasing financial efficiency
- Enhancing organisational reputation
- Reducing risk of non-compliance with legislation
- Encouraging innovation and the development of competitive sustainable solutions
- Meeting the members of the public's expectations regarding sustainability



10 Implementation

Galway City Council will:

10.1 Procurement Operations

- Develop and maintain a suite of procurement documents, including selection criteria, specifications and award criteria based on the EPA's **Green Public Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector**.
- Develop and maintain guidance, protocols and training to support and embed the practices of GPP in the procurement cycle across the organisation
- Establish and embed a corporate approach to contract management and contract monitoring to ensure that sustainability-related promises made by suppliers are delivered upon through the lifetime of a contract.
- Where appropriate, design specifications and procurement documents in a manner which allows greater access to opportunities for SMEs.
- Promote the use of E-Procurement throughout the organisation to reduce the use of paper in procurement projects.
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10.2 Environmental Impact



- Require suppliers to take action to reduce waste and promote reuse throughout the supply chain by requesting information on processes during procurements where appropriate.
- Require suppliers to support circular economy principles in their business with considerations to products made materials.
- Require suppliers to reduce the use of single use plastics in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where appropriate).
- Commission and procure energy-efficient products and services and encourage suppliers to improve their processes in this area.
- Require suppliers to demonstrate they are minimising the environmental impacts of their supply chain, choosing more sustainable and high quality products and/or services.
- Require suppliers to seek sustainable alternatives to materials which are scarce or at risk of becoming so.

10.3 Waste reduction, re-use and recycling

- Seek to reduce the impact of goods, services and works through waste minimisation - including packaging waste, construction waste, the disposal of any consumables, and the disposal of assets at end of life.
- Encourage suppliers to take action to reduce waste and promote re-use, remanufacture and recycling at every level of the supply chain – and set out specific requirements in contracts with a potentially high waste impact.
- Consider opportunities for reduced or more efficient use of resources, especially when preparing to re-tender for existing contracts.



10.4 Water

- Consider the risk of negative water impact in specific contracts, with particular focus on water use, waste water and discharges into the water system.



- Encourage suppliers to take steps to control and reduce water usage, and to prevent or mitigate harmful discharges into the water system, and seek to reward suppliers who achieve significant outcomes in doing so.

11 Training:

GCC staff who are responsible for carrying out specific tasks to have the appropriate skills, or that appropriate training is given. This would include:

- For procurers on the technical aspects of GPP implementation.
- For procurers and financial staff on the concept of life-cycle costing.
- For managers and high-level decision-makers on GPP in general and the potential benefits it can bring, to ensure high-level support for actions.
- For end-users on the sustainable use of products.

12 Communication:

GPP is most effective if there is a clear understanding, among all staff and suppliers, of what it stands for, and the reasons for its introduction. The following activities will take place:

- Awareness raising activities for all staff – possibly through seminars, in-house newsletters, the authority’s intranet.
- Communicating intentions to suppliers, well in advance of the actual procurement, providing the time and information to adjust to new requirements.
- Engaging with our Local Enterprise Office (LEO) to inform suppliers to responding to new environmental demands, for example by sourcing appropriate product ranges, and thus increasing innovation.
- Marketing activities aimed at the general public.

13 Reviewing

The Policy will be reviewed and enhanced regularly to stay up-to-date with best practices and changes in relevant guidelines and standards.

14 Conclusion

GCC is striving to create a fairer society based on equal opportunity, sustainable economic growth and wide market participation, while providing for sustainable public finances. Public procurement will remain a crucial instrument of policy delivery. The use of Green public procurement can help tackling global challenges such as climate change and resource scarcity. It can improve competitiveness and enable SMEs' access to procurement opportunities. This Policy will assist GCC in the development of a strategic approach to procurement policies.

The responsibility for effective implementation of this policy will rest with all of Galway City Councils staff, suppliers and partners. This Policy is to raise awareness of sustainable procurement across GCC.

Galway City Council endeavours to continually improve its sustainable procurement performance such that all relevant policies, guidance and training are continually reviewed and updated. The effectiveness of this approach will be measured and reported upon annually. Galway City Council will work with suppliers and contractors in a consistent and professional manner and build effective relationships while supporting the principles of open and effective competition.