



# **Kildare County Council Green Procurement Policy**

## Mission

Shaping a sustainable future while improving the quality of life of all citizens. Delivering enabling infrastructure and efficient accessible services and pursuing our vision through collaboration, innovation, inclusion and community engagement.

(Kildare County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024)

## Introduction

This policy complements Kildare County Council's Corporate Procurement Plan 2022 – 2026 and Kildare County Council's Climate Action Charter and details the Council's commitment to sustainability through its procurement principles and actions.

Kildare County Council is also a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors – this initiative encourages and supports long-term political commitment to climate action at a local level. This policy will assist Kildare in implementing some of the Covenant of Mayors' goals.



Source: Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy – 'The Journey'

Kildare County Council spends c€500 million per annum. Through the increased promotion of environmental sustainability, and by integrating environmental considerations in our procurement processes, the Council is in a position to influence the demand for environmentally preferable goods and services and show leadership in this sphere.

As part of our Climate 2030 targets, and our commitment to improving the quality of life of our citizens, this policy seeks to promote environmental stewardship and adapt to climate change by integrating environmental considerations in the procurement process.

Green procurement is set within the context of achieving value for money. It requires the integration of environmental considerations into the procurement process including planning, acquisition, use and disposal (*Circular Economy & Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022*). In this context, value for money includes the consideration of many factors such as cost, performance, availability, quality and environmental performance. Green procurement also requires an understanding of the total cost of ownership, the relevant risks and opportunities, the environmental and economic costs or benefits to society, and any environmental or economic non-monetized positive or negative impacts to society. The earth has a finite level of resources, and these are currently being used at a greater rate than they can be replenished. Consideration of this 'natural capital' should be inherent in decision making processes including procurement.

This policy also supports Kildare County Council in targeting specific environmental outcomes where procurement can effectively be used to mitigate the impact of – or adapt to – environmental issues such as climate change and can support the protection of biodiversity, natural areas, and the environment generally. Where decisions are made to move forward on realising specific environmental outcomes through procurement, it is expected this will:

- demonstrate environmental leadership;
- stimulate innovation and market development of, and demand for, environmentally preferred goods and services, making these available and mainstream for other sectors of society; and
- support emerging environmental technologies.

### **What is Green Public Procurement (GPP)?**

GPP is defined as 'a process where public authorities seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact.'

### **National Climate Action Plan**

The National Climate Action Plan aims to ensure that Ireland reaches its 2030 emissions targets, with the long term goal of zero net emissions by 2050. The Climate Action Plan requires every public body to engage fully in addressing the climate emergency. A key element of such a mandate is by using public procurement to deliver change.

To assist in the provision of green criteria that can be incorporated into public procurement in line with Circular 20/2019, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published updated [Green Public Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector](#) in September 2021. Launched at the EPA Circular Economy Conference by Minister of State Ossian Smyth, the general guidance is accompanied by GPP criteria for ten sectors:

- Energy-related products
- Food and catering services
- Heating equipment

- ICT products and services
- Cleaning products and services
- Indoor and outdoor lighting
- Design, construction and management of office buildings
- Paper products and printing services
- Textile products and services
- Road transport vehicles and services

The criteria can be copied and pasted directly into tender documents (although sometimes some minor adjustment may be necessary)

## **Sustainable Development Goal 12**

Ireland's [Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020](#) designates the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) as leading on target 12.7 – promote public procurement processes that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities – with Green Tenders indicated as the relevant national policy.

This policy will expand this commitment further.

## Kildare County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy

Kildare County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 -2024 contains six key 'goals':

- Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations
- Infrastructure and Built Environment
- Land use and Development
- Drainage and Flood Management
- Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure
- Community Health and Wellbeing.

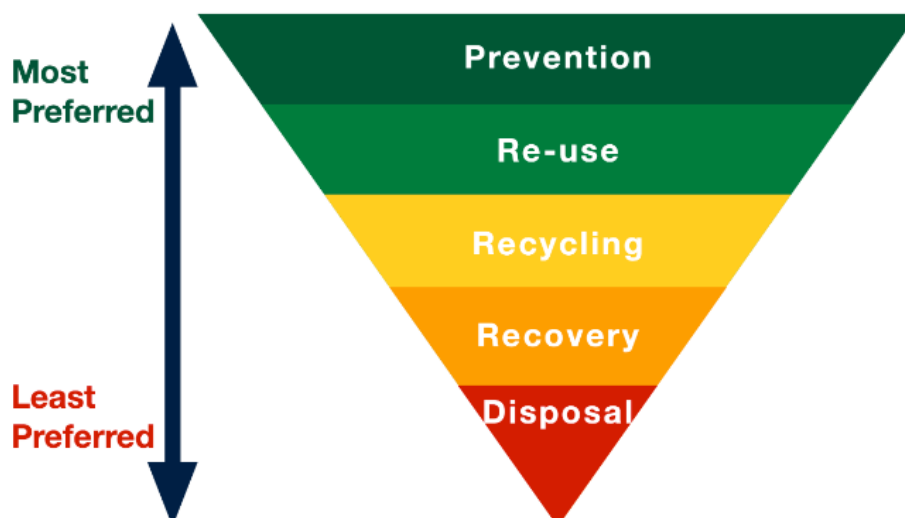
Procurement is specifically references within Goal 1 – Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations:

Take on a more robust role in promoting green procurement, in order for goods, services and works to support environmental and wider sustainable development objectives, to assist in balancing cost effectiveness and sustainable development, representing both short-term and long-term value for money.

## Kildare County Council's commitment to Sustainability

This Green Procurement Policy is another step in Kildare County Council's commitment to environmental, economic and socially sustainable procurement. Introducing environmental and social criteria to the procurement process should be about integrating these issues into routine business practice and should be mainstreamed in the same way as value-for-money considerations.

In looking at procurement, Kildare County Council should apply the principles of waste prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling and disposal –



## Promoting Green and Sustainable Procurement Practices

With this Green Procurement Policy, Kildare County Council is aspiring to:

- Only procure goods and services that reflect best practice standards for environmental, economic and/or social sustainability;
- Promote sustainability within all our contract and tendering documentation;
- Provide awareness training for staff on Green and Sustainable Procurement Practices;
- Only procure products that are harmful to the environment where absolutely necessary, and never if a less damaging alternative is available;
- Try to specify goods and materials that cause minimum damage to the environment including the impact of their manufacture, distribution, use and disposal.
- Consider the 'whole life' cost of products when tendering and selecting suppliers – energy efficient products may have an increased initial outlay, but this can often be offset over time by reduced operational costs;
- Regularly review our purchasing requirements with the intention of reducing our environmental impact and increasing our positive impacts on our citizens and the local economy.
- Work with our suppliers to encourage them to reduce the environmental impacts of their products and processes, and to develop environmentally friendly products where possible.

## Next Steps

The next step in this process will be to develop a Green Public Procurement Strategy. The strategy will be the vision that identifies Scope and Priorities, Targets and Timelines, Actions, Resources and Reporting, Ownership and Communication.



Included in this strategy, in order to promote green and sustainable procurement practices, will be the need to:

- Establish an implementation plan;
- Update existing documents and procedures to that Green Procurement is integrated into existing workflows;
- Train staff in the use of the updated documents and procedures, including how to incorporate green procurement criteria appropriately;
- Identify the most environmentally efficient way to meet the need through looking at the overall lifecycle of goods and projects, and in reducing overall consumption where possible;
- Monitoring and reporting performance – internal procedures will need to be set up to monitor and report on progress. This will include identifying the appropriate environmental assessment tools to evaluate data collected which will enable the measurement of impacts to CO2 emissions, energy consumption and waste. It will also enable Kildare County Council to determine actual environmental and cost savings over the lifecycle period. This information will then be used to inform further improvement measures.

## Conclusion

Climate resilience is no longer about policy – it is about actions. There is a climate emergency that we cannot avoid – however Kildare County Council can show leadership (*LA Climate Action Strategy 2020 (caro.ie)*) and has the power to set in place the planning needed to make significant change.

We need to do this within the context of achieving best value for money, by purchasing only what is needed and by managing our suppliers through pro-active, robust contract management.

This Green Procurement Policy ensures we also take account of our 2030 targets (*Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021*) and the wider national policy frameworks in order to deliver on key outcomes. This policy, together with our overall Corporate Procurement Plan 2022 – 2024 and national procurement policies, will help ensure that Kildare's expenditure actively supports sustainable growth and protecting our environment, while delivering on our Corporate Plan.