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Welcome to the Procurement Unit '5 in 5 briefing' (5 articles in 5 minutes).

We want to hear from you. Please give us your feedback, good or bad.

- Is there anything you would like to see in future newsletters?
- Please [Click Here](#) to complete our quick questionnaire (3 questions).

Email us at:

cpu.5in5@leeds.gov.uk

Wayne Baxter

Chief Procurement Officer



1. Lord Mayor launches his own Fairtrade coffee.



The new Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Brian Cleasby, has started his year of office with the launch of his own Fairtrade coffee.

The Lord Mayor of Leeds Single Origin Fairtrade Coffee highlights the council's ongoing commitment to fair trade,

ensuring farmers and producers in the developing world receive a fair and stable price for their produce. In addition, in line with the council's regeneration policy, the blend supports a Leeds based social enterprise employing local people with disabilities.

The Procurement Unit and Lord Mayor's Office worked in partnership with the social enterprise 'just coffee people' to put together the blend.

[Click Here](#) to read more.

2. Progress Towards Socially Responsible Procurement .

Since the Procurement Unit (PU) went through its latest restructure in spring of last year, our activities have been increasingly shaped by sustainability issues.

The rapidly increasing pressure being exerted by external actors such as central government, the general public, the media and NGO groups means that social responsibility has been pushed significantly up the public procurement agenda. With more stringent legislation, such as the Climate Change Bill, now imminent, public authorities such as ours are in a position where more proactive approaches must be taken to economic, social and environmental issues.

Procurement is instrumental in shaping the attributes of our city and thus, the importance of socially responsible procurement cannot be underestimated.

[Click Here](#) to read more about socially responsible procurement.

3. Purchasing cards get the stamp of approval.



Are you responsible for purchasing goods and services?

If you regularly order low value items for the council and you are using FAB and paper ordering processes, purchasing cards could be for you!

Purchasing cards can be used with corporate contracts to buy office supplies, cleaning materials, computer consumables, travel, bottled water and some catering supplies. Purchasing cards can be used like a Visa card, using chip and pin, to buy certain items such as stamps.

If your department regularly buys stamps using petty cash you can use your

purchasing card at the Post Office. You will need to be authorised by your Manager and set up by Central Creditors Finance to use your card to buy stamps and you will need to obtain a VAT receipt at the point of purchase.

Purchasing cards offer cardholders the following benefits;

- ~ No paper orders or invoices to process.
- ~ Improved accuracy of ordering because you speak directly to suppliers.
- ~ Improved delivery times.
- ~ Convenience of being able to make one simple phone call to place an order, or to order on line (provided it's a secure site).
- ~ Improved management information.
- ~ Improved coding to account codes.
- ~ Capture of VAT at point of sale.

To read more [Click Here](#).

4. Including Community Benefits in the procurement process.

Leeds City Council is committed to working in partnership with the voluntary sector, community groups, faith organisations and social enterprises, known collectively as the third sector.

We have signed up to the Leeds Compact, the Social Enterprise Framework for Leeds and the National Procurement Concordat for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) .

We are committed to valuing and delivering community benefits that will provide greater levels of choice and equality throughout our procurement processes.

The third sector has a long-established reputation for delivering high quality community benefits that add value to the service they deliver. These benefits are not always an explicit requirement of the contract and will usually be an indirect benefit that in the past was not considered or evaluated when awarding a service contract.

[Click Here](#) read more about community benefits.

5. Monitoring Equality in Contracts.



The more relevant equality issues are to a contract, the more they should be considered at both the

procurement planning stage and as part of the contract monitoring process.

Promoting equality through procurement is important. All the citizens of Leeds expect that public money is spent on local services which meet their needs, deliver high quality services and promote equality of opportunity.

It is therefore important that contracts are monitored to ensure that discrimination does not occur and

where it is identified, that it is effectively dealt with.

Should a breach of equality legislation be suspected or identified, then further advice should be sought from CPU, who will liaise with other sections such as the Equality Team or Internal Audit, in order to determine the most suitable way forward.

An effective monitoring process will lead to potential breaches of either the terms and conditions of a contract or legislation relating to equality, being identified at an early stage and therefore the council being able to work with a contractor to ensure that an effective service may be maintained.

[Click Here](#) to read more about equality in procurement.

1. Lord Mayor launches his own Fairtrade coffee.



A social enterprise is a business set up primarily to meet a social objective, profits are made to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. The council's Procurement Unit works with small, medium and social enterprises, faith, voluntary, community-sector and black and ethnic-minority suppliers as part of the procurement process.

'just coffee people', is a Fairtrade distributor registered with the Fairtrade Foundation, the UK co-ordination body for fair trade and products carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark.

A subsidiary of People Matters, it is a registered Social Firm recently awarded Investors in People accreditation in recognition of the value the company places on its employees. Their aim is to give people with disabilities the opportunity to move forward with their lives by providing the training and work experience needed to gain successful employment.

'just coffee people' employ thirteen people with disabilities to work in various aspects of the business. The employees learning is supported by structured training programmes or through work placements from local

organisations such as Thomas Danby College and Social Services Day Centres.

Wayne Baxter, Chief Procurement Officer, said :

"This coffee is an example of the council's ongoing commitment to support farmers and producers in the developing world and at the same time to work with local small, medium and social enterprises who benefit the local community."

The Lord Mayor of Leeds Single Origin Fairtrade Coffee has been made using 100% Arabica Excelso beans from the COSURCA co-operative in south west Colombia. This premium coffee is full roasted to give a rich dark but smooth flavour with low acidity and great body. All 'just coffee people' goods are certified to have been grown by democratically run co-operatives where growers have been guaranteed a fair and stable price for their produce.

The Lord Mayor's Fairtrade Coffee was served at the annual Mayor making dinner at the Town Hall and will be served at Mayoral functions in the Civic Hall. Bags of the coffee can be bought from the tourist information centre, Gateway Yorkshire, based at Leeds railway station, local health food shops or direct from the supplier (see contact details below).

To contact 'just coffee people',

Telephone: 0113 2792936 or

Email: info@justcoffeepeople.co.uk

To find out more about just coffee people please see their website at :

www.justcoffeepeople.co.uk

2. Progress Towards Socially Responsible Procurement

We have been working hard to put the foundations in place that will support further positive change towards more sustainable procurement at Leeds City Council. In previous communications, we have already told you about our partnership with Recycling Action Yorkshire (RAY) and how they are helping us to improve the environmental performance of the commodities we buy. We are currently working towards achieving the RAY action plan adopted by the council.

Our aims include introducing a 10% recycled content materials by value target for all construction and highways-related projects, formulating a sustainable purchasing policy, increasing the volume and value of the recycled-content products that we buy and subsequently, reporting on how our 'green' buying is influencing the CO2 we emit and the waste we send to landfill.

Further to the RAY project, we are also piloting a Socially Responsible Procurement Toolkit within the Procurement Unit. Its purpose is to ensure that any negative social, environmental and economic impacts are considered early in the contract-scoping stage and according to their significance, are resolved by provisions set aside in the tender documentation. The long-term hope is that the toolkit will be conducive to improving the overall sustainability performance of Leeds City Council contracts. The toolkit will be used in all tendering exercises, if only to evidence the fact that sustainability issues were considered. Whilst vested in the Procurement Unit, the toolkit will be subjected to continuous review to make it easier to use and to increase its effectiveness. Once we are happy with its functionality, we plan to cascade the toolkit down to decentralised procurers across the council.

The other pertinent news is that we are currently developing a Green Purchasing Guide to aid decentralised procurers. It will refer to existing contracts with environmentally-friendly options, offer best practice recommendations where no contractual arrangements are in place and, explain the relevant concepts and terminology underpinning sustainable procurement. The document is close to completion and full details will follow shortly. Once released, the document will be made available through the 'Procurement' Interest Area on the council's intranet. We will not be making any hard copies available so that paper wastage is avoided and to reflect the fact that its content will change often, as contractors and contractual arrangements progress.

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3. Purchasing cards get the stamp of approval.



What are purchasing cards?

Purchasing cards are visa badged charge cards, similar to Mastercard and Visa cards.

Council employees use purchasing cards to purchase high volume, low value, low risk goods and services such as office supplies, cleaning materials and travel. Purchasing cards replace FAB and paper orders.

Although purchasing cards work in a similar way to credit cards, they do not offer extended credit and the balance on the cards is paid off monthly. They also differ from other types of plastic cards, primarily due to the level of management information reported to the cardholder. Purchasing cards calculate full VAT details and provide a breakdown of each item purchased from the supplier or 'line item detail'.

Why is Leeds City Council using purchasing cards?

All local authorities have been given a target by the Government to implement the use of purchasing cards. In addition, the Council's Efficiency Agenda seeks to make procurement savings where possible. As purchasing cards can reduce both the time and cost of the procurement process, i.e. from raising an order to paying an invoice, they are clearly the way forward in achieving savings.

The traditional administrative process for paper ordering is expensive and time consuming. For Leeds City Council, the approximate cost of processing each paper

order – regardless of the amount it is worth – is £25.00.

In order to streamline this process, Leeds City Council launched its first purchasing card programme in 2000/2001. The main aim was to reduce the cost of low-value, high-volume purchasing and to re-direct efficiency savings and resources to front line services.

A pilot project led by the Procurement Unit started in 2001 in three council departments. The response from the pilot was positive and council staff requested to expand card usage to other areas.

A web based Card Back Office System called D.Cal was introduced in 2004. D.Cal allows cardholders and their managers to view purchasing card transactions electronically to be able to reconcile transactions online.

Since 2006 The Gershon Efficiencies Team at Leeds City Council have been managing the roll out of purchasing cards to all council departments and identifying new business areas where cards can replace paper ordering processes. To date there are 420 cards in use across the council.

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To find out more about purchasing cards click on the intranet interest area for procurement and click on purchasing cards on the left hand menu or [Click Here](#).

To find out if a corporate contractor accepts purchasing cards see the council's Contract Information System at <http://cis.leeds.gov.uk>

4. Including Community Benefits in the procurement process.

Our procurement practices reflect the aims of the city's Community Strategy as well as the council's Procurement Strategy. Regeneration and socially responsible procurement play a key role in both of these strategies. The council's procurement activity should contribute to the economic, social and environmental well being of the city, continually improving our communities and community life.

To help us to achieve these goals, the Procurement Unit is positively encouraging the inclusion of community benefits into the council's contracts. Community benefits can become part of the 'core aim' of the procurement process and this can be reflected in the contract specification. They can provide measurable benefits that can be taken into account in the award of the contract and by encouraging the use of community benefits in our tender documentation we can begin to deliver even greater benefits to the public.

An example of a community benefit clause taken from the Keeping House Initiative.

- ~ promoting the independence of older people and disabled people;
- ~ promoting and helping maintain the well-being of older people and disabled people (by increasing their access to healthy food and providing sociable shopping opportunities);
- ~ encouraging and building on neighbourhood support and volunteering;
- ~ stimulating the local economy: encouraging the development of local, not-for-profit small businesses / social enterprises;
- ~ Networking with local partnerships.

The Procurement Unit have developed guidance for collaborative procurement, working with the third sector and the benefits of including community benefits in contracts.

If you would like further information about including community benefits in contracts visit the procurement interest area of the intranet and click Regeneration on the left hand menu.

Or [Click Here](#).

Or contact:

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5. Monitoring Equality in Contracts.



Where the supply of goods and the provision of works and services are carried out by external

providers the council remains responsible for ensuring that the equality duties are met. Contractors themselves must not discriminate, but they do not have the same legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity as the council does. This is why we must ensure that equality considerations are effectively factored into the procurement process.

We need to consider how relevant equality is to the contract (the concept of proportionality). For example, where a contract involves contact with people, the possibility of discriminatory behaviour by a contractor would have a greater impact than in a contract where contact with people is minimal, e.g. a supplies contract.

We need to understand what different groups require from the council and ensure that our contractors recognise this. For example, at the outset most of our contractors will undertake a contract between Monday and Friday, however, Friday is a holy day in the Muslim faith and it must be recognised by both the council and it's contractors that Muslim families may not want disruptive building work to be undertaken in their home on a Friday. Equality in the procurement process is about recognising this and ensuring that our contractors are aware of such issues. They need to be properly factored into the requirements of the specification.

By identifying such issues as part of the project planning process, we can work with prospective contractors in developing an effective service. Prospective contractors can be given the

opportunity to develop their own method of dealing with certain equality issues. This can be evaluated as part of the tender evaluation process.

When the contract is in place, it is important that a contractor is effectively monitored to ensure that they are complying with both the requirements of the contract in relation to equality issues and any obligations created by national legislation Various methods may be used to undertake this monitoring such as the use of site visits, monitoring questionnaires and performance reports.

The Procurement Unit has published guidance on equality in the procurement process aimed at both contract managers from within the council and directly at our contractors and suppliers. This can be found on the Procurement Intranet Interest Area/ Guidance and Advice or [Click Here](#).

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