

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL SUPPLIER QUICK GUIDE

Social Value and Zero Carbon



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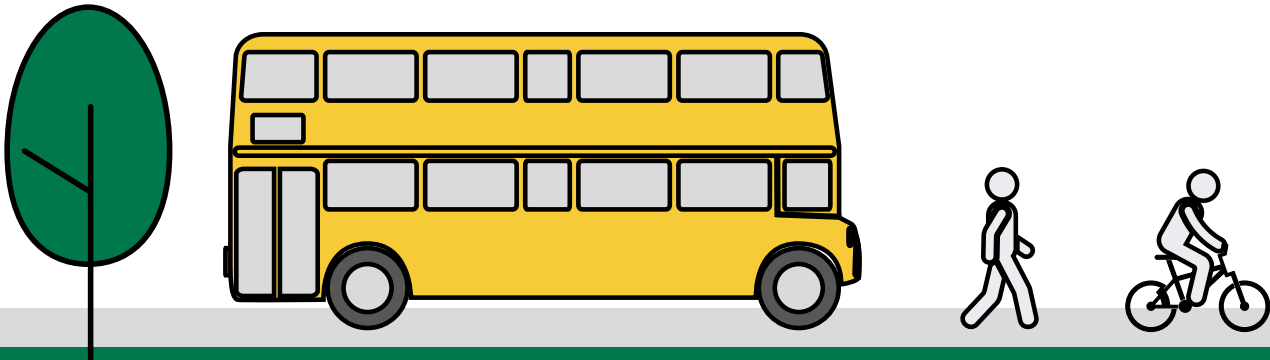
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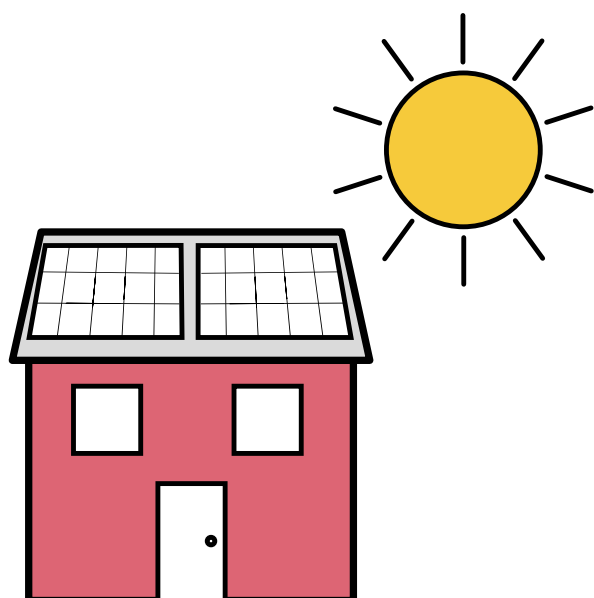


INTRODUCTION

This is a quick guide to help suppliers understand what is expected in our procurement exercises, and how you can contribute meaningfully to the city. For more details, please read the full **Ethical and Sustainable Procurement Toolkit**.

Manchester City Council is committed to driving inclusive growth and becoming a zero carbon city. We work in partnership with our suppliers to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits for our diverse communities.

This guide is for any organisation that is bidding for or delivering contracts with Manchester City Council. You may be a small local business, a voluntary sector organisation, or a large national or international provider. The guide covers social value and zero carbon, and is designed so it can be applied proportionately to different contract sizes and supplier capacity.



What you will learn

- What Manchester means by social value and zero carbon
- How to align your organisation with Manchester's priorities
- What a good tender response looks like
- Where to find more support and resources.

Key definitions

Ethical and Sustainable Procurement:

Our approach to embedding both social value and zero carbon into all Manchester City Council contracts.

Social value: Having a positive impact on local communities, the local economy and the environment. This includes inherent social value (things that are already part of your core service or business model) and added social value (new initiatives that you deliver in addition to your contract).

Zero carbon: No net carbon emissions, either eliminated or offset. Different from carbon neutral, which allows emissions but balances them through offsetting.

Local: Organisations and activities based within Manchester City Council boundaries, benefiting Manchester residents.

(For more definitions, please refer to the glossary at the end of the full toolkit.)

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT PRIORITIES

What the Council is looking for

We want to work with suppliers who are **ethically sound**, will **reduce their carbon impact** and are **aligned to our five social value priorities**:

1. Inclusive growth:

Create economic opportunities for Manchester residents, support local supply chains, and remove barriers for SMEs (Small to Medium-sized Enterprises) and diverse suppliers.

2. Good employment:

Provide fair pay, secure jobs, and inclusive recruitment practices, including alignment with the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

3. Reducing inequalities:

Tackle barriers faced by disadvantaged groups, promote diversity, and deliver services that are inclusive and culturally appropriate.

4. Strengthening the voluntary sector:

Support local Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations through partnerships, capacity-building, and in-kind contributions.

5. Creating a green and zero carbon city:

Reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing.

These priorities apply throughout the procurement process, from commissioning to contract management. Our social value and zero carbon goals are scored separately in tenders, but they are closely linked in practice.

These goals are guided by two main documents and are aligned to the Greater Manchester Framework:

- [The Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2025-2030](#)
- [2025 Social Value Policy](#).

What we expect from suppliers

To support these goals, suppliers should aim to:

- Use ethical sourcing and fair supply chains.
- Offer inclusive employment and fair pay.
- Build partnerships with local communities and VCFSEs.
- Support smaller suppliers and voluntary organisations.
- Reduce waste and adopt circular economy practices.
- Improve resource efficiency (energy, water, materials).
- Set clear carbon reduction targets (Scopes 1, 2, and 3).
- Transition to green energy sources.

WHAT IS ASSESSED IN TENDERS

Manchester City Council applies a 30% weighting to this in all tenders (20% for social value and 10% for environmental impact). This applies to all our contracts, and all suppliers and their supply chains are required to follow the Council's key policies.

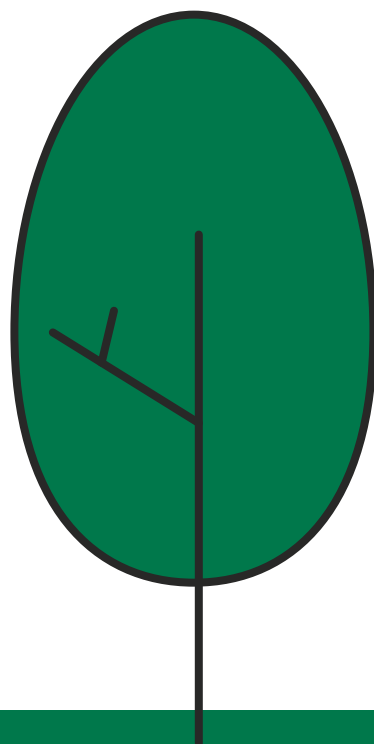
Your tender response should show how you will contribute to:

Social value themes

- **Inclusive growth:** Support local SMEs and VCFSEs, and ethical supply chains
- **Good employment:** Fair pay, secure jobs, inclusive recruitment
- **Reducing inequalities:** Promote diversity, wellbeing and access
- **Strengthening VCFSEs:** Collaborate with and support local voluntary organisations.

Environmental themes

- Reduce energy use and carbon emissions (Scopes 1, 2, and 3)
- Manage waste responsibly and promote circular economy practices
- Use sustainable materials and ethical sourcing
- Conserve water and prevent pollution
- Create a green city.



PREPARING YOUR ORGANISATION

Manchester City Council works with suppliers of all sizes, and applies a proportionate approach to social value and environmental sustainability. Therefore, a small contract won't require the same level of detail in the tender response as a large one.

Focus on what's relevant and achievable for your organisation. What matters most is a genuine commitment to deliver positive outcomes for Manchester's people and places, as well as the planet. It must be something you can achieve.

Step 1: Assess your impact

Review your current practices in areas such as:

- **Employment and inclusion:** Fair pay, job security, diversity, inclusive recruitment
- **Community engagement:** Partnerships with local communities and VCFSEs
- **Supply chain and sourcing:** Use of local SMEs and ethical sourcing
- **Environmental practices:** Energy use, waste management, carbon reduction.

Step 2: Gather evidence

Collect data and examples to support your bid, such as:

- **Local:** Understand local needs using the free Manchester City Council Data Intelligence Hub
- **Social value:** Employment practices and opportunities, community initiatives, charity partnerships, diversity metrics, case studies
- **Environmental:** Energy/waste/emissions data, certifications (eg. ISO 14001, FSC), progress reports.

Tip: Use qualitative evidence (eg. testimonials) to show real-world impact, not just numbers.

Step 3: Set goals

Based on your assessment, set a few indicative **SMART** goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) within your tender response that align to the Council's priorities.

Examples of social value goals:

- Create a number of apprenticeships for local residents
- Assign a percentage for local businesses and VCFSEs to join your supply chain
- Promote wellbeing and inclusion with communities facing disadvantage.

Examples of environmental goals:

- Reduce energy use or switch to renewables
- Minimise waste and improve recycling
- Lower carbon emissions across Scopes 1, 2, and 3.

WRITING A STRONG TENDER RESPONSE

When bidding for a Manchester City Council contract, you'll be asked to show what your organisation already does to deliver social value and environmental benefits and what you will commit to deliver through the contract.

What we are looking for

Your response should include:

- Organisational practices (eg. inclusive recruitment, ethical sourcing)
- Contract-specific commitments (eg. apprenticeships, carbon reduction plans)
- Evidence of past success (eg. case studies, metrics, testimonials)
- A robust delivery plan (eg. resources and timelines).

Responses should be proportionate to the contract value and tailored to your organisation's size and strengths.

What makes a strong response

The best tenders:

- Treat social value and environmental sustainability as integral, not as an add-on.
- Present a credible delivery plan with clear actions.
- Use both quantitative and qualitative metrics.

Social Value Fund

If direct delivery isn't feasible – especially in non-place-based contracts – you may be invited to contribute to the Social Value Fund. This audited fund supports community projects aligned with Manchester's priorities. Contributions are proportionate to contract value and scored as part of the tender.

Measuring impact with KPIs

Manchester City Council may include standard social value and environmental requirements within the specification documents, such as commitments to paying the real living wages and specific environmental outcomes.

Suppliers are expected to propose Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to the scope and value of the contract and tailored to their proposed social value offer. These KPIs will be reviewed and agreed during the tender evaluation and contract award process.

Suppliers may also be asked to provide a baseline and demonstrate how they will collect both qualitative and quantitative evidence to show the real-world impact of their commitments.

For further guidance, please refer to the Council's Social Value Toolkit, which outlines expectations, example KPIs, and approaches to monitoring and reporting.

Social value KPIs

These are illustrative examples only, but you may be asked to report on:

- **Inclusive growth:** Percentage of spend with local SMEs/VCFSEs, subcontracting opportunities, training hours
- **Good employment:** Number of jobs and apprenticeships for Manchester residents, Real Living Wage, workforce diversity
- **Reducing inequalities:** Community engagement, support for deprived areas, inclusive service design
- **Strengthening VCFSEs:** Donations, partnerships, volunteering, wellbeing initiatives.

Environmental KPIs

- **Carbon reduction:** Emission reductions (Scopes 1, 2, and 3), green transport, energy use. Focus on reducing emissions directly. Offsetting is not promoted as standard by Manchester City Council and should only be used where unavoidable, with credible and preferably local schemes.
- **Waste and circular economy:** Recycling rates, reduction of single-use plastics, product longevity.
- **Sustainable sourcing and biodiversity:** Ethical sourcing, water conservation, pollution prevention, biodiversity initiatives.

What you might be asked in tenders

Manchester City Council includes targeted questions in tenders to assess your commitment to social value and environmental sustainability. These questions vary by contract but typically align with our priority themes. The following are examples only and you must respond to the specific requirements and questions of the contract you are bidding for. For examples of each theme, please see the full toolkit.

Social value questions (20% weighting)

You may be asked to demonstrate:

- **Inclusive growth:** A clear and proactive approach to supporting local economic development in Manchester
- **Good employment:** How you will create fair and inclusive employment opportunities for Manchester residents through this contract
- **Reducing inequalities:** A clear and proactive approach to promoting inclusion and supporting communities that experience inequalities
- **Strengthening VCFSEs:** How you will collaborate with and support local VCFSE organisations
- **Delivery plan and innovation:** How you will deliver your proposed social value initiatives and any innovation you will bring that goes beyond the core contractual requirements.



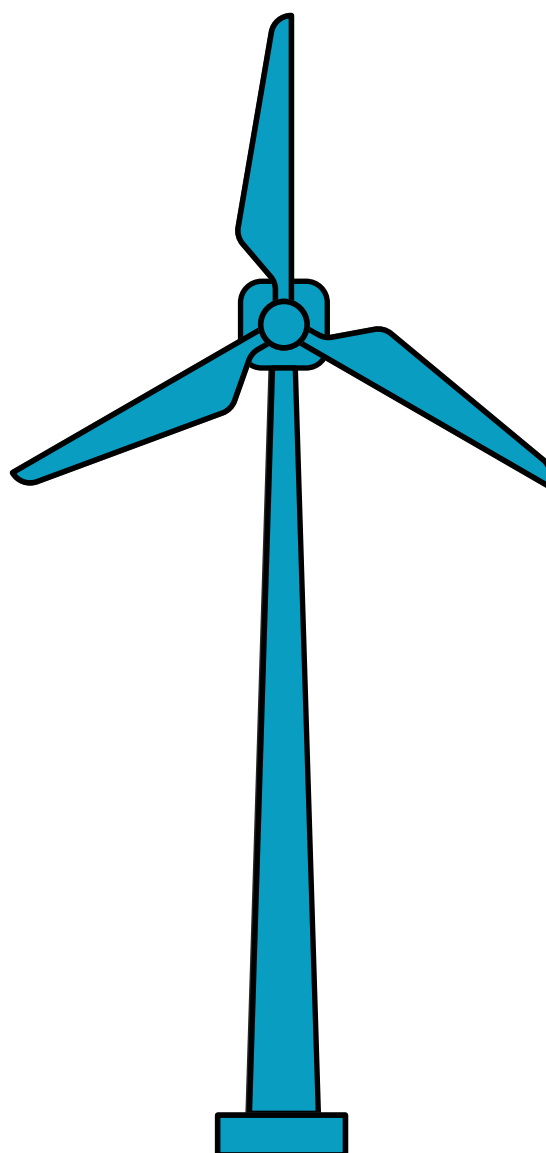
Environmental questions (10% score weighting in tenders)

You may be asked about your:

- **Carbon reduction:** Provide details of your plans to reduce your organisation's carbon emissions, including within Scopes 1, 2 and 3, and the specific actions you will undertake during the contract term to reduce emissions.
- **Energy efficiency:** Describe your approach to environmental sustainability, including steps taken in the design and manufacture of services to increase energy efficiency and reduce environmental impacts.
- **Embodied carbon:** How will you ensure that services delivered will be environmentally friendly through the elimination of avoidable single-use plastics (A-SUP) during the contract term?
- **Climate adaptation:** Provide a copy of your sourcing and resilient supply policy and demonstrate how it relates to the reduction of supply chain risks due to climate change.
- **Vehicle emissions:** Describe your approach to environmental sustainability in the purchase, maintenance and operation of your transport fleet to reduce vehicle emissions.

- **Natural environment:** Describe your approach to environmental sustainability and biosecurity, including steps taken to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- **Waste management:** Describe your approach to environmental sustainability, including steps taken to maximise the use of sustainable materials and apply the waste hierarchy.

Tip: Your commitment should be reflected across your whole bid, not just in response to specific questions. Smaller contracts may only ask one overarching question.



PROPORTIONALITY AND SUPPORT FOR ALL SUPPLIERS

Right-sized expectations

Manchester City Council applies a tiered approach to social value commitments, ensuring expectations are proportionate to the size and nature of each contract. The examples below indicate the scale of response we would expect to see for different sizes of contract:

- **All suppliers:** Expected to demonstrate inherent social value, eg. paying the Real Living Wage, inclusive recruitment, ethical business practices, and compliance with the Equality Act
- **Gold (over £1million):** Multiple commitments across all themes, detailed delivery plan, quarterly reporting, and impact case studies. Example: 3–5 apprenticeships, 25% of roles for disadvantaged groups, long-term VCFSE partnerships. Social Value Fund: Up to 5% of contract value if direct delivery isn't feasible
- **Silver (£250,000–£1million):** Commitments across at least two themes, six-monthly reporting. Example: 1–2 apprenticeships, one work placement, support for a local initiative. Social Value Fund: 1–2% of contract value
- **Bronze (under £250,000):** At least one measurable commitment with a simple delivery plan. Example: Careers session, donation to a local fund, inclusive recruitment improvements. Social Value Fund: Up to 1% of contract value.

Place-based frameworks

For regeneration contracts, suppliers should align with Manchester's strategic regeneration plans and local social value frameworks in north, east, and south Manchester. These reflect shared priorities across partners and communities in certain parts of the city.

Support for VCFSEs and SMEs

We welcome bids from Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations and SMEs (Small to Medium-sized Enterprises). Expectations are scaled appropriately and paperwork is reduced where possible. For competitive tender processes, a VCFSE/SME response to social value and zero carbon may look different from other bids, and that's okay.

Tips for VCFSEs:

- Consider whether a Council contract is right for you.
- Register on procurement portals.
- Attend market engagement events to connect with prime suppliers.
- Showcase your inherent social value and offer added value where possible.
- Seek support from local infrastructure bodies (eg. MACC).

For more information please see the full toolkit.

DELIVERING AND MANAGING YOUR COMMITMENTS

Once a contract is awarded, your **social value and environmental commitments** become part of your core contract delivery and responsibilities. Manchester City Council will monitor performance through contract managers and may ask for reporting via our online systems.

Key expectations

1. Implementation

- Train staff on sustainability and social value practices.
- Assign resources to your commitments (eg. sustainability lead, community liaison).
- Embed commitments into day-to-day operations.

2. Monitoring

- Track progress against agreed KPIs.
- Use reliable data sources (eg. HR systems, energy meters).
- Validate and review data regularly.

3. Continuous improvement

- Review delivery plans based on performance and feedback.
- Encourage staff to contribute ideas and lead initiatives.

4. Collaboration and learning

- Work with other suppliers, VCFSEs, and community partners.
- Share best practices through forums and events.
- Document case studies and lessons learned.

Reporting your impact

Suppliers are required to report on both **quantitative KPIs** and **qualitative outcomes**. This may be monthly or quarterly, depending on your contract:

- **Environmental KPIs:** Energy use, waste diversion, CO₂ emissions, water consumption
- **Social value KPIs:** Jobs and apprenticeships, local spend, volunteering hours, community investment and impact.



NEXT STEPS: DIVE DEEPER WITH THE FULL TOOLKIT

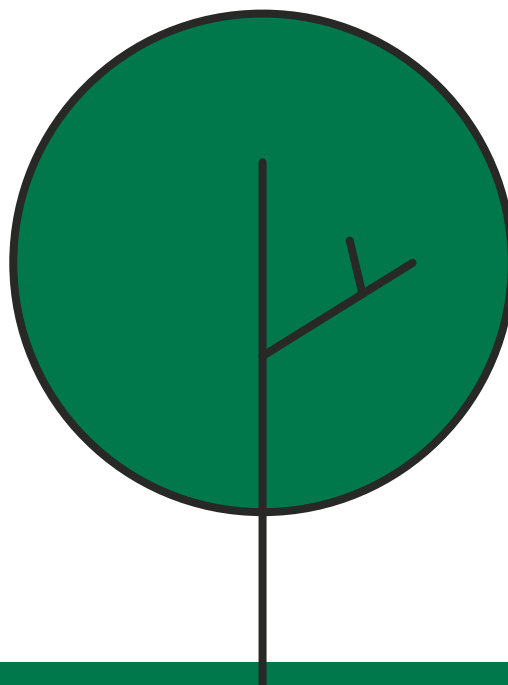
This Quick Guide has provided a high-level overview of Manchester City Council's approach to ethical and sustainable procurement. It summarised key expectations around social value, zero carbon, proportionality, and supplier responsibilities.

For a more detailed understanding – including full guidance, examples, templates, and additional resources – you can refer to the **Manchester City Council Ethical and Sustainable Procurement Toolkit for Suppliers**.

The full toolkit expands on everything covered here, with:

- Comprehensive explanations of each priority theme
- Sample tender questions and model responses
- Guidance tailored to VCFSEs and SMEs
- Information on the Social Value Fund, KPIs, and contract management
- Case studies, glossary, and further support links

Whether you're preparing a bid or want to strengthen your sustainability practices, the full toolkit is designed to support you every step of the way.





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