EPOW European Pathway to Zero Waste
Demonstrating the route to zero landfill

EPOW Targeted Assistance Case Study

Embedding sustainability in procurement practices: a UK museum's perspective

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London's Natural History Museum: an introduction

The Natural History Museum (the Museum) in London purchases a wide range of works, products and services ranging from high-tech scanning equipment to games and toys in the Museum shops. The Museum recognises that its procurement decisions can significantly impact on the sustainability of its organisation and supply chains. With procurement being decentralised (each department has its own budget holder and buyers), there was a need to establish a sustainable procurement policy and strategy, to help consistently articulate the Museum's objectives and ensure they are embedded in future procurements.

How EPOW targeted assistance has helped?

The European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) programme seeks to deliver practical ways of achieving zero waste to landfill in the South of England.

The EPOW Team supported the Museum on six projects to help them embed sustainability into their procurement process, procedures and contract specifications and:

"Successfully influenced c. £35 m procurement commitment in corporate policy, and £1.6m in tenders and contracts".

Project 1: Sustainable procurement policy and strategy

Context:

The Museum's primary objective was to build on its new procurement and environmental policies, by developing a sustainable procurement policy and strategy, which clarifies how procurement can help the Museum achieve its sustainability targets and objectives.

Work undertaken:

In developing the policy, key steps were followed to ensure it was successfully adopted by the organisation including:

Outcome:

The sustainable procurement policy and strategy will form one of the Museum's key procedures to help meet its legal and sustainability obligations, targets and objectives.

Project 2: Sustainable procurement guidance document

Context:

With a decentralised procurement team, there was recognition of the importance of developing a common approach to procurement in order to realise the financial and environmental benefits of procuring more sustainable products and services.

Work undertaken:

An internal sustainable procurement guidance document was produced to clarify the approach to be taken to highlight and realise the opportunities that exist across the procurement process.

The guidance document provides information on:

- defining of sustainable procurement;
- identifying sustainability risks;
- challenging the “need to buy”;
- life cycle analysis and whole life costing;
- developing specifications[1];
- market engagement, supplier evaluation and selection, contract award;
- supplier and contract management; and
- useful links to additional information.

Outcome:

The Museum has a bespoke guidance document that can be given to all procurement staff, providing them with an overview of what they can do in their day to day role to realise financial and environmental benefits through the sustainable procurement of products and services.

[1] Reference to the Government Buying Standards for example (http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/).

Project 3: Uniform contract specification

Context:

The Museum wanted to engage its supply base to identify the opportunities for procuring more sustainable uniforms for its employees.

Key to this was the development of a specification that included its sustainability requirements when it re-tendered the contract for the supply of work wear.

Work undertaken:

The work wear briefing document was reviewed and a number of recommendations made. In tendering for the contract, suppliers were asked to provide evidence of, for example:

- if the products hold the EU Eco label for textiles or if they are working towards it;
- how resources are minimised during manufacture (e.g. energy, water, chemicals etc.);
- how the durability of the products will add value for money over the life-time, for example resistance to fading and shrinkage;
- end-of-life product take-back and recycling services for the proposed uniform products; and
- the delivery packaging, and the recyclability thereof, to be used for proposed products.

Outcome:

The Museum used this information to successfully appoint a supplier who responded fully to the sustainability section of the specification. Specifically, the supplier has provided expertise in organic and fair trade cotton, has already addressed reducing packaging and recycling at end of life requirements, and continues to work closely with the Museum to reduce its impact on the environment.

Project 4: Construction contract specification

Context:

The Museum is part of the New Engineering Construction (NEC) 3 Framework[2] which covers work from refurbishing laboratories through to creating new buildings.

Work undertaken:

The construction procurement documentation was reviewed and a number of recommendations made on how sustainability should be included in the tender process. These included:

Pre-qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) to:

- incorporate the Museum's sustainability objectives;
- determine whether the supplier has an environmental policy and operates an environmental management system;
    - to provide certification and/or details of how the system is managed and continual improvement achieved; and
- understand measures taken by the supplier to reduce its sustainability impacts within the last three years and the relevant experience of delivering sustainable development outcomes in similar projects.

The Invitation to Tender (ITT) required suppliers to provide a statement detailing how they would:

- meet the sustainability requirements set out in the tender, for example, achieving a BREEAM[3] rating;
- approach waste and resource management throughout the whole construction phase;
- support the Museum's ambition to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions; and
- ensure accessibility and minimise transport impacts during construction and in use.

A suggested sustainability schedule was provided as part of the contract process, which suggested that, the supplier:

- provides a sustainability impacts register covering social, environmental and economic impacts;
- appoints an energy advisor who will monitor and report energy performance;

[2] *http://www.neccontract.com*
[3] *http://www.breeam.org/*

- takes measures to minimise water consumption during the construction stage and for the built asset;
- plays an active role in helping to improve materials resource efficiency through:
    - providing a Site Waste Management Plan;
    - minimising the use of material resources through, for example, efficient design, logistics and stock control;
    - maximising the re-use, recycling, and recovery of construction, demolition and excavation waste;
    - using reclaimed products and materials, and products and materials with a high recycled content, wherever feasible; and
    - reducing unnecessary packaging where possible.
- clearly communicates their sustainability requirements to the supply chain and all relevant staff.

Outcome:

Once the recommendations are embedded into the construction procurement procedures the Museum will be able to select suppliers who can meet the Museum's sustainability requirements for any future construction works, whilst delivering value for money.

Project 5: Exhibition contract

Context:

The Museum's Exhibition Team manages exhibitions throughout the year, which involve both the design work and building of exhibition stands.

A new framework for exhibition designers was being drafted and the Museum required assistance to develop the sustainability objectives.

Work undertaken:

The Museum identified the sustainability impacts associated with exhibitions, for example:

- resource depletion (energy, water, illegal and unsustainable timber and other natural resources);
- air pollution and toxic emissions (from paints, solvents, adhesives, sealants);
- waste generation (packaging, post exhibit waste, hard to dissemble equipment);
- social risks (working conditions, discrimination, child labour, corruption); and
- transport (pollution and social issues).

Using the identified sustainability impacts, recommendations were made for inclusion in the new framework, suggesting suppliers should:

- ideally have implemented, or be planning to implement, an environmental management system (consistent with ISO 14001, EMS 2004, EMAS or equivalent standard) and provide a detailed environmental policy and demonstrate how it is actively enforced;
- use materials that conserve energy (Energy Star compliance) and water;
- use products that conserve natural resources (eco-labels, low maintenance, superior durability, all timber FSC certified);
- use materials that avoid toxic emissions (avoid dangerous substances and preservatives, RoHS compliance);
- use materials that improve air quality (avoid products that give off gas or release significant pollutants);
- reduce and re-use waste (recycled content materials, easily disassembled equipment, reduce packaging and take back schemes, re-use of materials); and
- provide efficient delivery of goods and services (minimise number of journeys, reduce pollution and congestion).

Outcome:

With the sustainability impact recommendations added to the exhibition framework the Museum has a short list of suppliers that can construct exhibitions to a high quality whilst meeting the Museum's sustainability requirements.

Project 6: Waste and Recycling contract

Context:

The Museum wanted to develop a waste management specification and contract that helped it to meet its internal waste reduction targets, as part of the re-tendering exercise for its waste management services.

Work undertaken:

Following a review, a number of recommendations were included in the specification requiring suppliers to demonstrate in their tender responses how they would approach:

- service provision (mobilisation, capability, capacity, how supplier can assist with improving recycling rates, additional collection of other materials such as WEEE and furniture, management of contamination);
- management and monitoring information on performance and progress against targets (quarterly report containing overall weights, disposal routes, CO_2 savings through recycling);
- legislation and industry regulation (how supplier will achieve compliance and how they will notify the Museum of any legislative changes or requirements, procedure covering all the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act including Duty of Care, COSHH and the Health and Safety at Work Act, current Waste Carriers Licence); and
- waste disposal and processing facilities (show preference for sustainable reprocessing solutions, notification of any changes to facilities and disposal routes, full auditable trail available for inspection).

Outcome:

With the sustainability recommendations added to the waste and recycling contract procedures, the Museum will be able to select service providers that can help meet the Museum's waste and recycling targets in its environmental management system.

Summary

As evidenced, the adoption and implementation of sustainable public procurement strategies, standards and targets is stimulating greater demand for: recycled materials, re-useable/refurbished products and for products with lower waste impacts. Ellie Simes, Environmental and Sustainability Officer from the Natural History Museum, commented:

"The EPOW project has provided the Museum with an excellent opportunity to gain from specialist expertise and experience to improve our sustainable procurement practices.

Without the fully funded EPOW project, the Museum could not have benefitted from professional support and would not receive the lasting benefits of the comprehensive review of our sustainable procurement policy. In addition, the valuable experience has made a significant improvement to the sustainable elements of recent and forthcoming contracts. The efficient and targeted work of the consultants ensured a number of pieces of work could be delivered for the Museum over the duration of the project".

Key Actions:

- Develop sustainable procurement policy and strategy.
- Provide guidance for staff on how to procure within the policy and strategy.
- Consider sustainability early.
- Understand what the market is able to offer.
- Review and embed sustainable requirements within procurement documentation.
- Include monitoring and reporting as part of contract requirements.

Key Benefits:

- Align procurements with policy and strategy.
- Improve sustainable specification.
- Realise cost savings.
- Reduce waste to landfill.
- Regular monitoring and reporting against sustainability targets and objectives.
- Identifify items for re-use.

For more information on The European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) programme and WRAP tools and resources for embedding sustainable procurement, please visit http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement.

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European Pathway to Zero Waste
Waste & Resources Action Programme,
The Old Academy, 21 Horse Fair,
Banbury, OX16 0AH

Email: epow@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/epow

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