



Orbis Ethical Procurement Statement

On behalf of East Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council

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1. Introduction

This document sets out our commitment to ethical practice throughout the contract lifecycle as we work with suppliers to deliver goods, works and services for our partners and customers. It is complementary to our Code of Conduct for Suppliers (see our websites), which sets out the commitments and standards to which we expect suppliers to adhere when bidding for and delivering contracts for goods, works and services for our partners and customers.

Our aim is to adopt and ensure ways of working which:

- Respect fundamental international standards against criminal conduct (such as bribery, corruption and fraud) and human rights abuse (such as modern slavery), and respond immediately to such matters where they are identified, and
- Result in improvements to the working lives of people who contribute to our supply chains

Our purpose in doing this is to ensure that contracts are being delivered responsibly by our suppliers, and to build the trust of the public by promoting a culture of high ethical standards that deter or expose poor behaviour and practice.

Procurement for Orbis partner councils is governed by standing orders (variously 'Procurement Standing Orders' or 'Contract Standing Orders'), which are part of each council's constitution and may be found on their websites. These orders make it mandatory for our staff to operate ethically, and this statement expands on that requirement to make clear how we will do that and how we expect our suppliers to work with us.

2. Seven Principles of Public Life

All employees of our partner councils are bound by their own employer's code of conduct, which can be found on the partner council websites. These are underpinned by the Seven Principles of Public Life.

The Seven Principles of Public Life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in local government and in the health, education, social and care services, amongst others. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The Principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services, including our suppliers.

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

OBJECTIVITY

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

HONESTY

Holders of public office should be truthful.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Additionally, our procurement professional staff who are members of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply are required to uphold the [CIPS Code of Conduct](#), which defines the behaviours and actions to which they must commit to maintain the required standards.

We encourage our customers, suppliers, partner organisations and all with whom we work to give us [feedback](#), whether to give praise, or to comment or complain, especially where your experience is not in line with the principles above.

3. Our commitments

In implementing the above into our procurement practice, we commit to continuing to:

- Ensure our contract opportunities are [widely advertised](#) in accordance with the requirements of the latest Public Contracts Regulations and in line with the thresholds set by the partner councils in their standing orders.
- Provide [tendering opportunities](#) that are suitable for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) as appropriate
- Promote delivery of social value through our supply chain which supports the community, for example in delivering skills training, apprenticeship opportunities and graduate programmes, broader community support, and improved environmental outcomes
- Support the use of fairly traded goods where this is within the legal framework governing public procurement

- Encourage suppliers to **actively contribute** to offer solutions for delivering ethical requirements innovatively and cost effectively
- Encourage suppliers to **work with their people** to enable them to be the best they can at work
- **Continue to improve** the way in which suppliers are appointed and supply chains managed, audited and reported on
- **Retain records** in accordance with regulations to ensure transparency of our procurement processes
- Treat suppliers **fairly and equally** at all times and to act impartially and objectively and with integrity and honesty throughout the procurement process
- Make appropriate **resources available** to meet our stated commitments, including provision of guidance, awareness raising and training for staff and suppliers
- **Take action** when our suppliers do not abide by our Supplier Code of Conduct