

## Sustainability Strategy 2013 – 2016 The City of Aalborg, Denmark

### Background

Aalborg is the fourth largest city and the third most populous City in Denmark with 205,000 inhabitants and an annual procurement budget of 0.3 billion Euro. Aalborg has been a pioneer in the field of Sustainable Development since 1994, and has been involved in the effort to put local sustainability on the agenda in Europe. This came about as a result of the creation of the 'Aalborg Charter', a statement expressing that municipalities and their citizens have a responsibility to create environmental, social and economically sustainable communities.

The Aalborg Charter has so far been signed by over 3,000 municipalities across Europe. In 2004, the European work on local sustainability was assessed and this resulted in the creation of the 'Aalborg Commitments', a more binding statement in which the signatory municipalities commit themselves to work diligently for local sustainable development. The Aalborg Commitments have been signed by more than 700 municipalities.



### Development of policy

In 2013, the City of Aalborg established a Sustainability Strategy to be implemented over three years. As part of this strategy, the City Council decided to strengthen its efforts towards SPP and established a corporation between its Environment and Procurement offices.

Additionally, the City adopted a procedure to integrate sustainability criteria into all tenders carried out by the City. The criteria are laid down in the procurement policy adopted in the City Council covering every tender in the City to ensure that every single tender published today is requesting sustainable products and services.

### Implementation of policy

Aalborg's Sustainable Procurement Policy, set within the framework of European and national legislation, translates the City's Environmental Policy and other requirements into concrete sustainability commitments that are observed throughout the management of the entire procurement process. The Procurement and Environment offices work closely together throughout each procurement process. Before the City procurers can begin the process, a proposal must be submitted to the management team within the Environment Office. The process is carried out as follows:

1. A proposal to procure products, services or works is made by the Procurement Office to the Environment Office.
2. The appropriate sustainability requirements are then added to the technical specifications. For a range of products and services, these are taken from a pre-established list of sustainability requirements which are developed by the City, and are based on the EU GPP criteria, national recommendations and criteria from relevant eco labels.
3. Further sustainability requirements are formulated as part of the award criteria and are given a proposed environmental weighting of the total award criteria depending on the nature and potential environmental impact of each individual tender. This environmental analysis and weighting can determine whether or not the procurement will be permitted to proceed.
4. Award criteria are formulated and an environmental weighting (%) is agreed upon with the Procurement Office.
5. An Environmental Assessment form, which includes a framework of how bidders will be scored on their responses to the environmental requirements set out in the tender, is returned to the Procurement Office.
6. Once tenders are received, they are checked to ensure that they meet the minimum environmental requirements.
7. Additional documentation from the tenderers' companies is sometimes requested by the Environment Department via the Procurement Office in order to verify environmental requirements where necessary.
8. The Environmental Assessment, with a score for the environmental aspects, is forwarded to the Procurement Office for incorporation into the overall score comprised of other aspects such as price and other quality issues.

## Future Ambitions

The City of Aalborg hopes to introduce the following initiatives in the future:

1. Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) requirements will be incorporated into the award criteria.
2. Sustainability requirements will be introduced for construction tenders based on the [German Sustainable Building Council](#) (DGNB) criteria which are also used in Denmark.
3. Low energy requirements (2020 standard) for construction tenders will be incorporated from 2015 onwards in accordance with Danish building regulations.
4. Conducting market engagement will become compulsory prior to publishing all tenders.
5. The use of eco-label criteria, such as those outlined by the Nordic Swan, EU-flower etc. will be increased, in line with the new public procurement directive.

## Lessons learned

- In future the City of Aalborg will look at both direct and indirect energy consumption as part of TCO. This is as a result of the City's experiences whereby they have recognised that energy requirements must be integrated with other environmental requirements in order to ensure a product or service which meets comprehensive sustainability aspects is procured. Additionally, the City has recognised the importance of a procurement policy including sustainability issues and the importance of carrying out market engagement in order to assess market performance as regards sustainable products and services.
- In future, companies which bid for public tenders will be invited to 'Meet the Buyer' style events in order to facilitate dialogue on future municipal requirements that have been developed to support its business plans for sustainability.
- The City has realised that cooperation between the Environmental and Procurement Offices has been crucial for success. Additionally, the City has recognised the importance of addressing sustainability at an early stage of a tender as a part of the identification of the relevant products and services.

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