

## **WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL - CONSTRUCTION CHARTER**

As a local authority we directly procure a wide range of construction projects. We promote and support the positive workforce practices set out in this charter on all construction projects which we procure.

### **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of all workers on our construction projects is paramount. We expect all contractors and sub-contractors to ensure that:

- Health and safety regulations and standards are rigorously implemented and adhered to. This includes safe systems of work to protect the public and construction workers alike, continuous safety improvements and ensure that behaviours are managed to drive a safety performance culture;
- Welfare facilities for construction workers are appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including reasonable standards for toilets, amenities and drying facilities in accordance with the Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015.

### **Employment Standards**

We require the highest standards of project delivery in order to ensure that the aspirations of the people of West Lothian are met and the projects serve our communities well in the years to come. Mindful of the construction industry skills shortages, we expect the industry to train the next generation of skilled workers for the future by:

- Carrying out appropriate checks, and retaining documentary evidence for audit purposes, so as to be able to demonstrate the skill level of their employees on any construction projects if required to do so;
- Complying with the employment and skills requirements set out in our tender documents;
- Engaging with hard to reach and under-represented groups through provision of employment, training and skills initiatives;
- Working with us to support initiatives aimed at promoting and improving opportunities in education and training of employers and employees engaged on all construction projects within our authority;
- Ensuring fair and transparent recruitment practice.

## **Employment Rights**

This council is a Living Wage employer and encourages all construction companies working on its contracts to adhere to that policy and to register with the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative.

This council encourages direct employment by contractors and sub-contractors on a PAYE Class 1 National Insurance basis.

We expect that employees and workers have access to:

- Paid Holidays;
- Statutory Sick Pay;
- Auto-enrolment in a pension scheme.

We encourage contractors and sub-contractors to provide employees and workers with access to:

- A sickness benefit scheme;
- Accident compensation;
- Death in service benefits.

## **Responsible Sourcing**

This council supports responsible sourcing to benefit society and the economy, while minimising damage to the environment. [Government Buying Standards \(GBS\)](#) are part of public procurement policy, with individual standards developed with input from across government, industry and wider stakeholders. The standards have been extensively reviewed with market research and analysis to establish criteria that take long-term cost effectiveness and market capacity into account.

Many of these buying standards will be embedded in our tender process through use of the [European Single Procurement Document Scotland \(ESPDS\)](#) and we encourage all contractors to source responsibly to support our aims.

## **Community Benefits**

This council considers [community benefits](#) for all regulated procurements to support in delivering our sustainable procurement duty. Community benefits can contribute to a range of national and local outcomes relating to employability, skills and tackling inequalities by focusing on under-represented groups. Many of our tender processes will include community benefits and we encourage contractors to consider how they can embed community benefits into their organisation.

## **Trade Unions**

As an employer, West Lothian Council's policies fully support Trade Unions' duties and activities. We believe that Trade Unions can play an important role in creating a safe and productive worksite and developing good industrial relations. We therefore encourage our contractors and sub-contractors, within the context of the contract let, to:

- Employ workers under recognised industry collective agreements;
- Promote the benefits of belonging to a recognised Trade Union;
- Recognise the role that on-site Shop Stewards can play in achieving and promoting good industrial relations;
- Invite Trade Unions to have input into the development of Health and Safety policy;
- Encourage the election of Health and Safety Representatives and support their role in helping to ensure a safe site;
- Provide equality of opportunity for all.

West Lothian Council looks forward to working with contractors to help support the aims set out in this Charter.

21 January 2020