

Health and Safety: The Procurement of Contractors, Suppliers and Partner Organisations Policy

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Guidance – H&S: The Procurement of Contractors, Suppliers and Partner organisations

1. Introduction and purpose:

1.1 This policy and associated guidance aims to ensure that work undertaken on behalf of the council, by contractors, suppliers and partner organisations' is carried out in a manner that will avoid, reduce or control foreseeable risks to peoples safety and health.

1.2 The objectives of this policy include;

- To safeguard all persons on council premises
- To minimise risk associated with work carried out by contractors, suppliers and partner organisations
- To protect council staff, property, assets and the environment
- To ensure the council and contractors, suppliers and partner organisations employ recognised good practice and comply with legislative requirements

1.3 To achieve this, the council will ensure that:

- Only suitable and competent contractors, suppliers and partner organisations are engaged to carryout work on behalf of the council
- Contractors, suppliers and partner organisations are supplied with adequate health and safety information and instructions relating to their specific council contract (to include design risk assessments and other local features associated with the contract that would not be readily known to any perspective contractor, supplier or partner organisation bidding for work)
- Effective communication co-operation and co-ordination is maintained between the council representative, the contractor/suppliers/partners and their sub-contractors
- Contractors, suppliers and partner organisations will be issued with identification (where appropriate) that must be worn and visible at all times whilst undertaking work on behalf of the council
- Contractors, suppliers and partner organisations will be required to adhere to agreed codes of conduct and plan/manage their work effectively with regard to the safety, health and welfare of anyone who can be affected by their work activities. Where high risk work is involved i.e. working on live electrical equipment, a 'permit to work' system must be implemented
- Contractors, suppliers and partners performance will be constantly reviewed by the project team during the contract period and on completion of works

2. Scope and definitions:

2.1 This policy applies to council staff who engage or work with contractors, suppliers and partners, whose work can adversely affect the health and wellbeing of people or the environment.

2.2 Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum (SSIP) is applicable to all organisations/ businesses/individuals that provide services for PCC that may have an effect on our staff, residents, clients and customers (not just construction companies/contractors).

2.3 Where PCC service managers hold a 'preferred list of contractors' they must check that where appropriate, those contractors comply with the requirements of this policy

2.4 The following definitions are applicable throughout this policy document;

- (i) Contractor - a contractor, supplier and/or partner organisation directly engaged by PCC to carry out work on behalf of the council
- (ii) Sub-contractor - an individual or organisation that has been directly employed by the principle contractor and is responsible for that part of the contract.
- (iii) SSIP – Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum is an umbrella organisation to facilitate mutual recognition between health and safety pre-qualification schemes who are members of the SSIP Forum
- (iv) 'Buyer'- Portsmouth City Council under the terms of SSIP
- (v) 'Supplier' - A contractor, supplier or partner organisation (business or individual) who is offering to provide a service to Portsmouth City Council

3. Roles and responsibilities:

3.1 Contracts management (teams/individuals):

PCC employees involved in arranging/letting a council contract are responsible for ensuring that the chosen '*supplier*' is:

- SSIP compliant or working towards compliance (where appropriate), or is exempt from compliance and the reasons for exemptions are documented
- provided with appropriate information and instruction regarding specific hazards/risks and other relevant general information relating to their place of work (including site-specific safe working procedures and 'permit to work systems)
- facilitated sufficient time to prepare for and undertake the work contracted for, with due regard to local and corporate H&S policy requirements and legislative requirements.

Notes:

- (i) Where schools and other units do not have sufficient competency as an internal resource, they must engage a competent person to manage the project on their behalf
- (ii) The vast majority of maintenance and decorative works come under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM 2007) and clients must have a working knowledge of their duties and legal liabilities under CDM 2007 whether or not the project is notifiable to the HSE.

(iii) Where a project manager is included as part of the management arrangements, the client still retains legal liability for the project.

3.2 Project Manager:

The project manager is responsible for ensuring that a '*supplier*' has:

- assessed the risks related to the work being tendered for
- identified and agreed satisfactory safe systems of work for the project
- allowed sufficient time for planning and for the project
- been provided with sufficient information to enable them to reduce risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable, and develop a coherent health and safety management plan

3.3 Principle contractor:

The principle contractor is responsible for compliance with SSIP, where applicable, and is responsible for assessing the competency of their sub-contractors.

3.4 Sub-contractor:

The sub-contractor is an individual or organisation that has been directly employed by the principle contractor and is responsible for that part of the contract. Sub-contractors are not subject to the SSIP assessment process by Portsmouth City Council representatives, as it is the responsibility of the principle contractor

4. Application of this Policy:

4.1 PCC is committed to ensuring the safety and health of residents, visitors, contractors, staff and users of council buildings, facilities and services. Part of this ongoing commitment includes a '*competency*' assessment of our '*suppliers*' prior to selection and processes to monitor their performance, once the contract has been awarded

4.2 The person awarding/procuring the contract on behalf of PCC must ensure that any '*supplier*' who wants to enter into a contract with PCC has been assessed as SSIP compliant (to cover all categories of work that is included within the contract being applied for) and registered with a safety scheme under the umbrella of Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP), except:

- where a '*supplier*' has agreed (in writing) to become SSIP compliant (or working towards compliance) within the term of the contract, or
- where this is not deemed necessary by a client/contract manager due to the work being undertaken

Note: Where it is decided that a '*supplier*' (contractor/service provider) is not required to go through the SSIP process, the PCC client/contract manager/department concerned should document evidence to support this decision for audit purposes (further advice can be sought from the Council's H&S Unit or Procurement Management team)

4.3 The SSIP portal website enables PCC staff and managers to check whether a 'supplier' has been assessed and registered with SSIP.

4.4 To ensure a 'supplier' is competent within the work range they are tendering for, those involved within the contract tendering process are to ensure that all prospective 'suppliers' submit a pre-tender health and safety management plan. This plan is to include all specific health and safety documents relating to the actual work that is being tendered for, such as risk assessments, method statements and the organisation for health and safety.

4.5 A 'supplier' who has been assessed as SSIP compliant does not absolve the councils' legal responsibility from undertaking a 'Stage 2' assessment of the 'supplier' in accordance with the relevant SSIP scheme

Note: The 'Stage 2' assessment involves monitoring the 'suppliers' work throughout the contract period, to ensure the 'supplier' maintains the appropriate abilities and standards to carry out the specific work, has suitably trained staff and appropriate resources available to meet PCC's needs. A project manager can be appointed to undertake this task on behalf of the council.

4.6 It is accepted that not all 'suppliers' working on behalf of the council will require SSIP assessment, however contract managers should take reasonable steps (auditable) to establish the health and safety credentials of companies who have an association with PCC. Defining exactly who would need to be assessed and those that wouldn't is not a clear-cut exercise, but as a general rule, those suppliers who provide services that may directly affect our staff, residents, clients or customers would need to be assessed. Examples are construction and demolition companies, those installing hardware and social care providers would all need to be SSIP compliant, whereas furniture or office supplies companies would not necessarily need to be assessed.

4.7 In situations where a non compliant SSIP 'supplier' is awarded a contract but fails to comply with written assurance of their proposed application for SSIP accreditation (in accordance with this policy) should be clearly informed that this failure will be taken into consideration should the 'supplier' tender for future work with the council. Contract managers should ensure that tendering/ contract documents reflect this requirement.

5. Reference Documentation:

5.1 PCC staff involved with procuring suppliers can verify whether the supplier has been assessed as compliant and registered with a SSIP Forum member pre-qualification scheme, by logging onto the SSIP Portal website as a user www.ssiportal.org.uk and enter the following username ID and password;

- the username ID: ssip@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- the password: spinnaker (case sensitive).

Notes:

- (i) If the login details are entered incorrectly 5 times, you will be locked out of the portal
- (ii) No attempt should be made to change the password, as this will lock everyone out of the portal.

5.2 Further information regarding SSIP, how suppliers can apply for an assessment, including the list of SSIP Forum member organisations, can be found on the SSIP website: www.ssip.org.uk

5.3 The Corporate Health and Safety Policy and corporate guidance documents applicable to this policy can be accessed via the PCC H&S webpage on IntraLINK (<http://intraLink/PoliciesStrategies/877.html>) or the council's external website;

5.4 Further advice/assistance regarding SSIP and related health and safety matters can be sought from the H&S Unit, Procurement Management team or refer to the guidance document at Appendix 1.

6. Consultation:

6.1 The review of this policy has been consulted with the PCC procurement management team only and replaces the original version.

7. Communication and dissemination:

7.1 This policy is available on the H&S section of IntraLINK and the policy section of the council's external website.

8. Policy review:

This policy is reviewed annually by PCC's H&S Unit and Procurement Department. The document will be republished at least every three years.

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Guidance Document:
(H&S: The Procurement of Contractors, Suppliers & Partner Organisations)

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1. Introduction:

1.1 The requirement to monitor the work of our contractors, suppliers and partners is considered a priority by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and forms the model of good practice. PCC has responsibilities to take reasonable steps to ensure that contractors, suppliers and partners they appoint, are competent to undertake the work they are being contracted for, whilst maintaining essential health and safety standards throughout the duration of the contract.

1.2 Any contractor, supplier or partner who wants to enter into a contract with PCC must have been assessed as compliant and registered with a Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Forum member. Compliance must cover all categories of work that is included within the contract that is being applied for.

2. Principle and Purpose of SSIP:

2.1 The Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum (SSIP), a not for profit, umbrella organisation, was launched in May 2009 with the full support of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to facilitate mutual recognition between health and safety pre-qualification schemes, reducing duplication and improving standards of health and safety – ultimately saving lives.

2.2 The SSIP scheme defines any individual or organisation purchasing services as a 'Buyer' and a business or individual who is offering to provide a service or services is defined as a 'Supplier'.

2.3 Thousands of companies (Suppliers) apply for work with public and private sector organisations and to be successful they must meet the organisation's (Buyer's) exacting health and safety standards.

2.4 In the past, contractors, suppliers and partners have sometimes had to be compliant with a number of health and safety pre-qualification assessment schemes to enable them to successfully tender for work with local authorities and other organisations. Assessing a supplier's health and safety competence can be a lengthy and time consuming process with suppliers sometimes meeting one buyer's health and safety standards but not another.

2.5 To reduce the unnecessary bureaucracy and cost of pre-qualification, whilst maintaining essential standards, a number of pre-qualification schemes have come together to form the Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Forum. Pre-qualification by a member of the SSIP Forum means that a supplier has been assessed as compliant to a recognised Stage 1 health and safety standard, which is mutually recognised by all other SSIP Forum members pre-qualification schemes. This standard is also recognised by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), who is an active supporter and has been instrumental in its formation.

2.6 Prior to the launch of the SSIP Forum in 2009, PCC used the Contractors' Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) to verify the competence of a supplier. However, the CHAS scheme was limited to those suppliers who had been assessed as compliant or accredited by the scheme; it could not verify whether a supplier had been suitably assessed by another similar pre-qualification scheme.

The introduction of the SSIP Forum enables a buyer (PCC) to check via the SSIP Portal website, whether a supplier has been assessed and registered with a SSIP Forum member.

3. SSIP Benefits:

3.1 Participating in the SSIP scheme helps both buyers and suppliers as follows:

- Suppliers show compliance with important parts of health and safety legislation
- On achieving SSIP compliance, a supplier is approved to work for all buyers
- Inconsistencies are reduced where some suppliers may be judged compliant by one buyer and not another
- SSIP gives guidance on any weaknesses in a supplier's safety management, including how they can improve
- Being a SSIP supplier or buyer saves both time and resources

4. SSIP Registration Scheme:

4.1 Unless a buyer stipulates that a supplier has to register with the buyer's preferred SSIP scheme member, supplier's seeking registration with a member scheme, are free to choose the scheme they want to register with.

4.2 The benefits of choosing the scheme of choice, allows a supplier the freedom to choose the scheme they feel will provide the best value for them. Should this be an option, the supplier should visit the websites of all the SSIP scheme members' and decide which one they would prefer to register with. Their selection should be based on factors such as assessment requirements, registration fees, validity period of an assessment and whether the scheme covers their particular type of work.

4.3 In circumstances where a supplier, who is not registered with a SSIP member, may seek the advice of a PCC buyer with respect to suggesting a suitable scheme member. Buyers should direct them to the CHAS website www.chas.gov.uk. CHAS is a renowned and reliable pre-qualification scheme, which PCC has used for the vetting of suppliers for several years. It originated and is administered by the London Borough of Merton and is nationally recognised and used by local authorities throughout the UK. It is also the founder member of the SSIP scheme.

4.4 Although a supplier tendering for work with PCC may state that they are already registered with a SSIP member scheme, this should be verified by accessing the SSIP Portal website. Log in details are contained within this policy document (see section 5 of the policy)

4.5 Even if a supplier is registered with a SSIP member, PCC staff involved within the contract tendering process, are to ensure all prospective suppliers' are competent within the actual work range they are tendering for. The supplier should be requested to provide a pre-tender health and safety management plan as part of the 'supplier' (contractor) selection process. This plan should include all specific health and safety documents relating to the work activities the contract will encompass i.e. risk assessments, method statements and organisational arrangements for managing health and safety throughout the life of the contract.

The plan should verify the competence abilities, standards and safe guards the supplier will incorporate into the contract.

5. **SSIP Assessment Process:**

5.1 The procedure for a supplier who is seeking registration with an SSIP forum member, is to firstly determine if the buyer they are tendering for work with have a preferred scheme they must register with, or whether the supplier can choose the scheme of their choice?

5.2 Once the specific scheme has been determined, the next step is to contact the scheme to establish the assessment criteria that the supplier needs to comply with to commence the assessment process. This process will normally consist of making a formal application to the scheme, completing a questionnaire and submitting supporting documents and evidence, to define a supplier's health and safety management culture. Subject to a supplier meeting the health and safety standards set by the scheme member, will determine whether they are assessed as compliant, or asked to submit further information or evidence, to enable the schemes standards to be meet.

6. **What Health and Safety Subject Areas are Assessed:**

6.1 The list below shows typical subject areas of health and safety that are assessed. Not all subject areas of the assessment process will apply in all circumstances, this will depend on the kind of work the supplier does:

- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Organisational arrangements for health and safety management
- Work equipment
- Consultation arrangements
- First aid
- Fire and emergency procedures
- Display screen equipment
- Manual handling of loads
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Risk assessments
- Asbestos
- Health surveillance
- Accident reporting and investigation
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Electrical safety
- Contractor management
- Workplace and inspections
- Fire risk assessment
- Monitoring, audit and review
- Environmental

6.2 The degree, to which health and safety requirements are specified within documentation, will depend on the nature and level of risk involved in the work or a particular contract. The amount and level of the information required will also vary depending on the nature of the contract. Suppliers must provide evidence to

demonstrate that their organisation actively promotes and manages health and safety.

7. The Stages of Assessing Competency:

7.1 SSIP will only address the management system documentation at pre-qualification (stage 1) and must be supported by other measures to establish how work is conducted in practice. This monitoring must be job specific (stage 2) and could be in the form of site visits by the project team, surveyors, clerks of works and the H&S Unit. Where possible site visits should include the company's safety adviser to demonstrate that PCC and the company are communicating and co-ordinating a joint approach to health and safety on site.

7.2 Stage 1- This part of the assessment is carried out as a desktop assessment, so it is important that when suppliers send in their application they include all supporting documents and evidence. The schemes assessor checks a supplier has the ability, experience and resources to carry out the work they have applied for. The buyer will look at things like method statements, specific risk assessments, references, examples of previous similar work, training and available resources.

7.3 Stage 2 - This stage involves the buyer (PCC) monitoring the supplier when they are on site. The council will check suppliers are managing the work safely, carrying out the method statements properly, have enough resources, liaising properly with the client, designers and other contractors, managing the site effectively and providing enough supervision.

7.4 The level of assessment at these stages is normally proportionate to the level of risk they carry. The council has a responsibility to monitor suppliers, making sure they are working safely, in order to protect staff and everyone who may be affected by the work.

8. Further information:

8.1 Further information regarding SSIP, how suppliers can apply for an assessment, including the list of SSIP Forum member organisations, can be found on the SSIP website: www.ssip.org.uk