



Community benefits from the Scottish Borders tyres contract

Scottish Borders Council has used Community Benefit Clauses in its procurement of a tyres contract to secure employment opportunities for local young people.



Background

Scottish Borders Council (SBC) is responsible for the maintenance of its fleet of vehicles, ranging from small vans to large heavy goods vehicles and tractors.

SBC has outsourced this task to a specialist provider with the appropriate skills and capacity to deliver a tyre maintenance service.

An important aspect of the service is to minimise the vehicle downtime without compromising the safety of people or the vehicles.

The contract includes the routine maintenance of all vehicle tyres as well as an emergency repairs and replacement service.

Scope and focus

SBC is committed to sustainable procurement and wanted to use the tyre contract to achieve the maximum value for the people of the Borders and included Community Benefit Clauses (CBCs) in the tender.

CBCs are contractual clauses which can be used to build a range of economic, social or environmental conditions into the delivery of public contracts. This could include: employment and training opportunities, supporting small and medium business, educational support activities or the sponsoring of local events or projects.

Implementation

The Council is a member of Scotland Excel and used its national Tyre Management Framework Agreement to tender for the contract, including a CBC on employment and training.

Four suppliers made it to the shortlist and submitted a tender. Following an evaluation of all four bids the contract for the supplying and fitting of tyres to all Scottish Borders Council vehicles was awarded to Redpath Tyres based in Duns.

As a result of the CBC in the contract, a local young person was given a short period of work experience before moving on to a 12-week Skills Development Scotland programme and subsequently recruited as a modern apprentice within Redpath Tyres' Kelso depot. At the completion of the apprenticeship, the young person was offered a permanent job with Redpath Tyres.

Due to the success of the apprenticeship and the stability provided by the contract with SBC, Redpath Tyres has decided to take on a second apprentice.

Key challenges

There were some challenges that SBC had to overcome:

- **Organisational.**

This was Scottish Borders Council's first opportunity to take advantage of a Community Benefit Clause. Identifying and providing the necessary support for Redpath Tyres to ensure the contract delivered an employment opportunity was a new challenge for the Council. Working with the SBC's Employment Support Service, Skills Development Scotland and Job Centre Plus a number of young people were identified as potential candidates for the post. Close joint working between local employment agencies and Redpath Tyres management team ensured the right person was hired.

- **Process.**

Developing a mechanism to monitor and manage the CBC requirements of this contract was another challenge for the Council. Raising awareness with contract managers of the importance of managing the CBC and ensuring it was included on the agenda for every performance management meeting ensured the Council was kept up to date with progress and were able to support Redpath Tyres in their willingness to create further employment opportunities.

Outcomes

As a result of the contract one young person is now developing his skills through his apprenticeship programme and due to the success of their experience with the apprenticeship programme Redpath Tyres have recently recruited a second apprenticeship in their Kelso depot.

The successful use of CBCs in the tyres contract has set an example for other departments on the use of CBCs for the local community.

As a result of the tyres contract SBC has developed a Community Benefit Stakeholder Group to provide a single point of contact and support for third party suppliers to deliver the community benefit requirements for contracts. This group helps

to identify potential beneficiaries for employment, training and work experience opportunities and provide support to local SMEs enabling them to take advantage of supply chain opportunities from larger contracts.

SBC now has a better understanding of the opportunities that arise from the use of CBCs in procurement exercises. The Council has recently published their 'Adding Value to Communities through Procurement Policy' and employed a Community Benefits Co-ordinator to champion the use of CBCs in their procurement exercises.

Project owners and procurement specialists, with support from the Community Benefits Co-ordinator, will now consider community benefits for every procurement exercise with the contractual requirements being bespoke to each tender.

Critical success factors

There have been a number of critical success factors identified, including:

- **The Scotland Excel Tyre Framework:** the existence of a framework agreement that allowed for the inclusion of CBCs has made things easier.
- **Partnership working:** with Skills Development Scotland, Job Centre Plus and Scottish Borders Education and Lifelong Learning with the aim of identifying suitable employment opportunities for young people.
- **Support from the Employment Support Service:** the help of specialist recruitment services provided by the Employment Support Service has enabled the Council and Redpath Tyres to engage with and recruit suitable young people.
- **A supportive supplier:** the enthusiasm and genuine interest of the successful supplier in providing employment opportunities for young people has helped the success of the CBC. The fact that the supplier offered the apprentice a job and recruited a second apprentice are testament to Redpath Tyres' commitment to providing local employment.

- **Supportive senior management:** the understanding of the benefits of CBCs and the buy-in to the process of senior SBC management was key to achieving results.

Next steps

SBC is committed to where possible using CBCs in the future. Councillor John Mitchell, SBC's Depute Leader said:

“Community Benefit Clauses will be considered by the Council in every appropriate procurement exercise in an effort to ensure contracts have an additional positive impact on local communities, and I hope that among these benefits will be many more opportunities for young people within local companies like this”.

For further information, contact:

John Mallin, Community Benefits Coordinator, Scottish Borders Council
T: 01835 – 824000, ext. 5265
E: John.Mallin@scotborders.gov.uk