

Agenda item 7

For decision - Frome Town Council Suppliers & Contractors Questionnaire

Author: Chris Stringer, Environment Manager

Summary

As a next step in our programme on ethical decision making, we want staff and Councillors to be able to make informed and ethical decisions about who the Town Council works with, within a clear and transparent framework.

As a result of this, two questionnaires for current and prospective suppliers ([Appendix 6](#)) and contractors ([Appendix 7](#)) have been prepared. It is recommended that these questionnaires are adopted.

These will replace the Council's existing Ethical Decision Matrix - and should provide a clearer and less subjective approach to decisions about who the Council works with.

These questionnaires are intended to gather and record important information about the suppliers and contractors the Town Council has worked with and may work with, with a deliberate emphasis on ensuring the Council's good practice and responsible and conscientious decision making.

How this will work

On receipt of a completed questionnaire, Town Council staff will check and assess the answers. Follow-up questions may be required, particularly for businesses and organisations that are set up or operate in an atypical way, for example Edventure or the Share Shop.

If staff are satisfied that the supplier and/or contractor meets FTC's objectives, then this is recorded and they become an approved supplier or contractor. Approved suppliers and contractors will be checked on a regular basis to an agreed schedule.

If staff are not satisfied that the supplier and/or contractor meets FTC's objectives, then an alternative supplier will be sought and this decision will be recorded. Suppliers and contractors that fail to meet the Council's objectives will be notified of this and given the reason(s) for the decision; and could be reconsidered in the future.

In certain and exceptional circumstances, including unique suppliers and contractors, staff and the Finance Project Sponsors (currently Sheila Gore and Jean Boulton) will decide on the merits of the supplier and/or contractor on a case by case basis, recording the decision reached and noting the reasons for the decision.

This process updates and replaces the Council's current Ethical Decision Matrix.

The questionnaire could also be used (or adapted and used) for partner organisations or grant recipients in the future.

Recommendations

1. Begin using these questionnaires immediately by:
 - a) Sending them to all regularly used suppliers and all contractors with current contracts
 - b) Sending questionnaires to suppliers and contractors as work is quoted or tendered for
2. Report back to Council Matters in six months with a progress review, having used the questionnaires for that period
3. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to make minor changes and updates to the questionnaires as required