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Report to Council of 14 August 2008

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Subject: Procurement of recycled paper

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## 1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report concerns the procurement of recycled paper across the Council, as a response to various legislative drivers and government initiatives central to the sustainability agenda. The report recommends that the Council commits to an aspirational target of using 100% recycled paper for all its paper uses, and sets interim targets which are challenging but achievable. As such, an initial target of 50% is recommended for 2008/09.
- 1.2. Although recycled paper is more expensive than non-recycled paper, the cost of buying it can be offset by savings made through reducing paper use across the Council. Buying recycled paper, and thus providing a market for recycled goods, is a way for the Council to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.3. A contribution to the achievement of sustainable development is a requirement of best value; there are also a number of commitments that the Council has made to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, including signing up to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration in 2007, and its Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government in 2008.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Council commits to an initial target of 50% of the paper it uses having 100% recycled content and that progress is reviewed on an annual basis towards attaining a 100% target.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Measures to reduce the amount of paper used and to increase the proportion that is recycled can contribute to a number of objectives that the Council is required to meet. Environmental benefits include a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a reduction in the amount of waste generated by the Council. Using recycled paper encourages recycling by providing a market for

recycled materials; it also allows the Council to demonstrate leadership in working towards the achievement of sustainable development.

- 3.2. Between April 2006 and March 2007 Clackmannanshire Council used 28,843 reams of paper, costing on average £2.10 per ream. This was an increase in paper use of around 5% on the previous year. The cost of this paper was approximately £60,652. Of the paper used, only 2.6% was made wholly or in part from recycled materials, with the remainder, 97.4%, made from pulped wood (also known as virgin pulp).
- 3.3. The process of making paper by recycling waste paper uses less energy than making paper from virgin pulp; by diverting waste from landfill it also contributes to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions which are produced when buried waste biodegrades. Clackmannanshire Council's Waste Services operates a kerbside collection scheme for householders' recyclable waste. Paper accounts for 4.5% of the waste collected for recycling. Buying recycled paper "closes the loop" by creating a market for the waste paper collected by the Council.
- 3.4. Recycled paper has had a reputation in the past for being of poor quality and causing problems such as printer jams; however, this is no longer the case: modern recycled paper is of a high quality and runs smoothly in machinery. Recycled paper is marginally more expensive than virgin paper, but this cost can be offset by making best use of new technology available in the Council and reducing paper use.
- 3.5. The first national contract for office supplies is anticipated to be in place for April 2009. It is anticipated that due to this more collaborative approach to paper purchasing that economies of scale can be achieved and that a more competitive pricing structure will emerge, particularly in the case of papers with 100% recycled content. In the meantime, the cost differential to the authority between recycled and virgin pulp paper is continuing to reduce.
- 3.6. 100% recycled paper currently costs approximately 8% more than paper made from virgin pulp; it is anticipated that the cost of switching to 100% recycled paper across the Council could be offset by a 7.5% reduction in paper use. In January-March 2008 the Council's paper use was 24% lower than in the same period in 2007, suggesting that the necessary annual reductions in paper use are achievable.
- 3.7. Multifunctional devices (MFDs) for printing, photocopying, faxing and scanning have now been introduced in most of the Council's offices and offer significant energy and other resource savings over the machines previously used. New technology allows the machines to power down to an energy-saving mode when not in use. Toner cartridges will also now be recycled when empty by the company that supplies the machines to the Council, representing a further significant saving on the previous year's spend on toner and ink cartridges, as well as diverting waste from landfill.
- 3.8. Unlike many of the printers previously used by the Council, MFDs have the capacity to print documents double-sided. Significant paper use savings

would be expected due to using double-sided photocopying as default on MFDs wherever possible and encouraging the use of double-sided printing. The rollout of an awareness campaign to increase the volume of double-sided printing should result in substantial further paper use savings.

- 3.9. National policies and legislation require the Council to reduce its environmental impact. The Council itself has also made a number of commitments to reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions, both in its own operations and across Clackmannanshire as a whole.
- 3.10. The Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) requires local authorities to secure "best value", that is, "continuous improvement in the performance of the authority's function", in a way which contributes to sustainable development.
- 3.11. *Choosing Our Future*, Scotland's sustainable development strategy, emphasises the role of local authorities in leading and influencing the community in the improvement of sustainability performance, and singles out public procurement as one of three areas for action: it calls on the public sector to "use its purchasing power in support of sustainable development objectives." In December 2006, the Scottish Minister for Environment and Rural Development wrote to the Council (along with all other public bodies) requesting that specified thresholds are set in tender specifications and contracts for paper procurement, and to measure progress towards adoption of recycled paper.
- 3.12. In January 2007 Clackmannanshire Council, along with every other local authority in Scotland, signed up to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, which includes a commitment to "produce and publicly declare a plan [...] to achieve a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from our own operations. This will include our energy use and sourcing, travel and transportation, waste production and disposal, estate management, procurement of goods and services, and improved staff awareness."
- 3.13. Clackmannanshire Council has also taken part in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme in association with the Carbon Trust, which resulted in the production of a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan, which contains targets and actions to reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore its contribution to climate change.
- 3.14. Clackmannanshire Council's Corporate Plan and Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government include commitments to reduce the Council's annual carbon dioxide emissions, reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill and reduce Clackmannanshire's ecological footprint.
- 3.15. Reductions in waste and greenhouse gas emissions are of critical importance to the improvement of the Council's performance in the area of environmental sustainability and an important contributor to meeting each of these commitments. More efficient use of energy, minimisation of waste and re-use and recycling of waste materials all have an important part to play in delivering emission reductions.

3.16. It is proposed that all Council Services will make active progress towards switching from virgin to recycled paper use. However, it is acknowledged that recycled paper may not suit all of the Council's paper requirements, so it is proposed that an interim target of 50% will be set, with the intention of reviewing the success of this initiative after a year.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1. The savings resulting from using MFDs for printing and photocopying are expected to be sufficient to offset the cost of buying 100% recycled paper. However, the full potential of these savings will be dependent on the support of managers and steps will be taken to raise awareness of the need to reduce paper wastage by switching to double-sided printing across the Council.
- 4.2. Working towards the use of 100% recycled paper has the potential to significantly reduce the Council's environmental impact, and will help it to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to its duty of best value and sustainable development and its commitments made in signing Scotland's Climate Change Declaration.

#### 5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Using 100% recycled paper will contribute to sustainable production and consumption, through the reduced energy requirements necessary for production of recycled paper, reduced waste and supporting the market for recycled paper. Switching to recycled paper will enable the Council to provide leadership, demonstrating its commitment to sustainability and encouraging others to take similar steps.

#### 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The cost of using 100% recycled paper is anticipated to be offset by the financial savings from using the new MFDs and minimising waste.

#### 6.2. Declarations

- (1) The recommendations contained within this report support or implement Corporate Priorities, Council Policies and/or the Community Plan:

• **Corporate Priorities (Key Themes) (Please tick )**

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Achieving Potential                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Maximising Quality of Life            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Securing Prosperity                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Enhancing the Environment             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Maintaining an Effective Organisation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

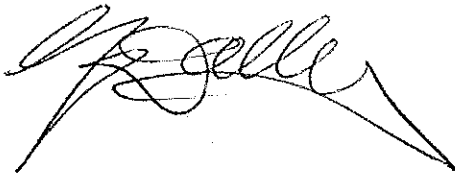
- **Council Policies** (Please detail)

The recommendations support the achievement of Corporate Priorities:  
4.1 – maximise waste reduction, recycling, energy efficiency and pollution control  
5.6 – promote effective use of modern technology to secure better service delivery

- **Community Plan (Themes)** (Please tick )

Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment and Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

- (2) In adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. (Please tick )
- (3) The full financial implications of the recommendations contained in this report are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. (Please tick )



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Director



## Report to Council

To accompany all Reports to Council

To: Head of Administration And Legal Services

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Date: 17 July 2008

Derek Barr, Procurement Manager

Service: Development and Environmental

Date of Meeting: 14 August 2008

Title of Report: Procurement of recycled paper

Recommendation that the attached report be:

1. Given unrestricted circulation

(tick appropriate box)

2. Taken in private

By virtue of paragraph \_\_\_\_ of schedule 7A, Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Appendices attached to this report (if none, state "none")

1. None
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

List of Background Papers (if none, state "none")

1. None
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Note: All documents specified must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of the meeting at which the report is considered.