

CORPORATE Social Responsibility policy

06/01/2026

1. Introduction

As a local authority responsible for towns and communities across Three Rivers and as an employer of more than 340 people, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is important.

CSR can help an organisation to show it is socially responsible and environmentally sustainable. To be considered as socially responsible, a company's activities should benefit society. To be considered environmentally sustainable, a company's activities should not harm the environment.

TRDC recognises Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a vital part of its community activity and ensuring Three Rivers is a great place to live, work and visit. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring sustainable development for both communities and businesses within the area. The council will work closely with partners and businesses to achieve the broader goals and objectives set out in this Corporate Social Responsibility Policy. This reflects the Council's ethos as an ethical, responsible and fair organisation recognising that CSR is a vital part of the council's community activity which represents the people it serves and the staff it employs.

The Council also achieves benefits from CSR by nurturing our skills and increasing team work across our organisation, whilst doing something positive for our community.

This CSR Policy will encompass the need to support the council's Objectives of the Corporate Framework to:

- Provide responsive and responsible local leadership.
- Expand the council's position as a great place to do business.
- Support and enable sustainable communities.
- Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient.

The council aims to provide quality services that are responsive to the needs of the communities it represents and deliver optimum best value. It is also important that the policy reflects the local authority's commitment to acting ethically and sustainably in all areas of its operations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to bring together the council's existing operating strategies, plans and policies that consider some aspects of corporate social responsibility e.g. Procurement, Climate Change and Sustainability into a single overarching policy under the heading of CSR. The principles encompassed in this policy cover all areas of the council's operations, and will continue to be reviewed, against government legislation.

3. Aim

TRDC recognises that it has a significant effect on the environment and the lives of people living and working in the district. The council believes that it should lead by example and is committed to acting ethically and sustainably in all areas of the Council's operations and working towards sustainable development and aims to play its part in the global effort to achieve it.

The council aims to reflect its commitment to sustainable development through both actions and influences and to do more to improve the quality of life today, whilst using fewer resources and without causing damage to the environment. In doing so, Three Rivers recognises the needs of its children, their children and future generations to come.

The council will aim:

- To reduce the council's environmental footprint through sustainable operations, responsible resource use, and support for biodiversity and climate resilience, while encouraging community-wide environmental responsibility.
- To foster a diverse, inclusive, and healthy workforce by supporting employee wellbeing, professional development, and maintaining a safe, respectful working environment.
- To maximise social, economic, and environmental value through responsible procurement, supporting local suppliers, ethical practices, and community benefit across all contracted services.
- To strengthen community ties and social impact through active local engagement, volunteering, collaboration, and inclusive initiatives that address inequality and improve quality of life.

4. Audience

The council is a political organisation led by members and managed by officers. This policy is primarily directed at council staff and key partners and will provide them with the standards required to uphold the CSR policy. This policy makes clear to all the Council's partners stakeholders; residents, workers and visitors, what its vision for CSR is and how we propose to work towards achieving it.

5. Corporate Social Responsibility Themes

The 4 main themes that provide the focus for the CSR policy are:

5.1 Community (volunteering, skills matching and fundraising)

The council is the key democratically elected body for the area, representing the hopes, aspirations and interests of around 90,000 residents and as such plays a key leadership role within the local community. As part of this leadership role, TRDC will build a culture that promotes employee volunteering and community collaboration. We actively support local businesses and the communities in which we operate. This will be achieved through:

- Providing employees with 2 paid voluntary days a year and encourage staff to donate time and skills (e.g. marketing, finance) to support voluntary and community groups.
- Providing responsive, responsible local leadership through listening and understanding our communities and their changing needs.
- Collaborating with local voluntary organisations, businesses, schools, and other public bodies to achieve shared community outcomes.
- Prioritising projects that address inequalities and barriers to inclusion for marginalised groups.
- Enhancing opportunities to participate in community initiatives.
- Achieving a positive impact upon the local community as a result of how the council undertakes business.

5.2 People (human resources, health, wellbeing and inclusion)

The council employees are central to the successful development and delivery of high-quality services and therefore vital to achieving the objectives of TRDC.

The council aim to create a workplace that encourages diversity and equal opportunities for all. It will actively encourage professional development and support employee health and wellbeing. This will be achieved through:

- Supporting learning opportunities through CPD, e-learning platforms, apprenticeships, and leadership and management development programmes.
- Upholding the Public Sector Equality Duty and foster a workplace where all individuals are respected and differences embraced and the implementation of the Inclusion working group.
- Ensuring all staff and visitors are protected through robust health and safety systems, regular training, and risk assessments.
- Supporting the wellbeing and health of our workforce through allowing flexible working, training of mental health first aiders, development of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Working Group, promotion of healthy work habits, and offering wellbeing resources including occupational health and EAP services.
- Maintaining efficient staffing levels to achieve the council objectives.
- Maintaining our status and accreditation as a Disability Confident Leader.

5.3 Environment (estates and environment)

The council is committed to reducing its direct impact on the environment by actively managing our waste, emissions and consumption of natural resources. This will be achieved through:

- Measuring and reporting on the council's Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions annually to identify opportunities for emissions reductions and share progress on reaching net-zero targets.
- Reduce waste and water consumption, increase recycling and reuse, and improve energy efficiency across council operations and buildings.
- Encouraging sustainable transportation methods and reducing carbon emissions through switching council fleets to low-emission or electric vehicles.
- Supporting the protection of local natural resources and ensuring TRDC-owned land is managed sustainably and for the benefit of biodiversity, soil health, public education, responsible recreation and climate resilience.
- Following through on our commitment to tackle the causes and effects of a changing climate by purchasing goods and services with regards to their environmental impact.
- Ensuring all major council decisions, policies and projects evaluate their environmental impact through the completion of Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessments, which seeks to mitigate environmental harms and maximise environmental benefits.
- Mandatory climate change e-learning for all staff and offering specialist carbon literacy training to senior staff and members where appropriate

5.4 Procurement (finance and purchasing)

A key opportunity for the council, as part of TRDCs commitments to obtain maximum value from contracted services and our wider spend with external organisations, is to strongly focus on securing enhanced contractual benefits for the local area, economy and for the health and wellbeing of our residents. This will be delivered by:

- Supporting local and small businesses by structuring contracts, where appropriate, to enable access for small, local, and third sector organisations, including by breaking larger contracts into smaller lots where possible.
- Encouraging local employment and skills development through prioritising opportunities that create local jobs, apprenticeships, and training, particularly for contracts exceeding £1 million or lasting more than 12 months.
- Promoting local supply chains by encourage suppliers to use local subcontractors and source goods and services locally, integrating measurable targets into contracts where appropriate.
- Actively supporting the local business and voluntary sector through supplier engagement events, workshops, and clear guidance on how to do business with us.
- All procurement activity reflects the council's ethos of valuing diversity and that our contracted services are accessible to everyone whatever their circumstances.
- Following through on our commitment to tackle the causes and effects of a changing climate by purchasing goods and services with regard to their environmental impact.
- Ensuring suppliers uphold ethical, environmental, and health and safety standards, including human rights and worker representation and have a positive impact on the communities in which they operate.

6. Implementation

To ensure CSR is part of TRDCs culture and operations, the council will:

- Embed CSR within the leadership structure of the council through the addition of a biannual item within Corporate Management Team (CMT) meetings to present on how they're team have delivered on CSR.
- Advise staff of the content of the CSR policy.
- Incorporate CSR into service planning, project development, and internal policy frameworks.
- Share case studies and team volunteering days as part of all staff Chief Executive's message.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting of this policy will be maintained through:

- A CSR performance report will be published within the KPI Annual report , highlighting achievements, challenges, and improvement areas.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Each theme will be monitored through specific KPIs, such as:
 - Carbon emissions from Council operations reported as tCO2e equivalent
 - Staff wellbeing scores (Employee satisfaction & motivation)
 - Average contracts with social value score

- Percentage of staff who have used at least one of their paid voluntary days
- Number of volunteer hours taken up by staff
- Updates and case studies will be shared with staff, councillors, and residents via internal channels and the council's website.

