

- **Increased business opportunities:** being in touch with the local community can lead to new business opportunities. It can boost your networking opportunities and lead to new suppliers and customers.

- **Company reputation and brand is strengthened:** in an increasingly competitive market place, it has been shown that engaging in a partnership with a charitable cause can greatly enhance a company's brand awareness and positioning, differentiating it from its competitors.

- **Employees gain new skills:** taking part in volunteering activities helps employees develop a wide range of new job-related skills such as teamwork, communication, project management and planning. You can use a community programme as part of your staff training and development.

- **Increased staff morale** and retention can lead to lower recruitment and training costs. Providing support for the local community can improve the way that individuals feel about an existing or potential employer. This helps develop pride about the workplace, and this is shown to have an impact on motivation, skills development, team working and likelihood of staying with the company.

- **Seeing is Believing:** by providing direct support for worthwhile causes in Leeds you are able to see, for yourself, just what impact your support is having.

- **Improved relations with the local community:** many companies have found that their community partnerships have meant that they are able to gain the trust and goodwill of local community residents.

- **The health of the local community improves:** some projects (such as training or environmental schemes) can directly affect the local community. A company could thus benefit from a more highly skilled potential workforce, a community with a stronger economy and, therefore higher levels of discretionary income, lower crime rates and a more attractive environment for employees. All of the above can have a significant bottom-line impact for the business.

- **Enlightened Self-interest:** there is a clear connection between a healthy and profitable business and the well-being of the community in which it is based. This should be of interest to those suppliers based in Leeds. A healthy economy and a thriving community will help the city continue to prosper and grow. This is of relevance to all suppliers, no matter where you are based.

How can I get involved?

By contacting one or more of the following individuals / organisations:



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A Charter for Procuring Community Benefits

"Leeds by Example"



*Working Together to
Achieve Greater Success*

housing, environmental problems and low educational achievement. Levels of crime and a poor environment in some areas make many people feel even more isolated and disadvantaged.

The council is committed to tackling these issues through our 'Narrowing the Gap' agenda.

As the largest employer in the city, and a major purchaser of goods and services, we can do more to ensure that our own practices contribute to narrowing the gap. We want to maximise the community benefit of our activities through the goods and services we buy. We want to encourage all providers of goods and services to the council to demonstrate their commitment to the people of Leeds by following our example, and taking steps to ensure they bring with them added community benefit in their activities.

This charter outlines practical action to enable this to happen. We are determined to make this a living, breathing charter. A charter that really does make a difference to the lives of individuals and groups living in some of the most disadvantaged communities in Leeds.

We look forward to working with you to deliver this charter, and turn our vision into reality."

What does the charter mean to you?

In modern-day society, we all need to recognise the importance of running our businesses in a responsible manner. Companies are increasingly being asked, as part of formal tender processes, to demonstrate what they are doing in terms of their environmental practices and community support. Indeed, some of our own contracts already include community benefit clauses that are very much part of the scoring system and are used when assessing formal tenders.

We recognise that most companies do operate in a responsible manner. The aim of this Community Charter is to ask all potential suppliers to Leeds City Council, and those already in receipt of a contract, to look at providing some added benefit to the local community here in Leeds.

Leeds City Council is already working in partnership with two Leeds-based not-for-profit organisations that can help you in this important area. Their contact details can be found on the back of this leaflet.



Leeds Ahead

Leeds Ahead provides a tailored brokerage service to business, matching up non-financial support to local regeneration initiatives, principally through the donation of time, skill and other resource. Examples include practical support for employability and environmental projects through mentoring, team activity days and work placements etc.



The Leeds Community Foundation

The Leeds Community Foundation provides a simple and easy way to channel financial support directly to local groups and projects. This may be from corporate donations, employee fundraising or payroll giving. They either help ensure your current policies are as effective as possible in tackling disadvantage in Leeds or they can work alongside you to set up schemes from scratch.

Opportunities

Detailed below are some specific examples of the kind of help you might be able to provide:

- Make a cash donation to support local community activity. This is fully allowable against tax and can be managed by the Leeds Community Foundation. This can be a one-off contribution or a regular donation by standing order.
- Encourage employees to sign up to payroll giving or to organise a fundraising event in support of local community groups. This, again, can be managed by the Foundation and can be directed at themes such as young people or health, or in specific parts of Leeds such as South Leeds or, at a very local level, areas such as Beeston, Gipton etc.
- Help people into work. Take part in group "world of work" sessions talking about different lines of business and preparing people for work; help run CV skills sessions; provide interview practice; hold visits to your workplace; offer work placements; run a job guarantee scheme with the council whereby we work, with you, to train up people and you then guarantee them a job at the end.
- Donate goods or services for free or at a reduced cost. Do you have any used furniture or IT equipment that you could donate to a local group? Are you willing to donate tools or specific equipment to help them in their work? How about offering some free accountancy, legal, quantity surveying, PR, design, printing advice or services?
- Local events and activities welcome small cash donations or goods or services to use as raffle prizes or gifts for competitions or for good attendance records at school by sponsoring treats and prizes.
- Encourage staff to volunteer their own time for schemes including: business mentoring of a local project, group, school etc; joining the board or management committee of a local group; becoming a school governor; supporting numeracy or literacy projects in inner city schools.
- Team activities. This is when groups of employees from one or several companies come together to support a local school or community group with a particular project. This might involve painting, creating garden spaces, gardening, painting or litter-picking or might involve contributing to some specific projects e.g. make-over projects in schools. Alternatively, you can choose to help with community consultations or to marshal community festivals and galas.

Why should I support the Community Charter?

There are many reasons why we encourage you to come on-board including:



Mark Harris *Paul Rogerson*

Cllr Mark Harris,
Leader, Liberal
Democrat Group

Paul Rogerson,
Chief Executive

Message from the Chief Executive / Leader of the Council

"Leeds City Council is proud to introduce its first ever Community Charter for Suppliers. The Charter aims to encourage all current and potential suppliers to Leeds City Council to commit to providing added benefit to the local community.

In many ways, Leeds is a success story. It is a major regional centre with impressive shopping facilities, a thriving business services sector, excellent leisure, cultural and educational facilities and strong financial, leisure and higher educational sectors. The Council, working closely with our partners, has played a large part in creating the right conditions for success and in helping many local people to share in that success.

But, despite our efforts, a number of our communities across the city are still not benefiting sufficiently. Disadvantage is felt at many levels, as low incomes are made even worse by poor health, inadequate