

Procurement Leadership Group Meeting (Q3)

11th December 2025

Meeting Actions

Group members:

- Share any additional feedback on the proposed Sustainable Procurement focus via the member engagement survey when circulated.

Group managers:

- Develop and issue a short member engagement survey to understand barriers to attendance and participation.
- Use outputs from the meeting discussions and ideas generated to inform development of the 2026–27 business plan, to be shared with the group in due course.

Welcome and Introductions

Sarah Chatfield welcomed members to the Q3 Procurement Leadership Group meeting and outlined the session's focus on informing business planning for 2026–27.

A special welcome was given to Anna Cantwell, Lead Consultant at Action Sustainability, who introduced her background in sustainable procurement and modern slavery, and outlined her role in supporting the group going forward.

Group Focus: Sustainable Procurement

Anna introduced a proposal to broaden the group's remit from procurement to sustainable procurement, using ISO 20400 as a shared guidance framework. It was noted that ISO 20400 is not a certification requirement, but a practical way to structure thinking and activity.

Under this proposal, new focus areas were introduced aligned to ISO 20400:

- Fundamentals & Drivers
- Policy & Strategy
- Enablers
- Procurement Processes

Discussion

There was strong support for broadening the group's focus to sustainable procurement. Members highlighted particular areas of interest, including Scope 3 emissions, Science Based Targets (SBTi), carbon data capture and quality, and improving supply chain mapping and visibility. ISO 20400 was welcomed as a useful common structure that provides consistency while allowing flexibility in how organisations approach sustainable procurement in practice.

Outcome

A poll conducted during the meeting showed *100% support* (11 votes) for changing the group's focus to Sustainable Procurement. There was clear agreement among those present to proceed on this basis. Further feedback will be invited from members unable to attend to ensure any additional views are captured.

Group Structure and Engagement

Sarah outlined a proposal to review the current group structure to improve engagement and effectiveness.

The group currently has around 67 members, with typical attendance of 15–20 people per meeting, and a smaller subset contributing regularly to discussions.

It was noted that the co-chair model has been retired, with thanks recorded to the former co-chairs for their contribution. Alongside this, potential options discussed for improving engagement included:

- introducing a smaller core group meeting quarterly, with at least one in-person meeting per year; and
- retaining two wider-group virtual meetings annually.

Discussion

Members raised a number of considerations in response to the proposal. There were concerns around inclusivity, representation and fairness if a core group were introduced, alongside the risk of disengagement if attendance

were perceived as restricted. Several members felt that engagement challenges were more likely linked to meeting length, timing (particularly afternoon sessions), and overall format and focus, rather than structure. There was strong support for first understanding why members are not engaging before making any structural changes. Suggested alternatives included shorter meetings, more focused or themed sessions, and gathering feedback through a member survey.

Outcome

No immediate changes to the group structure were agreed. The group supported *issuing a member engagement survey* to better understand barriers to participation before revisiting this discussion.

Business Planning for 2026–27

Members discussed priorities for the 2026–27 business plan, drawing on Impact Survey results, pre-read materials and group discussion.

Learning Formats

Members were generally satisfied with the current balance of learning formats, including e-learning, webinars, learning pathways and face-to-face activity. Face-to-face sessions were valued but seen as needing to remain limited due to time, cost and carbon considerations. There was strong support for themed learning series that combine virtual and in-person elements, alongside suggestions to record or stream in-person sessions to improve accessibility and reach.

Key Sustainability Challenges

Across sectors, members highlighted a consistent set of challenges, particularly around carbon reporting and data quality, especially for SMEs. The complexity of Scope 3 emissions measurement remains a significant barrier, alongside inconsistent supplier understanding and limited capability and resources. Members also noted the need to move beyond data collection to turning data into action, and that suppliers often struggle with the complexity of DEFRA carbon calculations, creating a clear need for more practical guidance.

Implications for 2026–27 Activity

Drawing on the preceding discussion, members identified a number of practical ways the School could support organisations and their supply chains more effectively, including:

- developing a practical case study demonstrating how SMEs can capture Scope 3 sustainability data and use insights to drive action;
- expanding carbon and Scope 3 e-learning, building on existing provision
- developing practical guidance to support suppliers in understanding Scope 3 carbon data requirements, including the use of DEFRA methodologies; and
- exploring supplier engagement approaches, including expectations linked to School membership, minimum learning hours for suppliers, and sharing best practice on how partners engage and incentivise their supply chains.

Alongside this, the School highlighted a small number of potential areas already under consideration for 2026–27. These included collaborating with the Irish School on a joint UK SRS / CSRD e-learning module, and exploring opportunities to work with other Leadership Groups on supply chain mapping of critical materials (such as steel and concrete).

Final Observations and Next Steps

Members highlighted the importance of simplifying messages and prioritising asks on the supply chain, to avoid adding unnecessary burden. There was also interest in clearer visibility of partner sustainability priorities, to help suppliers better understand where to focus their efforts.

Outputs from the meeting, including discussion points and ideas generated, will be used to inform development of the 2026–27 business plan, which will be shared with the group in due course.

Any Other Business (AOB)

No additional items were raised.

Close

Sarah thanked members for their contributions and closed the meeting.