



Procurement Strategy 2025 -2027

Introduction – why we need a Procurement Strategy

- A. Successful procurement is a key factor in allowing the Council to deliver its services to local residents in an efficient and effective manner. The works, goods and services we purchase can have a real and lasting effect on people and businesses of the Borough.
- B. We must act in accordance with the statutory best value duty which requires the Council to make arrangements to secure “*continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness*”.
- C. In addition, purchases are made against a background of pressures on budgets and often increasing demands on our services, and therefore the need to find more innovative ways of doing more with less remains ever present and ever pressing.
- D. The Council’s total third-party expenditure for 2023-2024 was nearly £64m, and of this 16% was spent within the Borough on revenue and 4% on capital (see Appendix 2), which is relatively low. This strategy is needed to set the direction for how the procurement function can increase local spend and thereby contribute to the overall financial wellbeing for the Council and the Borough.

- E. The legal landscape in which our procurement operates is changing with the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024 (the “new Procurement regime”), which is intended to bring benefits of increased flexibility within our procurements, while also increasing transparency in the entire procurement cycle, from preliminary market engagement through to contract expiry.
- F. This strategy supports the Council’s Contract Sanding Orders, seeks to align our functions with the new Procurement regime and allows us to make the most of the opportunities offered within them. This Procurement Strategy supports the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Strategy, and will support its key priorities by increasing efficiencies, environmental awareness and introducing greater emphasis on supporting our local communities and businesses.

We will create a modern and sustainable procurement function that makes optimum use of our officers’ expertise, working hand in hand with service areas throughout the entire procurement and contract lifecycle, to deliver best value and continuous improvement whilst supporting the Council’s Corporate Strategy.

Our Procurement and Contract Management Vision

Our Procurement and Contract Management Strategy

The table below sets out our main themes, giving the plans of how this vision can be achieved and how success can be measured:

Theme	How we will achieve this	What success will look like and will be measured
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<p>Upskilling officers by providing quality training in specification writing, contract and relationship management, supporting them to achieve ongoing value for money throughout the lives of all our contracts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure training is provided for all new officers, to make them aware of Contract Standing Orders and the Procurement regime • Create an accessible live list of all public sector frameworks and dynamic markets available and creating understanding of when to use of these where they represent the most expedient route to market • Build on existing relationships to promote an approach to the Procurement and Contract Management team immediately when a need is identified, to allow for seamless and well-planned procurement exercises from beginning to end • Continue to empower client departments with training in specification writing and contract management including the introduction of contract management templates and a formal post-contract review process • Maximise the most of the Procurement and Contract Management team through on-going training and re-directing resource to support delivery and maximise value for money. • Ensuring all officers who are involved in purchasing have completed an internal training course on governance procedures, making them aware of the required procedures for all values of purchases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new e-learning module to be included in the Induction pack for all new officers and rolled out for current officers. • All officers involved in procurement, commissioning and contract management to be provided with enhanced training with numbers to be monitored and officers to be surveyed for their views on the training and how they benefitted. • Contract spend to be monitored against original contract value to show value for money obtained from all contracts.
<p>Modernising our governance procedures, ensuring our processes are robust yet proportionate, allowing for transparency and probity in all procurements, large or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all spend through the Council's payments system to highlight non-compliant spend and work with clients to reduce this • All procurement decisions to be evidence-based, tenders will be scored by a team of suitably qualified officers, reasons for award decisions recorded and detailed feedback given to unsuccessful bidders • Maintain accurate records to allow for Notices to be published and to be accountable for decisions and open to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked reductions in non-compliant spend will increase our best value and our ability to evidence this. • Regular and timely spending reports published on our website will continue to meet our transparency obligations • Reduction in the number of

<p>small</p>	<p>scrutiny and challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage risk proactively by proportionate and relevant due diligence on suppliers before contract award • Consider potential conflicts of interest at the very start of all procurements and throughout the procurement cycle • Preserve the highest ethical standards at all times, in line with the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply Code of Ethics 	<p>procurements based on Exemptions from Contract Standing Orders will improve best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress can be monitored from the starting point set by reports of current spend profile.
<p>Making the most of the resources and expertise within the Procurement and Contract Management team, working closely with service areas to form productive relationships which enable close communication and lead to optimum solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy a 'Business Partner' approach, to be piloted and rolled out as resource and demands permit • Seeking where possible the most advantageous procurement route with an aim for a streamlined process and delivery of the most effective solution • Make the most of the new flexible procedures to design procurements that attract suitable bidders and result in best fit solutions • Ensure all departments are upskilled on commencing tenders with preliminary market engagement, with the Procurement and Contract Management team on board from the outset to support consistency and provide expertise • Work with client departments, allowing them to use their expert knowledge, making sure this knowledge is reflected in carefully constructed specifications which will lead to most advantageous outcomes and solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of purchases and contracts set up without Procurement and Contract Management team's involvement can be a baseline for monitoring improvement in this area. • Feedback from service areas on their views on the 'Business Partner' approach • Data and feedback on preliminary market engagements
<p>Support the life of the Borough, local economy and social value by understanding our</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance social value within the Borough, including where appropriate questions on social value, sustainability, and support for the local economy within the tender criteria • Have regard for the needs of local and SME suppliers in all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With new access to spending reports from the finance system the Procurement and Contract Management team can monitor how much of our spend is with

<p>supplier base and encouraging local suppliers to bid for our work</p>	<p>procurements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider when it might be in the Council's best interests to restrict procurement to the County of Norfolk to ensure local contractors are employed • Ensure we maintain communications with our internal clients, working to base all procurements on the client's requirements, gaining the best outcomes possible for the benefit of the community • Work to become more familiar with local markets, encouraging tender bids from local suppliers and supporting them in delivering optimum solutions • Find new and innovative ways to advertise our opportunities among local suppliers • Work to increase diversity of bids by removing barriers to local SMEs or new entrants to local markets • Develop a 'Selling to/open for business' campaign • Set out in all invitations to tender that we expect bidders to comply with government legislation around swift payments to their supply chain 	<p>local businesses and work with departments to increase this, thus increasing our spend within the Borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and calculate data on other social value metrics • Introduction of increased advertising options
<p>Maintaining a culture of continuous improvement, hearing all points of view and involving all officers in mutual learning and creative thinking around designing the best possible solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting where improvements can be made to streamline processes and create efficiency for the benefit of all • Ensure lessons learned from previous procurements are put into place for new tenders • Explore and be open to opportunities to share expertise and take part in collaborative procurements where these will bring better value or improved services • Maintain the Council's reputation as a buyer by treating all tenderers and suppliers with courtesy and respect 	<p>New KPIs to show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of influenceable spend with compliant/non-compliant contracts % contracts awarded to SMEs % of bids from local suppliers % of tenders including social value in scoring criteria % contracts that meet their performance targets
<p>Making best use of modern technology to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client departments will be empowered to run their own requests for quote by use of a digital platform to be rolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to be put in place to ensure all officers in purchasing departments

<p>enable fast and efficient lower-value procurements while allowing officer resource to be directed at more strategic projects</p>	<p>out on a pilot scheme basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and Contract Management team will have access to all requests for quote on the digital platform to ensure compliance with Contract Standing Orders • Introduce the use of electronic signatures via the Council's digital signature provider • Procurement and Contract Management team will be on hand to support all officers, giving advice to form robust yet proportionate procedures to buy the best possible value while reducing officer time needed for more routine purchases • Modernise contract completion and retention procedures 	<p>have been suitably trained in running their own requests for quotation exercises on the new digital platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor requests for quotations and measure how many are conducted in departments • Measure how many Exemptions from CSOs • Monitor the number of contracts completed via the Council's digital signature provider • Monitor the contract retention procedures being deployed by service areas to ensure centralised access for all relevant officers.
<p>Supporting the Council's Climate Change Strategy and helping all client departments in working towards the Council's Carbon Net Zero target of 2035</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design tenders, where relevant and proportionate, to include quality questions that place sufficient weighting on carbon reduction so as to have an impact on the outcome • Include the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in all tender packs to send a clear message to bidders that we expect them to support our aims and objectives • For specific and identified higher value tenders, request bidders submit their own climate change and/or carbon reduction strategies with their bids • Ensure that, where relevant and proportionate, contracts include clauses on carbon reduction and scope 3 emissions • Manage contracts proactively and monitor supplier's performance in this area to ensure they deliver on any promises made in their tender submissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher value contracts to include quantitative and relevant Key Performance Indicators that will monitor suppliers' performance on environmental issues • Measure how many contracts are let to local suppliers, reducing transport miles within our supply chain • Measure how many tender submissions include plans for carbon reduction within performance of the contract and how many deliver on their promises

Principles and Objectives

The Procurement and Contract Management will be the champion and guardian of promoting and applying the principles and objectives set out within Contract Standing Orders via its strategy set out above:

- The Council does not discriminate against suppliers and shall treat suppliers the same unless a difference between the suppliers justifies different treatment (in which case the Council must take all reasonable steps to ensure it does not put a supplier at an unfair advantage or disadvantage);
- the Council has regard to the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises may face particular barriers to participation and consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced;
- the Council has regard to the National Procurement Policy Statement;
- delivering value for money;
- maximising public benefit;
- sharing information for the purpose of allowing suppliers and others to understand the Council's procurement policies and decisions;
- acting, and being seen to act, with integrity
- supports the Council's Best Value duty;
- supports the delivery of the Corporate Strategy;
- complies with all legal requirements; and
- where relevant and proportionate, delivers Social Value.

Contract Management

We will not 'let and forget' our contracts but will ensure all are monitored by the use of contract management plans and appropriate KPIs. We will do our best to ensure good supplier relationships are maintained to check that all services promised at tender stage are actually delivered.

To support purchasing officers in this we will offer regular contract management training, giving them the tools to do the job of maximising benefits from all supplier contracts. The Procurement and Contract Management team will be on hand to support with managing contracts when required.

We will comply with legislation in publishing contractor performance for contracts over £5m and ensure all spending transparency is up to date.

Conclusion

The above Strategy is designed for our more modern procurement function that will support delivery of the Council's key priorities. It shows how we can provide a service that is efficient and robust yet considerate of client needs, meets statutory requirements but also those of the Borough, and deliver optimum benefits and innovative solutions for the Borough's residents, businesses and visitors.

Appendix 1 Understanding our place in the macro environment



Appendix 2 Spend for 2023-2024

Appendix 1 – Understanding our place in the macro environment

The two models shown below can be used concurrently to gauge categories and current suppliers, thus being able to prepare for any potential difficulties and make the most of our resources by directing them where needed.

Supplier Positioning Model

Segmenting third party expenditure in the way shown below can help us develop sourcing strategies that identify risks and target resources where they would be most efficiently deployed.

 Risk	Bottleneck low value specialist shortage of suppliers or market limitations monopoly suppliers or bespoke specifications Critical to ability to deliver services	Strategic high value specialist market more difficult market or restricted market critical to ability to deliver services can include capital purchases and construction contracts
	Routine low value low business exposure low risk no special quality, safety, reliability or environmental implications many alternative suppliers	Leverage high value many suppliers and healthy competition not likely to be critical to delivery of services
	Value 	

Supplier Prefrencing Model

Understanding how suppliers view us as buyers will help us identify which contracts need particular attention to avoid potential loss of supply or poor delivery. We will reduce these risks can by creating and maintaining constructive interpersonal relationships with these suppliers.

↑ Attractiveness of our account to the supplier	Development Good position Attractive to supplier despite low levels of business, but supplier may believe there is potential to develop business and will be willing to 'go the extra mile' to turn account into Core	Core Best position Supplier sees us as core to their business They will provide good service and be responsive to requests, wanting to establish long-term relationship
	Nuisance Least desirable position Account not valued by supplier Will receive little attention Poor service levels and quality, risk of supplier stopping service	Exploitable Undesirable position Many public sector organisations can be in this position, being regulated and lacking flexibility to use some approaches preferred by the commercial sector Supplier will fulfil contract but provide minimum service
	→ Relative value of our business to the supplier	

Appendix 2 – Spend for 2023-2024

Revenue Total Spend	£30,272,661.12
Revenue Local Spend	£4,844,438.35
Revenue Local Spend (%)	16%

Capital Total Spend	£33,406,118.00
Capital Local Spend	£1,435,010.00
Capital Local Spend (%)	4.30%

(Capital % is low due to the major development focus that that council currently has with c£25m being spent with Lovells Partnership Ltd and Norfolk County Council)