

Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 August 2025

Procurement Strategy 2025-2030

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Summary

This report seeks to introduce and approve the establishment of the 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Committee is asked to note the 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy and provide comments to Cabinet.
- 1.2. The Committee is asked to support the proposal of annual reporting of the deliverables.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. Procurement is a Cabinet function. Subject to approval, the attainment of 'best value', as detailed within the strategy, will support the delivery of not only financial, but also quality and social benefits to all council contracts.

3. Background

- 3.1. Medway Council's 2021-2025 Procurement Strategy was last reviewed at Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 March 2025. Based on success to date and the strategy coming to a natural end, the report sought to close that iteration and for a new strategy to be brought forward in late 2025.
- 3.2. On 24 February 2025 the Procurement Regulations 2024 (PR24) went live, replacing the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Alongside this the Cabinet Office published a National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS), which sets out the UK government's strategic priorities for public procurement and how contracting authorities should align with them. Practically, the PR24 and NPPS are interwoven and provide a level of consistency in terms of our regulative compliance as well as strategic deliverables.

3.3. The NPPS as well as a localised definition of 'best value' sit at the heart of the 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy and the objectives set within seek to deliver the national procurement objectives in a way suited to Medway Council.

3.4. The proposed 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy can be found as Appendix A.

4. Options

4.1. An effective procurement strategy is an important document for any proactive organisation wishing to strategically utilise their buying power and drive economic benefit.

4.2. As the previous strategy has come to a natural end and not having a strategy is not an option, the options revolve around the core of the new strategy.

4.3. Option 1 – strategy with local objectives only.

4.3.1. Establishing a procurement strategy which takes into consideration local/micro considerations only may prove beneficial short-term but runs a high risk of stifling improvement longer-term as it only looks at the needs of Medway Council in isolation, rather than the wider needs of public sector procurement. This option also fails to consider the change in landscape regarding local government reorganisation as well as the fact that a local set of objectives was the approach taken for the 2018-2021 strategy, which was criticised for its failure to address wider implications.

4.4. Option 2 – strategy based on the National Procurement Strategy

4.4.1. The National Procurement Strategy (NPS) was the foundation of the previous strategy. Whilst it was effective, it was formed of 59 objectives with some overlap between outcomes, which made it difficult and resource intensive to monitor and report on. Having so many objectives also, in some instances, diluted success and/or resulted in duplication as many objectives resulted in a single outcome.

4.4.2. The most recent version of the NPS, which has historically been on a 4-year cycle, was published in 2022, meaning the objectives already run the risk of being outdated and do not align with the new procurement regulations. To compound this, there's no indication that a 2026 version will be published, indicating a step-change from this approach nationally.

4.5. Option 3 – strategy based on the National Procurement Policy Statement

4.5.1. The National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) sits alongside the new procurement regulations and sets out the UK government's strategic priorities for public procurement and how contracting authorities should align with them. As an organisation we are required to align with these, and they closely align to most of the local objectives we have already set ourselves. The NPPS is

formed of fewer objectives, yet those within are more tangible in both tracking progress and demonstrable benefits to Medway.

5. Advice and analysis

- 5.1. Based on the above options appraisal, it is proposed that option 3, establishing a procurement strategy based on the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) is approved.

6. Risk management

- 6.1. Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community. Using the following table this section should therefore consider any significant risks arising from your report.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Reputational	Not having a fit for purpose procurement strategy.	Approving the procurement strategy as proposed.	CIII
Reputational	Inability to scrutinise collective procurement decisions.	Approving the procurement strategy as proposed and agreeing annual reporting on progress.	CIII
Financial	Failure to achieve value for money.	Ensuring the approved procurement strategy enables officers to apply a corporately agreed emphasis to achieving value for money.	CII
Social	Inability to provide local benefit through our buying power.	Approving the strategy as proposed which emphasises the delivery of local benefits.	CIII

For risk rating, please refer to the following table (please **retain** table in final report):

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely	I Catastrophic
B Likely	II Major
C Unlikely	III Moderate
D Rare	IV Minor

7. Consultation

7.1. The Head of Category Management has consulted with various officers within the organisation and obtained agreement from both Procurement Board and CMT prior to this juncture. It is important to note that the proposed strategy is based on the NPPS, which supports the delivery of the procurement regulations, and the statement public bodies must align with.

8. Climate change implications

8.1. The proposed strategy has a clear focus on delivering social value, within which climate change is addressed. Due to the breadth of services delivered through the Council, this is currently unquantifiable but will be reported on annually.

9. Financial implications

9.1. The council's procurement strategy supports the Council's attainment of value for money but there are no direct financial implications associated with this decision.

9.2. Financial commitments made after the adoption of the procurement strategy will continue to be subject to internal governance on an individual basis.

10. Legal implications

10.1. There is no legal requirement to have a procurement strategy, however having one allows the organisation to maintain focus on outcomes when considering third-party spend.

10.2. Having a procurement strategy aligned to the NPPS and based on delivering best value, as proposed, is pragmatic.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Procurement Strategy 2025-2030