

Procurement Strategy 2025-2030

1. Foreword

A procurement strategy is an important document for any proactive organisation wishing to strategically utilise their buying power and drive economic benefit. At Medway Council our procurement activities should shape the business and drive economic and organisational benefit by leading by example achieved by strategically utilising our annual third-party expenditure. It's imperative that the organisation can demonstrate the achievement of best value across the whole spend profile but also harness that power to drive wider changes to deliver on its priorities and improve the lives of residents, business and the environment.

The focus of this new strategy is not simply procurement, but how procurement can be positioned as the key strategic stakeholder to drive changes beyond the Councils curtilage and make real lasting changes whilst meeting its duty to deliver best value.

2. Background

To date the Council adopted a procurement strategy with objectives derived from the National Procurement Strategy 2018. This strategy was the first of its kind at Medway and saw our objectives set and monitored against a national suite. We performed well against the well-received strategy, but with an evolving economic climate and new regulations, it is appropriate to revisit the strategy to enable the organisation to dream bigger, to benefit from the new freedoms and turn ambition into outcomes.

Alongside the Procurement Regulations 2024 in February 2025, the government issued the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS). This statutory statement sets out the direction of travel for strategic leaders and key decision-makers to devolve power out to communities and deliver wider policy objectives.

3. National Procurement Policy Statement

The government's priorities for public procurements are set out in the NPPS:

- Kickstart economic growth through:
 - opportunities for small businesses and social enterprises across the country;
 - high quality jobs that offer fair wages and good working conditions;
 - encouraging innovation and the development of new technologies in line with the Industrial Strategy.

- Make Britain a clean energy superpower through:
 - accelerating to net zero, reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with the UK national carbon budget, minimising waste, supporting delivery of clean power by 2030, and promoting the use of green technologies;

- taking account of environmental risks and ensuring suppliers are committed to high environmental standards and protecting natural habitats and biodiversity.
- Take back our streets through:
 - reducing crime by providing support to organisations that strengthen community cohesion, awareness raising and action;
 - encouraging suppliers to recruit from groups that struggle to access employment opportunities.
- Break down barriers to opportunity through:
 - addressing specific skills gaps and facilitating access to training and other development opportunities;
 - removing barriers to entry for young people and under-represented groups, including people with protected characteristics and care leavers.
- Build a National Health Service fit for the future through:
 - supporting good physical and mental health by providing high quality jobs and encouraging suppliers to recruit from economically inactive cohorts.

Achieving value for money will always be the overarching priority in public procurement, and that contracting authorities can deliver value for money by:

- driving economic growth and strengthening supply chains by giving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) a fair chance, creating high quality jobs and championing innovation;
- delivering social and economic value that supports the Government's missions including by working in partnership across organisational boundaries where appropriate; and
- ensuring the right commercial capability and standards are in place to procure and manage contracts effectively and to collaborate with other contracting authorities to deliver best value.

4. Overarching themes for an effective strategy

A procurement strategy does not sit in isolation but rather is a systemic operating system that permeates into all corners of the organisation and defines how we deliver outcomes with purchasing power. Balance and proportionality are important but they cannot stifle ambition and the road to success starts with knowing where are starting from.

This strategy sits within an ecosystem driven by both internal and external sources:

- The One Medway Council Plan
- The Financial, Innovation and Transformation (FIT) Plan
- The Medium-Term Financial Outlook (MTFO)

- The Social Value Policy
- The Procurement Regulations 2024 (PR24)
- The Contract Procedure Rules (CPR)

These documents have been collectively relied upon and are reflected in in both appendix 1 and 2. As these documents evolve, especially the FIT plan and MTFO, we welcome further input from colleagues to reshape our deliverables where appropriate.

5. Best value

When officers and members alike discuss procurement, most have a differing opinion of what best value is. This can be borne from preconceptions through conversation, the performance of previous tenders, from the understanding of service plans, or even macroeconomic factors to name a few. An important foundation for any strategy is therefore not only being mindful of what Best Value is but defining what it means for Medway Council.

The Government's statutory guidance for best value (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities#defining-best-value>) introduces best value as a seven-themed Venn diagram (see below) it sets an important message, that the seven themes are dependent upon one another, and with overlapping priorities they must ultimately work together to achieve 'continuous improvement', which sits at its heart.



The model allows for flexibility to take into account diverse environments to meet local needs. As such this strategy cannot attest for the whole organisation, thus Appendix 1 reflects on the seven themes individually, from a procurement perspective, allowing us to understand how we are performing and in turn and as part of Appendix 2, document how we can improve.

6. Procurement deliverables

At this juncture of the strategy, we've detailed the national agenda (NPPS), our wider internal strategies as well as our approach and attainment of best value. Layering these as the foundation of our procurement strategy, we can now focus on our procurement outcomes and how proportionality within our approach is applied to generate them.

| Procurement deliverables | How it will be achieved |
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| Achieving value for money | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting consistent preliminary market engagement events to understand market appetite and ability to deliver. • Ensuring whole life cost is the primary consideration within all tenders. • Strategically reviewing corporate contracts to achieve economies of scale. |
| Generating opportunity for Medway residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the utilisation and weighting of bespoke social value measures to create local employee and supply chain opportunities. • Working with the voluntary sector to drive local economic benefit to support services. • Exploring how we reinvest in local staff and supply chains. |
| Creating a safer and cleaner place to live | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with colleagues to drive carbon reduction within all third-party activities. • Staying vigilant with the evaluation and eradication of modern slavery • Embedding and weighting sustainable practices for the future of Medway. |
| Encouraging competition and innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued delivery of open, fair and transparent procurement to encourage sustainable competition. • Exploring market solutions through constructive and open engagement. • Providing constructive feedback on all tenders to persuade improvements within future bids. |

7. Operational definition of best value for procurement

How we seamlessly concatenate our procurement outcomes allows us to define 'best value' and in turn a model that, through consultation and collaboration, provides each contract manager an opportunity to deliver best value which works best for their projects within a strategic framework set by the organisation and defined in this strategy.

Best value at Medway means: Fulfilling our procurement deliverables in the most appropriate and sustainable way, which leverages Social Value for increased capacity and a better future for Medway within the resources available.

Our procurement will be ethical, transparent, effective and efficient through strong leadership and governance whilst championing proportionate contract management to ensure our deliverables are met and continuously improved.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Best Value themes and how Medway’s procurement delivers them
- Appendix 2 - NPPS deliverables, Medway’s opening statement and proposed actions
- Appendix 3 – Medway’s Social Value policy

Appendix 1 – Best Value themes and how Medway’s procurement delivers them

| Theme | Description | How Medway Delivers |
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| Continuous improvement | <p>Making arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance and outcomes in relation to the exercise of all functions is a core requirement for achieving best value, and should be done whilst reflecting local priorities.</p> <p>Reflecting on past performance and sharing best practice.</p> | <p>Continuous improvement sits at the fore of procurement activity at Medway. All officers are afforded procurement training and since 2019 our introduction package, for those delivering services, have been introduced to the term ‘Kaizen’, meaning continuous improvement. We work closely with services to ensure their specifications are aligned to service and council plans and that the outcomes are both realistic and challenging.</p> <p>Contract management has a key role here as once awarded, officers must continue to evaluate performance and seek improvement where possible. This process is concluded at various junctures with ‘lessons learnt’ sessions, reflecting on what has/hasn’t worked well so not only are the operational outcomes improved, but so are the processes that support their establishment.</p> <p>Whilst there are pockets of best practice, as an organisation we need to standardise the data we collect and how we use it. We can do this by the standardisation of contract management reporting – whilst work in this area has started, an agreed platform is required to ensure it happens consistently and it is proposed that for this we use the procurement solution, which, from 1 October 2025, will have a module to facilitate this.</p> <p>Colleagues are also exploring the possibility of a ‘contract management champion’ forum, allowing colleagues to work together to discuss contract management issues, how they were resolved and nurture a culture of continuous improvement within our contracts.</p> |
| Leadership | <p>Effective political and administrative leaders who have a clear vision and set of priorities for their area, are key to building local economic growth, social</p> | <p>At the pinnacle of leadership, the organisation refers to members. Couples with officers with statutory roles and the Council plan, our clear procurement processes this has enabled us to instil confidence in the market and organisation alike.</p> <p>The One Medway and FIT plan, which sets out our vision, ambitions and priorities for the period (2024-2028) as well as the values and behaviours that shape what we do,</p> |

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| | <p>cohesion and a healthy local democracy.</p> | <p>is key and sits as the golden thread connecting all services and the way in which we approach the market.</p> <p>Risk is applied proportionately, but we need to be more rigorous in the application of risk management and better reflecting those risks in our tender activities to ensure that, should they materialise, we can vary the contract accordingly. This will curb exemptions and provide continuity.</p> <p>Furthermore, our Council Plan gives us clear direction, we have a Social Value Policy as outlined in Appendix 3 that we need to ensure remains fit for purpose and, where required applying minimum returns if appropriate.</p> |
| <p>Governance</p> | <p>In a well-run council officers and members will have a clear understanding of the democratic mandate as it operates in the organisation.</p> <p>There will be clear and robust governance and scrutiny arrangements in place that are fit for purpose, appropriate to the governance arrangements adopted locally</p> <p>Decision-making processes, within clear schemes of delegation, should be transparent, regularly reviewed, clearly followed and understood, enabling decision-makers to be held to account effectively.</p> | <p>Governance arrangements for all procurement activity is detailed within our Contract Procedure Rules (CPR), last updated in 2022. The CPRs are clear on our governance structure, what needs to be progressed when, who is making what decision when, where and why.</p> <p>Training is provided to colleagues to equip them to meet these challenges and deliver consistency through the use of templates, supporting guidance and one on one support through a standardised application process and governance route that ensures all meaningful options are considered, discussed and addressed to ensure proper scrutiny and decision making.</p> <p>Our Procurement Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approves all medium risk procurements or acts as the gateway to cabinet for all key decisions. Procurement Board , which is a cross-directorate board with statutory officer representation has evolved over time and has become an integral strategic function scrutinising all decisions to ensure best value is achieved. • annually reviews termed contracts, to ensure they remain fit for purpose and continue to deliver. Contract managers are asked to propose contractual |

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| | | <p>improvement where practical, further illustrating how continuous improvement is at the core of what we do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is comprised of decision makers, so we are clear that what is being approved has clear cross-directorate input and agreement prior to awarding contracts. When signing off/entering into a contract there is a clear approval process, supported by the employee scheme of delegation also. |
| Culture | <p>Culture describes how the established governance procedures and leadership are exercised in practice, whether they are respected by the letter or in spirit.</p> <p>The culture of a local authority is determined by an agreed set of shared values, ethics and beliefs, how decisions are made, as well as how elected members and officers behave, interact and carry out their roles.</p> | <p>A culture of collaborative working is encouraged and fostered within well-established governance and process structures that are fairly and consistently adhered to and tailored to meet our needs.</p> <p>Having operated for over a decade now, our advice and support whilst consistent from a compliance and regulatory perspective has been tailored to services where appropriate. What this has set is working environment supported by constructive challenge meaning all officers can work in a safe and productive environment.</p> <p>We have significant expanded market engagement (where we parade our upcoming need to the market), illustrating confidence in our approach and confidence in scrutiny to deliver the most with what we have.</p> <p>Our templates and supporting processes are all easily obtainable to colleagues, we welcome and always consider wider services reviewing these and proposing new ways of working and challenging existing practices.</p> <p>Our decision makers promote a culture of welcoming alternative views and our officers are confident in responding to scrutiny.</p> |
| Use of resources | <p>An authority must have in place and properly deploy an effective internal control environment to safeguard the use of resources,</p> | <p>The procurement team works closely with all services to provide clarity on our desired outcomes that match subsequent awards which are realistic, affordable and manageable.</p> |

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| | <p>and clear and effective processes to secure value for money.</p> | <p>Through market engagement we better define outcomes, explore alternative delivery models and our options appraisal consider how we approach the market to better support local SME and VCSEs.</p> <p>Our decision making/governance boards are support by mandatory internal consultees prior to an award and via lifetime contract management to ensure that the original commitment is being delivered and will continue to be.</p> <p>Our public contracts register (allowing external parties to see our contractual landscape) and a Forward Procurement Plan (FPP) allowing us to manage our resources and 'group' contracts, where possible to generate economies of scale and reduce resources pressures where possible.</p> |
| <p>Service Delivery</p> | <p>Well-run local services are customer- and citizen-focused, and meet the needs of diverse communities. They should improve outcomes for the people who use them and achieve the best balance of cost and quality (having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness).</p> | <p>Procurement supports the delivery of various service plans by enabling delivery of economic, efficient and effective outcomes.</p> <p>Through our Social Value policy, we target key outcomes aimed at supporting and providing opportunity to the residents of Medway. Our approach means bidders make contractually binding Social Value commitments measured by KPIs and monitored during the contractual term.</p> <p>We require all of our report authors to have completed the Government Commercial College 'foundation contract management' training prior to presenting a report for approval. This change was important as it put the focus of contract management at the start of the project, ultimately ensuring the outcomes were achievable yet challenging and that the correct mechanisms were in place to monitor them during the term of any contract.</p> |
| <p>Partnerships & Community engagement</p> | <p>Authorities should have a clear understanding of and focus on the benefits that can be gained by effective collaborative working with local partners and</p> | <p>Whilst services work much more closely with the community they are creating provision for, procurement continues to emphasise and facilitate the importance of early market engagement to ensure our proposed approach to the market is fit for purpose and deliverable by those we expect to bid.</p> |

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| | <p>community engagement. Partnerships can maximise opportunities for sharing resources, achieving outcomes and creating a more joined-up offer that meets the needs of residents and local service users. Stronger and more effective partnerships can also lead to better community engagement, for example working through partners to engage more effectively.</p> | <p>For the past few years and as a part of the 21-25 procurement strategy a focus was on social value and how we can realise additional benefits for the local economy through the contracts we award. We've previously localised our key social value outcomes using the Social Value TOMs and seek to directorate and even departmentalise those in the coming years.</p> <p>Most notably for the 23-24 financial year over £30m was committed as social value during the term of awarded contracts and a further £10m for the 24-25 financial year.</p> <p>The majority of this spend has been achieved by local supply chains and local employment, both with direct benefits to Medway. It's important to note though that the contract manager must continue to monitor what's being delivered to ensure the original commitment are realised.</p> |
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Appendix 2 - NPPS deliverables, Medway's opening statement and proposed actions

1. Theme: Economic growth

Overarching priority: Contracting authorities should drive economic growth and strengthen supply chains by giving SMEs and VCSEs a fair chance at public contracts, creating high quality jobs and championing innovation.

| Priority | NPPS supporting statement | Opening Council statement | Council proposed action(s) |
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| Maximise procurement spend with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs). | Small businesses and social enterprises are more likely to generate diverse and thriving local economies, creating jobs and economic growth. Increasing procurement spend with these suppliers is a national priority to drive economic growth. This Government wants to maximise every opportunity for these suppliers by opening up competition in public contracts and removing the barriers to participation they face, as set out in section 12(4) of the Act. | <p>The Council shall actively seek SME and VCSE engagement in our procurement processes, balancing several evaluation factors e.g. proximity, cost, environmental factors and social value.</p> <p>Whilst some services require local delivery, other areas e.g. building works could be provided by more distant operators, but with local delivery chains.</p> <p>Our ability and opportunities to work with VCSEs also needs further exploration and we must explore opportunities to build our relationship and opportunities to work with VCSEs as strategic partners for delivery.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to engage, track and improve the Council's strategic working relationship with SMEs and the voluntary sector. 2. Set evaluation criteria aimed at encouraging SMEs and the voluntary sector whilst not disadvantaging other sectors. |
| Ensure their suppliers are committed to providing high quality jobs, safe and healthy working conditions, fair pay, opportunity and progression for workers. | Suppliers that benefit from taxpayers' money should be expected to deliver public contracts in a way that benefits the country, delivering growth and fairer outcomes for all. Good jobs and a high-skilled workforce will help to drive growth and productivity, so public | <p>We need encourage and facilitate high quality employment, both academic and vocational skills based.</p> <p>We will develop SMART measures which have a strong focus and emphasis on social value, weighted to</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include the importance of sustainability in supply chains within our tenders and evaluate accordingly. 2. Continue developing SMART measures (such |

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| | <p>contracts should consider fair working conditions, appropriate pay, progression and provision of skills opportunities throughout the commercial lifecycle.</p> | <p>development of skills, retention of graduates in local employment and high-quality jobs.</p> | <p>as provide meaningful further education opportunities and paying the national living wage) that support the attainment and sustainability of local employment.</p> |
| <p>Work collaboratively across policy, delivery and commercial functions to develop a ‘pro-innovation mindset’, defining challenges to solve rather than solutions to buy, and engaging early with the market to consider innovative products and services.</p> | <p>Innovation is key to driving economic growth and raising productivity and is an important strand of the Government’s Industrial Strategy. Procuring innovative solutions can both improve public sector performance and provide revenue for innovative UK companies by supporting the pull-through and adoption of new technologies. Early market engagement is critical in supporting the development of innovative solutions and allows contracting authorities to understand the maturity of potential solutions, as well as identifying risks and challenges.</p> | <p>We have already undertaken a step change towards output-based specifications and started to look holistically at our procurement activity to harness greater economies of scale.</p> <p>We need to embrace the new regulations and preliminary market engagement to broaden our awareness and ask. For example, are there more innovative ways in delivering our primary outputs that we may also gain secondary and tertiary outputs.</p> <p>Risk management is key in this area, so a supportive governance process reflective of proposals and perceived benefits is important</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consistently undertake preliminary market engagement on all appropriate projects with an emphasis on engaging SMEs and the voluntary sector. 2. Support the organisation’s approach to risk management and ensure it’s being consistently applied to all contracts. |

2. Theme - Delivering social and economic value

Overarching priority: Contracting authorities should deliver social and economic value that supports the Government’s missions including by working in partnership across organisational boundaries.

| Priority | NPPS supporting statement | Opening Council statement | Council proposed action(s) |
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| <p>Secure social and economic value which supports delivery of the national missions taking into account priorities in local and regional economic growth plans (where available) and working in partnership with other contracting authorities, the private sector and civil society in the exercise of their procurement functions. This includes the mission aims and outcomes outlined at the beginning of the Statement.</p> | <p>In carrying out a procurement covered by the Act, a contracting authority must have regard to the importance of maximising public benefit. Applying social and economic value requirements in procurement can have a significantly positive impact by broadening the public benefits that are delivered through the life of the contract. By focusing on these outcomes throughout the commercial lifecycle and by co-designing requirements with customers, front line workers and communities, contracting authorities can achieve greater social and economic value benefits for the people and places that most need them, including creating opportunities in areas of deprivation.</p> | <p>Social value measures are included in all tenders.</p> <p>We will better define Social Value by moving away from a one size fits all approach to a more nuanced directorate-based approach.</p> <p>All relevant officers of must now complete the government commercial college’s contract management training, leading to increased accountability through the supply chain.</p> <p>Social Value measures will be collaboratively identified with directorates/ services, reflecting that social value deliverables for C&A will be slightly different to regeneration projects.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop directorate specific social value outcomes that are measured in all tenders. 2. Champion the attainment of contract management certification and proper application within all corporate contracts. |
| <p>Ensure their suppliers are actively working to: tackle bribery, corruption, fraud, modern slavery and human rights violations,</p> | <p>The Government expects the highest standards of integrity, ethical conduct and environmental sustainability in business practices from suppliers delivering public contracts. This includes the procurement of food; the</p> | <p>Prior to the award of any contract officers will conduct due diligence, effectively clarifying any anomalies with prospective suppliers that may mean they are unsuitable to contract with. To ensure we maintain the highest</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a system that mandates periodic checking of supplier eligibility post award for better decision making. Suppliers failing these |

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| <p>environmental impact (including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimising waste in their operations); comply with their tax, employment law and other legal obligations, and stamp out late payment of invoices in their supply chains.</p> | <p>Government wants to increase the proportion of food purchased across the public sector that is certified to higher environmental standards and which high-quality producers, including local suppliers, are well placed to meet.</p> | <p>levels of diligence, on all tenders we use the government’s standard selection questionnaire. This ensures that all national requirements are addressed and local needs (such as insurance levels) and accreditations are consistently obtained and checked.</p> <p>However, to expand our reach we need to put the same or a similar level of scrutiny on their supply chain, not simply requesting the information, but working towards proportionate validation.</p> <p>We will increase periodic diligence to ensure compliance through the award period.</p> <p>The council declared a climate emergency in April 2019 and thus we will require and scrutinise our prospective partners Carbon Reduction Plans (CRP) for those requiring one.</p> | <p>subsequent checks will have their contracts terminated.</p> <p>2. Work with colleagues to implement a proportionate approach to checking Carbon Reduction Plans.</p> |
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3. Theme - Building commercial capability to deliver value for money and stronger outcomes

Overarching priority: Contracting authorities should ensure the right commercial capability and standards are in place to procure and manage contracts effectively and to collaborate with other contracting authorities to deliver best value.

| Priority | NPPS supporting statement | Opening Council statement | Council proposed action(s) |
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| <p>Apply commercial best practice including the principles and policies in the Government’s Playbook series (where appropriate) and make decisions based on value for money and service quality when assessing delivery models and outsourcing decisions.</p> | <p>Value for money will be achieved if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public sector organisations normally acquire goods and services through fair and open competition; • efficient and effective policies and processes are in place to manage commercial delivery with a focus on delivering sustainable, long-term outcomes; and • the individuals undertaking the procurement and managing the contract have the right level of capability, skills and expertise to make informed decisions. <p>Government guidance (e.g. the Commercial Playbook series) emphasises the importance of partnership across organisations and sectors to effectively manage markets and strengthen supply chains. This collaborative approach, underpinned by principles like outcome-based delivery and early supplier engagement, helps assess market health, address</p> | <p>The councils open and transparent approach to procurement has instilled confidence with the market resulting in a continuously expanding supplier base commonly bidding for contracts.</p> <p>Our contracts consider whole life benefit and future needs. Officers continually explore how to improve service with the resources they have.</p> <p>Our staff are well trained, we often explore and roll our government approved programmes to support the workforce in various aspects of procurement. For example, to support the effective roll out of the Procurement Regulations officers at all junctures of the procurement cycle were required to complete some form of training to assist their knowledge and prepare. More recently contract management training has been mandated for new projects to ensure contract management, and long-term benefits are embedded upfront.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the working principles of the sourcing playbook within Council procurement documentation. 2. Create and champion a training programme for officers to undertake the sourcing playbook training courses, hosted by the government’s commercial function. |

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| | <p>weaknesses, and promote suitable, competitive environments that deliver value for money. The Commercial Playbook series also sets out key principles, best practice, and guidance on sourcing services and assets. The Playbooks on Sourcing, Construction, Digital Data and Technology, and Consultancy provide sector-specific guidance.</p> | <p>At the heart of our tenders sits the aspiration for delivering value for money as well as wider council objectives. The Government's sourcing playbook forms a larger part of what we do and we plan to make better use of this going forwards, notably the playbook on sourcing initially and wider ones when the foundation is set.</p> | |
| <p>Benchmark their organisational capability and workforce capacity to ensure they have the appropriate procurement and contract management skills and capacity necessary to deliver value for money.</p> | <p>To support commercial capability, the Government has provided a programme of free training to procurement teams on the new flexibilities in the Act as well as training on contract management skills. Capability in contracting authorities should go beyond legal compliance with the Act, to also include how the new flexibilities can be used to deliver greater efficiency, better commercial outcomes, and mission delivery. New ways of working may be needed across contracting authorities to understand how procurement can contribute to local outcomes and priorities, adopting a whole organisation approach so that policy and strategy engage earlier with commercial teams. There are also a number of professional standards against which contracting authorities can choose to benchmark their commercial capability including the Commercial Continuous Improvement</p> | <p>The training provided by the Government has thus far had positive impact within the organisation and it's noted there are many further facets that can be explored. The consideration here is merging the roles and responsibilities and therefore skillset of officer under the previous regulations against what is expected under the Procurement Regulations 2024. In particular we need to remain mindful that commercial skills such as negotiation and dialogue were historically stemmed through a lack of use, but the new regulations permit their use more widely. This creates an inevitable knowledge and confidence gap between regulation which officers need further practical application of.</p> <p>A key theme within the team is how contract management is developed</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to actively engage in the Central Buying Consortium sessions to share and learn from other procurement functions. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Currently partaking in contract management, LGR, procurement leadership, risk management. 2. Build the new procurement system around lessons learnt and the future of the procurement function with enhanced functionality and decision-making tools. |

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| | <p>Assessment Framework produced by the Government Commercial Function with NHS England, and the National Procurement Strategy Toolkit produced by the Local Government Association. This includes mitigating supply chain and national security risks by ensuring appropriate controls are in place such as the Cyber Essentials standard for cyber security, and by following the Government Security Function's guidance on Tackling Security Risk in Government Supply Chains.</p> | <p>into a proactive activity rather than reactive, although it's accepted that when things go wrong the activities remain reactive. Proactive contract management therefore looks at the future and considers how we can prepare ourselves or pre-emptively mitigate risk and/or have controls in place if things do go wrong. The team uses a common system with all procurement functions in Kent, which is to change supplier in October 2025, the team is approaching this system anew, considering what gripes the organisation has with the current and how we can automate functions where possible to ensure the organisation always has the right information at its disposal.</p> <p>Once this system goes live and the standardised data is available, we can then explore how we utilise the continuous improvement framework as a potential cornerstone of governance for future decision making and scrutiny to enable officers and members alike a comparative picture of the national landscape rather than our services in isolation.</p> | |
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| <p>Use collaborative procurement agreements, where appropriate for the requirement and the market, to ensure value for money (as long as those agreements are operating in accordance with relevant procurement legislation and good practice).</p> | <p>Contracting authorities can often ensure value for money by using collaborative procurement arrangements established by public sector centralised procurement authorities such as the Crown Commercial Service. These agreements aggregate spend for common goods and services and enable selected suppliers to be contracted quickly on agreed terms and with competitive maximum pricing. However, there are currently too many similar agreements across the public sector, leading to unnecessary transactional costs for suppliers and confusion for contracting authorities. In addition, some agreements are operated by private companies not in accordance with procurement legislation. Contracting authorities should ensure any collaborative arrangements they use are transparent about the provider's ownership and the fees they charge and that this represents good value for money when compared to other agreements.</p> | <p>When a need arises, we adopt an options hierarchy, operationally this means we explore solutions which already exist to meet our need prior to approaching the open market. What this allows us to do is focus time and resources on the outcome rather than the procurement activity itself. It should be noted however that although frameworks exist, they may not be appropriate and therefore time and resource go into appraising pre-existing solutions, most notably with most benefit to recurring needs, such as IT systems or outdoor play equipment.</p> <p>By using frameworks that exist we don't only cut our own procurement cost, but also that of our supplier base as they are pre-vetted. For certain requirements i.e. statutory requirements, a preferred option may also be establishing our own requirement, this balances the trade-off between outsourcing, risk, and supplier relationship management to create a sustainable long-term solution.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularly review our options hierarchy and refine where necessary. 2. Continue analysing our spend data to firstly irradicate spot purchasing where possible and then to implement frameworks, where practical, to support organisational need. |
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Appendix 3 – Social Value Policy

Social Value is an important outcome from Medway Council’s procurement activities and as such, to achieve this the Council has adopted the national TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) from the Social Value Portal as the foundation for realising Social Value.

The TOMs are applied to all applicable tenders through consultation with the lead officer to ensure they are fit for purpose, appropriate as per the respective service plan, and manageable. At the point of award, the commitments made during the tender stage are transposed into KPIs within the winning bidder’s contract and subsequently monitored through the life of the contract.

Whilst the bedrock of the TOMs is a financial proxy, this approach allows officers to hold the contractor to account to ensure perceived and offered benefits are realised and delivered during the contract.

Unless modified by the service area, the following Social Values are applied to all tenders:

| Theme | Outcomes | Measures | Standard Units |
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| Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment | More local people in employment | No. of local direct employees (FTE) hired or retained (for re-tendered contracts) on contract for one year or the whole duration of the contract, whichever is shorter | No. people FTE |
| Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment | More local people in employment | Percentage of local employees (FTE) on contract | % |
| Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment | Improved skills | No. of staff hours spent on local school and college visits e.g. delivering careers talks, curriculum support, literacy support, safety talks (including preparation time) | No. staff hours |
| Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment | Improved skills | No. of weeks of apprenticeships on the contract that have either been completed during the year, or that will be supported by the organisation until completion in the following years - Level 2,3, or 4+ | No. weeks |
| Growth: Supporting Growth of Responsible Regional Business | More opportunities for local MSMEs and VCSEs | Total amount (£) and % spent in LOCAL supply chain through the contract | £ |
| Growth: Supporting Growth of Responsible Regional Business | More opportunities for local MSMEs and VCSEs | Meet the buyer' events held to highlight local supply chain opportunities | £ invested including staff time |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Growth: Supporting Growth of Responsible Regional Business | Social Value embedded in the supply chain | Percentage of contracts with the supply chain on which Social Value commitments, measurement and monitoring are required | % |
| Social: Healthier, Safer and more Resilient Communities | Creating a healthier community | Initiatives taken or supported to engage people in health interventions (e.g. stop smoking, obesity, alcoholism, drugs, etc.) or wellbeing initiatives in the community, including physical activities for adults and children | £ invested including staff time |
| Environment: Decarbonising and Safeguarding our World | Carbon emissions are reduced | Savings in CO2 emissions on contract achieved through de-carbonisation (specify how these are to be achieved) | Tonnes CO2e |
| Environment: Decarbonising and Safeguarding our World | Sustainable Procurement is promoted | Percentage of procurement contracts that includes sustainable procurement commitments or other relevant requirements and certifications (e.g. to use local produce, reduce food waste, and keep resources in circulation longer.) | % of contracts |
| Innovation: Promoting Social Innovation | Social innovation to create local skills and employment | Innovative measures to promote local skills and employment to be delivered on the contract - these could be e.g. co-designed with stakeholders or communities, or aiming at delivering benefits while minimising carbon footprint from initiatives, etc. | £ invested - including staff time and materials, equipment or other resources |