

## **Cabinet**

**22 September 2026**

### **Procurement Strategy 2025-2030 Update Report**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Vince Maple, Leader of the Council

Report from: Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director for Legal and Governance

Author: Michael Kelly, Head of Category Management

#### **Summary**

This report summarises the performance of the first year of the 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy.

The report was considered by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 August 2026 and the minutes of this are set out in section 7 of this report.

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. The Cabinet is requested to note the comments of the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in section 7 of the report.
- 1.2. The Cabinet is requested to note the progress made to date and approve the continuation of the Procurement Strategy actions, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

#### **2. Suggested reasons for decisions**

- 2.1. The Procurement Strategy aligns to both internal ambitions and the national procurement statement. Continuation of the Strategy actions allows the organisation to measure and track progress in key areas of procurement.

#### **3. Budget and policy framework**

- 3.1. Procurement is a Cabinet function. The attainment of 'best value', as detailed within the original strategy, supports the delivery of not only financial, but also quality and social benefits to all council contracts.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1. The 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy was approved at Cabinet in September 2025 under decision number 138/2025.
- 4.2. A good level of progress has been made against the actions set and Appendix A details that as well as what else can be done.

- 4.3. The organisation must remain cognisant of Local Government Reorganisation and consider how far resource intensive actions are progressed if their perceived benefits are not guaranteed.

## 5. Options

- 5.1. The options that are open for Cabinet's consideration are:
- 5.2. Option 1 - note the progress made to date and approve the continuation as detailed in Appendix A.
- 5.3. The proposal outlined within Appendix A is a true reflection of what has been delivered and is a proportionate response to what would genuinely benefit Medway prior to vesting day of the new North Kent Authority. Whilst it may be aspirational to achieve more in the transitional period, it may be without benefit or not a consideration of the North Kent Authority and in turn detract resources from 'safe and legal' LGR preparations.
- 5.4. Option 2 – note the progress made to date yet revise some of the actions detailed within Appendix A.
- 5.5. Appendix A has been populated from the perspective of a proportionate response to Local Government Reorganisation. The actions are proportionately challenging in the backdrop of what could be recorded and achieved in Medway Council's remaining tenure. That being so, Members may wish to see alternations to the proposals, in which case they would be welcome for discussion.
- 5.6. Any revision must be offset with the impact that would have on Local Government Reorganisation planning as well as the benefit it would yield for Medway Council.

## 6. Advice and analysis

- 6.1. Based on the above options appraisal, it is proposed that option 1, is approved.

## 7. Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1. The report was considered by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 August 2026, the comments of which are set out below.
- 7.2. **Discussion:**
- 7.3. The Head of Category Management introduced the report. He highlighted the positive progress made in the first year of the strategy and noted the resources required to meet the challenge of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) over the period.
- 7.4. The following issues were discussed:

- 7.5. LGR – The Committee discussed the effect of LGR in relation to procurement, it was asked whether the Council was giving up on achieving its targets in response to LGR. The Head of Category Management stated that challenging targets had been included in the strategy and progress had been positive. It was not a case of reducing those ambitious goals but to consider what was achievable prior to the completion of the transitional period whilst solidifying the current approach.
- 7.6. It was asked if some contracts were prioritised for contract management in response to the additional resources required to prepare for LGR. The Head of Category Management stated that the Council managed resources to reach its targets but the full value may be realised after vesting day. All high-risk activity required procurement training and clear KPIs as part of the management of the contract.
- 7.7. Potential savings – in response to a question what savings were deliverable prior to vesting day, the Head of Category Management stated that procurement was cyclical in nature, so some potential contracts might not be renewed prior to vesting day, however the Council would seek opportunities wherever possible.
- 7.8. Promoting the local economy – it was asked what the service was doing to promote job opportunities and providers in the local community. The Head of Category Management stated that he continued to consider a broad spectrum of opportunities to deliver best value.
- 7.9. Training – a Member welcomed the number of staff gaining category management qualifications, she asked whether there was a target to support this welcome development. The Head of Category Management stated that the training was hosted by a government commercial function and the council was exploring how it could champion further take up of the available training. There was positive interest and the training was helpful to the Council in achieving its procurement goals.
- 7.10. Social Value – it was asked if social value elements of contracts were independently assessed and what benefits had been delivered. The Head of Category Management stated that Council approached the market with identified outcomes which were evaluated individually. Those metrics were tracked and around £30m of benefit had been provided in local employments and supply chains.
- 7.11. **Decision:**
- The Committee noted the year 1 update within Appendix A and provided comments to Cabinet.

## 8. Risk management

| Risk         | Description                                                      | Action to avoid or mitigate risk                                                                                                        | Risk rating |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Reputational | Not having a fit for purpose or delivering procurement strategy. | Approving the procurement strategy update as proposed.                                                                                  | C3          |
| Reputational | Inability to scrutinise collective procurement decisions.        | Approving the procurement strategy as proposed and agreeing annual reporting on progress.                                               | C3          |
| Financial    | Failure to achieve value for money.                              | Ensuring the approved procurement strategy update enables officers to apply a corporately agreed emphasis to achieving value for money. | C2          |
| Social       | Inability to provide local benefit through our buying power.     | Approving the strategy update as proposed which emphasises the delivery of local benefits.                                              | C3          |

For risk rating, please refer to the following table:

| Likelihood                                        | Impact:                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| A Very likely<br>B Likely<br>C Unlikely<br>D Rare | 1 Critical<br>2 Major<br>3 Moderate<br>4 Minor |

## 9. Consultation

- 9.1. The Procurement Strategy actions naturally mandated a varying level of consultation with colleagues both in and out of the organisation to support both progress made as well as that to come.

## 10. Climate change implications

- 10.1. The proposed strategy continues to have a clear focus on delivering social value, within which climate change is addressed.

## 11. Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 11.1. Following the announcement of the pause on the 7 September 2026 officers will monitor the on-going situation and will consider any relevant impacts as they arise. That being so and mindful the announcement was that of a pause only, the organisation must remain cognisant of how far resource intensive actions are progressed if their perceived benefits are not guaranteed.
- 11.2. Appendix A has been populated from the perspective of a proportionate response to Local Government Reorganisation. The actions are proportionately challenging in the backdrop of what could be recorded and achieved in Medway Council's remaining tenure. That being so, Members may wish to see alternations to the proposals, in which case they would be welcome for discussion.
- 11.3. Any revision must be offset with the impact that would have on Local Government Reorganisation planning as well as the benefit it would yield for Medway Council.

## 12. Financial implications

- 12.1. 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.
- 12.2. Financial commitments made after the annual update to the procurement strategy will continue to be subject to internal governance on an individual basis.

## 13. Legal implications

- 13.1. 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.
- 13.2. Appendix A has no legal implications associated to its continued delivery.

### Lead officer contact

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### Appendices

Appendix A – Procurement Strategy Actions Update 2026

### Background papers

None