

# **Procurement Strategy**

# Refresh 2023

New Forest District is a unique and special place, to live, work, visit and enjoy

# **Our Procurement Strategy aims to:**

explore and realise the Quality, Service and Value for Money offering from our suppliers to support and improve the Councils service provision to our residents and businesses. We will..

- Challenge the "as is" through creativity and innovation
- Operate within the legal framework set by UK Government
- Procure to protect the environment
- Encourage local & regional businesses to bid for opportunities
- Ensure fairness and clarity in the sourcing of suppliers
- Make it easy for businesses to interact with the Council

# **Our Procurement Guiding Principles are:**



You can find out more about our Procurement process at;

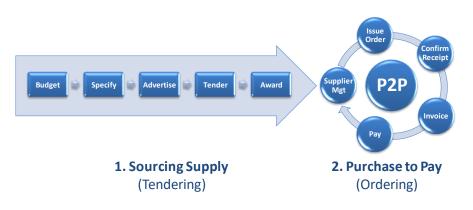
https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/942/Supplying-the-council

# 1. What is Procurement

Procurement is about making effective commercial choices in the process of acquiring works, goods and services from suppliers within a pre-agreed financial budget. The process starts from the identification of need through to the end of a service provision or the end of a product's useful life.

The Procurement Process is made up of 2 distinct elements:

- 1) Sourcing Supply to establish approved suppliers via a competitive quotation or tender depending on the contract value
- 2) Purchase to Pay process covering the ordering, receipt, invoice processing and payment for works, goods and services.



# The Procurement Process

# 2. Why we need a Procurement Strategy

#### • To set out the Corporate direction of travel for Procurement:

The Procurement Strategy sets out the major priorities, objectives and improvement goals for Procurement across the Council whilst ensuring compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR2015) set by the UK Government <sup>1</sup>

• **To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan:** The Procurement Process has a direct impact on the achievement of the Council's goals in relation to delivering value for money, improving sustainability and acting transparently.

Procurement is a key component of the Corporate Plan, where our procurement goals include;

- o identifying new and innovative methods of procuring services
- producing more flexible contracts
- o smarter buying taking environment into account

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Procurement Bill (2022) is nearing completion of its passage through Parliament. When it achieves Royal Assent, the new guidance will be reviewed against this Strategy.

#### • To maximise effectiveness of our spending power:

The effectiveness of our Procurement decisions has a direct impact on;

- New Forest District Council's budget and Council Tax levels
- The quality and cost of services to the people of the district
- o Corporate and service objectives

## 3. The Council's Procurement mission

We will be **ambitious, innovative and customer focused** on how we improve the outcomes of our procurement projects to support the delivery of services to our community. We will be **financially responsible** with the public funds made available to us to procure works, goods and services. We will be **collaborative** in our working, and work with others to represent the best interests of our unique and special place. We will be **open and transparent** in our approach and with our plans to deliver our aims and priorities.

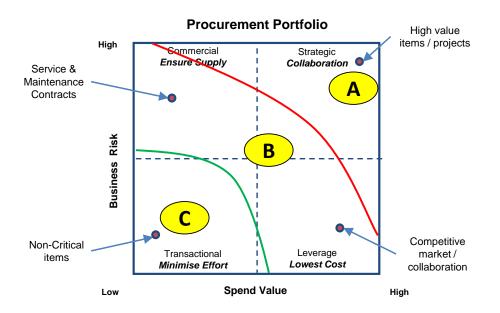
## New Forest District is a unique and special place, to live, work, visit and enjoy.

Procurement should be seen in the context of the Council's overall vision, priorities and objectives as set out in our Corporate Plan<u>http://www.newforest.gov.uk/corporateplan</u>

## 4. Use of Pareto ABC for Procurement Analysis and Planning

#### • Pareto ABC spend grouping

We consider different approaches for each procurement project based on a risk/value model to define our approach under strategic, commercial, leverage and transactional themes. Typically pareto ABC analysis is used as a means to target resource to the right place and proitise risk versus value contracts as shown in the diagram below



- A Class
- Procurement focus
- Contract Mgt
- Tenders > £50k+
- Collaborate

#### **B** Class

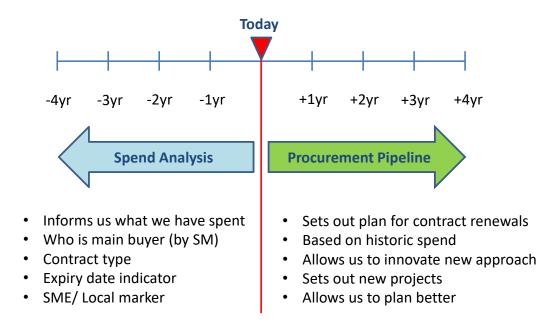
- Devolve to Service
- Use Frameworks
- eRFQ < £50k
- Purchase Order

#### C Class

- Devolve to Service
- E-Catalogues (EGPC)
- Local price challenge
- GPC Mastercard

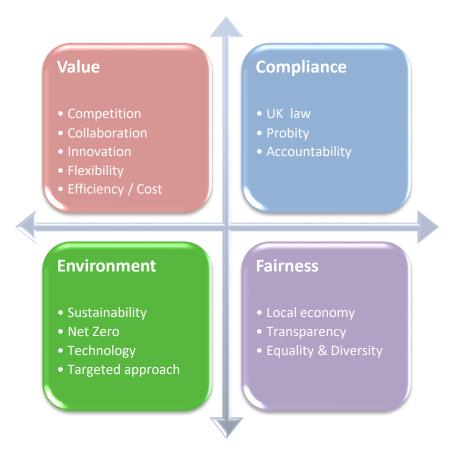
#### • Spend Analysis to inform the Procurement Pipeline

We will use Spend Analysis techniques to inform us of future Procurement Pipeline projects to ensure we improve our contract management activity. The pipeline will allow us to interact with NFDC Service Managers (SM) and the supply market earlier to understand the latest offerings and enhance the planning of our opportunities and tendering programmes.



# 5. Procurement Guiding Principles

The guiding principles below form the key elements of the Council's Procurement Strategy.



The following sections of the Strategy explain **the objectives** of each of the above procurement principles, the **improvement goals** the Council will promote within each area and an **action plan** timescale.

The Guiding Principles set out in this strategy apply to a) the AS IS business as usual Procurement to support day to day council services and b) the TO BE future state as set out in the Councils business transformation programme through improvement goals.

# Definition: Objective, Improvement Goals and Action Plan

The **Objectives** are the main improvement "themes" within each of the **4 Guiding Principles**.

The Improvement Goals are the specific elements of the action plan to deliver the objectives.

The Action Plan is the timeline by which we plan to deliver the improvement goals of the strategy.



# 5.1 Value

In order to achieve the best value for money and to encourage **competition** from the relevant supply markets, Officers working closely with the Procurement Team use the Council's e-business portal to advertise procurement opportunities. <u>https://sebp.due-north.com</u>

The Council encourages **collaboration** both within the Council and with other regional local authorities to stimulate **innovation** from our suppliers. This helps improve customer service levels, delivers better value and enhances quality.

When inviting quotations or tenders from potential suppliers our primary focus is on the outcome or end result required. This encourages **flexibility** in the approach taken by suppliers to achieve our goals.

Value Objectives	Improvement Goals	Action Plan
Competition:	<b>Spend Analysis:</b> Continue to improve our records of supplier's master file to record supplier size, locality, spend category, contract type (National, Regional, Local) and report savings achieved through the procurement sourcing process. Use pareto ABC modelling to tailor the procurement approach to best suit the needs of the Councils customers through our supply chain.	In Place
	<b>Procurement Pipeline:</b> Improve communication of planned procurement by maintaining a plan of forthcoming tenders / contract opportunities (the Procurement Pipeline). To cover both multi-service corporate-wide expenditure and planned specialist service-based contracts.	In place
	To be publicly available by industry sector via the Council's website.	Apr25
	<b>e-Business:</b> Maximise use of e-tendering and simplify communication between the Council and Suppliers whilst maintaining fully auditable processes.	In Place
Collaboration:	<b>Organisation:</b> Utilise the centre led procurement organisation to coordinate a consistent and corporate-wide approach to procurement.	In place
	<b>Work Together:</b> Both in-house and regionally with town & parish councils and other local authorities to identify collaborative opportunities.	Ongoing
	<b>Establish Local &amp; Regional Frameworks:</b> The Council will further develop a range of Framework Agreements with local and regional suppliers to provide a reactive and consistent	In Place



# 5.2 Compliance

The Council complies with UK Law under **Public Contracts Regulations 2015\***. This sets out the rules which central and local government must follow with their procurement procedures. The legislation applies to contracts for supplies, services and works based on contract values (see table below). The legislation sets out competition rules, threshold levels for advertising of opportunities, tendering and contract award procedures as well as prompt payment through the supply chain.

\*PCR2015 <u>https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/102/contents</u>

To ensure **probity** is maintained in the procurement process, the Council is required to establish and maintain Contract Standing Orders (CSOs). These rules are written in a way that allows local suppliers to apply for contract opportunities via the Council's business portal either singly or as part of an SME consortium. Higher value contracts are fully advertised to ensure full competition in line with UK procurement regulations (using the UK Government Find a Tender Service FTS).

The Council's service managers whose teams are engaged in the procurement process maintain full **Accountability** for compliance to the Councils CSOs issued and approved by the Executive Management Team and Cabinet.

Compliance Objectives	Improvement Goals	Action Plan
Public Contracts Regulations (PCR2015): Procure within the current UK Procurement law.	<b>Knowledge:</b> Procurement in conjunction with the Legal team, to develop and communicate clear guidance to the organisation explaining UK Procurement law (and any changes made from time to time).	In Place
	<b>Compliance:</b> Ensure all Procurement projects are completed in line with the regulations set by UK Government and where above the relevant higher value thresholds (for Works, Supplies & Services) use one of the five defined procedures (Open; Restricted; Competitive Dialogue; Competitive with Negotiation and Innovation Partnership).	Monitor & Review
	<b>Payment On Time in Full:</b> Ensure that suppliers are paid to the Council's terms and that main Suppliers are contracted to pay their sub-contractors to the same timeline (back-to-back). The Council has signed up to the BIS Prompt Payment Code: See link here>>	In Place
	http://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/9517/Payment-of- Suppliers	
<b>Probity:</b> Keep within the Legal framework defined	<b>Thresholds:</b> Clearly communicate in Corporate Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) and user-friendly guides the process to follow based on contract value. The Council has set a local	In place

by UK Government.	threshold of £50,000 for all contracts to be transparently and	
	openly advertised. Contracts below this value will be subject	
	to competitive quotations from local & regional suppliers to encourage small and medium sector business growth.	
	NFDC Local Thresholds – based on contract value	
	Best Value Price check: up to £15,000	
	Restricted Quotation: £15,000 to £50,000k	
	Openly Advertised in UK: £50,000 to UK Threshold	
	UK Thresholds (01.01.2022) – based on contract value	
	Openly Advertised in UK: <sup>2</sup>	
	• Supplies & Services Contracts above £213,477	
	Works contracts above £5,336,937	
	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-	
	policy-note-0921-thresholds-and-inclusion-of-vat	
Accountability:	<b>Comply with Contract Standing Orders (CSO's):</b> Ensure ALL staff (and consultants, members, etc.) operate within the guidelines set out in the Councils CSO's.	In Place
	Manage Risk (Public Funds): Use appropriate independent checks on suppliers based on value and risk to safeguard public finances.	In Place
	<b>To our Customers:</b> Ensure Suppliers are aware of (and commit to deliver) the Council's obligations under health and safety, equality, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and environmental sustainability, modern day slavery act, data protection.	In Place
	<b>For Service Specific Spend:</b> Service Managers to lead with Procurement support. Collaboration opportunities (internally and with other councils / organisations) to be tested wherever possible to establish benefit potential.	In place
	For Corporate Wide Spend: Service Managers & Procurement (via Contract Relationship Officers) to jointly lead sourcing projects that effect many Council services with support of key users (by Service) to maximise the Council's commercial impact (test collaboration with other councils or like-minded public sector organisations).	In place

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Updated as and when new thresholds are introduced under a new PPN.



# **5.3 Environment**

The Council recognises it has a vital role in sustainable development, through its procurement of goods, works and services. Procurement decisions have a major socio-economic and environmental impact, both locally and globally, now and for future generations.

On 6 October 2021 NFDC declared a climate change and nature emergency for the district at our meeting of full Council. The announcement builds on our environmental and sustainability actions to further focus on outcomes that will provide positive benefits to the world-wide climate change agenda. For further details please see NFDC Website link below:

#### https://newforest.gov.uk/climatechange

The Council will strive to educate and train internal purchasers to consider **Sustainability and Climate Change** in their procurement projects as we seek to achieve **Net Zero**. The supply market will be encouraged to bring forward new or emerging **Processes and Technologies** with a proven positive impact upon the environment.

A **Targeted Approach** will be used to determine and target categories of works, goods and services that have an impact upon the environment. This will help ensure positive outcomes can be delivered through the procurement process (e.g. score impact upon the following: energy conservation, emissions to air, discharges to water, waste and social environment).

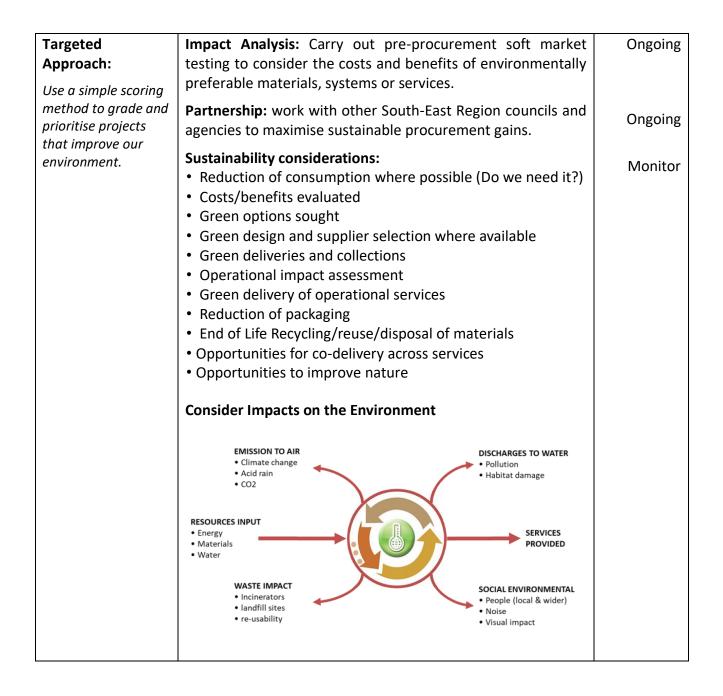
Suppliers tendering for Council contracts are required to set out below how their proposals contribute to the goals of the Councils Climate Change and Nature Emergency and specifically what innovations and improvements will be delivered from the start of contract and step changes to be delivered throughout the contract life cycle under the impact headings of nature, health, economy and social.

Our contract management processes will measure climate & nature emergency mitigations along with targets committed targets and deliverables through the contract life cycle.

The Council will tackle climate change and reduce waste in line with the UK Government National Procurement Policy Statement as set out in PPN 05/21.

- contributing to the UK Government's legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050
- reducing waste, improving resource efficiency and contributing to the move towards a circular economy;
- identifying and prioritising opportunities in sustainable procurement to deliver additional environmental benefits, for example enhanced biodiversity, through the delivery of the contract.

Environment Objectives	Improvement Goals	Action Plan
Sustainability: Ensure procurement supports innovation that will reduce environmental impact to Air, Water and Land, in line with the Councils Climate Change and Nature Emergency programme.	<b>Sustainable Procurement</b> means that the Council meets the needs of the community for works, goods, services in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits in the long term not only to the Council, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. Explore procurement opportunities to promote the local green economy and health and wellbeing.	Ongoing
	<b>Identify Opportunities:</b> Investigate opportunities across the supply chain for energy consumption reduction, emission output reduction, recycling, reduced usage, bulk delivery, co-delivery across services, nature benefits and better packaging.	Ongoing
	<b>Evaluation of Suppliers:</b> Ensure that Sustainability Criteria are part of the supplier evaluation process and are used in the award of contracts.	In place
Net Zero: For all of the emissions created by NFDC activities, we must find opportunities to offset and generate carbon benefit, to reach a balance of net zero emissions. Many of the impacts and opportunities to reduce our emissions will be found within our supply chains.	<b>NFDC Carbon Contribution:</b> NFDC is committed to reducing corporate and district-wide emissions (carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses), so we must ensure that any such emissions associated with the works, goods and services we procure is minimised or eliminated. A process is being developed to assist staff in the measurement and reporting of emissions and is scheduled to be introduced in 2024/25.	In design
	<b>Projects / Action Plan:</b> The Climate and Nature Emergency Action Plan 2023 includes the requirement to embed carbon reduction as a priority within all council activities and decision-making processes, including procurement.	2024/25
<b>Technology:</b> Use our Procurement projects to explore, encourage and realise innovative ideas.	<b>Environmental Specification:</b> Wherever possible and practicable, specify a requirement in line with known UK environmental standards or allow suppliers to submit offers for environmentally friendly alternatives.	Ongoing
	<b>Enable:</b> Encourage the supply market to bring forward new/emerging design technology that has a positive and measurable impact upon the environment.	Ongoing





# 5.4 Fairness

The Council is committed to promote fairness to all suppliers, stimulate local employment opportunities and encourage the **Local Economy** to bring forward ideas that could help the Council save money and deliver better services.

As a major purchaser of goods, services and works in the region the Council recognises the importance of **Transparency** in the communication of forthcoming tender / contract opportunities to promote local employment and the economy. The Council works with agencies such as the Federation for Small Businesses (FSB) and Chamber of Commerce to help SMEs decide if public sector contracts are right for them, if they are ready to tender and how they can submit the best possible proposals.

The Council recognises the opportunity procurement provides to influence the **Equality and Diversity** agenda. We are committed to ensuring that our major suppliers and contractors share our equality and diversity vision and values, and work to implement these. It is the responsibility of staff involved in procurement activities to ensure that equality is embedded in contracts and service provision.

Fairness Objectives	Improvement Goals	Action Plan
Local Economy: Engage with local economy small to medium sized businesses (SMEs), representative bodies (FSB/CoC) and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Compact.	Engagement: NFDC's Economic Development team and the Procurement team will work with local businesses and agencies such as the FSB and Chamber of Commerce to assist their understanding of how to obtain alerts and apply for Council contract opportunities. E.g. via Meet the buyer events, forums, training events, targeted information, etc. The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012): UK legislation supports the delivery of equality outcomes through procurement. Public authorities have to actively consider how a service being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant	In place Ongoing
	<ul> <li>area, consider its public and community obligations and determine how these outcomes and improvements are delivered through procurement.</li> <li>e.g. Consideration will be taken at the pre-procurement stage via consultations to assess the opportunity for community stakeholders, voluntary and community sector organisations and other interested parties to shape (or provide) the service.</li> </ul>	
<b>Transparency:</b> Ensure the wider supplier base is aware of the Council's	<b>Communication via the Procurement Pipeline:</b> Use clear communication channels to promote forthcoming contract opportunities to allow local SMEs or SME consortia to compete.	Apr25

opportunities and how we communicate upcoming contracts.	<b>Opportunity Notices:</b> Advertise all contract opportunities in excess of £50,000 electronically via the South East Business Portal (SEBP) so that suitably qualified suppliers can register their interest online.	In place
Encourage ideas from suppliers that could help the Council.	<b>Advance Notice:</b> Economic Development and Procurement to work together to produce an online "Heads Up" list of lower value (below £50,000) opportunities which are specifically suited to SME or local suppliers.	In place
	<b>Extend e-tenders:</b> Extend the use of e-tendering to lower value opportunities to encourage online through a restricted e-Quotation process where local and regional SMEs are targeted via a soft market testing exercise. Saving suppliers time and paper through use of e-Quotation and the Council can support the local economy.	Ongoing
Equality & Diversity: The Equality Act 2010 has laid out	<b>Legislation:</b> The Equality Act 2010: sets out anti- discrimination law and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Compliance with the PSED ensures that Council procurement is fit for purpose and meets the needs of our customers.	In place
specific procurement criteria to be included in contracts and achieved through the procurement process.	<b>The Modern Slavery Act 2015</b> requires complete transparency in the sourcing of goods and services to ensure slavery, human trafficking and forced or compulsory labour does not occur at any point of the supply chain.	In Place
	The Council's Equality and Diversity Objectives can be seen on our website;	
	http://www.newforest.gov.uk/equalities	
	<b>Influence:</b> Promote a positive approach to equality and diversity. In our procurement processes, we will make sure that we give our suppliers advice on equality issues and ensure that contracts reflect the outcomes required.	Ongoing
	<b>Obtain Commitment:</b> The Council expects its partners and suppliers to share its commitment to equal opportunities. Procurement can promote equality of opportunity and service delivery in those organisations that supply the Council or its residents.	Ongoing
	<b>Increasing supplier diversity:</b> Meet with potential new contractors and identify barriers to entry for smaller businesses by finding out why they do not respond to advertisements or invitations to tender.	Ongoing

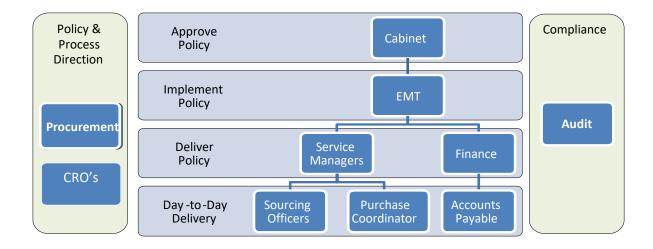
# 6 **Procurement Organisation**

#### 6.1 Governance and Responsibility for Procurement

The **Council's Cabinet** is responsible for setting the overall Procurement Strategy. The **Executive Management Team (EMT)** is responsible for implementing the Council's Procurement Strategy. The **Procurement Team** provide policy and process direction to **Service Managers** (and their nominated Contract Administrators) for procurement projects.

The Councils Cabinet and Executive Management Team have approved the adoption of a **centre led Procurement network** that retains the benefits of a devolved structure whilst adding the direction and control required from centre. This ensures the Council:

- Complies with Public Sector Procurement legislation
- Achieves its corporate plan objectives
- Maintains effective supplier relationship management



#### 6.2 Centre Led Procurement Network

The Council's centre-led approach to procurement, where the Service Manager (budget holder) and Strategic Procurement Team work together, combines technical and commercial skills while ensuring that all procurement rules are followed and good practice is established.

The approach covers the design, management and delivery in procuring; a) service specific contracts, b) corporate wide contracts and c) regional collaborative contracts.

The centre led procurement network model encourages:

- **Innovation** in procurement covering the following scenarios:
  - Doing procurement in an innovative way e.g. improving the process or tools used to help buyers and suppliers.
  - Enabling suppliers to offer innovative bids for what we are buying e.g. allow suppliers to offer new solutions.

- Encouraging innovation that may lie outside what we normally buy, e.g. products or services that can bring wider economic and service benefits for the District.
- **Collaboration** between Technical (Service Teams) and Commercial (Procurement, Finance and Legal) in-house teams and with other partners (local government, voluntary sector organisations etc.) to influence the supply market.
- **Contract Management** is the responsibility of the relevant Council Directorate and the Service Managers (budget holder). Typically, Procurement Contracts are assigned a "contract administrator" to manage day-to-day contract delivery. In 2023 the Council introduced a Contract Relationship Officer (CRO) for each of the three service directorates. The CROs report to Procurement but are deployed to work closely with Service teams to manage the end-to-end contract life cycle.
- **Consolidation** of spend wherever possible to maximise competitive opportunity.
- **Decision making** at operational level (by Service teams) whilst maintaining corporate process and legal compliance.

#### 6.3 Partnerships in Procurement

**Suppliers** are essential to the Council's customer service delivery objectives. The Council aims to ensure that local suppliers are embraced and that their knowledge and service capabilities are utilised to improve services for the local community.

The Council also encourages an active two-way relationship with suppliers to continually improve its procurement approach. Suppliers and prospective suppliers to the Council are encouraged to support procurement developments by using online quotations / tenders as well as proactively proposing innovative ideas that could improve cost, quality and service.

**E-tendering** is fully operational and hosted via the South East Business Portal (SEBP) <u>https://sebp.due-north.com</u> for all contracts in excess of £25,000 for restricted e-quotations (and selected lower value projects) and above £50,000 for open e-tenders (advertised on SEBP and the Governments 'Contracts Finder' portal. For higher value tenders (in excess of UK PCR2015 thresholds) the contracts are also advertised on the UK Government 'Find a Tender Service' (FTS).

**Economic Development** of our region through the continued strong working links with representative bodies such as the **Federation of Small Businesses** and the regional **Chamber of Commerce** will enable engagement with suppliers to ensure a sustainable future in New Forest.

**Inter Council Collaboration** - The Council seeks to play a strong role in regional procurement collaboration in the Hampshire and Dorset regions as well as working with other like-minded Councils and Government Agencies to jointly procure contracts of mutual benefit, through shared resources and know-how. Historically, collaboration at regional level has given rise to a wide range of procurement projects (e.g. Insurance, Cash Collection, Tree Maintenance, Facility Management, etc.) and delivered savings of £5m+ since 2009.

#### 6.4 Skills Development & Best Practice

Procurement will provide support and guidance to Officers through a set of common processes and tools that encourage skills development and knowledge transfer in order to deliver procurement projects for which they are accountable. As there is no 'one-way' for any project the need for prior planning and early engagement is essential to deliver best practice outcomes.

Procurement will develop and monitor methods to ensure efficient and effective Corporate Procure to Payment (P2P) processes that are understood and enacted across the Council.

# 7 General Information

## 7.1 Glossary of Contract Types

- Works Contracts These contracts relate to construction, demolition, building and civil engineering work and completion work such as joinery, plastering and decoration. It includes major repairs or complete refurbishment. For example: building a new affordable housing scheme, refurbishing a leisure centre, resurfacing a car park, repairing a building roof, installing a heating system.
- **Goods Contracts** These contracts relate to the purchase, hire, siting or installation of goods (sometimes referred to as Supplies), but not their maintenance. For example: equipment, clothing, vehicles and spare parts, office stationery, consumables, gas and electricity.
- Services Contracts These contracts relate to the provision by a person or other entity to provide services. For example: consultancy agreements, provision of maintenance services, provision of professional services (e.g. legal / insurance) and provision of cleaning services.

END

#### Version Control

v1.00 Original issue

- v2.00 Amended website links to SEBP in sections 3.1 and 4.3
- v3.00 Amended PCR2015 UK/EU thresholds @ Jan 2020 in section 3.2
- v4.00 Amended to reflect changes made to legislation following EU exit on 31.12.20
- v5.00 Refresh Dec 2023