Draft

Procurement Strategy

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Introduction

The Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) spends circa £400 million a year on contracted goods, works and services. This means that we spend more on external contracts than we do on directly delivering services. Therefore, the procurement and subsequent management of these contracts is singularly the largest and most critical activity that the Council undertakes to deliver value for money across its services. In view of this, whereas previous procurement policies and practices have tended to focus on delivering value for money that is measured through financial cost and quality of the service, goods or works delivered, our aim is to extract more value (or wider value) by asking for the right price, quality and social value (as added value) to be delivered for our residents through effective procurement and contract management activities.

This Strategy firstly outlines the processes and principles that underpin the Council’s procurement and contract management activities, explaining how each works towards ensuring that we continue to deliver value for money. It then moves on to explain how our procurement activity enables us to support our local community, improve the local economy and enhance the local environment. Finally, the document touches on some of the future areas of innovation in procurement and contract management that will look to secure the Council’s ability to continue to deliver value for money in the future and enhance the offer from our procurement service.
Defining Procurement

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods works and services. It includes acquisition from third parties and also from in-house providers. The process spans the whole cycle from identification of needs, through to the end of a service contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.

The first phase of any procurement activity is the establishing of service requirements through an understanding of the Council’s objectives. For RBG, this is a mixture of our statutory duties and service objectives as defined within service plans (which in turn are derived from the Council’s high level objectives and corporate principles).

Once a service defines and understands its objectives, it will then spend the allocated budget on a mixture of services, goods and works that together deliver the service objectives. In doing so, first the service will have to identify the need(s) it is to address before undertaking any spending activities. Then, it will assess whether in-house or outsourcing provision will be the most appropriate route to achieve those identified needs or objectives. This decision will be determined by whether there are the skills and knowledge and organisational capacity available in-house to deliver the service and or whether there are far greater financial, quality and social value benefits to be realised if a third party is contracted to delivers the service. It is also the Council’s desire to harness the vast resources available in our community to co-produce the services. As such, community engagement will be a key activity of the process for delivering services to our residents.

Services will seek support and advice from HR when investing in people and will seek support from the procurement team when purchasing goods/resources or contracting works and services.
Flow diagram showing how service actions are decided and how these actions are supported
Delivering Value for Money
The Council, has a statutory duty to ensure it demonstrates value for money in all its actions. To do this, the Council has corporate guidance which explains the step by step processes that procuring services must follow. This approach ensures that the Council as a whole can be confident in its procurement activities delivering value for money.

There are a few key principles that underpin this guidance, these are summarised below.

Data Management
Data collected and presented in the right way provides decision makers with the information needed to support them throughout the procurement and contract management processes. Therefore, effective data collection and management is a key factor in ensuring the Council can use this information in its decision making processes. Without good data, decision makers cannot be informed and the Council would be less able to understand its activities, limiting its ability to maximise value for money.

Local authorities must publish details of every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £5,000. Local authorities must also publish details of any contract, commissioned activity, purchase order, framework agreement and any other legally enforceable agreement with a value that exceeds £5,000. This information is published on the Council Website under the Transparency and Open Data Section and meets the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

Corporately, the Council will maintain two data collection and management processes with regards to our procurement and contract management activities:

The first is the Contract Management and Spend Database (CMSd). The database can be seen as a more detailed contracts register as it links our contracts register with our spend. This will provide a range of information including:

- **Who is procuring?**
  - This includes the service and the contract manager

- **What is being/has been procured?**
  - This includes a brief description and category classification for spend and contract type (discussed further below in the Category Classification section).

- **Who did we procure it from?**
  - This includes detail on the supplier including: name, type (SME, social enterprise, voluntary organisation etc.), size and location.
How did we procure it?
- This includes information on the method through which it is procured (e.g. Invitation to Quote or Invitation to Tender).

How much we spend on the contract?
- This includes detail on the value of the contract, the expected annual spend, also linking this to the actual annual spend.

The status of the contract.
- This information informs the Council’s forward plans providing information about upcoming procurements, existing contracts and contracts coming to an end.

The second is the Contract Summary Document (CSD). This is a document that stays with each contract from the planning stage to contract conclusion. It provides greater detail on each individual contract including information on supplier performance and any issue that has arisen through the life of the contract. This provides a resource for managers to refer to when procuring similar contracts in the future.

These two data sources act as the foundations for the Council’s procurement planning and contract management activities.

Data Analysis

The data recorded within the CMSd and the CSD provides the opportunity to derive a high level of insight that can inform future procurement and contract management activities. This places Royal Greenwich in the market place as an informed customer, giving our procurement professionals a much stronger standpoint for negotiation and a better chance to deliver value for money through our contracts. The data analysis will comprise the following:

- Category Analysis
  - This provides a breakdown of the number, length and spend on contracts in a certain area of activity (e.g. social care or building maintenance). This enables continued monitoring and understanding of how the Council’s spend matches against the service outcomes and enables the Council to be sure that it is amalgamating expenditure in certain areas to gain benefits from economies of scale.

- Contract Type Analysis
- The classification of all of the Council’s contracts as Strategic, Developing, Leverage and Routine enables the understanding of the risk and expenditure associated to the contract.

- Supplier Analysis
  - By analysing the Council’s spend profile with a particular supplier, it enables the current and historic spend with a supplier to be understood. This information can then be used to reduce fragmented purchasing across vendors and identify where a single procurement exercise can be used to procure two or more services, thereby reducing both the cost associated with the tender process and also increasing the economies of scale which will deliver greater value for money.
  - Analysis of supplier type, size and location across all Council suppliers builds a profile of our spend that informs the Council of the broader economic impact of its procurement activity. It enables the council to understand how much of our spend goes to what type of business and how many of those individual suppliers are located within the Borough.

Category Classification

The Council currently has thousands of individual contracts ranging from the purchasing vehicles to the management of leisure centres. The variation in type, value, length, risk and service means that it is important that each contract is classified into a certain grouping.

The Council classifies all contracts by specific service area (e.g. building maintenance, waste disposal, IT hardware, Social Community Care Supplies & Services). This is a common approach that enables the breakdown and identification of spend across the council services.

In addition to classifying the spend area, the contract will also be classified, based on its type (Strategic, Developing, Leverage and Routine). Each contract is classified into one of the 4 categories by evaluating its risk and level of expenditure.
Risk Spend matrix for category classification of contracts

By using this classification, it supports the tailoring of approaches to ensure that they match the level of risk and expenditure associated with each contract. These contract classifications also identify where potential opportunities for savings or process efficiencies may lie. For example, can we identify a number of ‘Routine’ purchases that could be amalgamated and shaped into a ‘Leverage’ category contract.

**Partnering and Collaboration both Internally and Externally**

The Royal Borough of Greenwich recognises the potential benefits that can be derived through conducting joint procurement. Opportunities may arise internally (between directorates) or externally with other organisations, including other local authorities. Partnering in procurement activities can lead to greater value for money by: realising greater economies of scale, sharing of the risk associated with a contract or new technology to be shared and enabling expertise and procurement resources to be pooled.

Collaborating through procurement with other organisation can bring enhanced Social Value benefits including Community Wealth. This can be achieved not just through working with anchor institutions in the Borough, e.g. the University Health and Royal Parks but with private sector organisation where appropriate.

The Council’s procurement guidance requires every contracting service to explore the potential for collaborating in their individual procurement activity both internally and externally to harness Value for Money, Social value and contributes where possible to Community wealth.
Contract Management

The Council has a clear and detailed set of guidance with regards to contract management that interlinks with the procurement guidance. This guidance helps to support each individual contract manager in delivering the most effective service at the best possible price. The guidance also establishes the data that needs to be collected during and at the conclusion of, the contract for inclusion in the CMSd and CSD, in accordance with our data collection and management principles. This helps to understand how the Council can look to deliver better value for money both now and in the future. This guidance is issued corporately and is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains in line with best practice.

Performance Monitoring and Transparency

Performance management is the formal process of reviewing and reacting to changes in our procurement activities and contracts. Each layer of the Council’s management structure will regularly review information on its contract and procurement activity. However, the depth and frequency at which they review will vary based on their proximity to the service that is being provided and or the contracts risk. Summarised below is the level and type of information received by the Council’s Cabinet, Management Team and Directorate Management Teams.

- **Cabinet**
  Cabinet receives a contracts and spend report detailing the Council’s spend and key summary points in relation to our contracts and procurement activity.

- **Greenwich Management Team (GMT)**
  GMT will receive reports, twice yearly, providing high level information on the Council’s spend and procurement activity as well as individual cases, by exception, where there is significant over or underspend; where the contractor is performing in an unsatisfactory manner, or any other issues that need to be raised.

- **Directorate Management Teams (DMTs)**
  Each DMT will review regularly (at least twice yearly) the detailed information regarding the contracts it holds to ensure that the contractor is performing as expected, that spend is as expected and that their contract management activities are satisfactory. Additionally, each DMT regularly reviews the position and state of each of their ongoing and planned procurement activities. This includes a review of any recently concluded contracts to ensure that any issues associated with a previous contract are understood and learnt from.

The Council is fully committed to ensuring that its activities remain as transparent as possible and meet the legislative requirements to produce both a contracts register and spend data in line with Local Government Transparency Code 2015. In addition to this, the Council requires suppliers to be fully transparent throughout their supply chain to ensure that all subcontractors are known and meet the requirements of the Council.
Risk Management

The Council’s procurement, contract management and performance reporting processes each help to ensure that any risks are identified, monitored and acted upon. Processes, such as category classification, enable contracts that are of greater value and that pose a greater risk, to be easily identified, helping services to manage those contracts accordingly.

The Council’s Corporate Performance Reporting structure, which encompasses Services Plans and Service Pressure Reports, also acts to capture service pressures and risks including those associated with contract or procurement activity. In addition, the Corporate Risk register enables all corporate risks to be logged and regularly reviewed.

The Council looks to reduce the risk associated with contractors carrying out activities on behalf of the Council by ensuring that contractors are aware its policies and, where appropriate, contractors’ policies mirror those of the Council.

The Council looks to mitigate risk on both the Council and supplier side by ensuring that contract managers and the supplier map out any risks associated with the contract and review these risks at every contract management meeting. This ensures that any risks that are solely held by the contractor are understood by the Council to ensure that appropriate actions can be taken to reduce these risks. The processes through which risks are established and recorded is outlined within the procurement and contract management guidance.
Supporting our Local Economy

Social Value

The Royal Borough of Greenwich has a legal obligation to provide maximum benefit for our local community from every pound spent, as stipulated in the Public Services (Social Value) Act of 2012. The legislation requires public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts.

The Council’s has a commitment to making the most out of every penny it spends and as such, will embed a social value approach to the commissioning and procurement activities. The Social Value Policy sets out the approach to defining and delivering social value through its procurement activities. The policy contains the Council’s definition of social value. The social value approach intrinsically links our social value objectives to the priorities of the council contained within the Corporate Plan. The link between the Corporate Plan Objectives and Social Value will be developed and maintained through a Social Value Framework.

Delivering Social Value

The Council’s Procurement and Contract Management Guidance sets out the specific processes and approach that will be taken by all procuring services with regards to social value in the planning, specifying and evaluating phases of the process. This approach ensures that social value is sought and embedded in the procurement process. A key part of this is the Social Value Framework, which is a dynamic document that provides examples of where a procurement may obtain social value.

In addition to this consistent approach, the Council will also identify specific upcoming high value contracts that are in the process of being procured. These contracts are of relatively high value and/or potentially may be delivered by suppliers that have a greater potential to deliver social value within one of our target areas. By applying greater resources to these high value contracts, the Council has an increased possibility to gain greater levels of social value than it otherwise would have.

The Council’s approach is to look to potential suppliers to offer Social Value in kind. This means the supplier, themselves, providing a service (or goods) that acts to support the Council’s Social Value Objectives.

Social Value in Lieu

It is recognised that it may not be possible, in all cases, for suppliers to offer relevant and proportionate Social Value in kind or the Social Value in kind that is offered may be negligible in the wider context. Therefore, Greenwich will explore the possibility of a ‘Social Value Fund’ into which suppliers can offer a cash contribution. There are a number of options for the distribution of this fund but it is anticipated that a mechanism will be set up to award grants to local voluntary/community sector and social enterprises for specific activities within the
Borough. These organisations would be able to bid for funding for certain projects that will contribute to the Council’s Social Value Objectives, as outlined in this policy. However, it is the Council’s policy that social value in kind is the Council’s preferred route.

**Measuring Social Value**

Measurement and performance monitoring are important elements of the contract management process through which the Royal Borough evaluates the delivery and subsequently the value for money of a commissioning or procurement exercise.

The monitoring of the delivery of the social value element of the contract is no different. All social value offers are required to have monitoring clauses for the described outcomes. This may be in the form of Key Performance Indicators where there are defined key deliverable outcomes (number of apprenticeships delivered, CO₂ emissions avoided etc.) or in cases where there are less tangible outcomes (improvements in wellbeing) narrative reporting or case study evidence will be used. Further detail on this is provided within the *Commissioning Guidance* and the *Procurement and Contract Management Guidance*.

It is important that the Royal Borough continues to monitor and understand the social value being gained through its procurement and commissioning activities. This is so that adaptations to processes can be made in the future to maximise outcomes derived from our social value approach. Robust information on the type and impact of the social value gained through the Council’s procurement activity will be reported to Cabinet on an annual basis alongside other key information and data on the Council’s procurement and commissioning activities.

**e-Procurement**

A number of e-procurement tools are available to streamline and modernise the procurement process including e-tendering, e-marketplaces and e-invoicing. The Council has begun to roll out e-procurement across the authority which helps to add greater efficiencies to the procurement process, saving officer time and reducing the overall time taken to procure goods, works and services; and increasing transparency; providing greater visibility of available contracts; and reducing the administrative burden and thus costs on the supplier side. It is widely recognised that e-tendering can improve accessibility for SMEs, VCSEs. The Council will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this change and assess the potential for the introduction of further e-procurement tools.

**Supporting and Encouraging Social Enterprises, Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary and Community Sector Groups (VCSEs)**

The Council will continue to look to balance the benefits associated with the aggregation of goods and services procured regionally or nationally to deliver cost savings with the benefit of improving access to SMEs and VCSEs, which are more generally located within the borough.
As part of the initial stages of a procurement exercise, the procurement route is considered. At this stage, the Council will also look to open up its procurement activity to Social Enterprises by consideration of whether use is made of the provision in Section 77 of the 2015 Procurement Regulation. This regulation allows certain contracts to be reserved for qualifying organisation e.g. Social Enterprise.

RBG will further develop its processes in this area in line with recommendations from the Council’s 3rd sector strategy and the National Procurement Strategy.

**Supporting the Wider Council Objectives**

The Council has a number of other Corporate Policies that should be considered as part of procurement objectives. These include, but not limited to:

- **Sustainable Procurement**

  Royal Borough of Greenwich recognises that sustainability encompasses environmental, social and economic concerns. The Greener Greenwich Strategy sets out Council’s strategic objectives of reducing Royal Borough’s emissions and helping others to do the same.

  To achieve these objectives the Council will:

  - Apply relevant environmental and sustainability standards to support delivery of target outcomes relating to climate change mitigation and energy, air quality, materials and waste, water, biodiversity and adaptation.
  - Encourage suppliers through selection processes to adopt processes and procedures that reduce their environmental impact
  - Ensure that the need to meet Council’s ambitious greenhouse gas and air pollution reduction targets are given appropriate priority in procurement decisions. This includes sourcing of low carbon energy wherever possible and phasing-out the fossil fuel use in our fleet.

- **Ethical Procurement**

  The Royal Borough has ambition to use its spending power to drive ethical standards and social outcomes through procurement activities. RBG therefore will ask its potential suppliers to abide with the following principles or policies where proportionate and directly relevant to the subject matter of the contract:

  - Modern day Slavery
  - Fair Tax

  On Fair Tax, our tender documentation will encourage suppliers to sign a Fair Tax Voluntary Declaration form and consider obtaining the Fair Tax Mark Certification. For Modern day Slavery, in addition to publishing our own annual statement, the Royal
Borough will use the selection process to assess potential suppliers’ compliance with the Act.

- **Social Mobility**

Fairness, equality and prosperity are fundamental to the aspirations that Royal Greenwich has for the Borough and its residents. As such, the Royal Borough will use its purchasing power to influence, enable and encourage its potential suppliers to support its policy to provide opportunity to everyone within the borough to build a good life and or have a fair chance of reaching their potential regardless of their family background.

- **Equality and Diversity**

The Royal Borough has duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, and to tackling all forms of discrimination through its roles as employer and community leader, service provider and commissioner/procurer. In this regard, our tender documents will include a requirement to potential suppliers delivering services, supplies and works on behalf of the Council to also uphold the same duty as an employer, with equality commitments.

- **Health and Safety**

Royal Greenwich will require its potential suppliers when delivering services, supplies or work on behalf of the Council, to ensure they abide with the obligation they have under the Health and Safety Act. This includes but not limited to their obligation to:

  o securing the health, safety and welfare of persons at work,
  o protecting others against risks to health or safety in connection with the activities of persons at work,
  o controlling the keeping and use and preventing the unlawful acquisition, possession and use of dangerous substances, and for controlling certain emissions into the atmosphere

- **Business Continuity**

When RBG awards a contract, it is relying upon some third parties to deliver key services, supplies or works on its behalf. Royal Greenwich therefore, will ask, in the procurement process especially within the tender documentation, potential suppliers to provide their policy to ensure that they have a quick and painless return to “business as usual” in the event of a major interruption. Effectively, potential suppliers will be asked to show a plan which addresses the following to ensure continuity in the service deliver is guaranteed:

  o reducing risk to the organisation
  o responding effectively to unexpected events
o restoring normality after an incident

Further guidance on how each of these can be applied as part of a procurement process is part of the Procurement and Contract Management Guidance.
Innovation and the Future

Through the implementation of a robust procurement process and the establishment of accurate and relevant data, the Council has the opportunity to further explore areas of innovation in procurement activities. This section outlines some of the aspirations that the Royal Borough will work towards and explore in the future.

Creation of public markets to utilise residents’ economies of scale

Currently, the Council procures goods, works or services to deliver a function that supports the work of services in achieving their aims. However, the Council is currently exploring the potential for these same processes to be executed in an innovative way which could lead to residents being able to purchase goods, works or services from the private sector through the Council. This type of action would see local residents utilising their combined economies of scale to realise economic savings, whilst also acting to help the Council in achieving some of its High Level aims and objectives such as its anti-poverty agenda.

One example of this could be setting up a market through which residents can purchase electric cars. One of the Council’s key high level objectives is to reduce levels of air pollution in the borough and a significant contributor of air pollution in the borough is diesel and petrol vehicles. Therefore, if the Council could encourage residents to replace these vehicles with low emission electric ones this would help reduce levels of air pollution in the Borough. One of the main barriers to individuals purchasing electric vehicles now is their relatively higher cost.

In this case, the Council firstly could reach out to the public via its communication channels to establish the number of residents that may be interested in purchasing a pre-defined specification of electric vehicle. This information can then be used to approach the market to ask for quotes for the specification of vehicle based on the number of interested parties. By approaching the market with a group of potential customers the Council would likely be able to leverage a more preferential price from the market on behalf of residents. Residents then have the opportunity to review the offer and purchase with the supplier if they wish.

This is just one example but feasibly it could be applied to other goods, including white goods, basic computers or furniture and could become an effective method through which the Council can support local residents and look to achieve some of its primary objectives. Similar schemes have been delivered by the Council and London in the past including a scheme that looked to use residents combined purchasing power to realise cheaper energy prices from the market.
London wide leverage and contract register

Earlier in this document, the Council’s approach to partnership activities with regards to procurement was set out including pooling of resources and expertise. In addition, the Royal Borough will look to drive forward further collaborative work with other London local authorities in the area of procurement. We recognise that, together, the 33 London Local Authorities have a large spending power (currently over £6.6 billion pounds per annum according to The Department for Local Government). The Council will look to work with other London Local Authorities and organisations such as London Councils to attempt to build on further collaborative work across London to enable this combined spending power to deliver even greater value for money in homogenous services (e.g. waste disposal, electricity and postal services) for Greenwich residents and London as a whole.

Outcome based contracting

The Council will continue to explore possibilities for the use of new innovative Outcome Based Contracting. Outcome Based Contracting is a route through which a commissioning authority can be sure that it only pays based on its desired outcomes being achieved by the supplier. These contract types can act to:

- Encourage a higher quality of service delivery;
- Stimulate innovation in service delivery from our providers; and
- Explore opportunities to reduce financial risk in service procurement.

The two forms of Outcome Based Contracts that the Council will look to explore are:
Payment by Results

This approach has two key features:

1. Payment is agreed based on pre-agreed results
2. The service provider decides how they achieve these pre-agreed results

The use of Payment by Results, in certain cases, acts to shift the financial risk and the responsibility for the methodology of service provision to the service provider. It is intended to improve service quality by offering higher payments for better performance, and to encourage innovation by giving greater freedom to providers to determine how best to achieve the required outcomes. This can create an environment for radical change in service delivery.
Social Impact Bonds

A Social Impact Bond follows the same principles as a Payment by Results partnership. However, they differ as they utilise external social investment capital. External investors fund a project at the start and then receive payments back from the procuring organisation (the Council) based on the results achieved by the project. These results will focus on achieving a social outcome (e.g. improved health) and will often deliver a longer term saving for the procuring organisation (the Council) if achieved.

This approach means that the investors carry the financial risk of a project as they would fund the project and the Council would only pay this money back and a small additional percentage to the investor if the pre-agreed outcomes of the project are achieved.

This approach can be used where an organisation, such as a voluntary group, proposes a project that has the potential to deliver a social value outcome that will benefit the local community and the Council. However, the risk associated with the project not meeting its outcomes is too high for the Council to accept and the voluntary group does not have the capital to fund the project on a purely payment by results basis. In this example, a Social Impact Bond may opt to finance the project and then receive payment back from the Council based on the delivery of the outcomes. This approach enables the project to be funded and the Council to assume no risk all, albeit there may be a marginal increase in cost over and above funding the project itself from the start.
Conclusion

This Strategy has set out the key procurement and contract management principles that underpin all of the Council’s guidance and subsequent activity in this area. The comprehensive procurement and contract management guidance arising from this Strategy ensures that the Council’s procedures remain robust, efficient and effective and thus ensure we continue to procure contracts that have the potential to deliver value for money and then manage them in the way that realises that value for money.

In addition, it has laid out the Royal Borough’s commitment to supporting community/voluntary groups, social enterprise and SMEs in the borough as well as outlining its forward thinking and comprehensive approach to delivering social value through its procurement activities.

Finally, it has discussed some of the key areas in which the Council will look to innovate to continue to ensure that its procurement activity remains future proofed and offers more to residents than just value for money services.
Appendix A

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms

This glossary is to aid in the understanding and interpretation of this strategy.

**Procurement** – the process of acquiring goods works and services. It includes acquisition from third parties and also from in house providers. The process spans the whole cycle from identification of needs, the determination of the method of delivery, through to the end of a service contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.

**Commissioning** – the process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet people’s needs at a strategic level. This applies to all services, whether they are provided by the local authority, NHS, other public agencies, or by the private and voluntary sectors.

**Contracts Register** - is an online directory and repository where details of tender opportunities (includes market engagement events) and contracts let must be stored (for all contracts over £5,000.)

**Contract Summary Document** – A working document detailing responsibilities and ongoing work of a particular contract. Information is recorded during all stages of the procurement cycle after the contract has concluded the document is then closed and becomes a point of reference for information or audit in the future.

**Contract Management and Spend Data Base** – A database (or the linking of two or more discrete databases) that provides key data from both the contracts register and spend data.

**Social Value** – When referred to in the document it is in the context of the councils obligations under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 which sets social value exclusively in the context of procurement.

**Procurement and Contract Management Guidance** – A manual for RBG employees detailing the procurement and contract management processes and pathways to be used when procuring a good, works or service.