



# NORWICH City Council

**Committee Name:** Cabinet  
**Committee Date:** 09/03/2022  
**Report Title:** Procurement strategy

**Portfolio:** Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources

**Report from:** Head of legal and procurement

**Wards:** All Wards

## **OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

### **Purpose**

To consider the Procurement Strategy implementation plan

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Cabinet notes the progress made in delivering the Procurement Strategy and the further actions identified in this report

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets all corporate priorities

This report, in respect of procurement, addresses the Inclusive Economy strategic action to increase the impact of our assets and purchasing power on reducing inequality in the Corporate Plan, however all purchasing indirectly contributes to all the council priorities

This report, in respect of procurement, helps to meet Social Value in Procurement Policy of the Council

This report, in respect of procurement, helps to meet multiple objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan

[View the Corporate Plan 2019-22]

[View the COVID-19 Recovery Plan]

## Background

1. The [Procurement and Contract Management Strategy 2021-24](#) was approved at the Cabinet meeting held 14 March 2021. The document was subsequently published on the council's website.
2. As the strategy covered a 4 year period Cabinet agreed they would review the progress made in implementing the strategy on an annual basis. The aim is to bring this strategy to fruition over the period of the four years.
3. This report is to appraise the members of the actions taken to date to move forward the delivery of the strategy and outline the next steps.

As a reminder, the vision for our procurement and contract management strategy is:

To procure and manage the supply of goods, services and works through the efficient selection and management of third-party relationships supporting the council and its wholly owned companies in the delivery of best value, innovative services and the achievement of its corporate priorities.

the five areas of focus identified in the strategy are:

- Providing an efficient and effective service
- Reducing commercial risk
- Working locally, ethically and sustainably
- Driving Value for Money
- Making procurement mainstream

## Context

4. The actions in delivering the strategy to date should be considered in the context of the procurement team's day to day activities, which from April 2021 has included providing procurement support to NCSL. The team also supports key projects such as the transferring of building services to NCSL, and integration NPS into Norwich City Council (Project Place Phase 2). Procurement activity has also been carried out to further the Towns Fund projects, such as contracts in respect of Carrow House and Townshend House. There has also been a refocus of priority in the team during the year to support the identified back log of jobs in the area of housing (such as voids and whole house improvements) and compliance work (such as water testing, electrical testing). We also support NRL in procuring contracts to deliver social and private sector housing..
5. The council has approx. 215 active contracts over £25,000 on the Contracts Register together with approx. 105 emerging contracts where the team are actively undertaking procurement activity on contract re-lets, variations or on newly identified needs. At the time of writing, there remains approx. 50 contracts to be awarded or varied to ensure NCSL can provide building services to residents from 1 April 2022: in other words, a 50% increase in the standard workload of the team.

6. To support the team, the Council has allocated additional resources with dedicated temporary contract officers for Towns Fund, Project Place and Housing Compliance, as well as the overall expansion of resources to undertake the day-to-day NCS support work. Management capacity within the team has been focused on recruiting and developing staff and supporting programme management.
7. The work set out above means this year has been one of the most challenging the team have faced, but they have consistently risen to the challenges presented. Members can be assured that each and every time we undertake a procurement activity, we consider the principles of the strategy.

### **Summary of key Achievements**

8. Some of the key achievements in delivering the procurement and contract management strategy over the past year are highlighted below:
  - We have commissioned SPS Consultancy to undertake an assessment of our current commissioning and spend (see further information below)
  - We have undertaken our first electronic signing of documents and are piloting electronic sealing
  - We have started a review of the procurement service to ensure that we have the right resources at the right level to support the team
  - We have agreed actions to improve contract management within the Council, that includes launching an accredited contract management training package that all staff can access
  - We have launched the Future Shape Norwich: Supplier Value Workstream, providing a forum for officers to discuss how to develop effective commissioning and contract management approaches
  - We have published the procurement plan on the Council's website, improving compliance with transparency requirements and improving potential supplier access to information about future council spend

### **Developing the Action Plan**

9. The procurement and contract management strategy is ambitious. It identified a wide range of actions for the Council to undertake to commission and manage services effectively. Early work to develop the implementation plan recognised the need to establish our current baseline across the organisation, to then prioritise the action plan.
10. Through the East of England Local Government Association we engaged consultants, SPS Consultancy, to assist. Their work has focused upon:
  - a) a diagnostic review

Which would surface differences in perception on how contracting is managed at the Council, identifying areas of good practice and areas of concern while allowing us to work out what steps are required in supporting factors such as social value, the local economy and sustainability.

b) procurement value financial analysis.

This would provide evidence for prioritising future actions and identifying gaps in what can be measured.

### **Diagnostic review**

11. In 2021, public sector contracting authorities were asked to complete a diagnostic tool, whereby a range of questions were posed and authorities were asked to benchmark themselves against the criteria for each question. The results were collated and then shared, highlighting how authorities evaluated themselves compared to national and regional averages. We have only recently received our results and are therefore still evaluating the outcomes from this. However, recognising this was an exercise focused on the procurement team, and it covered specific values that, whilst useful, did not fully reflect our own strategy, we felt it would be useful to undertake our own survey along similar lines
12. SPS came with experience of running these diagnostics within local authorities and had led the national exercise. They had a standard set of core values, although for our purposes additional criteria in terms of evaluating our performance in sustainability and social value were added, two key components of our strategy. In consequence of the work undertaken to support us, SPS are now looking at how such criteria can be adopted elsewhere.
13. A wide range of participants were invited to take part from across the Council and key partners including nplaw, NPS and NCSL. The final data set was shared and discussed with the consultants in February. This valuable information, which includes not only scores but respondent's comments, will be used to influence the shape and focus on next steps and allow benchmarking in the future. Having only recently received the results, we need to undertake further analysis to focus on priority areas. However, an initial high level review the areas coming up to prioritise are social value, sustainability and skills and knowledge.
14. The headline outcomes are attached at Appendix 2.

### **Procurement value financial analysis**

15. Data was extracted from the council's financial system for a period of two years from Nov 2019 and, together with the contract register, was interrogated by the consultants. The data has been analysed in a variety of ways, for example by value, invoice volume, supplier, type of spend, service area.
16. An initial review had been undertaken and a workshop with key officers has been held to further understand the output and the potential ways in which this data can be used.

17. To demonstrate the value of this data and how it has already influenced positive change or could be used in future for other services, two case studies are included in Appendix 3.

- a) Case Study 1 - Using spend analysis to support revision of the Contract Procedure Rules
- b) Case Study 2 - ICT procurement for the council and NCSL.

### **Strategy implementation plan**

18. The aim is to bring this strategy to fruition over the period of the four years with three phases, as set out in the Strategy. Actions have commenced in both Phase 1 – Building the infrastructure and Phase 2 – Embedding the Changes.

19. Appendix 1 provides an update on Phase 1 and 2, what we have done to date and next steps.

20. The procurement team are working to use the SPS diagnostic to prioritise the action plan, as well as the outcomes of the service review being used to identify key officers to take work forwards. As such, a more comprehensive action plan is being developed to support the strategy delivery.

### **Summary**

21. The foundation of intelligence gathering has been the focus of this first year of implementation and is the launch pad for the prioritisation of actions moving forward. The service has been resilient in supporting the Council through one of its most demanding years in terms of procurement activity, and in making progress towards delivery of its strategy.

### **Consultation**

22. Consultation was undertaken with officers and members on the drafting of the strategy and in undertaking the diagnostic tool. Local businesses, including the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector will be consulted to understand their priorities and what they want from us as a Council during the implementation phase. Officers will also be consulted during this phase for example on procedural changes. A diagnostic survey was undertaken with officers and partners.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial and Resources**

23. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan and Budget.

24. A £20,000 allocation from the Business Change Reserve was made to support delivery of the strategy. The SPS consultancy was funded from this resource.

25. The review of the procurement service to ensure we have the right level of resources at the right level, this has been supported through the allocation of additional funds in the 2022/23 budget.
26. The implementation of the strategy will be a tool for driving value for money and supporting the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
27. Each service, works, goods requirement shall be subject to individual budget and award approval processes in line with Contract Procedures, Financial Regulations or other as appropriate.

## Legal

28. No legal implications are noted as the report is providing an update only.
29. It should however be noted that changes are expected to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 shortly. This may require additional workstreams and resources to be allocated in order to review working practices and any changes to Contract Procedures/other procedures which may be required as a result.

## Statutory Considerations

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Equality and Diversity	The report itself does not impact these statutory considerations but we would consider impacts as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises
Health, Social and Economic Impact	The report itself does not impact these statutory considerations but we would consider impacts as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises
Crime and Disorder	The report itself does not impact these statutory considerations but we would consider impacts as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises
Children and Adults Safeguarding	The report itself does not impact these statutory considerations but we would consider impacts as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises
Environmental Impact	The report itself does not impact these statutory considerations but we would consider impacts as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises

## Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
The report itself does raise risks in respect of operational, financial, compliance, security, legal, political		We would consider risks as we undertake actions associated with the strategy as well as individual procurement exercises.
Non delivery of the strategy plan	Reputational risks to the council.	Reporting of progress to key officers.

## Other Options Considered

30. This report is to update members there are no options proposed

## Reasons for the decision/recommendation

31. This report is to update members, recommendation is for update to be noted

**Background papers:** [Procurement and Contract Management Strategy 2021-24](#)

## Appendices:

**Appendix 1 Implementation Plan Phase 1 and 2 update**

**Appendix 2 Diagnostic respondent scores against the value codes**

**Appendix 3**

**Case study 1** Using spend analysis to support revision of the Contract Procedure Rules

**Case Study 2** - ICT procurement for the council and NCSL.

## Contact Officer:

**Name: Tracy Woods**

Telephone number: 01603 987723 / 07767 487536

Email address: [tracywoods@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:tracywoods@norwich.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 Implementation Plan Phase 1 and 2 update

<b>PHASE 1 - BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
<b>A) The detailed analysis and classification of our third-party expenditure information</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultants engaged to undertake a detailed procurement value financial analysis. Initial data received</li> <li>• Officer workshop held to understand how this data can be utilised with a range of agreed actions to take forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep dive into the procurement value financial analysis to understand what it is telling us and how we can work differently and more efficiently, focus effort on higher value contracts</li> <li>• Delivery of actions identified in officer workshop</li> </ul>
<b>B) The integration of policies, processes and systems underpinning the commercial life cycle</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of other local authorities Contract Procedures for best practice</li> <li>• Review of Contract Procedures and in particular thresholds values for procurement routes</li> <li>• Development of Contracts Register into a Procurement Plan</li> <li>• Drafted a contract management framework including contract management planning and assurance framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of procurement processes</li> <li>• Review of templates/standardized documentation</li> <li>• New procedures to be developed from increased thresholds to ensure Transparency Regulations are adhered to</li> <li>• Develop a risk-based contract review process</li> <li>• Agreement of contract management framework and launch contract management plan and assurance reviews</li> </ul>
<b>C) The development of skills and knowledge programmes for those involved in any aspect of the commercial life cycle</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing contract management training needs with consultants commissioned through EELGA</li> <li>• Government Commercial College e-learning foundation course has been made available on e-learning portal</li> <li>• See Phase 2 C)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and roll out of contract management training sessions</li> <li>• Ensure all contracts have an identified and engaged, trained contract manager</li> </ul>
<b>D) The reaching out to local businesses, including the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to understand their priorities and what they want from us as a Council</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial discussion with consultants on facilitating a voluntary,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and holding of voluntary, community and social</li> </ul>

<p>community and social enterprise sector engagement session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance of Anchor Institution training session being put on by CLES and the Norwich Good Economy Commission</li> </ul>	<p>enterprise sector engagement session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding how procurement can be embedded into any Anchor Institute development</li> <li>• Gain understanding of potential use of our e-tending portal what opportunities there are to increase efficiencies in procurement process and may accessible to all sectors particularly voluntary, community and social enterprise sector</li> </ul>
<p><b>E) The piloting of a category review, refining processes and documenting lessons learned</b></p>	
<p><b>Action taken</b></p>	<p><b>Next steps</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Categories included on the Contract Register</li> <li>• Financial analysis has identified categorisation of spend</li> <li>• Workshops held with each head of service to understand their short, medium term procurement needs</li> <li>• Proposed new team structure based on business partner model</li> <li>• Attendance at appropriate external led workshops for example Crown Commercial IT frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify further 'category management' knowledge bases</li> <li>• Skills development of team. See Phase 2 C)</li> </ul>
<p><b>F) The creation of an ambitious cultural change management programme, which will include an analysis of the likely impact on different parts of the business, to underpin all of the above.</b></p>	
<p><b>Action taken</b></p>	<p><b>Next steps</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate contract entered into with consultants with a strategic partner to help us to develop and design our culture, values, and behavioral framework</li> <li>• Consultants engaged to undertake a diagnostic of value codes across council and partners</li> <li>• Engaged in the National Procurement Strategy benchmarking exercise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the findings of the corporate culture review and both the national and council diagnostics where procurement culture doesn't align with strategy principles</li> <li>• Identify actions to address priority areas of focus of commissioning activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>PHASE 2 – EMBEDDING THE CHANGES</b></p>	
<p><b>A) Refinement of our new policies, processes and systems to ensure that they are working correctly and delivering the intended results and outcomes</b></p>	
<p><b>Action taken</b></p>	<p><b>Next steps</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a commissioning framework and associated</li> </ul>

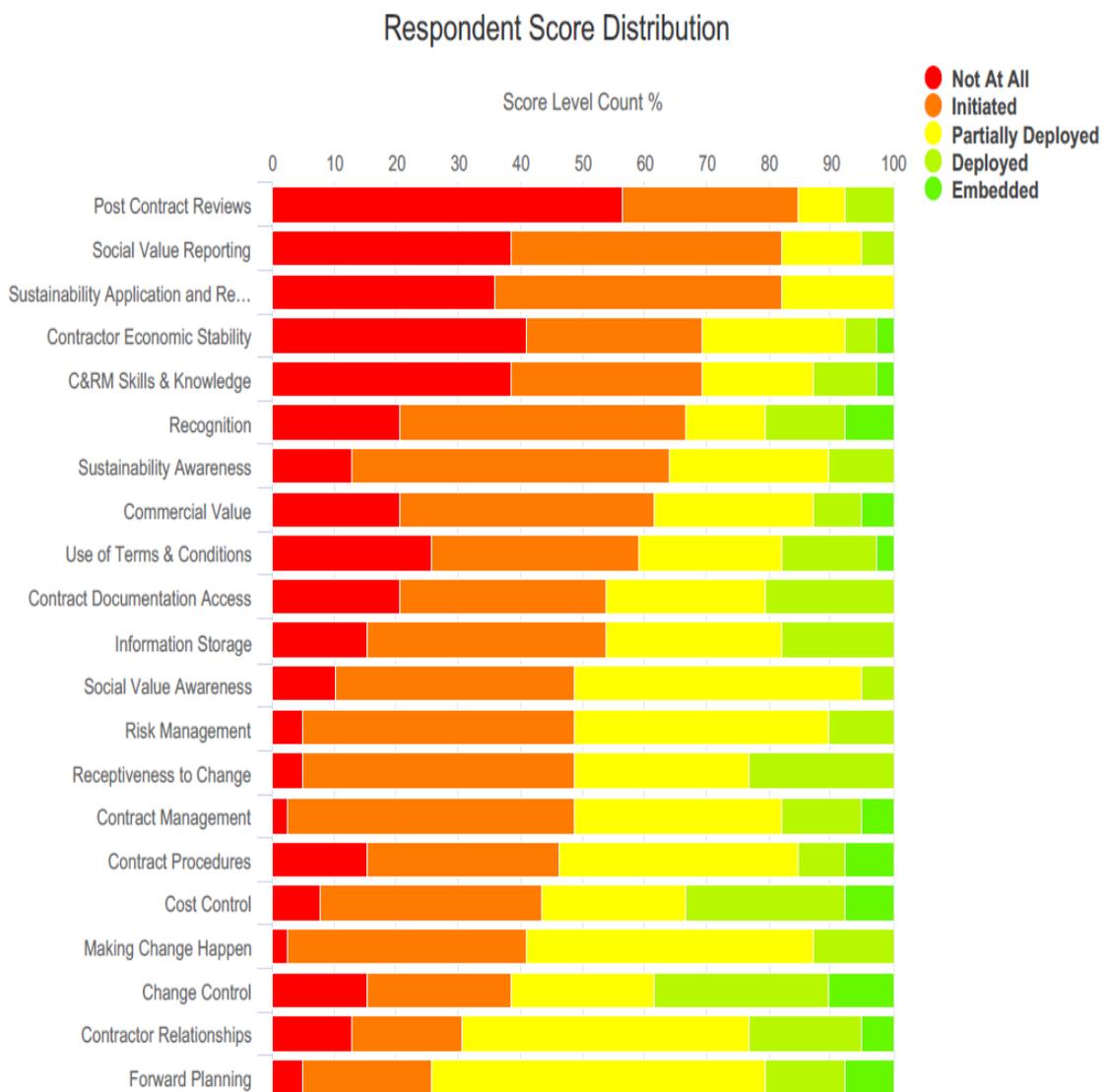
	<p>guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop risk identification and reporting at appropriate stages of procurement cycle</li> <li>• Roll out training to all Senior Officers /Contract managers See Phase 1 B)</li> <li>• Evaluate whether the procurement system can be used to improve process</li> </ul>
<b>B) Gaining internal stakeholder buy in to change</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross service area team set up to work on 'Future Shape Norwich - Driving Value from our supply chain' workstream</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New proposed Business Partner model in team to be embedded with directorates</li> </ul>
<b>C) Developing people skills and knowledge deployment to help individuals excel in their commissioning and contract &amp; relationship management activities</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation commenced on revised procurement team structure, focus on a business partnering model to support the council and wholly owned companies commissioning in alignment with strategy principles and introduction of an apprenticeship role.</li> <li>• Discussion with nplaw to develop and provide modular training sessions in specific areas of Public Contract Regulations (PCR). First session scheduled on contract variations (Reg 72 of PCR)</li> <li>• Regular training at team meetings on areas for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Council decisions Key, Executive etc</li> <li>○ Leaseholder consultation process</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify skills gap after team restructure</li> <li>• Develop training package for apprentice role and other members of team where is a skills gap</li> <li>• Recruit to vacant posts, ensuring capacity to deliver</li> <li>• Identify training providers (internal/external/mentoring)</li> <li>• Proposed Procurement Business Partner roles to engage with directorates</li> <li>• Following review of Contract Procures, internal processes develop and deploy training to wider organization</li> <li>• Further roll out of nplaw training modules to team</li> </ul>
<b>D) Introducing a marketing and communications plan to advance internal customer service capability and communicate effectively with our partners and suppliers</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Web team to get Contracts Register published on council website, including emerging opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review effectiveness of communication channels</li> <li>• <b>Include this as area for discussion in facilitated</b> voluntary, community and social enterprise sector engagement</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of twitter, LinkedIn and other social media to advertise opportunities</li> </ul>	session. See Phase 1 D)
<b>E) Building internal capacity and expertise for the future</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Phase 2 C) in respect of procurement team structure</li> <li>• Pilot of electronic signing and sealing with Right to Buys</li> <li>• Piloting video training for rollout to NCSL new onboarding officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Phase 1 C) in respect of review of e-tendering portal</li> <li>• Roll out of electronic signing and sealing, including review of appropriate level of authority</li> </ul>
<b>F) Agreeing a rolling programme of category reviews</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build into proposed Business Partner roles discussions with directorates</li> </ul>
<b>G) Ongoing engagement with our sustainability and social value work</b>	
<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piloted social value in contract lets</li> <li>• Working with Eastern Procurement Ltd (EPL) – all EPL frameworks have social value and sustainability criteria and are predominantly local suppliers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop toolkit and standard criteria to support service areas identify sustainability terms in tender evaluations, contracts and KPIs</li> <li>• Develop a mechanism to measure sustainability outcomes</li> <li>• Determine what constitutes 'local'</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 Diagnostic respondent scores against the value codes

This diagram illustrates the overall outcomes from the SPS consultancy diagnostic review. Respondents were asked to evaluate how they felt the Council performed against each criteria. Those areas which scored weakest overall are at the top, and those which are strongest are at the bottom. Officers have access to the full range of results and are able to analyse these.

SPS have identified to us that all authorities receive a wide range of results and there are some areas (such as post contract reviews) where the majority of authorities are weaker as this is not necessarily a high-value activity. Authorities need to consider their own situation and determine their own priorities for action. The outcomes are presently being considered and will be incorporated into how the procurement team prioritise actions in the procurement and contract management strategy.



## Appendix 3 – Case study 1 and 2

### Case Study 1: Using spend analysis to support revision of the Contract Procedure Rules

1. Within the Council, the current Contract Procedure Rules and associated processes can cause some frustration. Concern had been raised that the thresholds felt relatively low compared to other local authorities, and the benefits potentially gained through the expected, rigorous procedures could be outweighed by the additional work involved and the time taken.
2. Our current procedures require:
  - Where spend is predicted to be less than £25k, officers must obtain at least 3 quotes. Exemptions can be given but these must be authorised by the Business Relationship and Procurement Officer if greater than £5k.
  - Where spend is between £25k and the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) thresholds, an open tender exercise is required
  - Above the PCR thresholds, a route compliant with the PCR requirements must be followed
3. In order to evaluate our contract procedures, we first reviewed the levels used by our 14 most comparable authorities to evaluate the level of risk they accept and how Norwich City Council aligns.
  - 12 of the 14 authorities had a bottom limit where services were allowed to “get on and do” – there are no formal requirements except to seek value for money to the Council. This threshold ranged from £1k-£25k, with most authorities at £5-£10k.
  - We stop allowing 3 quotes at £25k. 11 other authorities had 3 quote limits; only one other set this at £25k; all other authorities allowed 3 quotes up to between £50-£100k
  - We require formal tenders at £25k. This is the lowest; 6 require tenders at £50k and 4 only require tenders at PCR thresholds.
  - In general, whilst our current approach is very simple compared to some, across the board, we are the most onerous in terms of the requirements we place when it comes to lower level (e.g. £100k and below) spend
4. Given this research, we then started to explore whether there was the potential to review our limits, and if so, what the values might be.
5. To support our evaluation, we looked at the results of the SPS diagnostic work on the Council’s spend. We were able to aggregate the levels of spend at different values to determine where the potential risk may lie, as follows:

Value of spend with supplier (2 years)	Number of suppliers	Number of invoices	Total spend at that threshold	% of total spend
<£5k	321	1,005	£404,091	<1%
5k-10k	64	455	£480,123	<1%

10k-25k	69	206	£1,053,460	2.2%
25k-50k	48	742	£1,751,558	3.6%
50-90k	37	796	£2,373,160	4.9%
>90k	63	3,071	£42,716,804	87.5%

Note: >£90k was used as a proxy for those contracts that are most likely to require the Council to undertake a procurement route compliant with the PCRs.

6. Clearly, we need to ensure that resources within both services and procurement are focused most on purchases with the 63 suppliers who account for nearly 90% of our total external spend – not just in terms of their initial commissioning, but also in terms of the ongoing management.
7. In contrast, 75% of our suppliers account for spend with whom we spend less than £25k. The financial risk associated with each individual supplier is relatively low to the Council. Enabling services to have more flexibility to seek the best purchasing route may enable them to progress more quickly and work more actively and directly with local suppliers rather than trying to search for potential suppliers to quote.
8. With this in mind, the following structure for the thresholds in the Contract Procedure Rules are being proposed:

	<b>Minimum Process</b>	<b>Procurement Option approval</b>	<b>Recommendation to award approval</b>	<b>Contract</b>
Up to £25k	Try to obtain value	Not required, however where spending >£5k a simple decision record is completed by the service manager setting out what has been purchased and gives the information we are required to produce on the contract register		Purchase Order
£25k to £100k	Min. 3 quotes, with option to use other processes	Head of Service	Head of Service	Based on standard terms and quote response (including terms attached to purchase order), can be formal contract
£100k to PCR	Min. 3 tenders, with option to use other processes	Head of Service	Head of Service	Formal Contract

PCR and above	Open, compliant process	Executive Director	Executive Director	Formal Contract
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9. This approach provides greater flexibility at lowest levels of spend. Nonetheless, throughout the process, we still expect services to ensure their decisions are subject to appropriate documentation and approval.
10. Further, the contract procedures are the minimum process services should comply with; services may find it preferable to use other options such as tenders or a framework where appropriate at lower levels of spend.
11. The Constitution delegates the Executive Director for Corporate and Commercial Services with authority to approve changes to the Contract Procedures. If agreed, we will be making necessary changes to the associated processes and documentation with the aim of bringing this into effect prior to 1 June 2022.

## **Case Study 2: ICT procurement for the council and NCSL**

This case study was provided by the ICT team to the Future Shape Norwich: Supplier Workstream, a group set up this year to share information and learning within the Council on commissioning and contract management. The NPS Norwich Transfer has provided the opportunity to evaluate supplier relationships, and through consolidating the number of ICT contracts, the Council can potentially secure better value and simplify their contract management arrangements. The data we have obtained from SPS enables us to look at how we can consolidate and aggregate spend across the Council on a wider basis, including a cross-service level, to improve outcomes for the Council.

### **Background**

The second phase of the Project Place programme comprises the return of NPS and NNB services and teams into the council and NCS respectively. This includes multiple requirements for ICT hardware and software to enable those teams to continue to deliver services on behalf of the council.

### **Approach**

Initially Norse (providers of IT services to NPS and NNB) were asked for a list of software and applications that they provided to those teams. In addition to this, they conducted a survey of the relevant users to ascertain their perspective of the IT provision and this resulted in another list being created. The combined total on both lists amounted to 79 different software elements.

Additional attributes for each of the items on the list was requested and confirmed over a period of time – these being:

- The number of installations
- Known costs – either per license or for a 'site' license
- Whether the software was installed on-premise or was remotely hosted, e.g. an external website
- How many members of staff used or claimed to use the software
- The use to which the software was put
- Was the software up to date and if not any effort and cost associated with bringing it up to date
- Was it part of a corporate Norse system or exclusively for the use of the NPSN/NNB teams

Working with Norse IT, the onboarding team for Project Place, representatives from both NPS and NNB as well as others with the council's IT Services teams the list was reduced by:

- 1) Rejecting all items that had not been used for some time, or confirmed by users as no longer necessary for their job
- 2) Understanding all items for which the use was simply an extension of existing council software installations, e.g. MS Office, Project, Visio, Adobe, Teams, Zoom, ArcGIS and AutoCAD software

- 3) Understanding all items for which there was an acceptable equivalent already in use at the council, only requiring an extension of an existing agreement instead of a new procurement, e.g. Profess, NBS Chorus

Aside from this activity, a strategic choice was made to review the additional modules that could be added onto the NEC Housing system already being built as a new housing management system for the council. The vast majority of the work delivered by the NNB teams was for the maintenance and upgrade of the council's own housing stock, so making the best use of the system already being developed to manage that stock and its tenancies, was a logical step. It was concluded that the extra modules should be bought and used to provide aligned systems and services for the NNB teams and, to an extent, NPSN teams too.

### **Outcome**

- Only 23 items remain on the list, mostly low-cost and not requiring significant procurement and installation effort
- Any additional investment was kept to an absolute minimum
- Reduced opportunity for additional complexity of the IT software estate
- Reduced the requirement for unnecessary procurement activity
- Focusing effort and time on absolutely necessary software evaluation, procurement and installation
- Reducing cost by pursuing only genuine software installations - initially identified by IT teams and users but subsequently with the onboarding team and operational managers within NNB and NPSN

A targeted and strategic use of the new housing management system to amalgamate and refine operational data, processing and decision making activity for the council's housing services into one system.