



**YOUR
FUTURE
SOLIHULL**



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Procurement Strategy 2024 - 2029



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1. Introduction

This strategy builds on Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) achievements under its previous Procurement Strategies, sets out our plans for continuous improvement and to work in conjunction with Rules for Contracts. A framework to work within to ensure that we deliver the best possible outcome for every pound spent with our suppliers.

The overarching purpose of this strategy is to ensure our procurement activities are undertaken consistently to a high standard, efficiently and economically whilst helping achieve economic, social and environmental benefits for our community.

Procurement is not solely about compliance – although this is still an integral part. Procurement is the whole process of acquisition from third parties and in-house providers and covers goods, services and works. The process covers the point of initial conception and definition of business need, to the effective management of markets, through to the end of the useful life of an asset/the end of a services contract. The contract lifecycle.

All Procurement activity should help to achieve Solihull MBC's Vision:

“Where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and more prosperous through growth that creates opportunities for all.”

Expenditure through contracts deliver essential front line public services. Our service purpose is to work collaboratively with colleagues across the Council to ensure that contracts deliver favourable impacts upon the lives of those who use our services. The scale and complexity of our work requires a “best in class” procurement function, and this strategy sets out the priorities we will focus on to work towards achieving our vision.

Whilst we operate in a challenging environment, in which savings will always be a factor for consideration, we need a plan which also focuses on achieving additional outcomes from our procurement activity at no extra cost. By leveraging our procurement expenditure and engaging with suppliers, we can help the council enhance our communities through delivering social value.

Local Government is under increasing pressure to deliver services in the face of reduced funding. In this context, delivery of the council plan requires resourcefulness and we are responding in a variety of ways through our procurement practice. Our response includes strategies designed to:

- maximise value for money – including ‘social value’ – achieved from the councils spend.
- implement our Responsible Procurement Policy Framework (RPPF).
- maximise the benefits of digital procurement practice.
- deliver continuous improvement plans to achieve our vision.

Lastly, it recognises that the environment is fast-changing and that developments, such as regulatory reform post leaving the EU, covid recovery and international situations, may require changes in strategy some way into the period this Strategy covers. The strategy has been designed so that priorities may become redundant or changed to reflect new or changed priorities. In other words, it is a living strategy.

2. Background

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council have previously used the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England, and the standards contained within as a basis to self-assess our performance and capability as a service.

This strategy maintains alignment with the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England but reflects a change to utilise the Government Commercial Functions (GCF) Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework (CCIAF), designed to drive continuous improvement in commercial practices right across the public sector.

We participated in cohort 2B of the CCIAF assessment and was an early adopter of the framework. This involved peer review of our self-assessment and focuses on 8 key themes. These are:

1. Commercial strategy, planning and governance
2. Commercial capability and resourcing
3. Commercial lifecycle define: pre-procurement
4. Commercial lifecycle procure: procurement and contracting
5. Commercial lifecycle manage: contract management
6. Managing categories, markets, supplier relationships and working with partners
7. Commercial systems, reporting and information
8. Policy

This strategy aims to define how we will support the Council's Vision: "Where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and more prosperous through growth that creates opportunities for all" through delivery of our procurement activity, as well as track our progress over the coming years as we embark upon our continuous improvement plan to work towards a being a "best in class" procurement service over the next 5 years.

3. Our Vision

“To be a ‘best in class’ procurement service, a critical and valued business partner, meeting our stakeholders expectations and needs, supporting delivery of the Councils vision and goals through robust procurement practice”

At Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), we believe in spending money wisely and effectively to meet the needs of our residents. As a Procurement department servicing the Council and Solihull Community Housing, we are responsible for £380m worth of expenditure per annum on goods, services and works with external suppliers. That level of spending can have a massive influence on the big issues that we face, as outlined in the Council Plan, and our Council priorities and strategies.

	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	Solihull Community Housing
Revenue	£275m	£20.5m
Capital	£67m	£17.8m
Total	£342m	£38.3m

The goods, works and services we chose to commission, the suppliers we award to, the relationships we maintain and develop with our suppliers, and the commercial opportunities we offer, can strengthen the local economy and improve the wellbeing of Solihull’s population.

There are several Government Acts that place responsibilities on the Council in relation to commissioning, procurement and contract management, and whilst changes to the Public Contract Regulations are imminent, the following general principles will remain:

- equality of treatment
- transparency
- mutual recognition
- proportionality

The Councils previous successful procurement strategy focused on:

- Efficiency – improved outcomes and value for money from the goods, works and services that it procures; and
- Governance – ensuring the councils has appropriate and proportionate controls, systems and standards to manage procurement risk and to comply with legal requirements.

Whilst efficiency and governance remain a key focus of our strategy and our work, we aim to be a more progressive function aligned with meeting the requirements of global, national and local commitments through our procurement activity. Achieve digital transformation and implement our responsible procurement policy framework underpinned by annual achievement of our continuous improvement plans to help us be a ‘best in class’ procurement leader.

4. The Way We Work

Structure

The Corporate Procurement service is structured to support the needs of our stakeholders, with specific category teams aligned to support Directorates within the Council for operational procurement support and a dedicated separate policy, systems and governance team to ensure that sufficient focus is placed upon the importance of these activities in relation to how we work and the decisions we make.

The sub-teams:

- Resources – Supporting Finance, Property Services, HR, Strategic Land and Property, Procurement, Income and Awards, Audit Services, Legal and Democratic Services, ICT, Business Intelligence and Improvement and Communications with their procurement requirements.
- People - Supporting Adults Social Care, Childrens Services and our Public Health team with their procurement requirements.
- E&I/SCH/UKC - Supporting Economy and Infrastructure, Solihull Community Housing and UK Central with their procurement requirements.
- Policy, Systems and Governance - Development, management and maintenance of data and our digital strategy and systems. Driving forward the commercial assurance and governance around strong procurement, on-going management and maintenance of systems, policies and procedures e.g. Rules for Contracts, Our responsible procurement policy framework, Contract Management Assessment Tool etc. This includes performance reporting.

Roles and Responsibilities

There are clear accountabilities, and therefore roles and responsibilities, which will underpin successful working between the Corporate Procurement Services and individual directorates.

The Corporate Procurement Service staff will:

- Be accountable for providing a central source of expertise, advice and support in relation to Procurement and Contract Management.
- Providing check and challenge as appropriate when helping to develop Procurement strategies, specifications and evaluation criteria.
- Ensure that Corporate Procurement Service staff have the appropriate knowledge and experience in respect of the relevant category of spend.
- Ensure each category team will include specialist staff with high levels of expertise who can provide support to directorates in developing strategic approaches and in delivering highly complex or sensitive procurements.
- In addition, ensure we have staff who can support more straightforward procurements.
- Work with directorate colleagues via the established category teams, to ensure consistency of approach and advice.
- Engage with the supply market at the earliest opportunity to maximise outcomes e.g. social value, innovation and efficiencies.

- Continue to share issues, lessons learned, best practice and innovations with colleagues across the Council.

We ask Directorates to:

- Remain accountable for the procurements and commissioned services that they need, to deliver the services and secure the outcomes that they are responsible for. In some cases, this is joint procurement with partners such as the health service or procurement on behalf of other directorates, for example energy.
- Own the preparation of the specification, evaluation questions and criteria, and take all decisions in relation to the procurement, in line with the governance procedures and decision-making rules laid down in the Rules for Contracts. This includes the proportion of the budget to be allocated to the contract, the decision to commence a procurement, and which organisation to award the contract to. The directorate is then accountable for mobilising, managing, and exiting the contract.
- It is imperative that directorates involve CPS at the earliest opportunity to ensure the most appropriate procurement route and resource is identified and secured well in advance.

Skills Development & Capacity Building

Our procurement vision and strategy require the right structure and staff to deliver. We recognise that this requires investment. To achieve this, we will:

- Build the capability and capacity of our team to meet the needs of those we serve.
- Equip staff and managers with appropriate procurement skills in order to fulfil their roles.
- Continue to develop our supportive, pro-active, strategic, innovative, challenging and learning culture.
- Continually review and develop a structure and roles that are attractive and support the needs of the Council.
- Strengthen commercial leadership and management skills.

Our Values and behaviours

We expect our team to demonstrate our Corporate values and behaviours:

- Our values; being ambitious, open, honest and keeping to our promises, and;
- Our behaviours; the way in which we act or conduct ourselves, especially towards others. It's about how we involve and engage with people to achieve good outcomes and create a pleasant working environment. How we do things, How we treat others, What we say and how we say it and how we expect to be treated.

There are five sets of behaviours, regardless of the role or grade within the team and, additionally, one behaviour set focused on leadership for managers.

Excellence

With enthusiasm, you work to deliver high quality service from your work location, whether that be in a Council building or in a remote working location, to meet customer, organisation

and personal expectations. You adopt a 'can do' attitude in all of the work we deliver ensuring it meets the needs of current and potential customers.

Simplicity

We actively seek ways to prevent over-complication or confusion, by adopting the most simplified approach to work. We communicate clearly and concisely, ensuring that the message is understood by all taking into account hybrid working.

Working Together

We work with others to reach a common goal; sharing information, supporting colleagues, both in their work and wellbeing, and searching out expertise and solutions from relevant partners and/or the communities we serve.

Trust and Respect

We are aware of our impact on others including confidentiality, team relationships and wellbeing. We value openness and listen carefully to understand the views of others. We promote the values of inclusion and diversity and actively work to minimise any harm caused to others in order to foster an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Responsibility

We take ownership for our own wellbeing, work and working environment and use our initiative to deliver. We are accountable for our own performance and development and take responsibility for our actions and decisions.

Leadership – for managers

Our leadership is demonstrated by delivering outcomes and inspiring our team and individuals to improve and develop within an environment that enables individuals to achieve their potential.

These values and behavioural requirements are taken seriously and managed through the corporate PDRF framework and approach for all team members.

Our Procurement Operations Manual (POM)

Our procurement operations manual is how we provide guidance for our team members to perform their roles correctly and efficiently. It documents the approved standard procedures, processes and includes standard templates for carrying out their role as a procurement practitioner working in SMBC. Compliance with the procurement operations manual is a requirement for all team members.

Its purpose is to act as a single version of the truth and reflects expected standards of practice during a period of fast pace change and improvement. It does not substitute for professional training, but it is sufficient to allow a trained and competent procurement professional to adapt to the specific procedures within SMBC.

It is a knowledge base for SMBC and is available for reference whenever needed by members of the Corporate Procurement Service. The operations manual is saved in

Sharepoint and periodically reviewed and updated whenever appropriate to ensure that it remains current.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

We provide a procurement service to Solihull Community Housing. How we work with our stakeholders in organisations that are arms length management organisations to the Council is documented within our service SLA where there are clear responsibilities for both the procurement team and our stakeholders.

We recognise that we can only realise our full potential, and that of the stakeholders, if we can empower people with the right tools, working in the right environment, in the right way. This is why the way we work is so very important.

5. Our Approach to Procurement

Financial pressures on the Council emphasise the importance that our procurement activities can make a real contribution towards a robust financial position.

Rules for Contracts

We have a duty to apply controls and consistent standards across all our procurement activities. Applying good leadership and governance ensures that our key decisions, processes, and procedures are legal, reflect best practice and manages risk.

We ensure compliance with the Rules for Contracts and public procurement law, including the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and The Procurement Act 2023, in order to manage procurement risk and to comply with legal requirements. We will keep up to date with relevant legislative changes, procurement case law and other evidence of best practice.

In addition, we will ensure compliance with the council's financial regulations, budgetary control mechanisms (such as "purchase order to pay policy") and officer schemes of delegation for the procurement of all goods, works and services.

Further, we will continue to engage with stakeholders by championing the impact of best procurement practices, developing and maintaining the Council's Rules for Contracts and together ensure a professional and consistent approach through the continued development of best practice documents and toolkits.

Governance

Procurement Board will be held monthly as of April 2024. The purpose is to ensure that any procurement undertaken with a cumulative value above the Public Contract Regulations threshold, or which has implications which in the view of the Head of Procurement is of interest to the Procurement Board; meets an appropriate need, proposes an appropriate route to market, is fully funded, complies with public procurement law, has considered all risks, seeks best value for money, is aligned with the Council Plan, identifies, articulates and delivers social value and will be effectively contract managed. Aswell as ensuring that all exceptions to the Rules for Contracts are applied and approved appropriately in line with processes established and agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team.

In addition, the Procurement Board will carry out checks to ensure that an up to date procurement strategy, reflecting national standards and supported by appropriate policies and procedures is in place, Rules for Contracts are followed and corporate procurement performance is managed through reporting to the Procurement Board and Corporate Leadership Team.

Commissioning

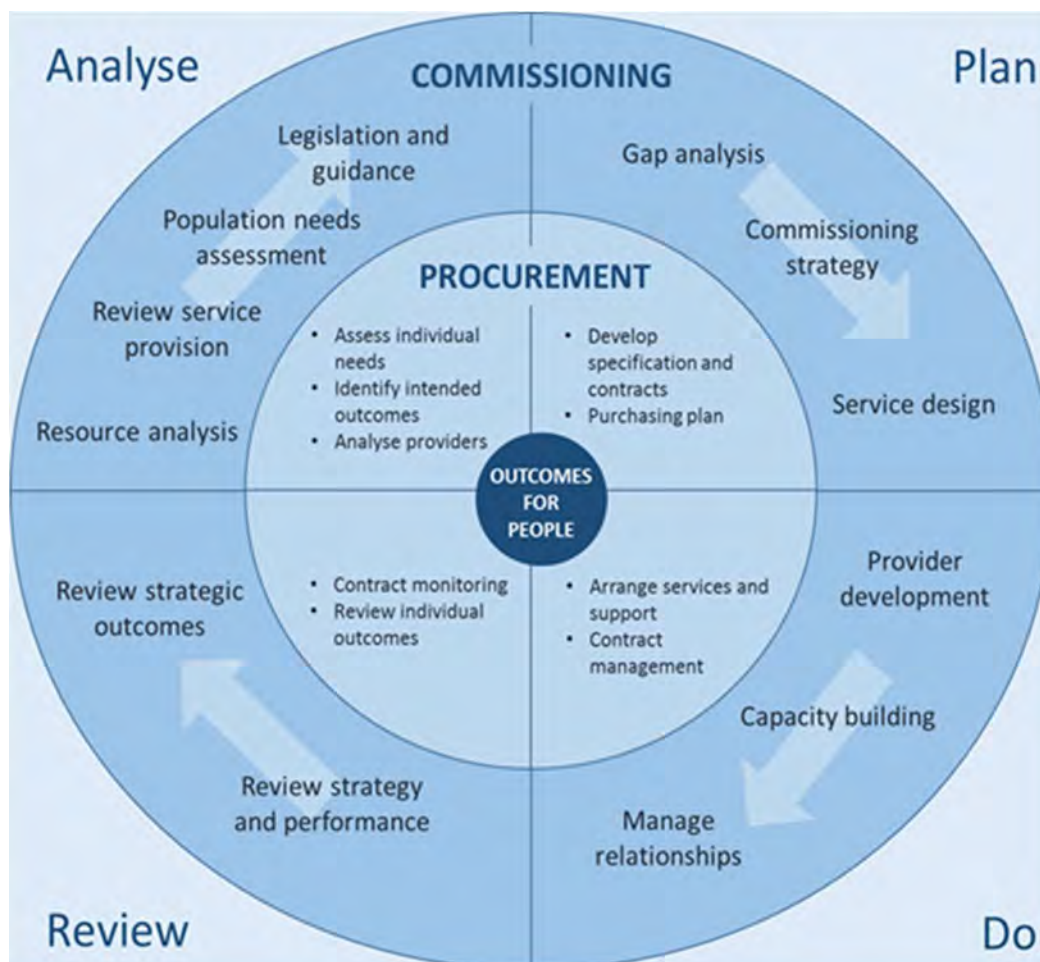
Commissioning is the process which establishes what services are required, now and in the future, to meet the needs of our residents, and to ensure that they are planned and delivered in a way which meets any statutory duties. Commissioning is not part of the Corporate Procurement Service and is a function carried out by Directorates.

Procurement ensures those services are procured, delivered and managed in a way which secures best value from public resources and ensures legal compliance.

The following diagram illustrates the key steps in the commissioning and procurement cycle. The outer ring shows the stage in the commissioning process and the inner ring shows the resultant stage in the procurement process.

It shows how commissioning and procurement is a continuous process and how we work together with our commissioners within Directorates.

Procurement are a member of the Strategic Commissioning Board to ensure that Procurement best practice aligns to the Corporate approach to commissioning and does not duplicate activities.



Partnering and Collaboration

Procurement can make a major contribution but that requires leadership and best use of resources through partnerships, working with those involved in the commissioning process, budget holders, suppliers and the wider public sector, particularly our Integrated Care System partners.

Where it is in our interests and meets our procurement and sourcing strategies, we will actively pursue collaborative procurement opportunities with Solihull Community Housing

(SCH), our Integrated Care System (ICS) partners, neighbouring authorities and public service bodies to secure and deliver common services through shared contracting arrangements with suppliers.

We will also engage with the wider public sector to explore ways we can aggregate spend, share experiences and expertise, and look beyond the traditional boundaries to see how services can be improved and procured more effectively.

We will, where a procurement strategy identifies there are opportunities, seek to engage in partnerships with Suppliers to harness and drive innovation.

Category Management

By deploying a category management approach and providing an enhanced combination of support and challenge, we will:

- Lead the way in seeking out opportunities for financial savings and ensuring that these become real cost reductions.
- Undertake research and engage with the market to both understand and influence the existing and future demand for our services.
- Exploit opportunities to make cost savings through investing and enhancing our category, supplier, and contract management activities; pursuing partnering and collaborative opportunities and, developing a skilled team to deliver our requirements.

We will continue to adopt the principles of category management in our approach to procurement activities. The category management approach will ensure that we take a full view of procurement spend to maximise value for money and secure other non-financial benefits.

Our requirements will be divided into categories that best reflect the market's capacity to supply. The aim is to take a strategic view of how our demand is best supplied from bought in goods, services and works at the greatest value to the Council and the local community and to ensure that our priorities are adopted throughout the entire cycle.

Our needs analysis and pre-market engagement will identify if there is any scope for improvement by changes in planning and control or changing the specification of what is needed. Supply analysis will establish opportunities by assessing supplier abilities and relationships, market analysis and positioning, supplier competition and differentiation.

Through our category management approach, we will:

- Develop effective leadership on spend
- Develop and manage the supply market
- Help inform the design of new models of service delivery including innovation
- Maximise value through spend aggregation
- Standardise specification to increase market competitiveness

- Understand the cost drivers that determine the costs we incur.

Supplier and Contract Management

We recognise that we need to be more effective in contract and supplier management to ensure we can maximise the opportunities for additional cost savings and non-financial benefits. Contract management is more than ensuring suppliers meet their contractual obligations, it helps to identify and manage risk that will be inherent in the contracts and to drive continuous improvement throughout the life of the contracts.

We offer an advisory role and provide a strategic framework for how the organisation approaches contract management via the SMBC Contract Management Assessment Tool.

Key to delivering our strategic plan is developing our contract management capabilities. The digitisation of this process via our 'source to contract' solution (Atamis) and improve supplier relationship management in the future.

Our aim is to be as efficient as possible, maximising the use of digital tools to enable this.

6. Our Responsible Procurement Policy Framework (RPPF)

Solihull Council is a complex organisation, providing a wide range of services to a diverse population. It procures supplies, services and works from many third-party suppliers in order to deliver services, achieve its vision and deliver the outcomes set out in the Solihull Council Plan.

The scale and diversity of our purchasing power provides opportunities to fundamentally change the way that supplies, services and works are designed, provided, consumed, and disposed of. Procurement is a crucial function, it is therefore vital that it is effectively managed in order to maximise its positive impact. We have a responsibility to manage public money with probity, to ensure that value for money is achieved and to manage it in such a way that wider Council objectives can be supported.

Responsible procurement helps us make a positive impact in the communities we serve, and it makes good business sense. It helps to achieve value for money and has the potential for positive change; to help combat global issues such as climate change, promote equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout our supply chain and to address the local priorities.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all procurement activity contributes to the Council's overall vision and helps to deliver out key priorities.
- Support our suppliers and contractors to understand our local priorities to deliver improved outcomes for Solihull residents.
- Provide a Framework to support Officers to promote and enhance opportunities in delivering social benefits to our communities.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, policies and procedures.

This policy will also be used as a driver for continuous improvement of our commissioning, procurement, purchasing and contract management practice to deliver:

- Fit for purpose procurement processes that are inclusive and enable the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and small business to participate.
- Improved commissioning practice placing impact-based decision making at the heart of our commissioning approach.
- Improved contracts resulting in improved services and outcomes for the whole borough.

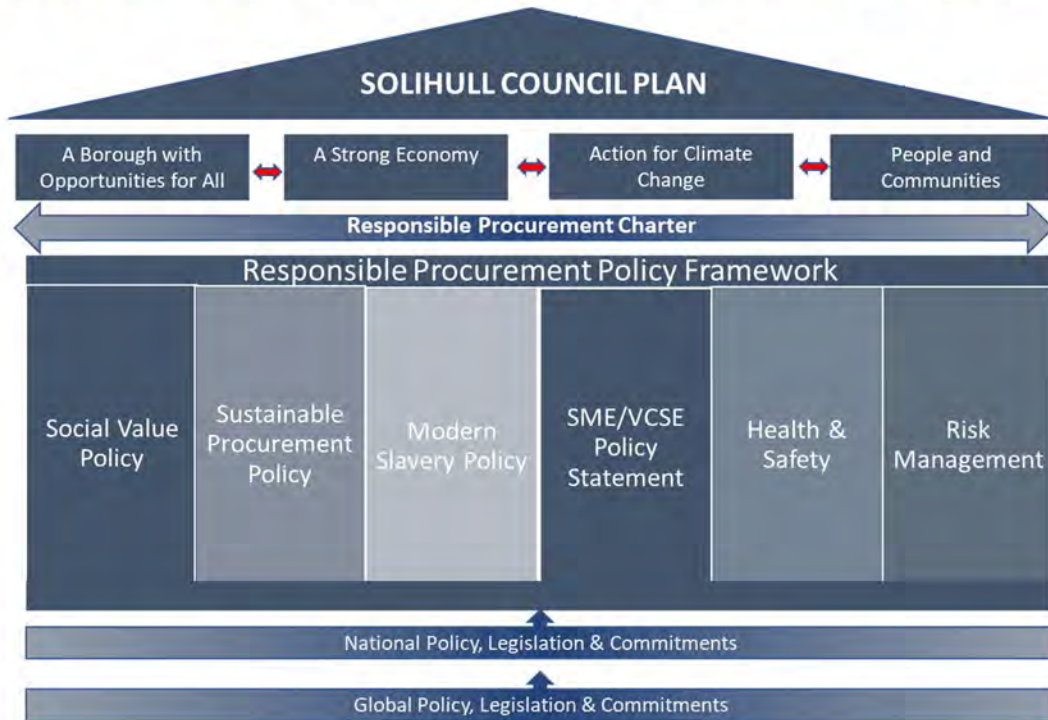
The Council's Responsible Procurement Policy Framework 'RPPF' is a framework of Council policies that are underpinned by legislation, global and national policy commitments. The RPPF supports delivery of the Solihull Council Plan and enables the Council to commission and procure in a manner that is legally compliant and considerate of the impact, both positive and negative, that the Council may have on the environment, the economy, and society in general.

The RPPF consists of six Solihull Council policies:

- Social Value Policy
- Sustainable Procurement Policy

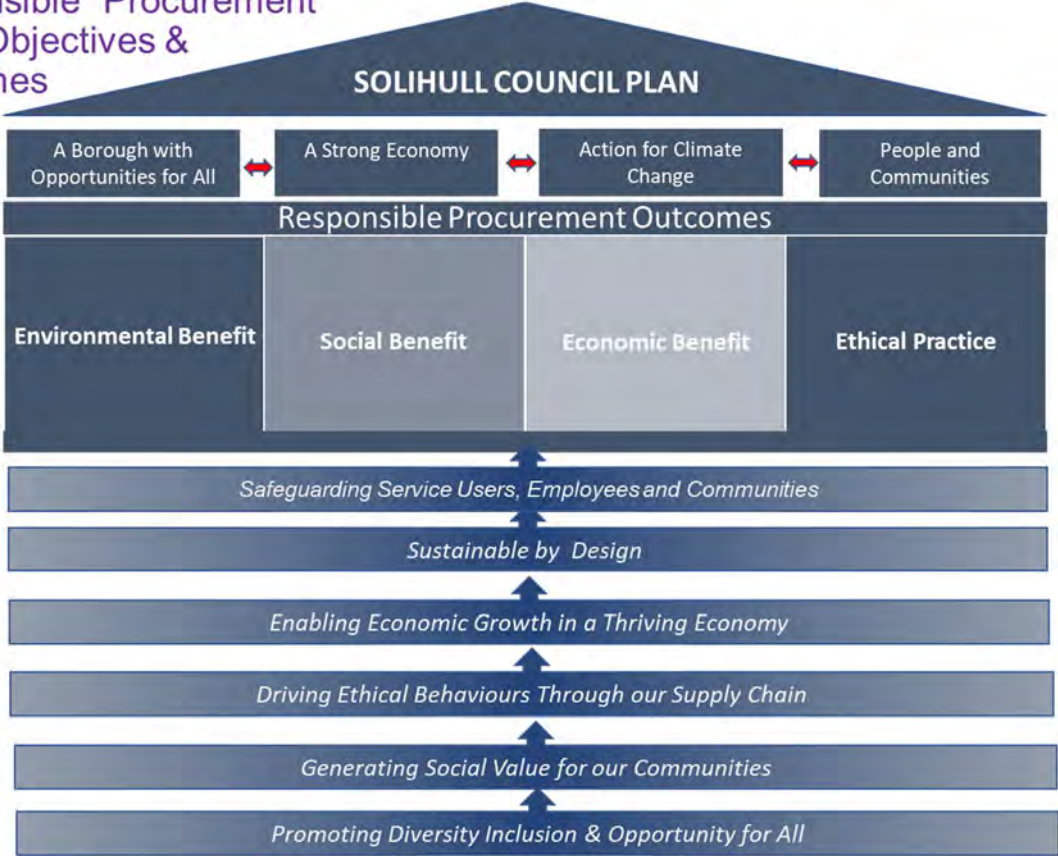
- Solihull MBC Modern Slavery Statement
- SME/VCSE Policy Statement
- Corporate Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Management Policy

Responsible Procurement Policy Framework - 'RPPF'



The Council's 'RPPF' sets out clear aims, objectives, and commitments for the conduct of ethical and responsible commissioning, procurement and contract management and directs our achievement of key outcomes that are aligned to the Solihull Council Plan.

Responsible Procurement
Aims, Objectives &
Outcomes



This policy is in draft form and implementation of it will be a key deliverable through achieving this strategy.

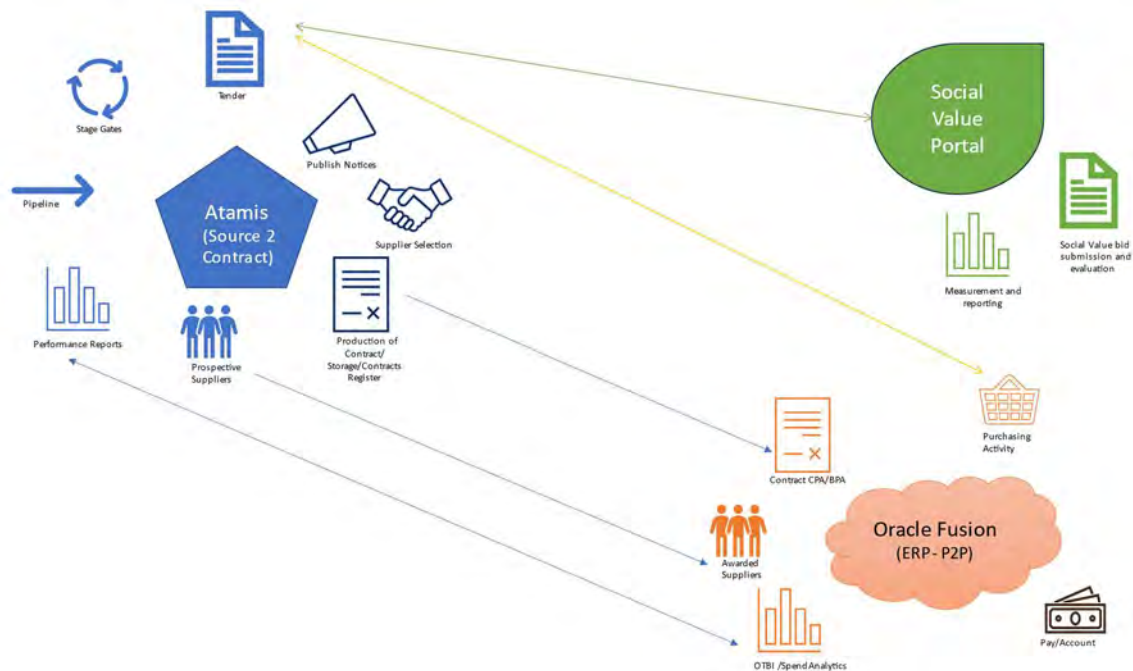
7. Our Digital Strategy

We will strive to deliver new and improved technology and digital solutions during the next five years, to extend our capabilities, improve resilience, introduce greater process automation, and provide us with real time access to the data and information we need to support informed and effective decision making.

The Procurement Team currently have 4 main technology solutions which it relies on. These are:

- Intend – Our outgoing electronic tendering platform.
- Atamis - Our new electronic 'source to contract' (S2C) solution.
- Oracle Fusion - Our purchase to pay solution and spend analytics platform.
- Social Value Portal – Our platform to manage, record and organise our social value activity.

Our digital vision of our Digital Strategy is depicted below:



Intend – Our outgoing electronic tendering platform and contract management tool

In-Tend provides us with a basic e-tendering and contract management tool. Whilst it is a cost-effective solution that was procured via a collaborative arrangement with Coventry and Warwickshire (as part of the disbanded shared service initiative), it does not have the capabilities at the level of functionality now required within a single platform that is needed to support CPS develop its resilience. This contract expires in October 2024.

Atamis – Our 'Source to Contract' Solution

Atamis was procured in November 2023 following an improved resilience plan for the Corporate Procurement Service (June 2023) and a business case approved at the

Procurement Board in October 2023 to procure a new Source to Contract Solution to complement Oracle Fusion. Implementation of the system – Phase 1 is planned for April 2024 to include Pipeline Manager and Tender Management. Phase 2 to include Contract Management and Supplier relationship Management modules to be rolled out following Phase 1.

Phase 1 - Pipeline Manager

The pipeline will provide a forward look at our anticipated procurement activity. The pipeline will contain details of contracts expected to be re-procured and new procurement projects that are expected to be undertaken. The pipeline is to be reviewed and updated monthly and will be maintained within Atamis.

We will continue to publish details of all of our opportunities valued above £50,000 on contracts finder and Find a Tender Service.

To operate successfully and meet the new transparency requirements of The Procurement Act 2023, we will need to plan our activity to align with, and be responsive to, our corporate requirements and publish this 3 years in advance.

Pipeline manager allows us to conduct all pre-procurement planning activity including: Procurement Approval Documents (PAD), Pre-procurement design considerations, Savings and benefits planning, Resource capacity planning (forecast need v resource available). As well as meeting the transparency requirements in terms of the format requested in legislation via The Procurement Act 2023.

It provides approval workflows for project requests and resource forecasts to help us plan our pipeline. It will provide the link between procurement and customer directorates by assimilating dependencies between strategic programmes and commercial activity helping plan resources ahead of time.

Phase 1 - Tender Management

Our new e-sourcing module that assists in request for quotations (RFQ's) and tendering activity up to the award of the contract ensuring compliance with legally required notices and Contracts Finder, as well as ensuring tenders are held securely for the required duration. It encourages procedural discipline aligned to our Procurement Operations Manual (POM) and avoids rushed procurement decisions by automatically generating task workflows for procurement practitioners to follow.

It ensures consistency and auditability across all tendering activity and improves efficiency in the administering of tender processes. All tender documentation is centralised and can be shared securely with authorised stakeholders and also suppliers via the Supplier Portal. There are tools that will suggest which suppliers to invite, facilitates the management of the clarification process aimed at improving efficiency while recording a full audit trail of activity.

It can support; auto-scoring (if appropriate), scoring by multi-user evaluation teams, bid comparison reporting and automatically-generates supplier feedback reports. Approval workflow meaning 'approved and awarded contracts' transfer seamlessly to the Contract Management module for ongoing contract management.

Phase 2 - Contract Management

Aimed at improving our corporate performance and compliance, we plan to deploy this module as part of our Phase 2 implementation. This module will allow us to:

- risk-profile and segment contracts.
- auto-schedule periodic tasks.
- author and share contract documentation such as change control documentation.
- generate renewal alerts.
- measure savings.
- track CSR/social value (when not using Social Value Portal).

Phase 2 - Supplier Relationship Management

This module will support improved management of our key supplier relationships, helping us to maximise our productivity, drive innovation and efficiencies, and minimise supply-side risk. By maintaining all of our supplier information in one place we will save valuable time, resource, eliminate errors and inefficiencies caused by pulling information from multiple sources in relation to risk management, contract performance and document management.

Oracle Fusion

Oracle Fusion is the organisations Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool. It provides the platform for the Procure to Pay (P2P) solution and is used for spend analytics via Oracle Transactional Business Intelligence (OTBI).

All goods, services and works should be accompanied by a purchase order number resultant from following the requisitioning process within Oracle. All purchase orders should be raised in advance as detailed in our 'Purchase Order = Pay' policy.

Procurement support the P2P process in the following ways:

- Support the supplier set up process.
- Create contract purchase agreements (CPAs).
- Approve purchase orders in line with configured rules in Oracle based upon value.

This allows for improved oversight of purchasing activity across the business units we support.

OTBI reporting aids improved business intelligence in the following ways:

- Provides insight to identify contracts/supplier rationalisation opportunities.
- Transactional performance reporting relating to the P2P process

Social Value Portal

A digital solution that supports delivery of the SMBC Social Value policy. It enables the:

- Electronic submission of tender returns in relation to social value, aligned to our prioritised themes, outcomes and measures (TOMs).
- Evaluation of social value returns by subject matter experts.

- Contractual commitments delivered to be measured.
- Efficient performance reporting relating to social value contribution.

Digital transformation puts technology at the core of our strategy. This approach will help us to improve resilience and drive out inefficiency.

8. The Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework (CCIAF)

The CCIAF is designed to help drive continuous improvement in commercial practices across the Government Commercial Function (GCF) and the wider public sector by enabling organisations to benchmark their commercial operations against good practice. As a participating organisation we form part of a network, which includes our ICS partners, to share commercial insight, common challenges and lessons learned. The framework is designed for us to assess our organisations capability in relation to commercial activity and help identify improvement actions as a result of the completed assessment, peer review and achievements of continuous improvement plans (CIPs).

The structure of the assessment framework

The table below sets out the structure of the framework with the 8 themes and 24 practice areas applicable to Local Authorities:

	Theme	Practice Area
1	Commercial strategy, planning and governance	1.1 Overall commercial strategy and plan 1.2 Commercial Pipeline and planning 1.3 Commercial governance and management framework 1.4 Commercial leadership and senior ownership
2	Commercial capability and resourcing	2.1 Improving commercial capability 2.2 Commercial resourcing and operating model 2.3 Contract management competency
3	Commercial lifecycle define: pre-procurement	3.1 Shaping and defining the business need 3.2 Supply market analysis and early market engagement 3.3 Developing and analysing commercial options
4	Commercial lifecycle procure: procurement and contracting	4.1 Applying effective contract terms 4.2 Procurement/commercial activity, bid evaluation and supplier selection 4.3 Appropriate risk allocation between parties
5	Commercial lifecycle manage: contract management	5.1 Contract mobilisation and transition 5.2 Managing delivery and performance 5.3 Managing contract risk
6	Managing categories, markets, supplier relationships and working with partners	6.1 Delivering category and market strategies 6.2 Supplier relationship management and collaborative working in partnership
7	Commercial systems, reporting and information	7.1 Using commercial systems and tools 7.2 Reporting and utilising commercial intelligence and insights
8	Policy	8.1 Policy awareness and implementation 8.2 Social Value 8.3 Small, Medium Enterprises (SMEs) 8.4 Sustainability and Net Zero

The framework draws on its related functional standards in relation to the above practice areas, criteria and includes a set of statements indicating different levels of organisations capability against aspects of the standard, ranging from in development through to good, better and best.

Maturity rating	Applicable percentage ranges within the maximum available score
In development	<40%
Good	>40% and <70%
Better	>70% and <90%
Best	>90%

Our approach to improvement plans

Continuous Improvement plans will be developed on an annual on-going basis aligned with our Directorate TOP 5 Priority plans each year to ensure that we are improving in alignment with not only global and national policy and plans but maintain aligning with local requirements through the Council plan and requirements to meet our customers.

Our historic performance:

As part of cohort 2B in October 2022, our first peer assessment resulted in a maturity rating for the Corporate Procurement service assessed against the CCIAF assessment tool as 'Good' with a score of 56.1%. This is defined as:

Good: A cross-government commercial and governance management framework is defined and established. Organisations have a clear commercial strategy and plan. Goods, works and services are procured using legally compliant, fair and transparent processes, guarding against corruption and fraud. Activities are aligned with commercial policy and organisational objectives and are in conformance with the commercial functional standard. Organisations have a commercial pipeline and capability to drive consistency in the planning and management of buying goods, works and services. Contracts and relationships with suppliers realise value for money and result in the delivery of high-quality public services.

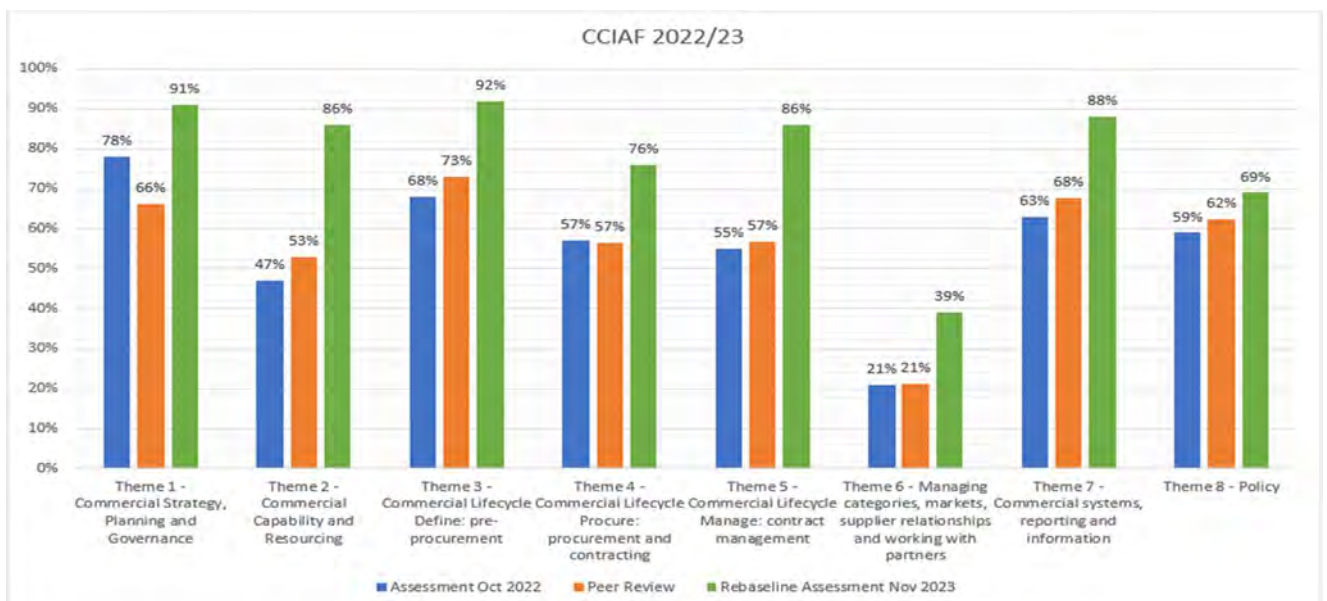
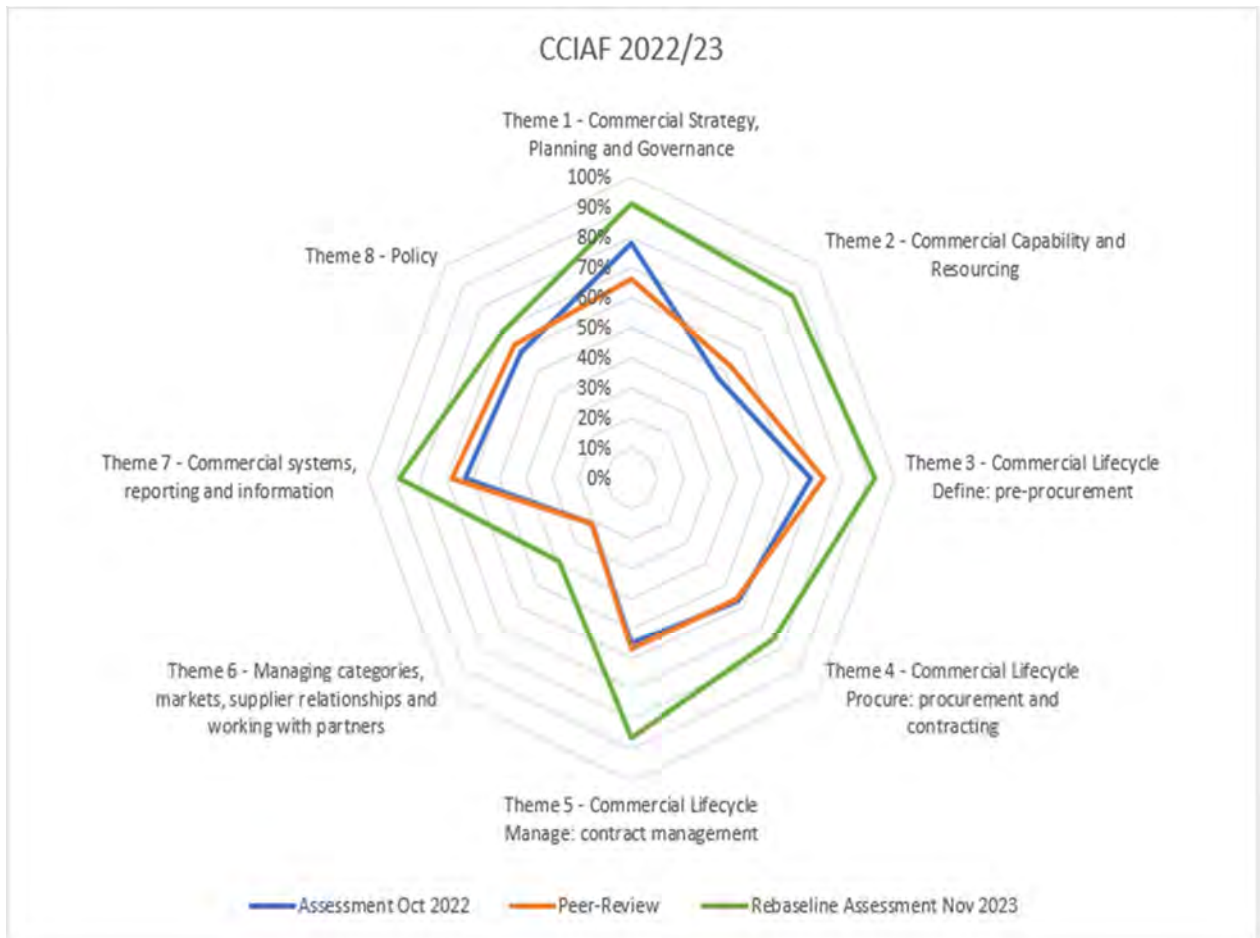
From the peer review undertaken, a playback report was received and identified opportunity areas for improvement. These featured in our Top 5 priorities to deliver through-out 23/24 financial year.

Our current performance:

The most recent self-assessment submitted November 2023, based upon delivery of our CIPs/Top 5 throughout the 23/24 financial year, based upon the evidence provided, has improved our maturity rating for the Corporate Procurement service to 'Better' with a score of 78%. This is defined as:

Better: Governance of commercial activities are an integrated part of the organisation's overall governance. The governance and management framework includes the development and monitoring of commercial policies. The commercial strategy maximises synergy and efficiency between different organisations. Lessons learnt and best practices are captured, shared and reviewed with stakeholders at the start and end of each activity. Continuous improvement is embedded in the organisation's practices through updates to its continuous improvement plans, learning and development opportunities.

The diagram and graph below shows our improved areas of performance, but most importantly our opportunity areas to improve. These will be the focus areas for our annual continuous improvement plans moving forwards and our Top 5 priorities for Resources Directorate performance.



9. Performance Reporting, Planning and Review

We will measure the effectiveness of this strategy and our CCIAF improvement plan through reporting on an annual basis to Procurement Board and quarterly through our Divisional 'Top 5 Priorities'.

As part of participating in the CCIAF assessment, an annual review of progress against our improvement plans will take place and be assessed by a peer reviewer.

The output from the peer review will be used in conjunction with any changes in the Council's priorities and financial position for updating the strategy and future improvement plans.

Ensuring effective implementation of this strategy, we will develop an annual procurement improvement plan. The objectives of the plan will be to identify:

1. The forthcoming 3 year's pipeline of procurement activity
2. Planned improvement activity through Top 5 priorities.
3. Learning and development programme for staff through PDR/PDP processes.
4. Key risks and issues that will need managing to achieve the plan.

10. Conclusion and Summary

The 2024 to 2029 Corporate Procurement Strategy has been developed to set us on the right path towards becoming a “best-in-class” procurement function over the next 5 years. Our CCIAF assessment provides an honest position of where we are today, and outlines where we want to get to, defining our ambitions, objectives and desired outcomes, and challenging ourselves to achieve these at pace.

We will maintain a clear focus on developing our people, processes and technology. On driving improved engagement both internally, and across our wider partners. And in promoting social value and community benefits through our extensive purchasing power.

We will work with the Government Commercial Function and peers, as well as the LGA, to understand and benchmark our progress along the way, and learn from and adopt developing best practices as we go, ensuring our strategy remains live and relevant, and delivering against our needs.

At the heart of what we do will be delivering good customer service to our customers as partners, and in-turn our wider residents, offering confidence that the public money under our control is spent wisely and continues to offer best value.

We have a great team who are ambitious, engaged, motivated and driven. Staff retention has been very challenging for us during 2023 and will continue to be due to the buoyancy of the recruitment market for procurement professionals. Our challenge is to deliver our ambitious strategy whilst retaining our staff and growing our own procurement professionals for the future who will, in time, possess the right skills and experience to lead our service in future years.

We as a team all recognise the challenge that this strategy sets us, and what will be involved to achieve it, and we are confident in our ability to do so.



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