

People Select Committee
Review of Procurement and Tendering Processes
Outline Scope

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Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address? Procurement relates to how the Council purchases goods and works and therefore directly addresses the following Council plan priority: Priority five – A sustainable Council: We will ensure our council is financially sustainable and manages our assets effectively to enhance their local impact. We will be a well-run council across areas of our business and continue to improve outcomes for communities. The actual goods, services and works also support all other council priorities.	
What are the main issues and overall aim of this review? Procurement represents a significant proportion of the Council's annual expenditure and there is an expectation that the Council spends money efficiently, secure competitive prices, and demonstrate transparency in purchasing and the awarding of contracts. Robust procurement arrangements ensure high-quality services and infrastructure, can promote sustainable and environmentally responsible practices, and support local businesses and the local economy. The aim of the review will be to ensure procurement processes deliver value for money, are competitive, and transparent.	
The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry What is the legislation the Council must adhere to in procurement and tendering? What are the Council's contract procedure rules (part of the constitution)? What are the Council's arrangements, structures and procedures for procurement and tendering? What are the pre-procurement stages? How does the Council procure via external organisations e.g. NEPO? What is the breakdown of expenditure through procurement? How is best value duty met when procuring services and/or goods? How are labour costs and overheads within contracts assessed and challenged? How is social value maximised?	

How are decisions made on whether services are provided inhouse or procured? Does the Council procure services with other public sector organisations? What opportunities are there for (further) joint procurement? How often are contracts/procurement reviewed in order to determine best value?
Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work? Council, Cabinet
Expected duration of review and key milestones: Six months (reporting to Cabinet in January 2027) Approve scope and project plan – July 2026 Receive evidence – July 2026 – October 2026 Draft recommendations – November 2026 Final report – December 2026 Report to Cabinet – January 2027
What information do we need? Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.): A councillor's guide to procurement (2025 edition) Local Government Association Contract Procedure Rules Social Value Policy New information: Comparison with other local authorities

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)	What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?
Procurement	The legislative remit and Council processes Contract procedure rules Budget and spending areas (i.e. what the Council spends money on)
North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO)	How the Council operates in the wider region How the Council compares to other Local Authorities in the region
LGA	Best practice in procurement processes used
Local Chamber of Commerce	Their experience of the Councils procurement process
How will this information be gathered? (e.g. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey) Committee meetings, reports, desk-based research, survey	

How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?

Committee meetings, information submissions

How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?

The Equality Act 2010 protects everyone from discrimination on grounds of nine Protected Characteristics (including – but not limited to – age, gender, disability, ethnicity), and advance equality of opportunity for those with Protected Characteristics.

Public bodies must have due regard for advancing equality which includes:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

Robust and well managed procurement and tendering arrangement contributes to the financial stability of the Council and thereby ensures SBC continues to deliver the services that communities need.

How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

Robust and well managed procurement and tendering arrangement contributes to the financial stability of the Council and thereby ensures SBC continues to deliver the services that communities need.

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:

Examining procurement processes and identifying whether there are any areas where these may be strengthened will ensure the Council is delivering value for money and processes are transparent.

Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	June 2026	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	23.06.26	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	06.07.26	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Determine whether Communications Plan needed	TBC	Link Officer, Scrutiny Officer
Obtaining Evidence	Background evidence Evidence from Procurement Evidence from NEPO/LGA & Local Chamber of Commerce	06.07.26 07.09.26 05.10.26	Select Committee
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	02.11.26	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	November 26	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TBC	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Final Agreement of Report	Approval of final report by Committee	07.12.26	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	19.01.27	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet/Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	21.01.27	Cabinet / Approving Body

