

CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

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CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Contract Standing Orders are made in accordance with the requirements of Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the purpose is to provide a framework within which commissioning and purchasing decisions are undertaken to enable the Council to:

- furthers its priorities
- use its resources efficiently
- commission quality goods, services and works
- operate in a fair, open and transparent manner
- safeguard its reputation from the implication of dishonesty or corruption.

1.2 These Contract Standing Orders provide the minimum standards and requirements that shall be met on all occasions when the Council enters into an agreement for the supply of goods, services or the execution of works. Further guidance that shall also be applied is provided in the Council's Commissioning and Procurement Manual.

1.3 These Contract Standing Orders apply to all contracts, leases, concessions and agreements entered into by or on behalf of the Council; except where:

- The goods, services or works are provided by a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council or where the Council controls the subsidiary in a similar way to which control is exercised over their own departments, more than 80% of the subsidiary's activities are undertaken for the Council and there is no direct private capital participation in the subsidiary.
- The Council collaborates with other Public Authorities to deliver a public service with a view to achieving objectives that they have in common and the collaboration is implemented in a manner governed solely by considerations relating to the public interest.
- The Council has established a Mutual Organisation delivering a service contract in relation to education, healthcare and housing, health and social work services, or library and other cultural services. A contract may be awarded for no more than 3 years.
- Circumstances where purchases are made or services rendered as a consequence of a contract made by another Local Authority, Government Department, Government Body or Agent, the benefits of which the Council obtains as a result of participation in a consortium.

- Goods are purchased by public auction.
- The lending or borrowing of money.
- The appointment of any Officer directly employed by the Council.
- The sale or purchase of any land or buildings.
- The provision of services by Legal Counsel.
- Agreements setting out the conditions which the Council will provide funding to particular voluntary sector bodies.
- The goods or services are supplied at a fixed price or the prices are wholly controlled by trade organisations or Government order and no satisfactory alternative is available.

2. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

2.1 All commissioning and procurement activity by the Council shall be undertaken in compliance with the Council's Procurement Scheme of Delegation which is provided in Table 1.

2.2 Delegation of Authority to Approved Officers

Corporate Managers have responsibility to delegate authority to Approved Officers and shall ensure that they have the appropriate levels of capability and understanding to undertake the role.

2.3 Recording of Delegations

Effective records of delegations shall be maintained in the Council's Authorised Signatory List which the Council's Section 151 Officer or his/her nominee has responsibility for the compilation of. Corporate Managers (or the role which succeeds this role) have responsibility to ensure that details of Approved Officers are maintained in the Authorised Signatory List.

2.4 Variation from the Procurement Scheme of Delegation

Where requirements for high value contracts and purchase orders occur on a regular basis the Section 151 Officer may approve a variation from the Standard Procurement Scheme of Delegation for requirements up to £250k. Any such variations shall be recorded in the Council's Authorised Signatory List.

Table 1 – Standard Procurement Scheme of Delegation

£ Value excl. VAT	Approve the Selection of Suppliers to Invite to Tender	Approve the award of business	Signing of contracts	Approval of purchase or works orders, payment vouchers or invoices	Approval of contract extensions	Approval of exemption from undertaking competitive sourcing
Up to £25k	Not Applicable	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Approved Officer	Corporate Manager
£150k	Not Applicable	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager	Corporate Manager
£150k to £250k	Corporate Manager	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Assistant Director
Over £250k	Corporate Manager	Director	Council's Monitoring Officer	Director	Director	Director

Notes

(1) Corporate Manager or Professional Lead or the role which succeeds these roles.

(2) Assistant Director or the role which succeeds this role.

3. PERSONAL INTERESTS

- 3.1 Employees of the Council and members of the Council shall give notice in writing to the Council of any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, which he/she has in a contract entered into (or to be entered into) by the Council.
- 3.2 Such notification shall be given to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

4. MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS

- 4.1 Proper records of all communications, reports, minutes, meetings, quotes, tenders, contract and other relevant documents shall be retained securely so as to protect the integrity of the process and managed in accordance with the Council's policy on The Management and Retention of Records.
- 4.2 A record of all Contracts shall be entered into the Council's Contract Register.

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 The following principles shall be applied to all the Council's commissioning and procurement.

5.2 Fairness and Transparency

All of the Council's commissioning and procurement shall be undertaken in an open and fair manner which provides the same information to all suppliers and an equal opportunity to all potential suppliers. The Council shall ensure that comparable situations are not treated differently and that different situations are not treated similarly.

5.3 The Principle of Proportionality

The Council's commissioning and procurement shall be undertaken with regard to the principle of proportionately. Requirements placed upon suppliers shall be appropriate for attaining the objective pursued and shall not go beyond what is required to achieve the objectives of the procurement.

5.4 Value for Money

The selection of offers for goods, services or the execution of works from suppliers shall be based upon achieving value for money for the Council.

5.5 Sustainability

The selection of offers for goods, services or the execution of works from suppliers shall ensure that sustainable and ethical sources of supply with minimal impact upon the environment are used.

5.6 Economic and Social Development

Subject to the test of fairness and equality for potential suppliers the requirement to support specific regional economic and social development opportunities may be included.

6. SOURCING PROCESSES

- 6.1 The sourcing process that shall be used will depend upon the type and estimated value of the requirement (excluding VAT), refer to Table 2.
- 6.2 Requirements shall not be broken down into smaller portions (lots) for the purpose of avoiding the application of the procurement thresholds.

Table 2 – Sourcing Processes

Value of Expenditure	Sourcing Process
Less than £1k – All Categories	Verbal or email confirmation from supplier, pricing obtained from suppliers' catalogue.
£1k to £25k – All Categories	A written quote from the supplier shall be obtained.
£25k to £150k – All Categories	At least three quotes shall be invited using the Formal Quotation Process.
Over £150k – All Categories	<p>A Tender shall be undertaken and advertised nationally and also in the EU where the value threshold for the UK Public Contract Regulations is passed for the relevant category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods and Services • Light Touch Services (see Note 1) • Works <p>Definitions of the categories and the current UK Public Contract Regulations Value Thresholds are available in the Commissioning and Procurement Manual.</p>

Note (1) Light Touch Services are health, social and related services, administrative social, educational and cultural services, compulsory social services, benefit services, community social and personal services, religious services, catering services for private households, prison services, postal services, investigation and security services.

7. EXEMPTIONS TO UNDERTAKING A COMPETITIVE SOURCING PROCESS

7.1 Exemptions to the requirement to undertake a competitive sourcing process shall be approved in accordance with the Council's Procurement Scheme of Delegation and can only be undertaken in the circumstances listed in Table 3.

Table 3- Exemptions to Undertaking a Competitive Sourcing Process

Type of Exemption	Criteria	£ Value for which this Exemption can be Applied
Sole Provider	Where for technical or artistic reasons connected with the protection of exclusive rights only a single supplier can meet the requirements.	Unlimited
Urgency A	Emergency action is required which acting diligently the Council could not have foreseen and if not taken would provide an unacceptable impact upon on the delivery of the Council's services.	Up to the value of the UK Public Contract Regulations value thresholds.
Urgency B	In cases of extreme urgency, where the health and safety of the public is at stake and the likelihood of harm during the period of delay is considerable, for reasons unforeseeable by and not attributable to the Council.	Unlimited
Additional Requirements	Where the Council requires a contractor to provide additional goods or carry out additional works or services beyond 50% of the original contract value (including any extension included in the original terms of the contract); which the Council acting diligently could not have foreseen and undertaking a further competitive sourcing process is unlikely to deliver value for money and will impede upon the delivery of the Council's services. The extension cannot include a variation in the scope of the contract.	The contract can be extended by its original value once again. However the total value of the contract must not exceed the UK Public Contract Regulations value threshold for the relevant category.
Best Value	Where there is sufficient evidence that only one supplier is able to provide the goods or undertake the services or works within the required timescale and undertaking a competitive sourcing process would be unlikely to deliver value for money and will impede upon the delivery of the Council's services.	£150k

Notes

(1) The UK Public Contract Regulations value thresholds are available from the Commissioning and Procurement Manual.

8. EXTENSION OF CONTRACTS

- 8.1 The term of existing contracts shall only be extended if satisfactory performance has been provided from the contracted supplier and there is adequate budgetary provision.
- 8.2 Contracts shall only be extended where competition was used to select the Supplier.
- 8.3 Contracts shall only be extended for any period that was provided for in the original terms of the contract unless clause 8.4 applies.
- 8.4 Where the Council requires a contractor to provide additional goods or carry out additional works or services due to circumstances which acting diligently the Council could not have foreseen an extension of up to 50% of the original value of the contract (which includes any extension periods provided for in the terms of the original contract) can be undertaken.
- 8.5 Contracts shall not be varied with regard to the scope and the type of goods, services or works that they deliver unless, the variation has already been provided for in the original contract terms or the changes are not substantial and do not alter the nature of the Contract.

9. PURCHASE AND WORKS ORDERS

- 9.1 With the exception of the requirements included on the Council's Purchase Order Exemption List an official Purchase or Works Order must be used to undertake all financial commitments on behalf of the Council.