



PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

2009 – 2012

CONTENTS

	Page
Forward by Portfolio Holder Assets, Shared Services and Procurement	
Executive Summary	
SECTION 1	
Introduction	
What is Procurement?	
What is a Corporate Procurement Strategy?	
Scope	
National Drivers	
SECTION 2	
Procurement vision and objectives	
Procurement vision	
Procurement objectives	
SECTION 3	
Delivery of the Strategy	
Organisational structure of procurement	
Portfolio Holder Assets, Shared Services and Procurement	
Procurement Board	
Corporate Procurement Unit	
Procurement Coordinators	
Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Procurement Hub	
Procurement planning	
Procurement principles and action	
Spend analysis	
Category management	
Supplier Relationship Management	
Commissioning led procurement	
Efficiency savings plan	
Collaboration	
Contract management and the control of contracts	
E-procurement	
Sustainable procurement	
Local economy and 3 rd sector	
Equality and Diversity	
Leadership	
Skills and capability	
Performance management and measurement	

Forward By Portfolio Holder Assets, Shared Services and Procurement

Cheshire East Council recognises that effective and efficient procurement is key to delivering our plans.

Our new unitary Council brings together four existing authorities and gives us the opportunity to deliver more efficient, high quality joined-up public services.

We want to put the people of Cheshire East first, provide value for money and be locally responsive. How we decide what type of goods, works and services we buy, how we buy them and how the suppliers perform all impacts upon our partners, local businesses, the local economy and the environment. We are committed to supporting economic regeneration through local buying wherever possible.

The Council will establish its own distinctive characteristics, priorities and ways of working, especially with the public, business community and stakeholders to create a Council of which we can all be proud.

The Council will target our procurement resources initially on the major areas of spend where potential efficiencies and savings are greatest. Consideration will be given to economic, social and environmental impacts of our buying decisions.

Cheshire East will fully participate in the newly-formed Cheshire and Warrington Sub-Regional Procurement Hub which will co-ordinate a joint approach to procurement with other authorities and organisations.

This strategy sets out the overall direction for procurement within the new Cheshire East Council and I commend it to staff and partners with whom the Council works as a measure of commitment from the Council to achieving excellence in procurement.

Councillor Peter Mason
Portfolio holder Assets, Shared Services and Procurement

Executive summary

Welcome to the Procurement Strategy for Cheshire East Council. This Strategy details how procurement will be structured and managed using the latest strategic procurement techniques.

Procurement, when strategically managed, can actively contribute to the delivery of the corporate objectives and release much needed resources to deliver front line services. In recent years this has been recognised by central government with a number of drivers advocating the adoption of modern innovative procurement solutions. The profile of procurement subsequently increased accordingly.

Structure

This Strategy aims to ensure that procurement is a high profile activity that the Cheshire East Council will undertake, as one, in a professional manner.

A cabinet member has procurement as a portfolio responsibility and will act as an advocate or spokesperson on procurement matters to encourage communication and a positive interaction.

A Procurement Board will be established that will have responsibility to oversee the implementation of this strategy, contribute to its development and monitor levels of compliance.

Cheshire East Council will adopt a devolved structure of procurement with each service responsible for leading their own procurement activity to meet their specific needs.

All services will be required to provide details of their proposed procurement activity as part of their service planning. Each service will identify Procurement Coordinators who will act as the coordinator of all strategic procurement activity and communication within that service.

Cheshire East Council propose to adopt a lead role in the Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Procurement Hub. Benefits will include economies of scale, collaboration, increasing capacity and the targeted use of expertise. This will raise the profile of procurement and avail collaborative opportunities throughout the sub region, regionally and nationally.

Action

A strategic Category Management approach will be adopted where procurement will be based upon achieving desired outcomes. There will be a targeted approach to those areas where the need is greatest and where the opportunities for efficiencies and savings are greatest to ensure the release of resources.

Cheshire East Council will adopt a commissioning led approach to procurement that will challenge the need and ensure that the needs of the users or business need are predominant in the procurement cycle.

A formal approach to Supplier Relationship and Contract Management will be adopted to ensure compliance with contracts and that relationships are developed to achieve ongoing value for money, and reduce the risk of poor performance or non-delivery or non-availability.

Cheshire East Council will look to embrace e-procurement where there are efficiency benefits to the Council including the use of e-auctions and e-tendering solutions.

Sustainable Procurement will be embedded into the procurement process with the adoption of a whole life costing approach to procurement activity.

There are legislative restrictions which prevent the Council from showing favour to local businesses. The Strategy details how we will seek innovative solutions to increase the level of business that is awarded to local companies and the 3rd sector.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 The importance of good procurement cannot be understated. The national profile of Public sector procurement has increased significantly in recent years and Local authorities are being encouraged to use procurement as a means to deliver financial and efficiency savings to release resources that can be utilised in the provision of services provided by the Council. There is a responsibility to ensure that there is a professional and consistent approach to the Councils commercial activity.
- 1.1 Procurement activity can sometimes be fragmented and uncoordinated. This Strategy outlines how we will:
- Increase opportunities to improve the overall cost effectiveness of Council services.
 - Ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to savings and efficiency.
 - Reduce overall procurement and transaction costs.
 - Increase capacity through partnerships and collaborations with other Public bodies, the private sector and the 3rd sector.
 - Promote social, environmental and equality of opportunity benefits to the community and Council staff.
- 1.2 The Council has a duty to secure Best value and continuous improvement from its expenditure whilst having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This Strategy details how the Council will achieve this.
- 1.3 We will ensure that the latest procurement methodology and techniques are adopted throughout the Council through the establishment of a clear framework in which all procurement activity will take place and be measured against.
- 1.4 Cheshire East Council has a Corporate vision to 'work together to improve community life'. Key objectives have been established through the Corporate Plan to achieve this vision.
- 1.5 Procurement within Cheshire East Council will be effective, efficient and will support the Council in achieving these objectives and obtaining best value.
- 1.6 The Cheshire East Corporate Plan has been developed as an interim plan to set service direction for 2009/10 and allow Cheshire East to set the budget.

- 1.7 This Procurement Strategy is intended to be a living document and as the plan for the period 2010/11 – 2012/13 is developed this Strategy will be updated to reflect the new Corporate objectives and priorities.

Core Values and Behaviours

- 1.8 Cheshire East Council has developed a set of core values and key behaviours. These are collected together as ASPIRE. Cheshire East Council Procurement will:
- Take **Action** to engage with the Local economy and the 3rd sector, implement e-procurement, sustainable procurement, category management and commissioning led procurement.
 - **Support** communication of our procurement opportunities.
 - **People's** needs will be at the forefront of procurement activity.
 - Operate with **Integrity** in all our procurement activity ensuring that we are fair, open and transparent.
 - Give **Recognition** to the views of all stakeholders involved in procurement including Local suppliers and the 3rd sector.
 - Adopt **Excellent** procurement practice that is modern, innovative, targeted and efficient.

What is Procurement?

- 1.9 Procurement is more than just buying or purchasing. It is the process of acquiring goods, works and services covering both the acquisition from third parties and from in-house providers.
- 1.10 The process spans the whole life cycle from the identification of need through to the end of a services contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.
- 1.11 It involves options appraisal and the critical 'make or buy' decision which may result in the provision of services in-house in certain circumstances.
- 1.12 The procurement process aspires to achieve the best value solution. This is not necessarily the lowest cost but the optimum combination of whole life costs and benefits to meet the needs of the Council.
- 1.13 Procurement decisions must be taken in the context of the broader objectives of the Council.

What is a Corporate Procurement Strategy?

- 1.14 The Council will spend a large proportion of its budget on the procurement and commissioning of goods, works and services. There is a responsibility to ensure that it achieves best value from this

spend. This will release the maximum amount of resources to support the delivery of the objectives as detailed within the Corporate Plan.

- 1.15 This Strategy is a mechanism for ensuring that procurement and commissioning within Cheshire East Council takes place in a controlled and structured manner that will support the Council vision and Corporate Plan.
- 1.16 A Procurement Strategy provides a framework for individuals and Directorates to operate in and be measured against.
- 1.17 This Strategy details the procurement vision, aims and objectives that are required for a flagship Council.
- 1.18 The Strategy will seek to challenge procurement activity, raise the profile of procurement and drive improvements in procurement performance and deliver best value and contribute to the shaping of supply markets.

Scope

- 1.19 This Strategy is targeted at all internal and external stakeholders including employees, trade unions, the 3rd sector, partner agencies, suppliers and potential suppliers.
- 1.20 The principles of this Strategy are to be applied to **ALL** procurement activity that the Council undertakes.
- 1.21 Consideration of this Strategy is not optional – it is mandatory. It is not intended to be a procurement manual nor does it attempt to prescribe in detail every action that should be undertaken in all procurement activity, however it does detail the approach and considerations that should be made when committing the Council to expenditure. It should be read in conjunction with the Financial Procedure Rules and the developing procurement guidance.

National Drivers

- 1.22 There have been numerous reviews of Local Government procurement activity all raising the profile of procurement and the contribution it can make to improve the delivery of Local authority services.

National Procurement Strategy

- 1.23 The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government published in 2003 built upon the previous reports such as that by Sir Ian Byatt, “Delivering Better Services to Citizens”, and detailed how central and local government, working together with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, can improve local government

procurement. The Strategy set a series of clear objectives and targets (milestones). Those milestones were categorized under 4 themes:

- Providing Leadership and building capacity:
- Partnering and collaboration:
- Doing business electronically:
- Stimulating markets and achieving community benefits.

Gershon Savings

- 1.24 The report by Peter Gershon on Public sector Efficiency “Releasing Resources to the Frontline” set out a challenging agenda for better, more co-coordinated procurement and service delivery between public bodies, and overall savings in procurement costs. The Report which had significant influence on the Government’s Comprehensive Spending Reviews set tough targets for efficiency savings to be gained from improved procurement practices.
- 1.25 The Local Government White Paper further indicates that pressures to achieve even greater savings and efficiencies will continue to increase; promoting greater collaboration across the public sector in procurement and shared services; the use of alternative methods of delivery and a diverse and competitive marketplace will be instrumental in the realisation of those savings.

Sustainable Procurement Task Force (SPTF 2006)

- 1.26 This was established in response to the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. The Task Force made recommendations to Government in June 2006, to improve the sustainability of Public Sector procurement to deliver social, environmental and economic benefits through local authority procurement activity. They identified a range of actions for public sector procurement including;
- Developing the evidence base on sustainable procurement; identifying priority areas with specific targets and key performance indicators.
 - Extend the range of mandated products reaching minimum environmental standards.
 - Work with key public sector suppliers to raise sustainability awareness and performance.
 - Ensure that public sector employees receive appropriate training.
 - Remove barriers and increase opportunities for increased sustainable procurement activity.

- 1.27 The Task Force also developed a flexible framework identifying 5 key themes of People, Policy, Strategy & Communications, Procurement Process, Engaging Suppliers and Measurement & Results. With the appropriate milestones to be achieved by Local authorities.

North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

- 1.28 The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership was established in response to the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy to drive the region's ambitions for excellence through improvement and efficiency.
- 1.29 The procurement programme will encourage savings to be achieved through collaborative procurement, both at a regional and sub-regional level. A regional Procurement Strategy has been developed that forms the basis of the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership's (NWIEP) Regional Procurement Action Plan for the CSR 07 period to support the 46 local authorities, plus the national park, in seeking to achieve regional savings.
- 1.30 Each Sub-region is expected to establish its own Procurement Hub to facilitate the delivery of the efficiency agenda.

Value for money

- 1.31 The Government has set a challenge for the public sector: to build on the progress already made in enhancing value for money and further embed a culture of innovation. All public services have been set a target of achieving at least 3% net cash releasing value for money gains per annum over 2008/09 to 2010/11.
2007 Comprehensive Spending Review
- 1.32 The Government has stated that there is considerable potential from effective harnessing of efficiency and innovation techniques, such as smart procurement and service redesign. The reorganisation of local government in Cheshire creates a fantastic opportunity for change and the realisation of improvements and Cheshire East has the scale, capacity and commitment to deliver on this agenda.

SECTION 2

PROCUREMENT VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Effective and transparent procurement has been increasingly promoted by central government and is a key factor in achieving increased efficiency and productivity.
- 2.2 To be effective, procurement must be measured as much by the social and community benefits that result from its activity as by the financial and efficiency gains it delivers.
- 2.3 Cheshire East Council has a Corporate vision to 'work together to improve community life' and has developed the Corporate objectives detailed below to deliver this vision.

	Corporate Objectives
1	We will enable all children and young people to fulfil their potential.
2	We will improve the wellbeing, health and care of people.
3	We will ensure that people in local communities have a greater say about how resources are targeted in their area
4	We will work with others to make all of our communities safer places to live, work and play
5	We will enable people to have a good quality of life irrespective of where they live or their social or economic background.
6	We will shape and maintain strong and prosperous neighbourhoods in which our residents are skilled and economically active, where businesses want to invest and where people want to visit.
7	We will provide an attractive and sustainable environment which communities can be proud of.

- 2.4 Cheshire East Council aspires to become a flagship authority. In order to support this aspiration and to support the delivery of these Corporate objectives Cheshire East Council will adopt the following Procurement vision and objectives.

Procurement vision

To adopt excellent procurement practice that is modern, innovative, targeted and efficient that will release the maximum amount of resources for Cheshire East Council and support the delivery of the Corporate vision and plan.
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Procurement Objectives

1	All procurement activity undertaken by Cheshire East Council will be fair, legal, ethical and transparent.
2	Procurement activity will seek to support the local economy with a mixed economy of service provision including SME's and the 3 rd sector encouraging local sourcing and local employment wherever possible.
3	Cheshire East Council will develop specifications and evaluation processes that support social, environmental and community benefits by the development and adoption of appropriate specifications and evaluation processes.
4	Cheshire East Council will seek to undertake Procurement and Commissioning in partnership with other Public sector Organisations where this is beneficial to the community.
5	Cheshire East Council will seek to adopt the latest e-procurement solutions to contribute to the maximisation of efficient procurement processes.
6	Sustainable Procurement will be embedded into the procurement cycle to realise wider social, environmental and economic objectives.
7	Cheshire East Council will contribute to the Council savings targets by continually challenge the procurement activity and practices through the development of an efficiency plan.
8	All staff involved in procurement and commissioning activity will have the appropriate skills and competencies to carry out the activity.
9	All Procurement will be strategically managed by a team of professionally qualified staff.
10	Cheshire East Council shall seek to ensure compliance with the Corporate Procurement Strategy through formal performance management and measurement.

SECTION 3

DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

Organisational Structure of Procurement

Portfolio holder Assets, Shared Services and Procurement

- 3.1 Cheshire East Council has a cabinet member with a Portfolio responsibility that includes Procurement. The role is to be an advocate or spokesperson on procurement matters to encourage communication and a positive interaction.

Procurement Board

- 3.2 A Procurement Board comprising of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets, Procurement Manager, Borough Solicitor and representatives of the People and Places Directorates will be established. Project sponsors will be co-opted to the board as and when necessary.
- 3.3 The Boards' prime responsibility will be to oversee the implementation of this Strategy and steer its future direction.
- 3.4 In order to achieve this function the Board will:
- Support the development of the Procurement Strategy.
 - Monitor the implementation of the Strategy.
 - Monitor levels of compliance.
 - Contribute to the development and implementation of major strategic partnerships.
 - Support the introduction of gateway reviews for all projects over £500,000
 - Oversee the establishment and achievement of procurement efficiency targets.
 - Accept reports from Officers and make decisions relating to Council wide procurement.
- 3.5 The Procurement Board will meet quarterly.

Corporate Procurement Unit

- 3.6 The Unit will act as a centre of procurement excellence providing advice and guidance and be a corporate resource to all services. The Corporate Procurement Unit will not be a central buying unit.
- 3.7 Cheshire East Council will operate a devolved structure of procurement with each service responsible for leading their own

procurement activity to meet their specific needs. As a result most of the transactional elements of purchasing are devolved to the relevant service area.

- 3.8 The team will have a targeted approach to its activities to those areas where the need is greatest and where there are the maximum opportunities for efficiencies and savings that will ensure the release of resources. The Unit will however, influence **ALL** procurement activity to a greater or lesser degree. It will lead on letting corporate contracts whilst supporting officers from all service areas to procure within a clear corporate framework.

Procurement Coordinators

- 3.9 Each service will have a nominated Procurement Coordinator who will be informed of new corporate contracts and developments within procurement and act as the coordinator of all strategic procurement activity and communication within that service.
- 3.10 Cheshire East Council will act as one organisation in the planning and buying of goods works and services. A key role of the Corporate Procurement Unit will be to ensure that this is a view shared by the whole Council in order to maximise the benefits of a strategic approach to procurement.
- 3.11 Service plans will be expected to include details of the proposed future procurement activity. The Unit will use this detail to inform the procurement plan. This will ensure that procurement is able to be undertaken in a structured manner and that there are adequate resources, targeted at the appropriate areas.

Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Procurement Hub

- 3.12 Cheshire East Council proposes to lead the Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Procurement Hub The partners to the hub include Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington BC and Cheshire Fire and Rescue service.
- 3.13 The aim of the Hub is to examine procurement across the Sub Region to determine areas of procurement where a collaborative approach can drive down prices, improve services, improve supplier engagement, encourage SMEs and Third Sector organisations to trade with local government and lead in areas of diversity and sustainability.
- 3.14 Objectives include:
- To Identify and implement opportunities to increase efficiency through smarter procurement and maximise value for money across Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington and the sub region.

- To Identify and implement the opportunity for strategic procurement and shared services with other agencies where it will add value to services in terms of quality and efficiency.
- Development of a benefits realisation policy to monitor efficiency savings and the release of resources.

3.15 The Hub will give consideration to the following

- Contract Procedure Rules/Standing Orders/Terms and Conditions.
- E-procurement.
- Strategic, operational and transactional procurement.
- Contractual opportunities both existing and new to address efficiencies.
- Shared service provision for the two Cheshire authorities and joint working initiatives with partners.
- Structured engagement with the relevant stakeholders including the 3rd sector.
- National, Regional and Corporate Procurement Strategies and initiatives.
- All operational aspects of the Procurement Hub.
- The development of a Hub procurement work plan referenced to the member procurement work plans.
- The development of a procurement action plan that will develop procurement capacity.

Procurement planning

3.16 The Corporate Procurement Unit will develop a three year procurement plan to include all future proposed procurement exercises in the Directorates.

3.17 The plan will be initially developed from Service Plans and knowledge of contracts due for renewal. It will then be continuously updated to reflect a current picture of the Councils anticipated procurement activity. This plan will be a living document and be published and freely available.

3.18 The Corporate Procurement Unit will ensure early engagement with internal customers, suppliers (both current and potential), to assess the needs and understand the market and the most appropriate procurement plan with needs analysis.

PROCUREMENT PRINCIPLES AND ACTION

- 3.19 The Corporate Procurement Unit will develop a Procurement Action Plan that will detail the priority actions required to deliver the Strategy and the Procurement Objectives. This will be referenced to the business plan of the Sub Regional Procurement Hub.
- 3.20 The Unit will adopt a strategic approach to managing procurement using strategic procurement tools that will aid decision making and support the efforts of commissioners. These strategic tools will include:
- Spend analysis
 - Category Management
 - Supplier Relationship Management
 - Commissioning lead procurement

Spend analysis

- 3.21 Spend analysis is a powerful and invaluable tool for identifying and manipulating detailed spend data by, for example, category, supplier and area and combinations/permutations of these. It will identify key suppliers, key spend areas and how many suppliers may be delivering the same goods and services.
- 3.22 This information is the key foundation for other strategic procurement decisions such as Category Management, Supplier Relationship Management and the Procurement Strategy. It forms an important part of resource mapping and planning as it will allow the Council and their commissioning partners to identify where financial resources are being allocated currently and commitments in the future. We will seek to undertake a spend analysis.

Category Management

- 3.23 Cheshire East Council will operate a strategic Category Management approach to its procurement activity where procurement will be based upon achieving desired outcomes.
- 3.24 Category Management is a process of identifying categories of goods or services and managing these as business units so that value for money is maximised. It comprises a wide number of tools and techniques including Portfolio analysis.
- 3.25 Portfolio analysis allows procurements to be mapped against a cost/risk matrix (see diagram). It highlights categories where a more hands-on style of management may be appropriate (the Strategic/Critical quadrant in particular) and where it will be in the

interests of the Council to build relationships with providers. It will also identify categories most suitable for automated, streamlined management through the use of frameworks or e-catalogues for example (the acquisition/routine quadrant in particular).

Portfolio analysis (Kraljic Matrix)

Criticality/ Risk/ Market difficulty	High	Critical /Bottle neck	Strategic /Critical
	Low	Acquisition/ Routine	Leverage
		Low	High

Spend/Cost Impact

- 3.26 Activity will focus on key spend areas targeting resources where they are most effective.
- 3.27 Procurement solutions will be different for each category of spend. These will vary from national collaborative solutions to local ones to ensure a mixed economy of service provision.
- 3.28 Category strategies and action plans will be developed that will clearly identify, how, when and where efficiency savings are going to be delivered. The plans will give consideration to:
- An appraisal of the supply base to determine the level of competition within the marketplace.
 - An appraisal of the contract landscape both within the Council and outside to determine the suitability of collaboration with potential partners at a sub regional, regional and National level.
- 3.29 Cross Council teams will be developed that will be led by the category managers. The teams will include the procurement coordinators from various services. This will ensure that procurement has a broader role as a centre of commercial expertise and a strategic partner in service delivery capable of developing innovative solutions.
- 3.30 Category managers will work together with procurement coordinators to ensure compliance with procedures and corporate contracts to ensure value for money and management of risk through the avoidance of off contract expenditure.

Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)

- 3.31 Supplier Relationship Management is an important element of Category Management. It is an ongoing activity that will be applied to all current, significant suppliers.
- 3.32 SRM recognises that different relationships will be required with different suppliers/providers. The type of relationship will depend largely on the criticality and/or value of the goods or services they supply, and factors such as the number of suppliers in the market, and the global availability of a requirement.
- 3.33 SRM will allow the development of strategies for dealing with suppliers to achieve ongoing value for money, and reduce the risk of poor performance or non-delivery or non-availability. It allows the Procurement Unit to focus effort on the right suppliers and ensure that the supplier is not managing us.
- 3.34 For many suppliers, it will not be necessary to expend significant resources building a relationship, and an operational-type management style will be sufficient, but for others it may be necessary to enter into full relationship management. This will not be a 'cosy' option – it will require a drive for continuous improvement and ongoing communication management, cost management and benchmarking.
- 3.35 The success of this approach will depend on the buy-in from suppliers and we will have to determine how they value our business. Supplier preferencing will assist with this and is based on the matrix below.

Supplier perception of clients

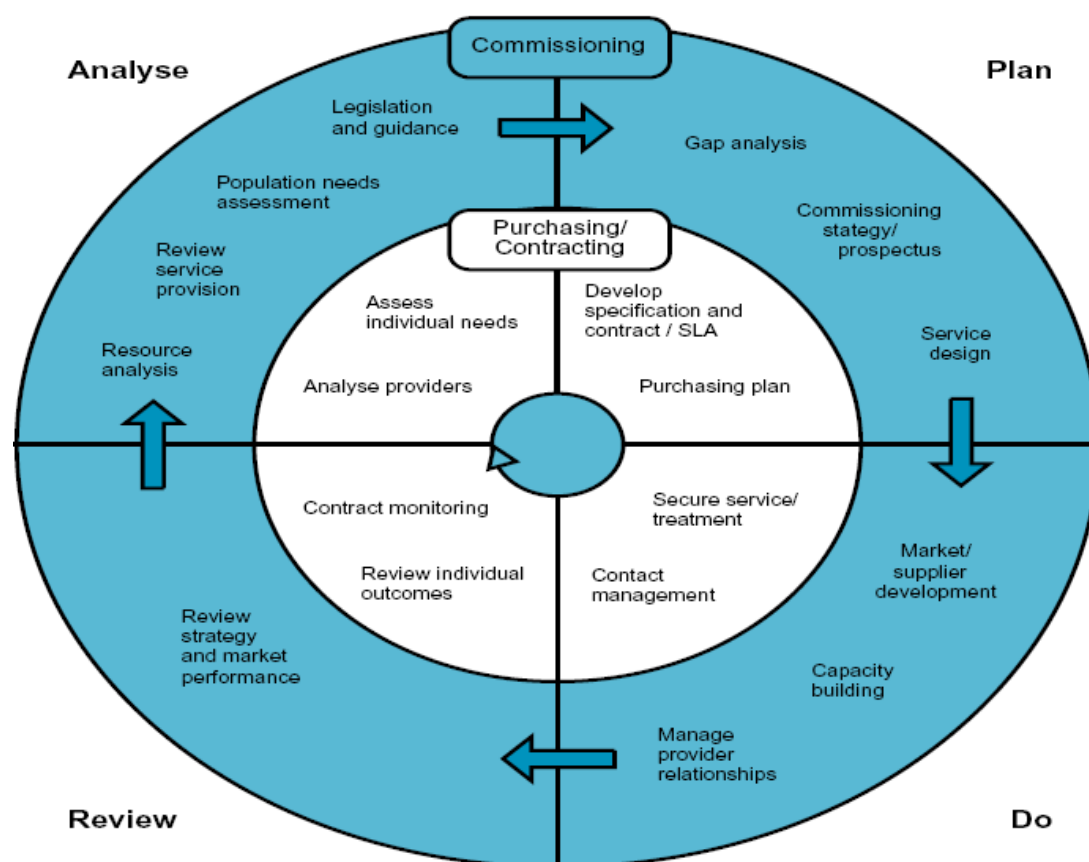
Attractiveness of Account	High	Develop	Core
	Low	Nuisance	Exploit
		Low	High

Customer Spend

Commissioning led Procurement

- 3.36 Cheshire East Council will adopt a strategic Commissioning led approach to procurement.
- 3.37 Commissioning can be defined as “The Strategic Activity of assessing needs, resources and current services and developing a Strategy to make best use of (available) resources”

- 3.38 This is about ensuring the needs of the users or the business needs are predominant in the commissioning and procurement process. This ensures that the emerging needs, best practice, market analysis and available resources are taken into full account when developing procurement plans and strategies. It further ensures historical provision patterns (including in-house) do not unduly distort future purchasing decisions.
- 3.39 The diagram below details a typical commissioning and procurement cycle. It must be noted that commissioning activity drives the procurement activity.



© Crown Copyright, 2008
(DCLG Needs analysis, Commissioning and procurement for housing related support)

Efficiency Savings Plan

- 3.40 The Corporate Procurement Unit will develop an annual procurement efficiency savings plan that is informed by the category management plans.
- 3.41 This plan will identify the areas of spend that the Unit will target, benchmark the current position and detail the anticipated savings.

- 3.42 The plan will apply consistency to the approaches to definition, approval and reporting of savings by the Council and the Sub Regional Hub.

Collaboration

- 3.43 We will seek to collaborate on procurement activities at the widest possible level, both internally with services and externally with other Public sector organisations mainly through the Sub Regional Procurement Hub.

- 3.44 Benefits will include:

- Improved value for money due to economies of scale
- Greater leverage in the market and greater provider loyalty
- Access to resources and ideas from others working in the same environment
- Sharing of the procurement burden.

- 3.45 Collaboration will be eased by:

- Working with organisations which enable collaboration such as the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships, Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions and other Councils through the Sub Regional Procurement Hub who may already have a contract in place
- The pooling of procurement resource and/or budgets
- Clear supportive statements in Commission Strategies, Procurement Strategies etc and senior management commitment
- Written agreements with partners on the split of roles and responsibilities, or Service Level Agreements if necessary
- Involving partners in the requirement, development and evaluation processes

Contract Management and the control of contracts

- 3.46 All contracts over £50K in contract value will be detailed in the contracts register and any renewal requirements reflected in the procurement plan.

- 3.47 Contract management is an integral part of procurement. We will ensure that all contracts are adequately managed and monitored to ensure completion of service delivery on time, within budget and in accordance with the specification.

- 3.48 As a minimum, for contracts at £100,000 or over, we will allocate clear responsibility for contract management, schedule regular contract review meetings (where appropriate), monitor current performance and performance trends and know the level of mutual business dependency.

E- Procurement

- 3.49 E-Procurement is the use of electronic tools and systems to increase efficiency and reduce costs during each stage of the procurement process.
- 3.50 The Council will look to embrace this technology where there are demonstrable benefits to the Council. This will include:
- Continuing the development of electronic internal procurement processes and procedures
 - Increased use of on line market catalogues
 - Introduce the use of Tender and Contract management software for the quotation and full tender process including e-tendering
 - Advertising all tender opportunities on an on line regional portal
 - Increase the use of purchase cards for low value purchases where appropriate.
 - Financial evaluation of suppliers, through use of an electronic on line system,

Sustainable Procurement

- 3.51 Sustainable Procurement is about the optimum combination of environmental, social and economic considerations. The Procurement Unit will develop a sustainable procurement policy that will seek to address the following:
- The introduction of a whole life costing approach to procurement activity rather than the purchase price.
 - The inclusion of environmental and social considerations into the specifications and evaluation criteria where this is appropriate and legal to do so.
 - Developing the evidence base on sustainable procurement; Identifying priority areas with specific targets and key performance indicators.
 - Introduction of a range of mandated products reaching minimum environmental standards.
 - Work with key public sector suppliers to raise sustainability awareness and performance.
 - Ensure that officers involved in procurement activity receive appropriate training.
 - Remove barriers and increase opportunities for increased sustainable procurement activity.
 - We will seek to undertake disposals in the most cost effective manner having due regard for the wider environmental considerations.
- 3.52 In addition we will seek to achieve the appropriate level and milestones detailed within the flexible framework introduced by the Sustainable Procurement Task Force around the 5 key themes of

People, Policy, Strategy & Communications, Procurement Process, Engaging Suppliers and Measurement & Results.

Local Economy and 3rd sector

- 3.53 All procurement activity that the Council undertakes is subject to strict Public sector procurement legislation. This prevents the Council from showing favour to local businesses.
- 3.54 The Council has one of the largest spends in the area and recognises the impact that this can have on the local economy. As such we will seek to increase the level of business that is awarded to local companies and 3rd sector organisations.
- We will engage with local businesses and the 3rd sector to explain how to obtain Council business.
 - We will publish long term procurement plans.
 - We will make the procurement process simple, fair and transparent.
 - All tender opportunities will be advertised on a regional portal.
 - We will manage procurement professionally and strategically.
 - We will encourage good practice between prime and sub-contractors.
 - We will use standard documentation wherever possible including a Council wide pre-qualification questionnaire containing common core questions with limited bespoke additions for each contract.
 - Where possible we will package requirements in a manner that does not preclude Local and regional companies, SME's and social enterprises from tendering.

Equality and Diversity

- 3.55 The Council has a duty to ensure that its expenditure does not lead to unlawful discrimination and social exclusion.
- 3.56 We will use all the powers available, including the provisions of the Local Government Act 1988, the Transfer of Undertakings - Protection of Employment Regulations (TUPE) 1981, the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amended 2000), the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Council Service Contracts to ensure that equalities issues are addressed in the procurement of goods, works and services.

Leadership

- 3.57 The Unit will act as a centre of excellence and expertise on procurement. It will forge close relationships with the services becoming aware of their outcome requirements and supporting their delivery.

Skills and capability

- 3.58 The unit will seek to develop a training solution to ensure that all officers involved in procurement activity have the appropriate skills to the activity undertaken. We will look to deliver this through an e-learning package that will be modular in design.

Performance Management and Measurement

- 3.59 Procurement will be subject to a series of performance measures. The performance of the procurement function will influence a number of National indicators and ultimately our Comprehensive Area Assessment review.
- 3.60 The performance of Procurement within Cheshire East Council will make a significant contribution to the managing resources score within the Comprehensive Area Assessment review. This strategy details how procurement activity will support the four underpinning concepts of sustainable development, equality, diversity and human rights, vulnerable people and value for money.
- 3.60 The wider procurement activity is subject to a number of milestone achievements in respect of e-procurement and sustainability against which our performance will be measured.
- 3.61 The Procurement Unit will develop a series of internal performance measures which will be reported upon accordingly and be used to measure performance outcomes.
- 3.62 We will manage performance by:
- Ensuring that specifications have measurable outcomes.
 - Producing a procurement plan to enable a coordinated, structured approach to the procurement with adequate resources and opportunity for challenge.
 - Ensuring that there is adequate contract management at the appropriate level.
 - Undertake risk analysis and management of the procurement process including gateway reviews on high value / high risk procurements.

Code of Conduct for Procurement

- 3.63 All procurement activity must be undertaken to the highest standards of ethics and probity. The Council insists on ethical standards from its suppliers, and in turn it must exhibit the highest ethical standards itself. Officers and members must not only be fair and above board in all business dealings, but should also avoid any conduct that is capable of having an adverse interpretation put on it.

Contact details

3.64 Any queries relating to this strategy should be directed to:

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