
New Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	11 June 2026
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Vicky Poole & Councillor Justin Pemberton
Report Author:	Richard Howroyd

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To introduce a new Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy that will improve procurement and commissioning across West Berkshire with greater market engagement to encourage small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector to work with the Council.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Executive adopt the Procurement Strategy
- 2.2 The Executive adopt the “Think Local” Social Value Strategy.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The Procurement Strategy will support the financial sustainability objectives of the Council by introducing up to date commercial practices relating to procurement and contract management. The “Think Local” Social Value Strategy will improve local economic benefit and increase the Council’s ability to leverage Social Value from contracts.

New Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy

Human Resource:	As part of the Procurement & Commissioning restructure a new role has been created within Community Services to manage Social Value for the Council. The role is out for recruitment.			
Legal:	The strategies ensure the Council complies with all key procurement legislation - The Procurement Act 2023 and the Health & Care Act 2022 (Provider Selection Regime). It also considers amendments to S17 of the Local Government Act 1988 that will allow the Council to reserve some contracts to local suppliers. They update the Council’s approach to Social Value as defined in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the National Procurement Policy Statement published in February 2025.			
Risk Management:	The strategies help the Council manage risks with relation to its procurement activity. It provides a framework for managing above and below threshold public contracts as defined by the Procurement Act 2023. Risks relating to contracts are managed on an individual basis.			
Property:	N/A			
Policy:	The strategies implement national policy from the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) as set out in the Procurement Act 2023.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:		X		
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		N/A

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B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		As part of the Procurement Strategy new Adult Social Care and Children's Commissioning Strategies will be developed. Equalities Impact Assessments will be produced as part of each individual commissioning process.
Environmental Impact:	X			Section 5 of the Procurement Strategy- “Embedding sustainability and climate action into all procurement activity” will have a direct impact on the Council meeting PRIORITY AREA 3. Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency
Health Impact:	X			As part of the Procurement Strategy new Adult Social Care and Children's Commissioning Strategies will be developed. The aim will be to improve health outcomes.
ICT Impact:	X			The Procurement Strategy looks to develop e procurement, contract management and social value systems that integrate with the Governments Central Digital Platform to meet the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024
Digital Services Impact:	X			The Procurement Strategy looks to enhance digital services internally and externally to improve efficiency and comply with the Procurement Act 2023
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			Both strategies underpin corporate priorities.
Core Business:	X			Whilst much of the Procurement Strategy is core business, good procurement and contract management support the overall delivery of improvement priorities
Data Impact:		X		N/A

Consultation and Engagement:	The strategies have been subject to internal consultation across all service areas. Some amendments have been made as a result of the feedback. External consultation with organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses, the local Chamber of Commerce and relevant VCSE bodies has been undertaken in parallel with the internal consultation. The intention is to launch the strategies at a “Meet the Buyer” event in June.
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4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The current Procurement Strategy is out of date and does not reflect recent changes to legislation including the Procurement Act 2023 and amendments to the Local Government Act 1988.
- 4.2 The introduction of the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) creates national priorities that need incorporating in any procurement strategy alongside local priorities.
 - delivering value for money
 - maximising public benefit
 - sharing information for the purpose of allowing suppliers and others to understand the authority’s procurement policies and decisions
 - acting, and being seen to act, with integrity; and
 - removing or reducing the barriers faced by SMEs
- 4.3 Amendments to Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 (LGA 1988) allow the Council, for the first time, to reserve below threshold contracts (in some circumstance) to local suppliers. The “Think Local” Social Value strategy looks to take advantage of this change to support the local economy whilst still ensuring the Council obtains value for money. This will require a change to the notes to Contract Standing Orders.
- 4.4 The report presents a draft revised Procurement Strategy and a draft “Think Local” Social Value Strategy to Corporate Board

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The report presents a Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy for approval by Executive.

Background

5.2 The Council’s current procurement strategy [Procurement Strategy 2023 to 2027](#) requires updating to reflect legislative change and the Council’s Procurement & Commissioning function revised operating model:-

- The Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) came into force in February 2024 governs all regulated procurement activity. It replaced the Public Contract Regulations 2015, although Council will still need to manage contracts and frameworks procured under the old regime.
- In April 2026 new Contract Standing Orders went live which reflect the new act and the recent restructure of the Procurement & Commissioning (P & C) function
- The P & C function will move away from a traditional category management approach to a business partnering model.
- There will be greater expectations on service areas to manage low value low risk procurement activities, allowing the P & C function to be more strategic in terms of supporting/managing higher value (normally above threshold) higher risk procurements including frameworks and dynamic markets.
- The P & C function will also become a more strategic function regarding contract management to ensure implementation of the new requirements under PA23.

5.3 The new Procurement Strategy (**see Appendix A**) establishes six workstreams each with associated ambitions, outcomes, and activities for the P & C function in the next 3 years. Delivering on the first three priorities will ensure that we achieve our procurement and council aims and ambitions; the second three are the strong enablers that will ensure that we have the tools in place to do so. Under the new operating model, we will have a more devolved procurement structure supported by a stronger professional centre of excellence. Embedding the six priority themes will ensure that procurement activity is robust and consistent across all areas of the council.

- a) **Delivering best value and good governance** is about delivering procurement in line with PA23, the NPPS and other best practices found in the government’s sourcing playbooks.
- b) **Embedding sustainability and climate action into all procurement activity** focuses on supporting the Council’s net zero ambitions, such as measuring and reducing Scope 3 emissions.
- c) **Providing opportunity for economic, social, and environmental wellbeing** is all about Social Value and targeting procurement at local suppliers to maximise the local economic impact. The draft “Think Local” Procurement Policy (**see Appendix B**) highlights the approach the Council is looking to take to simplify its approach to Social Value and to take advantage of changes to Section 17 of the LGA 1988.
- d) **Enhancing the supply market** explains how the Council will work with the supplier market to promote opportunities. The Council will establish a clear procurement pipeline and undertake pre market engagement in line with PA23. The Council will

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go beyond its legal requirements in promoting lower value contracts to SMEs and VCSEs. *This links in to a key recommendation from the recent Local Government Association Peer Review on Adult Social Care Commissioning.*

- e) **Improving contract and commercial management** is key to ensuring the Council delivers best value services. PA23 is not just about the procurement of goods and services it is about managing the whole contract lifecycle. *This links in to a key recommendation from the recent Local Government Association Peer Review on Adult Social Care Commissioning.*
- f) **Building skills and capability** within the Council is essential to ensure there are appropriate skills and expertise across the Council with the Procurement & Commissioning team (supported by Legal) taking the strategic lead and establishing a centre of excellence. *This links in to a key recommendation from the recent Local Government Association Peer Review on Adult Social Care Commissioning.*

5.4 As highlighted in 5.3 c) above in addition to the Procurement Strategy the Council will establish a separate “Think Local” Social Value Strategy (**see Appendix B**) This will align the Council’s approach with NPPS and create a simpler approach to maximise community benefit. More detailed guidance for officers and suppliers will be developed once the strategy has been agreed.

5.5 The Council will develop a realistic and achievable Delivery Plan (**See Appendix C**) which will include metrics to evaluate the progress of the activities contained in the strategy. The timeframes for delivery will be subject to various factors such as level of appropriate resources, organisational readiness and any changes required to Contract Standing Orders.

5.6 As stated in the Procurement Strategy, The Delivery Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be reported to the Procurement Board for oversight

5.7 Key priorities for 2026/2027 are shown in table below:-

Key Priorities Year 1

4.3.1	Introduce and promote the use of spend analysis in the development of reports, dashboards, business cases across the whole council.
4.3.2	Implement revised gateways and proportionate processes that align to relevant legislation into the governance arrangements to ensure all relevant factors are considered and relevant parties are engaged before decisions are taken.
4.3.4	Establish procurement tools, guidance and methodologies for council officers, ensuring that they can maximise opportunities to deliver best value outcomes throughout the commissioning, procurement and contract management lifecycle.
4.3.5	Introduce new Contract Standing Orders that support compliance with all relevant legislation and ensure effort and resource is focussed on the high-cost and high-risk commercial relationships.

New Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy

6.3.1	Launch a new “Think Local” social value policy and model, including provision of templates, processes and training to all relevant officers.
8.3.1	Introduce a consistent, risk-based contract management framework with accompanying tools, comprehensive training and support for all officers who are involved in managing contracts with third parties.
8.3.2	All key contracts have a named contract manager who has clear responsibilities and understands the contract performance reporting requirements and the importance of developing appropriate relationships with suppliers.

Consultation

5.8 Internal feedback has been incorporated into the revised versions of the strategies. Whilst most changes are minor three key change were identified: -

- a) Targeted training for Councillors on public sector procurement
- b) Support for officers undertaking low value low risk procurement activities inline with the Council’s revised Contract Standing Orders
- c) Frameworks and approved lists for commonly purchased low value goods & services to ensure the Council obtains value for money from its purchasing power.

5.9 Whilst internal consultation took place the Council has been consulting with external stakeholders prior to Executive agreeing the strategies. Consultation is also being undertaken with voluntary sector organisations. A “Meet the Buyer” event will be held in June/July to highlight the practical implications to suppliers.

6 Other options considered

6.1 No other options have been considered. The Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy set the strategic direction of the Council regarding procurement and complying with relevant legislation.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Executive are asked to adopt the Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equity Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 8.3 Appendix C – Draft Procurement Strategy
- 8.4 Appendix D – Draft “Think Local” Social Value Strategy
- 8.5 Appendix E – Delivery Plan

New Procurement Strategy and “Think Local” Social Value Strategy

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position: ☐

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months ☐

Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐

Report is to note only ☐

Wards affected: All

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West Berkshire Council
Equity Impact Assessment

TEMPLATE

March 2023

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Resources – Procurement & Commissioning
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Procurement Strategy & 'Think Local' Social Value Policy
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Updates the Procurement Policy and establishes a new policy relating to social value.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	In general, the policy is neutral relating to protective characteristics. It may have positive impacts on deprived communities by creating training and job opportunities as part of suppliers Social Value commitments. It continues to support the Armed Forces Covenant as highlighted by PPN 008: Armed Forces Covenant - GOV.UK
Completed By	R Howroyd
Authorised By	
Date of Assessment	7 th April 2026

Section 2: Detail of proposal

Context / Background Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.	The policies ensure we comply with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and recent changes to the Local Government Act 1988. There are no direct equalities impacts
Proposals Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.	The policies provide clarity on how the Council work with suppliers and implement the Procurement Act 2023.
Evidence / Intelligence List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our	The policy is informed by Government legislation and statutory guidance.

Equity Impact Assessment

ability to deliver our climate commitments.	
Alternatives considered / rejected Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.	None. There is a clear need for the Council to establish a new Procurement Strategy and Social Value due to changes in legislation. Individual procurements will still be subject to equality impact assessments.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	☒	☐	☐				
Disability	☒	☐	☐				
Gender Reassignment	☒	☐	☐				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☒	☐	☐				
Pregnancy & Maternity	☒	☐	☐				
Race	☒	☐	☐				
Sex	☒	☐	☐				
Sexual Orientation	☒	☐	☐				
Religion or Belief	☒	☐	☐				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	☒	☐	☐				
Areas of deprivation	☐	☒	☐	Social Value policy can support creation of jobs, training opportunities in the Council's more deprived wards		TBC	TBC
Displaced communities	☒	☐	☐				
Care experienced people	☒	☐	☐				
The Armed Forces Community	☒	☐	☒	Supports PPN 008: Armed Forces Covenant - GOV.UK			

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	June 2027
Person Responsible for Review	Richard Howroyd
Authorised By	

EDI employee related EQiA's should now be sent to Human Resources hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk.

Appendix B

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Resources
Service:	Procurement & Commissioning
Team:	
Lead Officer:	Richard Howroyd
Title of Project/System:	Procurement Strategy
Date of Assessment:	7/04/2026

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data? <i>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation”</i>	☐	☒
Will you be processing data on a large scale? <i>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</i>	☐	☒
Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension? <i>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</i>	☐	☒
Will any decisions be automated? <i>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</i>	☐	☒

Equity Impact Assessment

	Yes	No
Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?	☐	☒
Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?	☐	☒
Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?	☐	☒
Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised		

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.