



**Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority**

**Decision Report**

**Report reference number:** 038-22

**Government security classification** Not protectively marked

**Title of report:** Procurement Strategy

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** Service wide

**Report by:** Sarah Smith (Procurement Category Manager)

**Date of report:** 4 November 2022

**Enquiries to:** Neil Cross (Chief Financial Officer)

**1. Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to present the Procurement Strategy for review and approval for publication. This is the Authority's first Procurement Strategy and sets out the department's procedures, principles, priorities and action plan.

**2. Recommendations**

The Commissioner is asked to review and approve the Procurement Strategy for publication.

**3. Benefits of the proposal**

Every Procurement department should have a strategy to document how the department runs its procurement function. The Strategy provides an overview of the governance framework and how we intend to conduct our procurement activity. The Strategy aligns with and supports the Fire and Rescue Plan, Integrated Risk Management Plan and the Annual Plan and supports the overall Vision and Mission of the Authority.

The Procurement Strategy confirms the direction and change in working of the Procurement team. It also provides our Action Plan setting out our commitment to short and medium term measures that, as a department, we have committed to achieve.

The primary role of a procurement team is to purchase goods and services for the organisation with an optimum balance between cost and quality – achieving real value for money. The Strategy

ensures all procurement activity is conducted in a fair, open, transparent and compliant manner whilst ensuring value for money is achieved.

The key points covered in the Strategy are:

- Contract Management vs. Supplier Relationship Management
- Procurement principles covering:
  - Sustainable Procurement
  - Social Value
  - Modern Slavery
  - Equality and Diversity
  - Data Protection
  - Supply Chain Code of Conduct
  - Business Continuity

#### **4. Background and proposal**

The Authority recognises the importance of a professional procurement department which provides effective support, structure and guidance in regard to the compliant purchasing of goods, services and works. In October 2021 the Authority embarked on a procurement department transformation which has resulted in the Authority adopting a category management approach.

Previously the Authority did not have a Procurement Strategy. Part of the transformation recognised the importance of such a document to ensure that our stakeholders are informed of our priorities, procedures, principles and the ongoing Action Plan for continuous improvement of the department.

The Strategy will initially be updated in 12 months' time after a period of transition to category management and once the full procurement team is in place. The Strategy will then be reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance to the priorities of the Authority.

#### **5. Alternative options considered and rejected**

No alternative options have been considered. It is not advisable for the Procurement department not to have a Procurement Strategy.

#### **6. Strategic priorities**

Procurement has an important role to play in supporting all areas of the Authority that procure goods, services and works, in order to ensure that the Authority is compliant with the procurement regulations and our internal financial regulations. The Strategy sets out how we will meet specific areas of the Fire and Rescue Plan, Integrated Risk Management Plan and the Annual Plan that are directly influenced by Procurement.

Procurement will look to explore and develop opportunities to collaborate as required and as one of the priorities of the Fire and Rescue Plan. The Strategy also sets out that the Authority will be transparent, open and accessible in all of its procurement activity, as also documented in the Fire and Rescue Plan.

#### **7. Operational implications**

The Strategy supports operational activity within the Authority. The procurement team will ensure that all goods and services are compliantly purchased, and the Strategy sets out how this will be achieved.

## 8. Financial implications

This decision does not have any direct staffing implications. The restructure of the department and the adoption of a Category Management approach will ensure the Authority achieves value for money.

## 9. Legal implications

As a public body, the Authority is subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015), adopted into UK law following the UK's exit from the EU. The regulations require us to ensure all suppliers are treated equally and without discrimination, and to act in a transparent and proportionate manner without artificially distorting competition. The PCR 2015 are currently being streamlined and replaced with one set of rules for all public sector contracts which is expected to come into force mid-2023. The Authority will transition and work to the new legislation as required.

## 10. Staffing implications

This decision does not have any direct staffing implications. The Procurement Team has been fully recruited as part of the restructure. The Procurement Team will continue to work closely with key category stakeholders as the Strategy is embedded in the organisation. This will include providing further training and guidance to staff within the organisation as required.

## 11. Equality and Diversity implications

We have considered whether individuals with protected characteristics will be disadvantaged as a consequence of the actions being taken. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010. There are no disproportionate impacts for any protected groups.

Race	No	Religion or belief	No
Sex	No	Gender reassignment	No
Age	No	Pregnancy & maternity	No
Disability	No	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Sexual orientation	No		

The Strategy aims to improve equality outcomes, whilst developing an inclusive procurement provision that aligns to our strategic equality objectives and provides a legitimate aim to improve equality in our procurement processes.

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

The Strategy includes within the Procurement Principles that the Authority will conduct all of its business in an honest and ethical manner. This includes implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure modern slavery is not taking place within the Authority or any of its supply chains. The Modern Slavery Policy is to be updated by March 2023 as part of the action plan.

## 12. Risks

None identified.

## 13. Governance Boards

The Procurement Strategy has been presented to the following boards:

- Service Leadership Team on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022

- Strategic Board on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

#### **14. Background papers**

Appendix 1 – Procurement Strategy

**Decision Process (#)**

**Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments**

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

.....I support this recommendation.....

.....



Sign: .....

Date:.....04/11/2022.....

**Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies**

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

.....No Rep body consultation required.....

**Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review**

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority's ("the Commissioner's") Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer

Sign:



Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 8 November 2022

Chief Finance Officer

Sign: .....  .....

Print: .....Neil Cross.....

Date: . . .04/11/2022. . . . .

**Step 3 - Publication**

**Is the report for publication?      YES**

**If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication** (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'none' if applicable)

None

If the report is not for publication, the Monitoring Officer will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

**Step 4 - Redaction**

**If the report is for publication, is redaction required:**

- |          |                          |           |
|----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Of Decision Sheet</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Of Appendix</b>       | <b>NO</b> |

**If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:**

N/A

**Date redaction carried out:** .....

If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: ..... Print: .....

Date signed: .....

**Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

**I agree the recommendations to this report:**

Sign:  PFCC

Print: ROGER HIRST      Date signed: 25 November 2022