

Contract Procedure Rules

Contents

Rule Number	Rule
1	Interpretation
2	Compliance with Contracts Procedure Rules and Relevant European and U.K. Legislation
3	Exemptions and Exceptions
4	Delegated Authority to Enter into Contracts
5	Invitation of Tenders
6	Selective Tendering from Standing Approved List
7	Tendering by Advertisement
8	Negotiated Tendering and Competitive Dialogue
9	Contracts not Exceeding £50,000 in Value or Amount
10	Nominated Sub-Contractors and Suppliers
11	Electronic Bids
12	Submission and Custody of Tenders
13	Opening of Tenders
14	Amendment of Tenders
15	Post-tender Negotiations
16	Evaluation, Acceptance of Tenders and Award of Contracts
17	Letters of Intent
18	Form of Contracts
19	Execution of Contracts
20	Termination of Contracts
21	Financial Limits

1. Interpretation

In these Contracts Procedure Rules:-

“the Cabinet” means the Executive established under Part II of the Local Government Act 2000;

“the Cabinet Members” means the executive leader and the members of the executive;

“the Cabinet Functions” means the functions for which the Cabinet is responsible;

“the appropriate Chief Officer” means whichever of the following is responsible in any particular case for inviting tenders or placing an official order:-

- The Chief Executive
- Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services
- Assistant Chief Executive Strategic Development & Partnerships
- The Corporate Director - Resources
- The Corporate Director - Children
- The Corporate Director - Wellbeing
- The Corporate Director - Communities

“the appropriate body” means the Cabinet, and any committee, panel or other body to which power has been delegated to accept tenders for contracts of the category for which tenders are to be or have been invited;

“the Chief Finance Officer” means the officer for the time being having statutory responsibility for the administration of the Council’s financial affairs;

“contract” means any form of contract or agreement entered into by the Council with any other party for the supply of goods, services or works, or any combination thereof.

“contract value” means the total value of the contract over the whole term of the contract. If there is no fixed price then the value of the contract is to be calculated on the expected expenditure during that financial year, if there is no fixed term for the contract. In the case where there is a contract term but no fixed price then the value of the contract is to be calculated on the expected expenditure over the whole contract period. All contract values are exclusive of VAT.

“EU” means the European Union

“framework agreement” means an agreement between one or more authorities and one or more economic operators, the purpose of which is to establish the terms governing contracts to be awarded during a given period, in particular with regard to price and, where appropriate, the quantity envisaged.

“internal providers” means an organisation managed, funded and staffed by the Council, which provides a service to various directorates and schools as its core business

“marketplace” means the externally hosted transaction hub which stores pre-approved supplier catalogues against which orders are raised”

"the Monitoring Officer" means the officer for the time being designated as such under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;

"parties" means collectively the Council and any other party or more than one party entering into a contract or agreement

"trade journal" means a newspaper or journal circulating among such persons or bodies as undertake contracts of the category for which tenders are to be invited;

Words importing the singular number only shall include the plural number and vice versa.

Any reference to any statutory provision shall include reference to any statutory modification amendment or re-enactment thereof and any subordinate legislation made under them.

2. Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and Relevant European and UK Legislation.

2.1 Every contract for the sale, purchase or hire of goods by or the carrying out of works or provision of services for the Council shall comply with:

(a) all relevant statutory provisions including in particular the Local Government Act 1988 Parts I and II, the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997, the Local Government Act 1999 Part I, and the Public Contract Regulations 2006. ,

(b) any relevant EU law, EU Treaty, and EU public procurement Directives as implemented in UK legislation,

(c) the Council's Constitution, including in particular Financial Procedure Rules, Scheme of Delegation and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

2.2 For the avoidance of doubt, the appropriate Chief Officer shall ensure that where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract (or series of contracts) is likely to be equal to or to exceed the thresholds set by the EU for the public procurement contracts referred to in Rule 2.1 above, then the tendering procedures to be adopted must be in accordance with the relevant EU Directive, and any statutory provision relating thereto.

2.3 Where an invitation to tender is subject to any EU Directive the appropriate Chief Officer or Cabinet Member shall consult the Chief Finance Officer prior to the commencement of the tender process as to the appropriate procedure to be followed.

2.4 The appropriate Chief Officer shall ensure that the Chief Finance Officer is informed by the 1st February each year of all proposed contracts which are likely to be subject to the relevant EU Directive within the following financial year.

2.5.1 The procurement of goods, services or works shall not be divided into more than one contract where that would result in the avoidance of the Contracts Procedure Rules or would affect the application of the Contract Procedure Rules.

2.5.2. The procurement of goods, services and works shall not be artificially over estimated or under-estimated which would result in either the avoidance of the Contract

Procedure Rules or which would affect the application of the Contract Procedure Rules.

- 2.6 It shall be a condition of contract between the Council and any person (not being an Officer of the Council) who is required to supervise a contract on its behalf that, in relation to such contract, s/he shall comply with the requirements of these Contract Procedure Rules and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules as if s/he were an appropriate Chief Officer.
- 2.7. The Monitoring Officer with the agreement of the Chief Finance Officer may issue procurement guidance or protocols, and all Chief Officers and any person who is required to supervise a contract on behalf of the Council shall have due regard to any such guidance or protocol.

3. Exemptions and Exceptions

3.1 Exemption from any of the following provisions of these Contract Procedure Rules may be made:-

- (a) By direction of the appropriate body where they are satisfied after considering a report from the appropriate Chief Officer that exemption is justified in special circumstances;
- (b) In an emergency situation in which injury or damage to persons or property is threatened in which case the appropriate Chief Officer may take any necessary action but must report the circumstances and the action taken to the next meeting of the appropriate body.

3.2 A record of any exemption made in accordance with Rule 3.1 shall be made in the Minutes of the appropriate body to which the report referred to in that Rule is made.

3.3 These Contract Procedure Rules do not apply to contracts let by school or college governing bodies acting in accordance with their approved schemes of delegation.

3.4 Compliance with these Contract Procedure Rules shall not be required:-

- (a) Where a tendering procedure is prescribed by legislation;
- (b) Where purchases are made through Internal providers, County Borough Supplies, the Welsh Purchasing Consortium, any other approved local authority purchasing consortium or a central government supply organisation, provided the requirements of the consortium or organisation and all relevant legislation are complied with;
- (c) Where an existing contract is extended by the ordering of new goods, works or services which will increase the value of the contract, provided the approval of the appropriate body is obtained if the total value of any extension or series of extensions exceeds £100,000 or 10% of the original contract sum, whichever is lower (subject to a de-minimus variation of £10,000), and provided that any extension is not in breach of any legislation.

- (d) Where a contract is renewed on the basis of its original terms with the approval of the appropriate body;
- (e) Where the appropriate body considers it desirable in the best interests of the Council that a tender be invited from one or more persons or bodies selected by it or negotiated with a contractor already engaged by the Council;
- (f) For the appointment of consultants (including architects, engineers, surveyors, solicitors and barristers) providing a professional service;
- (g) For the carrying out of security works where the publication of documents in accordance with the tendering procedure could prejudice the security of the work to be done, provided the method of tendering has been approved by the appropriate body;
- (h) Where the Council or the appropriate Chief Officer is acting on behalf of a consortium, joint committee, association or similar organisation of which the Council is a member and the organisation concerned has not stipulated that these Contract Procedure Rules shall be complied with, provided the requirements of that organisation and any relevant legislation are complied with;
- (i) Where the Council is acting on behalf of another local authority or public body within the meaning of Section 1 of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970, provided that authority or body's requirements and any relevant legislation are complied with;
- (j) For contracts which can only be performed by a specific statutory undertaker.
- (k) Where goods, services or works are to be purchased under a framework contract, subject to the framework contract itself having been entered into in compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules.
- (l) Contracts for services entered into in accordance with the National Health Services and Community Care Order 1990 and the Children Act 1989 for the benefit of an individual client.
- (m) Employment contracts which make an individual a direct employee of the Council.
- (n) Contracts regarding the acquisition, disposal or transfer of land (in respect of which the Financial Procedure Rules apply)

4. Delegated Authority to Enter into Contracts

- 4.1 Each Cabinet Member has been allocated the following functions under Scheme A of the Council's Schemes of Delegations (Scheme for the Allocation of Cabinet Functions to Individual Cabinet Members) in respect of any proposed contract relating to services falling within the Cabinet Member's portfolio having an estimated value exceeding £1,000,000 but not exceeding £5,000,000:
- (a) To accept the lowest tender received where payment is to be made by the Council or the highest tender received where payment is to be received by the Council, or
 - (b) To accept a tender other than the lowest tender received where payment is to be made by the Council, or other than the highest tender received where payment is to be received by the Council where there are special reasons approved by the Section 151 Officer for not accepting the lowest tender or the highest tender as the case may be.
- 4.2 Each appropriate Chief Officer has been allocated the following functions under Scheme B2 of the Council's Schemes of Delegations (Scheme for the Allocation of Functions to Executive Directors) in respect of any proposed contract relating to services administered by their Directorate/Office having an estimated value not exceeding £1,000,000:
- (a) To accept the lowest tender received where payment is to be made by the Council or the highest tender received where payment is to be received by the Council, or
 - (b) To accept a tender other than the lowest tender received where payment is to be made by the Council, or other than the highest tender received where payment is to be received by the Council where there are special reasons approved by the Section 151 Officer for not accepting the lowest tender or the highest tender as the case may be.

5. INVITATION OF TENDERS

- 5.1 Subject to any overriding requirements of the EU Procurement legislation, any contract exceeding £50,000, and in any other case where the appropriate body determines, tenders shall be invited in accordance with either Rules 6, 7 or 8.
- 5.2 Where the estimated value or amount of a particular description of goods to be purchased or hired, works to be carried out or services to be provided exceeds the figure specified in Rule 5.1 tenders shall be invited for the full value or amount of the goods, works or services of that description required by the appropriate Chief Officer, after consulting the Chief Finance Officer. This shall be done at the time tenders are invited, and tenders shall not be invited for less than the full value or amount so required for the purpose of avoiding the application of these Contract Procedure Rules.
- 5.3 A register of contracts over £50,000 shall be maintained by the Chief Finance Officer.

6. SELECTIVE TENDERING FROM STANDING APPROVED LIST

- 6.1 The selection of contractors shall be made from the list of approved contractors for the procurement of all Works and Services.

The Chief Finance Officer shall compile and maintain a list containing the names of persons or bodies who wish to be included and who have been approved after successfully completing a vendor appraisal.

The approved list will show the categories for which approval has been given and a recommended contract value.

- 6.2 The list shall be reviewed continually, by the Chief Finance Officer, each contractor being reviewed on the occasion of their insurance renewal and in the event of any negative end of project feedback received from the Directorates.
- 6.3 Requests for contractors to be added to the approved lists may be made by the Chief Officer or received from a Contractor. The Chief Finance Officer will undertake a vendor appraisal advising both the Chief Officer and the Contractor of the outcome. Only successful Contractors will be added to the approved list.
- 6.4 Except in the circumstances described in Rule 6.6 invitations to tender for a contract shall be sent by the appropriate Chief Officer to at least five (except where legislation permits a lesser number) of the persons or bodies approved for a contract of the relevant category and amount or value.
- 6.5 The basis of selection for those companies on the approved list shall be by way of rotation and/or the suitability of contractors to undertake the project. Reasons for such choice must be recorded,
- 6.6 Tenders may be sent to less than five of the persons or bodies approved for a contract of the relevant category and amount or value if in the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer this is necessary because of the specialised nature of the works or services

7. TENDERING BY ADVERTISEMENT

- 7.1.1 All requirements for goods above £50,000 shall be referred to the Chief Finance Officer who will arrange for the provision of such to be advertised as described in 7.2.1 and 7.2.2
- 7.1.2 In addition, where a category for Works or Services does not exist, this shall be referred to the Chief Finance Officer who will arrange for the provision of such to be advertised as described in 7.2.1 and 7.2.2
- 7.2.1 An advertisement shall be placed as directed by the Chief Finance Officer in one or more of the appropriate media, i.e.:
- (a) The Authority's website
 - (b) Buy4Wales
 - (c) Local newspapers
 - (d) Trade Journals

(e) EU Journal (which shall be mandatory in the event of the relevant threshold being exceeded)

7.2.2 The advertisement shall:

- (a) Specify details of the contract into which the Council wishes to enter;
- (b) Invite persons or bodies interested to apply for permission to tender;
- (c) Specify a time limit of not less than 14 days within which such applications or tenders are to be received by the Council.
- (d) Indicate the criteria and weighting to be used to select tenderers and award the contract.

7.3 Except where an open procedure has been used, after the time limit specified in the advertisement has expired invitations to tender for the contract shall be sent to:-

- (a) At least five of the persons or bodies which applied for permission to tender, selected by the appropriate Chief Officer after consulting the Chief Finance Officer, or
- (b) Where fewer than five persons or bodies have applied or are considered suitable, to all those persons or bodies which the appropriate Chief Officer considers suitable after consulting the Chief Finance Officer.

8. NEGOTIATED TENDERING AND COMPETITIVE DIALOGUE

8.1 The negotiated procedure, as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, can only be used in exceptional circumstances as directed by the Chief Finance Officer and with prior approval of the appropriate Cabinet Member and Monitoring Officer.

8.2 The competitive dialogue procedure, as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, can only be used for particularly complex projects as directed by the Chief Finance Officer and with prior approval of the appropriate Cabinet Member and Monitoring Officer.

9. CONTRACTS NOT EXCEEDING £50,000 IN VALUE OR AMOUNT

9.1(a) Where products, services or works are available on the Xchange Wales marketplace hub, orders must be placed directly with the nominated supplier.

(b) Where there are no supply arrangements in place, the appropriate Chief Officer shall make what s/he considers to be the most suitable arrangements for the sale of goods and for the ordering of goods, works and services having an estimated value or amount not exceeding £50,000 but before doing so shall obtain at least three alternative written offers or quotations unless it is impracticable to do so.

- 9.2 A record shall be kept by the appropriate Chief Officer in a form approved by the Chief Finance Officer of the details of every such contract exceeding £2,500 in value or amount and, in each case in which at least three alternative written offers or quotations were not obtained, the appropriate Chief Officer shall also record the reasons why it was considered impracticable to do so.

10. NOMINATED SUB-CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

The following provisions shall have effect where a sub-contractor or supplier is to be nominated to a main contractor:-

- (a) Where the estimated amount of the sub-contract or the estimated value of the goods to be supplied does not exceed £50,000 the appropriate Chief Officer is authorised to nominate a sub-contractor or supplier in accordance with Rule 9;
- (b) Where the estimated amount of the sub-contract or the estimated value of the goods to be supplied exceeds £50,000 tenders shall be invited in accordance with either Rules 6, 7 or 8 and Rules 12, 13, 14 and 15, and 16 shall apply to the tenders received.
- (c) In dealing with matters under this Procedure Rule, the invitations shall require an undertaking by the tenderer that if selected, the tenderer will be willing to enter into a contract with the main contractor on terms which indemnify the main contractor against the main contractor's obligations under the main contract in relation to the subcontract.

11. ELECTRONIC BIDS

11.1 TENDERING FOR CONTRACTS ABOVE £50,000 IN VALUE OR AMOUNT

Requests for Invitations to tender may be transmitted by electronic means. Tenders may be submitted by electronic means provided that:

- (a) evidence that the transmission was successfully completed is obtained and recorded;
- (b) each tender submitted electronically is supplemented by an identical signed hard copy original submitted in the manner prescribed in the advertisement or the ITT documents before the tender return date; and
- (c) electronic tenders are kept in a secure folder under the control of the Monitoring Officer which is not opened until the deadline has passed for receipt of tenders.

Where a tenderer doesn't have the capability to tender electronically, they shall be allowed to tender in paper format.

11.2 QUOTATIONS BELOW £50,000 IN VALUE OR AMOUNT

There is no electronic bid facility available at this time

12. SUBMISSION AND CUSTODY OF TENDERS

12.1 Where tenders are invited in accordance with these Contracts Procedure Rules or otherwise as determined by the appropriate body, the requirements for submission of tenders shall be set out in the invitation and every invitation shall state that no tender will be considered unless it is enclosed in a sealed, plain envelope bearing the word "Tender" followed by the subject to which it relates and addressed to the Monitoring Officer or in the case of contracts of a value not exceeding £50,000 to the relevant Chief Officer but bearing no other name or mark indicating the sender.

12.2 An Officer receiving the tender shall initial and indicate on the envelope the time and date of receipt and such details are to be recorded in the Tender Register.

Tenders shall be kept in the custody of the Monitoring Officer until the time and date specified for their opening.

12.3 No tender received after the time and date specified in the invitation shall be accepted or considered unless there is clear documentary evidence of it having been posted by first class post at least the day before the tenders were due to be returned (by postmark or otherwise) and provided its receipt is brought to the attention of the appropriate Chief Officer before any tender has been formally accepted.

13. OPENING OF TENDERS

13.1 Tenders for contracts or call off/framework arrangements having an aggregated estimated value or amount exceeding £500,000 shall be opened at the same time in the presence of:-

(a) Two Members comprising any of the following:

(i) the Mayor;

(ii) the Deputy Mayor;

(iii) the Cabinet Member for the function in respect of which contract is to be concluded

(iv) the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Committee with responsibility for the function in respect of which the contract is to be concluded.

If two of these Members shall be unavailable, one or two Members as the case may be may be nominated by any of the unavailable Member(s) to act in their place being any Cabinet Member(s) or the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of any committee, sub-committee, panel or other body the majority of members of which are appointed by the Council;

(b) Two officers, one designated by the Monitoring Officer and the other by the appropriate Chief Officer.

- 13.2 Tenders for contracts having an estimated value or amount not exceeding £500,000 shall be opened at the same time in the presence of two officers, one designated by the Monitoring Officer and the other by the appropriate Chief Officer.
- 13.3 A record shall be kept of all tenders received in a form approved by the Monitoring Officer, including any reasons for disqualification
- 13.4 All unsuccessful tender documents shall be retained by the appropriate Chief Officer for a period of two years from their receipt.

14. AMENDMENT OF TENDERS

- 14.1 If an error is identified before the closing date for the return of tenders, all tenderers shall be appraised of the error and invited to adjust their tenders.
- 14.2 If an error in the contract documentation provided by the Council is identified after the closing date for the return of tenders, all tenderers shall be given details of the error and afforded the opportunity of withdrawing the offer or submitting an amended tender.
- 14.3 Except as provided in Rule 15 a tender may not be amended by the tenderer after it has been received unless examination of it reveals errors or discrepancies which would affect the tender figure in an otherwise successful tender, in which case the tenderer shall be given details of such errors and discrepancies and afforded an opportunity of confirming or withdrawing his offer.

15. POST-TENDER NEGOTIATIONS

- 15.1 Negotiations following the opening of tenders but before the acceptance of any tender may be conducted by the appropriate Chief Officer, subject to compliance with any legislative requirements , and only when:-
- (a) Amendments have been made to any relevant specification since the invitation of tenders, which could not have been foreseen at the invitation stage, or
 - (b) The volume of goods, works or services required by the Council has increased or decreased since the invitation of tenders, or
 - (c) Only one tender has been received, or
 - (d) Tender prices exceed financial targets predetermined by the Council, the Cabinet or the appropriate Committee, or
 - (e) The possibility of such negotiations has been indicated in the invitation to tender.
- 15.2 Negotiations shall be conducted in a manner which ensures as far as is reasonably possible that no tenderer is unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged, and a full record of the negotiations shall be made by the appropriate Chief Officer which shall include the names of the officers involved, minutes of all meetings and copies of all relevant correspondence and other documents.

16. EVALUATION, ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS AND AWARD OF CONTRACTS

- 16.1 The Chief Officer shall examine tenders in accordance with predetermined evaluation criteria and identify tenders that represent best value for money.
- 16.2 Except as provided in Rules 4.1, and 4.2, a tender other than the lowest tender if payment is to be made by the Council or the highest tender if payment is to be received by the Council shall not be accepted unless the appropriate body shall have authorised its acceptance after having considered a written report from the appropriate Chief Officer.
- 16.3 Tenders for contracts having an estimated value exceeding £5,000,000 may be invited and accepted only by the appropriate body unless the power to do so has been specifically allocated or delegated to the appropriate Cabinet Member or appropriate Chief Officer.
- 16.4 No tender relating to a contract to which Sections 2 to 9 of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 apply, shall be accepted without the approval of the Monitoring Officer.
- 16.5 Before a tender is accepted other than for the sale of goods the appropriate Chief Officer must obtain the Chief Finance Officer's confirmation that the tenderer's financial standing is satisfactory, unless the Tenderer has already been approved using the Council's prequalification process.
- 16.6 The award of any contract shall be in accordance with Public Contract Regulations 2006 and the requirements of any other legislation including any EU public procurement directive.
- 16.7 If the award of any contract is subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 or any EU public procurement directive, then there shall be a standstill period of at least ten days between the communication of the decision of the intention to award the contract being notified to those parties who were selected to tender, or who applied to be selected to tender, and the entering into of that contract.

17. LETTERS OF INTENT

Letters of intent shall only be used with the agreement of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services and only in very exceptional circumstances. Where the terms and conditions of the contract are not fully agreed no contractor shall be allowed on site to begin preliminary works until a full risk assessment has been carried out by the Authorised Officer as to possible implications to the Council by the Contractor being allowed to start on site before the contract terms and conditions have been finalised.

18 FORM OF CONTRACTS

- 18.1 Every contract exceeding £50,000 in amount or value shall be in writing in a form approved by the Monitoring Officer.
- 18.2 Every written contract shall include a clause empowering the Council to cancel the contract and to recover from the contractor the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation if either:-

(a) The contractor, any persons employed by the contractor or any body purporting to act on the contractor's behalf, whether the contractor is aware of their acts or not, shall have offered or given or agreed to give any officer or member of the Council any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or bribe to influence its decision in the tendering procedure, or in relation to any contract with the Council shall have committed any offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 1916 or shall have given any fee or reward the receipt of which is an offence under Section 117(2) of the Local Government Act 1972; or

(b) The contractor:-

(i) shall have communicated to any person other than the Council the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender (other than in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the tender for insurance or to obtain any performance bond required by the Council); or

(ii) shall have entered into any agreement or arrangement with any person as to the amount of any proposed tender or that that person shall refrain from tendering.

18.3 All contracts where a specification issued by the British Standards Institution or an European Standard is current at the date of the tender and is relevant shall require as a minimum that the goods and materials used in their execution shall be in accordance with that specification.

18.4 All contracts shall comply with the Council's policy in respect of Equalities and Welsh Language schemes.

19. EXECUTION OF CONTRACTS

19.1 Every contract which exceeds £100,000 in amount or value shall be executed under seal.

19.2 Contracts in writing exceeding £50,000 but not exceeding £100,000 in amount or value may, at the discretion of the appropriate Chief Officer after consulting with the Monitoring Officer, either be:

(a) executed under seal; or,

(b) signed by the appropriate Chief Officer, or another officer authorised in writing to sign on behalf of the appropriate Chief Officer, and by the Monitoring Officer or another officer authorised in writing by the Monitoring Officer.

19.3 Contracts in writing or official orders not exceeding £50,000 in amount or value may be signed either by the appropriate Chief Officer or by an officer in writing authorised to approve on behalf of the appropriate Chief Officer.

19.4.1 Every contract (other than framework contracts) exceeding £1,000,000 shall require a Performance Bond and for contracts below this limit the appropriate Chief Officer shall determine the necessity for a Performance Bond based on an assessment of risk for that contract.

19.4.2 A Surety shall be approved by the Chief Finance Officer.

20. TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS

For any contract exceeding £100,000 in value, early termination shall be approved by the appropriate Chief Officer in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services and the Chief Finance Officer. Contracts of a lesser value may be terminated early by agreement prior to the expiry date or in accordance with the termination provisions set out in the contract.

21. FINANCIAL LIMITS

With the exception of the financial limit specified in Rule 18.1, which may be varied only by the Council, the financial limits specified in these Contract Procedure Rules or any of them may be varied at any time by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, but any alterations shall be reported to the next meeting of the Council.