



Bridgend County Borough Council
Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy

2021 - 2024

Draft 3.2

7th September 2021

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	3
Why Procurement is Important to Bridgend	4
Procurement Context.....	6
Organisational Procurement Objectives.....	10
Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector.....	11
Improving Fair Work and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers	12
Increasing community benefits delivered by suppliers	13
Contributing to the Council’s aim to be a Carbon-Neutral Council by 2030	14
Securing value for money and managing demand	15
Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance	16
Promoting innovative and best practice solutions	17
Key Enablers.....	18
Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting.....	19
Supplier Support and Further Information	19

Foreword

Bridgend County Borough is a great place to live and work but like the rest of the world it has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. As we look to recover from the impacts of Covid-19 we want to utilise the Council's annual spend of over £186m to support the local and regional economy. Our first Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy puts delivering economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being at the heart of what we do. The Council recognises that procurement will be one of the key tools that enables the Council to deliver its strategic priorities and in ensuring that the Council buys the right thing at the right time for the right price.

As set out in our Corporate Plan Well-being Objective 3 - Smarter use of resources *"We recognise that we need to continue to make smarter use of our resources, looking at different ways of delivering services, embracing technology and working with partners and our communities to deliver financially sustainable services for the long term. In this way we can maximise our contribution to achieving our well-being objectives and improving well-being for our citizens while achieving those planned savings."*

The Council faces a number of well-documented challenges including our response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our communities and businesses, our response to the climate emergency and our response to managing ongoing budgetary constraints at a time of increasing demand for services. We want to use our procurement programme to:

- Support implementation of the Council's 2030 Decarbonisation Strategy and the circular economy;
- Maximise opportunities for local businesses, particularly those who demonstrate fair work practices;
- Support the foundational economy;
- Maximise the delivery of social value / community benefits;
- Act as a key driver to achieving our wellbeing ambitions and as a driver of organisational change;
- Deliver value for money whilst considering the whole life cost.

Mark Shephard – Chief Executive/ Cllr Huw David Leader of the Council

Why Procurement is Important to Bridgend

Bridgend County Borough Council delivers a wide range of statutory and discretionary services to over 147,000 residents. The Council does this through its own workforce and through over 1,700 private and third sector organisations.

The Council has a responsibility to manage public money with probity and to ensure that its £186m of annual procurement spend is managed in such a way that it supports the delivery of wider Council priorities. This Strategy sets out:

- Procurement's role in supporting the delivery of the Council's three main Corporate Well-being objectives (see Fig 1) and Directorate Business Plans.
- How the Council will ensure that value for money is achieved.
- Seven key procurement priorities and what the Council will do to deliver these priorities and how delivery will be demonstrated.
- The key changes that will be made to improve the management of its external spend on goods, services and works.
- What the Council will do to enhance procurement capacity and expertise

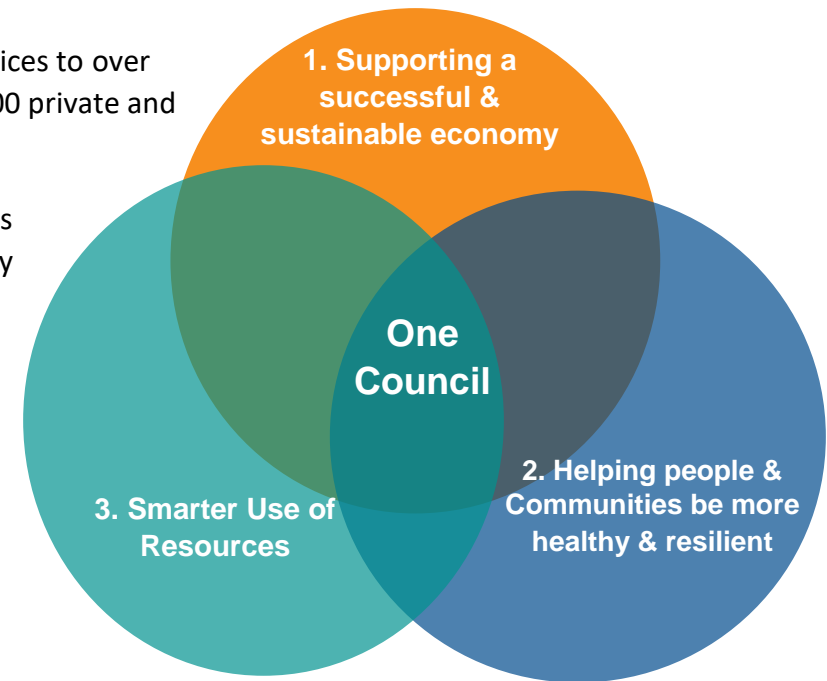
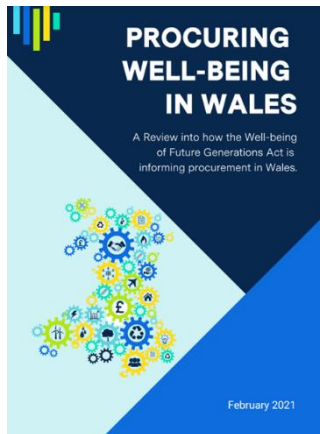


Figure 1: The Council's 3 Wellbeing Objectives



The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales 2021 report "*Procuring Well-being in Wales*" identified a number of challenges and constraints in procuring sustainably including:

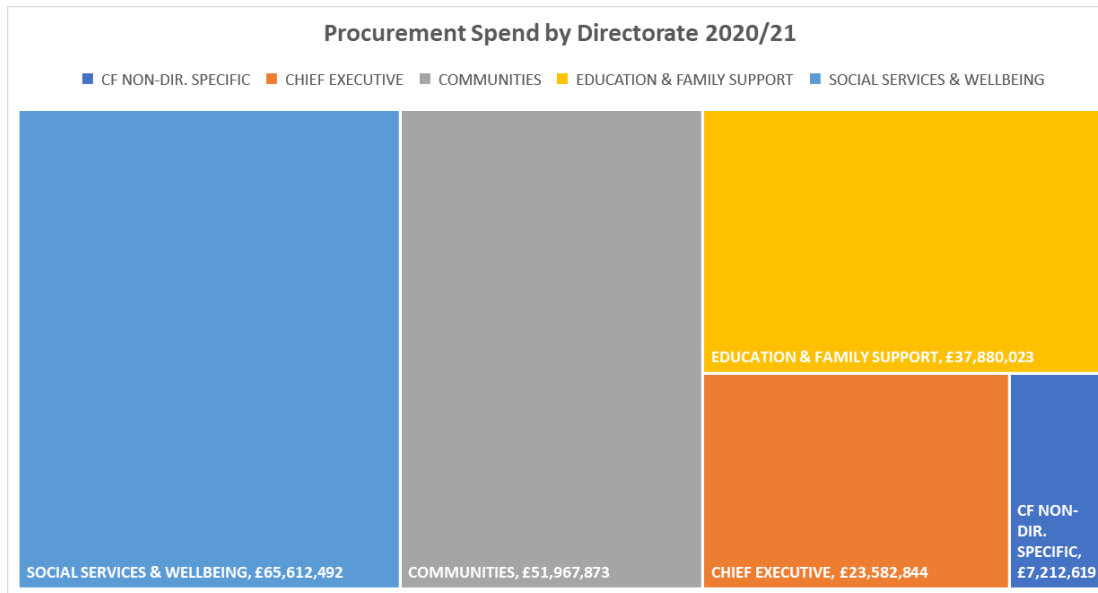
- Organisational buy-in, leadership involvement and engagement
 - Leaders failing to view procurement as an important function or lever in meeting corporate (well-being) objectives.
- Insufficient resources and capacity within the procurement function and amongst procurement professionals.

How we manage Procurement

The Council's seven strong Procurement Team uses a category management approach and works with Directorates to deliver their requirements, whilst providing corporate oversight to the Council. They:

- Aim to ensure that procured services deliver good value for money.
- Look to utilise the efficiency offered by regional and national frameworks.
- Are actively engaged in the decarbonisation work and the 21st century school modernisation programmes.
- Provide procurement support to infrastructure projects, including as outcomes to the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal that will see significant and extensive investment in infrastructure and business within the County Borough.
- Enable economic regeneration through procurement and collaboration with internal and external partners.
- Are exploring the potential to maximise the delivery of social value by implementing the use of the Welsh TOMs.
- Are working to embed the "5 Ways of Working" into the procurement processes and raise awareness with suppliers.

Procurement Spend



In 2020/21 the Council spend with third parties was £186m of which £172m was revenue spend and £14m capital spend. The chart show that the highest spend was by the Social Services and Well-being Directorate (£66.6m) followed by the Communities Directorate (£52.0m).

Procurement Context

There are a number of priorities, policy aspirations and legislative requirements that have been taken into account when developing this Strategy. These include:

UK Legislative Context

The Council’s procurement of goods, services and works are primarily governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCRs 2015) which transposed EU Directives and EU Treaty Principles into UK law. The PCRs 2015 are grounded in the principles of free movement of goods, freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services. These principles are underpinned by equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency.

In response to the UK leaving the EU, the UK Government issued a Green Paper: Transforming Public Procurement and the consultation closed in March 2021. The UK Government’s stated aim is to speed up and simplify procurement processes, place value for money at their heart, and unleash opportunities for small businesses, charities and social enterprises to innovate in public service delivery. It will also look to enshrine in law, the principles of public procurement: value for money, the public good, transparency, integrity, efficiency, fair treatment of suppliers and non-discrimination.

In addition to the PCRs 2015 the Council needs to ensure that its procurement policies and practices adhere to a range of additional legislative requirements including the Equality Act 2010.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This is a key piece of legislation that focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The aim of the Act is to help create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. Procurement is one of the seven corporate areas for change in the Act’s statutory guidance and the Act recognises the important role procurement can play:

“The role of procurement will be an important part of how a public body allocates resources under the Act. It is expected that public bodies comply with their existing legal obligations in relation to procurement and that they also apply the Wales Procurement Policy Statement. This Policy adopts the Sustainable Procurement Task Force’s definition of sustainable procurement

...

This sets out the procurement practices and the specific actions expected of every public sector organisation in Wales”



Well-being goals: Source - Welsh Government

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

This Act introduced a duty on local authorities and local health boards to promote the development (in their area) of not for profit organisations to provide care and support for carers, and preventative services. These models include services across the range that make up the third sector - social enterprises, co-operative organisations, co-operative arrangements, and user-led services.

Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill

The Bill is expected to be enacted in 2022 and sets out a range of actions the Council will need ensure it implements. This includes publishing a Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy that will set out how the Council will carry out procurement in a socially responsible way, how it will secure value for money and how it will ensure payment of invoices within 30 days. There will also be a requirement to publish an annual Procurement Report, maintain and publish a contracts register and publish a contract forward plan / pipeline.

The Council will be required to carry out procurement in a socially responsible way by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at contributing to the achievement of— (a) the well-being goals listed in section 4 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and (b) the fair work goal (within the meaning given by section 4), referred to for the purposes of this Part as the “socially responsible procurement goals.” A Council must set and publish objectives designed to maximise its contribution to achieving the socially responsible procurement goals.

The Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS)

The third [WPPS](#) published in March 2021 sets out the ten principles the Welsh Government expects the Welsh public sector to follow for procuring well-being for Wales based on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act Goals and key Welsh Government policies. They include:

- Leveraging collaborative procurement activity in Wales to maximise long-term sustainable social and economic value outcomes from public spend.
- Supporting Welsh Government policy objectives relating to progressive procurement, such as the Foundational and Circular Economy.
- Preventing climate change by prioritising carbon reduction and zero emissions through more responsible and sustainable procurement.
- Collaborating with stakeholders to promote equal opportunities and fair work in Wales.
- Improving the integration and user experience of our digital solutions and applications, maximising the use of our procurement data to support decision-making.

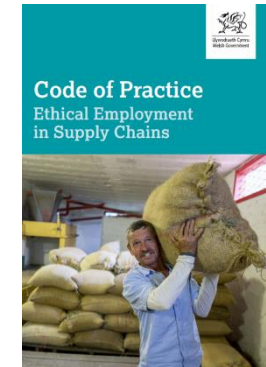


Welsh Government Initiatives

Community Benefits – aimed at delivering maximum value for the Welsh pound when tendering contracts.

Code of Practice – Ethical Employment in Supply Chains – Bridgend Council has signed up to the Code of Practice’s 11 commitments including the following employment issues:

- Modern Slavery and human rights abuses.
- Blacklisting.
- False self-employment.
- Unfair use of umbrella schemes and zero hours contracts.
- Paying the Living Wage.



Opening Doors: The Charter for SME Friendly Procurement – recognises that 99% of Welsh businesses are SMEs and their important role in the Foundational Economy. The Charter sets out a range of public sector commitments to SMEs and SME commitments to the public sector.

Wales Procurement Policy Notes – a series of Guidance notes for the Welsh Public sector.

Progress towards the Development of a New Procurement Landscape for Wales – recognises the role of procurement for supporting delivery against a number of important policy areas. It sets out 7 commitments that recognise that a new procurement approach is required in Wales and 7 commitments that the Welsh Government will take toward procurement. These are underpinned by 9 procurement transformation strands.

UK Steel Charter – the Council has signed the Charter and has committed to implementing the steps when appropriate to do so, including the following:

- Place a requirement in our appropriate contracts requiring the origin of steel to be provided.
- Stipulate use of steel products accredited to BRE Standard BES 6001 in appropriate contracts.
- Introduce a requirement for tender applications to include supply chain plans.

Bridgend and the Cardiff Capital Region Context

The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal was signed in March 2016 and is an agreement between the UK government, the Welsh government and the ten leaders of the local CCR. It includes £1.2 billion investment in the Cardiff Capital Region’s infrastructure through a 20-year Investment Fund.

Council Policy Drivers

The **Corporate Plan 2018-23** sets out the Council's ambitions and commitments to citizens and its contribution to Wales' seven well-being goals as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The vision is "*one Council working together to improve lives*". The Plan sets out the key principles that "underpin how we work" and the values that "shape how we work". The Corporate Plan is updated on an annual basis and has 3 well-being objectives:

1. Supporting a successful and sustainable economy.
2. Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient.
3. Smarter use of resources.

Directorate Business Plans set out how each Directorate will contribute to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives. They set out the actions the Directorate will take to achieve the Corporate Plan outcomes and how they will be measured.

There are a number of other key Policies, Strategies and Programmes that will influence this Strategy and in particular the Delivery Plan that sets out how the seven priorities will be delivered. They include:

- Decarbonisation Strategy.
- Covid-19 Recovery Plans.
- Digitisation Programme.
- Transformation Programme.

Organisational Procurement Objectives

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out the important role that procurement has in delivering well-being goals. The draft Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill states that the Council “*must set and publish objectives designed to maximise its contribution to achieving the socially responsible procurement goals.*” The Council’s seven Organisational Procurement Priorities set out how the Council’s procurement activity will contribute towards improving local economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.

1. Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector.
2. Improving Fair Work and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers.
3. Increasing community benefits delivered by suppliers.
4. Contributing to the Council’s aim to be a Carbon-Neutral Council by 2030.
5. Securing value for money and managing demand.
6. Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance.
7. Promoting innovative and best practice solutions.

Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector



A Prosperous Wales



A Wales of Cohesive
Communities

Aim

- To ensure that procurement decisions consider how local market can best be supported.

We will do this by

- Developing and then publicising a Selling to Council Guide to local businesses so they are clear about how to do business with the Council.
- Publish our Corporate Contracts Register on the Council's website so businesses are aware of the likely procurement opportunities.
- Undertake targeted engagement and 'Meet the Buyer' events with Third Sector and local businesses.
- Ensuring that lotting strategies that support SMEs are used.
- Undertaking market analysis so that informed procurement decisions can be made.
- Analyse spend data and business directories to identify opportunities to increase local supply.
- Ensure that the Council applies prompt payment for SMEs.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Increasing the number of business accessing and being successful when tendering for Council opportunities.
- Increasing the spend with local businesses.

Improving Fair Work and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers



A Healthier Wales



A Wales of Cohesive
Communities



A More Equal Wales

Aim

- To ensure that fair work principles are promoted across the Council and procurement processes increase fair work practices that help tackle poverty and inequality.

We will do this by

- Working towards the Welsh Government Fair Work Guidance including the Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains.
- Applying Fair Work criteria in all tenders and applying appropriate weightings.
- Supporting the development and implementation of the Council's Modern Slavery Statement.
- Encouraging contractors to provide equality training.
- Ensuring contractors know how to identify and report safeguarding concerns.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Delivering against the 11 principles of the Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains.

Increasing community benefits delivered by suppliers



A Prosperous Wales



A Wales of Cohesive
Communities



A More Equal Wales

Aim

- To increase the value of community benefits delivered through Council contracts.

We will do this by

- Adopting and rolling out the use of the Welsh TOMs as a scored element in all tenders over £100,000.
- Making the 'community benefit offer' of the successful tenders a contractual commitment and contract managing delivery.
- Raising awareness of community benefits internally to address any organisational culture barriers.
- Reviewing community benefit implementation and adapting the approach as required.
- Encouraging tenderers to provide employment, training and work placement opportunities.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Increasing the volume and value of community benefits delivered through Council Contracts.

Contributing to the Council's aim to be a Carbon-Neutral Council by 2030



Aim

- Embed a procurement processes that addresses climate change and a circular economy approach.

We will do this by

- Support initiatives that raise the awareness on climate change and circular economy – both internally and with suppliers.
- Consider circular procurement when scoping requirements to minimise waste.
- Learn from best practice and work with partners to develop a carbon baselining approach.
- Increasingly use a whole life costing approach in tender evaluations.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Reporting on carbon reduction through the Council's 2030 Decarbonisation Governance Board.

Securing value for money and managing demand

Aim

- Ensure the achievement of value for money in terms of whole life costs and quality and that we operate efficiently.

We will do this by

- Continuing to manage and organise our procurement activities using a category management approach.
- Managing procurement demand across the Council and promote a 'Buying Responsibly' campaign.
- Utilising regional and national framework agreements where they represent value for money.
- Embedding a robust and proportional contract management approach.
- Working with Directorates to review their spend procurement data and Contract Forward Plan to identify opportunities to manage demand and/or drive efficiencies.
- Supporting and encouraging Directorates to use the "5 Ways of Working" when planning their procurements.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Reporting of procurement's contribution to savings targets.

Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance

Aim

- Ensure Council staff have awareness of, and comply with, relevant legislation and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

We will do this by

- Ensuring staff involved in the procurement process have the required skills, knowledge and tools to work effectively.
- Regularly reviewing and updating procurement documentation to ensure they reflect best practice.
- Ensuring procurement documentation, processes and controls are in place to ensure compliance.
- Regularly reporting on procurement activity and non-compliance to Corporate Management Board.
- Publishing an annual procurement report

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Publishing an annual Procurement Report.

Promoting innovative and best practice solutions

Aim

- Encourage and utilise innovation where it can reduce costs and /or improve effectiveness.

We will do this by

- Reviewing the procurement forward pipeline to identify innovation opportunities.
- Ensuring early and ongoing Directorate engagement to scope and deliver their requirements.
- Challenging Directorates over existing procurement arrangements.
- Seeking examples of market innovations and best practice.

We will demonstrate delivery by

- Reporting and developing case studies to highlight best practice.

Key Enablers

The Council has identified five key enablers that will be critical to the delivery of this Strategy:

People

- Continue to invest in our People to ensure that the Procurement Team has the right mix of skills, knowledge and expertise.
- Ensure staff across the Council have the procurement skills, knowledge and tools to work effectively and independently.

Process

- Simplify and standardise our core processes and ensure our controls ensure compliance.
- Ensure that standard templates are in place for key procurement and contracting documentation and that these are regularly reviewed.

Technology

- Invest in the use of technology and e-procurement to underpin and simplify our core processes for both staff and suppliers.
- Improve our Purchase to Pay (P2P) processes to drive efficiency savings.

Information

- Provide staff with accurate timely spend data to inform procurement decisions and identify savings opportunities.
- Produce an annual procurement performance report.
- Support Directorates to optimise their spend in the achievement of their strategic objectives.

Culture

- Develop a culture that is innovative and challenges traditional delivery to improve what we do and drive savings.
- Ensure that staff understand and appreciate the rules and policies of the Council.
- Ensure that there is positive engagement with staff across the Council to support and encourage the delivery of innovative solutions within the agreed Council rules and wider legislation.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting

A detailed Delivery Plan will be developed and shall set out the actions that the Council will take to deliver this Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy. This Delivery Plan will be updated on an annual basis and will be used to manage and report on progress on an annual basis to Corporate Management Board.

The Council will publish a procurement annual report at the end of each financial year. The report will include:

- A progress report on the implementation of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy Delivery Plan.
- A summary of the contracts awarded above PCRs 2015 Thresholds.
- Details of a review into the extent to which Council contracts contributed to improving well-being in Bridgend.
- A statement of the how the Council intends to further improve the delivery of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.
- A summary of the procurement the Council expects to carry out in the next two financial years.

Supplier Support and Further Information

Bridgend Council's Procurement website <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/procurement> will include the **Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy Delivery Plan** which sets out how the Council will deliver the Strategy and the annual Procurement Report.

Bridgend Council's Corporate Contracts Register - <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/business/contracts-awarded/>

Business advice and support - <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/business/business-zone/business-advice-and-support/> Sell2Wales is the national advertising portal where Welsh public sector organisations post their contract opportunities. <https://www.sell2wales.gov.wales/>

Etenderwales – is the portal for conducting all tenders

<https://etenderwales.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.shtml?ncp=1387297456320.119009-1>

Constructionline – is the portal that Bridgend Council utilise for tenders up to the value specified in the council's Contract Procedure Rules for Works - <https://www.constructionline.co.uk/>

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Telephone – 01656 642596

Website – www.bridgend.gov.uk/procurement (from 2022)