


# Procurement Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28



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# Foreword

## Our Vision for Mid Devon

Through innovative and effective procurement and effective selection and management of third-party relationships, we will obtain best value on all goods and services required by the Council, which in turn makes a difference to our services and locality and helps make lives better.

At Mid Devon District Council, we recognise that our spend on the procurement of goods, works and services has a major impact on many aspects of life in the district. This includes the environment, social factors and local economic development. This can be particularly important to those local businesses and the voluntary and community sector which form part of our supply chain. Wherever it supports achieving the best value for money, we wish to encourage our local economy and work with our public, private and voluntary sector partners to deliver services.

In a post Brexit and Covid-19 world, we aim to stimulate our local economy and help local businesses work with the Authority through tender opportunities, and promote training/engagement opportunities to ensure our supply chain is ready to bid for work with the Authority and wider region.

This strategy covers all areas of Council third party expenditure, including capital expenditure and major projects such as the investment in high quality affordable housing and our commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. It draws from the National Procurement strategy for Local Government in England and provides a local interpretation of key themes from a procurement perspective.

The Council's services are advised and supported by a procurement partnership with Devon County Council, and therefore this strategy and related policies align closely. We have access to a large, well-established and respected Procurement Team comprising of experienced, highly skilled and committed people across six relevant categories of service/expenditure.

Delivery of this strategy will be challenging for the Council, with fewer resources available and likely significant change to regulations following Brexit. However we are committed to delivering our objectives, providing high quality and sustainable services and creating an environment where communities and businesses can flourish and grow together.

**Cllr Bob Deed**  
**Cabinet Member for Financial Services**

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# Introduction

Welcome to Mid Devon District Council's procurement strategy for 2023 and beyond. The strategy complements the Local Government Association National Procurement Strategy, highlights a range of priorities for the Authority's procurement approach, and utilises the skills of the Devon Procurement Services to enable the Council's services to deliver high quality, mitigate risks and comply with public sector procurement legislation.

Procurement concerns the acquisition of all goods, works and services. The aim of this Procurement Strategy is to set a clear framework for procurement throughout the Council which reflects the Council's Corporate Plan and provides a framework for securing value for money within the regulations.

Procurement is a facilitator through which diverse considerations and objectives are drawn together to form a practical approach. This programme has been developed to support all areas of the Authority's activity in a joined-up way, bringing significant added value to our aim of providing the best possible service for Mid Devon's residents and communities.

Our procurement approach supports the organisation's core purpose and contributes to continual evolution. The procurement function is about far more than just competition and compliance; it is an expansive, value adding system which supports alignment of purpose and overall public value.

This procurement strategy links with the LGA National Procurement Strategy and brings together key considerations. This links into the Authority's wider objectives, many of which are highlighted within. Naturally as our landscape continually changes, the strategy will be updated periodically to reflect today's evolving environment.



# The Authority Context

Mid Devon District Council serves a rural location covering an area of 353 square miles (914 km<sup>2</sup>) in the agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. More than half the population of some 82,000 people is scattered in villages in the rural hinterland, with the balance divided between the three main towns of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton.

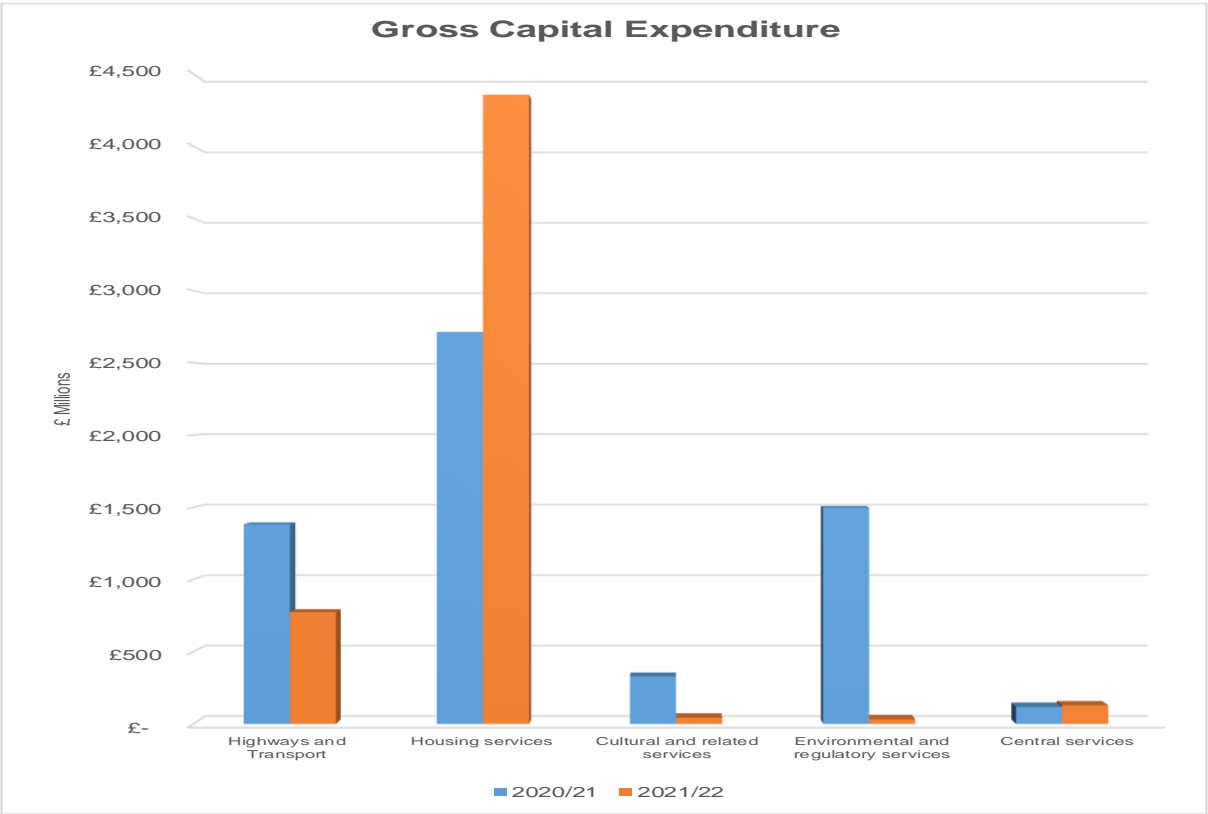
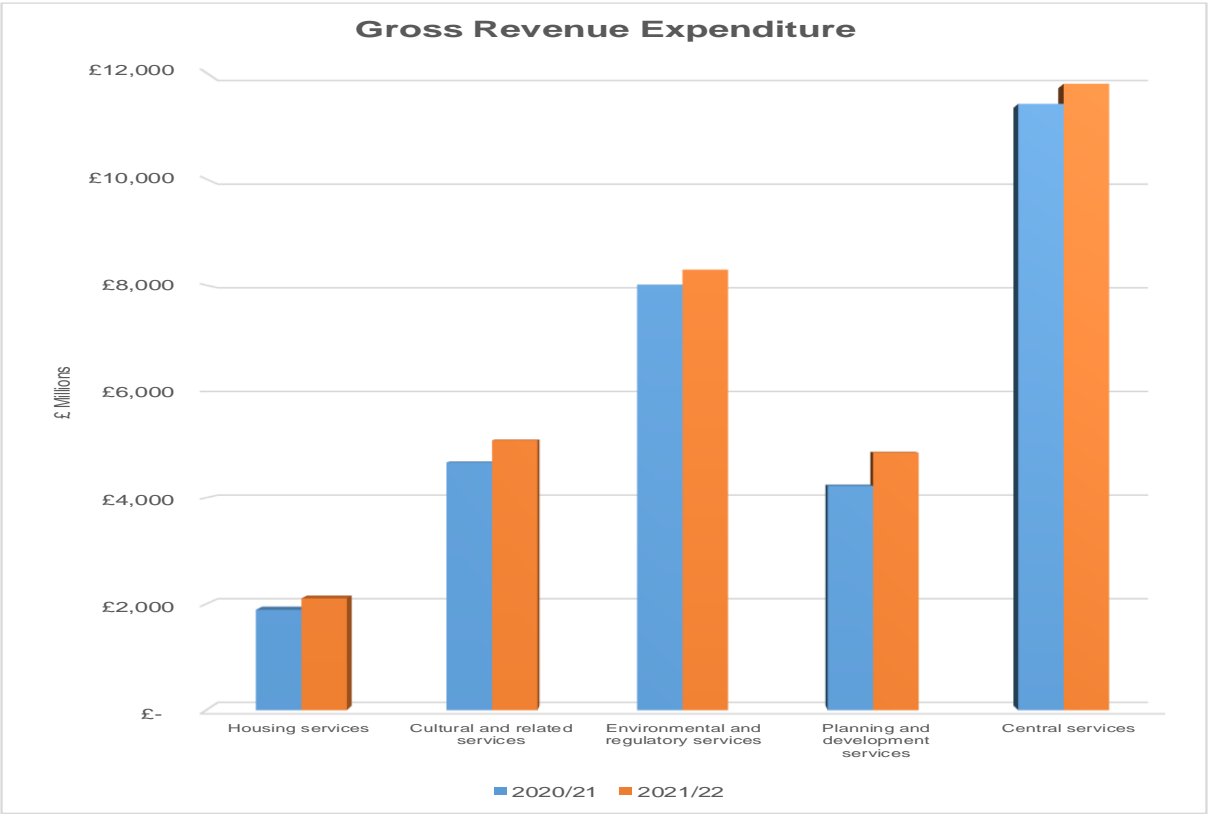
While it is the 23rd-largest district council in England by area, it is also the 34th-smallest by population. Our main offices lie to the north of the city of Exeter, one of the most rapidly expanding economies in the country, and as a district council Mid Devon has sought to maximise this opportunity by delivering quality growth in a high-quality environment.

As a district council, we are responsible for providing services such as Housing, Leisure and Cultural services, Environmental and Regulatory services, Waste Collection and Planning Services. Also as a billing authority, we are also responsible for the collection and administration of Council Tax and Business Rates income on behalf of those that levy it.

The Council applies a variety of different service delivery models across its operations including an increasing number of Joint Ventures and partnership operations. This utilises single / multiple provider frameworks and contracts, use of small Lots, local, and sometimes regional frameworks.

Mid Devon District Council is a progressive council committed to providing high quality and sustainable services, creating an environment where communities and businesses can flourish and grow together.

The Council spends significant sums on delivering services for its communities and residents across its capital and revenue workstreams. The charts below illustrate the value of spend across various categories. Over the timeframe of this strategy, the Council will be investing in further quality social and affordable housing and in reducing our carbon footprint.



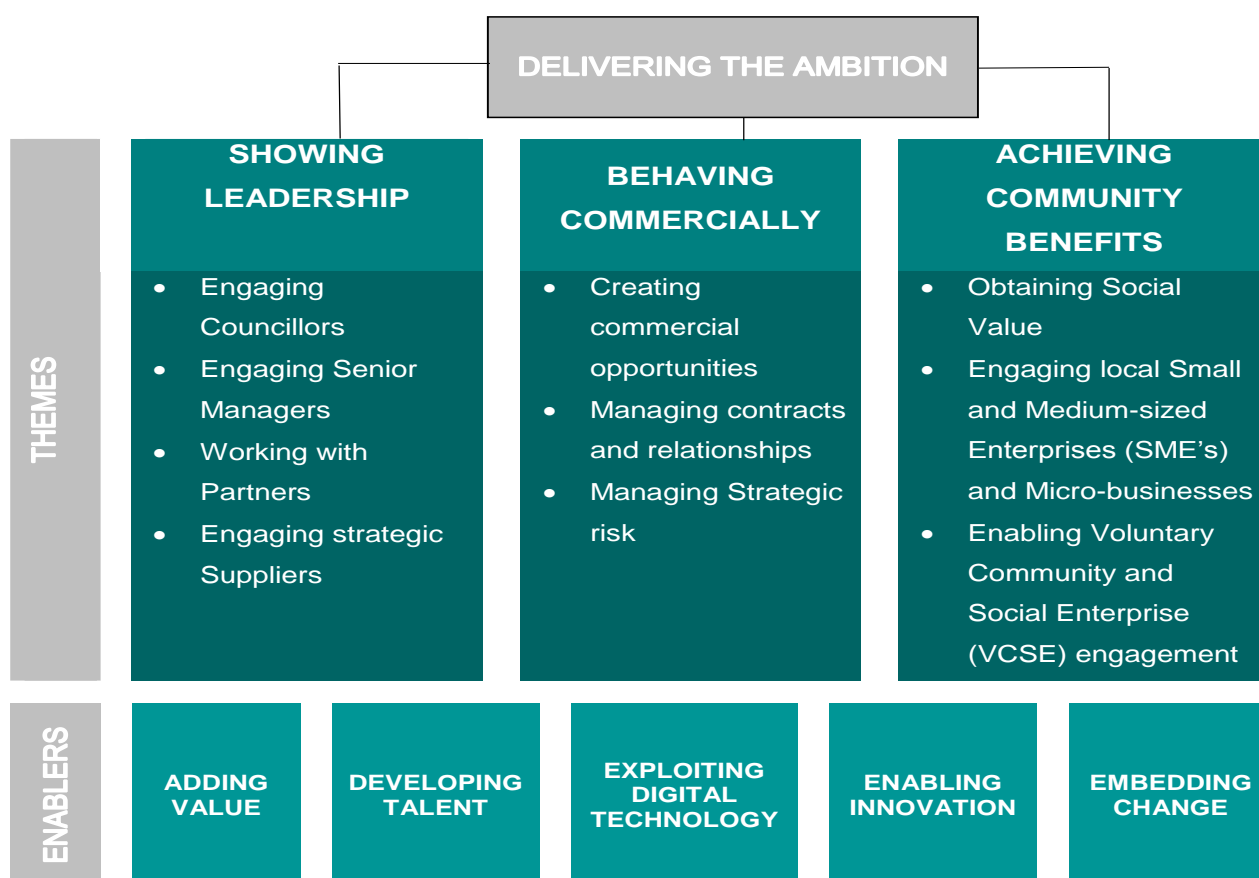
# National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England. The strategy outlines three Priority Themes and five 'Enablers' for Local Government procurement in coming years. <sup>1</sup>

The LGA national strategy highlights these themes and invites Authority's to develop their own approach linked to them. The strategy themes are illustrated below and are available via:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/national-procurement-strategy-local-government-england-2022>

Mid Devon District Council's procurement strategy links these themes with local priorities, forming our procurement approach.



<sup>1</sup> Source: National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England

# Procurement Strategy

Below are the key procurement themes. The Authority's procurement strategy closely links these themes with local priorities, to form our overall procurement approach. The approach works in line with organisational objectives and the National Procurement Strategy, and will develop over time. These themes will be promoted across services through the procurement approach and performance will be monitored for continuous improvement.







## Support Strategic Objectives

**Procurement is an enabler which supports the Authority's objectives.**

### Our priorities include:

#### Procurement awareness

- Understand how procurement can help in the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives.
- Maintain excellent procurement links with the Authority's Senior Managers and Budget Holders.

#### Support future service design

- Early procurement involvement in service planning.
- Promote stakeholder input to support efficient and effective service design.
- Consult service providers to build supply market skills into service design.
- Support Service delivery and decision making.



#### Support daily activities

- Support daily operations across the Authority's business.
- Promote procurement support for public sector partnerships and income generation / cost recovery to support partners as appropriate.

#### Continuous learning

- Identify continuous learning opportunities and share knowledge widely.
- Undertake support and challenge to enable effective decisions.

#### Promote equality and diversity objectives

- Work with services to ensure equality and diversity considerations are central to the procurement approach, helping build a society where everybody can thrive.

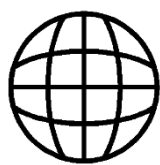
#### KEY MESSAGE

Attuned to organisational strategy with an enabling procurement environment.

01 Promote procurement as an enabler to support the organisation's strategic objectives and daily operations.

02 Lead the Authority in a fair and proportionate procurement approach and enable monitoring through contract duration.





## Global Climate Change

### Mid Devon's climate declaration

**Mid Devon's Climate Declaration is in place along with a Devon Climate Emergency Response Group. Relevant Procurement considerations are part of the Authority's Net Zero Action Group's (NZAG) responsibility which is working in response to the climate emergency.**

This includes working with service providers to reduce the Authority's carbon footprint in line with developing commitments, as part of Mid Devon's Net Zero ambition. It will carefully consider specifications and standards alongside a total lifecycle approach to consider the long-term impact.



Procurement activity will underpin the Authority's climate emergency activities by supporting the sourcing of low carbon alternatives, renewable energy, waste management strategies and climate enhancement initiatives. We will work with services, communities, external partners and supply markets to show leadership, improve standards and enable investments which support environmental sustainability priorities and play our part in tackling the global climate emergency.

We will promote local service delivery, reduce road miles, help de-carbonise the supply chain and support opportunities for local supply in our procurement approach.

#### KEY MESSAGE

Our procurement approach will underpin the Authority's Climate Change Action Plan

- 01 We will proactively support procurement for climate emergency activity.
- 02 Work with services across the Authority to reduce the carbon footprint including supply chain carbon reductions.





## Social Value

### “Social Value drives everything”

**Unlocking social value promotes the improvement of economic, social, and environmental wellbeing, and our work must prioritise the things that bring value. Our approach includes:**

- Creating opportunities in line with the Social Value Act 2012.
- Implementing a social value matrix to maximise Social Value opportunities when planning procurement activity.
- Ensuring social value considerations are proportionate with the size, scope and nature of procurement activity.
- Working in line with good practice approaches such as the national social value framework.
- Ensuring Social Value is considered upfront in all procurement approaches as appropriate (e.g. quality criteria, specifications, design of route to market and contract evolution through its lifecycle).
- Social Value Championing ensuring wide engagement.
- Supporting local social value creation events.
- Promoting Social Value across all our collaborative procurement forums and contributing towards further development of shared social value frameworks with other local authorities.



#### KEY MESSAGE

**Social value drives everything.**

- 01 Our approach will prioritise the overall value ahead of the cost.
- 02 We will ensure Social Value considerations are built centrally into the planning of all procurement activity.





## Prioritise Local Economic Development & SMEs

**Mid Devon's organisational strategy emphasises local economic wellbeing. The Authority's Procurement Strategy aims to prioritise opportunities for local suppliers, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) when planning the procurement approach and that applying to do business with the Authority is as streamlined as possible.**

We recognise that engaging local SME's and VCSE's is a powerful means to support the local economy. This brings a multiplier effect through which local service providers can upscale, create and sustain local jobs, invest in personnel, generate local economic growth, social stability, be agile and support innovation.

Service providers working within their localities bring an unrivalled appreciation of local considerations. Their contribution is tireless, and they are able to direct their operations in line with fast changing local priorities. We are mutually reliant on their success.

We recognise VCSE's can play a critical role in local communities and look to build suitable opportunities into our approach when planning procurements.



## The Authority's approach includes:

- Applying an SME / VCSE engagement strategy for specific contracts, designing services at an appropriate scale to support engagement and attending local 'Meet the Buyer' events.
- Approaching the competitive process in a practical way, with procedures and templates proportionate to each procurement – with early market engagement, appropriate routes to market and small Lots.
- Promoting the 'Multiplier effect', whereby £1 spent locally is multiplied many times over through the local economy. As organisations gain turnover, they can upscale and invest, gain resilience and support sustainable services and communities.
- SME / VCSE use of e-procurement systems including a common system across local procurers.

- Using Dynamic Purchasing Systems to support SME engagement.
- Utilising VCSE sector for insights into local community requirements and support service design, with community engagement in service development.
- Building Social Value when planning all our procurements: consider breaking down opportunities into smaller lots, ensuring SME's and VCSE's have good opportunity to bid.
- Ensuring fair payment and other positive practices flow through the supply chain.
- Improve the monitoring of spend with local SME's/VCSE's.
- Considering how 'Tail spend' is managed and ensure it is not just the high profile spend areas which attract due attention.
- Recognise how local supply chains contribute to the Local Economic Multiplier effect.

#### KEY MESSAGE

Local supply is key for sustainable services and economic wellbeing. We will promote opportunities for local community and partnership engagement.

- 01 Ensure wherever possible we create opportunities for small to medium-sized enterprises and the voluntary/ community sector.
- 02 Promote and prioritise local economic development across our procurement engagement and delivery.
- 03 Ensure we are easy to do business with and always take a proportionate approach.





## Client of Choice,

**Service providers have choices around which clients to prioritise, and to secure the best outcomes for the people of Mid Devon our approach must enable us to be client of choice.**

This includes being practical and consistent in our approach, transparent and diligent and communicating well. This requires early planning, market communications, risk allocation, meeting our commitments and holding to our principles.

We plan procurements to accommodate SME's and VCSE's, use small Lots as appropriate and build contracts of sensible scale. Supporting measures include prompt payment, avoiding onerous contract terms, meeting our timescales, good implementation planning and quality relationship management.



## Ease of Doing Business

**Procurement can sometimes feel complex due to many competing priorities. Therefore, we take a proportionate approach and work transparently.**

Working with the SW Regional Procurement Board we support the uptake of e-tendering. This ensures our suppliers have a common system to embrace opportunities from SW public bodies, as a joined up supply side experience which promotes ease of doing business.



## Transparency

**Mid Devon District Council works transparently. We ensure our operations are well structured, logical and predictable, and that our procurement procedures are transparent, practical and easy to engage with.**

The Authority supports the transparency regime and publishes details of all spending over £500 via this link:

[Payments to suppliers - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://middevon.gov.uk/payments-to-suppliers)

The team supports information enquiries from the public, many of which link to MDDC's contractual arrangements, a link to the Authority's published Access to information responses can be found here:

[Access to information - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://middevon.gov.uk/access-to-information)

Our contract register and opportunities to work with us can be found here:

[Current contract opportunities - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://middevon.gov.uk/current-contract-opportunities)

### KEY MESSAGE

**We will be a client of choice. In meeting our obligations, we prioritise purpose over process.**

**01 Openness, transparency, fairness, sustainability, resilience, equality and democracy**







## Contract Management and Performance Regime

**Contract management is vital to service performance. It supports overall service quality, value for money, promotes continual innovation, agility and flexibility, supports early intervention and encourages collaborative service development.**

As the Authority's financial resources are stretched ever further, the importance of contract management grows. This requires clear objectives and measurement of what's important to people. We take a proportionate approach to contract management ensuring considerations of strategic, political and citizen importance are within the performance regime.

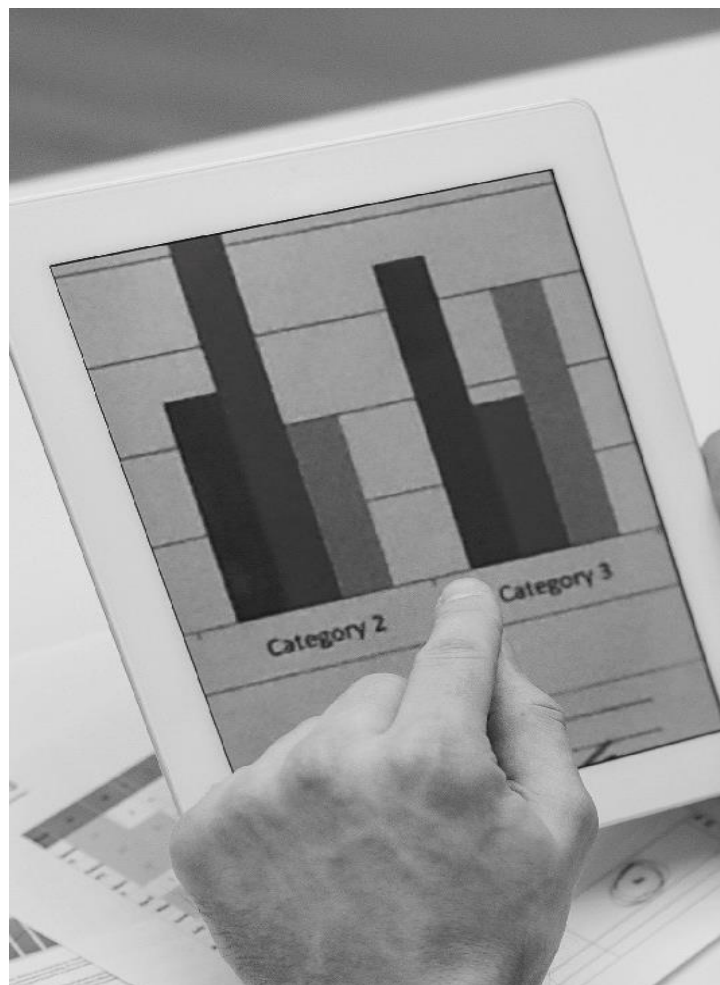
Contract management focuses service delivery on quality performance, making efficiencies and achieving cost reductions, increasing social value opportunities, decreasing environmental footprint, mitigating risks, increasing resilience and harnessing continuous innovation and change.

### **Our priorities for contract management include:**

- 01 Working with strategic suppliers via supplier relationship management.
- 02 Collaborative framework management and focus sessions.
- 03 Promoting supply chain opportunities through 'Meet the Buyer' events.
- 04 Performance monitoring of suppliers. Measures include financial resilience, service quality and continuity, modern slavery, carbon footprint and early problem resolution. Ensuring all parties are held mutually to account.



- 05 Sharing supply side intelligence with partners to support joined up public service.
- 06 Enabling services to fulfil governance and control over provider performance through good measurement and reporting. Ongoing performance reviews and meetings.
- 07 Promoting visibility of potential risks and ability to mitigate these to avoid underperformance / disaster with early intervention (e.g. inclusion of “Termination on Insolvency, Change of Control, and Breach of Warranties” clause)
- 08 Understanding market development opportunities, innovation and value creation; ensure contract agility and continual development
- 09 Post contract review meetings and lessons learned sessions including exit strategy
- 10 Maintaining the contracts register and supporting services in identifying procurement risks and opportunities.



#### KEY MESSAGE

We need to understand what's important to people.

- 01 Support services to develop contractual arrangements that facilitate effective contractual relations.





## Value for Money and Benefits Realisation

**Our services prioritise value for money and our supply competitions include specific criteria which identify the critical success factors for each opportunity. We optimise the performance of our contracts and prioritise value for the people of Mid Devon. We promote service quality and lifecycle value with performance, sustainability and longevity in mind.**

Procurement activity requires the highest standards of probity, transparency and fair competition. This includes adherence to the Authority's Code of Business Conduct and strategic procurement good practice and operating procedures.

Further details can be found in the procurement documents we publish for each competitive process and the wider considerations outlined in this strategy.





## Commercialisation and Working Efficiently

**As government funding changes, we increasingly rely on sustainable models which promote service outcomes in the best possible way. This includes the following approaches:**

- Income generating / cost recovery through procurement services for other public bodies.
- Developing ideas for further cost reductions and revenue generation opportunities.
- Maximising commercial attractiveness by aggregating requirements if appropriate.
- Bringing innovative ideas for service delivery (e.g. creation of trading services).
- Utilising frameworks and dynamic purchasing systems for operational efficiency.
- Engaging and researching the market for up-to-date intelligence.
- Developing documentation for each competition to ensure opportunities are attractive for the market and include innovation and value creation.



### KEY MESSAGE

**Value is at the centre of everything we do.**

- 01 We will consider income generation / cost recovery opportunities with a good organisational fit, which enable us to support partners and promote joined up public services.
- 02 Investing in our team will enable us to support our own financial sustainability, continuously develop our skills base and maintain our strategic procurement offer.





## Risk Appetite and Risk Management

The Authority has complex services for which innovation and transformation comes as standard, which requires risk appetite to pursue our objectives. This demands balance between the benefits of innovation and the risks this can carry.

Risk management is important to our activities and is part of good governance. Risks are identified and made transparent, with mitigations considered and implemented within the contract management approach. This also requires that risks are appropriately apportioned through our contracts and sit with whichever risk owners are best placed to manage them.

This ensures service providers do not take on inappropriate risk and then build risk allocations into their proposals; we can then provide better assurance and reduce costs in the system.

### Our approach includes the following:

- Procurement and Services collaboratively designing contract specifications to include risk identification and mitigation – for example supplier resilience and business continuity.
- Identifying risk ownership and mitigation assurance.
- Reporting and monitoring of suppliers' input and responsibilities.
- Developing and applying suitable terms and conditions for contracts.
- An appetite for innovation.
- External environment monitoring and identifying risk implication and mitigation in relation to strategic contracts.



### KEY MESSAGE

We need a proportionate approach to risk and will maintain a responsible risk appraisal process.

- 01 Procurement will support risk appraisal areas and help identify appropriate ownership and mitigation of risk amongst stakeholders.
- 02 We will create an environment of opportunity and promote innovation.





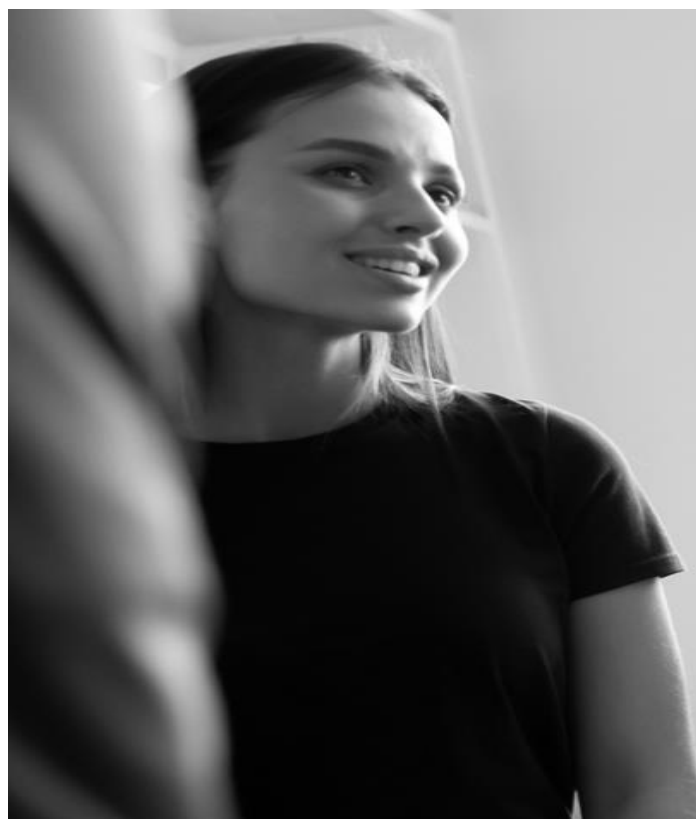
## Workforce Skills Development

**We rely on the skills of our people and all those we work with to run our activities with professionalism, diligence, knowledge, open mindedness, and leadership. We are committed to continual professional development. Through collaboration we have access to procurement professionals who bring unique skillsets, expertise, technical knowledge and offer peer challenge and support.**

We aim for high quality procurement support at all times. This requires continuous development of skills, and competencies, diversity, broad exposure to experience and learning, and cross functional working with services and market areas for knowledge development. This brings exposure to diverse experiences, formal professional development and links to industry forums, partnerships and learning events.

We invest in skills development to evolve our service, improve resilience and link back to our purpose of supporting Mid Devon's communities by providing high quality public service.

We value and embrace diversity at the heart of what we do.



### This includes:

- Linking with HR strategy to encourage workforce development and diverse experiences.
- Identifying leadership / career development opportunities.
- Promoting a management and mentoring approach.
- Cross-matrix working.
- Utilising the apprenticeship programme and opportunities for wider staff development.

### KEY MESSAGE

We invest in our team for continual learning, embrace autonomy and shared purpose.

- 01 Apply a workforce strategy which supports and enables professionals to continually develop their knowledge and make ever greater contributions. Ensure personal accountability and continual learning help.
- 02 We will continuously review opportunities to help our services be more efficient, effective and smart.





## Working with Partners

**Our procurement philosophy is a “one team” approach working with networks to ensure resources are applied efficiently, needs are understood, knowledge is shared, and innovative solutions are implemented.**

We encourage early stakeholder involvement and recognise the value in service co-design, consultation, and working together. We promote early engagement, collaboration, collective intellect and partnership, and recognise that competition can in some cases risk driving out co-operation in service design.

We engage with other local public bodies to uncover benefits which can be derived through collaboration. We also look to community groups, service providers and reference groups to build intelligence and local service knowledge into the planned approach.



### **We see advantages of a collaborative approach being:**

- The avoidance of duplication of effort/resources and working in silos, fostering cooperation across services and with external partners.
- Joined up planning and budgeting processes.
- Strong cross-organisational governance structures
- A cross service project management approach and shared support/resources.
- Greater economies of scale and cost savings

#### **KEY MESSAGE**

We promote collaborations and partnerships which are greater than the sum of the parts.

01 We will look to the big picture in supporting relationships, and consider whether competition or collaboration is the best approach.







## Digital Transformation

**The Authority's strategic procurement system is closely aligned with the digital agenda, working across all our markets to seek opportunities through digital access, using innovation to facilitate change.**

Procurement is a facilitator of change. It supports the Authority's digital ambitions in identifying opportunities for digital change, harnessing opportunities from specialist and innovative service providers.

We will support digital transformation and modernisation opportunities across the Authority, partners, stakeholders and service users to improve quality outcomes, promote wellbeing and efficiency. We will improve citizen experiences, support fitness for the future and transformational change.

Digital opportunities through the procurement approach include:

- Supporting service re-design;
- Enabling agile working and flexibility; and
- Increasing efficiency through use of better devices, hardware and software systems.

### KEY MESSAGE

We will support digital transformation throughout services, reduce waste, automate, digitalise, innovate, transform, simplify and streamline. Ensuring the local community and efficiency is at the heart of what we do.



Cloud commissioning / remote hosting approach:

- Supporting better IT infrastructure;
- Using Data & Business Intelligence;
- Maximising benefit created through technology;
- Innovating; and
- Working to modern e-Government standards including Cyber Security and Information Governance.

- 01 We will seek opportunities for digital transformation across all service areas to improve all areas of our overall public service.





## Utilise the Legal Framework to Best Effect

**We apply the legal framework in an enabling manner which allows us to work fairly, transparently and consistently. Considerations include:**

- Common appreciation of legal considerations Authority wide.
- Staying continuously up to date with the developing public sector legal framework.
- Modern Slavery measures and compliance checks.
- Innovation and consistent approach.
- Information Governance and GDPR measures and compliance checks – collaboration with the Information Governance team.
- Assisting internal stakeholders and external partners in procurement compliance.
- Ensuring ethical trading standards are supported by the supply chain.
- Working within the Authority's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Considering opportunities available through legislative change such as BREXIT.
- Counter fraud measures and awareness of procurement fraud risk.



## United Against Modern Slavery

**We are united against Modern Slavery and Mid Devon's Modern Slavery statement is available here:**

[Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2021-2022 - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://middevon.gov.uk/modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking-statement-2021-2022)

As part of the SW Procurement Board we have a joint approach in which all its members stand united in our commitment to positively contribute to both influencing and supporting the National Procurement agenda across the public sector. We aim to do this by providing a strategic voice with links into national policy, best practice and emerging changes to commissioning, procurement and supplier relationship management.

We can all make a difference.



### KEY MESSAGE

We apply the legal framework in an enabling manner and maximise opportunities from legislative change.

We are united against all aspects of Modern Slavery and will take a unified approach with regional partners.

- 01 We will apply the legal framework to ensure our operations are consistent, practical, innovative and legally compliant.
- 02 Ensure our procurement practises are compliant with all relevant legislation and reflect the latest best practises resulting from case law.
- 03 Work across the Authority and the SW Procurement Board to raise the profile and bring attention to this area.
- 04 Undertake supplier assessments and focus reviews to uncover and eliminate slavery from our supply chains and all areas of activity.



Website: [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk)

Email: [Procurementoffice@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:Procurementoffice@middevon.gov.uk)

