

This report is public	
Updated Procurement Strategy	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	7 April 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Regeneration and Property, Councillor Lesley Mclean
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	7 February 2026
Report of	Assistant Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer, Shiraz Sheikh

Purpose of report

This report seeks the approval of Executive for the new Procurement Strategy.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the new Procurement Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This Procurement Strategy outlines how we will continue to strengthen professional standards and procurement processes across the Council, supporting the delivery of high-quality services that provide value for money for our community.
- 2.2 It sets out the objectives of the Procurement & Contracts Unit—part of the Law and Governance Department—for the coming years, ensuring alignment with the Council's priorities around achieving value for money and continuous improvement in procurement practice.
- 2.3 This also includes new Social Value initiatives delivered in close collaboration with the Environmental Services team.
- 2.4 Updating the Procurement Strategy is essential to ensure the Council's procurement activity remains fully aligned with current legislation, reflects evolving corporate priorities, and embeds modern best practice across all commissioning and purchasing activity.
- 2.5 A refreshed strategy strengthens governance, supports consistent standards across departments, and enables the Council to maximise value for money at a time of increasing financial pressures.

- 2.6 It ensures that Social Value, sustainability, and climate objectives are fully integrated into procurement processes, while also improving market engagement and promoting fair, transparent competition.
- 2.7 Updating the Strategy also allows the Council to respond to technological advancements, enhance contract management approaches, and ensure that procurement continues to deliver high-quality, community-focused outcomes.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	A new procurement strategy that aligns with the Procurement Act 2023 will mean better value for money when commissioning works on behalf of the Council and thereby provide value for money for the residents of Cherwell district. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 3 March 2026			
Legal	An updated procurement strategy reflecting the changes introduced by the Procurement Act 2023 is recommended to ensure compliance and maximise opportunities for the Council and in turn for residents. These include greater transparency, alignment with environmental standards and involvement of local service providers. Mubin Khan, Contracts Solicitor, 5 March 2026			
Risk Management	A new procurement strategy mitigates the risk of becoming not compliant with the Procurement Act 2023. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 5 March 2026			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact				N/A
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				N/A

Climate & Environmental Impact				It is essential that the Climate and Environmental team are actively involved in procurement exercises and that the Procurement Strategy is updated whenever new guidelines or legislation are introduced.
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				Procurement Strategy Report
Council Priorities	Updating the Procurement Strategy is essential to ensure the Council's procurement activity remains fully aligned with current legislation, reflects evolving corporate priorities, and embeds modern best practice across all commissioning and purchasing activity			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	Consultation via various committees			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The previous Procurement Strategy now requires updating to ensure full alignment with the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23), which introduces new legal duties, transparency requirements, and procedural changes that all contracting authorities must embed within their procurement practices.
- 3.2 An updated strategy will provide a clear framework for implementing these reforms, ensuring that the Council remains compliant and continues to operate in a fair, efficient, and commercially robust manner.
- 3.3 In addition, the revised strategy will reflect new and emerging initiatives expected to shape procurement activity over the next two years, including strengthened Social Value commitments, enhanced environmental and climate-related requirements, improved contract management standards, and greater focus on digital innovation.
- 3.4 Refreshing the strategy at this point ensures that procurement activity remains forward-looking, responsive to change, and aligned with the Council's wider corporate priorities.

4. Details

- 4.1 The Council's existing Procurement Strategy was developed prior to the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) and does not fully reflect the new statutory duties, transparency requirements, and procedural reforms now required of contracting authorities.
- 4.2 PA23 represents a significant shift in public procurement practice, placing greater emphasis on openness, competitive flexibility, supplier engagement, and the achievement of wider public benefits. A refreshed strategy is therefore essential to ensure continued compliance and alignment with national expectations.

Need for an Updated Strategy

- 4.3 The current strategy requires revision to incorporate the new legal obligations introduced under PA23, including the increased focus on transparency, publication requirements, and the need to demonstrate clear, proportionate, and well-evidenced decision-making in all procurement activity.
- 4.4 Updating the strategy will ensure the Council operates within a modernised framework that reflects best practice, reduces the risk of legal challenge, and supports improved commercial outcomes.
- 4.5 It also enables the Council to embed enhanced internal governance arrangements and ensure a consistent procurement approach across all departments.

Future Initiatives and Forward Planning

- 4.6 The updated strategy will look ahead over the next two years, taking into account emerging priorities such as strengthened Social Value commitments, climate and environmental requirements, and improved contract management standards.
- 4.7 Collaboration with the Climate and Environmental team will be essential to ensure procurement exercises incorporate new sustainability guidance, evolving legislation, and the Council's environmental commitments.
- 4.8 The revised strategy will also respond to operational changes, including digital improvements, enhanced market-engagement approaches, and opportunities to streamline internal processes.

Benefits of Updating the Strategy

- 4.9 A refreshed Procurement Strategy will provide a clear and modern framework to guide officers, support informed decision-making, and ensure procurement activity contributes to the Council's wider corporate objectives.
- 4.10 By aligning the Council's approach with PA23 and future initiatives, the strategy will strengthen value for money outcomes, promote innovation, and ensure procurement practices remain legally compliant, efficient, and resilient.
- 4.11 The Council recognises that its procurement activity has a significant influence on environmental outcomes and the Council's wider climate objectives. Through this Strategy, the Council will use its purchasing power to support the reduction of carbon emissions associated with the goods, services and works it procures, including emissions arising within supply chains. This will include where possible

asking suppliers to report on the emissions associated with the services provided to the council.

- 4.12 Procurement will therefore support the Council's commitment to addressing climate change by embedding proportionate and relevant low-carbon and sustainable procurement principles, while continuing to secure value for money and compliance with procurement legislation.
- 4.13 Officers undertaking procurement exercises must ensure that environmental and carbon-reduction considerations are addressed where relevant, taking account of contract value, risk, and market capacity, and ensuring consistency with the Council's Procurement Rules and applicable statutory guidance.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Remain with current procurement strategy - Without updated guidance, officers may interpret PA23 reforms differently, leading to inconsistent approaches, delays, or poor-quality procurement documentation, which can undermine effectiveness and accountability. The existing strategy may not capture new corporate priorities around Social Value, sustainability, climate action, and carbon reduction. This limits the Council's ability to maximise community benefits and deliver on its environmental responsibilities.

Option 2: A longer-term Procurement Strategy would not be a viable option, as it would risk becoming outdated and misaligned with the rapidly changing procurement landscape, particularly in light of the new requirements introduced by the Procurement Act 2023 and the ongoing developments in Social Value, sustainability, and environmental obligations. Legislative, technological, and market conditions are evolving at pace, and a fixed five-year strategy would lack the flexibility needed to respond to these changes effectively. A shorter strategy period ensures the Council can remain agile, regularly update its priorities, and maintain a governance framework that reflects modern best practice, emerging initiatives, and the Council's evolving corporate objectives.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Executive approves the development and adoption of a revised Procurement Strategy aligned with the Procurement Act 2023 and emerging priorities for the next two years. A shorter strategy period should be endorsed to allow for regular review and timely updates in response to legislative changes, market developments, and corporate priorities. The updated strategy should strengthen governance, support consistent practice across departments, and embed enhanced Social Value and environmental requirements, ensuring that procurement continues to deliver high-quality outcomes and value for money for our community.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Yes
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Procurement Strategy
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Darren Jacobs, Senior Procurement Manager
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Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Report of Statutory Officer, Monitoring Officer