Norfolk County Council

Corporate
Select Committee

Date: **11 September 2023**

Time: **10:00 am**

Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich**

Membership:

Cllr R Oliver (Chair)
Cllr A Birmingham   Cllr L Hempsall
Cllr S Clancy   Cllr T Jermy
Cllr D Bills   Cllr B Price
Cllr G Carpenter   Cllr V Thomson
Cllr D Roper   Cllr W Nunn (Vice Chair)
Cllr A White   Cllr C Smith

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person

It will be live streamed on YouTube and members of the public may watch remotely by clicking on the following link: Norfolk County Council YouTube

We also welcome attendance in person, but public seating is limited, so if you wish to attend please indicate in advance by emailing committees@norfolk.gov.uk

Current practice for respiratory infections requests that we still ask everyone attending to maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene and, at times of high prevalence and in busy areas, please consider wearing a face covering.

Please stay at home if you are unwell, have tested positive for COVID 19, have symptoms of a respiratory infection or if you are a close contact of a positive COVID 19 case. This will help make the event safe for attendees and limit the transmission of respiratory infections including COVID-19.

Agenda

1. **To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending**

2. **Minutes**

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   To receive the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 July 2023.

3. **Members to Declare any Interests**
   If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.
   If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter
   In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.
   If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

   - Your wellbeing or financial position, or
   - that of your family or close friends
   - Any body -
     - Exercising functions of a public nature.
     - Directed to charitable purposes; or
     - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

   Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

   If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

4. **To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency**

5. **Public Question Time**

   Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm 5 September 2023.** For guidance on submitting a public question, view the Constitution at: Ask a question to a committee - Norfolk County Council

6. **Local Member Issues/Questions**

   Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm 5 September 2023.**

Tom McCabe
Chief Executive
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: **1 September 2023**

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Norfolk County Council

Corporate Select Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 July 2023 at
10:00 am in Council Chamber, County Hall, Martineau Lane Norwich NR1 2DL

Present:
Cllr R Oliver (Chair)
Cllr A Birmingham
Cllr D Bills
Cllr D Roper
Cllr A White
Cllr B Price
Cllr V Thomson
Cllr W Nunn (Vice Chair)
Cllr C Smith

Substitute Members Present:
Cllr J Fisher
Cllr L Bambridge
Cllr S Morphew

Also Present:

Kat Hulatt	Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Gail Harvey	Digital Inclusion Strategy Programme Manager - Digital Services, Strategy and Transformation
Geoff Connell	Director of Digital Services - Digital Services, Strategy and Transformation
Sarah Rank	Head of Business Partnering, Digital Services, Strategy and Transformation
Adrian Thompson	Assistant Director of Finance (Audit)
Derryth Wright	Assistant Director of HR (Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Performance, Governance and Improvement)
Cllr A Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
Alex Cook	Senior Budgeting Accountant
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation
Maisie Coldman	Trainee Committee Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Hempsall (substituted by Cllr Bambridge), Cllr Clancy (substituted by Cllr Fisher), Cllr Jermy (substituted by Cllr Morphew) and Cllr G Carpenter.

2. Minutes

2.1   The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3.   Declarations of Interest

3.1   There were no declarations of interest.

4.   Items of Urgent Business

4.1   There were no items of urgent business.

5.   Public Question Time

5.1   There were no public questions.

6.   Local Member Issues/Questions

6.1   There were no member issues/questions.

7.   Upcoming Constitutional Changes

7.1   The committee received, and was introduced to, the annexed report (7) by Kat Hulatt, the Director of Legal Services (nplaw) and Monitoring officer.

7.2   The following points were noted during discussion and in response to questions from the committee:

- The work being carried out around strengthening the policy framework was felt to be worthwhile irrespective of whether the full council agrees to change the governance structure to a Directly Elected Leader (DEL) model.

- Members of the committee requested to know how much third-party involvement was costing and how this was being funded. The committee would be informed of this.

- The role and capacity of the scrutiny function were currently being explored and the involvement of a third party was thought to be a useful opportunity to explore this question. Discussion and ideas following the engagement would be feedback to the committee. Additionally, communication with the chairs of the Scrutiny and Select Committees would be happening to understand their views. Plans would be shared as they are established.

- Concerning the increased partnership work that would occur alongside a DEL, the committee was advised that methods to develop, manage and scrutinised partnership work was being explored.

- The central government's summer recess was not anticipated to interrupt the timeline. The results from the consultation process were

requested before the summer so that work could commence on the draft order conferring power to the Norfolk County Council ahead of the decision in December 2023.

- A DEL could not be removed by the council as it was the decision of the electorate, thus, they would follow the same code of conduct as elected members.

- A DEL would have the same powers as the Leader currently holds, and the scrutiny function and call-in process would remain the same. Thus, if there was a disparity between the decisions taken by the DEL and the agreed policy framework and budget, avenues would be available to hold a DEL to account.

- Cllr Price questioned whether the current timeline would cause conflict and proposed that the election of a DEL was brought in line with the Norfolk County Council elections. The proposal did not receive a seconder.

- Members heard that communication between other councils, who have also been offered a deal, was occurring and that insights were being shared. Although direct comparisons are hard to make given that each area has different priorities, the experiences of other councils have reaffirmed the importance of communication and equipping members with relevant information.

7.3   The Select Committee agreed to **endorse** to the future workplan and the approach to constitutional changes as proposed.

A recorded vote was requested.

Cllr Oliver	For
Cllr Thomson	For
Cllr White	For
Cllr Fisher	For
Cllr Bills	For
Cllr Nunn	For
Cllr Roper	For
Cllr Bambridge	For
Cllr Morphew	Against
Cllr Birmingham	Against
Cllr Price	Against

The motion was **carried**.

7.4   The committee also **agreed** to request more information to confirm the cost and funding of the third-party resource.

8.   Norfolk's Digital Inclusion Strategy and "Tech Skills for Life" Pilot in West Norfolk Update

8.1   The committee received, and was introduced to, the annexed report (8) by Geoff Connell, Director of Digital Services.

8.2   Gail Harvey, Digital Inclusion Strategy Programme Manager, presented the annexed presentation (item 8, appendix 1) to the committee highlighting partnership working, the Digital Inclusion Strategy and how the Tech Skills for Life pilot in West Norfolk was operating.

8.3   The following points were noted during discussion and in response to questions from the committee:

- A person-centred, place-based approach was taken to support people to become more digitally included. An individual would be able to determine what level of inclusion was satisfactory to them and have goals that are tailored to their needs and desired outcomes. By supporting people to gain digital skills in areas that interest them, it was thought that these skills may then encourage the use of other digital tools and online services such as the NHS app and online forms.

- Despite the offer of support, members heard that some people are unwilling or unable to learn digital skills.

- Part of the Digital Inclusion Strategy and "Tech Skills for Life" Pilot was to raise awareness of existing offers, for example, the social tariffs.

- West Norfolk was selected for the pilot study based on several factors including the existing support available in the area, the demographic, and the level of connectivity. It was confirmed that whilst the tech coaches are based in Hunstanton and Downham Market, they cover, and support, the whole of West Norfolk.

- As part of the pilot in West Norfolk contact has been made with many voluntary and community organisations, parish councils, and local community events to build connections and opportunities to support more people. Conversations have also been had with Curry's and the Digital Poverty Alliance around partnering further through Tech 4Families scheme and the pilot. Also working with local schools to commence a child and adult family afterschool club for tech related learning and skills.

- Members heard that the distribution of 5000 laptops to school children during the pandemic happened alongside school involvement. Headteachers identified digitally excluded students who then received a laptop to enable study to continue. Since then, Digital Services have refurbished over 1000 council laptops annually which get distributed to the community. They are currently working with both public and private sector to increase this number.

- The issue of online scams was discussed, and it was confirmed that raising awareness of this was included within the work being done.

- The impact of the work being carried out was being measured through different means such as the number of laptops given to people and the uptake of courses. Impact stories are also being collected from people who have received support. Members of the committee heard one account of the impact that receiving a laptop had made on a young lady.

- Members shared anecdotal evidence that in some rural areas, smart meters are unable to be fitted or are not working. It was confirmed that whilst a move towards broadband was being encouraged, smart meters are reliant on mobile connectivity to operate, thus, explaining the difficulties experienced in rural areas. Members of the committee were welcome to share their experiences concerning poorly connected areas.

- With respect to Norfolk County Council digital services, an update would be provided to the committee about the website, how it was audited, and the feedback received from users of the services. A member shared anecdotal evidence of long wait times on the phone with the council. It was hoped that the more digitally included the Norfolk population was, the more resources would be available to those that are unwilling or unable to learn digital skills.

- Money has been acquired through the Local Enterprise Partnership to run a trial in rural locations where connectivity was poor. The trial would involve the use of low earth orbit satellites and it was hoped that this would improve connectivity from 1-2 megabits per second to 50 – 60. Half a dozen rural buildings and village halls have agreed to take part in the trial to provide the community with Wi-Fi and to host events.

8.4   Having reviewed and commented on the progress on delivering the Digital Inclusion Strategy and the Tech Skills for Life pilot in West Norfolk, the Select Committee resolved to note the information.

9. Modern Slavery Statement 2022-23 and approach to the action plan

9.1   The committee received, and was introduced to, the annexed report (9) by Adrian Thompson, Assistant Director of Finance (Audit).

9.2   The following points were noted during discussion and in response to questions from the committee:

- Following a members comment noting concerns that they had received, the routes to follow to raise a concern were clarified. If the person was in immediate danger the police need to be notified. If the person was not in immediate danger, the concern can be raised with Norfolk County Council though the Multidisciplinary Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Advice, resources, and contacts can also be found on the Norfolk Anti-Slavery Network website.

9.3   Having reviewed the Action Plan on modern slavery activity, the Modern Slavery Statement, and the Equality Impact Assessment, the Select Committee resolved to note the information.

10.   Workplace Wellbeing Strategy 2023 -2026

10.1   The committee received, and was introduced to, the annexed report (10) by Derryth Wright, Assistant Director of HR.

10.2   The following points were noted during discussion and in response to questions from the committee:

- The manager-employee relationship was noted to be important in promoting wellbeing. Managers are offered learning and development resources to equip them to have wellbeing related conversations with their team. Additionally, all managers are expected to complete the mental health first aid training

- It was confirmed that Norfolk County Council was committed to working in a hybrid way. Different services and job roles influence how much someone was expected to be in the office. It was noted that there needs to be a balance between ensuring service delivery, whilst also being flexible to meet the needs of staff. It was confirmed, however, that staff are not required to work from home, and they can choose to work from a work location if that was preferable. The flexible working policy was recently updated, this included removing core hours for most staff (some services must operate within set hours). Staff are not required to input their hours into the HR and finance system, instead, hours are recorded locally and managed by managers. Hybrid working does not change the way that wellbeing in measured. Managers are equipped to manage in a hybrid way.

- A four-day week was not something that had been explored and employees had not been asked their views on this. It was felt that the flexible working approach allowed staff to adopt a working pattern that best suited them and their service. There was also the option to work compressed hours. It was clarified that the same number of hours are required to be worked under the flexible /compressed working arrangements.

- Several general measures are reported on to measure productivity, including vital signs that include HR measures which are reported to the council quarterly. Work was being done to establish clear measures for the strategy and the team have access to a benchmarking group to enable comparison with other authorities when helpful. The annual progress report would include data relating to the agreed measures.

10.3   Cllr Ben Price proposed a motion that the committee should recommended that a four-day week be explored.

The motion was seconded by Cllr Nunn.

The motion was **agreed** on a show of hands

10.4 Having reviewed and commented on the proposed strategy, the Select Committee resolved to:

- Endorse the proposal that update reports should be presented to Corporate Select Committee annually.

- Endorse the proposal that recommend that a 4 day week be explored.

11. Strategic and Financial Planning 2024-25

11.1 The committee received, and was introduced to, the annexed report (11) by Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Cabinet member for Finance.

11.2 The following points were noted during discussion and in response to questions from the committee:

- The Capital Programme was being reviewed in the context of the increased cost of borrowing within the wider economy. At the same time the Council was earning additional interest on its cash balances due to higher rates.

- The Council borrows to manage its overall treasury position, but borrowing is not directly linked to specific capital projects or schemes. The profile of maturity of borrowing is managed by the Treasury function to avoid significant peaks or troughs. The Council has the facility to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). Treasury management activity aims to secure borrowing at the most advantageous rates available (i.e. the objective is that borrowing is undertaken when required and when rates are lower).

- The council was always looking to maximise the value of its assets and therefore keeps the asset base under review to evaluate whether assets held are appropriate for the needs of the council. For example, the amount of office space required in the context of the increase in flexible working. The Committee was reassured that there is no "fire sale" of assets being undertaken.

- In response to questions, it was confirmed that there is a member Treasury Management Committee, that meets three times a year to review and scrutinise treasury management processes.

- In response to a question regarding savings, it was noted that historic delivery of savings was around 85 percent, some of this non-delivery of savings is due to implementation timing and that a smaller amount of

savings was required to be reversed in the next year budget setting. Members were assured that the finance department was managing this.

- Figures in relation to overnight rates, the cost of borrowing £1m, and capital earmarked reserves would be circulated to the committee.

11.3   Cllr Price raised that the committee has not yet received a report that was recommended during the meeting on the 11 July 2022, noted at 10.3 of the minutes.

The Chair and the Executive Director for Strategy and Transformation apologised to the committee for not having received this report and noted that the recommendation would be looked into.

11.4   Having reviewed the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy position, the Select Committee resolved to:

- note in particular:

a.) the budget gap for 2024-25 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
b.) The Departmental saving targets.
c.) The overall timetable and approach to developing the 2024-25 Budget.

- endorse:

a.) The overall service strategies as set out within the 2023-24 Budget Book.
b.) The budget setting principles set out in Section 3 of the appended Cabinet report, which will provide the broad framework for savings development for services within the Select Committee's remit.

- Agree that the Committee will provide input to the 2024-25 Budget process in July (this meeting) and in November, with the latter (November) report providing an opportunity to comment on the detailed savings proposals being taken to public consultation.

- There were no specific areas of activity that the Select Committee would recommend exploring for savings development, in order to provide input to the 2024-25 budget process and inform the saving proposals put forward to Cabinet later in the year.

12.   Forward Work Plan 2023

12.1   The committee resolved to **agree** the forward work programme.

Meeting concluded at 12:11 pm

Rhodri Oliver Chair

Corporate Select Committee

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Corporate Select Committee

Item No: 7

Report Title: Smarter Working

Date of Meeting: 11th September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Jane James (Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance**)**

Responsible Director: Paul Cracknell, Executive Director Strategy and Transformation

Executive Summary

The Smarter Working programme started in 2018 with an initial focus to rationalise the NCC Estate. Over time the programme evolved to consider how technology could support alternative working practices such as Hybrid Working. When the pandemic hit, NCC was then well placed to continue to deliver services to citizens through remote working practices. Now post pandemic, over the last 13 months hybrid working patterns have settled into regular patterns. It is now time to re-consider what the focus and aspirations are for the broader Smarter Working Programme and to determine revised strategic ambitions. Additionally NCC climate strategy was adopted in May 2023 and therefore needs to be considered as part of Smarter Working.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee is asked to:
1. Approve the strategic roadmap for the programme
2. Approve the programmes of work

1.   Background and Purpose

The Smarter Working Programme began in 2018 at that this time the ambitions of the programme were focused on the rationalisation of the NCC estate which achieved savings of £2.343m over 2021/22 & 2022/23, as well as enhancing the technology to start to enable colleagues to work from home, and start adoption of hybrid working practices. Hybrid working is an informal flexible working arrangement

which allows colleagues to split working time between one or more workplaces, and agreed remote working location(s), such as their home

1.1 The pandemic accelerated the adoption of a range of technology solutions that enabled hybrid working practices, which enabled services to continue provide their services to the citizens of Norfolk and staff to continue working.

1.2 During the pandemic working practices evolved, as national guidance changed. The Hybrid Working Policy for NCC was published in June 2022 and over the last 13 months working patterns and practices have evolved into a steady state. The Hybrid Working Policy provides principles and guidance to managers and colleagues on to work in a fair & consistent way. Using the guidance and principles each service can develop their own best version of hybrid working for themselves, their teams, their service and their customers. This means that colleagues are engaged, teams have autonomy to make their own decisions on what is right for them to ensure delivery of their service to customers, as well as reducing emissions associated with business travel

1.3 Based on available reporting current trends indicate that officers visit the locations of County Hall, Haven bridge House and Priory House once a week which is comparable to national trends Empty office space and implications for asset valuation (cipfa.org)

1.4 In May 2023 the climate strategy for NCC was adopted and outlines the need to focus on reducing emission from NCC own estate (eg from buildings) and it's indirect emissions (eg business travel) so climate and sustainability should feature in the Smarter Working Programme

1.5 Colleagues from Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust will shortly be occupying two floors of County Hall, joining other public sector partners from Health and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub team in the building.

1.6 A number of small scale floor moves have been undertaken in County Hall and across the wider office portfolio to respond to specific service needs.

1.7 A refresh programme for highway depot sites and Fire Stations is being developed with colleagues from CES, to ensure a consistency of office facilities across the County.

1.8 An additional sustainable travel option gives colleagues access to a salary sacrifice scheme to lease electric vehicles, along with access to over 15 electric vehicle charging points at county hall where charging is priced at a competitive price compared to commercial charging.

1.8.1 Flexible working policy and the well being strategy has been published / launched to complement/support existing practices. Over last 12 months of the roles recruited 13% (over 150) have been outside of Norfolk into a variety a cross section of senior and more junior roles, increasing the talent and experience within the council

1.8.2 A piece of internal action research was completed in the Autumn of 2022 with a small sample of colleagues in County Hall to provide some insight into colleagues perspective on hybrid working practices. The research highlighted that colleagues valued coming into the office to collaborate,

network and enhance their well being as well as access extra technology (eg printing.) and a more comfortable working environment. However this was considered with alongside the need to balance costs associated with travel & food and the need for space for confidential conversations.

2. Purpose

2.1   The purpose of this paper is to articulate the strategic roadmap for the Smarter Working Programme for approval by the Committee and endorse the 4 proposed programmes of work as well as an ongoing continuous/tactical improvements.

3. Proposal

3.1   The proposal outlines the need for the programme to clarify where the programme needs to move to in 2024 and beyond, whilst focusing on 4 programmes of work**:**

- Hybrid Working
- County Hall car park
- County Hall Ground Floor Space
- Business Mileage

3.2   **Hybrid working:**

The Hybrid Working Policy has been in place for 13 months and given that working patterns have remained stable, there is an opportunity to understand managers and colleagues experiences of Hybrid Working to inform any changes to:

- The office physical environment to support colleagues expectations of hybrid working (eg Digital, facilities, offices space, rooms)
- Support colleagues to optimise their home working environment to enable productive and safe working
- Communications, policies, training and guidance for Leaders and managers to apply a consistent and fair approach to hybrid working
- Develop policies and incentives to support and encourage sustainable travel
- Evolve reporting to understand impact on utilisation of NCC estate, travel and colleague / manager experience

This is expected to result in the following outcomes:

- Improved levels of colleague and manager engagement
- Identification of opportunities regarding the use of county hall space
- Continue to increase the attraction of a broader range of talent to NCC

3.3 County Hall Car Parking

Since colleagues have returned to the office demand for the use of County Hall Car Park has steadily increasing. The County Hall Car Park Policy was last updated in in Jan 2022 and its associated guidance was last updated in March 2022.

Therefore a piece of work is required to understand the current and future plans for the use of County Hall and the associated impact on the current County Hall Car Parking Provision so that:

- Priority car parkers (as defined by current parking policy) can come and go as they need to during the day
- Put in the place the right restrictions to manage utilisation in line with corporate goals (eg encourage sustainable travel)
- Explore the if there is potential to generate income and/or save money through use of alternative entry controls
- Changes can made to signage and reflect corporate branding
- Car parking policies are enforced

This is expected to result in the following outcomes:

- Priority parkers can come and go as they need to
- Colleagues & visitors are clear on where they can / can't park, for how long and any restrictions
- Improve colleagues and visitor experience to county hall
- Potential generation of income

3.4 County Hall Ground Floor

There is an increasing demand from services for alternative appropriate customer facing meeting/conferencing/training accommodation facilities. Colleagues and senior leaders have anecdotally raised issues relating to visitor experience/journey (eg look and feel of reception, who is greeting visitors, need for a more modern experience) and there is a corporate appetite to focus on what it would take to make entrance more welcoming to reflect NCC culture / values and identity

Therefore there is an opportunity to:

- Improve and optimise the Ground Floor Space to support changing needs of services and improved visitor/service user experience
- Understand the current and future demand from services on the ground floor rooms (which may include demand for larger venue/ conferencing facilities to bring together teams / external)
- Understand the end to end "visitor journey" across the diverse range of visitors to improve their experience when visiting County Hall

This is expected to result in the following:

- Maximise utilisation of Ground Floor space to meet the needs of services
- Evolution of technology and operational process to enable effective management of the space
- Modern and welcoming experience of service users
- The potential reduction in conference spend
- Service users more likely to recommend NCC services

3.5 Business Mileage

In November 2021 the following cabinet commitment was made

- "Engage with services, staff and trade unions to develop alternative business travel arrangements that support the phasing out of diesel and petrol cars for council business."

Between 2016-2019 the emissions from employee/other vehicles steadily increased year on year (2.6K tCO2e to 2.8K tCO2e) before a fall due to the pandemic. Whist numbers for 2021-23 remain below pre-pandemic levels (1.6K tCO2e to 1.9K tCO2e) the trend is now increasing

Therefore in order to address this trend a project is needed to engage with services and colleagues who are claiming business mileage to identify alternative ways of working / alternative sustainable travel options to reduce carbon emissions, and implement appropriate solutions

3.6 Continuous / tactical improvements

As the above programmes emerge and take shape, there will be opportunities to take action to improve colleague, manager or service user experience as agreed with the Senior Responsible Officer against an agreed criteria.

4.   Impact of the Proposal

4.1   Whilst it is anticipated that the work will be completed within roles which are already funded within NCC (eg Operational / change roles) there may be a need to for additional resources (both people and financial investment) to deliver the changes. For example, to improve visitor/ service user experience the security booth in reception may need to be moved.

5.   Evidence and Reasons for Decision

5.1   Hybrid working has been in place for 13 months and we need to review what is working well and what more we need to do to embed within current working practices

5.2   As new tenants occupy County Hall the remaining space needs to be utilised according to NCC needs

5.3   In the most recent colleague survey, 48% colleagues stated that they would prefer to work from home and come into the office occasionally when needed which indicates that hybrid working is widely embraced across the organisation 78% said they are making smarter working work well for them and their customer, 78% saying their manager encourages them to be flexible in when and how they work

5.4   In Oct 22 a four week property utilisation study took place across County Hall, Haven bridge and Priory House. This found that desk utilisation was at 35%, with 65% desks un-utilised

5.4.1   A further internal research survey that was completed with a small sample of colleagues highlighted that from 60 colleagues who participated, a number of thematic areas were highlighted. These included benefits of face to face working when collaborating on work, networking with colleagues and wellbeing, as well as accessing as technology and having the right meeting rooms for confidential conversations.

5.5   County Hall Car park data highlights that whilst the main car park was busier on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays. Given current levels of building occupancy and low levels of recruitment, there are no immediate issues with colleagues accessing spaces

5.6   Whilst Business mileage decreased during the pandemic this is now starting to increase to pre pandemic levels Microsoft Power BI

5.7   The ongoing consolidation and review of the NCC estate alongside the return to use of external venues for larger meetings face to face, provides an opportunity to review how the ground floor space is utilised, improve service user and visitor experience to reflect that of other local authorities

6.   Alternative Options

6.1   To focus on fewer programmes impacting the delivery of associated outcomes

6.2   To delay some programmes until 2024 impacting the delivery of associated outcomes

6.3   Do nothing which would potentially impact how NCC estate is utilised, colleagues and visitors unable to park, increase in hire of external venues to meet needs of the service and increase in amount of carbon attributed to business miles,

7.   Financial Implications

7.1   As above – see point 4

8.   Resource Implications

8.1   Staff
As above

8.2   Property:
The requirements from the programmes will inform any changes required to corporate property and will be managed through existing channels

8.3   IT:
The requirements from the programmes will inform any changes required to IT and will be managed through existing channels

9.   Other Implications

9.1   Legal Implications:
None

9.2   Human Rights Implications:
None

9.3   Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):
The four programmes of work outlined in the proposed roadmap will have an effect on how the Council operates in relation to management of its resources. The detail of each programme has the potential to have positive, negative and neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. EqIAs will be developed alongside these programmes to assess the impacts in more detail.

9.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):
None

9.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):
Health and Safety requirements will need to be met for colleagues and managers whilst conducting council business, and for visitors, service users and members

9.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):
Carbon reduction forms part of the NCC property Decarbonisation programme and through potential changes to business mileage schemes may also reduce the councils own carbon footprint

9.7 Any Other Implications:
None

10. Risk Implications / Assessment

10.1 The proposed programme brings together a number of interconnected pieces of work designed to maximise benefits for colleagues, managers and visitors. If the work is not managed through a centralised programme this will result in the inefficient use of officer time.

11. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:
1.   Approve the strategic roadmap
2.   Approve the 4 programmes

12. Background Papers

12.1   Strategic Roadmap

Officer Contact
If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Deborah Carr
Telephone no.: 01603 222182
Email:Deborah.Carr@norfolk.gov.uk

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Smarter Working Roadmap Version 0.2

Characteristic	Smarter Working (2018 to 2022)	Re-brand / Re Position (2023)	Long Term (2024 onwards)
Style	Planned property, HR and technology outcomes Accelerated by pandemic	Take stock and review Agree where to go to next	Planful, iterate and learn based on colleague, manager, member, service user and visitor voice
Behaviour	Just in time Learn as we go Emerging confidence that productivity the same	Greater confidence in levels of productivity Less demand for "presenteeism" Optimisation hybrid working / embedding climate thinking Strategic alignment across workforce policies	Continuous improvement embedded as operational processes in place No longer a programme
Plan	Started with Strategy but moved to Reactive / Tactical	Strategic - Deliberate and targeted outcomes, with clear accountability	
Outcomes	Tech in place New policies in place Emerging Data and reporting	Understand colleague, manager, visitor experience Evolve buildings, policies and technology with clearer messaging Repositioned use of county hall to meet changing demand for client facing services Mature reporting and performance management	Mature insight on colleague, manager, visitor experience Understand service user and member experience Identification of issues before they emerge Optimise emerging technology and redesign processes where appropriate to do so
Output	Managers /leaders adapting to new management practices Colleagues adapting to new ways of working Service maintained	Clearer guidance and support for all Policies and working environments optimised for hybrid working Governance and performance measures Build trust that teams are productive	Emerging needs understood from colleague, manager, member, service user and visitors Continuous Improvements made across the organisation Performance tracked and decisions made quickly
Benefits	Colleagues work life balance Increased business continuity Financial savings from approved property strategy	Improved accountability Longer term plans for evolving working environments Optimise tech to remove lower value work Identification of opportunities to reduce carbon through NCC estate and business/commuting travel	All stakeholders engaged and efficiencies delivered Clearer guidance and support for all Benchmark well to similar organisations Delivering to long term plans
Impact	Steadied the ship Created opportunity for increased property benefits (eg rental income) Some managers unclear on how to manage in hybrid context	Co-ordinated, planned approach to build trust across multiple stakeholders Strategic plan to improve alongside tactical/incremental change	Stakeholders trust approach and know the plan
Political Influence	Know something is happening Service maintained	Influence targeted stakeholders Gain buy in and support	Increased confidence
Status	Learnt a lot now need to evolve	Build organisational capability	Ongoing improvement of organisational capability

Corporate Select Committee

Report Title: Procurement Strategy

Date of Meeting: 13 September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services)

Background

Procurement plays a pivotal role in the delivery of high-quality local authority services. Norfolk County Council spends some £900m a year on procured services, works and goods – ranging from social care to highway maintenance. Indeed, for many residents and visitors to Norfolk their experience of council services comes via a contracted service provider rather than directly from the council's employed staff. How the council goes about its procurement and contract management activities is fundamental to achieving value for money in the way the council deploys its resources on behalf of Norfolk's residents. This paper introduces a Procurement Strategy for Norfolk County Council which sets out the way procurement can contribute to delivering the council's overarching strategy Better Together, for Norfolk.

Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review and comment on the proposed Procurement Strategy
2. Endorse the Procurement Strategy's progression for Cabinet's consideration.

1 Background and purpose

1.1 We spend approximately £900m per annum on procured services, works and goods. This consists of about £650m revenue spend via contracts (40% of gross revenue budget) and a £250m capital programme.

1.2 Many people's experience of council services comes from the council's contractors and not its directly employed staff – most social care, waste disposal, highway and streetlight maintenance, construction, road schemes and so forth are undertaken by contractors. And contractors also provide the infrastructure that council services are built on – like software, networks, building maintenance, energy, and water.

1.3 Getting procurement right is essential to delivering effective and efficient public services. But it also makes a huge difference to our ability to deliver policy goals – such as net zero carbon– and to our place-based strategies for an attractive environment and a high-skilled economy.

1.4 This paper introduces a Procurement Strategy for Norfolk County Council. The strategy aims to provide a clear, strategic direction for procurement at Norfolk County Council, supporting the delivery of the organisation's vision and strategic priorities as laid out in Better Together, for Norfolk (BTFN).

2 Proposal

2.1 The full Procurement Strategy being proposed is attached to this paper for review (appendix A). In summary, it sets out eight overarching goals for procurement at Norfolk County Council:

1. To achieve value for money from the goods, services and work we procure, such that we achieve the optimum quality from the available budget.

2. To ensure that contracts deliver what is expected – in terms of costs, time, specification and social value.

3. To maintain sustainable markets where the supply chain is local or regional, such as in care, transport and construction.

4. To build long-term, innovative relationships with strategic suppliers.

5. To effectively manage risks associated with our commercial activity, including inflation, supplier solvency, modern slavery, supply chain resilience, cyber risks, and supplier performance.

6. To build social value considerations into the planning and delivery of all procurement activity – especially net zero and other environmental objectives, local skills and employment, and apprenticeships (especially for care leavers) - to make Norfolk a better place to live, work and study.

7. To exploit our position as one of the public sector bodies with the strongest spend data to drive our procurement and commissioning decisions, and to improve performance data and better evidence value for money and outcomes.

8. To comply with national legislation and the council's organisational policies, strategies, and regulations.

2.2   Alongside these goals, a series of medium-term priorities are identified for the period of 2023 to 2026:

- An increased emphasis on savings delivery

- Influencing and then getting full value from legislative change

- Improving the sustainability of local markets, especially for transport and care

- Stronger contract and supplier relationship management and effective supply chain risk management

- A focus on reducing our Scope 3 emissions in line with the council's Climate Strategy

- Appropriate emphasis on driving a clearly defined set of social value objectives that fit with Better Together, for Norfolk.

2.3   To achieve these goals and medium-term priorities, the strategy defines a set of enablers, namely:

- Having capable and motivated staff

- The right policies and an effective governance framework

- The right tools

- An effective relationship between the procurement team and the rest of the council

- Continuous improvement.

3   Impact of the proposals

3.1   The proposed strategy contributes to effective corporate governance within the council through setting out the value that procurement seeks to bring towards the delivery of its overarching strategic priorities.

3.2   It provides a framework of goals, medium-term priorities and enablers to guide the focus of procurement and commissioning colleagues as to what they are trying to deliver for the council and how they should orient their professional development and relationships.

4   Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1   Under the Local Government Act 1999 Act, local authorities must deliver 'Best Value' – to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness".

4.2   The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is currently consulting on statutory guidance for local authorities to meet Best Value Standards. A 'fit for purpose' procurement strategy is specifically identified within the draft guidance as part of delivering Best Value. Therefore, member endorsement of the strategy supports delivery of the Best Value Duty.

5   Alternative Options

5.1   The council could choose to continue without a member-endorsed Procurement Strategy. However, this would mean forgoing the opportunity to strengthen corporate governance for a significant function within the council through a published strategy that guides the focus of its procurement activities. Not publishing the strategy would also run counter to the anticipated good practice standards expected of local authorities in meeting their Best Value Duty.

6   Financial Implications

6.1   There are no direct financial implications from the Procurement Strategy itself. However, through setting out clearly the goal of delivering value for money and enablers to achieve this.

7   Resource Implications

7.1   **Staff** – the strategy emphasises how capable and motivated staff are at the heart of delivering on the strategy. It places focus on the need to consider the professional development and training needs to ensure procurement and commissioning staff are equipped with the right knowledge and commercial skills.

7.2   Property – no direct implications

7.3   IT – development of process automation tools will draw on the expertise of the council's digital services.

7.4   Implementation capacity – as with staff resource implications above.

8 Other implications

8.1 **Legal implications** – no direct legal implications identified, but publishing the strategy is likely to support the council's ability to demonstrate meeting its Best Value Duty.

8.2 **Human rights implications** – no direct implications but managing modern slavery risks is specifically highlighted within the strategy's goals.

8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)** – a goal set out within the strategy is to build social value considerations into procurement activity. This includes support for disadvantaged groups, which is identified as a specific focus for social value delivery in the council within its Contract Standing Orders. Therefore, the strategy maintains social value and support for disadvantaged groups as part of what procurement delivers.

8.4 **Sustainability implications** – as above, the strategy supports delivery of social value through our procurement activity. This includes contributing to Net Zero and the council's wider environmental objectives as identified in the council's Contract Standing Orders.

8.5 **Any other implications** – no significant other implications identified.

9 Risk Implications/Assessment

9.1 All procurement involves some degree of risk, including:

- The risk that the contracted services will not be delivered to time or budget or to the required quality

- Environmental, modern slavery and similar risks

- The risk of legal challenge.

9.2 By contributing towards the systematic delivery of procurement and contract management processes, the quality of staff training and the application of modern procurement tools, the strategy helps to mitigate these risks.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The Select Committee is asked to:

- Review and comment on the proposed Procurement Strategy

- Endorse the Procurement Strategy's progression for Cabinet's consideration.

11 Background papers

Officer contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Appendix A

Norfolk County Council
Procurement Strategy 2023-2026

Procurement Strategy 2023-2026

Introduction

The aim of this Procurement Strategy is to provide a clear, strategic direction for procurement at Norfolk County Council, supporting the delivery of the organisation's vision and strategic priorities as laid out in *Better Together, for Norfolk*.

Background

We spend approximately £900m per annum on procured services, works and goods. This consists of:

- about £650m revenue spend via contracts (40% of gross revenue budget)

- a £250m capital programme.

Many people's experience of council services comes from the council's contractors and not its directly employed staff – most social care, waste disposal, highway and streetlight maintenance, construction, road schemes and so forth are done by contractors. And contractors also provide the infrastructure that council services are built on – like software, networks, building maintenance, energy, and water.

So getting procurement right is essential to delivering effective and efficient public services. But it also makes a huge difference to our ability to deliver policy goals – such as net zero – and to our place-based strategies for an attractive environment and a high-skilled economy.

Goals

These goals underpin this strategy and our vision for procurement at Norfolk County Council:

1. To achieve value for money from the goods, services and work we procure, such that we achieve the optimum quality from the available budget.
2. To ensure that contracts deliver what is expected – in terms of costs, time, specification and social value.
3. To maintain sustainable markets where the supply chain is local or regional, such as in care, transport and construction.
4. To build long-term, innovative relationships with strategic suppliers.
5. To effectively manage risks associated with our commercial activity, including inflation, supplier solvency, modern slavery, supply chain resilience, cyber risks, and supplier performance.
6. To build social value considerations into the planning and delivery of all procurement activity – especially net zero and other environmental objectives,

local skills and employment, and apprenticeships (especially for care leavers) - to make Norfolk a better place to live, work and study.

7. To exploit our position as one of the public sector bodies with the strongest spend data to drive our procurement and commissioning decisions, and to improve performance data and better evidence VFM and outcomes.

8. To comply with national legislation and the council's organisational policies, strategies, and regulations.

These goals will be achieved through:

- Having capable and motivated staff

- The right policies and an effective governance framework

- The right tools

- An effective relationship between the procurement team and the rest of the council

- Continuous improvement.

Medium-term priorities

Our medium-term priorities for procurement are:

- An increased emphasis on savings delivery

- Influencing and then getting full value from legislative change

- Improving the sustainability of local markets, especially for transport and care

- Stronger contract and supplier relationship management and effective supply chain risk management

- A focus on reducing our Scope 3 emissions in line with the council's Climate Strategy

- Appropriate emphasis on driving a clearly defined set of social value objectives that fit with Better Together, for Norfolk.

Enablers

Capable and motivated staff

Our staff are the foundation for delivering the council's procurement goals. Therefore, we need to ensure we both attract and retain motivated team members, equipping them with the right skills, knowledge, and further development opportunities. This will extend to all staff across the organisation involved in procurement activity, not just members of the procurement team.

To achieve this, we will continually build skills and capacity of staff members through fostering a culture of support and mentoring and through learning and development programmes that include:

- Training on the use of tools, such as templates and playbooks
- Understanding social value, including sustainable procurement principles
- Understanding major risks including supply chain and market sustainability risks, modern slavery, cyber and environmental.
- Awareness of changes in key decisions, policy, and governance
- Additional contract management training where appropriate
- Developing strong negotiation skills, including assessing and negotiating on 'open book' accounting information.
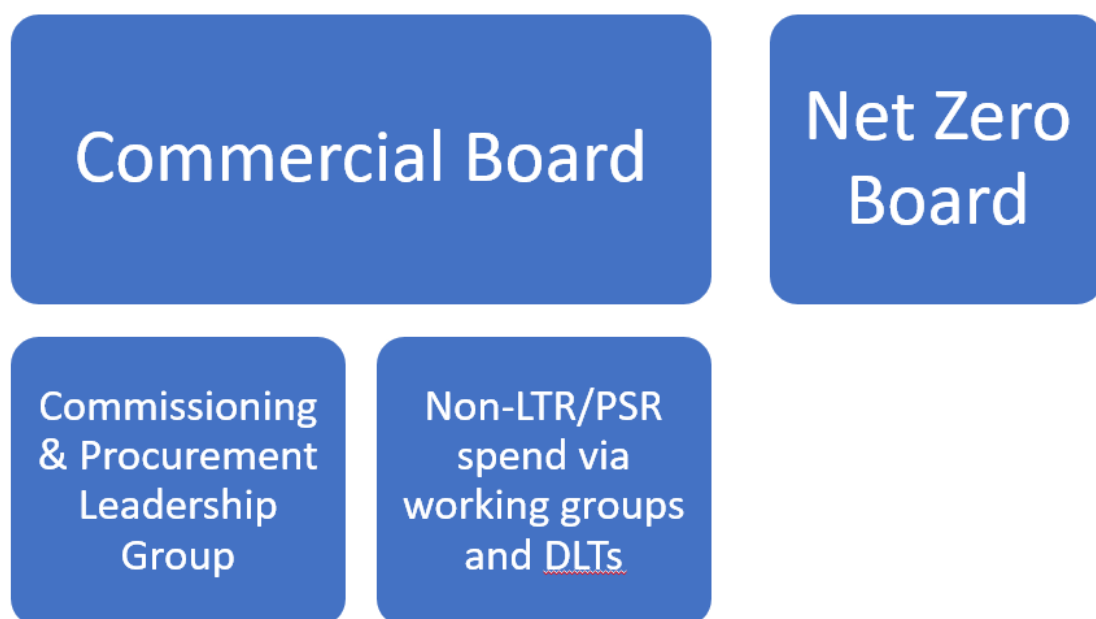
With regard to recruitment, we will continually assess the pipeline of procurement staff, hiring apprentices and graduates to ensure the continuity of knowledge and skills within the team.

Right policies

Policies form a framework to deliver this strategy. They offer a formal expression of the legal and non-legal considerations that underpin our commercial activity. We need to ensure that policies are relevant, consistent, and up to date.

Governance framework

We have introduced a new governance structure for procurement and commissioning, reporting into a Commercial Board chaired by the Head of Paid Service.

Commercial Board

Net Zero Board

Commissioning & Procurement Leadership Group

Non-LTR/PSR spend via working groups and DLTs

The Commissioning & Procurement Leadership Group provides coordination and alignment between the Council's commissioning and procurement activity across

Children's, Adults and Public Health (including consideration of joint commissioning arrangements) to establish a shared view of opportunities to deliver value for money across key categories of contracted spend.

Other categories are overseen by the relevant directorate leadership teams.

Commissioning & Procurement Leadership Group

Adult social care
Children's care & education
Public health
Housing
Schools capital
Education & care transport
PLO legal

CES DLT

Highways
Waste
Fleet
Passenger transport
Construction
Facilities management
Retrofit
Utilities
Fire

S&T DLT

Digital
Web
Marketing
Comms
HR
Change
Legal

The Commercial Board will:

- Endorse significant category strategies, including carbon reduction plans for major strategies

- Take papers where categories overlap and span multiple directorates

- Monitor major initiatives involving NCC-owned companies

- Approve the pipeline and wave plan for presentation to Corporate Board and then a Cabinet decision

Our governance framework will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in national procurement law and policy and to ensure it is aligned to the wider organisational strategy and policy. This includes aligning the Contract Standing Orders with the government's National Procurement Policy Statement; the Council's strategy Better Together, for Norfolk; our Environmental Policy; and any additional organisational policy changes that may arise. This also applies to updating the financial regulations. The schemes of delegation will be reviewed and updated, defining the appropriate level of commercial authority across the organisation.

Procurement law change

We will stay up to date with changes to national procurement law and policy, ensuring their effective implementation into NCC's procurement processes. Two upcoming procurement law changes are the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) and the Procurement Bill. These are once-in-a-generation changes in policy direction.

The Procurement Bill is expected to take effect in spring 2024 and sets out proposals to transform public procurement, simplifying and ensuring greater flexibility and

transparency across the procurement process. Some of the proposals include amendments to the Light Touch Regime; the combination of existing different procurement regimes into one new unified set of regulations to reduce complexity and improve flexibility; and making the National Procurement Policy Statement have statutory effect

The PSR will replace the existing rules for procuring healthcare services for the health service. Its purpose is to provide a set of more flexible arrangements moving away from the current competition and procurement rules that the government considers are not well suited to the way healthcare is arranged. It is likely the PSR will be implemented and become law in summer 2023.

We will need to ensure that these legislative changes are reflected in our governance framework and that relevant members of staff are aware of the impacts they will have on our procurements.

Right tools

Category strategies

Given the breadth and variety of commercial areas that we operate in, it is important to differentiate across contract categories in terms of management and strategic objectives. This will involve the development or iteration of individual category strategies for major categories of spend, in cooperation with the business.

The Hamilton model for process improvement

Our procurement process will follow the 3R methodology framework outlined by Alex Hamilton[1]. The 3R (repeatable, robots, refinement) methodology is centred around creating better contracts that are shorter and faster to negotiate, as well as reducing cost per contract and improving risk management. Through following this model, we will ensure that staff time is used efficiently and devoted to where people can deliver the most value to our commercial activities.

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[1] Hamilton, A. (2021). *Sign Here: The enterprise guide to closing contracts quickly*. Radiant Law Limited.

	Initiate	Draft	Negotiate	Sign	Manage	Track
Repeatable	Intake process / Training materials	Templates	Playbooks	Approval process / Signing policy	Renewal management	Process map / Service levels
Robots	Portal / Intake system	Document automation	Word extensions	E-signatures	Contract management	Matter tracking /dashboard / Knowledge system
Refinement	Capacity & demand management	Template improvement / Template automation	Negotiation optimisation	Risk management	Content extraction / Performance management	Process optimisation / Data analytics

Repeatable

This stage involves the standardising of our procurement process. We will develop a wider set of basic tools such as contract templates and playbooks to help drive improvements in the consistency and quality of our contracting process. Used appropriately, these tools can allow for the right balance of covering the important areas of contracts but reducing their length and complexity where possible. Where there are significant risks in contracts, playbooks can help highlight these areas and provide a more systematic approach to addressing them.

Robots [automation]

Technology is pivotal in delivering efficiencies, improving performance and driving consistency across the procurement process. Using technology, we will create a line of structured, automated data from end to end of the procurement process. This will include the automation of:

- Intake forms
- ITT and contract templates
- E-signatures
- Purchase order production
- Master data management

This will improve efficiency and remove opportunities for error, facilitating better contracts that are quicker to execute, and faster to negotiate.

As part of this automation, we have already replaced our existing finance and procurement system with myOracle to simplify business practices across the organisation and with our suppliers. We are augmenting MyOracle with robotic process automation (RPA) to automate purchase order production and then a range of other repetitive processes.

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We will consider replacing our existing legal documents automation software with an alternative based on open source software. This will avoid us being locked into a particular vendor as we develop a much broader suite of templates.

We will also seek to introduce a single contract management tool. Although we have a central contract database, which is used to drive the procurement pipeline and identify sourcing and renegotiation requirements, this is not widely used outside procurement, and it does not cover performance against KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).

A single tool will:

- support better management of the portfolio across procurement and commissioning;

- enable tighter performance management, and publication of performance against KPIs as required by the Procurement Bill; and

- make it easier to comply with the requirement in the Procurement Bill to publish our pipeline.

Refinement

We will strive to continually refine our procurement process, driven by our stakeholders' needs. We will draw upon data analytics to identify performance gaps, fixing any issues with short quick projects.

Relationships within the council

Effective working relationships are critical to getting value for money from procurement spend and delivering on other policy objectives. Critical officer relationships include:

- capital teams including waste, highways, corporate property and school capital

- adult, children's, passenger transport and public health commissioning

- the legal team

- the IT department, as both a significant procurer and a technical enabler, and the information and analytics team

- the Fire and Rescue Service

- quality assurance teams

- brokerage and care arranging teams

- economic development

- sustainability

- resilience.

We will work together with colleagues through:

- the commissioning and procurement leadership group and its sub-groups, for education, health and care contracts;

- shared systems – in particular shared contract register, pipeline and contract management tools;

- shared training – including in negotiation skills, modern slavery, net zero and the forthcoming legislative change;

- joint contribution to policy decisions.

Continuous improvement

We will view improvement as a continuous process that is integrated as a way of working rather than a one-off task. The Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework (CCIAF)[2] is designed to help drive continuous improvement in commercial practices across the public sector. It provides a framework for self-assessment to benchmark commercial operations against good practice standards and a forum for collaboration and learning. We will use it to measure our progress and benchmark ourselves against it. We will aim to be a leading source of best practice in local government and to compare ourselves to the best in the sector.

To facilitate continuous improvement across our procurement process, we will:

- Ensure the continuous refinement of tools, systems, and processes in light of experience of what works and what could be better.
- Be open to respond to changes in business needs and technologies.
- Ensure feedback and learning is integrated to the way we work, with the regular review of systems, tools, and policies.

Medium term priorities

Savings

We will prioritise making savings across our procurement activity. To do so we will need to:

- Keep our contract pipeline under close review to ensure we have sufficient time to renegotiate and extend contracts.

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[2] Government Commercial Function. (2021, September 29). *Government functional standard Govs 008: Commercial and commercial continuous improvement assessment framework*. GOV.UK. Retrieved May 17, 2022, from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commercial-operating-standards-for-government

- Utilise contract break points effectively as opportunities to drive value for money in multi-year contracts.
- Ensure that our team members and our commercial colleagues across the council are equipped with strong renegotiation skills.
- Make use of the flexibilities afforded by the Procurement Bill and [for public health services] the Provider Selection Regime to get best value from new contracts.
- Work with our strategic suppliers to build constructive, long-term relationships that enable both sides to benefit from innovation. The PSR permits the extension of contracts without tendering where sufficient benefits are being achieved.

We recognise the need to make trade-offs between savings, quality and social objectives. For carbon savings, we will be guided by our internal carbon pricing mechanism.

Legislative change

With both the PSR and the Procurement Bill coming into law we need to prioritise their seamless implementation into our procurement processes. This will involve ensuring that the relevant people are aware of the legislative changes and their implications on procurement; providing training for those involved in the procurement process; amending our governance framework to reflect the legislative changes; and identifying the effect on the procurement pipeline.

Contract and supplier relationship management and supply chain risk

Contract and supplier relationship management is fundamental to achieving value for money and managing risk. Both contracts and suppliers will be segmented according to the Council's judgement of risk, value, criticality, and carbon. We will establish consistent criteria for defining this segmentation.

Effective supplier relationship management will allow us to develop a two-way, mutually beneficial relationship with our strategic suppliers. By developing a closer working relationship and strengthening transparency we can identify our level of exposure to risk; drive and monitor performance; and foster innovation and business development by identifying opportunities that builds value for both the customer and the supplier.

It will be critical to seek to maintain and develop local markets, especially in categories that have been badly hit by staff shortages and inflation, such as social care and passenger transport. These markets are typified locally by a high degree of fragmentation, although there are also a number of more strategic suppliers.

Growth, net zero and social value

In line with the National Procurement Policy Statement, we will prioritise building social value into the planning of all procurement activity. This will cover the creation of new business, jobs, and skills; tackling climate change and reducing waste; and improving supplier diversity, innovation, and resilience.

With our supply chain responsible for a large proportion of NCC's overall emissions we need to ensure that we prioritise opportunities in procurement, through the delivery of our contracts, on carbon reduction and waste reduction measures. Part of this process will be to ensure we provide learning and development opportunities for team members, so they understand how net zero and social value practices feed into the procurement process. We will also continue to update our governance framework to reflect our net zero and social value priorities.

CORPORATE SELECT COMMITTEE – FORWARD WORKPLAN 2023

Corporate Select Committee	11 September 2023	26 October 2023	13 November 2023	Future/to be scheduled
	Part A – • Smarter Working update • Procurement Strategy	**Part A –** • Constitution Review	**Part A –** • Budget proposals • Artificial Intelligence • County Farms Rural Estates Strategy • Policy Framework	**Part A –** • Net Zero updates (tbc) • Communication Strategy • EDI (Jan 24) • Wellbeing Strategy *(review tbc)* • Digital Strategy update (tbc) • Customer Experience programme (tbc)
	Part B – Committee forward plan	**Part B –** Committee forward plan	**Part B –** Committee forward plan	**Part B –** Committee forward plan