

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? Yes No

Ref JMck/BF

Date 04/03/26

Procurement Strategy 2026/27

From James McKinstry, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

E-mail MckinstryJ@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** 07939 281 102

Executive Summary

To comply with 'The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014', the council must publish an annual Procurement Strategy. This proposed "**Procurement Strategy 2026/27**" (Appendix 1) sets out how the council will conduct procurements between 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

The strategy continues the direction established in previous years but incorporates some important updates that reflect national policy changes, additional governance arrangements, and refinements to our procurement objectives.

The key updates include:

- new national reporting requirements under SPPN 1/2026;
- addition of the Cross-Border Public Procurement (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2025;
- enhanced procurement objectives aligned to local and national priorities;
- strengthened content on procurement's enabling role, including economic challenges, supply-chain resilience, climate responsibilities and Community Wealth Building;
- refreshed policy expectations on Community Benefits, Fair Work First, sustainable procurement, ethical supply chains; and,
- inclusion of the [Invest: In North Lanarkshire](#) initiative.

The strategy must be published in an accessible format and shared with Scottish Ministers following approval.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Approve the content of this report;
- (2) Endorse publication of the Procurement Strategy 2026/27; and
- (3) Acknowledge the requirement to share a copy of the approved Procurement Strategy with Scottish Ministers.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1. As required by the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 (the “Act”), the council must publish a Procurement Strategy and review it annually to ensure continued relevance. The Procurement Strategy must be published online, and a copy should be shared with Scottish Ministers.
- 1.2. The Act specifies content to be set out within the Procurement Strategy, including:
 - how it links and delivers against local and national priorities;
 - how the council shall undertake its regulated procurement and in doing so satisfy general and specific duties; and,
 - it requires the council to make a statement on its general policies and approach to matters where procurement can influence or support.
- 1.3. The Act requires monitoring and reporting on the performance of the Procurement Strategy, and it prescribes that this should be done through publication of an Annual Procurement Report.
- 1.4. The Act requires the council to ensure that its regulated procurements are carried out in accordance with legislation and our Procurement Strategy.

2. Report

- 2.1. The current [Procurement Strategy 2025/26](#) was approved by Finance and Resources Committee 26 February 2025, and remains in effect until 31 March 2026.
- 2.2. The national procurement policy team provided feedback on our Procurement Strategy 2025/26 where a review was undertaken by an independent assessor, who commented that our procurement strategy was "*...well-structured and easy to read, with a helpful glossary provided to assist the reader. The strategy shows strong evidence of how North Lanarkshire Council has complied with the general duties and sustainable procurement duties. There are many examples of how procurement opportunities have been opened up to SMEs, supported businesses and third sector bodies.*"
- 2.3. The proposed Procurement Strategy 2026/27 continues the direction established in previous years but incorporates some important updates that reflect national policy changes, additional governance arrangements, and refinements to our procurement objectives and ongoing improvement activity.
- 2.4. In accordance with the Scottish Government’s procurement policy note [SPPN 1/2026](#), Procurement Strategy 2026/27 acknowledges the updated requirement for publishing and the revised reporting metrics mandated for Annual Procurement

Reports in 2026/27. The council's procurement toolkit, including tender documents, will be updated to ensure all measures can be tracked and reported on.

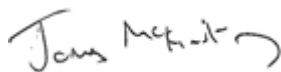
- 2.5. In Section 3 Governance for Procurement Activity we have added [the Cross-Border Public Procurement \(Miscellaneous Amendment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2025](#), that explain which procurement rules apply when Scottish public bodies and UK public bodies buy goods or services through each other's contracts or frameworks.
- 2.6. The procurement objectives in Section 5 have been revised to more clearly articulate the council's commitment to best value, capability development, transparency, improved supplier participation, and alignment with local and national priorities.
- 2.7. We have updated the policy on Community Benefit requirements (Section 9.4), providing more focus on targeted social and economic benefits for the council. There is more detail on the council's procedures pre- and post-tender, including managing the delivery of Community Benefits.
- 2.8. In Section 10 we have incorporated the [Invest In North Lanarkshire](#) initiative, which is linked to the Plan for North Lanarkshire.
- 2.9. The full Procurement Strategy 2026/27 is included at Appendix 1 of this report, and covers the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Procurement Strategy 2026/27 fully complies with the legislative requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and SPPN 1/2026.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 – Procurement Strategy 2026/27



James McKinstry
Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty

Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The Procurement Strategy 2026/27 sets an overarching approach for undertaking regulated procurements; from this we have embedded considerations into the regulated procurement toolkit and procedures to help procuring services areas comply with national policies on:

- Equality Duty - <https://www.gov.scot/policies/public-sector-procurement/procurement-equality-duties/>; and
- Fair Work First - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/publication-of-updated-fair-work-first-in-procurement-guidance/>

If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments>

Yes No

5.2 Financial impact

Does the report contain any financial impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The Procurement Strategy 2026/27 sets an overarching approach for undertaking regulated procurements; each individual procurement undertaken will have its own review of Financial Impacts.

5.3 HR policy impact

Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.4 Legal impact

Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The Procurement Strategy 2026/27 sets an overarching approach for undertaking regulated procurements and sets out the governance for procurement activity that need to be considered in each individual procurement.

<p>5.5</p>	<p>Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.6</p>	<p>Technology / Digital impact Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.7</p>	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? The Procurement Strategy 2026/27 sets an overarching approach for undertaking regulated procurements; from this we have embedded considerations into the regulated procurement toolkit and procedures to help procuring services areas comply with national policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Procurement Duty per the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014; • guidance on climate change and circular economy https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-procurement-taking-account-of-climate-and-circular-economy-considerations-3-2022/; and • the Council's Environmental Pathway
<p>5.8</p>	<p>Communications impact Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires monitoring and reporting on the performance of the procurement strategy, and it prescribes that this should be done through publication of an Annual Procurement Report. The Procurement Strategy 2026/27 must also be published online, accessible by the public.</p>

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

The risks associated to governance of the council's procurement strategy and procedures are managed at a corporate level.

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes No

APPENDIX 1 – Procurement Strategy 2026/27

GLOSSARY

“Community Benefits” are requirements built into a contract which deliver wider social, economic or environmental benefits beyond the primary purpose of the goods, works or services being procured. These may include, but are not limited to, job creation, training and development opportunities, supply-chain initiatives, and activities that support community regeneration.

“Contractor” any organisation that provides Supplies, Works, or Services to the Council or on behalf of the Council.

“Economic Operators” are defined in [The Act](#), means any person who offers the execution of works, the supply of products or the provision of services on the market

“LGBF” is a high-level benchmarking tool designed to support senior management teams and elected members to ask questions about key council services.

“Living Wage” an independently calculated rate based on the cost of living and is paid voluntarily by employers. The rate is calculated each year in November by The Resolution Foundation on an analysis of the wage that employees need to earn to afford the basket of goods required for a decent standard of living. This basket of goods includes housing, childcare, transport, and heating. The Real Living Wage is different to the UK government’s National Living Wage which is not calculated according to what employees need to live on.

“Procurement” the tasks and decisions which secure an external Contractor to provide what we want, at a price that we can afford. Activity is focused on the period from prior to advertising a tender to signing the contract. It includes both competitive tenders and circumstances where we negotiate with a single Contractor.

“Regulated Procurements” refers to any Procurement: above £50,000 for Supplies or Services; and above £2,000,000 for Works.

“Scotland Excel” is the national centre of expertise for local government procurement; responsible for collaborating with Scottish councils to improve procurement performance and practice, and the lead buying authority for a range of national collaborative procurement frameworks.

“Services” are those services that we buy including specialist support for vulnerable children and adults, and repairs and maintenance services, financial advice, designs, and surveys for new building works.

“Single Procurement Document” / “SPD” - means the Single Procurement Document referred to in the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. It is a standard questionnaire the council use in higher and lower threshold regulated procurements to allow the council to identify suitably qualified and experienced bidders. It contains questions on both exclusion and selection criteria. Bidders will use their SPD response to indicate whether they can meet the requirements of the procurement.

“SME or Small and Medium Enterprises” defined by the number of employees whereby micro is 9 or fewer, small is 10-50, medium is 51-250.

“SPPN” abbreviation of ‘Scottish Procurement Policy Note’ these are the messages from the Scottish Government’s procurement policy team, providing advice to public bodies on procurement policy.

“Supplies” items that we buy, such as pens and paper, or plants and seeds, or fruit and vegetables.

“Supplier Development Programme” is a public sector organisation who offer expert training, support and information to businesses develop and compete for Contracts.

“Supported Business” as defined in the procurement regulations, means an economic operator whose main aim is the social and professional integration of disabled or disadvantaged persons and where at least 30% of the employees of the economic operator are disabled or disadvantaged persons.

“Sustainable Procurement” is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for Supplies, Services and Works in a way that achieves value for money and generates benefits, not only for the organisation but also to wider society, the economy, and the environment.

“Third Sector” is the group name for a range of organisations including community groups, charities, voluntary organisations, faith groups, social enterprises, community interest companies. Third sector organisations may be registered charities and may be registered companies. They include small, local groups and large multinational operations, and everything in between.

“Value for Money” – achieving the best balance between cost, quality, and sustainability.

“Works” is the construction works that we buy, including construction of new buildings, or extensions, and creation and improvements to roads and bridges and open spaces.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North Lanarkshire Council (“the council”) is a unitary authority, the fourth largest in Scotland, and is responsible for the delivery of a wide and diverse range of statutory and discretionary public services.
- 1.2 The council deliver services through a mixed economy acting as both:
- a provider through direct provision of services using its own workforce and assets; and,
 - an enabler with services delivered under commercial arrangements by private Contractors, the Third Sector and Supported Businesses.
- 1.3 During the financial year 2024/25, the council spent £706 million (excluding VAT) on goods, services and works to support operations and deliver public services.
- 1.4 In Scotland, public bodies with an annual procurement spend of £5 million or more are required by legislation to prepare and publish a procurement strategy or revise an existing strategy under the [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) (“the Act”).
- 1.5 The council has prepared and published Procurement Strategies since 2017 in conformance with the requirements of [the Act](#); the most recent publication was [Procurement Strategy 2025/26](#).
- 1.6 This document outlines the continuation of the existing procurement strategy with some refinements to produce our new **Procurement Strategy 2026/27** which shall cover the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.
- 1.7 [The Act](#) requires a public body which is obliged to prepare or revise a procurement strategy:
- to ensure that its regulated procurements in that year are, as far as reasonably practicable, carried out in accordance with its procurement strategy; and,
 - to publish an Annual Procurement Report as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of that financial year, but no later than six months after, with specific means to report its performance against the procurement strategy amongst other requirements.
- 1.8 In accordance with the Scottish Government’s procurement policy note [SPPN 1/2026](#), this Procurement Strategy acknowledges the updated requirement for publishing procurement strategies and the revised reporting metrics mandated for Annual Procurement Reports in 2026/27.

2. PRIORITIES AND THE ROLE OF PROCUREMENT

2.1 Local Priorities

- 2.1.1 In North Lanarkshire, we are making progress to transform and regenerate towns; develop high-quality, sustainable housing; create bold, dynamic, flexible places to learn and work; and create an enviable infrastructure and suitable conditions that drives investment, growth, and prosperity.
- 2.1.2 [The Plan for North Lanarkshire \(“the Plan”\)](#) sets out our shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for all, with a fairer distribution of wealth across all local communities.
- 2.1.3 Our vision is for North Lanarkshire to be the place to: Live; Learn; Work; Invest; and Visit.
- 2.1.4 [The Plan](#) sets out five priorities, providing focus for activities and resources:
- Improve economic opportunities and outcomes.
 - Support all children and young people to realise their full potential.
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.
 - Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities.
 - Improve North Lanarkshire’s resource base.
- 2.1.5 We have twenty-five high level ambition statements that collectively support the shared ambition, and these are aligned to our five priorities.
- 2.1.6 A five year [Programme of Work](#) (for period 2023-2028) was put in place, setting seven workstreams to support of [The Plan](#). Each workstream has project boards headed by our most senior leaders to keep activities aligned and on track.
- 2.1.7 The council’s procurement function is seen as an enabler to all aspects of [The Plan](#) as we ensure each regulated and significant procurement undertaken corresponds to one of the priorities, an ambition statement, and to a workstream; these become embedded within contract strategies, specifications and form part of tender evaluation.
- 2.1.8 Our [Capital Investment Programme](#), includes major projects such as Town Centre Regeneration, New-build homes, Community Hubs, and Active Travel – each of these projects will require a number of procurements as they progress, and therefore this Procurement Strategy, the governance it sets out, the specific Procurement Toolkit and Procedures covered within are all relevant to our council’s journey.
- 2.1.9 The outputs and achievements of each completed procurement are reported with reference to a priority, ambition and workstream, and set out how the procurement has achieved value for money, and delivered against relevant economic, social, and environmental objectives.

2.2 National Priorities

- 2.2.1 The national priorities, captured more fully in the [National Outcomes](#), has the objectives to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

- 2.2.2 Recognition for public sector procurement is given as it is seen as "...*vitally important to public services, businesses and communities alike. If we are to deliver sustainable economic growth, it is essential that we continue to use the power of public spending to deliver greater public value, drive efficiencies and help public bodies achieve their overarching purpose and strategic objectives. Smart use of procurement can play a key role in building a more prosperous and fairer Scotland by promoting jobs and growth; encouraging innovation; boosting training, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities; and helping businesses, particularly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), third sector bodies, and supported businesses to compete effectively for contracts.*".
- 2.2.3 The first procurement strategy for Scotland, [Public Procurement Strategy for Scotland 2023 to 2028](#), was published by the Scottish Government in April 2023 and seeks all public bodies to align with it.
- 2.2.4 The procurement strategy for Scotland confirms the need for public bodies to contribute against the [National Performance Framework](#), comply with the legislative procurement duties, and to utilise the national procurement policies and guidance which underpin good procurement practice.

3. GOVERNANCE FOR PROCUREMENT ACTIVITY

3.1 Regulations

3.1.1 The regulations applicable to our procurement activity derived from European Union Directives, and were transposed into Scots law as follows:

- [the Public Contracts \(Scotland\) Regulations 2015](#);
- [the Utilities Contracts \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#); and
- [the Concessions Contracts \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#).

3.1.2 These regulations ensure that public purchases are made in a transparent and fair manner, seeking to achieve efficiency in public spending while facilitating the participation of SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses.

3.1.3 In December 2025, [the Cross-Border Public Procurement \(Miscellaneous Amendment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2025](#) were introduced; these Regulations explain which procurement rules apply when Scottish public bodies and UK public bodies buy goods or services through each other's contracts or frameworks. They clarify when Scottish procurement law applies, when UK procurement law applies under the Procurement Act 2023, and prevent both sets of rules applying at the same time.

3.2 Legislation

3.2.1 The [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) works alongside the regulations and is the legislation that governs how Scottish public bodies buy their goods, services and works, providing a national legislative framework for sustainable public procurement that supports Scotland's economic growth through improved procurement practice.

3.2.2 [The Act](#) focuses on several general duties on contracting authorities regarding their procurement activities and some specific duties aimed at promoting good, transparent, and consistent practice in procurement processes.

3.2.3 Further provisions under [the Act](#) are made through [the Procurement \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#).

3.3 General Contract Standing Orders

3.3.1 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 81 requires local authorities to "...make standing orders with respect to the making by them or on their behalf of contracts for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works".

3.3.2 Our [General Contract Standing Orders \("GCSOs"\)](#) set out the council's specific procurement procedures and responsibilities at all spend levels, covering both regulated and non-regulated approaches. [GCSOs](#) include our reporting requirements of procurement activity, including authorisation of contracts awards.

4. REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY SET BY THE ACT

4.1 In accordance with section 15 of [the Act](#), the procurement strategy must detail how the council intends to carry out its regulated procurements and in particular:

- (a) set out how the council intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will:
 - (i) contribute to the carrying out of its functions and the achievement of its purposes;
 - (ii) deliver Value for Money; and
 - (iii) be carried out in compliance with the general duties reference in section 8 of [the Act](#) to; treat Economic Operators equally and without discrimination, act in a transparent and proportionate manner, and to comply with the Sustainable Procurement Duty.

- (b) include a statement of the council's general policy on:
 - (i) the use of community benefit requirements;
 - (ii) consulting and engaging with those affected by its procurements;
 - (iii) the payment of a living wage to persons involved in producing, providing, or constructing the subject matter of regulated procurements;
 - (iv) promoting compliance by contractors and sub-contractors with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (c.37) and any provision made under that Act; and
 - (v) the procurement of fairly and ethically traded goods and services.

- (c) include a statement of the council's general policy on how it intends its approach to regulated procurements involving the provision of food to:
 - (i) improve the health, wellbeing, and education of communities in the authority's area; and
 - (ii) promote the highest standards of animal welfare.

- (d) set out how the authority intends to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, the following payments are made no later than 30 days after the invoice (or similar claim) relating to the payment is presented -
 - (i) payments due by the authority to a contractor
 - (ii) payments due by a contractor to a sub-contractor
 - (iii) payments due by a sub-contractor to a sub-contractor

4.2 The council must have regard to further orders and/or guidance issued by Scottish Ministers.

5. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2026/27

5.1 Procurement Strategy Objectives

5.1.1 This procurement strategy should:

- support delivery of the council's local and national priorities;
- confirm that our procurement toolkit and procedures, complemented by national tools and guidance, are designed to deliver best value while providing assurance of regulatory and legislative compliance;
- showcase our effective procurement function with strong leadership buy-in and a talented network of procuring officers supported through training and continuous professional development;
- provide assurance that our monitoring, reporting and analysis inform continuous improvement in procurement practice;
- outline our commitment, where relevant, to work with and involve those affected by our procurements;
- ensure that through robust contract award procedures, we appoint Contractors who share our vision and can help deliver the council's priorities and ambitions; and,
- demonstrate transparency and fairness in our procurement approach, encouraging interest and participation from businesses of all types and sizes to strengthen competition and secure the best possible outcomes from regulated procurement.

5.2 Alignment with National Procurement Strategy

5.2.1 This procurement strategy ensures that the council remains aligned to the Public Procurement Strategy for Scotland ("PPSfS"), which establishes a single vision for public procurement and identifies four key enablers that support delivery:

- Procurement Capability – developing people, skills and leadership across the procurement community.
- Supplier Development – strengthening supply chains and supporting suppliers to meet public sector requirements.
- Engagement – improving consistency in processes and tools to benefit both buyers and suppliers.
- Collaboration – promoting strong relationships and shared working towards common goals.

5.2.2 The council recognises these enablers and has embedded them within our procurement approach and governance arrangements as detailed throughout this strategy.

5.2.3 As highlighted in the Scottish Government's review of the PPSfS two years on (May 2025), a suite of eight national Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has now been introduced to measure progress against the strategy's vision and demonstrate the value and impact of procurement activity across Scotland. The council will provide relevant procurement and associated data to support this national baseline and ongoing measurement.

6. THE COUNCIL'S PROCUREMENT FUNCTION

6.1 Importance

- 6.1.1 The council are responsible for a broad range of statutory and vital public services, requiring each responsible Service Area to seek tailored procurement advice and support to help them achieve their service and/or programme of work objectives, often against a hard economic and unpredictable commercial landscape.
- 6.1.2 Having an effective procurement function, directed by a procurement strategy, is deemed essential to the council, with our procurement professionals on hand to give advice to our leaders supporting their most strategic decisions, by challenging the thinking, by developing options, and pursuing innovative and outside-the-box solutions to overcome challenges and barriers.
- 6.1.3 Procurement activity features in the council's top 25 areas of corporate risk, and as such, there is a high-level awareness of procurement across the council's corporate management team.
- 6.1.4 The main mitigation of procurement risk lies within having controls implemented across the procurement function, including people and process. Procurement must be carried out in compliance with the governance of procurement activity outlined at section 3 herein, making it important to have an approved procurement toolkit underpinned with guidance, policy and procedures, and an effective group of procurement professionals able to conduct procurements.
- 6.1.5 In recent years, the public sector has faced significant challenges arising from Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and global conflicts. These events have disrupted supply chains, created economic instability, and introduced new risks to the reliable and affordable delivery of public services.
- 6.1.6 During the pandemic, the procurement function played a critical role, rapidly sourcing essential goods and services to support first responders and front-line operations.
- 6.1.7 Looking ahead, the council's procurement function will continue to act as a key enabler in delivering the Plan for North Lanarkshire, supporting priority outcomes through:
- Social and Economic Impacts – promoting Fair Work First, securing Community Benefits, and supporting job creation and Community Wealth Building; and
 - Environmental Outcomes – using procurement levers to reduce emissions, protect local habitats, and strengthen climate resilience.
- 6.1.8 Our procurement professionals act as trusted ambassadors for the council, representing us through external networking and building constructive relationships with peers across other public bodies.
- 6.1.9 They also serve as our key interface with the external marketplace, managing enquiries and leading or supporting events and initiatives that stimulate supplier interest, support contractor development, and contribute to stronger competition.

6.2 Leadership

6.2.1 The procurement function has a prominent place in the hierarchy of the council's leadership model, whereby overall governance and strategic procurement responsibility resides with the Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement). The Chief Officer has a direct channel of engagement with the council's: Chief Executive; Councillors; Corporate Procurement Working Group ("CPWG"); and Procurement and Support Manager who in turn manages the Corporate Procurement Team ("CPT").

6.2.2 Throughout the year, the Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) and Procurement and Support Manager have engagement and participation with strategic procurement leaders across the 'procurement network' including government, national bodies, local authority peers, collaborative partners, and other professional agencies. Relative and comparable relationships exist and are encouraged at all levels up and down the council's procurement function as we embrace procurement opportunities that can be gained through collaboration, networking, and partnership.

6.3 Devolved Procurement Model

6.3.1 The council operate a devolved procurement function, including:

- the corporate procurement team comprising category managers and procurement officers, who have the predominant remit to support Service Areas with their strategic and regulated procurements (acting as the procuring officer), and management and maintenance of the council's procurement registers and procurement toolkit; and,
- an extension of officers across the Service Areas with various levels of procurement expertise and involvement, some are delegated responsibility to perform a procuring officer role to undertake a mix of regulated and non-regulated procurements, and some are assigned contract management responsibilities.

6.3.2 All procurement is: undertaken in compliance with the governance of procurement activity; has regard to the local and national priorities; and can be linked to a category management approach.

6.4 Category Management

6.4.1 The council has a category management approach, which allows a commercially focused overview of the aggregate council expenditure, with tiered segmentation into common categories of spend, broken down further into commodity groups and down again into specific individual contract requirements.

6.4.2 CPT consolidates and uploads the council's spend data recorded periodically to a national online spend platform, which analyses and tags our data into various helpful spend classifications and groupings, readying it for further segmentation and detailed analysis.

6.4.3 Segmenting our spend into high level categories provides intelligence, particularly as we drill down the category into commodity groupings, showing us patterns of our wider procurement needs, and the range of known Contractors used in each. Furthermore, the category view helps to inform strategic procurement, identifying opportunities to take advantage of, such as by consolidating some requirements we

can streamline the number of procurements undertaken improving efficiency, but also achieving better value through economies of scale savings.

- 6.4.4 All categories work to common principles and rules. Under our category management approach, the council's toolkit blended with the [online sustainable procurement tools](#) support prioritisation, life-cycle mapping and sustainability assessments, helping to identify the measures most relevant to each category. These can then be incorporated into individual Contract Strategies, enabling procuring officers and service leads to make timely and well-informed procurement decisions.
- 6.4.5 The Category Strategy provides high-level governance and guidance, allowing procuring officers to adopt established measures into individual Contract Strategies, including sustainable procurement duty, equality duty, supported business involvement, and actions to support our Environmental objectives.

6.5 CPWG

- 6.5.1 The CPWG comprises a small number of Chief Officers and representatives with interest and skills to review, provide oversight, and assist in strategic decisions on matters pertaining to the council's procurement function. The CPWG meet quarterly and provide helpful influence securing council-wide buy-in and promoting the procurement strategy and procedures.

6.6 Network of Procuring Officers

- 6.6.1 The council's internal procurement network is a forum for procuring officers across the council, with devolved procurement responsibilities or associated procurement roles (contract managers, evaluation managers, service experts), to collaborate on procurement practice.
- 6.6.2 We use internal communication channels to provide access to procurement toolkits, template documents and share communications (guidance notes, policy updates etc.). These channels function as a repository for sharing examples of best practice and lessons learned.
- 6.6.3 The procurement network promotes opportunities for mentoring and job shadowing as a mean of developing officers and allowing skills transfer. It is a future priority to develop this network further to advance specific procurement practice, deliver essential and bespoke training suited to the individual officer and their service procurement requirements. Like the national procurement strategy, we also recognise our people as enablers of effective procurement.

6.7 Procurement Training

- 6.7.1 It is necessary that we have a checklist, indicating the awareness and training needs required for procuring officers and supporting roles (service leads, contract managers or contract administrators, evaluation managers and evaluators), and this features in the current procurement improvement programme.
- 6.7.2 Particularly for procuring officers, we need to ensure officers are aware and trained on:
- the internal procurement toolkit and procedures;

- the governance of procurement;
- sustainable procurement duty;
- the [online sustainable procurement tools](#);
- Fair Work First approach; and,
- Climate Duty.

6.7.3 The [national procurement competency framework](#) is utilised to help officers self-appraise their existing competencies and identify areas to be worked on and/or assist with their continuous professional development (“CPD”).

6.7.4 There is a commitment to the development of our procurement network to maintain and raise standards across the procurement function.

6.7.5 We encourage professional qualification through the [Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply “CIPS”](#) which is the professional body for procurement. CIPS members can benefit by participating in CIPS run tutorials, webinars and a range of other CPD opportunities. Learning and experience gained by our officers who are CIPS members adds value and benefit where the learning can be integrated and/or adopted within the council’s procurement function and approach.

6.7.6 We also encourage and have interest in participation with external programmes and/or groups, such as [Procurement People of Tomorrow \(PPoT\)](#), to improve the procurement and commercial skills of our officers and future talent.

7. THE COUNCIL'S PROCUREMENT TOOLKIT AND PROCEDURES FOR 2026/27

7.1 Overview of Procurement Toolkit and Procedures

7.1.1 The council have a comprehensive procurement toolkit and supporting procedures, maintained by CPT and mandated through the council's [GCSOs](#). These are continuously under review and development, and in place to ensure a consistent approach to regulated procurement activity, ensuring compliance with the governance of procurement, the associated general and specific duties, and mitigating procurement risks.

7.2 Forward Procurement Plans

7.2.1 The CPT work closely with service areas to consider new and recurring procurement requirements and from this can establish forward procurement plans which are essential for resource allocation and planning of procurement activity.

7.2.2 The forward procurement plans are consolidated, and those above the relevant procurement thresholds are published within the council's Annual Procurement Report which lists the expected regulated procurements to be undertaken in the next two financial years, providing transparency for prospective Contractors interested in doing business with the council.

7.3 Contract Strategy

7.3.1 An internal Contract Strategy is the main pre-tender document from the procurement toolkit, required to be produced for all regulated and significant procurements.

7.3.2 The Contract Strategy may derive from an established Category Strategy, through inheriting any high-level practice and decisions, such as identified sustainable procurement measures, that should be incorporated into the planned procurement.

7.3.3 The Contract Strategy can also be written bespoke and/or deviate from the Category Strategy as required to meet particular contract objectives.

7.3.4 Each Contract Strategy should be tailored to reflect and achieve: the service area and/or stakeholder needs; the level of competition in the marketplace; and the choice of procurement procedure and agreement type to ensure optimum competition with objective to achieve the desired quality outcomes and best value.

7.3.5 The Contract Strategy will link the procurement to the local and national Priorities helping the procuring officers focus on setting the desired procurement objectives.

7.3.6 This internal document has a key purpose in ensuring the preparation for procurement is made in compliance with the governance of procurement activity. The format of the contract strategy is structured with checkpoints and considerations, including but not limited to:

- risk and opportunity assessment;
- consideration for sustainable procurement duties, and for those identified, what is needed in the tender approach to achieve these targets;
- how we can influence and encourage Contractors to support the Procurement Priorities, including Fair Work practices, reduction of waste and carbon emissions;

- establish relevant targets for Community Benefits for the procurement, such as job creation, training, and use of sub-contractors;
- make or buy decisions, and consideration of the circular economy;
- decision on procurement route with consideration given to the potential to reserve opportunities for supported businesses where it is identified they can fulfil the requirements;
- applying measures to reduce inequality and facilitate the involvement of SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses;
- encouraging innovation per guidance in [SPPN 3/2023](#);
- consider how to involve those who may be affected by the procurement;
- setting the evaluation criteria; and
- capture key decisions.

7.3.7 Contract Strategies are required to be authorised in accordance with [GCSOs](#) before the associated procurement progresses to competition.

7.4 Tender Packs

7.4.1 CPT have established tender packs for all types of regulated procurements the council may undertake, this ensures a consistent approach for procuring officers and for potential contractors. A key feature of the tender pack is the council's standard terms and conditions applicable in all contracts, which incorporates requirements set by [the Act](#) and the mandated clauses from policy guidance [SPPN 2/2022 - prompt payment in the supply chain](#).

7.4.2 Each tender pack will have a clear 'conditions of participation' and outline any selection and award criteria; this provides transparency and clearly informs those expressing interest and/or planning to tender the council's rules and protocols for tendering, how tenders will be checked and evaluated, and the tender opening procedures (these are also covered in [GCSOs](#)).

7.4.3 A template quality questionnaire has been created with considerations and a choice of questions to capture tenderer feedback on key areas of impact that are important to the council, including: equality duty and fair work; community benefits and social value; net zero; data protection and cyber security.

7.5 Tendering

7.5.1 The council's tendering approach for regulated procurements is generally conducted through the national platforms:

- [Public Contracts Scotland Portal](#) ("PCS"); and
- [PCS-Tender](#) ("PCS-Tender").

7.5.2 These tender platforms ensure consistency for prospective contractors and provide transparency, administer questions and answers during the tender process, manage tender deadlines, and facilitate a sealed-bid approach where the tender post-box remains locked to ensure any bids received cannot be opened until the deadline has passed. Each system has its own independent helpdesk with both telephone support and a catalogue of guides.

7.5.3 Exceptions to using the above platforms may be required for bespoke procurement exercises or when we are conducting a call-off from a third-party framework or

dynamic purchasing system (“DPS”) and its either mandatory or beneficial to use their platform.

7.6 Tender Evaluation

- 7.6.1 In each individual procurement, a tender evaluation manager and team of evaluators are identified when finalising the contract strategy.
- 7.6.2 Prior to receiving any tender submissions, all officers and individuals involved in tender evaluation must complete a conflict of interest declaration and a confidentiality statement; these requirements safeguard the integrity of the evaluation process and provide assurance that decisions are taken impartially, transparently, and without undue influence or risk of information misuse.
- 7.6.3 The tender evaluation manager is responsible for any clarification requirements and consolidating evaluation scores and result.

7.7 Contract Award Reports

- 7.7.1 Contract award reports are the main post-tender document from the procurement toolkit, used internally to detail the scoring and finalised results of tender evaluation.
- 7.7.2 Contract award reports will summarise the key outcomes in a procurement, from savings to benefits captured, while also explaining how best value has been achieved.
- 7.7.3 The Chief Officer of the Procuring Service is required to approve contract award reports, and where applicable, seek Committee approval in accordance with the procedures set out in [GCSOs](#).
- 7.7.4 As soon as the relevant approval(s) are given for the contract award report, the procurement can proceed to the stage of finalising the contract award by formal communication of the result with the candidates and tenderers.

7.8 Notices of Decisions

- 7.8.1 The procurement toolkit has letter templates that the procuring officer will use to explain the procurement outcome following the conclusion of the respective stage of a procurement, informing candidates or tenderers with the required feedback under the relevant governance of the procurement.
- 7.8.2 Depending on the contract award value and in accordance with the procedures set out in [GCSOs](#), letters will be issued under the approval of either the Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) or the Chief Officer of the procuring service area.
- 7.8.3 Where required, the procuring officer will close the procurement process by publishing a contract award notice.

7.9 Contract Register

- 7.9.1 The council has a [publicly accessible online contract register](#) contained within PCS which is auto-populated on publication of contract notices, with further monitoring and maintenance of the register undertaken by CPT.

7.10 Contract Management

- 7.10.1 The council is required to have robust contract management arrangements in place, particularly for its most strategic contracts to ensure the council works effectively and professionally with the appointed contractors.
- 7.10.2 Any key performance indicator and/or services levels must be considered during development of contract strategy and carried forward into the tender pack.
- 7.10.3 Each contract we enter should be formed based on the council's tender pack, comprising:
- the specification of requirements;
 - key performance indicators (KPIs) and/or expected service levels;
 - general conditions of contract (and if applicable, special terms and conditions);
 - the accepted tenderer proposals, method statements and pricing; and
 - any other pertinent detail captured and written into the final contract award letter.
- 7.10.4 It is important that each contract is managed in compliance with the council's [GCSOs](#) and in conformance with the contract award letter (to ensure that the expected performance and outcomes are achieved).

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1 Annual Procurement Report

8.1.1 An Annual Procurement Report will be produced by the council as soon as possible after the financial year and used to report the performance and effectiveness of the respective Procurement Strategy.

8.1.2 The Annual Procurement Report will be produced in conformity to the Act and utilise the recommended reporting template provided through the national policy note i.e. [SPPN 1/2026](#) which aims to ensure consistent reporting from all public bodies. The report measures what we have achieved in our contract awards, including:

- Number of Regulated procurements;
- Compliance with Procurement Strategy;
- Community Benefits accrued;
- Appointed Contract status with Fair Work and the Real Living Wage;
- Payment Performance;
- Supported Business; and,
- Total Spend and Savings.

8.1.3 The data sources for the above information include payments made through the council's financial system; data gathered through the procurement registers managed by CPT; and the outputs from the national online spend platform (as mentioned at 6.4.2 herein).

8.1.4 To finalise the production of the Annual Procurement Report, prior consultation and approval will be sought from the CPWG members, committee, and the Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement). The Annual Procurement Report will be published in an accessible format on the council's website ([link to published Annual Procurement Reports](#)) and a copy will be shared with Scottish Ministers.

8.2 Local Government Benchmarking Framework ("LGBF")

8.2.1 The council contribute to the national reporting metrics and indicators, which includes a procurement measure attached to the focus area of Economic Development:

- Proportion of procurement spent on local enterprises.

8.2.2 Data to produce this metric will be the same sources mentioned at 8.1.3 above.

8.2.3 This metric will be published in an accessible format on the [LGBF website](#).

8.3 The Council's Strategic Performance Framework

8.3.1 The council use a platform of performance metrics in all services to keep track and focus of how each service and team are performing, these are:

- Procurement spend - % through collaborative contracts with other publicly funded bodies.
- Procurement spends - % with contracted suppliers.
- Procurement contracts - % qualifying contracts >£1m containing a community benefit requirement.
- Procurement contracts - % qualifying contracts awarded to clients who meet fair work criteria.

- Procurement assessment score - procurement and commercial improvement programme (PCIP)
- Procurement contracts - % qualifying contracts in reporting period to local organisations
- Procurement contracts - % qualifying contracts in reporting period to small medium enterprises
- Procurement spend - % awarded to local organisations.
- Procurement spend - % with small medium enterprises.

8.3.2 Data to produce these metrics will be gathered from the same sources as 8.1.3 above.

8.3.3 These metrics will be reported annually by the Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) to the relevant council committee.

8.4 Audits

8.4.1 The council's Internal Audit department provides independent and objective assurance to the council's senior management that systems and controls are fit for purpose. The most recent audits related to Procurement were focussed on:

- Contract and supplier management; and,
- Procurement – Best Value Approach.

8.4.2 These audits are welcomed to provide critical review and recommendations, adding focus for procuring officers and sharpening the procurement toolkit and procedures.

8.4.3 Progress on actions arising from audits are reported to the council's audit and scrutiny panel, which ensures continuous management until the actions are completed.

8.5 Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme ("PCIP")

8.5.1 The council is committed to improving procurement performance and practice of its overall procurement function, therefore we feel it is essential to participate in the [National PCIP assessments](#).

8.5.2 Local Authority PCIP assessments are conducted by Scotland Excel, usually every two years.

8.5.3 Following each assessment, Scotland Excel provide the council with a formal output report, outlining what has been identified as strengths and areas where the council have scope for improvement.

8.5.4 The council has undergone three PCIP assessments in 2017, 2019 and 2024.

8.5.5 The council's 2024 PCIP assessment report supports continuous improvement of the procurement function as covered in each Procurement Strategy.

9. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2026/27 GUIDED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACT

9.1 Ensuring regulated procurements contribute to the carrying out of the council's functions and the achievement of council purposes

9.1.1 All regulated procurements will be conducted using the procurement toolkit and procedures set out at section 7 herein. For clarity, it is expected a pre-tender contract strategy will be completed and a post-tender contract award report will be produced; both documents require the council priority, ambition statement and programme of work priority to be identified, and both require authorisation to be finalised per [GCSOs](#).

9.1.2 With the checkpoints in place in the respective procurement toolkit documents, CPT can log the impacts of each procurement into our procurement registers allowing us to produce a compliance report to verify expected outcomes and compliance with the Act.

9.2 Ensuring regulated procurements deliver value for money

9.2.1 All regulated procurements will be conducted using the procurement toolkit and procedures set out at section 7 herein. For clarity, it is expected a pre-tender contract strategy will be completed and a post-tender contract award report will be produced.

9.2.2 The contract strategy will set out the options appraisal and tender evaluation criteria chosen with the aim to deliver value of money; this document will require approval before the tender pack is produced and the procurement is published.

9.2.3 The contract award report will outline the evaluation results validating how the tender of the preferred bidder represents value for money; this document will require the relevant approval to enable the next stages in contract award process.

9.2.4 With the checkpoints in place in the respective procurement toolkit documents and procedures, CPT can log the impacts of each procurement into our procurement registers allowing us to produce a compliance report to verify expected outcomes and compliance with the Act.

9.3 Ensuring regulated procurements are carried out in compliance with the general duties to; treat economic operators equally and without discrimination, act in a transparent and proportionate manner, and to comply with the sustainable procurement duty

9.3.1 All regulated procurements will be conducted using the procurement toolkit and procedures set out at section 7 herein.

9.3.2 The contract strategy provides an appraisal on the procurement route, and will consider maximising competition, reducing barriers to entry, and ensuring complying with the principles of procurement.

9.3.3 Considerations on sustainable procurement duty are initially carried out within the category strategy making appraisals with use of the [online sustainable procurement tools](#). Those measures identified at category level transfer into the contract strategy for full use or adaptation to suit the individual contract requirement.

- 9.3.4 The contract strategy will require approval before the tender pack is produced and the procurement is published.
- 9.3.5 The notifications of contract awards decisions will provide successful and unsuccessful candidates and tenderers comprehensive feedback to the extent provided by the relevant governance of the procurement.
- 9.3.6 With the checkpoints in place in the procurement toolkit, CPT can log the impacts of each procurement into our procurement registers allowing us to produce a compliance report to verify expected outcomes and compliance with the Act.

9.4 The council's general policy on the use of community benefit requirements

- 9.4.1 The Act requires public bodies to give consideration whether to incorporate Community Benefit requirements as part of the Procurement when the estimated contract value is greater than or equal to £4 million; the council comply with this requirement. In addition to this, the council give enhanced consideration for Community Benefits for all Regulated Procurement for Supplies or Services, and for all Works procurements greater than £500k; this is incorporated into the council's pre-tender procedures.
- 9.4.2 The Council recognises procurement as a key mechanism for delivering wider social, economic and environmental benefits for communities across North Lanarkshire. The Council's Community Wealth Building Statement, aligned with national policy, identifies procurement under the "Spending" pillar as being an enabler for improving employment, training, skills development and sub-contracting opportunities within the local economy.
- 9.4.3 The Council is committed to leveraging its procurement spend to maximise these wider community outcomes wherever appropriate and proportionate.
- 9.4.4 The Council will:
- Include Community Benefit requirements in its contracts where there is a clear opportunity to benefit the community, ensuring these requirements comply with all relevant legislation, statutory guidance, best practice and the Council's GCSOs.
 - Use procurement activity to promote Fair Work First, encourage inclusive employment practices, support skills development, and stimulate local supply chains in alignment with the Council's Community Wealth Building priorities.
 - Ensure that Community Benefit requirements contribute to local and national outcomes, particularly in relation to employability, skills development and regeneration.
- 9.4.5 For each procurement exercise, the Contract Strategy will assess opportunities for Community Benefits relevant to the market and proportionate to contract value and duration. As part of this assessment, the Strategy will set clear, measurable targets, which may include:
- Job creation and employment opportunities;
 - Apprenticeships, training or skills development;
 - Use of local or SME sub-contractors;
 - Activities aligned with Fair Work First;
 - Community and/or environmental initiatives.

The identification and inclusion of these requirements at the pre-tender stage ensure that Community Benefits are fully integrated into the tender pack, the evaluation of tender proposals, and the post-award contract management.

- 9.4.6 For all contracts awarded where Community Benefits form part of the supplier proposal, CPT will log all expected benefits in the Procurement Register. CPT will also report the Community Benefits achieved within the council's Annual Procurement Report.
 - 9.4.7 Under the Council's Contract Management approach, the responsible Contract Manager will manage and monitor the appointed Contractor to ensure that agreed Community Benefits are delivered.
 - 9.4.8 The appointed Contractor must provide the council with regular updates on the progress of their Community Benefit commitments. Where targets are not being achieved, the contractor must provide details of remedial actions they propose to undertake to deliver the required outcomes.
 - 9.4.9 The Council will continually review the effectiveness of Community Benefit requirements through contract management, supplier reporting and annual performance reporting. Lessons learned will inform future procurement practice and help strengthen the role of procurement in supporting the Council's Community Wealth Building ambitions.
- 9.5 The council's general policy on consulting and engaging with those affected by its procurements**
- 9.5.1 The council recognises that it is important to consult and engage with those affected by our procurements, and where relevant and proportionate, to allow the views of those affected to be considered. The procurements must accurately reflect need and opportunity, and take account of the wider context, including the local and national priorities.
 - 9.5.2 In each individual procurement, the contract strategy development will therefore prompt consideration of those affected.
 - 9.5.3 The council engage outward with stakeholders through many formats and channels, tailored to the procurement and its objective. Examples include but are not restricted to online surveys; public and community consultations; and targeted engagement with affected stakeholder groups for the specific procurement being sought.
 - 9.5.4 The council encourages its procuring officers to undertake pre-tender engagement with the marketplace, particularly when it has complex requirements and/or when through analysis it anticipates that the level of competition is low which would then impact on the competitiveness of the procurement.
 - 9.5.5 The council will consider a trauma informed approach where is it relevant to do so, allowing those procurements to integrate the knowledge and experience gained through lived experience of both adults and children. The process of including lived experience involves working with people through the tender design, evaluation and implementation, fully adapting processes, paperwork and systems to promote diversity, inclusion, support and recognition of trauma and/or lived experience.

- 9.5.6 Procurement and commissioning of health and social related services, where considered possible to do so, are undertaken with involvement of people who use the services. All regulated procurements for health & social care consider best practice principles for ethical commissioning.
- 9.5.7 The council complies with its duty to respond to requests received under freedom of information and there is an online [Comments, Compliments and Complaints procedure](#).
- 9.6 The council's general policy on the payment of a living wage to persons involved in producing, providing or constructing the subject matter of regulated procurements**
- 9.6.1 The council's Fair Work First approach is published on the [councils website](#), detailing the approach with our own workforce and operations.
- 9.6.2 The council are an [accredited Living Wage employer](#); this is a clear commitment to pay at least the [real Living Wage](#) for all staff we directly employ.
- 9.6.3 The council has made a commitment to implement and promote [Fair Work First](#) in all relevant procurements in line with national policy. The council encourages the Contractors we work with and want to attract, to pay the [real Living Wage](#) as part of a package of fair work practice. It's our experience that those which have a diverse workforce and whose staff are well rewarded, well-motivated, well led and who have appropriate opportunities for training and skills development, are likely to deliver a higher quality of service. A positive approach to fair work practices can have a positive effect on the quality of the services, supplies and work delivered on our contracts.
- 9.6.4 Where conditions of the national guidance on payment of the [real Living Wage](#) can be legally mandated, we will follow such approach including model tender evaluation questions available from the [online sustainable procurement tools](#).
- 9.6.5 Should the council award a contract to a Contractor who is making commitment to pay the [real Living Wage](#), this will form part of the contract, and it will be monitored through the Contract Management arrangements.
- 9.6.6 The council will report the number of [real Living Wage](#) Contractors appointed in our Annual Procurement Report.
- 9.7 The council's general policy on promoting compliance by contractors and sub-contractors with the health and safety at work etc. Act 1974 (c.37) and any provision made under that act**
- 9.7.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that nothing purchased by us is at the expense of the health and safety of those who are involved in delivering our contracts whether directly or as part of the supply chain.
- 9.7.2 It is important that those bidding for our contracts can demonstrate that they are responsible Contractors who keep to their legal duties, including duties relating to health and safety.
- 9.7.3 It is a standard condition of our contracts that the contractor must keep to all laws that apply, the requirements of regulatory organisations, and good industry practice.

This includes any relevant health and safety law. Health and safety criterion forms part of the evaluation for all relevant contracts.

9.7.4 Whenever a Contractor's staff are on our premises, under the terms of our standard contracts they must keep to our own health and safety requirements.

9.7.5 The council will revise our standard contract management arrangements to make sure that we include information about health and safety incidents relating to delivering our contracts and any measures we take to put things right.

9.8 The council's general policy on the procurement of fairly and ethically traded goods and services

9.8.1 The council takes a robust approach in its procurement processes and work with its collaborative procurement partners and agencies to tackle criminal activity in line with the [national serious organised crime strategy](#), and use the SPD and tender questions to prevent human trafficking and exploitation, modern slavery, corruption and fraud. It is our objective to promote positive employment practices.

9.8.2 The regulated procurement procedures we follow involve assessing a potential Contractor's suitability to be awarded the contract. This process includes checking for exclusion grounds per the regulations and [the Act](#), such as convictions, breaches of duty, offences or acts of professional misconduct.

9.8.3 The council's standard terms and conditions of contract allow the council to end a contract if the Contractor or sub-Contractor fails to keep to their legal duties in the areas of environmental, social or employment law when carrying out that contract.

9.8.4 The council were awarded "Fairtrade Zone Status" in recognition of the support and awareness the local schools, churches, businesses, and communities have given to Fairtrade products. This a clear commitment to consider the relevant and proportionate application of fair and ethical principles in our procurement activities.

9.8.5 The council commits to considering the purchase of fairly and ethically traded supplies if available to meet our requirements through the contract strategy, which includes seeing how best to integrate with the specification of requirements and evaluation process.

9.8.6 The APR for this strategy will include a statement about the effectiveness of our procurement procedures.

9.9 The council's general policy on regulated procurements involving the provision of food

9.9.1 The council recognises food and drink as a key industry sector where major sustainability wins can be achieved. The procurement of food and catering services is a high-ranking area because there are major social, economic, and environmental impacts. It can have benefits on community health, wellbeing, and social justice through access to good nutrition including fresh and seasonal produce.

9.9.2 The council's approach to its contracts involving food, which are under our direct control, is to make sure that it keeps to all relevant Government policies on healthy eating and nutrition, promoting fresh and seasonal and local produce, and on fairly

and ethically traded produce. These standards take account of a range of factors, including production, traceability, authenticity, origin, ethical trading, animal welfare, environmental standards, and health and waste.

9.9.3 The council continue to consider available Scottish products that we source through initiatives such as the Red Tractor assurance scheme and through engagement with the Food for Life programme we aim to increase the amount of locally sourced and produced food for our schools.

9.9.4 Keeping to the policy commitment is part of our Contract Management arrangements for all food contracts.

9.10 The council's approach to prompt payment performance in the supply chain

9.10.1 The council support the national policy and agree with the position that prompt payment is necessary for local and national economic recovery and longer-term wellbeing. Prompt payment of the supply chain is ethical and socially responsible, and critical to the sustainability and resilience of our supply chains who in turn are supporting us with our service delivery and priorities.

9.10.2 Following [SPPN 2/2022](#), the lead procuring officer will design the selection stage (SPD) for a regulated procurements with a standard statement as means of understanding the payment performance history and payments systems of bidders; this allows an informed contract award decision and ability to reject a candidate that does not comply with the requirement.

9.10.3 The council's standard terms and conditions, as mentioned at 7.4.1 herein, uses the recommended clauses to mandate all aspects of prompt payment in our contracts. We have also included an escalation process should any Contractor or Sub-Contractor be in dispute that prompt payment has been complied with.

9.10.4 Monitoring of compliance with prompt payment is covered within our guidance on Contract Management and within [GCSOs](#).

10. HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

- 10.1** The council welcomes interest and competition in our contract opportunities from all businesses. We have an ambitious plan for North Lanarkshire, and we recognise the innovation and expertise that can be procured from the supply base can help us to meet our objectives.
- 10.2** Any potential Contractor who are seeking access to our contract opportunities are encouraged to be registered on:
- the national advertising platform [Public Contracts Scotland Portal](#) (“PCS”); and,
 - the national e-Tendering system “[PCS-Tender](#)”.
- these online platforms are used to facilitate our competitive quotations or tenders and will provide automated notifications to Contractors (based on their business areas they have matched their PCS profile to) when the council advertise open opportunities.*
- 10.3** The council has a [buyer portal](#) which sits within PCS; this is a public resource that acts as an online directory featuring links to:
- the council's contract register;
 - displaying notices for our open contract opportunities; and
 - displaying notices of our previous contract awards.
- 10.4** The council's [contract register](#) holds current contract details; this helps any Contractor determine opportunities, when current contracts expire and when the council are likely to re-tender.
- 10.5** The council produce an [Annual Procurement Report](#) which has a dedicated section setting out the expected contract opportunities for suppliers to get involved in over the next 2 financial years.
- 10.6** Further links to the council's procurement activity and publications can be found on our [website](#).
- 10.7** For construction projects, in progress or coming soon, the council provide additional updates on our activity through the “[Scottish Pipeline Forecast Tool](#)”. This acts as a further resource that may be of assistance to potential suppliers looking for subcontract opportunities.
- 10.8** The corporate procurement team and procuring officers across the council's Service Areas support the Lanarkshire and National “Meet the Buyer” events, which are generally the key networking days our procuring officers where we have time dedicated to liaising with potential Contractors.
- 10.9** In addition to liaison with the council, the [Supplier Development Programme \(“SDP”\)](#) offer independent support and training to businesses who are seeking help / guidance with public sector contracting opportunities. The council work in co-operation with SDP including making referrals, especially where there is a change in tender process.
- 10.10** For awareness, the council's contract opportunities for below £50,000 Supplies/Services or below £2,000,000 Works are not subject to the procurement

regulations, and in these cases the procuring Service Area is guided to consider a procurement route that represents best value.

- 10.11** Generally procuring officers undertaking non-regulated procurements will source their requirements through either:
- Using an already established Framework Agreement i.e. [Scotland Excel](#) / [National Frameworks](#) / [Crown Commercial Services Frameworks](#); or
 - Undertaking a competitive quotation exercise.
- 10.12** The Council's full procurement procedures are set out in our [GCSOs](#).
- 10.13** In addition to procurement-specific support, the council promotes a broader environment that enables sustainable business growth across North Lanarkshire, aligned to the ambitions of the Plan for North Lanarkshire.
- 10.14** The [Invest: In North Lanarkshire](#) programme provides further information for prospective suppliers and investors, highlighting North Lanarkshire as a competitive and well-connected location, supported by strong transport links, a skilled workforce, and access to innovation and digital infrastructure. The programme also offers dedicated advisory services, including an in-house planning pre-advisory service to streamline development processes, alongside support through Business Gateway and regeneration partners. These services help reduce barriers to entering the local market and strengthen the conditions for business growth.
- 10.15** Collectively, this wider support reinforces North Lanarkshire's commitment to sustainable economic growth and provides clear, accessible routes for suppliers and investors seeking to do business with the council.

11. IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2026/27

- 11.1** This procurement strategy will subject to annual review to ensure that the council are flexible in adopting emerging guidance and polices into its procurement function.
- 11.2** There will be continued engagement with key stakeholders and access to appropriate accredited training for relevant staff.
- 11.3** Independent audit and assurance will be sought to challenge and assess on a sample basis, both the procurement strategy content and intentions, and our compliance with it; this will help to identify, and provide a process to correct, any weakness.
- 11.4** The council's procurement performance against this procurement strategy will continuously be monitored, with the associated reporting to be produced following the end of the financial year (2026/27), with the output report expected to be approved and published by 30 September 2027.