

The background of the page features a large, faded coat of arms of Northam Town Council. The coat of arms is a heraldic shield supported by two figures, with a crest on top and a motto scroll at the bottom. The shield is divided into quarters, and the crest depicts a red lion passant guardant. The motto scroll contains the text 'SIGILLUM CIVITATIS NORTHAMPTONIE'.

**NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL
PROCUREMENT POLICY
and PROCEDURE**

Adopted by Northam Town Council on 18th December 2024

NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL PROCUREMENT POLICY

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Version	Date	Note	Drafted by
V0.1	28 th June 2024	Revision of draft policy to align with current requirements and standing orders.	Acting Town Clerk
V1.0	14 th November 2024	Recommended policy wording	Town Clerk after Review Committee resolution
V1.1	18 th December 2024	Adopted by Full Council	n/a

ADOPTED

NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL PROCUREMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 It is the purpose of this policy to set out the strategic aims which inform and direct the Council's procurement activities and to operate in conjunction with the Council's existing Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Standing Orders for Contracts, and Climate Action Plan. All Council Services involve procurement to some degree. There is a direct link between good procurement and the delivery of high quality and cost effective services for residents and the wider community.

1.2 The Council accepts its responsibilities throughout the procurement process. It will operate a transparent process through which it will strive to attain best value for all goods, materials and services which it purchases. "Best value" is defined as a balance of price, quality of product and supplier services.

1.3 The procurement process starts with an identification of needs and proceeds through the stages of evaluation, purchase and contract management. This policy shall cover all aspects of procurement, from the day to day purchasing of commodities through to purchasing key strategic items, capital assets or commissioning surveys. The council is committed to minimising any adverse impact on the environment arising from its policies and working practices¹.

1.4 This policy has been drafted with reference to the Council's Standing Orders² and Financial Regulations³, and the National Association of Local Council (NALC) [Legal Topic Note 87 – 'Procurement'](#), updated in January 2024⁴.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 Northam Town Council's procurement objectives are:

- a) Community Involvement: taking into account the community's views.
- b) Quality of Service Provision: seeking to continually improve the quality of service.
- c) Easy Access: making services open and available for all.
- d) Best value: provide the best service at the best possible cost with a balance of price, quality of product and supplier services, with a focus on economies of scale where appropriate.
- e) Sustainability: recognition of the economic; social and environmental impacts arising from the Council's procurement behaviour.
- f) Building Partnerships: working closely with community partners to deliver best value services and facilities for the community.
- g) Valuing Staff – Council staff are a key resource and should remain appropriately trained and valued.

2.2 Responsibility for implementing this policy rests with Councillors and Council employees.

¹ Northam Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in August 2019. To support this declaration the Council committed to adopting an action plan by the end of January 2020 detailing how the it plans to secure net zero carbon emissions by 2030 across its buildings, assets and operations.

² Standing Order 18: Financial controls and procurement

³ Financial Regulations 10 (Orders for Work, Goods and Services) and 11 (Contracts)

⁴ https://www.northamtowncouncil.gov.uk/_UserFiles/Files/LTN%2087-Procurement.pdf

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3 NATIONAL STRATEGY

3.1 The [National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England \(2022\)](#) sets out how councils can improve the delivery and cost effectiveness of high quality services through leadership, behaving commercially and achieving community benefits subject to local priorities.

3.2 [The National Procurement Policy Statement \(presented to Parliament pursuant to section 13\(3\)\(c\) of the Procurement Act 2023\)](#) sets out the strategic priorities for public procurement and how contracting authorities can support their delivery.

3.3 The Procurement Act 2023 establishes a new public procurement regime, aiming for a simpler and more transparent system to deliver better value for money. Councils have a duty to provide 'value for money' and must continually review and improve services.

3.4 The Public Contracts Regulations (2015) Section 110, as amended, sets a public procurement threshold of £30,000 (inclusive of VAT). Above this threshold, opportunities must be published on the Government Contracts Finder platform⁵. For tenders above £214,904 (including VAT), the Government Find a Tender platform⁶, which replaced the EU platform on 1st January 2021.

4 LOCAL STRATEGY

4.1 All purchasing must comply with the Council's Financial Regulations Standing Orders and tendering process and other relevant policies as adopted by the Council.

4.2 The Council recognises the benefits to the local economy of using local businesses and will seek out local contractors and suppliers wherever possible.

4.3 All contractors and suppliers working on Council sites will be required to comply with the Council's Health & Safety policy and any rules specific to the site of operation. Provision of suitable risk assessments and method statements will be a condition of all such contracts.

4.4 The Council requires all contractors working on Council sites and projects to maintain adequate insurance, including (but not limited to) Public Liability insurance for £5 million. The Council retains the right to increase this requirement for specific jobs and/or contracts where the risk is perceived to be greater.

4.5 The Council recognises the importance of sustainability and will take into account the environmental, social and economic impacts of its purchasing decisions. (see section 5 – Sustainable Procurement).

4.6 The Council recognises its duty to protect biodiversity under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. To meet this duty the Council will wherever possible purchase products that protect biodiversity.

4.7 The Council will, wherever possible, purchase goods that meet international Fairtrade standards.

4.8 The Council understands the importance of paying suppliers promptly and will wherever possible settle accounts within a maximum of 30 days, or earlier, by agreement. In order to comply with current legislation all payments (apart from petty cash payments) are made by BACS transfer, Direct Debit, or cheque.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/find-tender>

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4.9 The Council needs to have access to pre-approved contractors to supply routine services or who can be called on to provide both emergency and routine services. Contractors wishing to be included on the Council's register of approved contractors will be required to complete a registration form. The register of approved contractors will be periodically reviewed. The Council maintains monthly accounts with suppliers of regular purchases, all purchases on Council accounts may only be made by authorised Council officers who must be provided with a receipt. Limits will be set on each account on the maximum value of individual purchases and the overall balance on the account. Expenditure over these limits must be authorised in advance

4.10 In accordance with Standing Order 18 the Council is not obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quotation or estimate, but seeks to identify the *most economically advantageous tender*.

5 THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

5.1 The procurement process starts with an identification of needs and proceeds through the stages of evaluation, purchase and contract management.

Action	Timeframe
Agree project by Council resolution	1 week*
Develop tender documents	1 to 2 weeks
Full Council reviews tender documents and agrees by resolution and appoints a tender evaluation panel	1 week*
Publish the opportunity on the relevant platform(s)	2 days
Make the opportunity 'live' and respond to questions by potential tenderers	6 to 8 weeks
Tender evaluation	1 week
Report evaluation panel's report to Council with recommendations	1 week*

* the 1 week timescale refers to the number of days between the issuing of a summons and agenda pack and the meeting at which it is considered.

5.2 Tender documents set out the parameters of the project, including:

- i The Invitation to Tender
 - a. descriptions of the project, with instructions of how to submit the tender
 - b. the expected timetable
 - c. the budget
 - d. notes to tenderers
 - e. contract specifics
 - f. planning considerations (e.g. the contractor to obtain planning permission on the Council's behalf, incurring any of the costs)
 - g. the evaluation criteria to be applied and the respective weighting
- ii Supporting documents, for example:
 - a. Service specifications
 - b. Location / floor / site plans
 - c. Surveys (e.g. topographical, building condition, asbestos, tree)
- iii The tender submission form.

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6 EVALUATION PROCESS

6.1 Once the opportunity to tender process has closed and the tenders been received, the panel is contacted and each panel member is to review the documentation, first individually, then jointly at a meeting of the panel.

6.2 Prior to the meeting of the panel, all panel members must complete a tender evaluation sheet, assigning scores to each weighted criteria, for example:

Criterion	Percentage Weighting	Score Awarded	Weighted Score	Comments
Bidder:				
Price	(x)%		0	
Quality	(x)%		0	
Life expectancy	(x)%		0	
Timeframe	(x)%		0	
Compliance	(x)%		0	
Environmental Issues	(x)%		0	
Totals:	100%	0	0	
	Maximum:	(5 x number of criteria)	(x)	

6.3 Scores shall be awarded according to how well the tenderer responded to each criteria, on a 6 point scale (0 to 5), as follows:

Score awarded	Definition
0	Very poor or No response (the response provides no confidence).
1	Poor (the response inspires very little confidence)
2	Unsatisfactory (the response provides some confidence but not to an acceptable level)
3	Satisfactory (the response an acceptable level of confidence)
4	Good (the response provides a high level of confidence)
5	Excellent (the response an exceptional level of confidence)

6.4 The panel pulls together a detailed report to be presented to Full Council for consideration. Following the resolution, the Council advises the tenderers and, if necessary, re-starts the tendering process.