



# Carlow County Council Corporate Procurement Plan 2023 - 2025

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## 1.0 Introduction:

### 1.1 Corporate Procurement Plan - Purpose & Scope

Carlow County Council's Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) 2023-2025 is a three-year strategy, setting out the procurement objectives and priorities for this period. The Procurement Plan has been developed to ensure that the organisation's procurement function operates at all times in accordance with best public procurement practise. This Corporate Procurement Plan will ensure that the procurement function formally supports the Council's key corporate objectives & values and is focused on delivering value for money outcomes that are consistent with EU and National procurement legislation and policy requirements.

### 1.2 Governing European Principles

The European Treaty of Rome, that results in the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC), established several principles that apply when awarding contracts, in particular:

- Freedom of Movement
- Freedom of Establishment
- Freedom regarding the Provision of Services

The award of any public contract must be carried out in accordance with the principles set out in Treaty of the Function of the EU<sup>1</sup> as follows: -

- *Transparency* – This principle underlines the obligation to publish a sufficiently accessible advertisement prior to the award of the contract and to set out its requirements and rules in a clear and precise manner, so that they can be understood by all 'well informed' tenderers, in the same way.
- *Non-discrimination* - This principle prohibits requirements or measures which discriminate, either directly or indirectly, based on the origin of the goods or the nationality of suppliers.
- *Mutual Recognition* –This principle is closely linked with the *Principle of Non-discrimination*; it specifically requires that Member States much acknowledge and accept certifications, standards, and qualifications, awarded by other Member States, where these are equivalent to those awarded in the home Member State.
- *Equal Treatment* – Fairness and impartiality should be considered at all stages throughout a procurement process. Authorities need to be aware of how their actions will be perceived by tender participants and potential tender participants.
- *Proportionality* – This principle requires that measures taken, and requirements imposed, by authorities are necessary and appropriate, in light of the objectives sought to be achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> 2012/C 326/01 Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Current EU governing procurement directives, that have subsequently been transposed into Irish Law include:

- EU Directive 2014/24/EU (Public Sector)<sup>2</sup> – transposed by S.I. No. 284 of 2016 <sup>3</sup>(as amended),
- Directive 2014/23/EU (Concessions)<sup>4</sup> - transposed by S.I. No. 203 of 2017<sup>5</sup>,
- Directive 2014/25/EU (Utilities)<sup>6</sup> – transposed by S.I. No.286 of 2016<sup>7</sup>,
- Remedies Directive 2007/66<sup>8</sup> - transposed by S.I. No. 130 of 2010 <sup>9</sup>(as amended in 2015)

### 1.3 National Procurement Structure

Following the Local Government Efficiency Review Group (2010) and the Public Sector Reform Plan (2011) one of the key priorities highlighted was saving through procurement reform. These reforms, predominantly a transition to greater use of centralised contracts and frameworks by the public sector, are now coordinated and driven by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP), with the support of four key sectors partners – Local Government, Health, Defence, and Education.

The current national procurement model divides the spend into 16 categories of commonly procured goods and services, with ‘One Voice’ to the market, eight managed by the OGP, and the remaining eight allocated and administered across the other key sector partners. The OGP categories include Professional Services, Facilities Management & Maintenance, Utilities, ICT & Office Equipment, Marketing Print & Stationery, Travel & HR, Fleet & Plant and Managed Services. The sector partners categories include Minor Building Works, Plant Hire, Laboratory/Research Diagnostics Services & Equipment, Agriculture & Veterinary Goods & Equipment, Medical Professional Services, Medical Diagnostic Equipment & Supplies, Medical, Surgical & Pharmaceutical Supplies and Defence & Security requirements.

#### *Office of Government Procurement (OGP):*

An essential part of OGP’s remit is to manage and deliver supplier frameworks (FWs), dynamic purchasing systems (DPS), and contracts across the above listed eight categories of commonly procurement goods and services assigned to them.

The OGP also has responsibility for the National Procurement Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>10</sup>, which consist of 5 strands; Legislation (Directives, Regulations); Policy (Circulars etc.); General Guidelines; the Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF); and detailed technical guidelines, template documents and information notes that issue periodically.

Some specific Public Procurement Circulars of note include:

- Circular 05/23: Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement
- Circular 16/13: Arrangements concerning the use of Central Contracts

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<sup>2</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on Public Procurement

<sup>3</sup> S.I. No. 284 of 2016 - European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts) Regulations 2016

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2014/23/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the award of Concession Contracts

<sup>5</sup> S.I. No. 203 of 2017 - European Union (Award of Concession Contracts) Regulations 2017

<sup>6</sup> Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport, and postal services sectors

<sup>7</sup> S.I. No. 286 of 2016 - European Union (Award of Contracts by Utility Undertakings) Regulations 2016

<sup>8</sup> Directive 2007/66/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 with regard to improving the effectiveness of review procedures concerning the award of public contracts

<sup>9</sup> S.I. No. 130 of 2010 - European Communities (Public Authorities' Contracts) (Review Procedures) Regulations 2010, *as amended* by S.I. No. 192 of 2015 The European Communities (Public Authorities' Contracts) (Review Mechanism) (Amendment) Regulation, (2015)

<sup>10</sup>National Public Procurement Policy Framework, Office of Government Procurement, Nov 2019. (Available at <https://ogp.gov.ie/national-public-procurement-policy-framework/>)

- Circular 10/18: Capital Works Management Framework

Separately, the OGP is responsible for the provision of the Irish/European platform for publishing public procurement competitions, [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) and the public sector construction reform policy platform, [www.constructionprocurement.gov.ie](http://www.constructionprocurement.gov.ie). Best practice guidance, standard contracts, and generic template document for Public Works and Works related services may be found here. Further details on the Office of Government Procurement services may be accessed at [www.ogp.gov.ie](http://www.ogp.gov.ie).

#### *Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre (LGSPC):*

The LGSPC is a strategic procurement centre for the local government sector. This centre is based within the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). The key deliverable is to support the delivery of public services through efficient procurement processes. Within the LGMA, the Procurement Programme Board provides oversight and governance to this function.

#### *Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC):*

Based in Kerry County Council, the LGOPC manages two categories, on behalf of the public sector, Minor Building Works, and Plant Hire. LGOPC has developed a range of frameworks and dynamic purchasing systems for categories such as plant hire, civil engineering materials and minor works - tradespersons. Details on the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre services may be accessed at [www.supplygov.ie](http://www.supplygov.ie). The Procurement Programme Board also provides oversight and governance to this operational function.

#### *Education Procurement Services (EPS):*

The EPS manages two categories of procurement spending on behalf of the public sector, Laboratory/Research Diagnostics, Services & Equipment and Agriculture and Veterinary Goods & Services. Details on the Education Procurement Services may be accessed at [www.educationprocurementservice.ie](http://www.educationprocurementservice.ie)

#### *Health and Defence:*

The remaining sector partners bodies, that are part of the national procurement structure, are the Health Services Executive (HSE) and The Department of Defence (DoD), delivering commonly procured goods and services within the medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and security & defence areas.

### **1.4 Organisational Structure & Role**

The procurement function in Carlow County Council is under the Directorate for Finance, Information Systems, Arts & Culture. Carlow County Council's current procurement structure is mainly a decentralised or devolved one, with procurement competition responsibility delegated to staff members at directorate, department, section, and municipal levels. In certain cases, a nominated directorate/section will lead on a required procurement need, for the whole of the Authority. An example of this involves the IS section procuring hardware, software, and fixed & mobile telephony service for all of our Authority requirements.



The Procurement Function has a vital coordinating role in ensuring organisational focus on good practice and procedures in procurement competitions. This includes embedding transparency, accountability, and compliance, achieving value for money and ensuring high standards in procurement. This is further underlined through communication of all relevant updates and information to all those involved in a procurement role in our Authority.

### 1.5 Procurement Plan 2020-2023 Review

This Corporate Procurement Plan seeks to build on the existing Procurement Plan of 2020-2023, and our authority's earlier procurement plans (2016-2018; 2011-2013; 2009-2011). The 2020-2023 plan was developed at a time of changes both nationally and within the procurement function of Carlow County Council.

The plan sought to:

- have the Authority's procurement requirements carried out in a coordinated and strategic manner.
- identify and develop opportunities to achieve value for money.
- seek out opportunities to streamline existing procurement processes & procedures.
- improve procurement compliance in all competitions.
- facilitate economic, social, and environmental objectives throughout the procurement journey.
- support the ongoing development of the procurement function.

Many of the objective and goals outlined in this 2020-2023 plan have been adopted and implemented.

## 2. Procurement Overview:

### 2.1 Carlow County Council Corporate Plan

The mission of Carlow County Council is *‘to provide a quality local government service for the people of County Carlow, through the protection and enhancement of the environment and improvement in the quality of life’*.<sup>11</sup>

Carlow County Council is committed to achieving its core values in the delivery of services which include, Democratic & Civic Leadership; Respect; Social Inclusion; Accessibility; Quality Services/Customer Care; Partnership, Transparency, Accountability, Integrity; Our Employees; Innovation; Value for Money/Maximising Resources; Sustainability and Pride.

### 2.2 Procurement Function Mission Statement & Values

#### *Procurement mission statement:*

Carlow County Council is committed to the compliant procurement of goods, services and works, in line with best public procurement practices, to achieve value for money outcomes for its citizens, that are strategically align to the business needs and core values of the organisation.

#### *Procurement values:*

In all of Carlow County Council’s procurement and purchasing activities the staff will endeavour to operate in accordance with the following values:

- Maximise compliance with all relevant procurement legislation and guidelines.
- Always seek value for money, whilst achieving optimum quality to meet the authority’s business needs.
- Minimise the authority’s exposure to procurement risk.
- Strive to streamline procurement processes & procedures and amplify transparency.
- Encourage active business engagement and maximise contract performance.
- Strengthen the procurement function.
- Promote environmental, social considerations and transparent & accountable governance (ESG) in procurement competitions, when possible.

### 2.3 Internal Procurement Regulations

#### *Financial Management System (FMS):*

Carlow County Council operates the Agresso Milestone 7 financial management system (FMS). The Authorities financial regulations, Purchase to Pay Guidelines<sup>12</sup>, specify how goods, services and works should be procured and managed through the FMS. Requirements for **all** goods, services and works must be recorded on the FMS.

Staff must raise a ‘requisition’ to a value which accurately reflects the planned cost. A requisition may be approved, and a purchase order can be generated once a requestor has:

- abided by the appropriate procedures as set out in the authority’s Policy for Procurement
- ensure fulfilment of the requirements of the Purchase to Pay Guidelines
- confirm that budget limits and all legal requirements are observed.

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<sup>11</sup> Carlow County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024

<sup>12</sup> Carlow County Council, Purchase to Pay Guidelines

Every procurement activity that requires payments through our Agresso Financial Management System, over €5,000 in value, must have a Procurement Reference (ProcRef) number<sup>13</sup> selected. A ProcRef number is a unique alpha-numerical code that will assist with tracking each project's procurement activity and assist with ensuring compliance with our procurement policies and procedures.

Users are also required to select a ProcType - Procurement Type for *all* transactions generated on Agresso FMS. ProcType is the various ways/methods a procurement exercise can be carried out, compliantly, in Carlow County Council.

*Threshold and Related Procurement Procedures:*

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<sup>13</sup> Carlow County Council, Procurement Reference Numbers – Frequently Asked Questions



Threshold (All figures are ex-VAT)	Procedure N.B.: All documentation must be retained & Aggregation Rules apply	Proc Type	Proc Type Description
Local Procurement Criteria	Up to €5,000 - All Services	LOC LV	Local Low Value less than € 5k
	Between €5,000 and €50,000 for Goods & Services & Consultants	LOC QQ	Simplified Procedure on eTender €5k - € 50k G&S
	Between €5,000 and €200,000 Works	LOC QQ	Simplified Procedure on eTenders €5k - € 200k Wks
	For Goods & Services Seek a minimum of 3 quotes from interested & competent suppliers/service providers. For Works and Works Related Consultants Seek a minimum of 5 quotes from interested & competent suppliers/service providers. N.B. When a procurement competition is managed outside eTenders (with the exception of SupplyGov.ie) contracting authorities are required to manually create a record of award on eTenders for contracts over €25,000 (excl. VAT)	LOC HV (Exception)	Local High Value €5k - € 50k G&S & (€ 200k Wks)
National Procurement	Between €50,000 and €215,000 for Goods & Services & Consultants	NAT ET	National E Tenders
	Between €200,000 and €5,382,000 Works	SUP	SupplyGov Arrangements
EU	Over €215,000 for Goods & Services & Consultants	EUOJ	Official Journal of the EU tender
	Over €5,382,000 for Works	OGP	Office of Government Procurement Arrangement
Not Req	Office of Government Procurement Arrangement	NOTREQ	Not Required
<p><b>Note 1:</b> The effect of the Aggregation Rule is that if there are lots of separate contracts for the same type of goods/services/works which in the aggregate exceed the relevant threshold then those individual contracts still need to be advertised even though individually they are below the threshold. This rule apply Authority-wide and not just to individual sections/departments .</p> <p><b>Note 2:</b> While a CE Order is required for the appointment of ALL Consultants, a Delegated Officer Order will suffice for values up to €2000 excl. VAT</p> <p><b>Note 3:</b> The EU thresholds for Goods, Services &amp; Works are subject to revision every two years (latest revision January 2022). This table will be updated to reflect the altered limits</p>			

## 2.4 Procurement Supply & Risk Analysis

Carlow County Council has recognised the risks associated with its procurement spend and has listed these in their Risk Register. The areas identified for risk assessment and mitigation solutions include legal, professional, regulatory, financial, contractual, economic, and technological. Risks may be associated, for example, with restrictive measures made at National or EU regulatory level<sup>14</sup>, of which the authority should be cognisant. The authority has assessed the probability of supplier failure and its impact on the organisation, particularly developing strategies to mitigate risk around critical contracts.

		Impact →				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
↑ Likelihood	Very Likely	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High	High
	Likely	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High
	Possible	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	Med Hi
	Unlikely	Low	Low Med	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi
	Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Low Med	Medium	Medium

### Supply & Risk Analysis – Buying from Non-EU Countries:

If the likely source of a procurement requirements is from a non-European Union country (including the UK)<sup>15</sup> there are a number of risks that procurers must familiarise themselves with.

Risks such as customs formalities, checks, and other regulatory requirements must be considered and measured. In monetary terms these may include duty, delivery, payment of VAT at the point of entry and possible exchange rate volatility. Care must be taken when preparing procurement plans, particularly undertakings for goods/supplies, to ensure the buyer specifies who is responsible for paying for and managing the shipment, insurance, documentation, customs clearance, and other logistical activities.

## 3. Procurement Plan Objectives

### 3.1 Obtain Value for Money

Value for money is a core principle of public procurement. Price is not always the sole factor when assessing value for money. The process requires an analysis of all relevant cost *and* benefits for proposal. One of the fundamental objectives of Carlow County Council’s procurement plan is to strive to achieve value for money at every opportunity, delivering savings and benefits through reducing costs.

The Authority will maximise efficiency and collaboration, including the use of national & regional arrangements, when possible, to ensure sustainable improvements. Buyers will consider standardising and aggregating demand to obtain volume savings.

Proactive involvement by the ‘project owner’ through monitoring, evaluation, reporting and in the ongoing management of a contract is *essential* to maximising value for money.

<sup>14</sup> Information Note on Russian Sanctions (with reference to EU2022/576), Office of Government Procurement (OGP)

<sup>15</sup> Carlow County Council, Procurement Information Note – Buying from Non-European Union Countries

### 3.2 Ensure Compliance

The purpose of this objective is to ensure that all procurement carried out by the Authority is in accordance with appropriate Local, National & EU Procurement Directives, Guidelines, Policies and Procedures. Carlow County Council has created a document library of policies, procedures, and guidance notes to ensure that staff have access to all current and relevant procurement documentation. Standard templates documents and correspondence to be used in the procurement process are available in the procurement library. All procurement related circulars, information notes and details on national arrangements will be updated regularly.

Independent assessment of compliance with procurement rules shall be carried out by the internal and or external audit function. Procurement staff will observe the requirement of the General Data Protection Regulation <sup>16</sup>in all their procurement processes. The procurement unit has in place a Privacy Policy to assist with observation of this regulation.

### 3.3 Strengthen the Procurement Function & Reinforce Governance

Another essential objective is to build the organisational capacity to strategically manage procurement and reinforce governance. The Council re-establish the Procurement Steering Committee to improve strategic support and direction for the procurement function. This steering committee, drawn from a cross-functional representatives, have schedule quarterly meeting to discuss and deliberate on procurement related matters.

Due to the dynamic nature of procurement law and practices it is vital that up-to-date information is available to staff. Carlow County Council's procurement function will continue to communicate best procurement practices and procedures through use of the Council's intranet (SharePoint). These will include regularly updated details of arrangements available to the Authority from Central Procurement Bodies (as listed in Section 1.3 of this document).

Standardised procurement documents for use in the tendering process will be further developed and be available to all staff associated with the function. Procurement processes and procedures will continue to be updated and strengthened.

Despite the decentralised nature of procurement in the authority, continual training will be required for staff to ensure they stay up to date with procurement developments. This guidance will be delivered via a mix of local and externally provided training.

### 3.4 Encourage Business Engagement

This procurement objective will strive to encourage business engagement and, in particular, assist with developing access for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to Carlow County Councils' public procurement competitions. Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are an important part of the national economy and access to public procurement competitions can be an important source of business to SMEs. The national circular 05/2023<sup>17</sup> outlines various initiatives to assist with great participation of SMEs in public procurement. The measures include:

- Encourage buyers to complete market analysis and examine capabilities of SMEs.
- Use of Preliminary Market Consultations (PMC), Expressions of Interest (EoI), when possible.
- Consideration be given to of subdivision of contracts into Lots, without compromising efficiency and value for money.
- Encouraging consortium bids for competitions

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<sup>16</sup> Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (2016)

<sup>17</sup> Circular 05/23: Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement (2023)

- Consideration to greater use of open tendering procedure.
- Requesting turnover and insurance requirements which are proportionate and reasonable, in the context of competitions.
- Support capacity building and encourage innovation in competitions.

Carlow County Council will promote observant of Circular 05/23 in all competitive processes by setting out requirement, when possible, in terms of deliverables that encourage SMEs.

### 3.5 Promoting the use of Environmental, Social Consideration & Sustainability

As a signatory of the Climate Action Charter for Local Authorities<sup>18</sup> Carlow County Council has already committed to implementing a green public procurement strategy and procedures across all business areas. Carlow County Council will continue to encourage the use of criteria, where possible, that promote sustainable procurement through the inclusion of environmental and social criteria in the procurement of goods, services and works.

Green Public Procurement is a process where public authorities seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function which would otherwise be procured.

Social inclusion is a process where public authorities seek to include social consideration into their procurement process. Examples of social considerations include, but are not limited to, employment and training opportunities for disadvantaged groups, disability access, promoting social inclusion and social enterprises, and the protection of the environment and combating climate change. These also include national or EU social and labour rules, collective agreements, and/or international law.

Sustainability is a process by which public authorities seek to achieve the appropriate balance between the three pillars of sustainable development - economic, social, and environmental – when procuring goods, services or works at all stages of the project.

The authority is cognisant of national guidelines<sup>19</sup> on prompting the use of Environmental and Social Consideration; the Information Note on Incorporating Social Inclusion into Public Procurement<sup>20</sup>; the Green Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector<sup>21</sup> from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications', Climate Action Plan 2023<sup>22</sup> and will ensure that these documents are readily available to all staff involved in Carlow County Council's procurement processes.

### 3.6 Maximise Contract Performance

The purpose of this goal is to ensure that contract performance is regularly checked. Areas to be monitored are value for money; compliance with original competition ask, including requesting annual updates on tax or insurance certification requirements of the competition; consider ongoing issues and seek to resolve these with the service provider, and gathering information that will inform any future contracts. As previously cited, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of contracts is an important element in achieving values for money outcomes.

Carlow County Council has now developed a central register of all contracts for goods, services and works. This will inform the Authority of what contract are in place, what contract are due to expire and where further arrangements may be required. This register will assist with developing a multi-annual procurement plan (MAPP), ensuring the timely review of existing arrangements and

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<sup>18</sup> Climate Action Charter for Local Authorities, Dept. Environment, Climate, & Communications (2019)

<sup>19</sup> Circular 20/2019: Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement (2019)

<sup>20</sup> Incorporating Social Considerations into Public Procurement – information note, Office of Government Procurement (2018)

<sup>21</sup> Green Procurement – Guidance for the Public Sector, Environmental Protection Agency (2021)

<sup>22</sup> Climate Action Plan 2023, Changing Ireland for the Better, Department of Environment, Climate, & Communications (2023)

development of necessary replacement competitions. Consideration will be given to developing or aligning policies, related to specific contracts, that improve or change norms and lead to improved contract delivery and performance.

### 3.7 Internal & External Communications

Carlow County Council’s procurement function will strive to improve both internal and external communications. Internally, this will see the continued development of a dedicated space on the authority’s intranet. A library of all appropriate and necessary guides, templates, and instruction are currently available to staff. As part of the internal communication all changes/revisions will be advised via circulars email, to all staff. Any major revisions will be presented to all staff operating in a procurement function, as part of their daily role. The procurement function will encourage staff to think ‘cross-functionality’ when planning any new procurement competition.

As part of continued external communications the procurement unit will further engage with the supplier community and, in particular SMEs. The procurement unit will partake, with authority stakeholders and external bodies, in capacity building for businesses seeking opportunity in public procurement competitions.

## 4. Procurement Goals & Actions 2023-2025

### 4.1 Corporate Procurement Plan - Goals & Actions Table

Corporate Procurement Plan – Goals and Actions - 2023-2025				
	Goal	Action	Timescale	Assigned to:
1	<b>Compliance &amp; Governance</b>			
	Review and redevelop Carlow County Council’s procurement policy and procedures	Carry out a review of current procurement policy and procedures. Redevelop the rules and guidance that reflect the dynamic nature of procurement law and practices	Q1 & 2 2023	Procurement Officer
	Ensure Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Data Protection are observed by all sourcing and evaluation teams, to strengthen procurement compliance	The Authority previously developed a Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Data Protection Undertaking Form to be used by <i>all</i> Sourcing and Evaluation Teams. Procurers will be reminded, throughout all engagements, the necessity for this undertaking to be completed for <i>all</i> competitions	2023 and Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Non-compliant procurement – Legal Services	Previous audit report highlighted that the authority was non-compliant in legal services spend. A cross function group will be established by the procurement unit to explore and develop a compliant procurement process for this area	Q4 2023	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
	Non-compliant procurement – Emergency Accommodation	Audit reports highlighted emergency accommodation as an area where no tender process had been undertaken but acknowledged that the spending is of an emergency nature. The procurement unit will continue to liaise with the Housing Department to explore compliant procurement options	Q3 2023 & Teem of Plan	Housing Department & Procurement Officer

	Non-compliant procurement - Others	Continue to monitor, through requisition approvals and audit reports, areas of non-compliance. These areas will be discussed with the relevant section/department to ensure plans for an appropriate compliant arrangement are put in place	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
<b>2</b>	<b>Risk Management</b>			
	Be aware of the risk associated with the Carlow County Council's procurement	Identify risks in all procurement spend and develop mitigation solutions. Details of all risks associated with procurement will be updated in the authority's risk register	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
	Be aware of the risks associated with buying from non-EU countries	The Procurement Unit will continue to liaise and advise procurers when potential suppliers of supplies or services are from a non-EU country (incl. UK).	Q3, Q4 2023 & Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
	Review procurement structures and activities	Ongoing reviews of the Council's procurement activities and structures will determine what if any of these should be revised or how they can be strengthened to mitigate risk	2023 and Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
<b>3</b>	<b>Compliant Sourcing</b>			
	Provide procurement information, advice, and support to the staff of Carlow County Council	Ensure that all staff operating in a procurement function are completely aware of the council's policy for procurement; ensure that the resources library for procurement and training modules is available to all staff.	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Ensure all staff are aware and have access to the authority's Thresholds and associated Procurement Procedures	Upload the up-to-date threshold table and the associated procurement procedures to the Procurement Library on SharePoint	Q3 2023 & Term of the Plan	Procurement Officer

	Develop a library of procurement related documents	Ensure that all pertinent and up-to-date procurement document are assembled and are made available to staff involved in any procurement role, via the procurement intranet on SharePoint	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Promote electronic procurement and record keeping for all procurement activities	While electronic submission of tender documents, and requests to participate in competitions has been mandatory since October 2018 for all above threshold competitions, it is important that ALL procurement transactions are performed electronically. During the term of this plan the authority will mandate the use of electronic submission in all procurement activities (including lower value quotes) and encourage electronic record keeping in all competitions	2023 & Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
<b>4</b>	<b>Procurement Communications</b>			
	Encourage business engagement in all public procurement competition undertaken by Carlow County Council	In accordance with the Principle of Transparency, the authority will publish sufficiently accessible advertisement prior to award of the contract, in line with Carlow County Council’s threshold and procurement procedures.	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
	Develop access for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to Carlow County Council’s procurement competitions	In line with National Circular 05/2023, <i>‘Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement’</i> , Carlow County Council will promote, where possible, the setting of requirements in terms of deliverables that encourage SMEs to partake in procurement competitions	Term of Plan	Budget Holders



	Supporting procurement knowledge capacity building	Partake with authority stakeholders and external bodies, in capacity building of businesses. Such support will encourage greater participation in public procurement competitions	2023	Local Authority Stakeholders & External Training Bodies & Procurement Officer
	Liaise with the Procurement Steering Committee	Quarterly meeting will be organised with the Procurement Steering Group to assist with discussion on strategic procurement projects	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Liaise with Internal and External Audit functions	Liaise with the internal and external auditors to reflect their observations for procurement procedural changes	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Publish this Corporate Procurement Plan, ensuring it is accessible to the citizens of Carlow and to all staff members of Carlow County Council	This corporate procurement plan will be published on the authority's website to make it publicly accessible. The plan will also be distributed to all staff and published on the intranet procurement library	Q3 2023	IT Unit and Procurement Officer
<b>5</b>	<b>Procurement Training</b>			
	Develop staff training modules for procurement	Develop and deliver internal training modules on various topics for all staff associated with a procurement function	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Develop procurement induction information guide for new staff	Develop ' <i>Essential Quick Guide to Procurement in Carlow County Council</i> ' for distribution to all new staff	Q4 2023 and Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Ensure that essential guidance & competition templates for procurement are available	Upload that the necessary public procurement guidelines; local policies; up-to-date goods and services CfT and contract templates to the authority's procurement intranet page	Q3 2023 & Term of Plan	Procurement Officer

	Encourage and support the use of environmental, social inclusion and sustainability in the procurement of goods, services and works	Promote and encourage the use of criteria, where possible, that promotes environmental, social inclusion and sustainability in procurement	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer & Budget Holder
	Create an enhanced awareness of environmental, social consideration and sustainability with all staff engaged in the procurement function	Continue to increase awareness by providing all the appropriate public policy, national guidelines and related GPP website, information notes on this area, and access to online services available, via the procurement intranet library	2023 & Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Create and make available standard template documents for various stages of procurement activities	Continued development and updating of standard templates for compliance checking, evaluation note taking, final evaluation reports, outcome letters, checklists and other competition templates that will assist with the procurement function	2023 & Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
<b>6</b>	<b>Spend Analysis</b>			
	Monitor and measure all purchasing activity in Carlow County Council	Ongoing examination of spending data of the authority to inform future procurement plans and to address non-compliant spend	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Evaluation of spend on Low Value Purchase Cards (LVPC)	Liaise with the finance personnel that perform regular analysis of the spending from Low Value Purchase Cards. This will be done to ensure procurement regulatory compliance	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
<b>7</b>	<b>Value for Money</b>			
	Encourage use of National & Regional arrangements that have standardised and aggregated demand to maximise efficiency	Ensure that details of all central procurement bodies' arrangements are readily available to all staff involved in developing procurement sourcing arrangements.	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer

	Develop a culture within the organisation that acknowledges and respects the requirement to spend money wisely	Encourage staff to strive to achieve value for money at every opportunity. This consists of all spending, including unspent budget allocation.	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
	Develop a strategic approach to procurement by working with directorates and sections	Identify strategic procurement opportunities, through working with all stakeholders, to identify areas that could generate efficiencies and achieve value for money outcomes for the authority.	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer
<b>8</b>	<b>Procurement Operations</b>			
	Continued maintenance of the procurement intranet page	Ensure that the procurement intranet page is a space that staff will automatically reference, when involved in planning procurement competition	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Maintain a central register of all contracts and arrangements	Continue to develop and maintain a central register for all contracts for goods services and works.	Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Develop a Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP)	From the central contract register the authority will create a Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP). This will ensure the timely reviews of existing arrangement and the planning of future procurement activity	2023 & Term of Plan	Procurement Officer
	Considerations of collaboration for procurement	The authority will seek to engage with Regional and National collaboration procurement projects, when possible	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer

9	Contract Management			
	Encourage and advise on measurement of contract performance	Liaise with relevant departments, sections, end-users, and project owners, when requested, to offer advice and assistance on measuring contract performance. Such processes allow for measurement of value for money performance and checking that the terms of the competition are adhered to.	Term of Plan	Project Owners and End-Users
	Record contract performance	Develop, with the relevant sections and contract owners, systems for recording contract performance. The information gathered can then be used to inform future competitions	Term of Plan	Budget Holders & Procurement Officer

#### 4.2 Measurement of Results

The Procurement Unit has identified indicators of success that can be used to inform future procurement. Annual indicators will be assembled, include measuring the number of centralised arrangements being used (OGP, LGOPC, etc.) by the Authority; recording the number of contracts advertised on eTenders annually; and the number of SMEs participating in all competitions.

#### 4.3 Continuous Improvement

The Procurement Function has identified mechanisms to capture continuous improvements including feedback to and from the Procurement Steering Committee and Audit Committee; developing a schedule to review existing procurement document, considering improvements, updates, or additions; examining the analysis of LVP Cards usage, to confirm if the Authority has a procurement arrangement deficit.

#### 4.4 Governance & Approval

This Corporate Procurement Plan was approved by the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

#### 4.5 Implementation and Review

The procurement function will ensure this plan is implemented. The plan will be circulated throughout the organisation, ensuring all staff involved in any procurement activity are aware of the details of this new corporate procurement plan. Once adopted, this plan will be published on the Authorities website.

## 5.0 Glossary of Terms

CPB	Central Procurement Body
CPP	Corporate Procurement Plan
CWMF	Capital Works Management Framework
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate,& Communications
DPS	Dynamic Purchasing System
EEC	European Economic Community
Eoi	Expression of Interest
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPS	Education Procurement Services
EU	European Union
FMS	Financial Management System
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LGOPC	Local Government Operational Procurement Centre
LGSPC	Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre
LVPC	Low Value Purchasing Card
MAPP	Multi-Annual Procurement Plan
NPPF	National Procurement Policy Framework
OGP	Office of Government Procurement
PIN	Prior Information Notice
RFI	Request for Information
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
UK	United Kingdom
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## 6.0 References

2012/C326/01 Consolidated Versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Brexit and Public Procurement – Information Note, Office of Government Procurement – OGP (2019).  
Climate Action Plan 2019 to Tackle Climate Breakdown, Department of Communication, Climate Action & Environment (2019).

Directive 2007/66/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 with regard to improving the effectiveness of review procedures concerning the award of public contracts.

Directive 2014/23/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the award of Concession Contracts.

Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on Public Procurement.

Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport, and postal services sectors.

Green Procurement – Guidance for the Public Sector, Environmental Protection Agency - EPA (2004).  
Incorporating Social Considerations into Public Procurement - Information Note, Office of Government Procurement – OGP (2018).

National Public Procurement Policy Framework, Office of Government Procurement - OGP (2019).  
(available at <https://ogp.gov.ie/national-public-procurement-policy-framework>).

S.I. No. 130 of 2010 - European Communities (Public Authorities' Contracts) (Review Procedures) Regulations 2010, *as amended by* S.I. No. 192 of 2015 The European Communities (Public Authorities' Contracts) (Review Mechanism) (Amendment) Regulation, (2015).

S.I. No. 203 of 2017 - European Union (Award of Concession Contracts) Regulations (2017).

S.I. No. 284 of 2016 - European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts) Regulations (2016).

S.I. No. 286 of 2016 - European Union (Award of Contracts by Utility Undertakings) Regulations (2016).