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## FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to provide a foreword for this Commissioning and Procurement Strategy which represents a new approach to the challenge of delivering services to our residents.

This Council has always valued the procurement process, not only in terms of a process that needs to be followed, but also as a mechanism for ensuring that quality and value for money can be delivered in an increasingly challenging economic climate.

In recent years our strategy has focussed on joint partnership work to deliver service improvements and economies of scale not just for Maidstone but also for our neighbouring boroughs with whom we now work more closely, particularly on transactional services.

This new strategy builds upon the achievements of previous procurement strategies and, more importantly, sets out a framework for the Council's approach to commissioning and procurement, that will enable us to understand better the needs of residents and to deliver services that will improve outcomes and meet our priorities.

Planned and skilful commissioning will embrace different models of delivery, such as social enterprise, voluntary organisations and labour mutuals. Whilst acknowledging that there will be a greater risk in this approach, which will require management, there will also be potentially greater rewards through their contribution to social value.

In preparing this strategy, we have also taken the opportunity to reflect on some of our recent successes and to learn from our experience with other authorities and the private sector to help guide us through the challenges expected over the next few years.

I am confident that this strategy will ensure we continue to be fair and transparent, provide opportunities for a wide range of providers, ensure value for money and deliver on our priorities.

Cllr Brian Moss  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Services

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Previous procurement strategies have supported the Council's Strategic Plan vision and objectives and have ensured that procurement activities have been mainly focused on achieving value for money. Having a dedicated team of procurement professionals to lead and advise on the procurement of the Council's goods and services has been a key element in its success. Procurement throughout local government has moved forward considerably over recent years and Maidstone has developed practices and protocols to increase participation in the supply market wherever possible to improve outcomes for service users at an affordable price.

There is now recognition that, with the emphasis in the Strategic Plan on the development of a commissioning approach to services, and the introduction of the Social Value Act and the Localism Act, a more far reaching "Commissioning and Procurement" strategy is required.

Broadly, commissioning is a process that sets out to ensure that an organisation spends its money in the most effective way to secure the best outcomes for the local community. No longer is value for money the key objective, it is now more about understanding the needs of the community, balancing those needs with the available resources and tailoring the services to meet the intended and required outcomes.

Adopting a commissioning approach to services, for some services, will require a new mindset and will not happen overnight. There will also be some services for whom this will have a larger impact and it is those areas that will need to be identified and prioritised. The existing cycle of outsourced contracts and partnerships will also need to be reviewed according to the scheduled renewal dates.

This strategy will set out the actions we need to take over the next three years in order to develop an excellence in commissioning and procurement. Key actions will be to:

- Identify, understand and challenge needs and priorities

- Challenge existing provision and review alternative service delivery models
- Decommission services where appropriate
- Focus on outcomes
- Understand the market and encourage a diversity of providers
- Review the strengths and performance of providers and measure the outcomes
- Promote social value and sustainable procurement

## 2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The introduction of the Community Right to Challenge and Social Value legislation means that the Council needs to explore ways to ensure that smaller and less well established organisations are not disadvantaged. This will include reviewing financial checks, re-assessing risk criteria and reviewing the requirements at pre-qualification questionnaire and final submission stages.

### **2012 - Localism (Community Rights) Act**

Proactive strategy adopted in response to the Community Right to Challenge. Presentation to Kent Business to Business conference to advise on contract opportunities to the wider business community.

### **2012 – Public Services (Social Value) Act**

This is the most significant development in the trend towards embedding social value in procurement. For the first time, public bodies are required to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

In 2011 the European Commission published its four year strategy. Its guidance stated that public sector entities should have processes in place to integrate social, environmental, economic, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their core strategy and business operations. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, requires public bodies to “seek to maximise the additional benefit that can be created by procuring or commissioning goods and services above and beyond the benefit of merely

the goods and services themselves”.

Social Value, as defined by The Sustainable Procurement Task Force” is the process whereby organisations meet their need for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

This requires the Council to understand:

- How what is being commissioned and procured might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area in which it primarily delivers services and exercises its functions
- How, in conducting the procurement process, it might act with a view to securing that improvement (in compliance with the law).

In conjunction with other recent legislation, for example, The Community Right to Challenge, there are therefore compelling local, social and legislative reasons to introduce actions as part of the commissioning and procurement cycles that will stimulate the local economy and empower local residents, and voluntary and community groups to play a part in the shaping of service provision as well as supporting the Council’s priorities.

The Council has already developed a strategy in response to the Community Right to Challenge which includes the publication of:

- Expression of Interest calendars for in-house and outsourced services
- Guidance notes for those voluntary or community bodies considering making an expression of interest to provide services
- Expression of Interest pro-forma for relevant bodies wishing to provide services

Further information on all of the above is available by following the link: [HTTP://www.maidstone.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/community\\_right\\_to\\_challenge.aspx](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_right_to_challenge.aspx)

The Council has a good track record in promoting many of these issues through the way it has procured goods, services and construction, but the inclusion of social value considerations in specifications and contract award decision making as well as the potential engagement with a new breed of bidding entities, such as voluntary, community or charitable bodies, will require the development of new output and assessment methodologies. For example, the current and well established council practices requiring supplier bank references and previous experience based references will need to be reviewed, and the associated risks reviewed.

During the period of this strategy a number of existing contracts are due for review and renewal. The challenge for the Council will be to consider, how what is proposed to be commissioned might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area and how, in securing the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

The Council has identified three themes to be taken into account during the commissioning and procurement process. The themes and practical examples are outlined below:

<b>Social Value Theme</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Impact on local economy	Requirements to advertise employment opportunities locally Skills training/apprenticeships Offering work placements to school children and young adults Use of local subcontractors/suppliers
Contributing to Maidstone as a decent place to live (Social)	Relevant contractor employees being paid at least the living wage (currently £7.49) Encouraging Community Engagement Improved health and well-being of local people
Environmental	Requirement to use low emission vehicles Reduce, reuse & recycle Helping to achieve a high quality physical environment

### 3. LOCAL CONTEXT

Maidstone Borough is considered a good place to live and work with high rates of employment, relatively low levels of adults claiming incapacity benefits and a higher proportion of residents who have a degree than the South East average. Larger numbers of people commute into than out of the Borough. The Borough has a very mixed business sector with large numbers of small and medium size businesses with particular strengths in professional services (law and accountancy) and construction. There is a growing media industry led by Maidstone Studios and the Kent Messenger Group. Maidstone has an extensive further education campus (Mid Kent College) and a growing higher education offer with both the University for the Creative Arts and Mid Kent College seeking to increase their range of courses and facilities. Residents living in the Borough have relatively high wages (although many higher earners commute out of the Borough to achieve these).

Maidstone came out as the top destination for business in the 2010 study of locations for business in Kent.

Maidstone's Local Strategic Partnership has carried out work in 2010 looking at how public money is spent locally. They have identified that £602 million has been spent in Maidstone in 2010 by various bodies including Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council, the Police and the local Primary Care Trust. Just over 35% of the money is spent on health and social well-being, nearly 17% is spent on education and 15% on housing.

#### **Maidstone Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020:**

The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is the topmost level of policymaking in the Council. Our SCS was published in April 2009, and it contains the following vision and long term objectives for the Borough agreed with our partners:

***"We want Maidstone Borough to be a vibrant, prosperous 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy,***



***excellent environment with high quality education and employment where all people can realise their aspirations”.***

#### **4. THE CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

The Council has identified the following three priorities and seven outcomes for Maidstone over the next four years:

1. For Maidstone to have a growing economy. In essence Maidstone will be a good place to work and to do business. The economy will continue to grow with a range of employment and business opportunities.
  - A transport network that supports the local economy
  - A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets, to meet the demands of the local economy
  
2. For Maidstone to be a decent place to live. Maidstone already has a clean, attractive environment. We wish to maintain this and ensure that proper respect is paid to its diverse and valuable assets so that Maidstone is a place where people want to live.
  - Decent affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.
  - Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough.
  - Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are.
  
3. Corporate and Customer Excellence. The Council will have a productive workforce with people in the right place at the right time, delivering cost effective services. Services will be affordable, delivered on time and to agreed standards in an accessible way.
  - Customer focused services with which residents are satisfied
  - Effective, cost efficient services are delivered across the borough

An effective commissioning and procurement strategy is a key element in achieving the required outcomes.

The Council is also in the early stages of implementing its commercialisation project, which will involve selling services in competition with the private sector. This will require new skills, and the knowledge and skills developed over the last ten years of successful procurement and understanding of supply chains will play a key part in the preparation of bids.

## **5. PROCUREMENT "THE JOURNEY SO FAR"**

Listed below are some of the successful and significant procurement projects, and verified savings, during the last three years run by the procurement team and reviewing procurement milestones that have determined and shaped service provision in the past:

**CCTV Monitoring** – introduced new ways of working, new technologies and savings in the capital budget,

**Civil Parking Enforcement** – a joint project with Swale Borough Council that provided savings to Maidstone of £132,000,

**Mid Kent Joint Waste Project** – a joint project with Swale and Ashford Borough Councils, and Kent County Council using the Competitive Dialogue Process which will deliver £1million revenue savings per annum for Maidstone during the life of the contract,

**Tunbridge Wells and Swale Councils' Banking Services** – A direct commission resulting in over £370,000 savings for the two councils,

**Cash Collection Services** – A significant role in bringing together 12 Kent authorities in a joint tendering exercise which generated savings through economies of scale,

**Mote Park Development** – A series of lottery funded projects which

resulted in the most significant and visible enhancements to the parks and open spaces of Maidstone since the Millennium River Park project,

**Introduction of “e – Tendering tool”** – A project led by Maidstone, with Swale and Tunbridge Wells Councils to introduce technology to develop best practice procurement techniques,

**Training** – Procurement training of managers on smaller scale projects and initiatives on how to secure better value for money.

Ever changing and more complex government legislation, advice and guidance and the need to balance these with the Council’s evolving aims, objectives and priorities has required constant development of procurement strategies, practices and policies. Significant milestones, and the Council’s strategic responses include:

**2002 – Byatt report**

Procurement section created to develop strategy, policy and procurement knowledge and skills,

**2003 – National Procurement Strategy**

Council’s strategy updated to incorporate key targets and objectives,

**2004 – Gershon report**

Beginning of joint procurement activities to improve procurement efficiencies and deliver further savings,

**2005 – Concordat for small and medium enterprises**

“How to do business with the council” produced. Current contracts and future opportunities published on Council website,

**2006 – Sustainable Procurement Task Force**

Principles of “whole life costing” and wider social and environmental benefits introduced,

**2007 – New Procurement Strategy**

Environmental performance of suppliers introduced, use of e-Procurement extended and partnership working developed,

### **2008 – Glover report**

Tender documentation and guidance simplified to encourage small businesses to engage with the council,

### **2009 – Contract Procedure Rules**

Contract Procedure Rules substantially overhauled increasing opportunity for more spend with local businesses. Purchasing guide for officers and members created,

### **2010 – Equalities Act**

Tender documentation updated. New e-tender system introduced,

### **2011 – MKIP Procurement Group**

First of many MKIP joint tender exercises undertaken; MKIP forward tender plan developed.

## **6. VALUE FOR MONEY**

***'Value for money' is a term used to assess whether or not an organisation has obtained the maximum benefit from the goods and services it both acquires and provides, within the resources available to it'***

Although the introduction suggested that value for money is no longer the key objective, it certainly remains one of the key objectives and needs to be embedded in how we address social value. We see "Value for Money" as the 'four Es' – economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

- Economy – careful use of resources to save expense, time or effort.
- Efficiency – delivering the same level of service for less cost, time or effort.
- Effectiveness – delivering a better service or getting an increased return for the same amount of expense, time or effort.

- Equity – the extent to which services are available to and reach all people that they are intended to – spending fairly. Some people may receive differing levels of service for reasons other than differences in their levels of need.

In developing the achievement of “Value for Money”, there are several ‘*Best Practice*’ steps that the Council will be following. Many of these are consistent with the commissioning approach to services.

**Clarification of service objectives** - We will strive to obtain a full understanding of service requirements and objectives, rather than making assumptions about their needs, thus maximising the chance of achieving the desired outcome without unnecessary expenditure and effort,

**Planning as an essential tool of a well managed process** - We will continue to engage with the service as early as possible to discuss service acquisition alternatives. Good planning minimises the risk of the procurement process failing to deliver the intended outcome, at the right time and at the right price,

**Openness and transparency of procurement process** - We will demonstrate a commitment to achieving propriety through properly documented plans, assessments and open processes involving all stakeholders. This is particularly important in an environment of growing accountability and responsibility and in our position as a receiver of public funds we have a special responsibility to operate honestly and fairly,

**Assessment of Risks** - We will discuss and assess risks with the service. All procurement activities have risks. For example, reputational risk, compliance and control risks, financial risk, health and safety risk and business risk. Understanding likelihood and potential is essential for value for money,

**Collaboration** - We will continue to encourage collaboration with partners and the wider public sector to deliver savings through economies of scale,



**Development of supply chain** - We will develop relationships with existing and potential suppliers to introduce more efficient ways of working, and innovative supplier payment measures to help deliver post contract savings opportunities for all parties,

**Whole life costs** - We will continue to develop the understanding and practical application of whole life costs.

## **7. FUTURE LEGISLATION**

Revised EU Procurement Directives, which will include a new directive for concessions as well as one for contracts, will be adopted as UK law by the 30 June 2014.

The procurement team will review the impact of the legislation and any amendments to our practices will be incorporated and training provided by procurement staff. Amendments required to the Contract Procedure Rules and Council Purchasing Guide will also be managed by the procurement team.

The following is a summary of the European Commission's proposed revisions to the EU Procurement Directives:

**Group structures** – Provision of examples of exemptions from tendering of contracts between contracting authorities and their subsidiaries; and specific authorisation of "shared services" agreements where two or more contracting authorities jointly control the subsidiary.

**Contract variations and Contractor insolvency** – Clarity will be provided through the inclusion of a list of changes categorised as "substantial" therefore requiring a tender process, and a list of changes that will not be regarded as "substantial" and therefore not requiring the need to re tender.

**Extension to the list of services subject to the full rules** – Full EU tendering procedures will be applied to the majority of services previously categorised within the "Part B" list. Services covered by the full scope of

the rules will now include security patrols and alarms, agency and temporary staff, travel arrangements and legal services. Broadly speaking only social services, education and leisure will fall outside this requirement.

**Division of contracts into lots** – The procurement of works, services and supplies above certain thresholds will require the authority to give reasons if the proposed contract is not split into lots. There will however, be provision for the authority to limit the number of lots that any tenderer can win.

**New rules affecting the prequalification of suppliers-** Various changes to simplify the requirements for suppliers to qualify for inclusion in tender lists, and limiting previously stipulated “onerous” requirements from contracting authorities. This is balanced however, with some increased flexibility for authorities over “selection” criteria, providing they are transparent and treat all bidders from different EU member states equally.

**Concessions** – Concession contracts will now be regulated. The new directive will cover both services and works concessions. It is likely a new simplified version of the “Open” competition will be made available for such contracts.

**Competitive procedure with negotiation** – Widespread criticism of inflexibility within EU rules particularly in respect of post tender negotiation, has led to the existing negotiated procedure being replaced by “Competitive procedure with negotiation”. This new procedure will be similar to competitive dialogue and can be used in similar circumstances. Other changes including tendering timescales, provisions for dealing with conflicts of interest between the tendering authority staff and contractors, and the requirement for each member state to set up an enforcement body are planned.

## **8. COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT – “THE BIGGER PICTURE”**

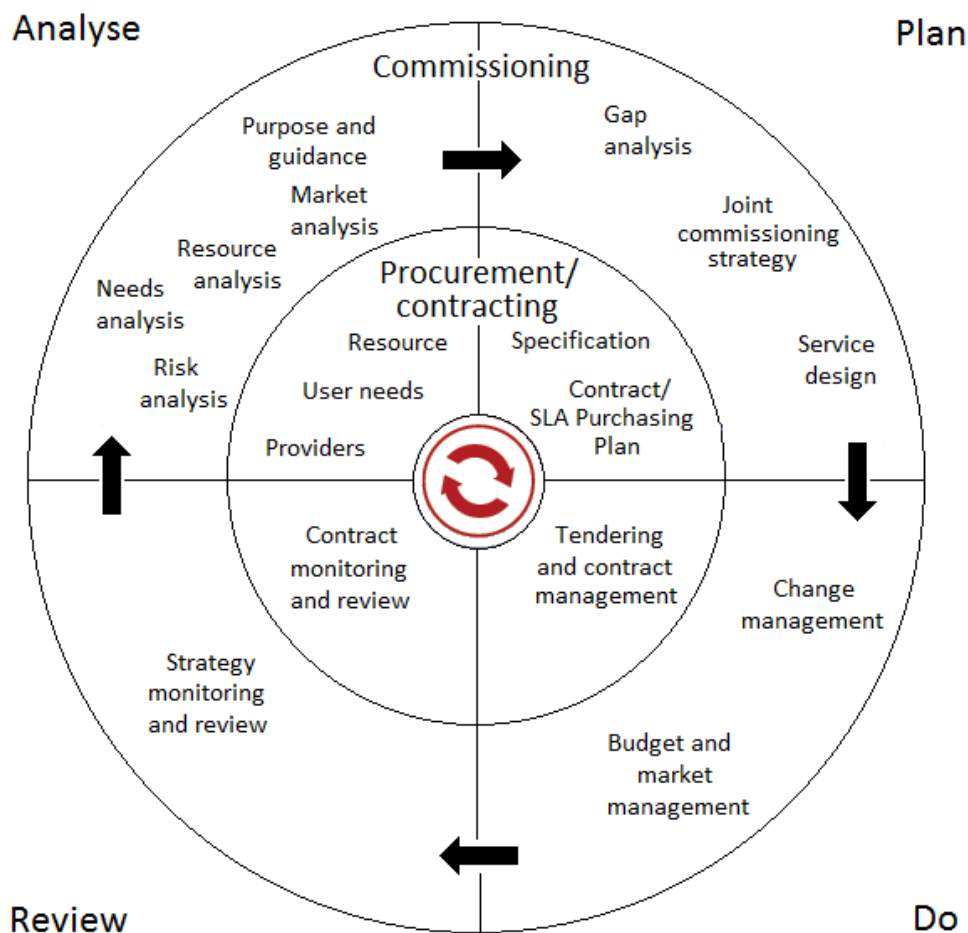
Previous procurement strategies have brought us a long way and frequently used phrases like “*Value for money*”, “*best value*” and “*continuous improvement*” are now embedded in all procurement activities as a result of the commitment by Members and officers.

Commissioning and procurement have, for the most part, been viewed previously as separate processes, and commissioning has sometimes been misunderstood as an alternative to procurement. Procurement of goods and services should more properly be viewed as part of a much bigger cycle.

Commissioning is the process for deciding how to use the total resources available in order to improve outcomes in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way. This can produce a number of results:

- Outsourcing via a commercial organisation
- Outsourcing to a community group
- Continuing with in-house delivery
- Delivering in partnership
- Discontinuing the service

However, in order to determine whether procurement itself is undertaken and to optimise the benefits from that procurement exercise the “bigger picture” of the Commissioning and Procurement cycle needs to be understood. The cycle is outlined in the following diagram:



Effective commissioning and procurement forms a continuous cycle of action and improvement, from identification of need through to learning from experience and review of delivery and achievement of outcomes. The stages are inter-dependent, with each stage building on the previous one.

**Analyse** – This involves reviewing the current service with providers and users to gain a greater understanding of the service and user needs, looking at national and local strategy and policies, finding out whether it is mandatory or discretionary, and how it interacts with other services. This may lead to the decommissioning of a service.

**Plan** – This will determine what resources are available and those needed to satisfy the identified needs and enable the formulation of a service specification.

**Do** – This determines how the service will be delivered, either through a procurement route, in-house delivery or in partnership.

**Review** – This involves monitoring the service and its impact and analysing whether it is achieving the intended outcome.

Effective commissioning and procurement are important because the Council spends around £19-20m in delivery of its services and it is the Council's responsibility to use this money in the best possible way to achieve its objectives, especially given the challenges arising from the current financial environment. Commissioning enables a greater flexibility in the commitment of the Council's resources and provides the opportunity for a greater diversity of providers, but there will be a responsibility to ensure that organisations delivering goods and services are resilient and reliable and will be able to deliver at the right quality.

## **9. A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT**

Committing to a commissioning approach to the delivery of services requires the Council to establish a framework of principles to underpin our policies and procedures:

- We will base our approach to the commissioning and procurement of services on outcomes.
- We will understand the needs and priorities of users, now and in the future, to enable a clear specification of requirements.
- We will ensure that value for money and sustainable efficiencies will be the foundation of our solutions.
- We will involve providers and users in the planning, design, monitoring and evaluation of services.
- We will support a mixed economy of commissioned services.
- We will build the capacity of the local voluntary and community sector and small businesses to ensure they have equal opportunity to provide services.



- We will work with other commissioners where appropriate, either neighbouring or locally, to secure improved outcomes and value for money.

## **10. PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR THIS STRATEGY**

The introduction of commissioning into the Council's approach to services will not happen across the board overnight. For some services, commissioning will be more important than others. Equally, there will be some services which are already outsourced or delivered in partnership where end dates of the contracts will determine the timetable of commissioning. Challenges under the Right to Challenge may also have an influence on the commissioning timetable. All of this will enable a timetable for the commissioning of specific services to be established.

### **Priority one - For commissioning and social value to be embedded within the authority**

#### **Outcomes- what we plan to achieve**

- Cabinet, Corporate Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Unit Managers will understand and embrace the principals of commissioning and social value.
- Services will be commissioned where appropriate
- Social value is considered in service contracts.
- Heads of Service will include social value considerations in all relevant procurements and service planning.
- The Procurement Team and Heads of Service will collaborate with their peers on commissioning best practice and consider opportunities for joint contracts and procurement.
- We will develop and include community benefit clauses and key performance indicators into new contracts and incorporate the measurement of outcomes and "social value" into contract management.

**Priority two – To encourage and support the growth of local business, small and medium enterprises and third sector organisations**

**Outcomes – what we plan to achieve**

- The Procurement and Economic Development Teams will work together to improve access to contract opportunities and build greater understanding of council procurement processes among small business in Maidstone.
- The Procurement Team will encourage officers to break down larger contracts to more effectively match SME and Social Enterprise capability and capacity where appropriate.
- The Procurement Team and Heads of Service will work together to ensure that commissioning and procurement processes encourage a diverse supply base of local suppliers, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the voluntary and community sector including social enterprises.

**Priority three – To enable a greater diversity of service providers**

**Outcomes – what we want to achieve**

- We will establish new policies to assess the financial, health & safety and supply risks associated with the provision of goods, services and works by community groups, charities and social enterprises.

**Priority four – To reduce our carbon footprint**

**Outcomes – what we want to achieve**

- The Procurement Team will encourage officers to consider the costs and benefits of environmentally preferable goods/services as part of the “whole life costing” process.

## **11. EARLY PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COMMISSIONING**

A number of key contracts, set out below, are due for renewal over the next 18 months or so. Specific actions in connection with their procurement that will take forward the principles of commissioning and deliver enhanced social, economic or environmental outcomes are also set out:

### **Office Cleaning**

- Consider joint procurement project with MKIP Partner authorities.
- Work with service manager to consider how the local labour market and businesses could benefit from the proposed contract.
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products and equipment within service provision.

### **Buildings Maintenance**

- Review potential for joint procurement opportunity with MKIP Partner authorities.
- Consider pre tender market engagement exercise with potential suppliers.
- Encourage suppliers to engage in the adoption of more environmentally friendly working practices and product alternatives.
- Package the contract requirements to maximise the appeal to local and small & medium size enterprises.
- Encourage the client to develop the inclusion of social, economic and environmental factors into tender evaluation, contract conditions and contract management.

### **Provision of Bailiff Services to Maidstone/Swale/Tunbridge Wells**

- Review with client how the contract opportunity can be made attractive to the local supplier market.
- Recommend the creation of a framework order with access to an appropriate number of local suppliers.
- Engage with the joint council project team to build social, economic and environmental factors into the tender evaluation, contract conditions and contract management.

### **Provision of Park and Ride Bus Services**

- Recommend pre tender service user and supplier community engagement events.
- Ensure sustainability and social economic value is included within evaluation criteria at tender pre qualification and final bid stages.
- Engage with the client department to ensure the inclusion of sustainability factors within contract management key performance indicators.
- Ensure client understands the need to make provision for the collection of social value/cost benefit data of any contractual agreements.

### **Provision of external printing**

- Review with partnering authority the quality of print service provision during existing contract and create a plan to evaluate future supply options.
- Consider the creation of a framework order with a defined number of potential suppliers including those who can demonstrate added social economic value.
- Engage with the joint council project team to build social, economic and environmental factors into the tender qualitative assessment.
- Encourage the client to develop the inclusion of social economic value factors into contract management and key performance indicators.

## 12. ACTION PLAN

Link to Sustainable Community Strategy	Link to Corporate Priorities	Task	Comments	Target Completion	Resources
A vibrant prosperous 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy, excellent environment with high quality education and employment where all people can realise their aspirations.	Corporate and customer excellence.	Cabinet introduction to principles of Commissioning.	Briefing of Cabinet Members to be arranged.	Quarter 3 2013/14	Officer provided
	Corporate and customer excellence.	Heads of Service/ Service Managers Commissioning training.	Provision of training by Commissioning expert via existing local government expertise or outside training organisation.	Quarter 3 2013/14	Training budget of approx £2000 anticipated
	Corporate and customer excellence.	Heads of Service Peer Group established to develop and share best practice	Important for a clear Council wide strategic development of Commissioning led outcomes	Quarter 4 2013/14	Officer time
	Growing economy.	Develop improved relationship with local businesses to publicise council contract opportunities	Joint Economic Development and Procurement sections project	Quarter 1 2014/15	Officer time
	Growing economy. Decent place to live. Corporate and customer excellence.	Officer training (part 1) for contract procedure rule updates, social value, commissioning and whole life costing.	Procurement team to structure appropriate training using developing best practices	Quarter 1&2 2014/15	Officer time and/or small budget for external provision. (£1000)
	Corporate and customer excellence.	Update of Procurement documentation to include (Social value) community benefit clauses.	Part of ongoing development of Procurement best practice	Quarter 2 & 3 2014/15	Officer time.
	Growing economy.	Consider changes to contract procedure rules to improve diversification of supply base.	Establish working group representing legal, finance, audit and procurement to review and propose changes.	Quarter 2 & 3 2014/15	Officer time.
	Growing economy.	Officer training (part 2). Diversification of supply base.	Interim review of progress of Commissioning & Procurement purchasing, and advice on development of future practices	Quarter 4 2014/15	Officer time.