

**Portishead Town Council Staffing & Finance Committee Agenda item 12a:
Recommendation to approve the updated procurement process
Wednesday 24th November 2021**



It is recommended to review and approve the updated procurement process to improve the Council's efficiency and support local suppliers wherever possible, within the regulatory framework and best practice guidelines for the use of public funding.

This report has 3 other documents to consider:

12a(i) The draft Procurement Process:

- Setting out the suggested process, depending on procurement net value including authorisations and choice of procurement method.
- Also, outlining possible process exemptions and the method for dealing with these properly.

12a(ii) The draft Purchase Order Form, as referred in the Process diagram as the start of the procurement process.

12a(iii) The new Supplier Form for all potential suppliers to complete to capture and check details of all Council suppliers.

Supplier Framework:

The Council also recommends trialling a Supplier Framework procurement process. Again, this is a process used by many Councils to improve efficiency particularly as it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract suppliers to provide relatively small-scale piece-meal contracts or services. It is recommended to trial the process with legal services suppliers. Effectively, selected services contracts are only advertised and procured once, with all the proper checks made at the start, rather than each time a service is required.

In practical terms, the trial would include:

- Set out the range of predicted legal services requirements for the coming year e.g., advising on and drawing up property lease agreements; land registry activity; contract support, funding agreement checks and advice; etc.
- Estimate the number of contract opportunities available.
- Set out any supplier requirements e.g., industry specialists; a range of price options; locality radius; timescales; business types; insurances; etc. and set out the selection criteria.
- Advertise the full year of potential opportunities and criteria for suppliers to express an interest in joining the Framework and request details of their offers e.g., a menu of prices; available expertise; quality assurance; method statements; etc.
- Select a number of suppliers (public spending rules specify a minimum of 2 suppliers but the Council would aim for 3-4 to ensure a range of specialists) and invite to join the Supplier Framework as 'Call-Off Contracts'.
- As contract opportunities arise, approach the relevant suppliers on the Framework and offer the contract to the most appropriate / available supplier at the previously agreed terms.

The main rationale for recommending this process is that:

- All the procurement activity is front-loaded, so all the checks and balances are completed at the start of the year, saving time, adding efficiency and budgets can be planned.
- Suppliers should also be more willing and readily available to supply the Council if they can see a number of contract opportunities available, rather than smaller piecemeal contracts.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended to approve and adopt the updated procurement process as listed in this report and the following 3 report documents:
 - a. 12a(i) Draft Procurement Process
 - b. 12a(ii) Draft Purchase Order Template
 - c. 12a(iii) Draft New Supplier Form Template
2. It is also recommended to delegate authority to the Town Clerk (as Responsible Finance Officer) to initiate the trial Supplier Framework process as described, with Staffing & Finance Committee members overseeing the process.
3. If the trial Supplier Framework process is deemed an efficient success, it is recommended to authorise the Town Clerk to follow suit with other relevant contracts with Staffing & Finance Committee members overseeing the process.