

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
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**REPORT AUTHOR:** ALISON KIBBLEWHITE, ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT POLICY AND CONTRACT PROCEDURES

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Background Papers: Minutes and associated papers from meeting on Fire and Rescue Authority - Wednesday 6 November 2019

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Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	✓
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (procurement / purchasing)	✓
	New		

*Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.*

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## **PURPOSE:**

To provide an update on the progress of implementation and utilisation of the Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures which were presented to Members in November 2019.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Members acknowledge the contents of the paper and the progress made on implementing the policy and procedure.

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### 1. Background

1.1. The 2019/23 CRMP highlighted the requirement for BFRS to update our internal Procurement Strategy documents with a focus on:

- Leadership & Collaboration;
- Commercial Practice; and
- Social Value.

1.2. In November 2019, a revised Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures document was presented to Members and approved for implementation. The Policy was intended to be used as a reference document to guide service areas through the procurement process.

1.3. The policy was implemented following additional development of forms and templates to support the policy.

### 2. Review of implementation and usage

2.1. Service areas were provided with some initial training, February 2021 by the Procurement Manager, including training on procurement principles, legislation, tender/specification writing and contract management, and the range of new templates and forms were introduced. Soon after, the Procurement Manager who had written the policy and was responsible for publicising and promoting its use left the organisation, leaving the post vacant for a significant period of time and the team having to pick up the implementation of the policy.

2.2. A new Procurement Manager joined the Service in August 2021. During this time, feedback has been sought from service areas on the use of the new policy and process. Initial feedback on this has been that Policy document is that the documentation could be simplified for spend under £25,000 to be more agile and responsive, taking into consideration many suppliers are small enterprises. The procurement team would be involved to provide advice and guidance for the higher spend levels and therefore would be able to tailor advise and guide service areas appropriately in these instances.

### 3. Next Steps

3.1. In order to encourage utilisation and ensure compliance, it is felt a simplified version of the process should be issued to service areas. Information on the documentation must be easy to follow, concise and relevant to the procurement activity being carried out by the service areas (i.e. spend below £25,000), with the procurement team continuing to use the policy for higher spends.

3.2. The forms and templates issued shall also be reviewed to ensure that they are proportionate to the levels of spend.

3.3. Additional training and support shall be available to the service areas to allow teams to feel confident in understanding the processes and how to purchase requirements in a compliant way.

3.4. Feedback will regularly be sought from key users in service areas to ensure documentation remains user friendly.

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