

Making the Right Choice – Delivering a Successful Outcome

SKILLS FRAMEWORK FOR PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DEFINITIONS

Skill Levels

Awareness (yellow)	Limited awareness of issues; an ability to comply with rules and procedures.
Understanding (green)	Ability to understand the key issues and their implications for the local authority and able to ask relevant and constructive questions on the subject
Knowledge (blue)	Detailed knowledge of the subject and capable of providing guidance and advice
Expertise (red)	Extensive and substantial practical experience and applied knowledge of the subject

Roles

Head of Procurement	The professional head of the procurement function in a county or unitary authority (may be a chief officer and bear the title of director)
Principal Procurement Officer	A principal officer reporting to the Head of Procurement
Procurement Manager	The most senior procurement professional in a larger district or in a department of a county or unitary
Senior Procurement Officer	A senior officer within the structure managed by the Head of Procurement or Procurement Manager
Occasional Purchaser	An officer in a department involved intermittently or part-time in procurement or contract management (also referred to as a “part-time buyer”)

Administrative Officer

An administrative officer employed within the structure managed by the Head of Procurement or Procurement Manager

Note:

In a social services authority the care contracting team may be outside the corporate procurement function. Job titles would be different but the roles to be performed would be essentially the same with a specific focus on care contracts.

Similarly, property and construction (“estates”) procurement may be outside the remit of the corporate procurement function. Essentially, the same skill set is required with a specific focus on property and construction contracts.

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SKILLS	ROLES			
	Administrative Officer	Senior Procurement Officer	Principal Procurement Officer	Head of Procurement in a larger authority
		Occasional purchaser in a department	Procurement Manager in a smaller authority or in a department of a larger authority	
1. Procurement policy context - Local government policy environment ➤ Local democracy ➤ Best value and CPA/WPI ➤ Well-being power, community strategy and LSPs ➤ Local e-government ➤ Service strategy drivers in education, social care, housing, environment, transport, leisure and fire - Local government finance and accounting - Local government law - Public procurement law ➤ EC directives ➤ Non-commercial matters - Accountability, ethics and probity - Policy, strategy and procedures ➤ Procurement strategy ➤ Contract standing orders/financial regulations	Limited awareness of procurement policy context, implications and requirements. Compliance with administrative and procedural needs through adherence to pre-defined rules/procedures, under close supervision.	Awareness of procurement context and associated implications. Compliance with pre-determined rules, accompanied by an understanding of the risk of non-compliance. Through experience has the knowledge and understanding of when to seek advice.	Understands procurement policy context, able to comply with rules through knowledge and experience. Understands risks of non-compliance. Able to review compliance options and challenge, and to recommend the preferred approach. Has the knowledge and ability to provide sound advice. Knows when to seek advice and assistance.	Understands procurement policy context, and the rationale that underpins it. Totally familiar with compliance rules, is seen as a valued source of advice on compliance options/risk of non-compliance. Has the ability to contribute to the further development of policy in this area.

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➤ Procurement procedures • Sustainable development ➤ Economic development (SMEs, social enterprise) ➤ Environment ➤ Social issues • Fair employment, workforce issues and equalities • Role of ODPM/NAFW, OGC, Audit Commission and central bodies				
2. Strategic awareness • Portfolio analysis and strategy • Member and stakeholder engagement • Procurement planning • Risk management • Options appraisal and the business case • Procurement strategies • Project management and cross-functional teams • Supplier management and development • Supply chain management • Collaborative procurement • Sustainable procurement	Limited awareness of strategic issues. Involvement in supporting or administrative capacity only, under close supervision.	Awareness of strategic issues, and ability to identify circumstances where value and risk require a strategic approach to be taken. Enough experience of strategic procurement to know when to seek advice. Aware of strategic importance of sustainable procurement and electronic commerce.	Experience of developing corporate procurement strategy. Experience of operating on strategic projects as part of cross-functional teams. Able to draw up business cases and project plans, able to manage risk. Able to identify differing procurement strategies and to recommend preferred option. Experience of supplier management. Knowledge of sustainable procurement and electronic commerce solutions.	Leads development of corporate procurement strategy. Through knowledge and skills is able to play a leading role in cross-functional teams handling strategic procurements. Able to manage all aspects of projects from business case through to delivery. Able to identify and implement appropriate contracting strategies. Actively manages relationships with key suppliers. Leads implementation of electronic commerce. Champions sustainable procurement and mainstreams into decision-making. Interfaces with elected members and provides procurement advice to them.

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- Electronic commerce - Performance measurement and benchmarking				
3. Markets - Market knowledge - Product knowledge - Commercial focus	Awareness of markets as a source of supply, but no detailed market/product knowledge, with limited commercial focus. Administrative/supporting involvement only under close supervision.	Basic knowledge of markets and products, with ability to apply basic procurement processes in search of best value. Some commercial focus, with enough experience to know when to seek advice.	Thorough experience and knowledge of specific markets, with the ability to exploit them through application of well developed procurement skills. Commercially aware and credible internally and externally.	Skilled and experienced in market exploitation. Able to identify appropriate tactics dependent on supplier position in the market. Very focussed commercially, very credible externally.
4. Processes - Service need - Stakeholders - Planning - Scoping - Options appraisal and the business case - Market sounding - Procurement strategy - Specifications - Forms of contract, framework agreements - Terms and conditions - Contract law	Limited awareness of procurement processes. Involvement in supporting/administrative capacity, in line with pre-determined rules and under close supervision.	Able to apply basic procurement processes to routine procurement situations. Some experience of negotiation, but requires support. Experienced enough to know when to seek help or advice.	Familiar and comfortable with all aspects of procurement processes. Able to provide advice on all types of specifications, and to take the lead on procurement aspects as part of a cross-functional team. Experienced in negotiating high value contracts, commanding credibility and respect internally and externally.	Totally familiar with all aspects of procurement processes, through experience and knowledge. Able to apply judgement to determine how best to apply processes to secure best value in any particular set of circumstances. Able to direct and coach others, able to command credibility internally and externally

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• Invitation to tender/negotiate • Supplier selection • Bid evaluation • Negotiation • Contract award • Implementation • Change management • De-briefing • Learning lessons • Low value procurement • Approved lists				
5. Contract management • Contract administration • Performance management • Change management • Relationship management • Key performance indicators • Contract performance review • Benchmarking • Problem solving and dispute resolution	Limited awareness/appreciation of contract management issues Involvement in supporting/administrative capacity, under close supervision.	Able to monitor contractor performance against pre-determined milestones, and to identify when corrective action needed. Requires assistance to negotiate improvements.	Understands when contractor performance requires corrective action, and is able to identify the appropriate action to be taken. Experienced in negotiating to achieve and maintain the necessary level of improvement.	Experienced in identifying and negotiating contractor performance milestones, and in monitoring performance. Ability to resolve difficulties through negotiation, leading to improvement. Knowledge of how to terminate contracts appropriately and legally where necessary.
6. Finance and accounting • Financial accounts • Financial appraisal • Supplier cost base	No real understanding of financial management issues, no involvement in appraisal of suppliers' accounts/cost bases.	Limited appreciation of financial accounts/ appraisal, and of supplier cost bases. Enough knowledge to know when further advice may be necessary.	Enough knowledge of financial accounts to be able to identify companies that are at risk. Sufficiently aware of cost bases to be able to negotiate cost reductions. Able to identify when specialist	Understands profit and loss accounts and balance sheets. Able to calculate key financial ratios, to provide evidence on companies that are at risk. Detailed understanding of suppliers cost bases and cost drivers. Aware of boundaries of own

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			financial advice may be needed.	knowledge, able to judge when specialist financial advice is necessary.
7. Inventory management • Receipts • Storage • Stock control • Distribution • Disposal	Awareness of the fact that stocks are held at local level, but no detailed understanding of inventory management. Involved in administrative/supporting capacity, under close supervision.	Appreciation/familiarity with basic stock control. Able to operate stock control systems in line with pre-determined criteria e.g. re-order levels. Able to recognise where advice is required.	If within remit: Experienced in design, implementation and management of inventory control systems, so that money tied up in stock is minimised whilst optimum levels of customer service are maintained. If not within remit: Basic skills and experience in all aspects of inventory management. Able to manage the balance between the need to provide high levels of customer service, and the need to minimise money tied up in stock.	If within remit: Experienced in design, implementation and management of inventory control systems, so that money tied up in stock is minimised whilst optimum levels of customer service are maintained. If not within remit: Basic skills and experience in all aspects of inventory management. Able to manage the balance between the need to provide high levels of customer service, and the need to minimise money tied up in stock.
8. ICT and e-commerce • Management information	Able to operate basic ICT and e-commerce tools in a supporting/administrative	Ability to operate basic ICT and e-commerce tools, coupled with an appreciation of	Familiar and comfortable with ICT and e-commerce tools. Working knowledge as to how	Experienced in design, implementation and management of ICT and e-commerce systems that interface with

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- Basic ICT tools - Electronic commerce - E-sourcing - E-ordering - E-payment	capacity, under close supervision.	how to exploit them to support procurement processes.	ICT and e-commerce can support procurement systems. Appreciation of the potential for ICT and e-commerce systems to produce management information.	financial systems, reduce manual effort and facilitate provision of meaningful procurement management information.
9. Marketing/customer management - Stakeholder orientation - Promotion, selling procurement - Customer awareness - Customer relationships	Limited awareness/ understanding of a customer focused approach. Supportive/administrative involvement only, under close supervision.	Understands and commits to a positive, helpful customer focussed approach. Knows when to seek support.	Experienced and skilled in dealing with customers at all levels, so that they feel both valued and satisfied. Commands customer respect and creates confidence that excellent service will occur.	Experienced and skilled in all aspects of pro-active management of customer relationships. Effective in promoting procurement influence.
10. Management (self) - Time management, flexibility - Situational leadership - Planning - Creativity - Risk awareness - Numeracy/analysis - Communications - Influencing	Aware of the need to support others in a helpful, flexible way. Able to adopt a polite, positive attitude, working under close supervision and in accordance with pre-determined rules/procedures.	Makes good use of time, is flexible. Aware of the need to plan. Limited ability to be creative, limited awareness of risk and its implications. Possesses basic numeracy and communicates well. Limited influencing skills, but able to be a good team player.	Able to plan use of time, and to react to change in a flexible way. Limited creativity, but very comfortable with managing high value procurement processes. Able to manage risk. Comfortable with numbers, able to communicate well both orally and in writing. Good	Ability to provide direction and leadership. Able to agree plans and ensure performance against milestones is managed pro-actively. Able to manage risk. Flexible, comfortable with change - constantly seeking improvements to existing practice. Creative, numerate and able to communicate effectively. Strong influencing/negotiating skills.

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- Teamwork - Improvement - Professional ethics - Presentations			orally and in writing. Good influencing/ management skills, and a good team player. Aware of the need for continuous improvement. Knows when to seek support	influencing/negotiating skills. Knows when to seek support
11. Management (team) - Leadership - Recruitment and retention - Performance management of staff - Budgets - Workload prioritisation - Training needs analysis and staff development - Capability procedures - Equal opportunities - Health and safety - Handle staff conflict - Motivation and team building - Organisational skills - Line management responsibilities - Management of change	Aware of the need to support others in a helpful, flexible way. Aware of the roles of others and how they interact. Able to work with others as part of a team.	Aware of the need to support others in a helpful, flexible way. A good team player who can effectively manage staff. Aware of the need to support management in ensuring that an effective team is developed to deliver the needs of the business plan. Able to identify staff conflicts and work with management to resolve.	Able to plan use of time, and to react to change in a flexible way. A good team player who can effectively prioritise workload and identify the skills required within the team to deliver to the needs of the business plan. Able to effectively manage a team, whilst being able to identify any staff conflicts and work with management to resolve. Knows when to seek advice and support	Ability to provide direction and leadership. Able to agree plans and ensure performance against milestones is managed pro-actively. Able to recognise the skills required for a team and through recruitment and development ensure that an appropriate team is built to meet the business objectives. Ability to effectively manage a team (s) as necessary, handling conflict effectively, as appropriate. Knows when to seek advice and support
12. PFI/PPP and strategic partnering PFI/PPP and strategic partnering models		Some awareness of PFI/PPP policy and practice and strategic partnering. Able to follow pre-determined procedures. Understands	Understands PFI/PPP policy and practice and strategic partnering. Awareness of attendant risks and able to contribute to their	Understands PFI/PPP policy and practice and strategic partnering, and arguments for and against. Thorough knowledge and practical experience. Has proper understanding of

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◆ Project finance and special purpose vehicles ◆ Joint venture companies ◆ Knowledge of the PFI/PPP market ◆ Commercial finance, law and tax ◆ PRG approval process ◆ Certification ◆ Procurement process ◆ Business case and financial modelling ◆ Output specifications ◆ Pricing mechanism ◆ Project agreement ◆ Negotiation		risks of non-compliance. Sufficiently knowledgeable to recognise when to seek advice and other support	management. Commercial awareness and experience of high value contract negotiation in this arena. Knows when to seek advice and support	commercial partnering and able to play a leading role in it. Able to contribute to continuous improvement in PFI/PPP/strategic partnering policy and practice. Knows when to seek advice and support
13. Gateway review process ◆ Gateway review process ◆ Risk assessment and judgement ◆ Financial analysis ◆ Building and managing customer relationships ◆ Process control ◆ Finance control ◆ Project administration ◆ Communication Key Review Team Leader ◆ Management control	N/A	Limited awareness of gateway review process.	Understands gateway review process and competent to participate in gateway review teams for the council's lower risk projects.	Proficient and comprehensive knowledge of the following areas: gateway review process and accreditation and where gateway fits and impact; own role and accountability plus the roles of all individuals involved; project management; understand department and project; financial management and numeracy; audit methodology; how teams and individuals work; performance management; capability assessment; benchmarking, measurement and operating standards with respect to the private sector; understanding change and effect

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◆ Impact ◆ Leadership ◆ Problem analysis ◆ Performance motivation ◆ Interpersonal sensitivity ◆ Independence ◆ Initiative				A high level of confidence and self esteem. Objective and prudent, has courage of convictions and to 'do things right the first time'
14. Project management ◆ Project lifecycle ◆ Project plan ◆ Critical path analysis ◆ Project evaluation		Basic understanding of project management and the formulation, key components and use of the project plan.	Competent to oversee all facets of the project cycle, ensuring proposals are realistic and manage processes to accomplish full completion of the project. Be able to understand the formulation, key components and use of the project plan. Establish the minimum time necessary to complete a project by calculating the longest sequence of activities.	Suitably qualified and experienced to act as a single focus point and manage the council's interest in the project. Ability to assess performance costs and outputs independently against project plan and take necessary measures to improve future outcomes.
15. Construction and property ◆ Capital strategy, capital programme management ◆ Asset management ◆ Rethinking Construction ◆ Best practice client role ◆ Knowledge of the construction market ◆ Construction law ◆ Construction procurement strategies	Limited awareness and understanding of the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the client department Basic understanding of the current health and safety legislation and its effects on projects.	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the client department Understand the current health and safety Legislation and its effects on projects.	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the client department and able to ask relevant questions on the subject. Have the technical ability to do what is required at each stage of the project or able to direct someone to perform detailed requirement. Knowledge and	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the client department and able to ask relevant questions on the subject. Have the technical ability to do what is required at each stage of the project or able to direct someone to perform detailed requirement. . Knowledge and understanding of the Construction

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◆ Partnering and teamwork ◆ Incentives ◆ Costing systems in industry ◆ Design – quality/sustainability issues ◆ Forms of contract ◆ Workspace management ◆ Problem solving, dispute resolution and claims ◆ Key performance indicators and benchmarking ◆ CDM regulations/health and safety regulations			understanding of the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996.	(Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996. Also to understand the project sponsors role as “client” under the CDM Regulations.
16. ICT projects ◆ Information management ◆ Local e-government ◆ Service strategy and planning ◆ ICT strategy and planning ◆ Knowledge of the ICT market ◆ Technical solutions ◆ ICT, internet and data protection law ◆ Programme and project management ◆ Ergonomics ◆ Systems development	Should have a basic awareness of the importance of ICT and the need for procurement to be involved at an early stage. Possible involvement in assisting the various stages of the procurement lifecycle in an administrative capacity. Limited involvement in system testing, project office support, application and system support	Communicate ideas and work within multi-functional teams with minimum supervision and infrequent reference to others. Have a methodical and organised approach to work and demonstrate ability to learn new skills and apply newly acquired knowledge. Basic awareness of the importance of ICT, the role that procurement should play and the need for procurement to be involved at an early stage.	Knowledge/experience of strategy and planning, management and administration, development and implementation and service delivery for ICT processes. Ability to work effectively within multi-functional team environment. Ability to quickly absorb complex issues/data and communicate this at all levels. Conversant in the following areas; business risk management; contract	Experience in procurement strategies and planning for development, implementation and service delivery of ICT projects. Ability to team lead, influence and negotiate Understands, explains and presents complex ideas to both technical and non-technical audiences. Able to understand and communicate the potential impact of emerging technologies on the organisation and individuals

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			management; project office; quality management/assurance; asset management; systems development management.	
17. Social care contracts ◆ Social care policy ◆ Social care law ◆ Social care finance and accounting ◆ Adult and childrens' services ◆ Partnerships with health ◆ Knowledge of social care market and voluntary sector ◆ Commissioning strategy ◆ Commissioning cycle ◆ Values, rights and principles ◆ Care standards ◆ Service design ◆ Care plans ◆ Consulting service users, carers and advocates ◆ Approved providers ◆ Forms of contract, framework agreements ◆ Risk management ◆ Placements ◆ Monitoring and management ◆ Consortia	Limited awareness and understanding of the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the social services department, service users, carers and advocates.	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the social services department, service users, carers and advocates.	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the social services department, service users, carers and advocates and able to ask relevant questions on the subject. Have the technical ability to do what is required at each stage of the project or able to direct someone to perform detailed requirement.	Able to understand the key issues of each subject heading and their implications for the social services department, service users, carers and advocates. Have the technical ability to do what is required at each stage of the project or able to direct someone to perform detailed requirement. Knowledge and understanding of social care legislation.

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