



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru

Mid and West Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service



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De Cymru

South Wales  
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# **WELSH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES' PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2025-2030**

## Contents

Contents .....	2
1. Background and Purpose .....	3
2. Definition of Sustainable Procurement .....	5
3. Governance Structure.....	6
4. Supplier Expenditure .....	6
5. Collaboration .....	6
6. Strategic Procurement Objectives.....	7
Appendix A.....	9



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## 1. Background and Purpose

This Strategy sets out the framework for procurement within the Fire & Rescue Services (FRS) in Wales from 2025 – 2030 and is in line with the Welsh Government's Welsh Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS) See Appendix A)

The Strategy creates a Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) Procurement Structure that makes the best of opportunities to deliver efficiencies and other improvements in the acquisition of goods, services and the awarding of contracts, across the three FRSs in Wales.

Importantly, the Strategy also paves the way for exploring the contribution that the FRS can make to a broader vision for public procurement.

The key aims of the Strategy are:

- To align its procurement activity with the Procurement Act 2023, Procurement Regulations 2024, Procurement Regulations (Wales) 2024 and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.
- To emphasise the importance of collaborative procurement in the FRS because of the demonstratable efficiencies and other benefits it can deliver.
- To support the Welsh Local Government Association Procurement Network (WLGAPN), the Welsh Government Commercial Delivery Hub (WGCDH), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and other suitable equivalent consortiums in promoting collaborative procurement.
- To develop a better understanding and analysis of expenditure in the FRS to support more effective procurement and to develop improved systems for the regular reporting of the benefits and opportunities presented by collaboration.
- To promote sustainability practices in the FRS procurement process, aligned with Welsh Government's net zero 2030 ambition.

An All-Wales Strategic Contract Plan is in place and is led by a Strategic Procurement Board developed by the Welsh Fire and Rescue Services' National Issues Committee (NIC), who advise on the strategic direction of procurement in the Welsh Fire and Rescue Sector. The Strategic Procurement Board consists of three strategic leads of the Welsh FRS's along with procurement professionals from across the three Welsh FRSs.



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This Strategy is designed to take account of the following policies and encourage stakeholders to consider the long-term implications of each procurement activity. Summaries of these policies are attached in Appendix A:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Cymru Can Strategy for 2023-2030.
- Welsh Government's Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS).
- Prosperity for all: A Low Carbon Wales.
- Wales "Beyond Recycling" Circular Economy Strategy.
- The Fire Standards Board's Procurement and Commercial Standard.

The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis or in line with any new policies / legislation that affect procurement. This strategy sits within the context of the Welsh Government's Fire and Rescue Service National Framework which, among other things, sets a clear expectation of greater collaboration to deliver efficiencies.

The NIC drives collaboration across the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services in line with the Government's agenda on Public Sector reform. This strategy document outlines proposals to ensure that the collaborative procurement opportunities identified by the NIC Strategic Procurement Board are delivered efficiently and effectively across the three Services.

This strategy document sets out how the NIC Strategic Procurement Board seeks to adopt a strategic approach to procurement which will underpin its efforts to unlock these efficiencies and achieve value for money. In taking a holistic view and integrating the principles of sustainable development and e-procurement through all activity, the public sector can optimise the positive impact of responsible procurement; ensuring savings are equally about optimising whole-life costs, achieving wellbeing benefits and taking a sustainable approach wherever possible.

This strategy seeks to ensure the Welsh Fire and Rescue Procurement Services' activities consider the WGCDH and WLGAPN for areas of common and repetitive spend.

The Welsh FRS Procurement Teams promote procurement professionalism to support staff in engaging with suppliers and ensuring that procurement processes and procedures are appropriate and effective in order to encourage innovation, promote sustainability and ultimately deliver value for money and wellbeing benefits.



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## 2. Definition of Sustainable Procurement

For the purposes of this strategy document, sustainable procurement will be defined as:

*The process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment"*

Thus, the functions of procurement are considered to be:

- **Identification of a business need** – Procurement will have a key role in identifying if there is a definite need for equipment, premises or services through Purchasing plans and the scrutiny of Revenue Budgets / Capital payments, review of existing products and services of similar nature within the fire service, review of options to deliver service in-house and potential for collaboration.
- **Technical Services (Research and Development)** – Including completion of risk assessments, a consistent approach to options appraisal, translating the business need into measurable performance criteria, co-ordination and evaluation of trials promoting workforce engagement, production of supporting training materials and guidance notes. In this regard the Welsh FRS's have agreed a common approach as part of the procurement process. This will enable any one of the Welsh FRSs to undertake the complete procurement process on behalf of the other Welsh FRSs and thus reduce duplication and make best use of resources. We will therefore do it once for Wales and avoid repetition.
- **Purchasing and Contracting** – Including strategic and routine procurement, issue of Find a Tender Service (FTS) notices, tendering, contracts, legal and finance tasks and compliance with Standing Orders.
- **Commissioning** – Including production of final safety and technical materials, training and distribution.
- **Contract Management** – Whole life costs, including servicing, maintaining and disposing of the equipment at the end of its useful life, managing and monitoring contracts and supplier relationships and development. Whole life costs remain a consideration throughout the procurement cycle and cannot be neglected after the options appraisal stage. Management and monitoring of contracts to be undertaken via electronic systems.
- **Decommissioning and Replacement** – Including a review of equipment or contract performance and ultimate disposal. Sustainable procurement and the foundational and circular economy is a key principle to be embedded within procurement processes.



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### 3. Governance Structure

Following a review of procurement across the Welsh FRSs as instigated by the National Issues Committee in 2014, a virtual procurement service was established to facilitate increased collaboration and improve efficiencies.

The virtual procurement team work within their respective FRSs and report directly to the Strategic Procurement Board which is led by three members of the Executive Leadership Team, one from each of the three Welsh FRSs.

The Virtual Procurement Team will support staff by providing strategic procurement direction, offering professional advice and guidance on all procurement matters, assisting in making the procurement process more efficient and effective and ensuring that staff have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake their procurement duties through facilitating appropriate training.

### 4. Supplier Expenditure

The Three Welsh FRS's analyse their spend data through use of the Welsh Government expenditure analysis tools which provides identification of spend patterns and potential areas of collaboration. It also provides identification of category expenditure so efforts can be focused on priority areas.

Analysis of data will enable reduction of the number of suppliers used, consolidation of expenditure, increase in the proportion of SME spend, identification of alternative methods of payment for low value transactions and will also provide a benchmark to enable identification of areas suitable for carbon reduction initiatives.

### 5. Collaboration

The Welsh FRS's support collaboration through use of national frameworks including the WGCDH, WLGNP and NFCC Procurement Hub, Crown Commercial Services, and other Purchasing Bodies. There is also cross sector collaboration with other public sector bodies via local Public Service Boards (PSBs) and via regional procurement groups, which feed in to the WLGA Procurement Network.

In line with our collaborative approach there is an aim to standardise on specifications as far as possible to maximise economies of scale and interoperability.



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## 6. Strategic Procurement Objectives

In order to promote procurement best practice, remain legally compliant, meet the Welsh WPPS Principles and to act to prevent climate change by prioritising carbon reduction and zero emissions to deliver our ambition to be net zero by 2030, the following key procurement objectives have been identified as priority areas for improvement. The Welsh Procurement Policy Statement can be seen at Appendix A.

- a) **Strategic Procurement** – the Strategic Procurement Board consisting of members of the Executive Leadership Teams of each of the FRS's influences strategic procurement.
- b) **Professionally Resourced** - To ensure a consistent approach to the training and development of staff that have a procurement role throughout the fire service in line with good practice.
- c) **Economic, Social and Environmental Impact** – To not only obtain optimum value for the Service in terms of whole life cost (from acquisition to disposal) and quality outcomes through effective sourcing, supply and performance monitoring, but also to provide benefit to society, the economy, and the environment, both now and in the future.
- d) **Sustainable Procurement** – integrate sustainability considerations into the procurement process, apply the Sustainable Risk Assessment (SRA) framework and execute the sustainable procurement action plan and supplier engagement strategy.
- e) **Wellbeing Benefits** - delivery of social, economic and environmental benefit through effective application of Welsh Government's Wellbeing Benefits must be an integral consideration in procurement.
- f) **Open and accessible competition** – To advertise all contract opportunities above £30,000 via Sell2Wales, thereby encouraging open and fair competition.
- g) **Simplified Standard Processes** – To simplify and standardise the Welsh FRSs' procurement documentation and processes.
- h) **Collaboration** – To promote and encourage further collaboration through the NIC work-streams in order to achieve economies of scale, standardisation and to deliver procurement process efficiencies.



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i) **Supplier Engagement and Innovation** – To encourage more effective supplier engagement both pre-tender in terms of market testing and supplier pre-tender events and post tender in terms of providing constructive feedback on submissions. Encourage suppliers to make use of Business Wales for bidding advice and guidance.

j) **Policy Development and Implementation** – support the achievement of the seven well-being goals for Wales as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) and comply with the relevant standards of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, Procurement Regulations 2024, Procurement Regulations (Wales) 2024 and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act 2023.

k) **Monitoring performance and delivery** – The delivery of this Strategy will be managed through an Action Plan with progress reported on an annual basis based on the strategic procurement objectives. The plan will include detailed actions and KPIs.

l) **Risk and Contract Management** – To ensure that project, commercial, organisational and health and safety risks are considered in all key procurements, that suitable contingency plans are in place for key products and that all those in project management and contract management roles have the appropriate skills and experience.

m) **eProcurement** – To ensure the FRS is able to meet e-government targets in respect of procurement and that a consistent approach is taken on a national basis with regard to the implementation of eProcurement within the FRS.



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## Appendix A

The sustainable procurement activities should be structured around the following key Policy drivers and initiatives:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force on 1 April 2016, focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The aim of the Act is to help create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. Importantly, the Act recognises the important role of procurement: "The role of procurement will be an important part of how a public body allocates resources under the Act. It is expected that public bodies comply with their existing legal obligations in relation to procurement and that they also apply the Wales Procurement Policy Statement which adopts the Sustainable Procurement Task Force's definition of sustainable procurement. This sets out the procurement practices and the specific actions expected of every public sector organisation in Wales".

The Act puts in place seven well-being goals, illustrated below, is how a Sustainable Procurement policy approach meets these goals, particularly focussing upon a circular economy.

Cymru Can sets out their strategy for 2023 – 2030 and their long-term vision. It summarises the approach they intend to take, gives an overview of the way they will work, and outlines how they will measure their impact.

**Figure 1:** Outcomes of Sustainable Procurement System Fit for Future Generations<sup>1</sup>



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South Wales  
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- Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS) establishes a number of key principles by which the WG expects public procurement to operate across Wales and their reporting methods. This includes several principles that directly support the delivery of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 namely:
  - Collaboration across procurement activities and with stakeholders.
  - Integration of data driven, digital solutions for procurement into the heart of Welsh policy.
  - Sustainable, value-based procurement delivering long-term outcomes for Wales.
  
- Prosperity for all: A Low Carbon Wales Cutting our emissions and transition to a low carbon economy in a way that maximises wider benefits for Wales, ensuring a fairer, healthier and more equal society. The plan makes clear what it expects of leadership in the public sector: Delivering the decarbonisation targets and the carbon neutral ambition will require significant leadership from the public sector in areas such as buildings, transport and procurement.
  - This is backed-up by WG declaring that the local government in Wales must achieve Net Zero Carbon on their emissions by 2030. Procurement will play a crucial role in delivering this.
  
- Wales "Beyond Recycling" Circular Economy Strategy. The strategy, published in March 2021, aims to support the green recovery by focusing on zero waste, net zero carbon actions that use resources fairly. The document outlines key themes for Wales:
  - Driving innovation in materials use
  - Upscaling prevention and re-use
  - Building on the recycling record
  - Investing in infrastructure
  - Enabling community and business action
  - Aligning Government levers



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South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

- Fire Standards Board Procurement and Commercial Standards – a fire and rescue service whose leaders recognise the importance of procurement and commercial best practice ensuring that contracts and relationships with its suppliers realise value for money (VFM) and result in the delivery of quality public goods, services and works that support the environment and the diversity, safety and wellbeing of its people and communities. A service that makes strategic, ethical, and informed procurement and commercial decisions that are aligned to organisational goals, ensuring fairness, transparency, and integrity throughout the lifecycle of its procurement activity. A service that considers procurement and commercial options robustly and thoroughly, engages and consults with staff and wider markets to consider needs, and partners with others to define the optimum procurement and commercial approach. A service that establishes competition, legally compliant and transparent processes and adopts robust contract management practices, ensuring VFM and security of supply is delivered throughout the procurement and contract lifecycle. A service that embraces innovation and contributes to continuous improvement and collaboration at local, regional and national levels. It understands the impact that procurement and commercial activity has on people, the local economy, the environment, and that it delivers its social value and net zero targets. A service that establishes and maintains appropriate capability and capacity by ensuring teams are equipped with the technical skills, commercial expertise, and resources to keep communities safe supporting continued professional development of its procurement and commercial people.



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