



## Procurement Strategy

### Introduction

Ayrshire Housing is a public contracting body in terms of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act, 2014.

The Act requires a Procurement Strategy to be prepared where regulated procurement contracts of £5m and more are expected to incur expenditure over a financial year. Regulated procurements are of £50,000 or more for goods and services and £2m or more for works.

Scottish Government guidance encourages contracting authorities to have a procurement strategy even where relevant expenditure is likely to be less than £5m. Since some procurement areas will always be at or above regulated levels, Ayrshire Housing will always endeavour to maintain a compliant strategy irrespective of the volume of regulated activity. This strategy is updated each year with a current procurement report (annexed) showing how the objectives of the strategy are being met.

The purpose of the strategy is to demonstrate that the association's procurements will deliver value for money and comply with the statutory Sustainable Procurement Duty.

The main obligations of the duty are to procure in such a way as to:

- Improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.
- Facilitate the involvement of small and medium sized enterprises, third sector bodies and "supported businesses".
- Promote innovation.

For smaller non-regulated procurements, general principles of openness, fairness, transparency, non-discrimination and proportionality still apply but are not governed by specific Government guidance.

### Our approach

The association's mission statement is:

*We aim to enhance the wellbeing of our tenants and the wider communities of Ayrshire through high quality housing and related services*

Our longstanding approach to procurement already accords with the principles of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act, 2014. Namely, we are focused on:

- Ensuring that our tenants receive value for money for the rent that they pay.
- Maximising the positive economic and social impact of our expenditure especially within Ayrshire.
- Developing relationships with companies and other organisations that share our values.

## **Key objectives and principles**

Regulated procurements can only be made on the *most economically advantageous tender (MEAT)* terms. Individual awards will not be made on price alone. Assessments will have due regard to both cost effectiveness and quality to obtain the best outcome for the association. In choosing potential contractors and suppliers, we will have regard to the following general criteria.

We also seek to apply this approach to non-regulated procurements in a proportionate manner.

### Fair payment

We will always ensure that our trading terms are fair and ensure payment within 30 days. We would expect all our contractors and suppliers to demonstrate that they have processes in place to ensure equally fair payment to their own suppliers and contractors. We would expect reasonable measures are taken to further ensure good practice at each level of the supply chain.

### Community benefits

The statutory provisions on community benefits apply only to contracts of over £4 millions. The Act defines community benefits as:

*Contractual requirements relating to training and recruitment or the availability of sub-contracting opportunities, or which are otherwise intended to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the public body's area, in a way which is additional to the main purpose of the contract in question.*

Notwithstanding this, Ayrshire Housing will include community benefit requirements in the following types of contract irrespective of value:

- New build and major refurbishment projects.
- Contracts for the renewal of building components (e.g. doors and windows, bathroom and kitchen renewals, and central heating).
- Multi-year service contracts for reactive repairs, gas services and landscape maintenance.

Such requirements will provide for enhancements including job training, school and community engagement, and innovation and evaluation.

In addition, all consultants, contractors, and suppliers will be expected to provide evidence of their general commitment to training and community engagement before their selection to individual frameworks (approved lists) for their specialisms.

Ayrshire Housing is also committed to obtaining wider community benefits through the promotion of fair work practices (see below) and general social responsibility. With regard to the latter, we will always seek to work with companies that demonstrate a commitment to tax fairness through for example the Fair Tax Mark scheme and ethical supply chains (e.g. through the Fair Trade Foundation's scheme).

### Fair work practices

For Ayrshire Housing, quality of work and service is central to providing what our tenants expect for their rent. This applies both to the quality of building works and to personal engagement. For this reason, we expect to deal with companies that can show a good

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quality working environment for their staff. We consider that this principle applies to guaranteeing good quality goods and after care as much as for more service orientated activities. Our selection practices will therefore focus on such evidence as:

- The proportion of direct as opposed to contracted staff.
- Good pay and conditions which may be evidenced through pay arrangements at least meeting the norms of the Living Wage Foundation and the absence of “zero hours” and other forms of vicarious employment.
- Effective staff engagement which can be best evidenced through a positive attitude to trade union membership and organisation.
- A commitment to traineeships and staff development.
- High standards of health and safety.
- A proactive approach to equality issues.
- Pro-active compliance with the as appropriate the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the Human Trafficking (Scotland) Act 2015
- No breaches of the blacklisting regulations for at least three years (“self-cleansing” is not considered achievable in less).

Consultants, contractors, and suppliers seeking to join works and supply frameworks will be expected to score highly with regard to the above criteria. This applies irrespective of the likely value (call-offs) of individual orders or work.

The same general principles will also inform the choice of companies for smaller, intermittent or one-off commissions and purchases.

#### Environmental standards

All works and major service contracts will reflect a commitment to the use of sustainable materials, and energy and waste management. The promotion of a healthy living environment for our tenants underpins our approach to the procurement of design services.

#### Health and Safety

All consultants and contractors will be required to demonstrate the highest commitment to health and safety before being considered for work. We will maintain our own health and safety advisors to ensure compliance.

#### Supporting small and medium sized enterprises

We will always seek to keep our financial requirements proportionate to the proposed supply or work. In making selections, we will give added weight to interviews and references with a view to rewarding commitment and innovation.

Our major service contracts are all capable of being delivered by small or medium sized contractors. At the present time, we do not see merit in operational or good practice terms in splitting these into lots. The development of more formal framework arrangements for the delivery of additional work on a jobbing basis will extend the opportunities for smaller companies to work with us on a more consistent basis.

For small scale procurements, we may consider more focussed advertising as an alternative or complement to the Public Contracts Scotland website.

As a major Ayrshire charity, we are committed to building partnerships with other charities, social enterprises and supported businesses to obtain social benefits for our communities.

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### Engaging with tenants

Through surveys, focus groups and the annual Charter report, we will ensure that our services meet expectations. We will identify areas of customer care and innovation which should be reflected in new contracts.

### Innovation

We will introduce innovation through for example:

- Engaging with potential local contractors and suppliers through economic development agencies and trade bodies.
- Focusing on innovative practice in the appointment of consultants in all fields.
- Setting quality targets beyond statutory requirements and building in evaluation to selected contracts.

### **Policy and procedure framework**

The delivery of this policy is underpinned by the following key documents:

- Business Plan.
- Equalities and Human Rights Policy.
- Annual budget.
- Asset Management Plan.
- Financial Regulations.
- Financial Procedures.
- Development Policies and Design Guide.

### **Implementation and review**

The objectives of this policy will be delivered through an action plan contained in the Annual Procurement Report (see annex).

The action plan will cover the following:

- Policy and practice work to develop our approach to procurement.
- List expected works and service contracts over a two-year period (at or beneath regulated levels).
- List expected framework agreements likely to be created over a two-year period (at or beneath regulated levels).
- List any one-off regulated procurements identified from the Business Plan and annual budget review.

The format of these reports will be:

- A report on the outcomes of the previous action plan including all regulated procurements.
- A note of any adjustments to made to the policy to improve the quality of compliance.
- A summary of community benefit requirements included in contracts and any steps taken to involve supported businesses.
- An action plan including expected significant procurements in the next two financial years.

**Responsibility for compliance and delivery**

Responsibility for the delivery of this policy lies with the Director.

**Review**

The policy is current to April 2026. The annex containing the Procurement Report will be updated each year following its submission to the Board.

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## ANNEX

### Procurement Report – April 2021

#### Introduction

This report should be read in conjunction with the association’s Procurement Strategy. The report provides a summary of regulated procurement activity and associated practice development since the previous report which was published in April 2020. It also contains an action plan for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. It replaces the previous Procurement Report (and action plan).

#### Reactive Repairs and Planned Maintenance

The following table lists the current regulated procurements:

Provision	Contractor	End date (including options)	Estimated Yearly Spend
Reactive repairs/small works (primary contractor)	Turner Property Services	April 2025	£730,000
Reactive repairs/small works (secondary contractor)	ACATCH Environmental & Property Services Ltd	October 2023	£275,000
Gas Servicing	James Frew Ltd	September 2023	£90,000
Landscaping	Tivoli Group Ltd	April 2024	£50,000
Legionella Assessments	Integrated Water Services	February 2023	£14,000
Asbestos Sampling	Vega Environmental Services	March 2023	£9,000
Fire Control Equipment	Kilpatrick Blane Services	March 2024	£9,000
Close Cleaning	ACATCH Environmental & Property Services Ltd	January 2024	£35,000
EPC Certificates	Allied Surveyors Scotland PLC	January 2024	£2,600
Electrical Works and Testing	Invincible Fire & Security	January 2024	£6,000
Lift Maintenance	Consult Lift Services Ltd	December 2021	£5,600
Windows and Doors	CCG and CWS	January 2025	£100,000

Tendering exercises are planned for bathroom replacements, kitchen replacements, gas boiler replacements and painter work. This list includes exercises delayed from 2020 – 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

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### **General goods and services**

There have been no regulated procurements in these areas.

As noted below in the Action Plan, any significant procurements will be identified as part of the 2021-22 budget preparation. At the present time, it is not envisaged that any regulated procurement exercises will require to be initiated in the period to 31 March 2022.

### **Built environment professional services**

Following 2018 tendering exercises, EU compliant frameworks are in place for -

#### **Consultant Architects (and principal designers):**

ARPL Architects \*  
Austin-Smith:Lord \*  
Do-Architecture \*  
John Gilbert Architects \*  
LMA Architects  
Page\Park \*

#### **Consultant Structural Engineers:**

AJ Balfour Associates  
Clancy Consulting \*  
David Narro Associates \*  
G3 Consulting Engineers \*

#### **Consultant Quantity Surveyors:**

Ewing Somerville Partnership \*  
Langmuir and Hay \*  
NBM Construction Cost Consultants \*  
TCS Construction Consultants \*  
Thomson Cost Consultants

\*call-off award since framework was established.

During the year, we reactivated existing commissions to AJ Balfour Associates and Thomson Cost Consultants. McColm Civil and Structural Engineers were appointed on AJ Balfour's retiral.

\*call-off award since framework was established.

### **Major Works**

During 2019-20, an EU compliant framework for major works was created following a competitive process.

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The following contractors were appointed:

Ashleigh (Scotland) Ltd  
CCG (Scotland) Ltd  
Cruden Building and Renewals Ltd \*  
JR Construction (Scotland) Ltd  
McTaggart Construction Ltd  
Stewart and Shields Ltd

The framework will have effect to January 2024.

There was one award (call-off) during the year. This was of £6.972m to Cruden Building and Renewals Ltd to build 52 houses in Troon.

In addition, a non-regulated award of £0.729m was made to 3B Construction Ltd for the extension of the association's office. The selection followed a competitive process through Public Procurement Scotland.

### **Community benefits**

All regulated procurement tenderers are assessed on their commitment to provide community benefits. Benefits include employment and training opportunities, school and college liaison and general community support.

During the year, the delivery of benefits from our maintenance contractors was severely curtailed by the Coronavirus restrictions.

Cruden as part of the above award has committed to provide a number of benefits in terms of training and educational engagement. This will be reported on more fully in the next Procurement Report.

### **Fair work practices**

All regulated procurement tenders are assessed on their fair working practices. Three suppliers are currently Living Wage Foundation accredited – Do-Architecture, John Gilbert Architects, and Page\Park.

### **Action Plan**

The following work continues to ensure the application of the association's Procurement Strategy.

This follows the headings of the previous years' action plans.

### Practice development

- We continue to use the procurement journey to ensure that each regulated procurement reflects best practice.
- We continue to implement the following recommendations of an audit of our processes by Scottish Excel:

- *Procurement responsibilities should be included in all relevant job descriptions and inclusion of procurement to induction process. Action: Job descriptions and inductions for new appointments have been adjusted accordingly.*
  - *Contract and Supplier Management approach should be embedded throughout the organisations. Action: Contract administration arrangements are in place for all service and works contracts. These provide for regular review and quality assurance meetings with contractors.*
  - *Tender evaluation process should include segregation of duties to ensure quality and cost submissions are scored separately. Action: procedures have been introduced to ensure such a separation. These are being included in a revision to the tendering procedures.*
  - *Evaluation and recording of commercial decisions to help determine value for money and develop understanding of detailed spend decisions. Action: Board reporting with regard to service and financial performance has been extended. With the recent tendering exercises, the majority of significant expenditures have been subject to detailed quality and price assessments. A standalone Development Committee allows a greater focus on specification and value for money, for example through an up-to-date Design Guide.*
- We engage with potential suppliers regarding desired community benefits to encourage to their delivery in regulated contracts and call-offs from individual frameworks.
  - We maintain a contract's register on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). There is a [link](#) from the association's website to ensure easy access for the general public. A full list of all current and recent suppliers of whatever scale is included within the Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy available on the website. In addition, a return is made to the Scottish Government on procurement activity.

#### Reactive Repairs and planned maintenance

- Tendering exercises will be programmed during the year for bathroom replacements, kitchen replacements, gas boiler replacements and painter work. Over the following three years, it is not envisaged at the present time that additional frameworks will be created beyond the existing and planned work areas.

#### Major works

- Subject to funding and approvals, we may make approximately 3 call-offs from the above framework. These are likely to have a value of £15 million. There will potentially be a similar level of activity in the following three years.

#### One-off and general procurements

- We will identify any new regulated procurement activity as part of the 2022-2023 budget preparation.

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- We will continue to review whether any longstanding service arrangements should be subject to retendering based on an assessment of the value for money of the current suppliers.