

Procurement: Policy Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust procures a variety of goods, services, and works from suppliers throughout the UK, spending around £150m every year on goods and services to enable us care for our network of canals, rivers, reservoirs, and docks. Procuring these goods and services is an essential function of our business, and a key component of helping us achieve our mission.
- 1.2 This Policy Statement sets out our strategic procurement objectives and the principles that we will apply when pursuing those objectives, ensuring that we achieve optimum value for money.

2. Strategic procurement objectives

- 2.1 Our strategic procurement objectives are to:
 - 2.1.1. Contribute to the achievement of the Trust's strategic priorities by delivering value for money.
 - 2.1.2. Comply with law and relevant regulations and manage risk effectively and efficiently.
 - 2.1.3. Develop fair, effective, and efficient vendor relationships by avoiding bias and favouritism and adopting best practice.
 - 2.1.4. Ensure probity, professionalism, and competence of all involved in the Procurement process.
 - 2.1.5. Provide solutions to the Trust's needs that are flexible, robust, sustainable, transparent, and that enhance the financial security and reputation of the Trust.
 - 2.1.6. Strive for continuous improvement in all aspects of our work.
 - 2.1.7. Support Trust objectives in relation to sustainability and ensure that our supply chain adheres to our aims.



3. Our approach to procurement across the Trust

- 3.1 Competitive Tendering: we will ensure that, wherever possible and practical, all expenditure above relevant thresholds is regularly subject to competitive tender and contract opportunities are advertised on an open basis, and that all contracts are awarded to vendors that provide best overall value for money.
- 3.2 Contract Conditions: we will utilise robust and practical contract conditions that facilitate the implementation of sound contract and project management principles and practices, as well as defining legal relationships and providing clarity of risk allocation.
- 3.3 Group Contracts: we will develop and manage contracts, on a national and, where appropriate, regional basis, for the supply of works, goods and services in common use within the organisation or, where advantageous, adopt collaborative arrangements established by other organisations, ensuring that they are developed in line with best procurement practice and relevant legislation, and that they are fully utilised for the collective benefit of the organisation as a whole.
- 3.4 Contract Management: we will utilise sound commercial, relationship and performance management principles, applying best practice that contributes to our efficiency and effectiveness in both the pre- and post-award phases of contracts.
- 3.5 Processes: we will maintain auditable, transparent, and fair processes that are efficient, enable the assessment and management of risk and value, and that support our sustainability targets and code of ethics.
- 3.6 Internal Controls: we will ensure that all commitments for goods, services and works are made to our supply chain by means of purchase orders, approved in accordance with the Trust's Delegation Arrangements, and that procurement arrangements are subject to periodic audit and review.
- 3.7 Collaboration: we will take a long-term and strategic approach to procurement, with a commitment to continued collaboration with other organisations, fostering mutually beneficial contractual relationships.
- 3.8 Training: we will develop and provide support for staff involved in all stages of the procurement process, maintaining a centre of excellence via our Procurement team.
- 3.9 Benchmarking: we will ensure that group contracts are developed, managed and periodically benchmarked in line with best procurement practice. We will encourage this approach for non-group contracts, with two-way

communication and feedback on the performance of our supply chain arrangements.

- 3.10 Corporate Criminal Offences, bribery, and fraud: We are committed to promoting the highest standards of probity in the business practices we carry out through our procurement arrangements and supply chains. We will implement sound practices to detect and prevent any form of fraud or corruption and put reasonable procedures in place to prevent tax evasion. We will carry out reasonable procedures to assess areas of highest risk for tax evasion in the supply chain.

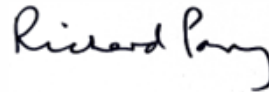
4. Expectations of suppliers

- 4.1 We expect our suppliers to align with the Trust's ethical and professional conduct requirements.



David Orr CBE

Chair to the Board of Trustees



Richard Parry

Chief Executive

23 November 2023