

Report to **Policy & Resources Committee**
Date **20 November 2025**
By **Procurement Manager**
Title of Report **Review of SDNPA Procurement Strategy Action Plan**
Decision

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Note progress against the Procurement Strategy Action Plan during Year 4.**
 - 2. Approve the revised Procurement Strategy Action Plan Year 5 for November 2025-November 2026.**
-

1. Introduction

- 1.1 SDNPA's P&R Committee approved the Authority's Procurement Strategy 2021-2026 at the meeting of the P&R Committee on 30 September 2021.
- 1.2 The Procurement Strategy 21-26 describes what SDNPA aims to achieve when procuring works, goods and services, and the mechanisms and processes used to achieve those.
- 1.3 This report summarises the progress against the Procurement Strategy Action Plan during year 4 and proposes the delivery of the new Sustainable Procurement Strategy in year 5.

2. Policy Context

Corporate Plan

- 2.1 Effective procurement makes a significant contribution to achieving organisational success. By aligning the function with key objectives contained within the Corporate Plan, procurement processes allow Officers working towards the high-level targets to achieve the best possible outcomes, through the application of early and appropriate market research, the correct type of specifications, and the use of appropriate evaluation criteria.

Procurement Act 2023

- 2.2 The Procurement Act 2023, which reforms the previous Public Contract Regulations, came into effect as of 24 February 2025. The new procurement legislation introduces a more flexible system, with the aim of making it easier for small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and social enterprises to compete for and secure public contracts. Crucially, it also embeds transparency throughout the commercial lifecycle, streamlining processes and strengthening opportunities to do business with the public sector. The National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) is a strategic document issued by Government under Section 13 of the Procurement Act 2023, it sets out the priorities contracting authorities must consider when carrying out procurement activities, these are:

- Driving Economic Growth

- Delivering Social and Economic Value
- Building Commercial Capability

Staff Environment Group

- 2.3 SDNPA have put together a Staff Environment Group, who will be developing a Sustainability Policy in the coming months.
- 2.4 The Procurement Team will use the next 12 months to work on the new Sustainable Procurement Strategy which will be brought to Members for approval in November 2026. The new Procurement Strategy will align with the aims of the Corporate Plan and Climate Change Action Plan, the SDNPA’s Sustainability Policy (once drafted), and the Procurement Act 2023.

3. Progress on the Action Plan during Year 4

- 3.1 The Procurement Strategy Action Plan for Year 4 contained the following actions:
- Review and update policies or procedures, including guidance, as required as part of the procurement process to ensure compliance with the new legislation.
 - Use the opportunities provided through the new Procurement Legislation to improve sustainability within procurements and contracts (for example the use of restriction below threshold procurements to specific counties (i.e. those that fall within the National Park) to benefit the SDNP economy and reduce carbon emissions).
 - Measure the baseline Scope 3 emissions for SDNPA contracts. This will enable us to measure how the new sustainable procurement strategy will contribute over time to SDNPA’s carbon Net Zero ambitions. Network with internal groups (Climate Action Group) and external colleagues (procurement colleagues in other National Parks and Local Authorities) to research best practice.
 - Research – to further strengthen our social value contributions to the National Park community through the tendering process.

3.2 Below is an update on the progress of each of these actions.

3.3 Review and update policies or procedures, including guidance, as required as part of the procurement process to ensure compliance with the new legislation.

3.4 Our suite of procurement documents including Contract Standing Orders (CSOs), Standard Terms and Conditions, Invitation to Tender, Contract and Framework documents, procurement strategy and procurement guide were sent to our Legal team in 2024 for review and updating. This has now been done and new versions of these documents are in use. A single set of Standard Terms and Conditions has been replaced with one set for goods and one for services. Some small changes to CSOs have been approved by the Chief Executive Officer, for example aligning with revised thresholds for publishing below threshold tendering opportunities on the new Government Central Digital Platform (upped from £25k to £30k), revising wording to reflect the change from “most economically advantageous tender” to “most advantageous tender” and an updated section on the procedures for tendering for public contracts above Government thresholds.

3.5 Use the opportunities provided through the new Procurement Legislation to improve sustainability within procurements and contracts (for example the use of restriction below threshold procurements to specific counties (ie those that fall within the National Park) to benefit the SDNP economy and reduce carbon emissions).

3.6 Under the new Procurement Legislation, we have explored the option of restricting below-threshold procurements to suppliers within the South Downs National Park to support the local economy and reduce carbon emissions. However, the legislation only permits

restrictions to a single county, which does not work effectively for the National Park which spans multiple counties. Instead, we continue to embed sustainability through other measures, such as applying social value criteria and considering environmental impacts over the contract life cycle.

- 3.7 **Measure the baseline Scope 3 emissions for SDNPA contracts. This will enable us to measure how the new sustainable procurement strategy will contribute over time to SDNPA’s carbon Net Zero ambitions. Network with internal groups (Climate Action Group) and external colleagues (procurement colleagues in other National Parks and Local Authorities) to research best practice.**
- 3.8 The Procurement Team have representation on both the Authority’s internal Climate Action Group – which considers delivering climate action across the National Park – and the Staff Environment Group – which considers delivering climate action within the Authority itself.
- 3.9 The SDNPA uses a specialist company to support us in monitoring and reporting on the SDNPA’s total scope 3 emissions. We have a report for the 2024-25 Financial Year and are working with both the Climate Action Group and Staff Environment Group to consider how best to reduce our scope 3 emissions based on the recommendations in the report. These considerations will inform the Climate Change Action Plan and the actions as part of the new Sustainable Procurement Strategy.
- 3.10 In addition, we have commissioned a detailed assessment of the Scope 3 impact of contracted spend in 2024-25, which will allow us to identify key contracts to focus our efforts in order to maximise the reduction of our environmental impact through contracts.
- 3.11 **Research – to further strengthen our social value contributions to the National Park community through the tendering process.**
- 3.12 To strengthen our social value contributions to the National Park community, we have undertaken research into best practice approaches for embedding social value within the tendering process. We ensure an appropriate but not exhaustive list of Social Value options is included within the tender pack, we have updated our website with information on including Social Value in tenders.
- 4. Procurement Strategy Action Plan Year 5 for November 2025-November 2026**
- 4.1 The focus for the next 12 months will be the drafting of the new Sustainable Procurement Strategy. This will be brought to Members in November 2026 for approval. The action plan for the next year includes stages with key dates for completion. A copy of the current Procurement Strategy with updated Action Plan is attached at Appendix A.
- 5. Options and cost implications**
- 5.1 The development of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy for approval 2026 will require us to continue measuring Scope 3 emissions of current suppliers. Budget has been approved and set aside for two more years of using Small World Consulting to assist us with our measuring of Scope 3 emissions and reporting these to Defra.
- 6. Other implications**

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	Not in relation to this action plan, however the Sustainable Procurement Strategy will come to P&R committee in November 2026 for consideration and approval.

Implication	Yes*/No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	The procurement team is adequately resourced to deliver the strategy.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	The development of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy in the Action Plan aims to improve value for money across the organisation, not only in terms of savings but towards social, environmental and economic goals embedded in the Corporate Plan.
Which PMP Outcomes/ Corporate plan objectives does this deliver against	Procurement is a strategic function which supports the delivery of all outcomes and objectives in the PMP and Corporate Plan.
Links to other projects or partner organisations	Cabinet Office, any companies/organisations who might bid for contracts with the SDNPA.
How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives	The strategy will aim to ensure that any procurement processes take into account the objectives within the forthcoming SDNPA Sustainability Policy.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	The strategy will have information on Social Value. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to all contracts over government procurement agreement Thresholds, however we apply Social Value criteria to all lower value contracts where relevant and proportionate to the contract. The updated criteria in last year's Action Plan aims to ensure that we are better able to monitor the delivery of social value promised in bids.
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes, taking regard of the Authority's equality duty is an integral part of the procurement process.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None within the Strategy however the selection process within any tendering exercise will examine the bidding companies' compliance with the associated laws.
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None within the Strategy however the selection process within any tendering exercise will examine the bidding companies' compliance with the associated laws.
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None within the Strategy however the selection process within any tendering exercise will examine the bidding companies' compliance with the associated laws.
Are there any Data Protection implications?	None within the Strategy however the selection process within any tendering exercise will examine the bidding companies' compliance with the associated laws.

7. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
SDNPA's forthcoming Sustainability Policy is not approved with sufficient time or is not detailed enough to allow Procurement to develop a Sustainable Procurement Strategy that aligns with its objective.	Possible	3	The Procurement Team has a presence on the Staff Environmental Group which will allow us to contribute to the timely development of the policy.
Implementing criteria which requires bidders to submit complex sustainability information could exclude smaller suppliers from bidding or impact disproportionately on the cost/quality of what we buy.	Possible	4	Ensuring the sustainability requirements are proportionate to that of the contract and therefore do not exclude suppliers from being able to submit a proposal. Ensure a focus on prior engagement with Suppliers is maintained, to ensure the requirements will not be a barrier to bid for SDNPA contracts.

HAYLEY MADGWICK

Procurement Manager

South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer: Hayley Madgwick, Procurement Manager
 Tel: 01730 819390
 Email: Hayley.madgwick@southdowns.gov.uk
 Appendix: I. Procurement Strategy with proposed Action Plan
 Background Documents Report to [P&R Committee September 2024](#) and associated [Appendix](#)
 SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Landscape and Strategy; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Head of Finance and Corporate Services.
 External Consultees None

