

Audit Objective

An end to end review of the Council's procurement processes and readiness for new legislation to provide assurance that appropriate controls are in place.

Executive Summary



Assurance Opinion

Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Management Actions

Priority 1	0
Priority 2	2
Priority 3	1
Total	3

Organisational Risk Assessment

Medium

Our audit work includes areas that we consider have a medium organisational risk and potential impact.

The key audit conclusions and resulting outcomes warrant further discussion and attention at senior management level.

Key Conclusions



The service recognised that there were control weaknesses and implemented a new end to end procurement process approximately six months ago. This has resulted in notable improvements within the Procurement Team, however, there remain gaps in the information held in Atamis relating to contracts which implies that services are not engaging with Procurement as required by the Council's Constitution, for contracts over £25,000.



The Procurement Strategy and other procurement related policies and procedures have not been updated for a significant period of time and refers to incorrect legislation. This was fully recognised by the service prior to audit and there are plans to update the documentation by September 2024.



Reliance has been placed on management knowledge across service areas to ensure arrangements can be made in the event of supplier failure. Establishing and documenting contingency plans ensures that the service can prioritise and plan for the most significant risks, develop response plans, and maintain clear lines of communication throughout the disruption

Audit Scope

The scope of this audit was limited by the gaps in the information held in the contract management database.

We have reviewed:

- Readiness and preparation for the new legislation - expected to be introduced in 2024;
- Adherence to the Council's own rules and regulations (Constitution) including Records of Officer Decisions;
- The efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's procurement processes; and
- Decision-making throughout the procurement process.

Post procurement activities will be the subject of a separate review and Contract Management has been added to the Rolling Audit Plan in preparation for this.

Next Steps

The Head of Procurement recognises that there is further work required to ensure that all service areas are complying with Contracts Procedure Rules and Regulations, including the storage of relevant records. The new end to end process which has been introduced will be championed by the Business Partners. A further audit relating to Contract Management has been added to Rolling Audit Plan which will be undertaken in 2025.