



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Corporate Procurement Plan 2025-2027





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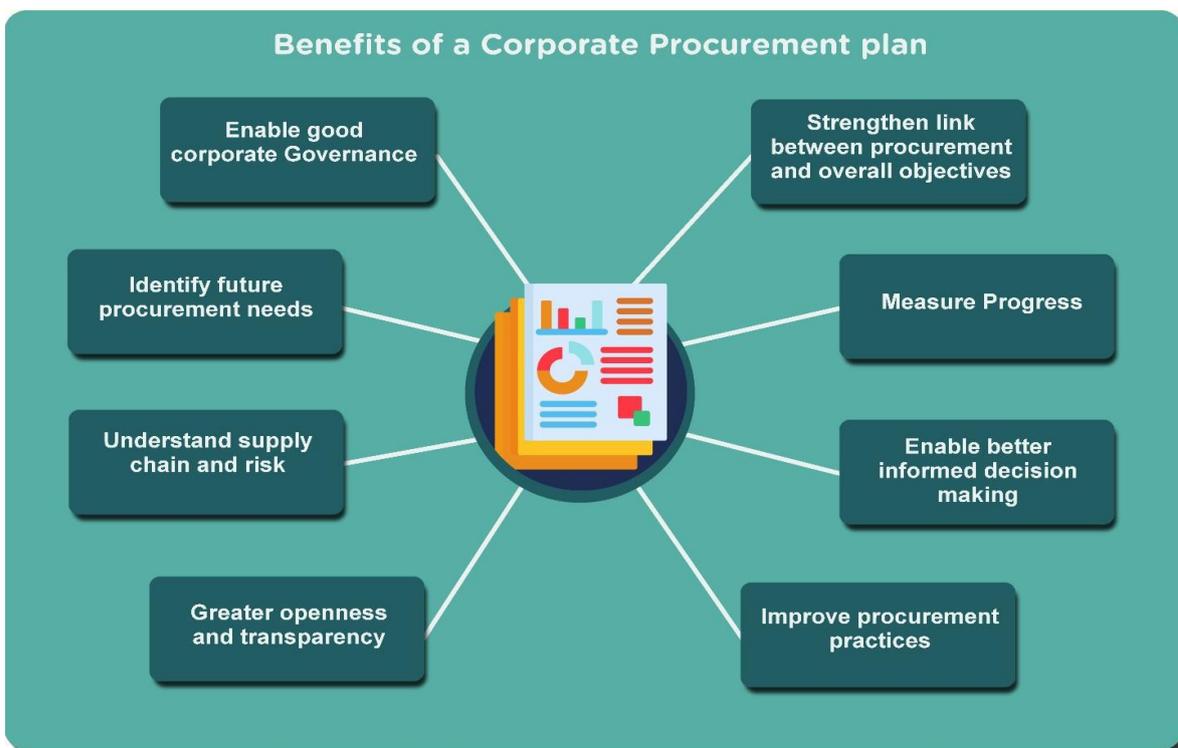
1. INTRODUCTION

Procurement can be defined as “the acquisition of supplies, works and services which meet the needs of customers and service users, whilst at the same time, ensuring value for money throughout the life of the product or service including, where appropriate, disposal”.

This plan aims to deliver best practice procurement in Clare County Council by setting out clear objectives and goals to be achieved over the lifetime of the plan – 2025 to 2027 inclusive. The Procurement and Capital Support Team will lead on the plan’s delivery and act as a focal point, engaging with departments across the Council to ensure compliance with procurement policies, processes and systems. This plan is supported by **Clare County Council’s Procurement Policy** and **Clare County Council’s Procurement Procedures** documents which define, respectively, the policy and procedures to be followed by all those involved in the procurement of goods, services and works. This document supports the operational delivery of the plan and will be kept under review throughout the life of the plan to ensure best practice.

2. PURPOSE & BENEFITS OF A CORPORATE PROCUREMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Corporate Procurement Plan is to set objectives and goals to ensure that the Council’s procurement function operates in accordance with procurement directives, legislation, and other legal requirements and supports effective value for money while ensuring transparency, openness and accountability.



The Plan will take account of changes to procurement legislation and new requirements set out at a national level by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and the Office of Government Procurement. This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre (LGSPC) document “Guidance for Corporate

Procurement planning in the Local Government Sector” issued in December 2020, and the OGP’s information note on ‘Corporate Procurement Plans’ (2024 edition).

The Corporate Procurement plan is effective for a three-year period 2025-2027. A progress review will be carried out annually. The procurement objectives and goals outlined are challenging and will require the co-operation, engagement and support of all departments in the council in order for them to be successful. They require a stronger focus on compliance and procurement planning and collaboration between all departments. The Directors of Service and Budget Holders play a lead role in the implementation of this plan and in particular the promotion of a culture of compliance, efficiency and value for money. **The goals in the Corporate Procurement Plan should be embedded within all Directorates’ Annual Team Plans.**

3. PROCUREMENT FRAMEWORK IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Public procurement is an integral part of the Government’s overall Public Service Reform agenda; the following are several measures/initiatives that have been undertaken to manage the reform of the public sector procurement spend and which Clare County Council must support in carrying out its procurement function.

Office of Government Procurement (OGP)

Following on from the recommendations of The Capacity & Capability Review of Centralised Procurement Function, the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) was established in 2014 by Government to lead the Public Procurement Reform Programme. Together with four key sectors (Local Government, Defence, Education, and Health), the OGP is taking responsibility for sourcing goods and services on behalf of the public service.

There are sixteen public procurement categories and the OGP have responsibility for sourcing eight categories of spend, with the other eight managed by a lead agency from one of the four key public sectors on behalf of the public sector as a whole. The establishment of the OGP represents a key milestone towards centralised procurement for goods and services for the entire public sector. The procurement of capital works has remained a function of each Local Authority.

Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre (LGSPC)

The *Local Government Strategic Procurement Centre (LGSPC)* A Strategic Procurement centre for the Local Government Sector initially set up under the aegis of the Project Management Office for Local Government Efficiency Review, and now subsumed into the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). The function of the LGSPC is to lead, co-ordinate and support the local government sector with procurement reform supporting its efforts within the procurement reform agenda.

Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC)

The *Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC)*, based in Kerry County Council, leads two categories on behalf of the entire public sector: Minor Building and Civil Works and Plant Hire and it also retains the management of the SupplyGov.ie (formally Laquotes.ie) which is the eProcurement system which facilitates Local Authorities and other state agencies in procuring goods and services in respect of the Local Authority lead category for Plant Hire and Minor Building and Civil works.

Munster & South Leinster Regional Procurement Network

The Munster & South Leinster Regional Procurement Network consists of Procurement Officers in the Munster and South Leinster Region. The group meets up on a bi-monthly basis to share views and experiences on Procurement. They liaise with the OGP and LGSPC on various categories of spend and in the implementation of National and Regional frameworks as they arise.

4. PROCUREMENT STRUCTURE IN CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Procurement is a day-today responsibility within departments, with budget holders responsible for ensuring their sourcing requirements are met while operating to best procurement practice and compliance with relevant legislative, regulatory and policy requirements. Where national framework agreements are in place for the local government sector, competitions should be run under these agreements.

Procurement Responsibility

The Chief Executive (CE) has ultimate responsibility to ensure compliant procurement practices are adhered to. The CE delegates significant budgetary and procurement responsibilities to Directors of Service, Divisional Managers, and Heads of Section. Each Director/Divisional Manager/Head of Section has the responsibility to ensure that the ***budget holders, to whom they in turn delegate, take responsibility for the compliant procurement of all goods, services and works for which they authorise spend.*** The dispersion of Clare County Council's operations presents a strategic challenge in developing a procurement function to deliver high quality goods and services that represent good value for money in meeting operational and corporate need. It will require significant commitment from each division and directorate to make available the necessary resources to conduct procurement as per regulations and legislative requirements.

Procurement and Capital Support Team

The Procurement and Capital Support Officer leads the Procurement and Capital Support Team and reports to the Management Accountant, Finance Department. The Procurement and Capital Support Team has a strategic role; to provide support, advice and guidance to the organisation on all procurement related matters, to pro-actively engage with the OGP, LGSPC, LGOPC, LGMA and generally represent the Council externally in the advancement of good procurement practice; and to ensure org-wide compliance with the Council's Procurement Procedures and Procurement Policy at local, national and EU level.

The Procurement and Capital Support Team will maintain well-functioning communication channels to ensure the most up to date information is available. The team also supports all Departments with their tendering by reviewing draft tender documentation and advising on evaluation of tenders where required. Where challenges to contract awards occur, the Procurement and Capital Support Team can guide and advise on appropriate courses of action. The team will also organise relevant procurement related training and provide and maintain a centralised procurement portal on the intranet.

Procurement Group

In recognition of the need to further develop a corporate wide view of procurement, a Procurement Group has been established which comprises key procurement representatives from

Departments and Municipal Districts. This group acts as a conduit between the Procurement and Capital Support Team and the wider organisation on all Procurement matters.

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Treaty of Rome), signed in 1957, which resulted in the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) sets out several principles which should apply when awarding contracts in relation to freedom of movement of goods and services:

- **Transparency:** Being open and transparent about the procurement process;
- **Equal Treatment:** Applying the same rules to all giving everyone the same rights of access;
- **Proportionality:** Ensuring that all requirements are necessary and appropriate in relation to the contract; and
- **Mutual Recognition:** is the principle of the European Union (EU) law under which member states must allow goods that are legally sold in another member state also to be sold in their own territory.

Central to current public sector procurement practice are key guidelines and legislation founded in EU legislation that have been transposed into Irish Law. The principal - but not exhaustive - list of Procurement legislation includes:

- Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement (goods, services and works);
- Directive 2014/23/EU on award of Concession Contracts;
- Directive 2014/25/EU on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors;
- S.I. No. 284/2016 - European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts) Regulations 2016; and
- Circular 05/23 Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement.
- Circular 09/2024 Reporting on the Use of Centralised Procurement Arrangements.

All procurement practices and decisions made by Clare County Council must demonstrate adherence to the above legal guidelines and principles, as well as adherence to all other Procurement related Circulars, Statutory Instruments and EU Directives.

6. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT VALUES

Clare County Council is committed to the compliant procurement of goods, services and works, in line with best public procurement practices, to achieve value for money outcomes for its citizens, that are strategically aligned to the business needs of the organisation.

In all of Clare County Council’s procurement and purchasing activities, staff will endeavour to operate in accordance with the following values:

- Compliance with all relevant procurement legislation and guidelines;
- Maximising competition and thus Value for Money, whilst achieving optimum quality to meet the authority’s business needs;
- Minimising the use of non-competitive procurement procedures;
- Minimising the Council’s exposure to procurement risk;
- Minimising waste;
- Encouraging local business engagement;
- Maximising contract performance; and
- Promoting Environmental and Social Consideration in competitions.

7. SPEND ANALYSIS OF PROCURABLE ITEMS

Knowing how goods and services were purchased in the past is fundamental to planning future procurement. Spend analysis provides an opportunity to review historic expenditure with a view to improving future spending, for example, by consolidating lower value purchases and/or the number of suppliers. The Council’s spend on procurable items (goods/services/works) in 2024 is broken down below.

Procurement Type	Sum of Total spend ex vat
Spend under €500	€450,086.75
Quotes for spend between €500 and €50,000 for goods & services, and works related consultancy ; and between €500 and €200,000 for works	€15,585,807.27
Use of eTenders where overall contract value is over €50,000 and not exceeding €221,000 for goods & services and work related consultancy	€2,329,286.60
Use of eTenders where overall contract value is over €200,000 and under €5.538M for works	€31,803,569.23
Use of eTenders where overall contract value is over €0 and under €750,000 for Title III services	€204,419.49
Use of Official Journal of the EU via eTenders for overall contract value greater than €221,000 for goods or services or works related consultancy	€2,509,633.79
Use of Official Journal of the EU via eTenders for overall contract value greater than €5.538m for works	€35,883,686.89
Use of collaborative/regional framework	€484,485.82
Use of Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Framework	€3,567,205.67
Use of SupplyGov for overall contract value over €200,000 for works	€724,191.95
Use of SupplyGov for overall contract value over €50,000 for goods and services	€7,805,499.17
Use of SupplyGov for overall contract value up to €200,000 for works	€782,253.07
Use of SupplyGov for overall contract value up to €50,000 for goods and services and works related consultancy	€343,165.27
Non-competitive Procurement Process (where the buyer uses the 'Derogation from Procurement Form')	€3,409,092.68
2024 Total	€105,882,383.65

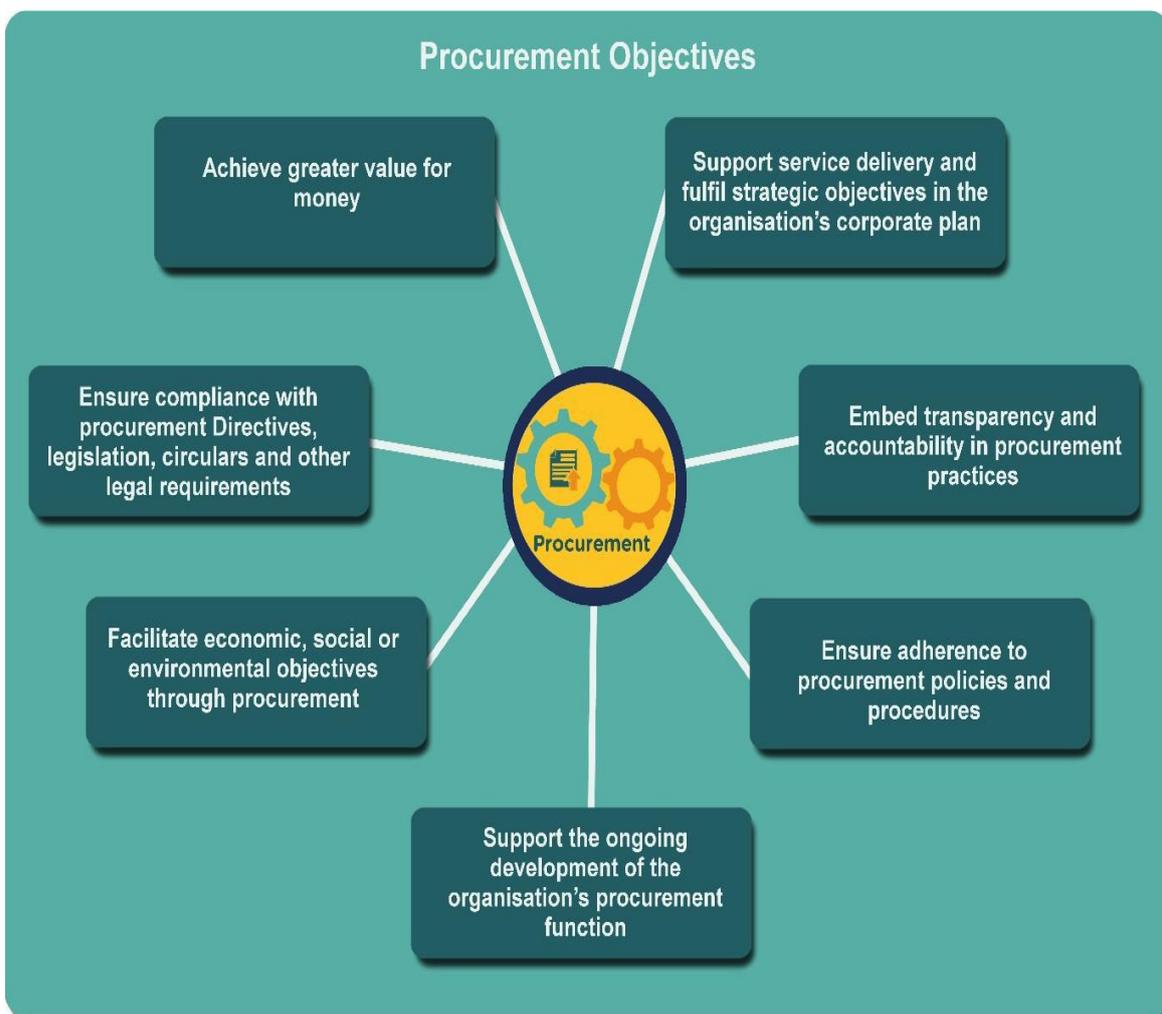
From the above statistics we can see that:

- Spend by way of contracts from **tenders on eTenders** totalled €72.73m (**67%** of 2024 spend).
- Spend by way of contracts from **tenders/RFQs on SupplyGov** totalled €9.65mm (**9%** of 2024 spend).
- Spend on goods/services/works from **OGP Frameworks** totalled €3.567m (**3%** of 2024 spend).
- Spend on goods/services/works from **‘Request for Quote’** processes totalled €15.585m or **14.3%** of 2024 spend.

- **3.1%** of spend was attributable to ‘Derogation from procurement’ category as per the reasons for doing so in the EU Procurement Directive.
- There continues to be opportunities to see if better value for money can be achieved by **consolidating spend through collaborative procurement arrangements across Directorates** leading to Council wide frameworks/contracts.

8. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES 2025 -2027

The OGP sets out seven broad objectives for a Corporate Procurement Plan. These objectives/priorities will guide Clare County Council’s Corporate Procurement Plan for 2025-2027.



OBJECTIVE 1 – ACHIEVE GREATER VALUE FOR MONEY

This objective will be achieved by:

- O1.1 Reducing ‘legacy contract’ procurement arrangements /prompt re-engagement of the market: Monitoring spend on organisation-wide goods and services to ensure that valid and live contracts are in place for such goods/ services and where goods/ services are found to be drawing from expired ‘legacy contracts’ (non-compliant procurement),

supporting the relevant department to re-engage the market to ensure value for money and ensure a competitive procurement environment.

- O1.2 Collaborative procurement across Directorates/consolidation of suppliers: Continue the collaborative procurement arrangements across Directorates - consolidating the number of suppliers for the good or service being provided or by establishing Clare County Council established frameworks.
- O1.3 Mandatory use of National Framework agreements/Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS): Continue to mandate that where Council buyers can utilise a central purchasing arrangement (OGP, SupplyGov) that these platforms are used given the economies of scale / value for money that these frameworks/DPS offer to public bodies.

OBJECTIVE 2 - SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY & ACHIEVE STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES IN CORPORATE PLAN

The Clare County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029 references Procurement related objectives in two instances, as follows:

- O2.1 Corporate Plan reference: *“Governance: Clare County Council implement and maintains the highest standards of ethics and governance, standards in public office, management of fair and impartial regulation, **adherence to legislation, the public spending code (Infrastructure Guidelines) and public procurement requirements**, continuous improvement in standards, monitoring business and financial performance, ensuring value for money across all the Council’s activities. Accordingly, the Procurement Team will continue to advise Council staff on public procurement requirements through training, emails and Quarterly Procurement Bulletins.*
- O2.2 Corporate Plan reference: *“Green Public Procurement: The Council is mindful of the Government’s Green Public Procurement (GPP) Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027 and the requirement for all public bodies, in updating their corporate plans, to set out how they will **adhere to the Government’s GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations**. In order to fulfil our obligations in regard to Green Public Procurement, the Clare County Council Green Public Procurement Strategy was adopted by the Council’s Management Team in July 2024. This was in keeping with Objective G2.5 of the Clare Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 requires that Clare County Council ‘Develop a Green Public Procurement (GPP) Strategy to **ensure GPP is mainstreamed through all sections of Clare County Council**’. The Council’s GPP strategy reflects the Government’s GPP targets and objectives and EU direction in regard to GPP/in regard to how tenders can incorporate green/sustainable specifications, green/sustainable award criteria etc.”. Clare County Council will adhere to the Government’s GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations which are set out in the Clare County Council GPP Strategy.*

OBJECTIVE 3 – EMBED TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

This objective will be achieved by:

- O3.1 Procurement Section on Council Website: Review and update the Procurement section of the Clare County Council website to make our procurement processes more transparent to the Public. Examine other Local Authorities websites' in regard to their Procurement related information and establish best practice. Create links to OGP's existing and schedule of frameworks, and a link to the Council's tenders on eTenders. Provide information to local suppliers on how they can register for eTenders and SupplyGov.

OBJECTIVE 4 – ENSURE ADHERENCE TO PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES, LEGISLATION, CIRCULARS AND OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

This objective will be achieved by:

- O4.1 Ensure compliance with Circular 5/23 (Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement) and the use of eTenders system for advertising of all contracts above the €50,000 threshold for goods and services and €200,000 for works; and ensure that the requirement for publishing Contract Award Notices for all contracts over €25,000 are adhered to.
- O4.2 Ensure Compliance with the EU Procurement Directive and, conscious of the impending revision of the EU Procurement Directive, provide any feedback as requested by the OGP into the processes to update the Directive.

OBJECTIVE 5 – DEVELOP THE PROCUREMENT FUNCTION

This objective will be achieved by:

- O5.1 Explore if Procurement Training courses can be rolled out on the MyCompliance training platform.
- O5.2 Explore if the Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures Manual can be added to the new joiners 'starter pack' issued by Human Resources to new joiners.
- O5.3 Continue to hold in-house procurement training sessions that are open to all staff to attend.

OBJECTIVE 6 – ADVANCE GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (GPP) AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

This objective will be achieved by:

- O6.1 Clare County Council will adhere to the Government's GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations which are set out in the Clare County Council GPP Strategy.

- O6.2 The Procurement Team will promote the use of the GPP Criteria Search tool within the organisation.
- O6.3 The Procurement Team will conduct annual staff training in relation to GPP with a priority focus on key goods/services/works applicable to Clare County Council.
- O6.4 The Procurement Team will conduct annual staff training in relation to Socially Responsible Public Procurement. This training will focus on the recently adopted Clare County Council Social Considerations Charter.

9. CONCLUSION

The aim of this Corporate Procurement plan is to ensure that Clare County Council adheres to effective, strategic and professional procurement methods incorporating all relevant EU directives and Government legislation and guidelines while at the same time delivering value for money on all spend. Public Procurement is continuously examined and audited; therefore, it is a requirement that all staff take responsibility for and are accountable for their procurement activity. The successful implementation of this plan will require support and commitment from our Management Team and Budget Holders to ensure the objectives of the plan are pursued and in doing so Clare County Council will deliver an open, transparent and accountable procurement framework.



APPENDIX 1 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Obj. No.	Objective	Actions to achieve objective	Target Date	KPI	Responsible
Objective 1 – Achieve Greater Value for Money					
1.1	Reduce ‘legacy contract’ procurement arrangements /promote prompt re-engagement of the market	Monitoring spend on organisation-wide goods and services to ensure that valid and live contracts are in place for such goods/ services and where goods/ services are found to be drawing from expired ‘legacy contracts’ (non-compliant procurement), supporting the relevant department to re-engage the market to ensure value for money and ensure a competitive procurement environment.	Ongoing	% of spend under ‘Non-compliant Procurement Process’ on Agresso	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team
1.2	Promote collaborative procurement across Directorates/ consolidation of suppliers	Continue the collaborative procurement arrangements across Directorates - consolidating the number of suppliers for the good or service being provided or by establishing Clare County Council established frameworks.	Ongoing	Number of new internal collaborative procurement procedures established	Procurement and Capital Support Team
1.3	Mandatory use of National Framework agreements/ Dynamic Purchasing Systems	Continue to mandate that where Council buyers can utilise a central purchasing arrangement (OGP, SupplyGov) that these platforms are used given the economies of scale / value for money that these frameworks/DPS offer to public bodies.	Ongoing	Number of centralised procurement arrangements used	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team
Objective 2 – Support Service Delivery & Achieve Strategic Directives in Corporate Plan					
2.1	Strategic Directives in Corporate Plan	Corporate Plan reference: <i>“adherence to legislation, the public spending code (Infrastructure Guidelines) and public procurement requirements, continuous improvement in standards, monitoring business and financial performance, ensuring value for money across all the Council’s activities”</i> . Accordingly, the Procurement Team will continue to advise Council staff on public procurement requirements through training, emails and Quarterly Procurement Bulletins.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x Quarterly Procurement Bulletins • Annual Inhouse Procurement Training 	Procurement and Capital Support Team
2.2	Strategic Directives in Corporate Plan	Corporate Plan reference: <i>Green Public Procurement: “adhere to the Government’s GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations”</i> and	Ongoing	% of Clare Co Co Tenders on eTenders incorporating	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team



		<p><i>“ensure GPP is mainstreamed through all sections of Clare County Council”</i></p> <p>Clare County Council will adhere to the Government’s GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations which are set out in the Clare County Council GPP Strategy.</p>		GPP into the tender	
Objective 3 – Embed Transparency and Accountability in Procurement Practices					
3.1	Review and enhance the Procurement Section on Council Website	Review and update the Procurement section of the Clare County Council website to make our procurement processes more transparent to the Public. Examine other Local Authorities websites’ in regard to their Procurement related information and establish best practice. Create links to OGP’s existing and schedule of frameworks, and a link to the Council’s tenders on eTenders. Provide information to local suppliers on how they can register for eTenders and SupplyGov.	Q3 2025	Procurement part of CCC website is updated.	Procurement and Capital Support Team
Objective 4 – Ensure Adherence to Procurement Policies and Procedures, Procurement Directives, Legislation, Circulars and Other Legal Requirements					
4.1	Compliance with Circular 5/23 (Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement)	Ensure compliance with Circular 5/23 (Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement) and the use of eTenders system for advertising of all contracts above the €50,000 threshold for goods and services and €200,000 for works; and ensure that the requirement for publishing Contract Award Notices for all contracts over €25,000 are adhered to.	Ongoing	% of Contract Award Notices published vs Tenders published	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team
4.2	Compliance with the EU Procurement Directive	Ensure Compliance with the EU Procurement Directive and, conscious of the impending revision of the EU Procurement Directive, provide any feedback as requested by the OGP into the processes to update the Directive.	Ongoing	% of spend under ‘Non-compliant Procurement Process’ on Agresso	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team
Objective 5 – Develop the Procurement Function					
5.1	Procurement Courses on MyCompliance training platform	Explore if Procurement Training courses can be rolled out on the MyCompliance training platform.	Q3 2025	MyCompliance Procurement training course launched	Procurement and Capital Support Team



5.2	Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures /HR new joiners 'starter pack'	Explore if the Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures Manual can be added to the new joiners 'starter pack' issued by Human Resources to new joiners.	Q4 2025	Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures Manual added to the new joiners 'starter pack' (if acceptable to HR)	Procurement and Capital Support Team
5.3	In-house procurement training	Continue to hold in-house procurement training sessions that are open to all staff to attend.	Q4 2025/ 2026/ 2027	In-house Procurement Training rolled out	Procurement and Capital Support Team
Objective 6 – Advance Green Public Procurement And Socially Responsible Public Procurement					
6.1	Government's GPP Strategy and Action Plan	Clare County Council will adhere to the Government's GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations which are set out in the Clare County Council GPP Strategy.	Ongoing	% of Clare Co Co Tenders on eTenders incorporating GPP into the tender	All Budget Holders/ Procurement and Capital Support Team
6.2	GPP Criteria Search tool	The Procurement Team will promote the use of the GPP Criteria Search tool within the organisation.	Ongoing	N/A	Procurement and Capital Support Team
6.3	GPP Training	The Procurement Team will conduct annual staff training in relation to GPP with a priority focus on key goods/services/works applicable to Clare County Council.	Q4 2025/ 2026/ 2027	Annual GPP training conducted	Procurement and Capital Support Team
6.4	Socially Responsible Public Procurement Training	The Procurement Team will conduct annual staff training in relation to Socially Responsible Public Procurement. This training will focus on the recently adopted Clare County Council Social Considerations Charter.	Q4 2025/ 2026/ 2027	Annual Socially Responsible Public Procurement Training	Procurement and Capital Support Team