



Yarra Ranges Council

Procurement Policy 2024-2028

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Responsible Officer	Director Corporate Services
Department	Financial Services
Contact Officer	Executive Officer – Strategic Procurement

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Version Control

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Contact Officer	Executive Officer – Strategic Procurement
Department	Financial Services
Review	This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if required

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Revisions
Final V1.1	11 Aug 2022	1st Annual Review
Revision Draft V0.2	22 March 2024	Procurement Services team and Project Steering Committee review
Revision – Final V2.0	10 April 2024	Document cleaned to show only the accepted marked up changes, removed comments and accepted formatting changes
Version 5.0	29 April 2024	Presented to ELT for consideration prior to presentation to ARMC, Councillors and Council.
Version Draft 6.0	05 June 2024	Presented to Council Forum 04 Jun 24 – requested changes included in this version
Version Final V1.0	25 June 2024	Presented to Council meeting – endorsed 25 June 2024

Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Definition
Act	Local Government Act 2020 .
Australian Disability Enterprises	Commonwealth-funded and generally not-for-profit organisations operating in a commercial context, specifically to provide supportive employment opportunities to people with moderate to severe disability. Some Australian Disability Enterprises also operate as Social Enterprises. Under the Social Procurement Framework, the Victorian Government encourages engagement with Victorian Australian Disability Enterprises that offer award based pay rates for all staff
Category	A segment of expenditure which contain similar or related products, enabling focus opportunities for consolidation and efficiency
Collaborative Procurement Arrangement	A contract established by the Council, government or a nominated agent, such as Procurement Australia, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Eastern Region Group of Councils or a local government entity, for the benefit of numerous state, federal and/or local government entities that achieves best value by leveraging combined economies of scale.
Commercial in Confidence	Information that, if released, may prejudice the business dealings or commercial interests of Council or another party, e.g. prices, discounts, rebates, profits, methodologies, and process information, etc.
Contract Management	The process that ensures all parties to a contract fully meet their respective obligations as efficiently and effectively as possible, in order to deliver the contract objectives and provide Value for Money.
Contract Management System	At the time of publication of this Procurement Policy, is the Open Windows provide solution referred to within Council as 'CMS'. The Open Windows solution is also used to provide the eTendering Portal.
Council	Yarra Ranges Council
Councillors	Council's elected representatives (the Mayor and Councillors) or administrator(s) (as the case may be) appointed to act in this capacity.
Council Staff	Includes all Council officers, temporary employees, contractors, volunteers and consultants while engaged by Council.
ELT (Executive Leadership Team)	Council's Executive Leadership Team, comprising of Council's CEO and Directors
Ethical Sourcing	Ensuring that goods and services provided are obtained through responsible and sustainable methods and in line with applicable legislation, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods – ensuring that the workers who make the products are paid a fair wage and all human rights are met, the factories are clean and safe environments to work in, and that all social and environmental aspects of production to the workers and the surrounding communities are considered; and

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services or works – ensuring that the workers who provide their services and deliver the works, whether through direct engagement contractors and / or sub-contractors, are paid a fair wage in line with relevant legislation, all human rights are met, and workplaces are clean and safe environments to work in; <p>and in accordance with the Ethical Sourcing Code of Conduct</p>
Financial Management System	At the time of publication of the Procurement Policy is the TechnologyOne provided solution referred to within Council as 'YRConnect'.
Indigenous Business	<p>An Indigenous Business, as defined by the Victorian Government, means a business that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 50% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander-owned; undertaking commercial activity; and mainly located in Victoria <p>The Indigenous Business sector includes for-profit businesses, Traditional Owner corporations, Social Enterprises and community enterprises in metropolitan and regional areas</p>
Local supplier	Local suppliers are defined as businesses or sole traders that are either based in the Yarra Ranges municipality, perform the majority of their operations in this region or employ a significant number of local residents in their business.
Material breach	Any breach of this policy that may also represent a breach of legislation or policy such as tendering thresholds, fraud or corruption, and occupational health and safety.
Probity	Within government, the term "probity" is often used in a general sense to mean "good process". A procurement process that conforms to the expected standards of probity is one in which clear procedures that are consistent with the Council's policies and legislation, are established, understood, and followed from the outset. These procedures need to consider the legitimate interests of suppliers and ensure that all potential suppliers are treated equitably.
Procurement	Procurement is the whole process of acquisition of external goods, services and works. This process spans the whole life cycle from initial concept through to the end of the useful life of an asset (including disposal) or the end of a service contract.
Quick Quote Process	The process to purchase goods, works, and or services between \$2,000 and \$19,999 (Excl. GST) by obtaining one written quote from either an existing supplier contract, a panel supplier or from the open market. The quote is reviewed to ensure that risks are mitigated, requirements are met, and Council is achieving value for money. The process is managed by Council Officers with oversight and approval from Executive Officers/Managers. The Contract consists of the Terms and Conditions of a Council generated Purchase Order combined with the quote.

Term	Definition
Regulations	Any applicable regulations in force from time to time under the Act.
Schedule of Rates Contract	A standing offer arrangement based on a Schedule of Rates contract that sets out rates for goods and services which are available for the term of the agreement but without a commitment to purchase a specified value or quantity of goods or services.
Simple Quote Process	The process to purchase goods, works, and or services between \$20,000 and \$49,999 (Excl. GST) by seeking three written quotes from either existing supplier contracts, panel suppliers and or from the open market. A risk assessment is conducted, and the quotes are reviewed and evaluated to choose the most appropriate supplier based on risks being mitigated, requirements met, and Council achieving value for money. The process is managed by Council Officers with oversight and approval from Executive Officers and or Managers. The Contract consists of the Terms and Conditions of a Council generated Purchase Order combined with the successful suppliers quote.
Social enterprise	Businesses that trade to intentionally tackle social problems, improve communities, provide people access to employment and training, or help the environment. They derive most of their income from trade (not donations or grants) and use the majority of their profits (at least 50%) to contribute to their social mission. Among other benefits, Social Enterprises play an important role in providing transitional employment for disadvantaged job seekers, including people with disability, as a pathway to employment in mainstream businesses. Social Enterprises can also provide ongoing employment options for disadvantaged job seekers who may not be well placed to sustain mainstream employment over the longer term.
Strategic Procurement Team	The team of procurement staff within Council's Corporate Services Directorate acknowledged as the authorised owners of the procurement function and appointed to provide management, oversight, advice and guidance in relation to Council's procurement policy, processes and procedures and, to ensure that the procurement policy, processes and procedures are complied with by all Council staff.
Supplier code of conduct	Council's Supplier Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour that a supplier agrees to aspire to when engaged by Council.
Sustainability	Activities that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs in line with Council policy.
Tender Process	The process of inviting parties from either a select list or via public advertisement to submit an offer by tender followed by evaluation of submissions and selection of a successful bidder or tenderer in accordance with pre-determined evaluation criteria.

Term	Definition
Total Contract Sum / Contract Value	<p>The potential total value or total cost of ownership of the lifetime of the procurement, inclusive of reasonable contingency allowances and optional contractual extension periods, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs for the full term of the contract, including any options for either party to extend the contract; • allowances for any market variables, as negotiated and agreed: • provisional items; • anticipated contingency allowances or variations, and • all other known, anticipated and reasonably foreseeable costs.
Value for Money	<p>Value for Money in procurement is one of five principles within the Act, and refers to selecting the supply of goods, services and works considering both cost and non-cost factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-cost factors such as contribution to the advancement of Council's priorities, fitness for purpose, quality, service and support, and • cost-related factors including whole-of-life costs and transaction costs associated with acquiring, using, holding, maintaining, and disposing of the goods, services or works.

Procurement Policy

1. Overview

This Procurement Policy is made under Section 108 of the Local Government Act 2020, (The Act). The Act requires Council to (amongst other things):

- prepare, adopt and comply with a procurement policy which specifies the principles, processes and procedures applying to all purchases of goods and services and carrying out of works by the council to promote open and fair competition and provide value for money;
- establish the thresholds and processes for public procurements;
- provide for collaboration in procurement with other councils or public bodies; and
- review its procurement policy at least once during each 4-year term of the council.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Procurement Policy is to:

- establish a procurement framework to achieve continual improvement and Value for Money in the timely acquisition of goods, works and services;
- ensure consistency, control and best practice over procurement activities;
- ensure Council resources are used efficiently and effectively to improve the overall quality of life for people in the local community;
- support the achievement of Council's strategies, aims and objectives as stated in the Council Plan prepared and adopted by Council under section 90 of the Act;
- support collaboration and partnership opportunities, including through Collaborative Procurement Arrangements;
- provide guidance and achieve high standards of Probity, transparency, accountability and risk management; and
- enhance Council's ability to obtain the best outcome from purchasing activities referring to a range of considerations, including but not limited to environmental, health and safety financial, ethical sourcing, social sustainability and support for the local economy.

3. Scope

Procurement is the whole process of acquisition of external goods, services or works. It can include planning, design, standards determination, specification writing, preparation of quotation and tender documentation, selection of suppliers, financing, contract administration, disposals, and other related functions. This process spans the whole life cycle from initial concept through to the end of the useful life of an asset (including disposal) or the end of a service contract.

Procurement also includes the organisational and governance frameworks that underpin the procurement function.

This Procurement Policy represents the principles that will be applied to all procurement activity undertaken by Council. The application of this Procurement Policy commences when Council has identified a need to procure goods, works or services, and continues through to the delivery of goods or completion of works or services.

This Procurement Policy will apply to Councillors, Council Staff and all persons undertaking procurement on Council's behalf. Council Officer must ensure compliance with this Procurement Policy when procuring any goods, services, and or works.

4. Policy non-compliance

Non-compliance with this Procurement Policy may result in a contravention of legislative requirements (including contravention of the Act) and disciplinary action that could include dismissal. In addition, criminal and civil penalties may be imposed if any Councillor or Council Staff act in contravention of any laws, including (without limitation) laws regarding fraud, corruption, bribery or Australian competition and consumer laws. Refer to section 15 of this Procurement Policy for further details regarding the reporting of fraud or complaints.

5. Principles

Council will apply the following fundamental best practice principles to every procurement activity irrespective of the value and complexity of that procurement:

- Value for Money;
- fitness for purpose;
- open and fair competition;
- accountability;
- risk management; and
- Probity and transparency.

Council is also committed to reducing its environmental impacts, while generating benefits to the broader community and economy.

Council will seek to do this by:

- encouraging the design and use of products and services that have been produced to ethical standards, which have minimal impact on the environment and human health and welfare;
- having considerations for Indigenous engagement where possible;
- fostering a viable market for sustainable products and services by supporting business and industry groups that demonstrate innovation in Sustainability; and
- supporting suppliers that are socially responsible and adopt ethical practices.

6. Delegations

Any procurement spend with a value greater than \$1,000,000 (excl GST) can only be entered into by a resolution of Council.

For procurement spend below \$1,000,000 (excl GST), Council will maintain and apply a scheme of procurement controls and delegations for Council Staff authorised to make such procurement commitments in respect of goods, services and / or works.

Council procurement processes will require authorisation from Council Staff with sufficient financial delegation before Council enters into any binding contracts for the purchase of goods, services and / or works.

Table1. Financial Delegations

Financial Delegation (Exclusive. GST)	Delegate
In excess of \$1,000,000	Council
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	Chief Executive Officer
\$250,001 - \$500,000	Director
\$50,001 - \$250,000	Manager
\$5,001 - \$50,000	Executive Officer
Up to \$5,000	Band 7
Up to \$1,000	Band 6 or 5 in line with role responsibilities

7. Probity and ethics

Council's procurement activities are to be performed in an open, transparent and ethical manner with demonstrated integrity, fairness and accountability that meets relevant legal requirements at all times.

7.1 Conduct of Councillors and Council staff

Councillors and Council Staff will at all times act in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct or the Staff Code of Conduct respectively. They must perform their duties ethically and with integrity, and must:

- treat potential and existing suppliers with equality and fairness;
- not use their position to seek or receive personal gain in procurement matters;
- maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence Information;
- present the highest standards of professionalism and Probity;
- afford suppliers and prospective suppliers with the same information and an equal opportunity to participate in a competitive procurement process, such as any tender or quote for goods, services or works contracts;
- be able to account for all decisions and demonstrate and provide evidence of the processes followed;
- not perform any work, deliver services or supply goods under any Council contracts that those Council Staff are supervising i.e. Council Staff cannot also work for the relevant supplier;
- report to the relevant director or department manager any behaviour by a contractor and / or supplier that may be considered to disrupt a fair and equitable procurement process;
- query incidents, decisions or directions that appear to contradict or deviate from Council's standards of ethics or Probity or established policies and procedures; and
- ensure that this Procurement Policy is adhered to in relation to any expenditure of Council funds.

7.2 Councillors' roles in procurement activities

The Councillors have a limited role in procurement activity and may be briefed on significant procurements during the procurement process. The role of Councillors may include providing general feedback during the project initiation phase that will assist the responsible service units to achieve their intended outcomes and overall community benefits. Councillors may be briefed of the scope and intentions of a procurement via involvement in Councillor bulletins, Councillor briefings or memoranda to Councillors.

In line with a Councillors' obligations, including under the Act and the Councillor Code of Conduct, Councillors are not permitted to form part of an evaluation panel or take on the responsibilities of a procurement sponsor, project director, contract superintendent/manager or similar.

Strict probity requirements set in the planning stage of a procurement must be adhered to during the evaluation and award stages of that procurement. Evaluation panel members must not disclose to any Councillors any element of an evaluation process while submissions are under consideration

7.3 Conflict of interest

Councillors and Council Staff must, at all times, endeavour to avoid situations which may give rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may be a 'general' or a 'material' conflict of interest. In the event that any Conflict of Interest situations were to occur, Councillors and Council staff must declare these to the relevant manager or director immediately and in accordance with Council's Conflict of Interest Policy.

A member of Council Staff has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

A member of Council Staff has a material conflict of interest in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. The benefit or loss may be direct or indirect and pecuniary or non-pecuniary. Affected persons include, among others, the member of Council Staff and their family members.

Any Council Staff or other person engaged to provide advice or services to Council, must disclose any general or material interest before providing advice or reports.

In procurement matters, all Councillors and Council Staff (as the case may be) involved in any stage of the procurement process, including (without limitation) the preparation of specifications, procurement or contract documentation, the evaluation of responses, quotations or tenders, or the awarding of any contracts, must:

- avoid conflicts of interest, whether material or general or actual, potential or perceived, wherever possible (this includes the receipt of any gifts, benefits or hospitality, as further detailed in section 7.6 of this Procurement Policy);
- complete and lodge a conflict of interest declaration in respect of the procurement;
- observe Council's Conflict of Interest Policy and guidelines on how to prevent or manage any conflicts of interest; and
- immediately disclose any conflict of interest in accordance with the relevant legislation and Council's Governance Rules if they become aware of a conflict throughout the duration of the procurement activity.

7.4 Open and fair competition

All prospective suppliers must be treated fairly, with access to the same information to afford them an equal opportunity to tender, submit a quotation or otherwise participate in a competitive procurement process.

Impartiality must be maintained in selecting suppliers to fulfil Council's needs.

Council will provide open and honest feedback to suppliers who participate in any competitive procurement process for Council's business, subject to confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence information.

Any suspected improper conduct, including (without limitation) suspected fraud, corruption, substantial mismanagement of public resources, risk to public health and safety, risk to the environment or other detrimental action must be managed by members of Council Staff in accordance with Council's internal policies and processes. Refer to section 15 of this Procurement Policy regarding the reporting of fraud and complaints for further details.

7.5 Probity, accountability and transparency

Accountability in procurement means being able to justify and provide evidence of the process followed. An independent third party must be able to see clearly that a process has been followed and that the process was fair and reasonable.

Council Staff must be able to account for all procurement decisions and ensure all procurement activities leave an audit trail for monitoring and reporting purposes.

7.6 Gifts, benefits and hospitality

Under no circumstance should Council Staff or Councillors involved in the procurement of goods, works or services seek or accept any immediate or future reward or benefit from a potential or actual supplier, regardless of value.

Any gift or benefit offered to a Councillor or Council Staff will be managed in accordance the Councillor and Council Employee Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policies.

Councillors and Council Staff, particularly contract supervisors must not knowingly:

- visit a current supplier's premises without invitation when acting in their official capacity; and
- engage a Council supplier for private benefit, unless that engagement is on proper commercial terms.

Refer to section 7.3 of this Procurement Policy for further details on how conflicts of interest are to be managed and addressed.

7.7 Disclosure of information

"To maintain transparency, Council may publish externally a successful respondent's price, in any evaluation reports that are presented to Council. .

Council may publish a summary of awarded contracts via public reports or on Council's website, including but not limited to:

- the contract number, title and type;
- name of the successful supplier;
- value of the contract; or

- contract duration.

Subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*, the Act and any other relevant legislation, Commercial in Confidence Information received by Council must not be disclosed and is to be stored in a secure manner.

Councillors and Council Staff must avoid references to current or proposed contracts in discussions with acquaintances or outside interests.

Discussions with potential suppliers during any tender, quotation or other competitive procurement process evaluations must not go beyond the extent necessary to resolve doubt on:

- the services, goods or work that Council is seeking to procure; or
- what is being offered by that potential supplier.

At no stage should any discussions be entered into which could:

- improperly influence the procurement process;
- improperly influence the negotiation of a contract; or
- have potential contractual implications,

prior to the contract approval process being finalised, other than authorised pre-contract negotiations.

Failure to maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence Information is a breach of the Council Code of Conduct.

7.8 Charter of Human Rights

Council will ensure that all of its procurement operations are consistent with the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, including that Act's fundamental rights.

8. Governance

8.1 Structure

Council will operate a centre-led / decentralised procurement structure, wherein all strategy, policy, procedures, technology, best practice and networking in procurement matters will be led by the Strategic Procurement team.

A procurement lead from the Strategic Procurement team will be allocated to provide assistance, oversight and probity advice to Council Staff for all procurement activities with an estimated contract value greater than \$250,000 excl GST, where appropriate.

Council's Procurement Guidelines and templates are available on Council's Intranet and have been developed to provide assistance to Council Staff when undertaking procurement activities.

8.2 Controls

Council will maintain a framework of internal controls over procurement processes that will ensure:

- more than one person is involved in and responsible for each procurement, end to end;
- transparency in the procurement process;
- a clearly documented audit trail exists for procurement activities;
- appropriate authorisations are obtained, exercised and documented;

- systems are in place for appropriate monitoring and performance measurement; and
- a process is in place for escalation, where appropriate, of procurement matters (including procedural non-compliance) to the relevant Director, ELT, the Audit and Risk Management Committee or Council itself.

8.3 Financial accountability

All Council Staff are to ensure that procurement approvals are in accordance with Council financial policies and delegations, as determined by Council and the CEO, under instruments of delegation. Responsibility for financial management must be accepted and adhered to by Council Staff in undertaking any procurement activities. Council funds must be used efficiently and effectively to procure goods, works and services and every attempt must be made to contain the costs of the procurement process without compromising any of the procurement principles as set out in this Procurement Policy.

Council Staff must:

- ensure the availability of funds within an approved budget must be established prior to the commencement of any procurement;
- not authorise the expenditure of funds in excess of the applicable financial delegation for their position (as per Council's Financial Delegation and Authorisations Policy);
- not authorise or write multiple purchase orders to avoid the authorisation process requirements or circumvent their procurement or financial authority;
- not approve expenditure that relates to them personally – any expenditure of this nature must be referred to the next higher level of authority for approval; and
- consistent with section 9.4 and 9.5 of this Procurement Policy, ensure that any purchase orders are generated at the point where the commitment to purchase goods, services or works has been made Internal compliance reporting

Appropriate performance measures and reporting systems must be used and followed to monitor performance and compliance with procurement policies and procedures. This will include but not be limited to regular review of contract variations (as further discussed at section 9.8 of this Procurement Policy) and compliance with this Procurement Policy.

Material Breaches of this Procurement Policy must be reported as soon as practicable to the relevant Manager, Director and CEO, and periodically to the Audit and Risk Management Committee. See section 4 of this Procurement Policy regarding non-compliance and section 15 for reporting fraud or corruption.

9. Procurement thresholds

For the purposes of assessing procurement thresholds under this Procurement Policy, estimated contract values must be inclusive of reasonable contingency allowances and optional contractual extension periods. Consideration should also be given to the total cost of ownership over the lifetime of the procurement, including but not limited to quality, reliability, risk, sustainability and delivery considerations. Due diligence must be exercised to ensure that realistic assessments are made of all factors which may impact the value of a contract.

Contracts must not be split to avoid proper process or circumvent the requirements of this Procurement Policy.

9.1 Contract value thresholds and procurement requirements

Section 108 of the Act details that each council will set the contract value above which tenders or expressions of interest for contracts must be invited. The Regulations may also set contract value thresholds above which Council must invite a tender or seek an expression of interest. As at the date of this Procurement Policy, no such thresholds have been set in the Regulations.

Subject to an exemption set out in the table at section 9.2 of this Procurement Policy, a public Tender Process or expression of interest process, must be used for all procurement spends valued at \$250,000 (excl GST) and above for goods, services and / or works.

A competitive tender and / or expression of interest process may also be called for the purchase of goods, services and / or works where the estimated expenditure is below the designated threshold, but this process would assist in achieving a greater Value for Money outcome and or, the outcome of the risk management assessment has deemed it necessary.

Except where Council believes a competitive procurement process should be called for (as contemplated immediately above in this section 9.1, or the purchase conforms with the requirements as detailed in section 10.10 Panel Arrangements, for procurements under \$250,000 (excl GST), the procurement requirements detailed in Table 2. Procurement Spend Thresholds below will apply.

Table 2. Procurement Spend Thresholds

Estimated total procurement spend (Excl GST)	Procurement requirement	Contract, Contract Number and Rapid Global Requirement	Purchase Order Requirement	Document Storage
Up to \$1,999	Best price available, verbal or written quote	Not required	Not required	Against Invoice, Credit Card reconciliation or Payroll Reimbursement record in Finance System
\$2,000 to \$19,999	Obtain at least one written quotation – Quick Quote Process	Not required	Yes	Attach quotes to Purchase Requisition in Finance System
\$20,000 to \$49,999	Seek three quotes in line with the Simple Quotes process	No unless High Risk Rating	Yes	Attach quotes to Purchase Requisition in Finance System
\$50,000 and <\$249,999	Best endeavours to obtain three or more written quotations, as part of a Request for Quote (RFQ) process	Yes	Yes	Contract Management System (CMS)

Estimated total procurement spend (Excl GST)	Procurement requirement	Contract, Contract Number and Rapid Global Requirement	Purchase Order Requirement	Document Storage
\$250,000 and above	Expression of Interest (EOI) and / or Tender Process	Yes – via request to procurement	Yes	Saved in Contract Management System (CMS)

Where possible, officers seeking quotations should seek at least one quote from a local business or provider.

Any exemptions from the above Procurement Thresholds must be sought in accordance with section 9.2 of this Policy.

9.2 Exemptions from competitive procurement processes

Unless the Act or Regulations require otherwise from time to time, the following circumstances are exempt from the requirements of a competitive procurement process (such as a general publicly advertised tender, quotation, or expression of interest).

Table 3. Exemption Types

Exemption type	Explanation, limitations, responsibilities, and approvals
A contract required because of a genuine emergency or hardship	See section 9.3 of this Procurement Policy for further details regarding Emergencies.
Government entity / approved third party	<p>This general exemption allows engagements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> with another government entity or government owned entity. For example, Federal, State or Local Government or an entity owned by a Federal, State or Local Government; in reliance on contracts and pre-qualified panels established by another government entity, local authority or local government group purchasing scheme, such as Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) or National Procurement network members (e.g. Local Buy), Procurement Australia (PA); and / or for purchases up to \$249,999 (GST exclusive), using Yarra Ranges Council prequalified supplier panels that have established price books and or schedule of rates in place.
Extension of contracts while Council is at market	Allows Council to extend an existing contract where the procurement process to replace the contract has commenced, and where the Tender Process or negotiations will take or are taking longer than expected.

Exemption type	Explanation, limitations, responsibilities, and approvals
	This exemption may be used when the establishment of an interim arrangement with an alternative supplier is considered not to be in the public interest, as it may be cost prohibitive and/or present a risk in the delivery of critical public services to the municipality. The term for this arrangement may vary to align with the time extension required to conduct the tender process and to allow for transition to a new supplier where applicable.
Professional services unsuitable for tendering	Legal services Insurance
Contract variations (that are not in effect new contracts)	See section 9.8 for further details regarding the procurement procedure to be observed for contract variations.
Novated contracts	Where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with the Act and Council's Procurement Policy and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to a new prospective supplier.
Information technology solutions, resellers, developers, and support service providers	Allows Council to renew software licenses, maintenance and support, or upgrade existing systems, where there is only one supplier of the software, who holds the intellectual property rights to the software and or the solution has been reviewed and approved in line with the Council's Information Technology Strategy, and assessed and confirmed to be meeting business requirements,
Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Groups	Situations where a Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Group constituted under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i> had already conducted a public Tender Process for and on behalf of its member councils.
Operating leases	Where a lessor leases an asset (generally a vehicle or plant and equipment) to Council and assumes the residual value risk of the vehicle.
Social Enterprise	For goods, works or services less than the tendering threshold excl GST, where a Social Enterprise is directly engaged. (Refer to section 12.3 of this Procurement Policy) and or in the case of State or Federal Government funding agreements, where applicable Council must still be able to demonstrate Value for Money in the course of the procurement process.

Exemption type	Explanation, limitations, responsibilities, and approvals
Proven monopoly or specialised market	<p>Statutory compulsory monopoly insurance schemes, i.e. Workcover, motor vehicle compulsory third party.</p> <p>Other statutory bodies such as water supply, electricity connections.</p> <p>Legislatively required services, such as Aboriginal Land Council.</p> <p>Where the work, goods or services requires a culturally specific supplier i.e. suppliers from Indigenous or Traditional Owner communities.</p> <p>When supply of goods, services or works can only be sought from a monopoly supplier, for example the marketplace is restricted by a statement of licence, technology or third-party ownership of an asset (i.e. telecommunication pits).</p> <p>If there are few suppliers for the goods, services or works being sought or where the work is highly specialised.</p>
Other	<p>Subscriptions</p> <p>Memberships</p> <p>Medical</p> <p>Advertising</p> <p>Postage and delivery charges</p> <p>Tolls and cab charges</p> <p>Loans</p> <p>Creative endeavours such as stage shows, bands, performers</p>

In addition to the listed exemptions, the CEO or relevant director (in accordance with financial delegations) may grant an exemption from seeking responses via a competitive procurement process, such as tenders or multiple quotations, when it can be demonstrated that:

- it is in the public interest;
- Council is still obtaining Value for Money in the process adopted; and
- the process is defensible and able to withstand internal and external scrutiny – one which achieves both accountability and transparency.

Prior to seeking approval for any exemption, advice and direction must be sought from the relevant department manager with review by the Strategic Procurement team. It is the responsibility of the relevant department managers to review the total cumulative spend with that prospective supplier and ensure that the justification requirements for the exemption have been met.

For engagement of suppliers on Yarra Ranges Council and or approved Government Entity prequalified panels that have established price books and or schedule of rates in place, approvals up to \$249,999 (GST exclusive) fall within normal Council Delegation of Approval processes and are not required to be endorsed by either the Strategic Procurement team or related Director.

Use of all other listed exemptions must be endorsed by the appropriate Director and the Strategic Procurement team.

9.3 Procurement during an emergency

Where an Emergency has occurred, Council's CEO may authorise procurements without the need for a competitive procurement process where the CEO is of the opinion that delays in obtaining and analysing quotations or similar would unduly frustrate or delay any response to the Emergency.

Once the effects of the Emergency have passed, all further procurement should be in compliance with this Procurement Policy, the Act and other relevant legislation.

For the purposes of this section, an Emergency is defined as a sudden or unexpected event or occurrence requiring immediate action and includes:

- the occurrence of a natural disaster, hazard, flooding or fire event at or in relation to Council property or Council's municipality;
- the unforeseen cessation of trading of a business critical service provider; or
- any other situation which is liable to constitute a risk to life, health, well-being or property.

9.4 Purchase order requirements

The purchase of goods, works and services must be acquired under an official purchase order that documents the type of services, items, and/or quantities and agreed price.

The purchase order must be raised and approved before any commitment is made to purchase goods, works or services from a supplier in the Financial Management System. In other words, the purchase order must be raised when the goods, services or works are ordered and not when an invoice is received by Council.

The purchase order must clearly and explicitly communicate Council's requirements. Once accepted by the supplier, the purchase order is binding on both Council and the supplier and any procurement spend is limited by and must not exceed the purchase order.

9.5 Exemptions from raising purchase orders

The Manager Financial Services (CFO) will maintain a listing of expenditure types that are exempt from the requirement to raise a purchase order. These exemptions may be revised from time to time in consultation with ELT and Council's Audit & Risk Management Committee.

9.6 Probity planning

A probity plan is required where the value of the procurement is greater than \$5 million (excl GST) and or where the procurement is considered sensitive, complex, or high risk (Probity Plan).

The Probity Plan is to be reviewed and approved by the relevant Director and relevant Procurement Lead.

The Probity Plan must identify whether a Probity advisor and/or Probity auditor needs to be engaged for the procurement process.

In the event a Probity auditor or advisor is appointed, such appointment should be made before the competitive procurement process specifications and documentation are completed.

9.7 Cumulative spend thresholds

The Strategic Procurement Team will monitor and report to ELT and / or the Audit and Risk Management Committee on supplier cumulative spend at least annually. If expenditure with a supplier or a number of suppliers providing similar goods, services or works is ongoing in nature and the cumulative spend is likely to exceed the public tender or EOI expenditure threshold over a rolling two year period, then Council will review the opportunity to pursue a contract for the aggregated purchase of such goods, services or works through a competitive procurement process.

Expenditure that was procured through a competitive process may be excluded from the cumulative spend analysis.

9.8 Contract variations

9.8.1 Contract Variations – Within Projects

Approval for Contract variation expenditure within Projects will follow and comply with the guidelines as described below in 9.8.1.1.

All contract variations must be assessed to determine whether they are properly characterised as variations or whether they are in effect a new contract. This will depend on factors like:

- the monetary value of the proposed variation, i.e., the value of the variation in the context of the thresholds fixed by this Procurement Policy at section 9.1; and
- the subject matter of the proposed variation, and whether it is consistent with the scope of the sourcing process completed and the contract executed.
- Council Staff should seek guidance from the Strategic Procurement team when considering contract variations.
- If the contract variation is deemed to be a new contract, then a competitive procurement process may be required as set out in section 9.1.

Council Staff should be cautious in readily determining that a contract variation is not a new contract, in order to minimise the risk of investigation into Council's processes, reputational damage to Council or complaint by dissatisfied and unsuccessful suppliers. Council Staff should seek guidance from the Strategic Procurement team when considering contract variations.

9.8.1.1 Approving Contract Variations within Projects

Table 4. Contract Variation Approvals

Variation Type 1: Significant Contract Variations The cumulative value of all proposed variations is 20% or more of the Original Contract Value, including any contingency and provisional items:	
Variation detail	Approved by
Cumulative variations greater than \$500K	CEO
Cumulative variations greater than \$250K but less than \$500K	Director
Cumulative variations less than \$250K	Manager

Variation Type 2: All other Contract Variations that are not Type 1 (above)	
Variation detail	Approved by
The variation is within the approved budget(s) for the contract, and one off or cumulative variations do not exceed the original contract sum by 20%.	The cumulative variation amount must be within the approving Officer's financial delegation

9.8.2 Contract Variations – for ongoing Goods, Services and Works Contracts

The relevant department manager should be consulted for all Contract Variation expenditure relating to existing contracts that are providing Goods, Services and or Works in an ongoing in nature.

The procurement team are available to provide advice and guidance in determining the variation strategy and advise of the process to be followed. Approvals will be in line with the tables above in 9.8.1 or as advised, depending on a variety of factors, including but not limited to, the situation, contract terms and conditions, value of the variation and risks associated.

10. Procurement processes

Council's standard methods of procurement include:

- purchase (Credit) cards;
- payment cards (i.e. fuel, store issued credit);
- Purchase Order (PO) / Quotation;
- formal Request for Quotation (RFQ);
- Request for Tender (RFT);
- Request for Proposal (RFP); and
- Expressions of Interest (EOI).

10.1 Public notice and communication

All public tenders or similar competitive procurement processes invited by Council will be published via Council's eTendering Portal and may be advertised in the media.

The eTendering Portal will also be used to provide access to public documentation (during the relevant open period), including without limitation, addenda, contract award information, guidelines for doing business with Council, Council standard terms and conditions and standard drawings and civil specifications (as the case may be).

10.2 Market engagement

Council recognises that in order to achieve sustainable outcomes and Value for Money, a strategic assessment of the approach to market should be undertaken to determine whether to approach the market directly, participate in regional or sector wide Collaborative Procurement Arrangements, access aggregator or State Government contracts or use other means.

Council will consider supply arrangements that are more likely to deliver the best value outcomes in terms of time, expertise, cost, Value for Money and quality, as such lowest price is not necessarily the sole determinate of selecting a supplier.

Suppliers will be encouraged to compete for Council work and services. Where appropriate, Council will encourage new suppliers for categories that have low competition.

Council will also carefully plan how it packages its requirements for significant goods, services and works by considering the market landscape (competitiveness, market size and Local Supplier capabilities) so as to maximise competition and optimise the best Value for Money outcome for Council.

Council recognises the importance of effective and open working relationships with its suppliers and is committed to developing and managing supplier relationships by establishing contracts that set reasonable and fair expectations for suppliers.

10.3 Specifications / project brief

Specifications used in procurements must aim to inform bid and quotation requests. They should aim to accurately detail the services, works or goods required in order to ensure that submissions received address Council's requirements.

Well drafted specifications greatly assist when evaluating submissions as they allow a clearer comparison between offers received. Specifications will be incorporated into the contracts and therefore should be written in a manner that:

- sets out the performance and functional requirements;
- clearly describes what Council wishes to procure;
- ensure impartiality and objectivity;
- encourage the use of standard products;
- takes into consideration Ethical Sourcing requirements;
- encourage sustainability; and
- eliminate unnecessarily stringent or market restricted requirements.

10.4 Late responses

RFQ and or tender submissions received after the submission date and time as advised to the supplier market, will not be accepted unless deemed acceptable by Council's Strategic Procurement team and or relevant Steering Committee, where applicable. Such agreement will take into account factors including but not limited to, circumstances outside of the Tenderers control that is likely to impact more than one Tenderer and or where it is deemed that consideration of the submission/s provides maximum benefit and positive outcomes to the community. .

10.5 Evaluation criteria for Value for Money

Council's procurement activities will be carried out on the basis of obtaining Value for Money, taking into account both financial and qualitative factors, including but not limited to:

- Mandatory tender selection criteria in accordance with section 10.5.2 and as agreed by the tender evaluation team prior to the release of the tender package;
- financial cost to Council;

- capacity of respondents to provide the goods and/or services and/or works;
- capability of respondents to provide the goods and/or services and/or works in accordance with Council’s requirements;
- community benefit, including local, social, economic and/or environmental Sustainability;
- quality; and
- previous experience and past performance.

10.5.1 Minimum criteria weighting

All procurements for goods, services or works of value equal to or greater than \$50,000 (excl GST) must include the following evaluation criteria:

Criterion	Minimum Weighting
Financial Cost to Council / Value for Money	30%
Community Benefit – refer section 12. Community Benefit	5%

The weighting for these criteria may only be varied or excluded with approval from the relevant Director prior to issuing any competitive procurement documentation, such as quote or tender documentation.

10.5.2 Mandatory criteria

Council Staff may consider inclusion of (pass/fail) criteria including, but not limited to:

- occupational health and safety;
- environmental
- insurances;
- licences / qualifications;
- proven capability including customer references;
- Child Safe Standards;
- applicable legal requirements;
- applicable standards or industry best practice; and
- accreditation with professional bodies or Australian Standards certifications.

10.6 Evaluation of tenders and EOIs

All evaluation processes must be transparent, robust, systematic, well-documented and unbiased.

An evaluation panel will be established to evaluate each submission against the selection criteria. Evaluation panels can include external personnel in order to ensure the best outcome (including in respect of Value for Money) for a procurement activity and must comprise at least 3 persons as well as a chairperson.

The delegated procurement lead will not contribute to scoring the submissions but will provide oversight of the evaluation team, the end to end evaluation process and will be the arbitrator of and determine the course of action to be taken where any notable discrepancies, conflicts of interest and / or evidence of perceived bias may be present.

A detailed evaluation plan must be developed, approved and strictly adhered to by that evaluation panel. Amongst other things, the evaluation plan involves the establishment of more detailed evaluation criteria (i.e. than those published with the competitive procurement process) and the application of a pre-approved and robust weighted scoring system. The criteria and weightings may not be changed once the evaluation plan has been approved.

The evaluation plan must be completed and signed-off by the relevant Director and procurement lead, prior to the relevant competitive procurement process closing date.

10.7 Confidentiality

All information related to a procurement activity should be considered Commercial in Confidence Information. Council Staff must take proper and adequate precautions at all times to preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary, financial and Commercial in Confidence Information.

Evaluation panel members are required to sign a Council conflict of interest declaration and confidentiality deed acknowledging their understanding of their requirements to protect Commercial in Confidence Information from unauthorised access or use.

Submissions for any competitive procurement process will be maintained by the Strategic Procurement unit, registered in Council's records management system and access only provided to members of the relevant evaluation panel after completion of Council's conflict of interest declaration and confidentiality deed.

With the exception of senior officers of Council and requests in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic), only persons on the relevant evaluation panel have a need to view any applicable documentation received from respondents to a competitive procurement process.

Security procedures for Commercial in Confidence Information must include the following:

- only those individuals with a direct need are to be granted access to procurement related information;
- document security must be observed, both physical (e.g. locked cabinets) and electronic (e.g. password protected);
- only limited copies of submissions should be produced;
- all documents and correspondence that are unnecessary for project files should be disposed of securely (e.g. shredded or security bins); and
- a 'clean desk' policy must be adhered to and all files that are not securely disposed of must be locked away when not in use.

10.8 Shortlisting and negotiations

Council may conduct a shortlisting process during a competitive procurement process, such as an EOI, tender or quotation processes. Shortlisting can be based on any criteria directly relating and pertinent to the proposed engagement, and in line with sections 10.5.2 and 10.6 in pursuit of the most advantageous outcome for Council. Council may shortlist one or more respondents.

Shortlisted respondents may be invited by Council to submit further information which includes submitting a best and final offer in relation to all or certain aspects of their respective submissions. Best and final offers will only be requested if it has been outlined in the tender documents.

Once one or more preferred respondents are selected, negotiations can be conducted in order to obtain the optimal solution and commercial arrangements, within the original scope and intent of the competitive procurement process. Probity requirements apply to all negotiations.

10.9 Award of contract

The value of the procurement activity will determine the relevant financial delegate to consider and approve (or otherwise) the relevant evaluation report.

The approving financial delegate cannot change the recommendation of the evaluation panel as to the preferred respondent. That is, if the approving financial delegate does not agree with the findings of the evaluation panel, they cannot make a substitute decision as to which respondent will be awarded the contract. Awarding a contract without the application of the applicable evaluation criteria may amount to engaging in misleading and deceptive conduct, breach of a 'process contract' or misuse of a delegation and could give rise to (amongst other adverse consequences) legal action being brought by dissatisfied respondents.

The approving financial delegate can reject a recommendation, on the basis that the delegate is not satisfied that the process undertaken was compliant with this Procurement Policy. Additional information can be sought by the approving financial delegate from the evaluation panel to clarify the analysis that was undertaken.

If the approving financial delegate determines that the evaluation was flawed, the evaluation panel may be asked to undertake a more thorough assessment against the published criteria and report back to Council. An approving financial delegate may reject a recommendation and stop the competitive procurement process. This may only be done with due consideration of the operational and reputational cost of taking this action and only when halting the competitive procurement process is in the best interests of Council.

In order to limit the occurrences of halting a competitive procurement processes at the award stage, Councillors are to provide input on the initial planning stage, as contemplated in section 7.2 of this Procurement Policy, to ensure that the resources committed to the competitive procurement process are best used and that the scope of a project is adequately determined prior to going to market.

*Council's Financial Delegations and Authorisations Policy applies to the **awarding** of contracts (i.e. the decision). The actual writing and signing of subsequent acceptance letters and the signing of contracts is simply an administrative task.*

10.10 Panel arrangement

Council may appoint a panel of suppliers as the result of a competitive procurement process, in an annual supply or longer panel arrangement.

Once a panel arrangement is established, this is a continuing offer by one or more suppliers to provide specified goods, works or services for a predetermined length of time, usually at a predetermined unit rate, and in accordance with pre-agreed terms and conditions.

When obtaining goods or services from suppliers on these panels, Council is not obligated to seek public tenders, quotations or similar, however quotations from one or more of the panellists may be obtained on a job-by-job basis (subject to the terms of the contract) to promote competition, retain competitive tension and obtain Value for Money.

11. Collaborative procurement arrangements

In accordance with the Act, Council will give consideration to utilising Collaborative Procurement Arrangements with other councils or public bodies when procuring goods, services or works, including for the reason of taking advantage of economies of scale.

Council Staff must consider any opportunities for Collaborative Procurement Arrangements in relation to a procurement process undertaken by Council. Any Council report that recommends awarding a contract as the result of a procurement process must set out information relating to opportunities for a Collaborative Procurement Arrangement, if available, including:

- the nature of those opportunities, if any, and the councils or public bodies with which they are available; and
- why Council did, or did not, pursue the identified opportunities for collaboration in relation to that procurement process.

When proposing to engage in a Collaborative Procurement Arrangement, Council will do so in accordance with the following process:

- a heads of agreement, agency appointment or other similar arrangement (including on a non-binding basis) will be established, which amongst other things, will aim to set out a lead participant to act as each participant's agent in the Collaborative Procurement Arrangement (unless alternative arrangements are set out in the heads of agreement/agency appointment); and
- each of the participants will be able to participate in the Collaborative Procurement Arrangement through a contracting model as agreed under the heads of agreement or agency appointment document, which may include a model whereby participants enter into a contract using "jump in/opt-in" contract provisions during the contract term.

Each participant of the Collaborative Procurement Arrangement must be involved in:

- the initial decision to undertake the Collaborative Procurement Arrangement;
- preparation of, and agreement to, the specifications;
- ensuring Probity for the Collaborative Procurement Arrangement; and
- the acceptance of the competitive procurement process response(s) and awarding of contract(s).

Council may also collaborate with other Government agencies or other bodies, such as MAV Procurement or Procurement Australia, to procure goods, services or works, or utilise existing Collaborative Procurement Arrangements for the procurement of goods, services or works established through a competitive procurement process where that arrangement provides an advantageous, Value for Money outcome for Council.

To guide collaboration and particularly joint procurement, the following framework will be considered:

Any Federal or State Government grant funded project may be excluded from a Collaborative Procurement Arrangement.

12. Community benefit

Council is committed to implementing procurement practices that provide social value to the community by including economic, social and environmental sustainability considerations into Value for Money evaluations. This allows Council to promote outcomes beyond immediate financial benefits and contribute to building strong communities.

Requirements to deliver community benefit outcomes should be functional and performance based. They should define 'what' outcome is required, rather than 'how' the outcome is to be delivered. This approach will provide suppliers with the opportunity to innovate.

Sustainable outcomes will be determined on a case-by-case basis, to ensure that the outcomes sought are proportionate to the individual procurement activity (including scale, value, complexity and level of opportunity and risk), as unduly onerous requirements may be unachievable or unnecessarily deter potential suppliers.

12.1 Economic sustainability

Council supports Local Suppliers and economic development by:

- encouraging purchases that are from Local Suppliers and from local inputs by including in supporting procurement processes, a requirement to obtain at least one quote from a relevant local supplier, where applicable;
- supporting small to medium enterprises (SMEs);
- generating opportunities for local employment and supply chains;
- designing competitive procurement processes that are inclusive of measures to involve and attract local businesses;
- undertaking early local market engagement; and
- fostering innovation and emerging sectors.

Council will include within the evaluation criteria and give preference to goods manufactured in, and services and works provided by, companies residing within the Yarra Ranges municipality, the State of Victoria, Australia and New Zealand whenever practicable.

12.2 Environmental sustainability

Council seeks to make procurement decisions that have minimal effect on the depletion of natural resource and biodiversity by promoting:

- green purchasing;
- reduced greenhouse gas emissions;
- reduced waste to landfill and the increase of the amount of waste recycled;
- reduced water consumption and the improvement of water management;
- improved environmental management in Council's supply chain;
- improved resilience and adaptability to climate change;
- support for the circular economy;
- improved environmental management of Council's supply chain;
- consideration of suppliers' environmental systems and practices;
- the collection, storage and analysis of emissions data from major suppliers; and
- working in collaboration with major suppliers to reduce emissions associated with the services they provide to Council.

Before making any purchasing decisions, Council Staff should first consider:

- Can it be borrowed?
- Can we re-use, refurbish or recondition an existing product?
- Can we purchase second hand, or used?

- Is there a more environmentally friendly alternative?

Council will equally consider the environmental performance of all suppliers and contractors and encourage them to conduct their operations in an environmentally sensitive manner.

12.3 Social procurement

Council seeks to address disadvantage and or inequalities by encouraging diversity, acceptance, fairness, compassion, inclusiveness, and access for all people of all abilities. Council will incorporate the following social procurement objectives, outcomes and actions into procurement planning and give preference to suppliers who enhance social outcomes for the community where appropriate.

Table 5. Social Procurement Objectives

Social procurement objectives	Outcomes sought	Suggested actions
Opportunities for Indigenous people	Employment of Indigenous people by suppliers to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to directly procure from Social Enterprises, Australian Disability Enterprises and/or Indigenous Businesses. • Mandatory inclusion of weighting for lead Indigenous team member or Indigenous business in assessment criteria for procurement involving Indigenous culture • Include performance standards and contract requirements that pursue social and sustainable procurement objectives. • Use evaluation criteria to favour businesses whose practices support social and sustainable procurement objectives. • Encourage suppliers to create new jobs, apprenticeships and opportunities for people who may be Indigenous, disadvantaged and/or have a disability. • Require suppliers to include relevant Social Enterprises, Indigenous Businesses and/or Australian Disability Enterprises within their supply chain. • Require suppliers to commit to targets for employment and/or training outcomes for disadvantaged, Indigenous and/or disabled persons. • Require suppliers to explain how they will identify disadvantaged Victorians and support them to achieve and maintain employment and training outcomes.
Engagement of Indigenous suppliers by Council	Respect for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocol in choice of suppliers	
Opportunities for people with a disability	Employment of people with a disability by suppliers	
Opportunities for disadvantaged persons	Job readiness and employment for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term unemployed • disengaged youth • single parents • migrants and refugees • workers in transition 	

Social procurement objectives	Outcomes sought	Suggested actions
Women's equality and safety	Gender equality within Council suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request evidence of gender equality in leadership positions. Collect data from suppliers on ratio of employment of men and women. Ask suppliers to demonstrate gender equitable employment practices, policies and commitments.
Supporting safe and fair workplaces	Purchasing from suppliers that comply with industrial relations laws, relevant modern slavery legislation and promote secure employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek commitment from suppliers to screen supply chains for ethical considerations. Require suppliers to complete a safe and fair workplaces self-assessment checklist and corresponding declaration of compliance. Where appropriate, request documentary evidence to substantiate their responses to the self-assessment checklist and declaration

13. Risk management

Procurement decisions should include an assessment of risks and include requirements for compliance with relevant laws, including without limitation, occupational health and safety, environmental and Child Safe standards and legislation. Appropriate risk avoidance and mitigation strategies will be employed whenever practicable and appropriate.

Aspects to be considered may include, but not be limited to, a risk review of:

- project specifications, competitive procurement process and contract terms and conditions;
- insurance requirements (including public liability, products liability, professional indemnity and workers compensation);
- supply continuity and disaster recovery requirements;
- use of standard-form contracts where appropriate;
- ensuring contracts are updated where appropriate to include current, relevant clauses;
- use of or reference to relevant Australian Standards (or equivalent), where appropriate;
- requiring security deposits (either cash or in the form of a bank guarantee, an unconditional undertaking, or cash retention plan), where appropriate;
- requiring contractual agreement before allowing the commencement of work;
- effective contract management, including monitoring, assessing, and enforcing proper performance; and
- ensure supplier occupational health and safety documentation is verified and assessed against Council's policies and other legislative requirements.

For general risk assessment and control, refer to Council's Risk Management and Policy framework.

13.1 Child safe standards

Council is committed to promoting child safety and ensuring compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. As a key priority, Council is actively promoting child safety and reducing the factors that lead to children being harmed.

Council must review all suppliers who undertake work on behalf of Council who may have direct or incidental contact with children. Third party contractors having direct or incidental contact with children have contract obligations to comply with the appropriate requirements of Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Council contracts include the right to take appropriate action including termination for non-compliance with contractual requirements.

13.2 Occupational health and safety

Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of Council Staff, Councillors, suppliers and the community.

All suppliers undertaking work on behalf of Council are required to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) (the OHS Act), applicable regulations under the OHS Act, the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* (and if applicable to claims before 1 July 2014, the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* (Vic)) and Council's Health & Safety Policy.

13.3 Supplier code of conduct

Council is committed to ethical, sustainable and socially responsible procurement, and expect the same high standards from our suppliers.

Suppliers undertaking work on behalf of Council are required to comply with the requirements of Council's Employee Code of Conduct.

14. Contract management

Council will ensure that it receives goods, services or works provided to the required standards of quality, quantity and price as intended by the contract by:

- establishing a system for monitoring and achieving the responsibilities and obligations of both parties under the contract;
- providing a means for the early recognition of issues and performance problems and the identification of solutions; and
- adhering to Council's adopted risk management strategy (see section 13 of this Procurement Policy regarding Risk Management) and adhering to relevant occupational health and safety contractor compliance procedures (in addition to compliance with other applicable laws or standards).

Council's contract management templates and guidelines are available on Council's Intranet. These templates and guidelines provide assistance to Council Staff in the administration and management of contracts and aim to ensure a consistent approach across Council to these activities.

15. Reporting fraud and complaints

Council regards all allegations of improper conduct and complaints about the procurement process as serious and is committed to handling such disclosures in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Members of the public, suppliers and Council Staff are encouraged to report allegations of improper or corrupt conduct by a public officer involved in any Council procurement process.

Please refer to Council's Fraud Control Policy for further information on reporting suspected fraud or corruption.

16. Amendments to Policy

Director of Corporate Services is authorised to make any reasonable administrative amendments to this Procurement Policy from time to time where the amendment is limited to an administrative nature and does not affect the substance of this Procurement Policy.

17. Reference documents

The following is a list of documents referenced to throughout this Policy, with the necessary links where available:

[Code of Conduct \(Councillors\)](#)

[Employee Code of Conduct \(Staff\)](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

[Ethical Sourcing Code of Conduct](#)

[Financial Delegations and Authorisations Policy 2023](#)

[Fraud Control Policy](#)

[Governance Rules](#)

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Risk Management Policy and Framework](#)