

Outline proposal for the provision of Procurement support from Runnymede Borough Council to Spelthorne Borough Council

Outline proposal for discussion / agreement

Date: 26th August 2025

Purpose:

To provide an outline scope of proposed working arrangements for the provision of Procurement Support from Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) to Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC), setting out a phased approach to integration of Procurement services, high level objectives of the proposal, and the key responsibilities of each party.

Background:

SBC contacted RBC in early June 2025 to explore joint working opportunities following the resignation of SBC's corporate procurement manager. An initial meeting was held to share information and discuss possible support on 3rd July (Attendees: Linda Heron, Group Head Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer (SBC), Amanda Fahey, Assistant Chief Executive and s151 Officer (RBC) and Amy Gibson, Head of Procurement (RBC)).

Based on the conclusions arrived at during the meeting, a draft outline proposal was shared 8th July, to which comments were received 11th July. RBC staff commenced drafting of a fuller proposal during which time requirements were clarified that the end product of the collaboration would be to see RBC delivering the procurement function for SBC.

A further meeting was held (same attendees as above) to discuss the approach. A phased approach was considered which would allow for all the building blocks to be put in place to enable RBC to take on the procurement service for SBC. This would involve much of what was in the original proposal but with a move to full service provision once the prerequisites were in place, such as aligning contract standing orders (CSOs), upskilling buying managers to ensure decentralisation of procurement up to certain financial limits, standardisation of templates and procedures and provision of technical support to SBC's current procurement team.

In all scenarios, Spelthorne and Runnymede would lie within the same unitary under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) so it makes sense to align to a single service.

Consultancy advice previously received by RBC when looking at the potential for a shared procurement service elsewhere in Surrey, which was not progressed, was that it is essential for success to lay this groundwork first, aligning process and policies before amalgamation.

The Proposal:

Phase 1:

1. Review of policies / intranet pages / proformas / toolkit

- Alignment of CSOs to RBC's which were revised in May 2025.
- RBC are in the process of introducing a Procurement Toolkit and updating all templates. These should be adopted across both authorities, with as little variation as possible.

- Review Procurement Strategy and associated policies and align to RBC.

2. Training/Upskilling of staff to fully employ decentralised procurement model up to agreed financial limits and enable buying managers to run their own procurement exercises

- Training on e-tendering system, including user guides
- Training on Procurement Act changes, Contract Standing Orders and processes.
- Rollout of Procurement Toolkit and standard templates including Request for Quote template
- Training in Contract Management

3. Procurement Team

- RBC to provide technical support to SBC team for procurement issues.
- RBC to support a review of the Contracts Register – essential both for internal processes and in preparation for LGR.
- RBC / SBC staff to ensure opportunities for joint procurement are identified and progressed
- Support spend analysis to identify where spend is not on contract or not included in the Contracts Register. Determine frequency of review for contracts register / spend analysis
- SBC team to provide details of staff to be trained, assist in creation of documents and provide feedback on policies and templates.

4. BAU/Project support

- RBC's Head of Procurement to provide support for higher value/more complex procurement projects.

Assumptions during Phase1:

- Spelthorne to retain day-to-day line management of the existing SBC Procurement team (2 members of staff).
- SBC Procurement team will assist with tasks listed above.
- RBC's Head of Procurement to provide technical and professional oversight for the SBC team
- Likely that SBC will continue to need additional external support for procurement exercise until wider staff are upskilled.
- SBC to carry out any required reporting to Management or Members for approval of proposal, alignment of CSOs and policies, etc
- SBC to draft the agreement / contract / memorandum of understanding (whichever is deemed the most appropriate route) to give effect to the proposal, for review by RBC.
- RBC's Head of Procurement to work on site at SBC as deemed necessary by RBC, to meet the team, build relationships and deliver training.
- Ideally, to facilitate the full service provision in phase 2, SBC would move to In-Tend the e-tendering system used by RBC. This is essential to align processes and guidance notes. In the short term, guidance may have to be prepared on the basis of using the system currently in use at SBC, which will be reliant on SBC procurement team assisting with the preparation of these guidance notes.

- During phase 1, RBC's Head of Procurement will work flexibly within an allotted number of days purchased by SBC, to deliver the task set out. The maximum number of days to be spent on SBC work in any one week will be 3 but will vary between 2 and 3 depending on the needs of the SBC team and the stage in the project. During the training roll out for example it makes more sense to spend more days delivering these in a shorter period and ensuring the competent upskilling of individuals across the organisation.
- Regular check-in meetings to be held between RBC's Head of Procurement and SBC's Group Head of Corporate Governance to ensure timely progress is made
- Any escalation of issues / concerns to be dealt with by a meeting with RBC's Assistant Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Phase 2:

Transition to full service delivery, by a single team led by RBC, using consistent policy and processes

Clear gateways will be agreed before progression to Phase 2. These should include:

- the successful transition to a more decentralised model
- Completion of alignment of all CSOs, Procurement Policies and guidance notes
- use of single e-tendering system (In-Tend)

The objective is to move towards a fully aligned, single service to be delivered by RBC in 2026/27.

Quick wins

- Adopt RBC's CSOs which have been recently simplified and reviewed to ensure consistent with the Procurement Act 2023
- Commence naming each other in current procurement exercises where appropriate to avoid duplication of effort

Financial Implications

- There is likely to be a cost to SBC in changing e-tendering systems
- During Phase 1 SBC will pay a proportion of costs to cover the work to be undertaken by RBC's Head of Procurement. This will be done by fixing a day rate and pulling down days over 6-month period. The Head of Procurement will maintain a record to be shared with SBC's Group Head of Corporate Governance on a regular basis so that SBC can monitor spend and assess how quickly the planned hours are being utilised. The day rate is likely to be in the region of £550 per day. Suggested total maximum days to be 60 over the first 6-month period (to be reviewed at least monthly), with ability to vary actual number of days in any week depending on requirements up to a maximum of 3 in any one week, providing an initial call off sum of £33,000 (to be invoiced based on actual call off, quarterly in arrears)
- Costs associated with operational equipment provided by SBC (e.g. IT equipment) to be funded wholly by SBC
- Cost of arrangements for full service in 2026/27 to be determined within the context of LGR

Other Implications

Each party shall ensure that it has appropriate insurances relating to public liability, employee liability and professional indemnity to cover any liabilities arising under this proposal.

Timescales

Phase 1: Sept 25 to Mar 26

Preparation for Phase 2: Jan 26 – Mar 26

Full service delivery: to be in place from 1st April 26

Phase 1: indicative plan

Month 1:

- Meet team and understand current processes
- CSOs - review and suggest amendments
- Review updates provided by NHS support - if required.
- Prepare training course content, book dates and sent to relevant member of staff.
- Contracts register and light touch spend analysis - review against spend to identify any potential missing contracts - with support from SBC team.

Month 2:

- Introduce new templates such as Request for Quote etc.
- Hold training sessions - introduction/refresher on procurement and e-tendering system for officers.
- Suggest higher level training for Senior Leadership if required.
- More in depth spend analysis to look at off contract register spending.
- Work on Contracts register for LGR preparations - look at extension options and termination provisions - SBC team to assist.

Month 3:

- Further training sessions - introduction/refresher on procurement and e-tendering system for officers.
- Contracts register updates - follow up with Contract Managers on re-procurement/extension options.
- Spend analysis - continue work on contract spend and previous financial years data.
- Updates to intranet documents/details
- Preparation for Contract Management Training sessions
- Progress Review and commence preparation for next stage

Month 4:

- Continue work on contracts register – LGR implications, ensure all contracts are captured etc.
- Hold Contract Management training sessions
- BAU/Project Support

Month 5:

- Spend analysis update
- BAU/Project Support

Ongoing:

- Provide technical and professional oversight to SBC Procurement Team

Month 6:

Continued support to embed change and review gateways and preparation for full service delivery for commencement April 26.