

### Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

#### Stage 1

##### Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	Y	26/01/26
Commissioner engagement (if report focused on issues of concern to Commissioners such as Finance, Assets etc)	N/A	
Relevant Group Head review	Y	28/01/26
MAT+ review (to have been circulated <b>at least 5 working days before Stage 2</b> )		
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee		
	<b>Reviewed by</b>	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	AB	18/02/26
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O’Neil)	LO	04/02/26
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	LH	03/02/26
HR comments (if applicable)		

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

#### Stage 2

##### Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least <b>5 working days before MAT</b>	L Heron	03/02/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least <b>5 working days before MAT</b>	T.Collier	18/2/26
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		



# Standards Committee

25 February 2026

<b>Title</b>	Amendments to Contracts Standing Orders
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision and a recommendation to Council
<b>Report Author</b>	Amy Gibson – Head of Procurement (Runnymede Borough Council)
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	This item is not in the current list of Corporate Priorities but still requires a Committee decision.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>Committee is asked to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the suggested amendments;</li> <li>2. Recommend that the Council agree the revised Contract Standing Orders and authorise the Monitoring Officer to update the Council’s Constitution</li> <li>3. Note the actions below</li> </ol>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The Procurement Act came into force in February 2025. The changes requested are to align to the new terminology and to assist in delivering a devolved model of procurement.

1. **Executive summary of the report** (*expand detail in Key Issues section below*)

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) form part of the Council's Constitution. They require an update to align to the Procurement Act 2023 and to assist in delivering a devolved model of procurement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a requirement to update the CSOs to ensure that they are relevant and up to date with new legislation.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend current CSOs to ensure they are fit for purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If approved, the next steps will be to publish the updated CSOs on Spelnet and on the Council's website.</li> <li>The Procurement Team will also continue with training for Officers.</li> </ul>

## 2. Key issues

- 2.1 The Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) are the part of the Constitution that deals with procurement and contract processes. The Procurement Act 2023 came into force on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025, which has led to a review of the CSOs being required.
- 2.2 Whilst minor amendments have recently been made, it is recommended that a re-write of the CSOs is undertaken. The update of the CSOs will align closely to those of the other Authorities that will form part of West Surrey, including Runnymede Borough Council, who are currently providing support to the Procurement Team.
- 2.3 It should also be noted that a recent audit found that the CSOs needed to be updated to ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023.
- 2.4 The updated CSOs will allow for a devolved model of procurement, meaning that Officers will be given more responsibilities to undertake procurement activity under £100,000. This will release the current Procurement Team to focus on more complex and higher risk procurement activities. The current model is unsustainable with a team of only 2 Procurement Officers.
- 2.5 To fully roll out a devolved procurement model, Officers will be trained on the changes to the CSOs and will be provided with a number of user guides and templates in order to complete the end to end process. The Procurement Team will have full visibility of any live procurements via the e-tendering system and will undertake spot checks to ensure that procurements are compliant and complete.
- 2.6 The devolved model does bring some extra risk but by training staff and offering support and guidance this will be minimised. Having reviewed the other Authorities that will form part of West Surrey, they all operated this model too, with 3 of the Borough's Procurement Teams undertaking activity over £100,000. The other 2 Boroughs have a much larger procurement team so are able to undertake more.
- 2.7 It is likely that any unitary authority would also operate in this way so this serves as a good opportunity to upskill staff.

- 2.8 The proposed changes ensure that the CSOs are the high-level details and less operational. This has meant that some sections of the CSOs have been removed. Operational guidance will instead be included in a Procurement Toolkit which will be introduced shortly.
- 2.9 It is proposed that that CSOs are split into 5 sections, Introduction, Pre-Tender Preparations, Tender Process, Award of Contract and Contract Management.
- 2.10 Please see Appendix A which sets out the main changes. Due to the significant changes that have been made it hasn't been possible to provide a tracked change version.
- 2.11 In addition to the above a flowchart has also been produced to show the process that is proposed.
- 2.12 The CSOs are also strengthening the role of the Procurement Board and has recommended additional approvals by the Board to ensure that decisions can be discussed and approved or rejected.
- 2.13 The flowchart in Appendix 2 details decision points and who will be making those decisions. It should be noted that this isn't an exhaustive list of tasks to be undertaken but gives an indication of those key tasks and assigns accountabilities.
- 2.14 The award report referred to within the flowchart will be a crucial part of the process and will be the point where the details of the procurement process and the outcome of the due diligence will be included, such as financial checks and appropriate insurance levels.

### **3. Options appraisal and proposal**

- 3.1 **Option 1 – Preferred option** – approve the amendments to the Contract Standing Orders
- The pros of this option are that the CSOs will align to current legislation and devolved procurement can be unlocked.
  - This will also align more closely with the other Authorities that make up West Surrey.
  - The cons are that potentially policies and procedures may be mis-interpreted however, training and guidance that will be made available will counteract this.
- 3.2 **Option2** – not recommended – Continue with current version of Contract Standing Orders (do nothing)
- The pro is that this will result in very little change to current practice.
  - The cons are that the new legislative requirements will not be adequately reflected. The Procurement Team will not be able to focus their attention on the projects that require more input and will spend the majority of their time on procurements that could be undertaken by Officers.

### **4. Risk implications**

- 4.1 Whilst there are risks around non-compliance, the Procurement Team will keep open communication with Departments to ensure that they are supported and are following the correct processes.

## **5. Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to this report. However, within the revised CSOs, stronger financial checks are being suggested. With all contracts over £25,001 requiring a credit check to be undertaken to ensure sound financial position of the Council's suppliers.

## **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1 Local Authorities are required to have a set of standing orders "with respect to the making of contracts by them or on their behalf." (Section 135(1) of the Local Government Act 1972).
- 6.2 By maintaining and updating these orders to reflect the relevant legislative changes, the Council complies with its statutory duties.

## **Corporate implications**

### **7. S151 Officer comments**

- 7.1 The S151 Officer recognises the importance of aligning the CSOs to current procurement legislation and is supportive of the proposals. As commented above, parallel to the above proposals, additional checks will be put in place to evaluate and sign off procurements. It is important that we have robust procurement arrangements both to ensure value for money and also to support the transition into West Surrey. The S151 Officer confirms the proposals do not directly have financial implications impact on budget provision.

### **8. Monitoring Officer comments**

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

### **9. Procurement comments**

- 9.1 As this report contains procurement comments, there is nothing further to add here.

### **10. Equality and Diversity**

- 10.1 None arising directly from this report.

**11. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

11.1 None arising directly from this report.

**12. Other considerations**

12.1 None.

**13. Timetable for implementation**

13.1 A recommendation from the Standards Committee will be considered by Council at its meeting on 26 February 2026.

13.2 The amendments will take effect upon agreement by Council, and the Constitution will be updated and published as soon as reasonably practicable.

**14. Contact**

14.1 Amy Gibson – [Amy.Gibson@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Amy.Gibson@runnymede.gov.uk)

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer  
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

**Background papers:** There are none.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Summary of changes

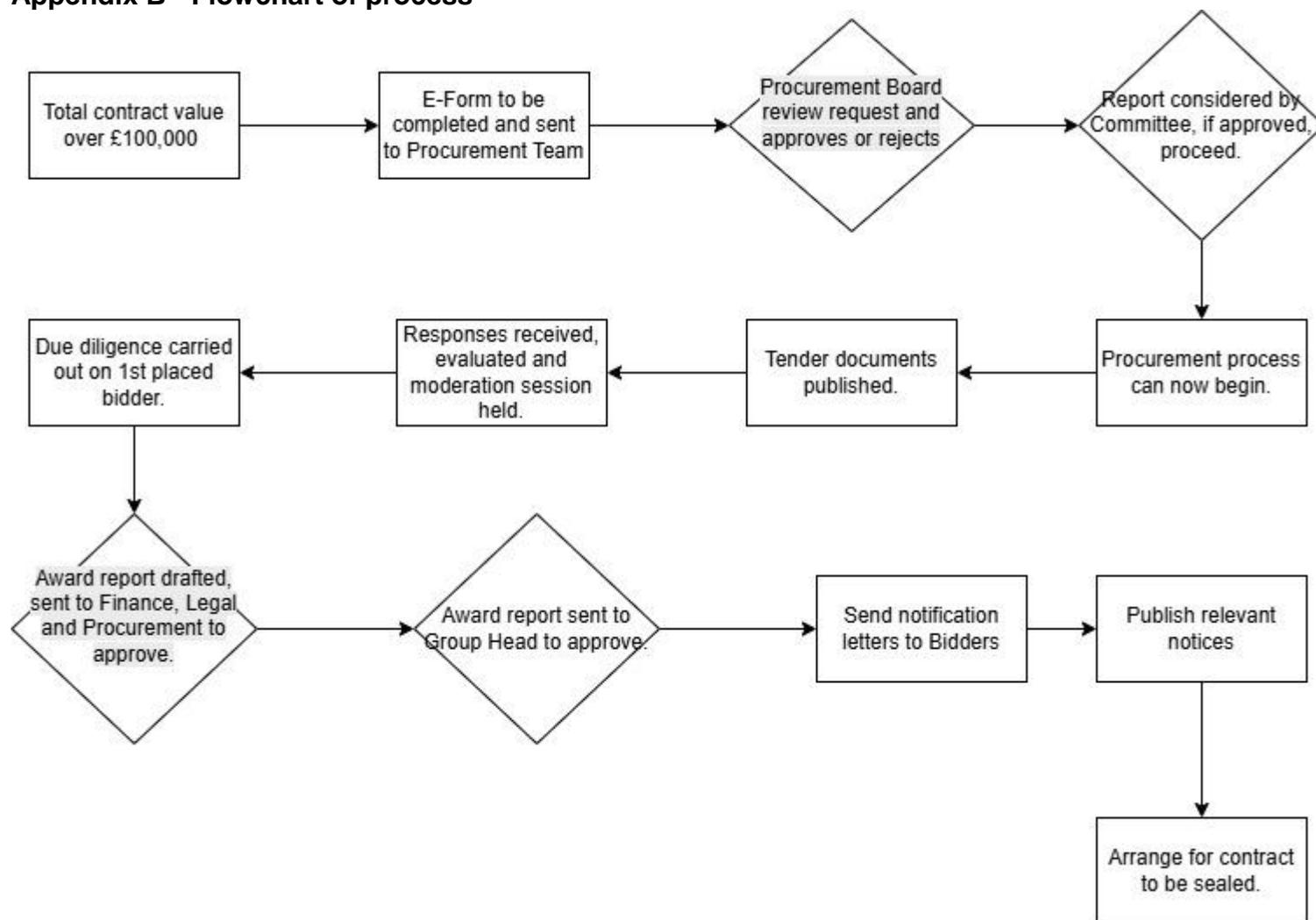
Appendix B – Flowchart of process

Appendix C – the revised Contract Standing Orders

## Appendix A – Summary of changes

Current Contract Standing Orders	Proposed Amended Contract Standing Orders
No clear structure.	5 sections introduced to follow the process from start to finish.
No section detailing out of scope requirements.	This is now included in the Introduction section.
Details of requirements for each value of contract	Further details have been added to the table, which includes a requirement of credit checks are undertaken and also details of when notices need to be published.
Threshold amounts include VAT.	VAT has been removed from thresholds to align to budgets set which do not include VAT.
Requirement for Procurement Team to undertake procurement over £30,000.	Increase to £100,000 for the reasons set out in the main body of the report.
Note regarding exemption report	Change in termination from exemption to waiver. Section added which details when a waiver will not be accepted and details of if an emergency waiver is required.
No details of where to find further guidance.	Toolkit has been referenced and will be rolled out shortly.
Frameworks mentioned briefly	Section added detailing what Frameworks are and clarification on how these can be accessed.
Contract management guidance	A section on this is still included but refers to the Contract Management Toolkit which will include operational guidance to staff.

## Appendix B - Flowchart of process



Key – Diamonds – Decision points