



Procurement Strategy

2021-2025



COLLEGE CORPORATE PLAN 2019-2025

Our Vision

Collective Ambition

Pride and Passion

Inspirational and Innovative

Our Mission

Providing excellent education and training opportunities and services for our students, customers and communities

Our Strategic Objectives

Personalisation

Collaboration

Agile and Adaptive

Digital

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Recognising that effective and efficient procurement will positively support the College in achieving its priorities, this Procurement Strategy provides a corporate vision, direction and focus for all procurement activities in the College.
- 1.2 The College's vision for procurement is *'To provide a professional customer focused service, driving legislative compliance, maximising the use of resources, promoting efficiencies and innovation, improving teamwork and communication across the College, capturing savings and adopting sustainable practices which enhance equality and diversity.'* The Procurement Strategy will therefore assist the College in demonstrating best value, continuous improvement, sound performance management, partnership working, community benefits and sustainable development.
- 1.3 The Procurement Strategy has been developed in line with College's Corporate Plan 2019-2025 which sets the College's strategic direction and priorities. The Strategy identifies the outcomes that the College aim to achieve, explains how it will deliver these outcomes and sets out the main challenges that the organisation will face across the next four years to July 2025.
- 1.4 As with all public sector organisations, the College is facing significant financial pressures. Procurement activity will be paramount in delivering service provision that has the greatest positive impact upon the students, staff and other stakeholder of the College.
- 1.5 The Procurement Strategy provides a clear and well-structured approach to the College's procurement activities outlining what will be done, how and when it will be achieved. In developing the Procurement Strategy, the following four strategic objectives have been set:

1) Robust and Transparent Contract Renewal, Monitoring and Supplier Management Process

To adhere to the Scottish Government Procurement Journey guidance and ensure full compliance through application of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and the Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016.

2) Efficiency and Effectiveness

To secure value for money by working closely with the people who use the goods, services and supplies that the College requires to: (a) articulate their requirements early in the process; (b) deliver financial savings; (c) generate community and other benefits; and (d) identify and promote collaborative and shared services opportunities.

3) Sustainable Procurement

To embed sound ethical, social and environmental policies within the procurement function and to comply with relevant Scottish, UK and EC legislation in performance of the sustainable procurement duty. The College will treat all suppliers fairly, equally and without discrimination through making procurement transparent and accessible to all businesses especially Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), the third sector and supported businesses.

4) Skills Enhancement

To seek out professional development opportunities to enrich and enhance experience and capability of procurement practitioners and to work with the supply chains to ensure continued value, managed performance and minimal risk throughout the life of contracts for the benefit of customers and students.

- 1.6 This Procurement Strategy has been informed by Scottish Government statutory guidance with the support of the Further Education Centre of Procurement Excellence - Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC). It will be subject to an annual progress update which will be reported to the Board of Management.
- 1.7 The effectiveness and impact of this Strategy will also be measured via the Scottish Government Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) which is currently undertaken every two years, thereby ensuring a culture of continuous improvement.
- 1.8 The Strategy was approved by the Board of Management on the 22 March 2021 and was subsequently published on the College website.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 As Scotland's second largest Regional College, West College Scotland provides education and training to almost 20,000 students. The College manages total funds of £70m and employs approximately 1,200 staff.
- 2.2 The College delivers learning and vocational training to the West Region of Scotland, a catchment area of 1.2 million people, representing 23% of the resident population of Scotland. The College has an important presence and deep roots in our main towns of Paisley, Clydebank and Greenock, and our footprint stretches from Oban to Barrhead. The College is committed to taking a leadership role in the West of Scotland and, together with partners and stakeholders, tackling significant social and economic deprivation which still characterises many of the towns and communities across the region.
- 2.3 The College is one of the Region's largest employers and is uniquely placed to help shape the West region's educational landscape and contribute to its social and economic development. The College wishes to exploit its scale and capacity to maximise its impact as a leader and influencer across the region and the wider College sector. While students are at the heart of what it does, the College wants to attract business at home and from abroad, and it seeks to build a reputation which is recognised for being innovative, enterprising and modern.
- 2.4 The College recognises the key role that procurement has in underpinning the development, improvement and success of the College. The successful implementation of this Strategy will only be achieved by those involved in the procurement of goods, services and works working in partnership internally, and externally, working collaboratively with partners across the wider education and public sector. Collaborative working will contribute to the future sustainability of the College activities and allow the reinvestment of the resultant savings and benefits to enhance student learning experiences and meet the College Corporate Plan objectives.
- 2.5 All public bodies, including colleges, have been tasked by the Scottish Government to develop their own net-zero plans to meet its key pledge to end the nation's contribution to the climate crisis by 2045. The College along with the wider public sector has significant purchasing power through which it can influence products, services, supply chains and investment decisions. Sustainable procurement is a key consideration for the College. The statutory [sustainable procurement duty](#) was introduced by the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. This duty requires the College to consider how it can use the procurement process to improve the

economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the College's area; to facilitate the involvement of small and medium enterprises, third sector bodies and supported businesses in the process; and to promote innovation.

- 2.6 This Procurement Strategy states how the College intends to comply with the sustainable procurement duty and will through the [Annual Procurement Report](#) show how its procurement policies and activities have taken into consideration or contributed to carbon emissions reduction targets, climate change adaptations and how the College is ensuring that its procurement activity is sustainable.
- 2.7 This Strategy provides the framework and direction to ensure that procurement is at the heart of addressing the Scottish Government policy objectives, and that the Procurement Department continues to develop and comply with all legislative requirements.

3. Procurement Vision

'To provide a professional customer focused service, driving legislative compliance, maximising the use of resources, promoting efficiencies and innovation, improving teamwork and communication across the College, capturing savings and adopting sustainable practices which enhance equality and diversity.'

3.1 The role of the Procurement Department is to provide professional, qualified procurement expertise, advice and services for all spend with external suppliers. This will be undertaken in compliance with the Procurement Reform Act 2014, the Public Contract (Scotland) 2015 Regulations, the Procurement (Scotland) Regulation 2016 and any other legislative requirements.

3.2 The Department will procure all goods, services and works, with high ethical standards focused on social, economic and environmental considerations by applying principles of sustainable procurement. As part of that role the Department will:

- Develop, promote and implement the Procurement Strategy, individual commodity procurement strategies and procedures.
- Comply with all equality legislation as it applies to procurement practices.
- Deliver value for money and quality to meet the end user's requirement.
- Maintain or enhance previous PCIP ranking scores.
- Monitor that modern slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any parts of the College's supply chain.
- Embed relevant and proportionate sustainability requirements in the development of frameworks and contracts.
- Promote and engage in the implementation of relevant technology solutions, including e-procurement, to minimise purchase to pay costs.
- Engage effectively with Centres of Expertise and Scottish Government in relation to issues of policy, practice, information sharing and collaboration.
- Act as a central point of contact for College staff and our external suppliers in relation to all procurement and supply chain related topics.
- Maintain a comprehensive Contract Register.
- Maximise Community Benefits where appropriate and measure and monitor result.
- Compliance to Supplier Charter and promote Workforce Matters (Living Wage) in alignment to statutory guidance.

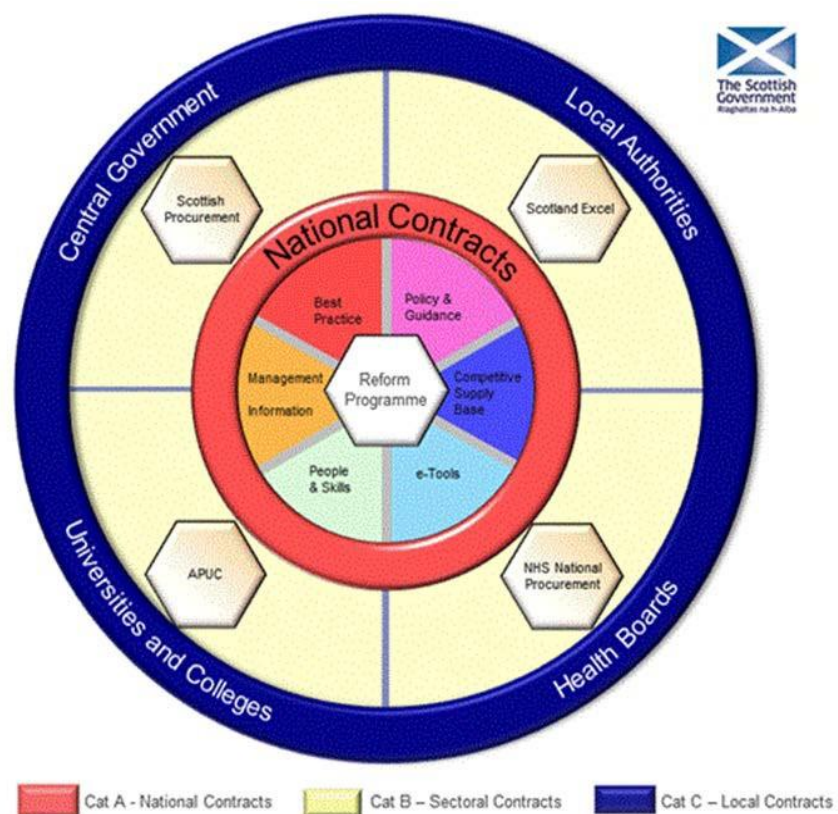
4. Strategy Context

4.1 Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, services or works. The process spans the whole life cycle of whatever is being purchased:

- From identification of needs and formation of a sourcing Strategy
- To options and supplier appraisals
- Through to the end of the contract or the useful life of an asset

4.2 [Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate](#) is responsible for developing and advising on a range of procurement activity, including implementing policy and setting up contracts and framework agreements for itself and the wider public sector in Scotland.

4.3 The diagram below shows the inter-relationship between the different public procurement organisations and their respective responsibilities.

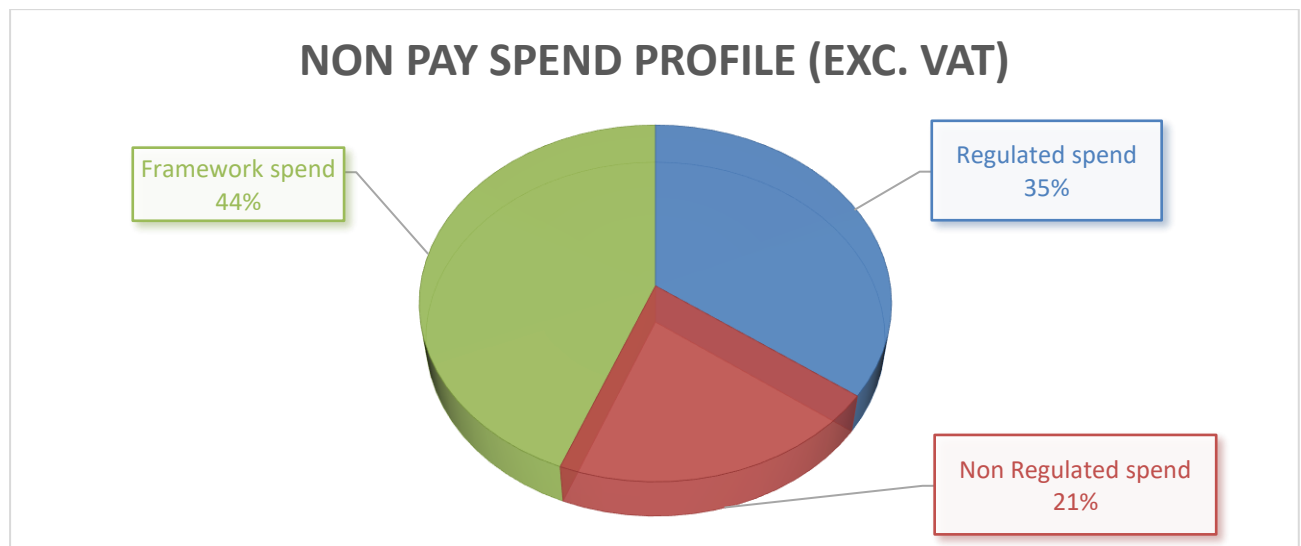


4.4 The Scottish Government in 2020 passed legislation which made the necessary changes to procurement regulations due to the UK leaving the European Union. The College will, in conjunction with APUC, continue to monitor and adapt to any further changes to procurement legislation over the life span of this Strategy.

4.5 Regarding how the College procures its goods and services the following chart provides an overview of the non-pay spend profile:

Non-pay spend

Based on 2023/24 data, the College's annual spend profile is displayed below with a total non-pay spend of approximately £10.12 million.



The Colleges annual influenceable procurement spend of circa £10.12 million is made up of:

- £8.038m of regulated spend (above Threshold and Framework Agreements)
- £2.082m of non-regulated spend (below threshold).

Please note that the total spend for the college including non-influenceable spend for financial year 2023-24 was circa £32.92 million. Of the Colleges total spend for financial year 2023-24, the value of circa £22.8 million was non-influenceable. This figure includes staff costs, VAT payments, exam fees, property rent and rates.

4.6 As can be seen from the chart at 4.5 above, the College continues to increase the number and value of contracts which it creates with 79% of College spend now categorised as Framework and regulated.

4.7 Non-regulated expenditure has been decreasing and now accounts for 21% of non-pay spend. This is due to the increasing levels of procurement engagement with stakeholders. This Strategy aims to continue and increase this level of procurement engagement thereby reducing the level of non-regulated procurement activity across the life of this Strategy.

4.8 The College will continue to use these policies, processes and procedures in delivering the Procurement Strategy objectives:

- [Public Procurement Reform Programme](#)
- [Regulated contracts](#)
- [Suppliers Charter](#)
- [The sustainable procurement duty](#) is a new requirement of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
- [Scottish Government's Procurement Journey](#)
- [Section 25\(1\) community benefit requirements in major contracts](#)
- [National Standards for Community Engagement](#)
- [Fair work and procurement - Public sector procurement - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Scottish Living Wage](#)
- [Community Benefit Clauses](#)
- [Public Contracts Scotland](#)

4.9 As a public sector body, the College advertise all contract opportunities with a lifetime value of £50,000 and above on the Scottish public sector portal (PCS). Suppliers must register with PCS to receive notification of possible contract opportunities. The supplier journey gives guidance and advice on tendering for public sector contracts in Scotland.

5. Strategic Objectives and Key Priorities

5.1 The four strategic procurement objectives which form the core of this Strategy are as follows and these will be fully embedded into all aspects of College operations:

1) Robust and Transparent Contract Renewal, Monitoring and Supplier Management Process

To adhere to the Scottish Government Procurement Journey guidance and ensure full compliance through application of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and the Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016.

This objective will be achieved by progressing the following key priorities:

- Developing and enhancing tools, templates, information and guidance for College staff involved in procurement, so skills will be further developed.
- Continuing to ensure that staff throughout the college continue to develop their procurement skills and training through provision of regular procurement awareness training to the Finance Team and to the wider College thereby developing working relationships within the College.

Success will be measured by:

- A reduction in non-regulated contractual spend.
- Production of an Annual Procurement Report including an update on how the College has complied with the Scottish Government's sustainable procurement duty.
- Ensuring procurement practices complies with legislation and good practice, as noted in the bi-annual PCIP review.

2) Efficiency and Effectiveness

To secure value for money by working closely with the people who use the goods, services and supplies that the College requires to: (a) articulate their requirements early in the process; (b) deliver financial savings; (c) generate community and other benefits; and (d) identify and promote collaborative and shared services opportunities.

This objective will be achieved by progressing the following key priorities:

- Developing and deploying procurement tools so that every procurement exercise continues to generate value for money.
- Ensuring feedback is secured from all procurement exercises to inform improvements to process and practices

- Participating in the Scottish Government's Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP).
- Developing processes which make sure contracts are robust and robustly managed.
- Creating and having approved by the Senior Management Team a future year action plan and contract renewal calendar.

Success will be measured by:

- Reduced contract prices, without reduction in service, or getting more for the same price.
- Evidence maximising both cash and non-cash benefits from existing contracts and identifying new benefits like social and community benefits for any future contract opportunities.

3) Sustainable Procurement

To embed sound ethical, social and environmental policies within the procurement function and to comply with relevant Scottish, UK and EC legislation in performance of the sustainable procurement duty. The College will treat all suppliers fairly, equally and without discrimination through making procurement transparent and accessible to all businesses especially Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), the third sector and supported businesses.

Complying with the College duties for sustainable procurement assists the College comply with other legislation that affects procurement, for example:

- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.
- The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015.

The College will use the [sustainable procurement tools](#) to support all procurement. This will assist the College to:

- Identify risks and opportunities before commissioning suppliers.
- Understand the scope for sustainability outcomes.
- Optimise our ability to influence sustainable outcomes.

This objective will be achieved by progressing the following key priorities:

- Continued development of individual commodity strategies to embed sustainability into contracts, for example energy efficient product specifications.

- Maximising opportunities for SMEs, the third sector and supported businesses to participate in procurement.
- Develop internal training and guidance to reduce demand for goods and services by cutting down on waste and encouraging reuse and re-cycling and use of the least environmentally damaging goods and services.

Success will be measured by:

- Increase the number and value of contracts with sustainability objectives and criteria embedded in them.
- Embedding the sustainable procurement duty in processes to take full consideration of whole life costs, environmental and social impacts in assessment of value for money.
- Increased delivery of sustainable, environmental and social benefits.

4) Skills Enhancement

To seek out professional development opportunities to enrich and enhance experience and capability of procurement practitioners and to work with the supply chains to ensure continued value, managed performance and minimal risk throughout the life of contracts for the benefit of customers and students.

This objective will be achieved by progressing the following key priorities:

- Having in place a high calibre procurement team with a competency-based training and a skills development programme.
- Assess procurement team competencies and conduct staff / skills gap analysis and address any identified gaps by encouraging involvement with or attendance at training and development courses and events with results monitored and recorded.
- Through expenditure analysis, identify supplier risk levels and determine appropriate tactical and strategic approaches to supply markets and management.
- Continued development of procurement risk register using high/medium and low risk assessment methodology.
- Developing guidance to help all staff involved in procurement to understand roles and processes.
- Obtain regular customer input/feedback on contract and obtain regular supplier input/feedback on contracts to secure optimum value and opportunities.
- Continued promotion of the use of e-procurement tools.

Success will be measured by:

- Increased number of staff undertaking formal training and development in the year.
- Maintaining or improving PCIP score, currently at 88% (Gold Standard).
- Evidence of increased use of centrally procured frameworks.
- Evidence of maximising goods and services obtained through shared service arrangements.
- Evidence of increasing participation in Scottish Government user groups and intelligence gathering forums.

5.2 These objectives are measured and supported in three ways; through the Procurement Action Plan which will be developed each year, through the College involvement in the Scottish Government's Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) and through the publication of an Annual Procurement Report.

5.3 Each of the four procurement objectives has been mapped to:

- a) the five strategic areas as defined by the Scottish Governments' Public Procurement Reform Agenda - Table (1)
- b) the College Strategic Plan 2019-2025 priorities – Table (2)

Table (1): Procurement objectives mapped to Public Reform Strategic Areas

	(1) Contract renewal and Monitoring	(2) Efficiency and Effectiveness	(3) Sustainable Procurement	(4) Skills Enhancement
Access	√	√		
Sustainability			√	√
Efficiency and Collaboration	√	√	√	
Savings and Benefits		√		
Capability	√		√	√

Table (2): Procurement objectives mapped to College Strategic Plan 2019-2025 Priorities

	(1) Contract renewal and Monitoring	(2) Efficiency and Effectiveness	(3) Sustainable Procurement	(4) Skills Enhancement
Personalisation				
Developing Bespoke solutions, Fast	√	√		
Raising Aspirations and Enabling Students to achieve outcomes		√		
Recruiting and Retaining Talented People	√	√		√
Collaboration				
Creating Learning Pathways		√		
Immersive Partnerships		√	√	
Delivering Inclusive Growth				√
Agile and Adaptive				
Developing new income opportunities				
Developing the Market	√	√		
Utilising Specialist Capabilities		√		
Managing for Resilience	√		√	√
Digital				
Using Data				√
Inspirational Learning			√	√
Developing the skills base				√

The College shall also support the vision of the Public Procurement Strategy for Scotland 2023 to 2028 and delivery of its objectives, namely to conduct its procurement activity in a way which is:

- Good for Businesses and their Employees;
- Good for Places and Communities; and
- Good for Society.

6. Strategy Compliance with the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

6.1 To comply with Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the College must observe several general duties and some specific measures which will be embedded in the Strategy Action Plan but are detailed below for clarity:

- **Contribute to the effective achievement of the college function and purpose**

The College will analyse its third-party expenditure and identify 'EU regulated procurements' and also 'Reform Act regulated procurements'. In addition, the College will identify all procurements above £25,000 in accordance with the Financial Memorandum with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The College will consider appropriate contract and supplier management to monitor and improve the regulated procurement outcomes.

- **Deliver Value for Money**

Value for money is not about buying the cheapest but is the balance between the lifetime cost of the purchase and the quality or performance of that product or service. Competition is a key component in demonstrating that a purchase represents value for money. When buying expensive items, e.g. high value equipment or specialist consultancy services, the need to demonstrate value for money is more important than for lower value purchases. It is for this reason that the College has in place many pre-tendered deals, and approved suppliers, across a wide range of product areas. Value for money comes as standard when you use these. This does not mean that they will always provide the very cheapest price but it does provide an assurance that you will get the best price available across the whole institution and a consistent quality from a reputable supplier with an interest in working with the College.

The College through its procurement processes and practice will consistently apply this principle.

- **Consult and engage with stakeholders affected by College procurement.**
 Where appropriate the Department will work with people who use College services, potential suppliers and others to help it design procurement activities. This can vary from market research to supplier engagement days or the design and piloting of services. For larger contracts the Department may involve people who use the services through ‘user intelligence groups’, and for other contracts the Department will match the involvement of people to the specific circumstances.
- **Negotiate with current suppliers to ensure payment of a Living Wage to their employees and throughout the supply chain**
 Living Wage payment and workforce matters will be encouraged in all relevant future contracts. West College Scotland became an accredited Living Wage employer in September 2017. This means that the College has made a commitment to pay at least the ‘real’ Living Wage to all directly employed staff and to address the payment of the ‘real’ Living Wage to contractors working on College premises.
- **Promote compliance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 by contractors and subcontractors**
 West College Scotland wants to prevent or reduce any workplace factors that may cause ill health and injury and by managing risk proportionately, sensibly and practically. The College believes that it is important that those bidding for contracts are also able to show that they are responsible and respect any health and safety obligations. That is why it is a standard condition of College contracts that the contractor must keep to all laws that apply, all requirements of regulatory organisations and industry good practice. This includes any relevant health and safety law. Also, whenever a contractor’s staff are on College premises, under the terms of our standard contracts, they must keep to the College health and safety requirements.
- **Include community benefit clauses where possible in any contract opportunities.**
 The Department will consider community benefit opportunities at the development stage of all regulated procurements and handle these in one of two ways:

 - *Mandatory or contractual* – In this scenario the College will ask bidders to deliver community benefits (for example, targeted training, recruitment and other opportunities in the supply chain) as part of a contract specification. These requirements then form part of the tender evaluation and may be scored.

- *Voluntary* – The College will use this approach in cases where it is not appropriate to make community benefits a mandatory requirement for all bidders. The College will ask that voluntary community benefits are only offered where these do not place too much of a burden on the bidder but may result in the contract delivering extra value. Bidders will be asked to consider what community benefits they can offer as part of their bid. In this scenario community benefits are not part of the tender evaluation. Where a bid is accepted, any offer of community benefits is included in the contract to be signed by the bidder.

- **Ensure that the goods and/or services procured by contractors and subcontractors are fairly and ethically purchased.**

The College will continue to develop its contract and supplier management practices which are key to addressing this issue. The College will also continue to engage with APUC to monitor practices and mitigate potential risks associated with human rights and/or ethical procurement risks in the supply chain. Also, in line with legislative requirements the College will update our standard contract terms and conditions to allow for contract termination in the event of failure by a contractor to comply with its legal obligations in the fields of environmental, social or employment law.

- **Ensure that all contracts involving food are aimed at improving the health, wellbeing and education of the College community and promote the highest standards of animal welfare.**

The College buys a significant level of food directly through a range of catering frameworks to achieve a range of benefits. The College approach is to make sure that this keeps to government policies on healthy eating and nutrition, promoting fresh, seasonal, fairly traded and local produce and to UK buying standards. These standards take account of factors including, production, traceability, authenticity, origin, ethical trading, animal welfare, environmental standards and health and waste.

- **Ensure that the College pays invoices in 30 days or less to contractors**
The College are committed to prompt payment of invoices to contractors. The College are committed to paying valid invoices within 30 days of receipt and, as a condition of contract, will require this commitment to apply through the supply chain relating to the contract. This condition, when applied throughout the supply chain, must also make clear that if a subcontractor believes that invoices are not being paid within 30 days they can raise the issue directly with the College.
- The Procurement Manager will design a training programme to make sure all within the department are fully compliant with Scottish Government legislation and best practice.

7. Implementation, Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting

- 7.1 The Strategy objectives and priorities will be monitored via an Annual Procurement Action Plan. Performance against the Annual Procurement Action Plan will be reviewed, reported and monitored annually by the Board of Management.
- 7.2 In accordance with requirements of the Procurement Reform Act, the College will publish an Annual Procurement Report as soon as practicable after the financial year end and this will describe how the College has discharged its obligations under the Act. The Annual Procurement Report will be reported to the:
- Board of Management
 - Wider public via publication on the College website and to the Scottish Government
- 7.3 In line with the statutory guidelines under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the College will review the Strategy annually and will make such revisions as it considers appropriate to ensure continued alignment with College Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Any significant changes will be reported to the Board of Management.
- 7.4 The strategy owner is the Director of Finance. The Procurement Team is led by the Procurement Manager who is responsible to the Head of Finance and Student Funding. Further details of the procurement arrangements at the College can be found on the College [Procurement Hub](#) page of the intranet or on the [Procurement Section](#) of the internet.

Appendix 1 – Glossary

The categorisations of College procurement expenditure referred to within this Strategy are defined as follows:

- **Non-Pay Expenditure** – all College expenditure – both influenceable and non-influenceable – that does not include remuneration costs.
- **Non-Influenceable Spend** – expenditure that relates to fixed and statutory requirements – such as irrecoverable VAT, property rent and rates and examination fees.
- **Influenceable Spend** – all expenditure that the College has an ability to influence.
- **Framework Category A** - commodities used across the public sector, such as utility contracts / insurance / IT supplies, and which are negotiated under collaborative contracts at national level.
- **Framework Category B** - commodities such as food/cooking supplies and curriculum support materials, with the procurement being undertaken through framework arrangements with Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC), Scotland Excel (the Centre of Procurement Expertise for the local government sector) and other similar centres of procurement expertise.
- **Contract Category C** - those supplies and services sourced through procurement exercises undertaken by the College (WCS Local) and not associated with any collaborative framework.
- **Regulated and Non-Regulated Procurement** – under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 the definition of regulated procurement is contracts valued at £50,000 or above, excluding VAT for goods and services and £2,000,000 for works. Non-regulated procurements are those contracts below the £50,000 threshold.