

CITY OF



**WHITEHORSE**

# PROCUREMENT POLICY

June 2017

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# 1 Background

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Procurement Policy is to -

- provide a framework to assist and ensure the efficient, effective, socially and ecologically responsible procurement of goods, services and works for Whitehorse City Council (Council);
- ensure consistency and control over procurement activities;
- demonstrate accountability to ratepayers;
- demonstrate the application of best practice in procurement; and
- increase the probability of obtaining the right procurement outcome.

- where procurement is defined as the whole process of acquisition of external goods (either outright or by rental or lease), services and works.

## 1.2 Best Practice

Council recognises that:

- Developing a procurement strategy and adopting appropriate best practice procurement policies, principles, processes and procedures for all goods, services and works will enhance achievement of Council objectives.
- The elements of best practice applicable to local government procurement incorporate:
  - broad principles covering ethics, value for money, responsibilities and accountabilities;
  - guidelines giving effect to those principles;
  - a system of delegations;
  - procurement processes with appropriate procedures;
  - an awareness of supply chain relationships and market conditions; and
  - a professional approach.

Council requires that Council's contracting, purchasing and contract management activities:

- support Council's corporate strategies, aims and objectives;
- consider the whole life cycle of an acquisition from initial concept to the end of the useful life of an asset, including its disposal;
- achieve value for money;
- can demonstrate that public money has been well spent;
- are conducted, and are seen to be conducted, in an impartial, fair and ethical manner;
- seek continual improvement including the embrace of innovation and technological initiatives;
- generate and support business in the local community; and
- required to comply with the Human Rights Charter.

## 1.3 Scope

The procurement function for Council is decentralised and utilises an electronic purchasing system. Central control of the procurement function is achieved by the Procurement Policy.

The Procurement Policy articulates expectations of Council officers, councillors and temporary employees conducting procurement on behalf of Council. Council officers undertaking procurement are required to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Procurement Policy and procurement procedures to ensure that all requirements are met.

The Procurement Policy applies to all purchases made by Council, regardless of the funding source.

Council's Purchasing, Tendering and Contract Administration Guidelines exemplify the Procurement Policy.

## **2 Framework Policies and Legislation**

### **2.1 Standards**

Council's procurement activities are carried out to the professional standards required by best practice and in compliance with:

- the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic);
- the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth);
- Council's Code of Conduct;
- relevant Council policies; and
- other relevant legislation.

Procurement actions and outcomes meet the requirements of the following relevant policies and legislation, including any subsequent amendments:

### **2.2 Local Government Act**

This Procurement Policy is made under Section 186A of the Local Government Act 1989.

This section of the Act requires Council to prepare, approve and comply with a procurement policy encompassing the principles, processes and procedures applied to all purchases of goods, services and works by Council.

The Local Government Act 1989, as amended, is the core legislation governing local government procurement.

### **2.3 National Competition Policy**

The National Competition Policy (NCP) impacts on Council's procurement processes. In brief, NCP extends the Australian Consumer Law to Councils and introduces Competitive Neutrality Policy.

### **2.4 Competition and Consumer Act 2010**

The Competition and Consumer Act (CCA) protects businesses and their customers from unfair trading practices. Council's rights and responsibilities under the CCA are considered in all procurement transactions.

The requirements of the CCA are applied to all aspects of Council business to ensure that it is operating fairly and competitively in the marketplace.

### **2.5 Competitive Neutrality**

All tenders submitted by Whitehorse City Council comply with the Competitive Neutral Pricing Principles as outlined in the Victorian State Government's "Competitive Neutrality Policy" dated September 2012.

Competitive Neutrality pricing principles are applied when tendering against external or private companies. The State Government has introduced competitive neutrality policy to ensure that where government's business activities involve it in competition with private sector business activities, the net competitive advantages, or disadvantages that accrue to a government business as a result of their public ownership are offset.

Competitive Neutrality policy promotes efficient competition between public and private businesses operating in the same market.

Competitive Neutrality pricing principles are also applied when evaluating tenders received from other Councils.

## **2.6 Best Value**

The State Government's "Best Value" Principles (contained in sections 208A-208J of the Local Government Act) are applied to the procurement of all goods, services and works that form part of the provision of services to the community. Services to the community satisfy the following best value principles:

- meet quality and cost standards;
- responsive to the needs of the community;
- accessible to those for whom they are intended; and
- demonstrate continuous improvement in social, economic and environmental value.

## **2.7 Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

When obtaining quotations/tenders, the value of the GST is included in the quoted/tendered price unless the goods or services are GST-exempt under legislation.

All monetary values stated in this policy include GST.

## **2.8 Occupational Health & Safety**

The requirements of the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and Council's Health and Safety Policy are applied to the procurement of goods, services and works.

Whitehorse City Council is obliged to ensure that its employees and Suppliers/Contractors/Consultants (and their employees) carry out their activities:

- in a safe manner;
- using proper and safe plant and substances; and
- employing systems of work that are safe and in which there has been adequate instruction, training and supervision.

This obligation applies to each and every aspect of the activity to be carried out.

Outsourcing work to Contractors/Consultants contributes to the quality of outcomes for an activity but does not remove Whitehorse City Council's obligation and accountability to ensure that those who actually perform the activity are protected from risks to their health and safety.

## **2.9 Equal Opportunity**

The requirements of the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Council's Equal Opportunity Policy and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation are applied to the procurement of goods, services and works.

## **2.10 Disability Considerations**

The legislative requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the current Whitehorse Disability Policy and Action Plan are considered to ensure that procurement processes and decisions do not directly or indirectly discriminate against people with a disability.

The Whitehorse Disability Policy and Action Plan details Council's commitment to the rights of people with a disability to access goods, services and facilities enjoyed by the whole community.

## **2.11 Privacy Compliance**

Privacy protocols in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) are observed in all transactions containing personal and health information held and gathered by Council. Council ensures that personal information held is stored, managed, used, disclosed and transferred in a fair and appropriate way and that people have the right to access and correct information about themselves.

## **2.12 Sustainability**

Council is committed to being sustainable and will ensure that it minimises adverse environmental impacts in the procurement of goods, services and works to the best of its ability.

Council constructs, operates and maintains economic, social and environmental infrastructure and leads by example through its own sustainable actions. The Whitehorse Sustainability Strategy 2016-2022 (the Strategy) forms the basis of Council's sustainable framework and guides all Council programs, outputs, services and facilities.

Council views sustainability in terms of achieving a triple bottom line with actions aimed at improving the environment, the health and well-being of the community, and promoting a sustainable local economy.

The Strategy is based on 16 Sustainability Outcomes, strategic directions and various sustainability targets, one of which is to increase Council's purchasing of green products to 10% of Council's total purchasing expenditure.

## **2.13 Human Rights**

The requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, ensure that Council gives proper consideration to human rights during the procurement of goods, services and works.

# **3 Key Purchasing Principles**

## **3.1 Responsible Financial Management**

The principle of responsible financial management is applied to all procurement activities by ensuring that:

- the availability of funding within an approved budget, or other source of funding, is established prior to the commencement of any procurement activity;
- delegated officers do not authorise expenditure of funds in excess of the approval levels detailed in clause 4.6;
- funds are spent efficiently and effectively;
- every attempt is made to contain the costs of the procurement process without compromising any of the procurement principles set out in this Policy;
- Council considers the overall need for a purchase across the various functions of Council and over time before approaching the market;
- smaller contracts are consolidated where practical into a single procurement;
- contracts are not split (either intentionally or inadvertently) to avoid the application of the financial thresholds in section 4.2; and
- major procurement activities are viewed strategically, in the context of Council's priorities and market factors, to ensure Council is best placed to achieve its objectives and obtain maximum value for money.



### **3.2 Value for Money**

All procurement activities are carried out on the basis of obtaining value for money.

Value for money is achieved by minimising the total cost of ownership over the lifetime of the requirement consistent with acceptable quality, reliability and delivery considerations. Lowest price is not the sole determinant of value for money.

In accordance with Section 186(3) of the Local Government Act, Council gives preference to goods, equipment, material or machinery manufactured in Australia and New Zealand when practical.

### **3.3 Probity principles**

Procurement processes are visible, defensible and auditable. The integrity of the procurement process is upheld to ensure that stakeholders have utmost confidence that procurement outcomes can be justified and that policy and legislative obligations are being met.

All documentation supporting procurement processes and decisions is stored in Council's corporate records management system (HPRM). This requirement applies equally to third parties managing procurement processes on behalf of Council.

### **3.4 Ethics and probity**

In accordance with, and further to, the conduct principles outlined in Section 95 of the Local Government Act, procurement is conducted ethically to enable Council to deal with its suppliers on a basis of mutual trust and respect and conduct business fairly, reasonably and with integrity. All Council officers involved in procurement ensure that they:

- avoid and disclose conflicts of interest;
- deal with suppliers even-handedly;
- consider seeking appropriate probity advice and/or the appointment of a probity auditor where there is a higher than usual level of complexity, including:
  - high value purchases;
  - projects with complex technical requirements or a variety of possible solutions;
  - multi-stage procurement activities, or those where some active engagement with industry is desirable;
  - where suppliers are disengaged or critical of Council's activities; or
  - where there is any suggestion of impropriety, including conflicts of interest or complaints about improper processes.
- seek ad hoc probity advice as soon as an ethical issue or policy breach is identified, in order to minimise the risk of harm to tenderers and Council;
- uphold Council's standing by not accepting gifts or hospitality;
- are scrupulous in their use of public property;
- comply with all legislative obligations including those required by safety and consumer protection legislation;
- have regard to the cost to suppliers in submitting prices, proposals and tenders;
- invite quotations and tenders only where there is a clear intent to procure the goods/services/works in the near future;
- do not behave in a fraudulent or criminal manner as detailed in Council's Fraud Policy;
- protect Commercial in Confidence information;
- do not endorse any unauthorised products or services; and
- do not use Council's purchasing system for personal use items.

### **3.5 Conflict of Interest**

All Council officers involved in procurement:

- ensure that they avoid whenever possible personal or private interests that intersect or overlap with their official duties;
- disclose all personal or private interests associated with the supplier (including interests from previous employment, personal business dealings and matters affecting family members) that might compromise their ability to act solely in the public interest; and
- follow the specific procedures defined in the Local Government Act to remove themselves from decision-making processes in the event that a conflict of interest is identified.

### **3.6 Risk Management**

Risk management is applied at all stages of procurement activities which are planned and carried out in a manner that protects and enhances Council's ability to prevent, withstand and recover from interruption to the supply of goods, services and works.

### **3.7 Socially and Ecologically Sustainable Purchasing**

#### **3.7.1 Principles**

Socially and ecologically sustainable principles and practices are considered in all procurement decisions.

Council supports and encourages the use of quality products that have recycled content and are ecologically responsible, over products made from virgin or inappropriate materials.

Council may give preference to:

- companies or organisations that follow ecologically sustainable and Fair Trade work practices;
- ecologically sustainable goods and services within the context of purchasing on a value for money basis; or
- tenders that will deliver a social benefit to the local community in addition to or as part of delivering the required goods or services.

#### **3.7.2 Objectives**

Council strives to:

- minimise unnecessary purchasing through the conscious and thoughtful purchasing of goods and services;
- minimise waste by using the waste hierarchy to assess purchases (Avoid, Re-use, Recycle, Treatment, Containment & Disposal);
- minimise greenhouse gas emissions by considering the energy efficiency rating of products, including the manufacture & transport energy costs;
- minimise habitat destruction by purchasing goods and services from sustainable and renewable resources;
- minimise toxicity by purchasing goods that are free of toxic or polluting materials;
- minimise soil degradation by using goods and services that do not degrade or pollute the soil, or result in erosion through their use;
- maximise recycled content by giving preference to high quality products containing recycled content; and
- maximise water efficiency by purchasing goods or services that conserve water.

### **3.8 Buy Local**

The Council Vision 2012-2023 aims to develop a regionally significant economy and as such encourages the procurement of goods, services and works within the City of Whitehorse. Local providers are given an equal opportunity to quote and tender. Where a local provider can match or better other providers on price, quality and availability, preference is given to the local provider.

### **3.9 Buy Fairtrade**

Fairtrade products are given consideration where practical. These are products labelled as Fairtrade or produced under Fairtrade conditions.

Fairtrade is an internationally recognised trading system that ensures decent working conditions, local sustainability, gender equity and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world.

Fairtrade certification ensures that small-scale farmers and plantation workers work under safe conditions and receive a fair price for their crops and labour. Fairtrade actively encourages better environmental practices such as organic production methods.

### **3.10 Understanding the market**

Purchasing is always informed by a good understanding of the supply chain (that is, the individuals and organisations that manufacture, sell or provide the goods and services needed by Council).

Council actively seeks to understand the supply chain and to develop relationships with suppliers, within the bounds of probity. This can be done by:

- Actively engaging in discussions with key suppliers to better understand issues that are important to suppliers;
- Seeking feedback from suppliers about the way Council does business;
- Agreeing to meet with new suppliers and encouraging them to bid for Council business where appropriate;
- Actively researching issues affecting the supply chain such as regulatory changes or availability of raw materials that may have a follow-on impact on Council; and
- Participating in industry groups and maintaining dialogue with peak bodies representing suppliers to ensure a good understanding of the market.

### **3.11 Disclosure of Information**

Council deals with large volumes of confidential information in the context of its procurement activities. Improper disclosure of this information can undermine the competitive nature of Council's procurement, and breach legal obligations to maintain confidentiality owed to third parties.

Council representatives are not permitted to disclose the following types of information:

- information (including pricing) disclosed in any tender or quote submitted to Council;
- matters discussed during negotiations with a supplier; and
- any details of the evaluation process or weighted criteria that are not contained in the formal request documentation issued by Council.

All confidential information held by Council in relation to procurement activities is stored in a secure location, and steps are taken to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure.

## **4 Procurement Levels and Procedures**

### **4.1 Total Value - Definition**

For quotations, the total value is the estimated value or reasonably anticipated value of the goods, services or works to be procured.

The annual cumulative expenditure against all suppliers, contractors and consultants is audited annually by the Procurement Department to determine whether tendering of the goods/services/works is required.

For contracts, the total value is the estimated value or reasonably anticipated value of the goods, services or works to be procured over the term of the contract, including project management costs, contingencies, provisional sums and any contract extension options that may or may not eventuate.

### **4.2 General Requirements**

A record of all verbal quotations and written quotations received and all other documentation supporting procurement processes and decisions is stored in Council's corporate records management system (HPRM) and/or Council's Procurement Portal.

The following procurement levels and procedures are applied to the procurement of all goods, services and works, including fee-for-service retainer arrangements:

#### **4.2.1 \$0 to \$5,000 – Best Offer**

For goods, services and works with a total value up to \$5,000, the number of quotations to be obtained is not specified, however "best value" principles need to be demonstrated and followed at all times.

This will include, at a minimum, recording why a particular supplier was selected and why that choice was likely to achieve a value for money outcome.

#### **4.2.2 \$5,001 to \$150,000 for Goods and Services – Written Quotations**

For goods and services with a total value from \$5,001 to \$150,000, a minimum of 3 written or emailed quotations must be obtained and filed.

Written or emailed quotations can be reused for a maximum period of 12 months provided that:

- The companies were advised at the time of providing the quote that further purchases on the same terms and conditions may occur; and
- the total value of the goods, services or works does not exceed \$150,000 in the 12 month period.

Invitations to quote may be publicly advertised or tenders may be called if these processes are likely to lead to a better procurement outcome. This should be determined by reference to the Public Tender Considerations in section 4.2.7.

A Schedule of Rates (annual supply) contract should be established in cases where goods and services are ordered from the same supplier/contractor on a regular basis.

#### **4.2.3 \$5,001 to \$200,000 for Works – Written Quotations**

For building and construction works with a total value from \$5,001 to \$200,000, a minimum of 3 written or emailed quotations must be obtained and filed.

Written or emailed quotations can be reused for a maximum period of 12 months provided that:

- The companies were advised at the time of providing the quote that further purchases on the same terms and conditions may occur; and
- the total value of the works does not exceed \$200,000 in the 12 month period.

Invitations to quote may be publicly advertised or tenders may be called if these processes are likely to lead to a better procurement outcome. This should be determined by reference to the Public Tender Considerations in section 4.2.7.

A Schedule of Rates (annual supply) contract should be established in cases where works are ordered from the same contractor on a regular basis.

#### **4.2.4 Above \$150,000 for Goods and Services – Public Tender**

For goods and services with a total value exceeding \$150,000, a formal contract is established. Tenders are publicly advertised for the contract in accordance with Section 186 of the Local Government Act.

Expressions of interest may be invited prior to tendering where Council wishes to:

- identify which companies are able to meet its requirements;
- seek innovative proposals from industry where specifications are not yet fully defined;
- ensure only the most suitable tenderers are put to the expense of preparing a full tender; or
- give the market early notice of the upcoming procurement.

This is done via an open and public process.

Tenders may be called for goods and services with a total value below \$150,000, if a public tender process is likely to lead to a better procurement outcome. This should be determined by reference to the Public Tender Considerations in section 4.2.7.

#### **4.2.5 Above \$200,000 for Works – Public Tender**

For building and construction works with a total value exceeding \$200,000, a formal contract is established. Tenders are publicly advertised for the contract in accordance with Section 186 of the Local Government Act.

Expressions of interest may be invited prior to tendering where Council wishes to:

- identify which companies are able to meet its requirements;
- seek innovative proposals from industry where specifications are not yet fully defined;
- ensure only the most suitable tenderers are put to the expense of preparing a full tender; or
- give the market early notice of the upcoming procurement.

This is done via an open and public process.

Tenders may be called for works with a total value below \$200,000, if a public tender process is likely to lead to a better procurement outcome. This should be determined by reference to the Public Tender Considerations in section 4.2.7.

#### **4.2.6 Schedule of Rates Contracts – Public Tender**

For the procurement of goods, services and works based on a Schedule of Rates (annual supply), a formal contract is established. Tenders are publicly advertised for the contract in accordance with Section 186 of the Local Government Act, regardless of the total value of the goods, services and works.

Expressions of interest may be invited prior to tendering where Council wishes to:

- identify which companies are able to meet its requirements;
- seek innovative proposals from industry where specifications are not yet fully defined;
- ensure only the most suitable tenderers are put to the expense of preparing a full tender; or
- give the market early notice of the upcoming procurement.

This is done via an open and public process.

If a lump sum quotation is invited under a Schedule of Rates contract and the total value of the goods, services or works exceeds \$500,000, the procurement is approved in accordance with Clause 4.6.5.

Contractors engaged under a Schedule of Rates contract are not excluded from tendering for fixed price work in accordance with subclause 4.2.4 and 4.2.5. Fixed price work forms an agreement that is separate and distinct from any contract for Schedule of Rates work.

#### **4.2.7 Public Tender Considerations**

A public tender for goods and services that are below the financial thresholds of \$150,000 (for goods or services) and \$200,000 (for works) is also considered when:

- the value of purchases from one or more vendor supplying the same or similar goods and services over a period of 1 to 3 years exceeds, or is likely to exceed, the relevant financial threshold;
- Council does not have a sound and current knowledge of the suppliers in the marketplace;
- There has been no comparable recent procurement from which Council can determine a reliable pre-tender estimate of the likely cost of the goods or services required;
- Council is unhappy with its current suppliers' performance or price, and wishes to encourage competition;
- Council is seeking innovative proposals or has an unusual requirement; or
- One or two suppliers have been servicing this requirement for a period exceeding 5 years, during which time the market has not been tested for alternatives.

#### **4.3 Exemptions to Procurement Levels & Procedures**

The Procurement Levels and procedures detailed in subclause 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 are not applied under the following circumstances, subject to written approval by a General Manager for purchases with a total value between \$5,001 and \$10,000 and the Chief Executive Officer for purchases with a total value exceeding \$10,000:

- in an emergency where "emergency" is defined as:
  - any urgent circumstance which may present a risk to public health and/or safety;
  - the failure of a key service provider such as Council's Waste Collection Service;
  - significant damage to a municipal building; or

- major business disruptions such as an extensive IT failure resulting in a loss of services to the community.
- where quotes were invited from 3 or more vendors and insufficient quotes were submitted or insufficient quotes were submitted that conform to the essential requirements of the procurement;
- where insufficient quotes were submitted and the goods, services or works have been publicly advertised;
- an absence of competition for technical reasons;
- for additional delivery of goods and services that are intended either as replacement parts, extensions or continuing services for existing equipment, software, services or installations where a change in supplier would necessitate the procurement of goods and services that do not meet the requirements for interoperability or interchangeability;
- to the procurement of works of art; and
- to the procurement of performing arts defined as forms of creative activity that are performed in front of an audience, such as drama, music and dance.

The Procurement Levels and procedures detailed in subclause 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 are not applied under the following circumstances:

- to the procurement of goods, services and works using approved aggregated purchasing arrangements with other councils and approved contracts entered into by MAPS Group Limited (trading as Procurement Australia), MAV Procurement, the Victorian Government, or other approved bodies;
- to non-contestable services and works undertaken by and on behalf of Utility and Service owners.

The Procurement Levels and procedures detailed in subclause 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 are not applied to the procurement of goods, services and works if:

- the Council resolves that a contract must be entered into because of an emergency as defined above;
- a contract is entered into with a Council acting as the agent for a group of Councils and the Council has otherwise complied with the requirements of the Local Government Act;
- a contract is entered into in accordance with arrangements approved by the Victorian Minister for Local Government;
- the contract is a type of contract that has been exempted by the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 (e.g. a contract for legal services); or
- the contract is entered into following the appointment of a third party to act as Council's agent for the purpose of conducting a tendering process (provided that the appointment is revocable at any time and the power to make a decision to award any subsequent contract remains with Council).

Where an exemption applies, the Key Purchasing Principles set out in this Policy still apply, in particular:

- maintaining probity;
- demonstrating ethical conduct;
- avoiding and managing conflicts of interest; and
- obtaining best value for money.

#### **4.4 Evaluation of Quotations**

Quotations are awarded to the supplier providing the best value for money outcome, following a transparent and defensible evaluation process conducted in accordance with Council's Tendering and Contract Administration Guidelines.

#### **4.5 Approval of Quotations & Invoices**

Verbal and written quotations and invoices for goods, services and works, are approved in accordance with the Approval Levels detailed in clause 4.6.

The approval of a purchase order or invoice using the electronic purchasing system is deemed to be an approval under delegation.

The conflict of interest requirements detailed in clause 3.5 apply equally to approving officers.

#### **4.6 Approval Levels**

The approval levels for the procurement of goods, services and works are based on the "total value" of those goods, services or works, as defined in Clause 4.1.

The procurement of all goods, services and works and the refund or reimbursement of moneys (including cash refunds, bank guarantees, bonds etc.) is approved by delegated officers in accordance with the following levels:

##### **4.6.1 Up to the Value of \$5,000**

The procurement of goods, services and works and the refund or reimbursement of moneys with a total value of \$5,000, or less is approved by authorised team leaders, supervisors, co-ordinators and other nominated Council officers.

##### **4.6.2 Up to the Value of \$50,000**

The procurement of goods, services and works and the refund or reimbursement of moneys with a total value of \$50,000, or less is approved by third level managers.

##### **4.6.3 Up to the Value of \$200,000**

The procurement of goods, services and works and the refund or reimbursement of moneys with a total value of \$200,000, or less is approved by General Managers.

##### **4.6.4 Up to the Value of \$500,000**

The procurement of goods, services and works and the refund or reimbursement of moneys with a total value of \$500,000, or less is approved by the Chief Executive Officer.



#### **4.6.5 Above \$500,000**

The procurement of goods, services and works with a total value exceeding \$500,000 is approved by the Council at a Council Meeting or a Special Committee Meeting.

#### **4.6.6 Transfer of Approval Authority**

The authority to approve the procurement of goods, services and works can be transferred to a nominated officer by the Procurement Department if requested by a delegated officer in writing when the delegated officer is on leave or is unavailable due to other reasons.

#### **4.7 Additional Approvals**

The following additional approvals are obtained:

- Chief Executive Officer approval for the purchase of additional fleet vehicles and interstate conferences or travel;
- General Manager and Chief Executive Officer approval for the engagement of temporary staff for a period exceeding 3 months where the placement is additional to the current staff compliment (i.e. an additional EFT);
- Department Manager approval for advertising a permanent position that must be filled to meet statutory requirements (such as a child carer, home carer or pool attendant), where there is an existing budget allocation and no variation to the position description;
- General Manager and Chief Executive Officer approval for advertising a permanent position where there is no budget variation or no variation to the position description;
- General Manager, General Manager Corporate Services and Chief Executive Officer approval for advertising a new permanent position created as a budget initiative;
- General Manager, General Manager Corporate Services and Chief Executive Officer approval for advertising a permanent position that requires a variation to the position description or has budget implications;
- General Manager, General Manager Infrastructure and Chief Executive Officer approval for advertising a permanent position that will be charged against a Capital Works account;
- General Manager Corporate Services approval following recommendation by the Head of Finance and Corporate Performance for all new financial leases and agreements (including financial leases and operating leases) for a term exceeding 3 months. The ongoing management of financial leases and agreements is the responsibility of Department Managers. Novated leases are first approved by the Payroll Coordinator;
- Manager Property and Rates approval for all new leases and licence agreements for Council owned properties. The ongoing management of leases and licence agreements is the responsibility of Department Managers;
- Head of Business Technology or Coordinator IT and General Manager Corporate Services approval for the procurement of mobile devices;
- Manager Capital Works approval for capital works expenditure;
- Head of Business Technology or Coordinator IT approval for the procurement of new hardware and software that will be connected to Council's computer network;
- Fleet Coordinator approval for the lease of plant and the hire, maintenance and repair of vehicles; and
- General Manager Infrastructure approval for the purchase of replacement fleet vehicles.

## **4.8 Council Contracts**

Existing Council contracts are utilised for the procurement of goods, services and works whenever practicable.

Council is committed to developing constructive long-term relationships with suppliers.

## **4.9 Use of Credit Cards and Purchasing Cards**

### **4.9.1 Corporate Credit Cards and Purchasing Cards**

Corporate credit cards and purchasing cards are used in accordance with Council's Credit Card Usage Policy which states that corporate credit cards are not used for personal use.

### **4.9.2 Personal Credit Cards**

Personal credit cards are not used for Council business purchases unless prior approval has been obtained from a General Manager or the Chief Executive Officer.

The use of personal credit cards to avoid the Procurement and Approval Levels detailed in this Policy is not permitted.

## **4.10 Petty Cash**

The petty cash system operates to reimburse legitimate, urgent and operational business expenses incurred by Council officers in the conduct of Council activities.

The maximum claim for petty cash reimbursement is \$100 per receipt.

All petty cash claims exceeding \$100 are authorised by the responsible Program Manager and the Head of Finance and Corporate Performance.

## **4.11 New Vendors**

New vendor requests are approved by a designated manager or team leader.

The officer requesting a new vendor does not approve their own new vendor request.

An approval by a designated manager or team leader is not required for a new vendor that has been awarded a contract through a public tender process in accordance with subclause 4.2.4, 4.2.5 or 4.2.6.

## **4.12 Purchase Orders**

### **4.12.1 Raising and Approving Purchase Orders**

A purchase order is raised and approved for the procurement of all goods, services and works using Council's electronic purchasing system.

All officers ensure that purchase orders are raised and approved for all goods, services and works prior to ordering and receiving the goods, services or works.

No officers authorise or raise multiple purchase orders to avoid the Procurement and Approval Levels specified in this Policy.

No officers authorise a purchase or reimbursement from which they will receive a personal benefit (e.g. a training course, travel arrangements).

A blanket order is raised for repetitive purchases from a single vendor. The blanket order has a fixed start and end date, has a maximum lifespan of 3 months and a

maximum value of \$20,000, unless otherwise approved by a General Manager. Purchases are made against the order until the amount of the order is depleted or the order expires.

Council's Purchase Order Terms and Conditions, which can be viewed on Council's website, apply to all purchases.

#### **4.12.2 Use of Electronic Purchasing System**

The electronic purchasing system is never used by any Council officer for personal purchases or for any financial gain by themselves, friends or relatives. Misuse of the Council purchasing system is contrary to Council's Employee Conduct Policy.

Access to the electronic purchasing system is not granted to any Council officer until an approved training course has been completed.

#### **4.12.3 Purchase Order Tolerances**

The amount of the invoice should not exceed the value of the purchase order. Invoices where the invoiced amount exceeds the purchase order amount by a value of up to 10% and \$300 are automatically approved without the need for an additional purchase order.

### **4.13 Exemptions for Purchase Orders**

Purchase orders are not raised for:

- for the procurement of goods, services and works using petty cash (maximum \$100.00 per receipt);
- postage service charges
- Council networked multifunction device and printer charges
- Council telecommunications service charges inclusive of landlines, mobile and data
- utilities charges for Council facilities;
- corporate credit card and purchasing card transactions; and
- where payments for approved purchases are made by direct debit transactions.

### **4.14 Payment Terms**

Vendor invoices are paid on a 30 day payment cycle, generally within 30 days from the date of the invoice and after completion/receipt of the goods, services or works, whichever is the latter.

Payment terms are only changed with the approval of the Head of Finance and Corporate Performance.

The preferred payment method is by electronic funds transfer, directly to the relevant bank. Bank account details are obtained for all new vendors whenever possible, except for credit card payments.

## **5 Tendering Requirements and Procedures**

### **5.1 Risk Management and Procurement Planning**

A risk management plan is prepared and a probity auditor is appointed for high value purchases, projects of lower value but of a complex nature and services that are critical to the continuity of Council business. The risk management plan considers all stages of the procurement cycle.

A Procurement Plan is prepared to sit alongside the Risk Management Plan and detail:

- the business case for the procurement;

- the method of procurement selected and justification for that selection (by reference to the value and risk profile of the purchase and prevailing market conditions);
- the key roles and responsibilities for the procurement to ensure individual accountability; and
- evaluation criteria and weightings that will be used to select the preferred tenderer.

## **5.2 Term of Contract**

There are no limitations on the duration of a contract. The contract term is selected to provide the best procurement outcome for Council.

Any decision made under delegation to award a contract does not include the awarding of any extension options for the contract.

Any extension of a contract containing an extension option requires a further, separate decision close to, and prior to, the expiry of the initial term.

The extension of a contract containing an extension option is approved by the same delegated officer or Council that approved the original contract. If the original contract was approved by Council, then the contract extension is also approved by Council, unless otherwise delegated and approved by Council.

## **5.3 Rate Adjustments**

For all contracts longer than 12 months, provisions are made in the contract for rate adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index (Melbourne All Groups Index Numbers), minimum wage increases as provided by the Australian Fair Pay Commission or other approved methods.

Reasonable requests for rate increases resulting from circumstances that are clearly beyond the control of the supplier/contractor/consultant or that could not have been foreseen at the time of submitting a tender are given due consideration.

If a contract is silent in relation to the rates payable during any contract extension, then because Council has discretion to exercise the option, it may also propose the applicable rates to apply during the extension period.

## **5.4 Contract Security**

Successful tenderers lodge a security deposit in the form of a bank guarantee, cash payment or cheque.

The amount of the security deposit is as follows, unless otherwise approved by the Manager Procurement & Contracts:

### **5.4.1 Contracts for Goods**

A security deposit is not required.

### **5.4.2 Contracts for Physical Services**

The minimum amount of the security deposit is 2.5% of the annual contract sum, including GST.

### **5.4.3 Contracts for Works**

The minimum amount of the security deposit is 5% of the contract sum, including GST or \$2,000, whichever is greater.

### **5.4.4 Contracts for Consultants**

A security deposit is not required.

#### **5.4.5 Schedule of Rates and Annual Supply Contracts**

The minimum amount of the security deposit is \$1,000.

### **5.5 Insurances**

Successful tenderers take out and maintain insurance cover for the term of the contract and provide evidence of cover prior to providing goods and services and prior to commencing works under the contract.

The insurance policies do not contain policy exclusions that are relevant to the contract.

The type and minimum amount of insurance cover required varies depending on the type of contract, as follows:

#### **5.5.1 Contracts for Goods**

- WorkCover Insurance; and
- Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$10M.
- Products Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$10M.

#### **5.5.2 Contracts for Physical Services**

- WorkCover Insurance;
- Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$10M; and
- Plant and Equipment Insurance.

#### **5.5.3 Contracts for Works**

- WorkCover Insurance;
- Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$10M;
- Plant and Equipment Insurance; and
- Insurance of the Works for building projects (including an allowance for demolition and consultants' fees).

#### **5.5.4 Contracts for Consultants**

- WorkCover Insurance;
- Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$10M; and
- Professional Indemnity Insurance for a minimum of \$5M.

Council's Safety & Insurance Coordinator can approve different types and levels of insurance cover to those specified in clause 5.5.

### **5.6 Advertising Tenders**

All tenders for the procurement of goods and services and works with a value exceeding \$150,000 for goods and services and \$200,000 for works, are publicly advertised.

All tender advertisements are approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to being publicly advertised.

Letters authorising a third party to act as a tendering agent on behalf of Council are signed by the CEO prior to the tender being publicly advertised unless other arrangements have been put in place by the Victorian Minister for Local Government whereby a letter of authority is not required. The third party must ensure compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act and (where applicable) this Procurement Policy.

## **5.7 Tender Period**

The tender period is a minimum of 21 days unless otherwise approved by the Manager Procurement & Contracts.

## **5.8 Charges for Tender Documents**

Tender documents are issued to tenderers free of charge.

## **5.9 Receipt of Tenders**

Tenders are received exclusively in either the tender box or in the electronic tender box by the specified closing time.

### **5.9.1 Receipt of Tenders in the Tender Box**

When closing tenders in the tender box, tenders received electronically or by facsimile are not accepted.

No responsibility is accepted for tenders sent by post or by courier.

### **5.9.2 Receipt of Tenders in the Electronic Tender Box**

The use of the electronic tender box is approved by the Manager Procurement & Contracts prior to inviting tenders.

When closing tenders in the electronic tender box, tender submissions, other than those received in the electronic tender box are not accepted.

Late tenders due to delays in electronic transmission are not accepted.

## **5.10 Opening of the Tender Box**

The tender box or the electronic tender box is opened in the presence of two officers, one of whom is an officer from the Procurement Department. The second officer is the Contract Manager or a nominated representative.

## **5.11 Opening of Tenders**

Tenders are opened in the presence of two officers, one of whom is an officer from the Procurement Department. The second officer is the Contract Manager or a nominated representative. Tenders are recorded and signed by the officers present at the tender opening.

Only the names of the tenderers are disclosed to the public at the time of opening of tenders.

## **5.12 Late Tenders**

Tenders submitted after the advertised closing date and time are not accepted under any circumstances and are considered to have never been received. The date and time of receipt is recorded. The late tender is returned to the tenderer with an explanation that it arrived too late to be eligible for consideration.

# **6 Evaluation of Tenders**

## **6.1 Terms of Reference**

Tenders are evaluated in accordance with the terms of reference detailed in Council's Purchasing, Tendering and Contract Administration Guidelines.

## **6.2 Weighted Attribute Method**

Tenders are evaluated using the weighted attribute method.

## **6.3 Weightings**

The Contract Manager determines the weighting for each selection criteria and records the weightings in the contract file prior to the receipt of tenders by any member of the Tender Assessment Panel.

The minimum weightings specified below are only changed with the written approval of the General Manager Corporate Services. Approval must be obtained prior to the opening of tenders.

Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety and Equal Opportunity requirements and the tenderer's business viability are evaluated as a Pass or Fail result. Tenderers that do not meet Council's requirements, as determined by Council at its sole discretion, are evaluated as a "Fail" and may not be considered further in the tender evaluation process.

The minimum weightings to be applied to the tender price are listed below:

### **6.3.1 Contracts for Goods**

The minimum weighting to be applied to the tender price is 50%.

### **6.3.2 Contracts for Works**

The minimum weighting applied to the tender price is 50%.

### **6.3.3 Contracts for Physical Services**

The minimum weighting applied to the tender price is 40%.

### **6.3.4 Contracts for Community Services**

The minimum weighting applied to the tender price is 30%.

### **6.3.5 Contracts for Consultants and Software**

The minimum weighting applied to the tender price is 20%.

## **6.4 Tender Assessment Panel**

The tender assessment panel consists of a minimum of 3 persons including:

- the Contract Manager or Council delegate;
- an appropriately qualified Council officer; and
- an independent representative (internal or external to Council) with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the tender.

The Contract Manager, Council officers and other Panel appointees must be appointed and given delegated authority in accordance with the Local Government Act.

If the contract is considered to be politically sensitive or contentious, the tender assessment panel also includes an independent, non-voting external representative (probity officer) to observe and advise on the process, and a representative from the Finance Department who will be a voting member of the panel.

## **6.5 Declarations**

Members of the Tender Assessment Panel sign and submit a statement declaring that they do not have a perceived or actual conflict of interest in the tenders being evaluated.

Where a matter is declared, the matter will be referred to a third level (or higher) Manager for consideration. The affected panel member will comply with all reasonable directions of the Manager in relation to the management of the issue, so as to minimise any reputational risk to Council.

Members of the Tender Assessment Panel acknowledge that information concerning the tenders being evaluated is confidential and sign and submit a statement declaring that they will not divulge any information in recognition of the importance of protecting and preserving the confidential nature of the information.

## **6.6 Business Viability Assessment**

A business viability assessment is considered for complex, high value and relatively important purchases and projects. However, procurement value is not used as the sole indicator of risk. In assessing whether a business viability assessment is required, consideration is given to the likelihood and consequence of a financial viability issue in the purchase or project and subsequent contract, as well as any other factors that have the potential to impact on the overall level of risk.

## **7 Approval**

### **7.1 Signing of Tender Evaluation Form**

The completed weighted attribute tender evaluation form is signed off by every member of the Tender Assessment Panel.

### **7.2 Signing of Letters of Acceptance**

Letters of acceptance for tenders must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer.

### **7.3 Signing of Contracts & Agreements**

All legal agreements must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or a delegated officer in accordance with the Approval Levels detailed in clause 4.6.

## **8 Review**

### **8.1 Responsible Manager**

The General Manager Corporate Services is responsible for this policy.

### **8.2 Review Date**

This policy is reviewed annually.

### **8.3 Human Rights Charter Compliance**

This policy has been reviewed for Human Rights Charter compliance.