



**Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála**
Office of the
Planning Regulator

Office of the Planning Regulator

Corporate Procurement Plan

2024-2027

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1 Introduction

This Corporate Procurement Plan has been prepared and will be reviewed annually to demonstrate our commitment to achieving value for money and implementing the most effective procurement processes within the OPR.

The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 requires state bodies to prepare a Corporate Procurement Plan as set out in section 8.20 of the code.

8.20 Corporate Procurement Plan

The OGP policy framework requires that all non-commercial State bodies complete a Corporate Procurement Plan. This plan is underpinned by analysis of expenditure on procurement and the procurement and purchasing structures in the organisation. The plan should set practical and strategic aims, objectives for improved procurement outcomes and appropriate measures to achieve these aims should be implemented.

This plan sets out how the OPR undertakes its procurement functions in compliance with section 8.20 of the Code of Practice.

The OPR's Statement of Strategy 2019 to 2024 identifies good corporate governance and controls as a key driver for the achievement of the organisation's strategic goals. A key outcome is to ensure full compliance with the relevant provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

2 Objective of the plan

The Office of the Planning Regulator's Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) is a 3-year strategy and its purpose is to set out the organisation's strategic approach to procurement, identify our procurement priorities, identify and address risk and plan for our future procurement needs.

The primary objective of this plan is to ensure the OPR's ongoing compliance with EU and national procurement legislation, circulars and guidelines (see Appendix 1).

This plan will be reviewed each year by the Procurement Officer and approved by the Executive Management Team.

The plan promotes the use of central procurement frameworks and contracts established by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). The benefits arising from usage of such frameworks and contracts includes full compliance with procurement regulations, best value for money, administrative savings from reduced duplication of tendering, greater procurement expertise, improved consistency, enhanced service levels and legal certainty.

The OPR Procurement Officer continues to keep abreast of relevant procurement policies to ensure the provision of support to all staff within our organisation. This is achieved by attending procurement training and conference events, including the OGP Procurement Officer Forums. In addition, it is the Procurement Officer's responsibility to circulate new and updated procurement legislation, circulars, policies and procedures to all staff and ensure that OPR policies and procedures are fully compliant.

During the planning stage, all staff must discuss potential procurement with their line manager to ascertain the required members of staff to be involved when creating request for quotations and tender documents, utilising the OPR's experts in specific areas. Assistance is provided by the Procurement Officer in identifying the appropriate procurement methods, preparing

RFT/RFQ documents, evaluating tenders and quotes received and preparing final documentation.

3 Procurement expenditure analysis

As a public body, the OPR utilises central contracts put in place by the OGP when procuring a range of commonly acquired goods and services. Where no central contract is available, the OPR operates in accordance with European Union (EU) Procurement Directives.

A number of OGP frameworks have been utilised since establishment, including the appointment of legal advisors, outsourced accountants, banking services, health and safety consultancy, electricity provision and language translation services.

Appendix 3 provides an analysis of the OPR's procurement including a full list of the central government frameworks used by the OPR. Additionally, a full set of financial statements is published annually on the OPR website following certification by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

4 Procurement structures

4.1 OPR Procurement model

Due to the size of our organisation, the OPR carries out procurement management using the Hybrid model. All staff members can carry out procurement that totals <€50k, enlisting support from management and the Procurement Officer where needed. Where procurement costs are expected to exceed €50k, staff must discuss the required procurement need with their line manager and the Procurement Officer. All staff members involved will collaborate in procuring required goods/services, adhering to National and EU guidelines, policies and legislation.

4.2 OPR Procurement systems

Within our internal systems, templates are available to all staff for documentation required for procurement. Policies, guidelines, legislation and procedures are included within this library. A standardised request for quote template is available. Other documentation includes evaluation forms, scoring sheets and contracts.

A procurement database is kept, updated and held by the OPR, which is maintained by the Procurement Officer. All members of the Corporate Services Team have access to this database, which lists all goods/services procured and paid by the OPR, total cost paid to each supplier for each goods/services, procurement method used and expiry dates of contract where applicable. This database is used to monitor contract costs in line with procurement methods used and upcoming contract expiry dates.

All documentation and correspondence relating to a procurement process is saved to the OPR internal systems. Correspondence and documentation includes but is not limited to, emails to suppliers requesting quotes, response received from potential and successful contractors, RFTs, RFQs, evaluation forms and scoring sheets, final signed contracts.

The OPR has access to the OGP and e-Tenders website. Login details for these websites are available through the Procurement Officer.

4.3 OPR Procurement processes

As a part of our business planning and budgeting, managers in each team are consulted regarding their upcoming procurement needs. The type of process used for procurement depends on the value and nature of the requirement. The stages in the procurement process are summarised below:

Planning:

- Where goods/services are required, staff liaise with the Procurement Officer to identify the best procurement method to be used. Estimated cost of goods/services are required when deciding on the most appropriate method.
- Staff must ensure to seek approval from their line manager in line with the OPR's Purchase to Pay approval authorisations (Appendix 2) prior to commencing Procurement.
- Staff identify the OPR requirements and complete Request for Quote/Tender documents as necessary. RFQs templates are available to all staff.
- Where comprehensive documents are required, staff must complete these along with their line manager and support from the Procurement Officer.

Selecting:

- When quotes are received, they are evaluated as per method of Procurement used;
- Quotes <€5k are selected on the basis of quotes from **one** supplier.
- Quotes >€5k require a comprehensive evaluation to be conducted, using scoring sheets and criteria set out in the RFQ and RFT documents.
- Where an OGP framework was used, evaluation takes place with OGP staff and successful tenderer selected based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) award criteria.
- Quotes received via eTenders are selected on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) award criteria.

Control:

- Staff who have conducted procurement of a goods/services are responsible for monitoring the contract and ensuring duties are carried out as set out in the contract's schedule.
- The Procurement Officer is responsible for monitoring contract dates and must inform staff availing of the goods/services of contract expiry at least two months prior, to ensure adequate time to extend contract where applicable or conduct a new procurement.

Closing:

- It is the responsibility of the staff involved in procuring goods/services to ensure appropriate documentation is held within the OPR internal systems.
- Where a RFQ has been issued, completed evaluation sheets must be saved accordingly and signed off by each member of the evaluation team.
- Where a quotation in response to a written RFQ is received from >1 supplier, outcome emails must be issued to all suppliers and saved to OPR internal systems, demonstrating transparency in our procedures.
- Closing documentation where a contract and/or confidentiality agreement has been signed must be saved to OPR internal systems.
- The Procurement Officer during monthly procurement database checks will review documentation on file to ensure relevant documentation is held. Missing documentation will be requested from the staff involved in procuring goods/services.

Where procurement is <€5k:

- OGP website is checked for existing or planned procurement arrangements which can be used;

- Where no arrangement is available or suitable, verbal/email quote is obtained (from one or more competitive supplier);
- Lowest price/most suitable is selected.

Where procurement is between €5K and €50k:

- OGP website is checked for existing or planned procurement arrangements which can be used;
- Where no arrangement is available or suitable, we contact various suppliers (minimum three quotes) providing an RFQ and a timeline for responses;
- The Quick Quotes facility on eTenders can be used to search for appropriate suppliers using the CPV codes which match our particular procurement needs;
- All responses received are evaluated and scored objectively against specified requirements;
- Evaluation will be carried out by a team with the requisite competency;
- Evaluation team must include a staff member with approved authorised level as per the OPR Purchase to Pay Policy;
- Highest scoring tenderer is selected;
- Notification is sent to all tenderers on the award of the contract.

Where procurement is >€50k:

- OGP website is checked for existing or planned procurement arrangements which can be used;
- Where no arrangement is available or suitable, a formal tendering process is conducted on eTenders;
- The OPR have access to e-Tenders where an RFT is advertised with a timeline for responses;
- Tender evaluation is carried out using MEAT criteria;
- Evaluation will be carried out by a team with the requisite competency;
- Evaluation team must include a staff member with approved authorised level as per the OPR Purchase to Pay Policy;
- Highest scoring tenderer is selected;
- Notification is published on the award of the contract.

4.4 Staff roles and responsibilities regarding procurement

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to familiarise themselves with our Procurement Plan, in conjunction with the OPR Purchase to Pay Policy.

It is the Procurement Officer's responsibility to monitor costs and expiration of contracts using the OPR's procurement database. This monitoring is carried out on a monthly basis and Director of Corporate Services is advised when this task is carried out along with a summary of any actions identified. The procurement database is updated with timestamp when monitoring has taken place.

Expiration of contracts is also monitored by those who conducted the procurement.

For contracts procured <€50k, when costs reach €40k, the OPR's procurement database highlights this. The Procurement Officer will bring this to the attention of those who have procured the contract and the Director of Corporate Services. It is the responsibility of the staff members to discuss and evaluate if a new contract should be procured, providing results of the outcome to the Procurement Officer.

When contracts are being finalised, staff member's line manager must be consulted and approval as per the OPR's Purchase to Pay Authorisation limits must be sought and received. All correspondence is saved to the OPR's internal procurement files.

The Procurement Plan is the responsibility of the Procurement Officer to monitor and maintain, including annual revisions, updates when a change to legislation, policy and/or procedures takes place. Final approval is required from the Executive Management Team before revisions are made live.

5 Review

The Corporate Procurement Plan will be reviewed annually by the Procurement Officer and approved by the Executive Management Team.

The OPR's Corporate Procurement Plan (2024-2027) will continue to promote and support procurement policies and procedures to standards of best practice and consistency in the application of public procurement rules in relation to the purchase of goods and services.

The main objective of this plan is to deliver value for money, whilst adhering to national and EU procurement directives and guidelines, and organisational policies and procedures.

The Action Plan set out in Appendix 4 will be monitored and reviewed regularly at the Executive Management Team meetings to ensure goals and targets are achieved. The OPR endeavours to continuously improve our approach to procurement and support all staff in achieving our objectives.

Appendix 1 – Procurement legislation and guidance

Name	Source	Description
Directive 2014/24/EU	EU Directive	Current EU directive on public procurement (goods, services and works)
Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services	OGP	Comprehensive guidance on procurement processes for frameworks and above and below EU thresholds.
National Public Procurement Policy Framework	OGP	Sets out the overarching policy framework for public procurement in Ireland.
Code of Practice for the Government of State Bodies	DPENDR	Includes the requirement to publish a Corporate Procurement Plan.
Circular 13/13	DPENDR	The public spending code: expenditure planning, appraisal and evaluation in the Irish Public Service – standard rules and procedures
Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service	DPENDR	Guide to the development of each Department and Office's individual governance frameworks
Freedom of Information of Practice for Public Bodies	DPENDR – FOI Central Policy Unit	Includes the requirement to publish quarterly details of

		public contracts awards (including mini-competitions under existing framework agreements)
Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme	DPENDR – FOI Central Policy Unit	Includes the requirement to publish procurement information under FOI Act, 2014.
Guidance on Innovation Procurement	European Commission	Includes practical information on how to start and develop procurement of innovation projects
Circular 2/16	DPENDR	Arrangements for digital and ICT related expenditure in the Civil and Public Service
Circular 2/11	DOF	Additional ICT requirements
Circular 20/19	DPENDR	Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement (Green Public Procurement) with special regard to Climate Action Plan 2019 and further reiterated in Climate Action Plan 2021 and Climate Action Plan 2023
Circular 20/19	DPENDR	Annual report must detail the number & value of contracts including Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria
Circular 20/19	DPENDR	CPP must state where GPP criteria will be used in upcoming procurements
Circular 16/13	DPENDR	Revision of arrangements concerning the use of central contracts put in place by the OGP.
Circular 5/13	DPENDR	Procurement of legal services and managing legal costs.
Circular 40/02	DPENDR	Revision of existing procedures for approval of certain contracts in the central government sector: Annual report to be submitted to C&AG in respect of contracts >25k awarded without a competitive process.

Circular 05/23	DPENDR	Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement
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Appendix 2 – Purchase to Pay authorisation limits

Table 2: Authorisation Limits for the purchase of Goods and Services	
Grade or Equivalent	Default Limit for the Grade
Higher Executive Officer	Up to €10,000
Assistant Directors	Up to €50,000
Directors	Up to €100,000
Planning Regulator and Deputy Planning Regulator	Up to €150,000 (single); Above €150,000 (joint PR/DPR + Director)

*In the case of non-routine expenditure, approval must be sought from a senior manager (Assistant Director or above).

Appendix 3 – Expenditure profile

The OPR is funded under the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage subhead D.5. of Vote 34. Total administrative expenditure of the OPR in 2023, as per the audited Financial Statements, amounted to €3,926,520 (of which €2,751,544 relating to staff costs net of agency staff costs of €76,176).

Total administrative expenditure (non-pay) can be further analysed by expense category as follows:-

Item	Total Expenditure Subject to Procurement	Percentage	Description
Upkeeps and overheads	60,777	5.2%	Repairs and maintenance, telephone costs, insurance, acquisition services.
General expenses	456,782	38.9%	General office expenses, communications, IT running costs.
Service contracts	227,463	19.4%	Legal, Accounting, Fee per case, etc.
Item	Total Expenditure Not Subject to Procurement (outside of requirements)	Percentage	Description
Rental Expenses	266,463	22.7%	Office premises rental costs
Travel & Subsistence	11,481	0.9%	Staff travel and subsistence in line with Government policy

Other	152,010	12.9%	Depreciation expense, loss on disposal, C&A audit fee, sponsorship of programmes
Total (Net of staff costs)	1,174,976	100%	Total (net of staff costs)

OGP Contracts / e-Tenders

Implemented in 2020-2024
Accounting services
Electricity provision to office premises
Fee-per-case assessors/reviewers
Graphic design services
Health & Safety consultants
Health & Safety training providers
Health Promotion Screening Occupational Health Services
Internal auditors
Irish language translation services
Legal services
Office supplies
Shredding services
Taxi service provider
Travel services
Website maintenance and developer

Appendix 4 – Procurement action plan 2024-2027

No.	Action	Output/result	Timeframe
1.	Review the corporate procurement register on a monthly basis to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> plans are in place for any upcoming contract renewals expenditure under contracts are in line with estimates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts are extended or re-tendered in a timely manner Expenditure under a contract does not exceed the estimated value of the contract or breach of thresholds 	Monthly
2.	Prepare an annual procurement activity plan	Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planned tendering requirements for the following year identification of estimated costs and proposed procurement methods actions required (e.g. decisions re extensions or procurement) person(s) responsible for each tendering requirement. 	Annually

3.	Publish a list of all contracts awarded with a value over €25,000 on website and eTenders with associated details	Increased transparency and compliance with the Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme and Circular 05/2023	Quarterly
4.	Publish a list of all purchases over €20,000 on website with associated details	Increased transparency and compliance with the Public Sector Reform Plan	Quarterly
5.	Review templates for low to medium value ICT goods and services RFTs and contracts	RFT and contract templates for low to medium value ICT goods and services. RFTs and contracts for higher value procurements will be considered on a case by case basis	Annually
6.	Publish award notices for OPR tenders on eTenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of award notices for all OPR tenders are up to date • Tenders are closed as appropriate 	Ongoing
7.	Ensure compliance with GDPR	Procurement documents are in accordance with GDPR requirements.	Ongoing
8.	Review the Corporate Procurement Plan	An up to date Corporate procurement plan published on OPR website	Annually
9.	Review the OPR Purchase to Pay policy	An up to date policy will be circulated to all staff that outlines the principles that underpin the OPR's procurement activities	At least every two years

Appendix 5- Procurement activity in 2024

The following list provides an overview of significant procurement activity that is planned for 2024:

- Extensions of the following terms of contract which will reach the end of their current contract term during 2024:

Goods/services required	Procurement method used	Team
Accounting, payroll and financial consultancy services	OGP Framework	Corporate Services
Facilities Management	Request for quote (RFQ)	Corporate Services
Health Promotion Screening Occupational Health Services	OGP Framework	Corporate Services

Graphic design services	eTenders	Corporate Services
Website maintenance and developer	eTenders	Corporate Services

- Goods/services to be procured:

Goods/services required	Procurement method	Team	Estimated cost
Communications-Advertising and Promotion	1 or more quotes	Research and Training	€5k - €50K
Banking Services	OGP Framework	Corporate Services	N/A
Planning consultancy	Request for quote (RFQ)	Plans Evaluation, Reviews and Examinations	€5k - €50K
Email marketing services	Request for quote (RFQ)	Communications	<€5K
General staff training	OGP Framework/RFQ	Corporate Services	€5K - €50K
Governance Software	Request for quote (RFQ)	Corporate Services	€5K - €50K
HR & Payroll software	OGP Framework/RFQ	Corporate Services	€5k - €50K
ICT equipment	OGCIO	Corporate Services	€5k - €50K
ICT licences	1 or more quotes	Corporate Services	<€5K
ICT software	1 or more quotes	Corporate Services	<€5K
ICT storage	1 or more quotes	Corporate Services	<€5K
Media monitoring	Request for quote (RFQ)	Research and Training	<€5K
Media production	OGP Framework/RFQ	Research and Training	<€5K
Office Supplies	OGP Framework	Corporate Services	€5K - €50K
Payroll outsourcing	OGP Framework/RFQ	Corporate Services	€5K - €50K
Public awareness initiatives	Request for quote (RFQ)	Research and Training	€5K - €50K
Research Projects Programme	Request for quote (RFQ)	Research and Training	€5K - €50K
Resources Tracker	1 or more quotes	Plans Evaluation	<€5K
Shredding services	OGP Framework	Corporate Services	<€5K
Training Consultants	Request for quote (RFQ)	Research and Training	€5K - €50K
Taxi Services	OGP Framework	Corporate Services	<€5K
Travel Desk	OGP Framework	Corporate Services	<€5K
Video hosting service	1 or more quotes	Corporate Services	<€5K

The OPR will promote the use of green public procurement options in criteria set out in Request for Quotes (RFQs) where possible.

The OPR will also ensure consideration in how social and environmental issues can appropriately be integrated into each procurement process in line with Goal 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): *Target 12.7, Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.*