



Standing Orders Relating to Contracts

Northumberland National Park Authority

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All figures quoted in this document are inclusive of Value Added Tax.

If clarification is required on any item in this document please contact the Finance Manger

STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO CONTRACTS

A Compliance with Standing Orders, and Procurement Rules

A1.1 Every contract made by the Authority or by a Committee or Officer acting on behalf of Northumberland National Park Authority (the “Authority”) shall comply with Procurement legislation for the time being in force in the United Kingdom and, except as hereinafter provided, these Standing Orders.

Guidance

A1.2 The Public Contracts Regulations 2015, including all amendments made since then, (“the 2015 Regulations”) place certain obligations on the Authority in relation to the procurement of contracts in excess of a particular value. It would be prudent to seek advice from Finance for the correct procedure to be followed if the value of the contract to be arranged is likely to be above £30,000.

A1.2A The 2015 Regulations will be replaced later in 2024 when the Procurement Act 2023 comes into effect. Until these Standing Orders are updated to reflect that change, all queries should be directed to the Finance Manager who will advise on the impact of the new rules.

A1.3 The Authority’s Procurement Policy is to obtain value-for-money in procurement, while taking into account social value, equality, environmental, risk and probity factors. The Authority is also obliged to comply with EU principles of transparency, equality, proportionality, and non-discrimination in carrying out any procurement exercise.

A1.4 The value limits quoted in these Standing Orders should be reviewed by the Authority at a minimum of 5 yearly intervals from 2015 or sooner upon any relevant revisions to the Public Contracts Regulations. Version 7.0 revises limits in line with The Public Procurement (Agreement on Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

A1.5 The value of a contract is to be assessed as the total amount to be paid, or the best estimate that can be made at the time of the total amount to be paid inclusive of VAT, for the full duration of the contract period, including options and renewals anticipated by the contract. For the avoidance of doubt, advice should be sought from Finance in estimating the value of the contract.

A1.6 In applying these Standing Orders users will also be expected to have regard to the Authority’s:

- Standing Orders ;
- Financial Regulations;
- Scheme of Delegation of Powers; and

- Any approved policies, codes of practice, guidance or protocols that may be issued by the Authority or apply to the Authority.

A1.7 It is an implied condition of employment of all Officers involved with any contract that they must at all times observe the provisions of these Standing Orders. Failure to do so may be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

A1.8 The Authority is committed to promoting equality of access. The Authority will treat all people equally including those contracting to supply goods or services. It will not discriminate on the grounds of age, colour, disability, ethnic origin, gender, and sexuality or on any other unjustifiable grounds. Suppliers or contractors appointed for the provision of goods, services or works are expected to operate in the same manner.

A1.9 It shall be a condition of any contract between the Authority and any person (not being an Officer of the Authority) who is required to supervise a contract on their behalf that, in relation to such contract, they shall comply with the requirements of these Standing Orders as if they were an Officer of the Authority.

B Responsibilities of Chief Officers

B1.1 The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) is responsible for ensuring that all staff are properly informed of, and comply with, these Standing Orders including policies, codes of practice, guidance and protocols that may be issued or accessed on the Authority's management information systems, together with any amendments that may be made thereto from time to time.

B1.2 The Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

B1.3 The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) is responsible for monitoring that proper value for money is obtained.

C Members and Officers Interests

C1.1 When procuring goods and services all Members and Relevant Officers must comply with the Authority's Standing Orders relating to Contracts.

C1.2 Relevant Officers include all Officers of the Authority, or of a Service Provider or Consultant acting on behalf of the Authority who are involved in the conduct of a procurement procedure or that may influence the outcome of a procedure.

C1.3 A Member or Relevant Officer has an interest where they have a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of a procurement procedure.

- C1.4 Any Member or Relevant Officer having any interest whatsoever must comply with the Authority's adopted Local Code of Conduct. Declaration of such interests will be recorded by the Corporate Support Officer in a register maintained for that purpose.
- C1.5 The Leadership Team are required to complete a register of Officer Interests. The register is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is made publicly available.
- C1.6 Any Relevant Officer having any interest as defined in C1.3 must also declare such interests to the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) who will record the interest and advise on appropriate action.
- C1.7 All interests detected, and measures taken must be recorded in the Authority's statutory reporting.

D Engagement of Consultants

- D1.1 An architect, engineer, surveyor or other consultant/adviser may be appointed to arrange and / or supervise a contract on the Authority's behalf where the necessary expertise is not available within the Authority or additional capacity is required.
- D1.2 Where the estimated value of a contract for the appointment of a consultant or adviser is less than £18,000 and financial provision exists in the approved budget, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) may appoint a suitable consultant at his/her discretion.
- D1.3 Where the estimated value of a contract for the appointment of a consultant or adviser is over £18,000 but less than £30,000 and financial provision exists in the approved budget, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) may appoint once three written quotes have been received or there is evidence that three written quotes have been requested but have not been forthcoming, providing he/she is satisfied that the appointed consultant or adviser does provide value for money to the Authority.
- D1.4 Where the estimated value of a contract for the appointment of a consultant or adviser exceeds £30,000 but is below the thresholds detailed in G1.3 the Authority must follow the procedures laid down in Section's H or I and comply with the requirement to publish a contract award notice on the Crown Commercial Service Contracts Finder website. For contracts above the thresholds detailed in G1.3 Finance should be approached for guidance on how to proceed.
- D1.5 If a consultant or adviser is engaged on the Authority's behalf, then the consultant or adviser shall enter into a contract with the Authority in a form prescribed by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer). Such contract shall:
- a) require the consultant or adviser to comply with all the Authority's Standing Orders;

- b) require the consultant or adviser, during the carrying out of the contract, to produce if requested to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) all records maintained by him/her in relation to the contract. Upon completion of the contract all records are to be passed to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer).

E Exemptions from Standing Orders for contracts below £30,000

E1.1 Exemption from any of the provisions of these Standing Orders may be made by the relevant Director provided that he/she is satisfied that the exemption is justified under the special circumstances set out below. Note the Authority is not exempted from the European Union Directives or UK procurement legislation under any circumstances.

The following circumstances shall be treated as exemptions to the normal requirements to obtain quotations and/or tenders where the estimated contract value is below £30,000:-

- (a) purchase or sale by auction;
 - (b) work to be executed or goods, materials or services to be acquired which are required in an emergency;
 - (c) the work to be executed or the goods, materials or services to be supplied consist of repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery, plant, equipment or systems;
purchase or repair of patented or proprietary articles sold only at a fixed price;
the works to be executed or the goods, materials or services to be supplied are such that effective competition is prevented by government control;
the goods, materials or services to be supplied are specified by central government;
 - (d) the goods, materials or services to be supplied were obtained by central or regional government approved centralised purchasing partnership;
extensions of existing contracts;
 - (e) the location of the works to be carried out;
 - (f) the specialist nature of the works or goods/ services;
 - (g) the value of the contract does not justify the time and effort to put the work or supply of goods / services out to quotation or tender PROVIDED THAT in any such case the Officer concerned must first obtain agreement of the Director of Finance and Resources to the exemption, which agreement and the reasons for it shall be recorded in writing and available for inspection by any Member.
- E1.2 An exemption is not required if formal agreement has already been given by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer).
- E1.3 Before approving an exemption to Standing Orders below £30,000 the relevant Director should check that the exemption does not conflict with any project grant

conditions where prior approval of the grant provider is required in advance of any financial commitments or purchase orders being placed.

- E1.4 All exemptions should be recorded, with appropriate detail, in the “Red Book” held electronically on the Authority’s computer network. This book should be reviewed quarterly by the Director of Finance and Resources or Finance Manager to ensure compliance with Standing Orders relating to Contracts.

F Invitation of Quotations for contracts below £30,000

Contract value (£10,000 to £30,000)

- F1.1 Unless an exemption is made (if so, see section E Exemptions from Standing Orders below £30,000), at least 3 quotations shall be requested by the Relevant Officer responsible where the estimated value of a proposed purchase for goods/ services/works exceeds £10,000 but does not exceed £30,000. Each Head of Department will maintain a Quotations Log containing details of quotes received. A Record of Quotations form should be completed by the ordering officer to record details of quotations received, including information on how the procurement policy, equality and health and safety (where appropriate) have been complied with. In addition the carrying out of an internet check on the supplier must be recorded. Quotations must be in writing; e-mail is acceptable. The Record of Quotations form, together with the written evidence of quotations should be electronically filed in the Head of Department’s Quotations Log.
- F1.2 The Finance Manager, is responsible for interpretation and guidance in the implementation of the Authority’s Procurement Policy.
- F1.3 The Record of Quotations form must set out how the Authority’s Procurement Policy has been considered in awarding each contract above the £10,000 quotations limit.
- F1.4 Where the lowest cost quotation is not accepted, this must be formally authorised by the Officer and the relevant Head of Department in the “Red Book” (see E1.4).
- F1.5 Orders should not be artificially split in order to avoid obtaining quotations (or tenders) at the specified value limits or avoid exceeding £30,000.

Value under £10,000

- F1.6 For purchases below the £10,000 limit, Relevant Officers should still look to obtain quotations at competitive prices in order to demonstrate value for money. Staff are encouraged to make best use of the internet (to benchmark prices and providers) and government endorsed purchasing partnerships and national and local framework agreements where available.

F1.7 Where a supplier is used repeatedly for orders under £10,000 but where “totting up” of the individual orders would exceed £10,000, then consideration should be given to market testing to ensure that value for money is being achieved.

G Invitation of Tenders above £30,000

G1.1 Where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract exceeds £30,000, and in any other case where the Authority or an appropriate Committee or an Officer determines, tenders shall be invited in accordance with Standing Order H, I, J or K. Individual Officers are responsible for recognising that contracts are likely to exceed the £30,000 limit and are required to inform their Head of Department and the Finance Manager. The Head of Department is ultimately responsible for his/her budgets and ensuring that the tender process is properly applied. The Finance Manager will then take responsibility for administration of the tender process, using information, specifications and technical input supplied by the individual officer.

G1.2 Whenever the Authority invites tenders for new contracts any relevant elements of the Procurement Policy will form part of the tender award criteria and be communicated clearly in the tender documentation.

Guidance

G1.3 Public Contracts under the Regulations are classified as follows (all figures inclusive of VAT):

Above Threshold Contracts	
<i>Supplies / Services</i>	<i>above £214,904</i>
<i>Works</i>	<i>above £5,372,609</i>
Light Touch Contracts	
<i>Contracts for social, educational and cultural services</i>	<i>above £663,540</i>
Below Threshold Contracts	
<i>Supplies / Services</i>	<i>between £30,000 and £214,904</i>
<i>Works</i>	<i>between £30,000 and £5,372,609</i>

* The values quoted are based on The Public Procurement (Agreement on Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulations 2023. These rates come into force on 1st January 2024 and change annually, therefore, the rates quoted may not be the latest available. If in doubt the Finance Manager can confirm.

Above Threshold Contracts are governed by the 2015 Regulations and require a Contract Notice (see sections J, K, L, M and N)

Below Threshold Contracts are governed by the 2015 Regulations (see sections G, H, I, L, M and N)

Contracts below £30,000 are not governed by the 2015 Regulations (see sections E and F)

All contracts are governed by the Authority's Standing Orders.

G1.4 The form of invitation to tender shall require an assurance in writing or properly constituted e-mail from the tenderer that the tenderer will not follow, or has not followed, in relation to that tender the under-mentioned practices:-

- a) communicating to any third party the amount of any proposed tender until after receiving notification from the Authority that a tender for the contract has been accepted.
- b) adjusting the amount of any proposed tender in accordance with any agreement or arrangement by the proposed tenderer and any third party.

G1.5 In all cases potential tenderers need to identify and advise the Authority of any significant areas of the tender which are to be sub-contracted and noting that the tenderer is wholly responsible for the delivery and quality of the work.

Tender Process Options for Below Threshold contracts but exceeding £30,000

G1.6 There are two options that may be taken in undertaking any tender process for contracts below threshold procurement limits:

- Advertised Tendering Exercise– see section H or,
- Standing List – see section I.

H Advertised Tendering Exercise for Below Threshold Contracts exceeding £30,000

H1.1 For the purposes of this Standing Order, public notice of any tender shall be given:-

- a) On any web based procurement portal used by the Authority from time to time; and
- b) On the Government Contracts Finder website within 24 hours of the public notice of tender being advertised.

The tender may in addition be advertised on the Authority's website, in newspapers, in a journal or on a website circulating among such persons, organisations or bodies who undertake such contracts or any other effective media. Any such advertisement should direct interested parties to the web based procurement portal used by the Authority in order to ensure all tenderers have equal access to tender information.

H1.2 The public notice shall:

- a) specify details of the contract into which the Authority wishes to enter;
- b) invite persons or bodies interested, to state their interest in tendering;
- c) specify a time limit, being not less than 14 days, within which such applications are to be submitted to the Authority;
- d) specify how and to whom tenderers must respond;
- e) specify any requirements for participating in the procurement.

H1.3 All procurement documents must be made available electronically and free of charge.

H1.4 The Invitation to Tender may include relevant suitability questions including:-

- the tenderer's capability and suitability;
- the tenderer's legal status;
- the tenderer's financial standing.

H1.5 Following the award of contract, the Authority must publish the following information on Contracts Finder:

- a) the name of the successful tenderer;
- b) the date on which the contract was entered into;
- c) the value of the contract;
- d) whether the contractor is a. Small or Medium Enterprise (SME) or Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE).

Guidance

H1.6 Under the 2015 Regulations, for contracts below threshold limits the Authority is prohibited from including a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) stage as part of its tendering process except as detailed in H1.7 below.

H1.7 For below threshold works only contracts which are above £214,904 in value, the Authority can use a Pre-Qualifying Questionnaire (PQQ) to carry out a short listing exercise prior to using an Invitation to Tender (ITT). Advice should be sought from the Finance Manager.

H1.8 When preparing a tender the Authority cannot use a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PPQ) process where tenderer's are evaluated against a set of criteria. The regulations do however allow a tender to ask suitability assessment questions. Suitability assessment questions mean a question which relates to information or evidence for the purpose of assessing whether candidates meet requirements or minimum standards of suitability, capability, legal status or financial standing. The questions must be relevant to the subject matter of the procurement and proportionate. If candidates fail to meet the requirements or minimum standards detailed in the tender their tender can be rejected.

I Standing List for Below Threshold Contracts exceeding £30,000

I1.1 This Standing Order shall apply where the relevant Head of Department has decided that invitations to tender for a contract are to be limited to those persons or bodies whose names shall be included in a list compiled and maintained for that purpose (i.e. the tender will not be advertised).

I1.2 The standing list shall:-

- a) be compiled by the Relevant Officer and maintained by Finance;
- b) contain the names of all persons, organisations or bodies who wish to be included and who are approved by the appropriate Head of Department, and
- c) indicate in respect of a person, organisation or body whose name is so included, the types of contract and the values in respect of those contracts for which approval is given.

I1.3 There are two ways in which a standing list may be compiled under this Standing Order O:

- a) At least 14 days before a list is first compiled, notices inviting applications for inclusion in it may be published in at least one newspaper, journal or website circulating among such persons, organisations or bodies who undertake such contracts or an effective e-marketing media and, on the Authority's website. Any such advertisement must appear on Contracts Finder website within 24 hours of the first advertisement being placed; or
- b) A list of appropriate suppliers may be compiled by the Relevant Officer approved by the Head of Department. When compiling the list the Officer and Head of Department must take into account the principles detailed in A1.3.

I1.4 Where I1.3 requires an opportunity to be advertised on the Contracts Finder website, such an advertisement must:

- a) specify a time limit, being not less than 14 days, within which such applications are to be submitted to the Authority;
- b) specify how and to whom tenderers must respond;
- c) specify any requirements for participating in the procurement.

I1.5 Lists compiled under I1.3 and I1.4 should look to contain at least five (minimum of three) persons, organisations or bodies approved by relevant Head of Department. Where the list contains less than three persons, organisations or bodies it must be approved by the Chief Executive before any invitation to tender is sent out.

I1.6 The lists shall be updated at least every three years.

I1.7 Invitations to tender for a contract shall be sent to:

- a) not less than three of those persons or bodies selected by the Head of Department, from among those approved on the relevant list for a contract of the relevant category and amount or value, or
- b) where fewer than three persons or bodies are approved on the relevant list for a contract of the relevant category and amount or value, all those persons or bodies on the list.

I1.8 Following the award of all contracts under a standing list the Authority must publish the following information on the Contracts Finder website:

- a) the name of the successful tenderer;
- b) the date on which the contract was entered into;
- c) the value of the contract;
- d) whether the contractor is a Small or Medium Enterprise (SME) or Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE).

Guidance

I1.9 When drawing up a standing list the Authority cannot use a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PPQ) process where tenderer's are evaluated against a set of criteria. The regulations do however allow suitability assessment questions to be asked. Suitability assessment questions mean a question which relates to information or evidence for the purpose of assessing whether candidates meet requirements or minimum standards of suitability, capability, legal status or financial standing. The questions must be relevant to the subject matter of the procurement and proportionate. If candidates fail to meet the requirements or minimum standards they can be omitted from the standing list.

J Above Threshold Contracts

J1.1 For contracts above threshold limits, the Authority must conduct the procurement in line with the 2015 Regulations.

J1.2 Where an above threshold contract procedure is required to be undertaken in compliance with the 2015 Regulations, the Authority will need to decide which procedure is most appropriate for use in the circumstances. Officers should seek guidance from the Finance Manager prior to undertaking the procurement exercise for all above Threshold Contracts.

J1.3 The Authority must comply with the timescales set out in the 2015 Regulations for the chosen procedure.

J1.4 The Authority must follow the minimum requirements set out in J1.5 to J1.8.

J1.5 The Authority must advertise the contract opportunity by publishing a Contract Notice, or if permitted by the procedure, a Prior Information Notice which is compliant with the regulations. The information must also be published on the Contracts Finder website within 24 hours of the initial advertisement being published.

J1.6 Selection criteria used may only relate to:

- suitability to pursue a professional activity;
- economic and financial standing; and/or
- technical and professional ability.

Requirements must be appropriate to the objective of the procurement, proportionate and related to the subject matter of the contract.

J1.7 Contracts must be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tender assessed by the Authority using a best value for money approach. All the assessment criteria used to assess the most economically advantageous tender must be linked and relevant to the subject matter of the contract.

J1.8 The Authority must publish a Contract Award Notice that is compliant with the regulations within 30 days of the contract award. The award notice must also be published on Contracts Finder within a reasonable time.

K Light Touch Contracts (above £663,540) for social, educational and cultural services (see G1.3)

K1.1 The Authority is free to determine its own procurement procedure however Officers should seek advice from the Finance Manager prior to undertaking the procurement exercise.

K1.2 The Authority must advertise the contract opportunity by publishing a Contract Notice or a Prior Information Notice which is compliant with the regulations. The information must also be published on Contracts Finder website within 24 hours.

K1.3 At all times, the Authority must comply with the information set out in its Contract Notice or Prior Information Notice in conducting its procurement procedure.

K1.4 The Authority must publish a Contract Award Notice that is compliant with the regulations within 30 days of the contract award. The award notice must also be published on Contracts Finder website within a reasonable time.

L Submission of Tenders

L1.1 All Tenders above £30,000 must be submitted electronically; unless there are very specific technical or security reasons for not doing so. The functionality of the electronic procurement portal is that all tenders are locked until the submission deadline is passed.

L1.2 No tender received after the time and date specified in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) shall be accepted or considered unless, discretion is exercised by the Chief Executive Officer of the Authority in individual circumstances.

M Receipt of Tenders above £30,000

M1.1 All tenders issued and received shall be recorded by the Finance Manager, in the tender Black Book register. The register will state the procurement process followed, the type of works being contracted and the method and date of advertising. The register shall for each tender received, specify the name of the supplier / contractor, note any tenders rejected and the tendered contract value. The register will also record the successful tenderer and state where the detailed procurement records are stored either manually or electronically. The Black Book shall be open to inspection by any Member of the Authority and any person authorised by the Authority. The book should be reviewed half yearly by the Director of Finance and Resources to ensure compliance with contract standing orders.

N Contract Conditions

N1.1 Every contract awarded by the Authority shall:

- a) be in writing and signed by an Officer of the Authority duly authorised in that behalf;
- b) specify the goods, materials or services to be supplied and the work to be executed; the price to be paid together with a statement as to the amount of any discount(s) or other deduction(s); the period(s) within which the contract is to be performed and such other conditions and terms as may be agreed between the parties.

N1.2 In appropriate cases, where a contract exceeds £30,000 in amount or value, the contract must provide for the payment of liquidated damages by the contractor where he/she fails to complete the contract within the time specified. In such cases, the Authority will take sufficient security for the performance of the contract, in the case of execution of works by requiring the retention of a proportion of the contract sum until the work has been satisfactorily completed, and where considered necessary by the Authority by the additional provision of a bond for due performance.

N1.3 The Authority may also require a contractor to give sufficient security for the due performance of any contract.

N1.4 Where an appropriate British Standard Specification or British Standard Code of Practice issued by the British Standards Institution is current at the date of the tender, every contract shall require that all goods and materials used or supplied, and all the workmanship shall be at least of the standard required by the appropriate British and European Standards Specification or Code of Practice or quality assurance schemes.

N1.5 There shall be inserted in every written contract a clause empowering the Authority to cancel the contract and to recover from the contractor the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation:

- a) if the contractor shall have offered or given or agreed to give to any person any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for doing or forbearing to do or for having done or forborne to do any action in relation to the obtaining or execution of the contract or of any other contract with the Authority, or for showing or forbearing to show favour or disfavour to any person in relation to the contract or any other contract with the Authority, or
- b) if the like acts shall have been done by any person employed by him or acting on his behalf (whether with or without the knowledge of the contractor), or
- c) if in relation to any contract with the Authority, the contractor or any person employed by him or acting on his behalf shall have committed any offence under the Bribery Act 2010, or shall have given any fee or reward, the receipt of which, is an offence under section 117(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

N1.6 Each contract shall state that the contractor shall not transfer or assign directly or indirectly the contract or any part of the contract without the written consent of the Authority.

N1.7 In every written contract for the supply of goods or material a clause shall be inserted to secure that should the contractor fail to deliver the goods or materials or any portion thereof within the time or times specified in the contract, the Authority, without prejudice to any other remedy for breach of contract, shall be at liberty to terminate the contract either wholly or to the extent of such default.

The clause shall further secure that the Authority will be entitled to purchase other goods, or materials, as the case may be, of the same or similar description in order to make good (a) such default or (b) in the event of a contract being wholly terminated, the goods or materials remaining to be delivered.

The amount by which the cost of so purchasing other goods or materials exceeds the amount which would have been payable to the contractor shall be recoverable from the contractor

N1.8 The relevant Head of Department shall consider whether a contractor has appropriate levels of public liability insurance, insurance of works and buildings, and professional indemnity insurance.

N1.9 In respect of above threshold and light-touch contracts awarded following one of the procedures in the 2015 Regulations, the contract should contain provisions permitting termination where:

- a) the contract has been subject to substantial modification which would have required a new procurement;
- b) the tenderer has, at the time of the contract award been in one of the mandatory exclusion situations and should therefore have been excluded from the procurement;
- c) the contract should not have been awarded to the contractor in view of a serious infringement of the 2015 Regulations.

The termination provisions should set out the basis on which the power is exercisable and addressing consequential matters.

N1.10 In respect of contracts awarded following one of the procedures in the 2015 Regulations, though not mandatory it should be considered good practice where variations may be anticipated during the contract term, to include provisions which permit review, stating the scope and nature of possible modifications during the contract term.

O Records and Reports for Contracts

Records

O1.1 For all contracts the Authority must keep a record of the progress of all procurements, this should include all communications, internal decision making, preparation of procurement documentation, dialogue of negotiations, selection procedures and contract award notices and purchase orders. This has to be kept for a minimum of 3 years from the date of award of the contract.

Copies of all concluded legal contracts must be kept (for works contracts over £8,847,200 and for contracts for the supply of goods or services over £884,720) this is a statutory requirement).

Reports for Contracts above £30,000

O1.2 The Authority must prepare and retain written reports containing:

- The tender details, the subject matter and value of the contract;
- Where applicable, the results of the objective tender assessment including the name of the successful candidate and the reasons for their selection and the names of the rejected candidates and the reasons for their rejection;
- The reasons for any tenders rejected for being abnormally low;

- The name of the successful tenderer and the reasons for its selection as well as (if known) the share of the contract which the successful tenderer intends to subcontract and the names of the main subcontractors;
- Where competitive dialogue or the competitive procedure with negotiation was used, the justification for use of those procedures;
- Where a negotiated procedure without prior publication is used, the justification for this;
- Where the Authority has decided not to award a contract, the reasons for this;
- Where applicable, the reasons why the Authority used non-electronic means of communication for the submission of tenders; and
- Any conflicts of interests detected, and subsequent measures taken.

Additional reporting requirements

If applicable to the procurement, the Authority must record:

- Any steps taken in relation to ensuring competition is not distorted where a candidate or tenderer has been involved in pre-procurement market engagement;
- Reasons for not subdividing contracts into lots if applicable.
- If, in relation to selection criteria, a minimum yearly turnover for economic operators is set above twice the minimum contract value, the reasons for this.

It should be noted that the European Commission and Cabinet Office may request the records and reporting information.

O1.3 Reporting required under O1.2 is not mandatory for below threshold contracts, but it is considered good practice and could be necessary to answer any procurement challenges or freedom of information requests.

P Internal Audit

P1.1 Internal audit, on behalf of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) shall, at all reasonable times, have access to all documents (paper/digital) maintained by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer), the Authority Solicitor, the Authority Architect, the Authority Engineer, the Authority Surveyor, or the Authority consultant(s), and wherever possible, have site access facilities during which they can expect information and explanation on demand during the currency of the contract.

Q Auctions of Property

Q1.1 The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) or an Officer designated by him/her may bid at auctions for items of any description required for any of the Authority's functions provided:

- a) the terms have been approved following the taking of property advice, and

- b) the bid does not exceed the sum indicated by the Authority or Chief Executive (National Park Officer) acting under delegated powers or, where no such sum has been indicated, the amount allowed in the Authority's approved estimates (subject to any allowance under the authority's Financial Regulations) for that purpose.

R Disposal of Surplus or Obsolete Goods/ Materials

- R1.1 Surplus or obsolete goods and materials belonging to the Authority may be disposed of by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) in line with the Authority's approved policy.

S Disposal of Fixed Assets

- S1.1 The disposal of Land and Buildings with a net book value recognised in the Balance Sheet must have the prior approval of the Chief Executive or in the case of a major disposal the Authority. It is the responsibility of the Director of Finance and Resources to obtain the approval.
- S1.2 It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Department to inform the Finance Manager of the intention to dispose and upon disposal of any other assets recognised in the Balance Sheet whether there is a net book value or not to ensure this is accurately reflected in the Statement of Accounts.