

Public Accounts Committee

Public Procurement: Comments on the findings of the Welsh Government's Review

From: Steve Robinson, Operational Manager and Head of Commissioning and Procurement, City of Cardiff Council

Thank you for the opportunity to provide views on the findings of the Welsh Government's Review.

I broadly welcome the Cabinet Secretary's Statement and the fact that the future priority actions for Procurement mirror the priorities that Heads of Procurement across Wales would recognise. I also look forward to working with the Welsh Government to develop the new procurement strategy set out in the Statement.

Although I am supportive of the proposed transition of the NPS to managing a reduced portfolio of national contracts, the detail of how the proposed regional collaborative procurement programmes will operate in practice will be critical especially, as the Committee will be aware, there has generally been a loss of procurement expertise from across the Welsh public sector. We have worked hard in Cardiff Council to maintain our award winning procurement team by establishing a local authority trading company, Atebion Solutions, to generate income to protect jobs and maintain our student placement programme with the University of South Wales.

The message of driving social value / community benefits through procurement spend is one that Cardiff Council strongly supports and is putting into practice. The Council is the only accredited Living Wage Council in Wales and was proud to be the first public sector organisation to sign to the Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains. The Council's Socially Responsible Procurement Policy spells out the Council's approach to this agenda. There is a collective recognition across local government that there needs to be additional resources devoted to supporting procurement policy development and implementation in Wales.

I trust this feedback will be useful.