



Centre of Public
Value Procurement
Canolfan Caffael
Gwerth Cyhoeddus



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Stakeholder Engagement Report

FAO: Commercial and

Procurement Directorate (CPD), Welsh Government

7th June 2024

Executive Summary

Public procurement spend in Wales is circa £10.8 billion¹ and plays a significant role in shaping Welsh supply chains and improving wider societal, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being outcomes, affecting the quality of lives for people living and working in Wales.

Wales has a long-established reputation globally for designing aspirational policies promoting responsible procurement, and this report evidences areas of significant advancements since the Procuring Well-being in Wales Review (2020).

However, there remains low confidence and feelings of being overwhelmed when trying to agree on definitions of value and embed key priority areas such as net zero, which stakeholders emphasise should be supported by a national carbon toolkit that is ‘accessible to all’.

“*Sleepwalking into Failure*” (F1) is a powerful metaphor noted as a caution by one stakeholder, highlighting what they perceive to be the current position with embedding net zero in public procurement. This is a critical perspective that underscores the urgent and collective responsibility of bringing sustainability and climate change matters to the forefront of all procurement decisions.

While the report highlights some difficult realities for the Minister and the Commercial and Procurement Directorate (CPD) to address, there is widespread support by stakeholders interviewed for the current Director appointment and for the support received by the developing team of the CPD. There is also acceptance of the need for change, which includes the development of a new [Welsh] National Procurement Leadership Group.

This independent research evidences the extent to which stakeholders engage with and receive adequate support and information from the CPD to embed the ten principles of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS). The report forms part of a consultation and review process, acting as a procurement health check.

Overall, this has been a fulfilling research opportunity, benefiting from a strong response rate to the research. This report presents aggregated responses from 88 stakeholders, representing 45 public bodies and other key stakeholders across Wales. Stakeholders who participated in the interviews welcomed involvement in what they firmly agree to be an important and valuable consultation exercise.

The research report is structured into three distinct phases: **Phase 1** presents the survey findings; **Phase 2** presents the interview findings; and **Phase 3** establishes the overarching key themes mapped against the ten principles before recommendations are offered.

¹ Estimated £10.8 billion spend is based on self-reported data from Welsh Public Sector organisations (2022-2023)

Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Abbreviations	4
i) Introduction.....	5
ii) Research Context	5
iii) Research Sampling.....	5
iii) Online Survey	6
iv) Online Interviews.....	6
v) Ethical protocol.....	7
vi) Report structure	8
1. PHASE 1	8
1.1 Survey Findings.....	8
1.1.1. Best Practice (Q. 1-9)	9
1.1.2. Policy Priorities (Q. 10-19)	10
1.1.3. Profile & Governance (Q. 20- 24).....	11
1.1.4. Digital (Q.25 – 28)	12
1.2. Survey Evaluation	12
1.3. Tertiary Responses (Internal procurement stakeholders)	14
Open text comments from CPD survey respondents.....	14
1.4 Themes from the survey comments	16
2. PHASE 2	17
2.1 Stakeholder Interviews.....	17
2.2 Interview Questions	17
2.2.1. Outcomes focused procurement	19
<i>The role of the CPD</i>	20
2.2.2. Collaborative procurement	20
The role of the CPD	22
2.2.3. Integration in procurement.....	22
The role of the CPD	23
2.2.4. Lowest cost versus value	23
The role of the CPD	24
2.2.5. Communication.....	24
The role of the CPD	25
2.2.6. Net Zero	25

The role of the CPD	26
2..2.7. Digitalisation	26
The role of the CPD	27
2.2.8. Sustainable procurement.....	27
The role of the CPD	28
2.3. Action Plan	28
3. PHASE 3.....	29
3.1 The strategic role of public procurement in Wales.....	29
3.2. Missed opportunities	30
4.0 Recommendations	30
4.1 Governance and Integration	31
4.2 Digitalisation	31
4.3 Net Zero	32
4.4 Sustainability.....	32
4.5 Communication.....	32
5.0 Closing Remarks	33
Acknowledgements	34
Appendix 1 Full list of participating stakeholder organisations	34
Appendix 2 – Survey Questions	35
Appendix 3 – Graph a) showing the ranging answers from Wider Public Sector (Ranging from Dark blue -Strongly agree / Light blue -Strongly disagree)	38
Graph b) showing the ranging answers from the Welsh Government (Ranging from Dark blue - Strongly agree / Light blue -Strongly disagree)	39
Appendix 4 - Interview Protocol Including Interview Questions	40
Appendix 5 – Coded Interview Participants	43
Appendix 6: Individual participant comments relating to the Ten Principles of the WPPS.	44

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning	First page mentioned
CPD	Welsh Commercial and Procurement Directorate	2
WPPS	Wales Procurement Policy Statement	2
CPVP	Centre of Public Value Procurement	5
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure	7
MEAT	Most economically advantageous tender	11
MAT	Most advantageous tender	11
CRM	Customer relationship management	14

i) Introduction

- This stakeholder engagement report was commissioned by John Coyne, Director of the Commercial & Procurement Directorate, at Welsh Government, and provides an independent evaluation of stakeholder engagement and a procurement health check in Wales.
- The commission was delivered by the principal investigator, Professor Jane Lynch, Centre of Public Value Procurement, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, referred to as CPVP in the report.

ii) Research Context

- In 2021, Minister for Finance, Rebecca Evans MS published the Welsh Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS)² and an action plan representing a shared ambition for Wales.
- The Minister notes that a partnership approach, through collaboration within and across public bodies, is key to effective delivery of the WPPS. It is emphasised that greater transparency will include regular stakeholder reviews of the WPPS.
- This stakeholder engagement research is a review process for establishing the extent to which stakeholders (Welsh Government, the wider public sector, and key suppliers) receive adequate support and information regarding the WPPS set out in a ten point Action Plan.
- The survey and interview questions are structured around the WPPS Action Plan which focuses on strategic priorities such as collaboration, integration, emphasising value over cost, outcomes over process, digitalisation, sustainability, net zero and elevating the profile of procurement across the Welsh public sector.

iii) Research Sampling

- The full research-led investigation includes the survey and interview discussions, noting perspectives from 88 stakeholders representing 45 public bodies across Wales who have shared their perspectives in the wellbeing health check of the Commercial and Procurement Directorate in Welsh Government. The participating stakeholder organisations are tabled in Appendix 1.

² [Wales procurement policy statement \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

iii) Online Survey

- Thirty survey questions were designed, and they are listed with the research protocol in Appendix 2. A Likert ranking scale was used for the survey (*1 not applicable; 2 strongly disagree with this statement; 3 disagree with this statement; 4 neither agree nor disagree with this statement; 5 agree with this statement; 6 strongly agree with this statement*).
- The survey was distributed to CPD and non CPD stakeholders by Welsh Government.
- An open qualitative response question was added to each question – ‘*How would you like to see this score increased?*’. Thanks must be noted here to those who demonstrated time, effort and commitment to the procurement profession in their detailed open text responses.
- In total, 35 internal stakeholders from the CPD trialled the online survey, before 120 non CPD stakeholders were invited to participate – 61 non CPD stakeholders completed the survey (their respective organisations are included in Appendix 1).
- While accepting some bias, there is value in considering the open text comments from the CPD responses which are separated in this report from the responses of non CPD stakeholders.
- For the report, a colour coding approach (traffic light, red, amber, green) is used for easier visual analysis.

iv) Online Interviews

- For the interviews, 34 stakeholders from 27 Welsh public bodies were invited to participate in the online interviews – 27 stakeholders completed the interview process which included giving consent and agreeing to the anonymised transcripts.
- As a quality benchmark and indicator of procurement experience, 15 stakeholder participants were employed in managerial-level roles, and 12 stakeholder participants hold director or chief executive roles.
- 3 interviewees represent non-procurement departments in the Welsh Government; 20 represent the wider public sector (including health, local authorities, education, and emergency services); and 4 represent other suppliers and support agencies.
- Perspectives were mainly from those personnel where procurement is their main role, but further consultation was made with stakeholders who interacted regularly with the procurement function. These individuals’ work involved foundational economy, sustainability, finance, information technology and cyber security, legal services, commercial, and with suppliers.

- Consideration was given to equality, diversity, and inclusivity when selecting interview participants, ensuring a wide range of internal and external stakeholder perspectives were included.
- Thanks must be noted to those individuals who generously gave up their time to engage in the interview discussions which were rich in content and have helped shape the report findings and recommendations.

v) Ethical protocol

- The survey was administered by the Welsh Government, and the anonymised findings were treated as secondary data, and exempt from the university's ethical procedure.
- For the interview stage of this research, ethical approval was gained from Cardiff University for the analysis of primary data (Cardiff Ref: 2314).
- All primary data will be kept securely for a minimum of 10 years (2024-2034) to follow the university guidelines for handling research data, after which time it will be disposed of appropriately.
- The principal investigator has completed research integrity training and complied with the university's standard operating procedure (SOP) for managing and storing recorded data.
- Each interview lasted 30-minutes which included communicating the interview protocol (Appendix 3) at the start of each interview.
- Interviews were recorded using Microsoft Teams transcription and recording services, and for triangulation and quality purposes, each interview participant was emailed a clean transcript of the recorded interview for checking.
- To comply with the university ethical policy, participants were emailed a project information sheet and a consent form, the latter of which they were asked to sign and return by email.
- All primary data from the interviews was anonymised and each participant was assigned a code (e.g., TH1). This approach ensured their confidentiality in the research (Appendix 4) - this anonymity aspect is a requirement of university ethical protocol but in the interviews, it also created a 'safe' environment whereby participants felt able to speak honestly and in confidence.

vi) Report structure

- **Phase 1** of the report presents the analysis and findings of an online survey.
- **Phase 2** of the report presents the analysis and findings of interviews with key stakeholders.
- **Phase 3** combines both data sets to evaluate procurement performance against the Welsh Procurement Policy Statement (2021), ten principles of the Action Plan. The report compares progress since the 'How we Procure Well-being' Review Report (2020) by the Future Generations Commissioners Office. Finally, key themes are established before recommendations are offered.
- Using a survey instrument and online interviews via Microsoft Teams, CPVP investigated the perceived performance and capabilities of the Commercial & Procurement Directorate by key stakeholders, which include the Welsh Government (procurement and non-procurement), the wider Welsh Public Sector (health, local authorities, education, and emergency services), and Other (national bodies, support agencies, and the third sector).

1. PHASE 1

1.1 Survey Findings

- Appendix 2 includes the full survey question list and Appendix 3 presents visual graphic summaries of the responses for Questions 1-28.
- Questions 29 and 30 relate to the development of a [Welsh] National Leadership Group which is commented on separately.
- Responses to the survey are mapped against the ten point action plan of the WPPS in Appendix 7. This includes some of the interview feedback comments. For easier visual understanding, the responses are scored using the traffic light (red, amber, green) approach.
- Each survey question is clustered and aligned with the WPPS themes: Best Practice Q.1–9; Priority Policies Q.10–19; Profile and Governance Q.20–24; Digital Q.25–28; Strategy Q.29–30.
- The graphs in Appendix 3 provide an overall snapshot of survey responses (dark blue – strongly agree – to light blue strongly disagree).

- The traffic light (red, amber, green) colour coded key used now to present the survey findings for each question is as follows:

Red (less than a third of respondents agree)

Amber (less than half of respondents agree)

Green (more than half of respondents agree)

1.1.1. Best Practice (Q. 1-9)

Q1. CPD leverages collaborative procurement activity in Wales to maximise long-term sustainable social and economic value outcomes from public spend.

4 STRONGLY AGREE and less than one third (12/35) of Welsh Government respondents and, half (14/26) of the wider public sector respondents AGREE

Q2. CPD is excellent at aligning its ways of working and engaging with stakeholders to achieve innovative and sustainable procurement solutions.

2 STRONGLY AGREE and, 5/35 Welsh Government respondents and, 7/26 wider public sector respondents AGREE

Q3. CPD provides excellent service and support in helping organisations to deliver outcomes-focused procurements (in which payments to suppliers are tied to contract delivery performance).

1 STRONGLY AGREES and, 6/35 Welsh Government respondents and, 3/26 wider public sector respondents AGREE

Q4. CPD supports framework design and development for the benefit of all, ensuring maximum contributions to the four dimensions of well-being, wherever possible.

2 STRONGLY AGREE and, 5/35 Welsh Government respondents and, 6/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q5. CPD provides excellent service and support to organisations seeking to better integrate procurement into their wider organisational processes.

2 STRONGLY AGREE and, 3/35 The Welsh Government and, 3/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q6. CPD delivers on policy areas through the appropriate tools, guidance, and training.

4 STRONGLY AGREE and, 11/35 Welsh Government and, 8/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q7. CPD provides excellent service and support toward building and maintaining resilient supply chains in procurement.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 6/35 The Welsh Government and, 4/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q8. There are supply chain resilience strategic tools and risk assessments to ensure procurement activity aligns with and contributes to the progressive procurement policy.

1 person STRONGLY AGREES and, 5/35 Welsh Government respondents and, 13/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q9. CPD is a signatory to the ethical code of practice and has published a modern slavery statement.

13 STRONGLY AGREE and, 22/35 Welsh Government respondents and, 15/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

1.1.2. Policy Priorities (Q. 10-19)

Q10. The Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill that will establish Fair Work as integral to socially responsible procurement.

13 STRONGLY AGREE and, 21/35 Welsh Government participants and, 15/25 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q11. CPD builds on and scales sustainable procurement best practices to support the delivery of organisational well-being objectives.

4 STRONGLY AGREE and, 9/35 Welsh Government participants and, 12/26 wider public sector AGREE

Q12. CPD provides excellent service and support towards the achievement of Welsh Government policy objectives relating to progressive procurement, such as the foundational and circular economy.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 3/35 Welsh Government participants and, 7/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q13. CPD provides excellent service and support to stakeholders seeking to embed sustainable procurement practices and processes.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 4/35 Welsh Government participants and, 7/26 wider public sector AGREE

Q14. CPD offers toolkits on sustainability strategic tools, risk assessments, contract management, social value, and whole life costing.

6 STRONGLY AGREE and, 14/35 Welsh Government participants and, 12/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q15. CPD is excellent at prioritising carbon reduction and Net Zero through sustainable procurement decisions.

4 STRONGLY AGREE and, 2/35 Welsh Government participants and, 4/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q16. CPD provides excellent service and support to stakeholders seeking to prioritise carbon reduction and Net Zero.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 3/35 Welsh Government participants and 4/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q17. CPD's Carbon Reduction Plans, and carbon reduction are a mandatory part of procurement tenders for WG contracts over £5 million from April 2022.

8 STRONGLY AGREE and, 9/35 Welsh Government participants and, 14/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q18: CPD provides excellent service and support to achieve value-based procurement.

5 STRONGLY AGREE and, 10/35 Welsh Government participants and, 6/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q19. CPD's value-based tools and risk assessments (e.g., MEAT to MAT) ensure that procurement activity aligns with and optimises long-term outcomes for Wales.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 9/35 Welsh Government participants and, 13/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

1.1.3. Profile & Governance (Q. 20- 24)

Q.20. The CPD is excellent at raising the long-term standing and profile, of the procurement profession, as an enabler for policy across the Welsh Public Sector.

2 STRONGLY AGREE and, 7/35 Welsh Government participants and, 11/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q21. CPD is excellent at providing support to stakeholders seeking to raise the long-term standing and profile of procurement.

2 STRONGLY AGREE and, 6/35 Welsh Government participants and, 10/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q22. I am aware of the development opportunities offered by the CPD for staff in my organisation to attain their CIPS professional qualifications.

9 STRONGLY AGREE and, 6/35 Welsh Government participants and, 11/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q23. The CPD is an excellent critical friend, and has the appropriate governance to encourage benefits, efficiencies and savings through procurement and contracting.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 16/35 Welsh Government participants and, 5/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q24. The procurement process is well understood and consistently applied by Procurement Professionals in my team or those who deliver support to my team (whichever applies).

11 STRONGLY AGREE and, 16/35 Welsh Government participants and, 11/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

1.1.4. Digital (Q.25 – 28)

Q.25. The CPD is improving the integration and user experience of its digital solutions.

1 person STRONGLY AGREED and, 4/35 Welsh Government participants and, 12/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q26. The CPD provides excellent support toward the achievement of the Digital Strategy for Wales.

2/35 Welsh Government participants and, 3/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q27. I am aware of the CPD's Digital Action Plan and Digital Tools and Templates for procurement.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 4/35 Welsh Government participants and, 5/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

Q28 The CPD provides excellent management information and data reports that are useful and accurate.

3 STRONGLY AGREE and, 2/35 Welsh Government participants and, 5/26 wider public sector participants AGREE

1.2. Survey Evaluation

What is working well (Green)

- The procurement process is well understood and consistently applied.
- The CPD is excellent at practising and promoting ethical and sustainable procurement - this is evidenced by the signing of Welsh Government's modern slavery statement and their commitment to Fair Work.

- Participants are fully aware of CPD's commitment to socially responsible procurement and emphasis on fair work with the Introduction of the [Wales] Social Partnership and Procurement Bill (now Act).
- The CPD has developed Carbon Reduction Plans and made it clear that they form a mandatory requirement in procurement tenders.
- The CPD is considered a critical friend in some areas.

Areas where there is less confidence (Amber)

- Maximising the social and economic outcomes from procurement spend.
- Accessing value-based tools and risk assessments.
- Raising the long term standing and profile of the procurement profession as an enabler of policy.
- Understanding the ongoing CIPS professional qualifications opportunities.
- The CPD has the appropriate governance to encourage benefits and efficiencies.
- Improving the integration and user experience of digital solutions.

Areas where there is little or no confidence (Red)

- Engaging with stakeholders to achieve innovative and sustainable procurement outcomes.
- Supporting framework design for maximum wellbeing outcomes.
- Supporting organisations to better integrate procurement with the rest of the organisation.
- Raising the long-term standing and profile of the procurement profession.
- Building and maintaining resilient supply chains.
- Supporting stakeholders with progressive procurement – i.e., embedding Foundational Economy and Circular Economy principles.
- Prioritising carbon reduction and net zero in procurement decisions.
- Supporting stakeholders with carbon reduction.
- Support towards the achievement of the Digital Strategy for Wales.
- Developing a Digital Action Plan with relevant tools and templates.
- Providing management reports with data which are useful and accurate.

1.3. Tertiary Responses (Internal procurement stakeholders)

- The survey was initially trialled with the CPD, and positive perceptions are more frequent than those reported by the other government stakeholders and the wider public sector – due to the inevitable bias the full data set of percentage responses is not documented in this report.
- Questions 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25 are more consensual and in agreement of positive engagement.
- There are admissions of low confidence by not agreeing or remaining impartial (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) with some statements.
- Respondents are in complete disagreement with question 27, which queries whether CPD are offering a Digital Action Plan with tools and templates.
- While this report focuses more on wider public sector perceptions and those of the Welsh Government, some of the internal CPD team feedback received via the open text comments is particularly noteworthy and merit attention as presented below.

Open text comments from CPD survey respondents

Q2. Welsh Government Commercial Procurement is excellent at aligning its ways of working and engaging with stakeholders to achieve innovative and sustainable procurement solutions.

Comment: We need to be more proactive and robust. Stakeholder engagement can be improved and brought up. There is no CRM for procurement activity, so there is little or no effective stakeholder management.

Comment: Achieving suitable engagement and buy-in from the appropriate people across the public sector continues to prove difficult, with many organisations only keen to engage at the point where the framework has been awarded and not involved in helping to shape the procurement strategy.

Q5. Welsh Government Commercial Procurement provides excellent support to organisations seeking to better integrate procurement into their wider organisational processes.

Comment: Some teams are, but others still have a silo mentality. Policy and bills in particular seem to be developed with minimal input from organizations. Not without trying, sometimes through a lack of resources, other times through a lack of engagement by the organizations and a lack of support, but with the new regulations, there must be far more standardisation

and consistency across the whole of Wales to ensure procurement can be understood by all, within and outside the profession. We should not be doing procurement differently across the approximately 100 public sector organisations across Wales. We should be embracing new technologies and the opportunities the new regs bring. With the financial pressures faced by all areas of the public sector if we don't do it. Support can be provided, but there are not enough resources to fully help in this area at the moment.

Q7. Welsh Government Commercial Procurement provides excellent service and support toward building and maintaining resilient supply chains in procurement.

Comment: We don't do much supply chain management or relationship management, really. Limited work is being conducted on contract management; more resources are needed to fully tackle this area.

Q14. I am aware of the toolkits on sustainability strategic tools, risk assessments, contract management, social value, and whole-life costing from Welsh Government Commercial Procurement.

Comment: Aware of but think this is old and dated. The whole delivery system for end-to-end procurement needs to be updated for the future. There shouldn't be toolkits; they should all be embedded.

Q28. Welsh Government Commercial Procurement provides excellent management information and data reports that are useful and accurate.

Comment: Reports are not produced in a timely manner, and too many supplier returns were declined for formatting errors with the spend not included in the reports. A better system is needed. Spend data is needed at supplier management meetings; it doesn't look good as an organisation to ask the suppliers to tell us what their spend is as we have not received the data for 6+ months.

Q29. I would welcome the creation of a Procurement Leadership Group to help shape the new national procurement strategy and to advise on the Welsh Government's commercial procurement objectives and business plan.

Comment: I'm saying no because I've lived through national groups in the past but could have done with a "maybe" button. They have their merits, but first, I think we'd need to find out if our stakeholders want a national procurement strategy, who would buy into it (health will go the way health wants to go), and what this means in practice.

Comment: I assume the group would be framed by the Wales Procurement Policy Statement and look to develop activities to support that. As a group that has a helicopter view of what's going on across Wales, such strategic oversight could be beneficial. Please do not let them

decide on more tactical areas, such as collaborative activity to be done by the WG. Keep it big-picture and strategic.

1.4 Themes from the survey comments

The survey comments are tabled in Appendix 6 and mapped against the ten principles of the Action Plan. Key themes emerging from the data at this stage are as follows:

Sustainability agenda

- One of the repeated messages in the survey feedback is the ongoing focus on short-term versus long-term thinking in the organisation.
- It is important to note that some participants still feel pressured within their respective departments to make outcomes-focused or “*values-based*” decisions, but it is unclear to them what these terms mean in practice.
- While there is acknowledgement by stakeholders in Welsh Government and the wider public sector of the policies, procedures, tools, and frameworks in place regarding sustainability, some feel that “*far more could be done.*”
- Respondents believe that there is still “*too much focus on short-term gains.*” “*I’m aware of MEAT [most economically advantageous tender], as the specifications I work on use that approach for scoring [but] wasn’t aware of MAT [most advantageous tender], as I don’t use that approach.*”

Collaboration

- There is a general perception that [internal] collaboration is more evident between the CPD and other Welsh Government departments than it is with [external] stakeholders in the wider public sector.
- Welsh Government participants feel that improved collaboration underpins sustainable outcomes. Collaboration is marked as amber and an area for improvement as collaborative behaviour and governance are perceived by stakeholders as preventing more collaborative procurement.

Communication

- While many stakeholders acknowledge the policies, procedures and toolkits available, some participants still report “*lack of visibility and communication,*” which they report is

largely due to either not signing up to receive the emails (or knowing how to), or weak communication between the CPD and other Welsh public sector organisations.

Governance

- Stakeholders are concerned about the capacity challenges facing most public sector organisations and the need for a more standardised approach to procurement to help try and alleviate some of these issues. *“We should not be doing procurement differently across the approximately 100 public sector organisations across Wales.”*
- Survey respondents emphasise the need for *“standardised definitions and measures for specifications and standardised approaches to recording outcomes”* to be effectively communicated. Participants perceive that it is the responsibility of *“contract managers’ to report on progress [not procurement],* and they support the introduction of *“a reporting tool or portal”*.
- The evaluation of the qualitative and quantitative survey data informs the next step in the research process, Phase 2.

2. PHASE 2

2.1 Stakeholder Interviews

- Analysis of the survey feedback led to the design of ten interview questions. The stakeholder interviews were carried out during March and April 2024.
- The protocol for inviting stakeholders for an interview is documented in Appendix 4.
- In total, 34 stakeholders from a range of organisations include healthcare, local authorities, central government, national bodies, suppliers, and service providers were invited for interviews.
- Appendix 5 tables the full list of coded [anonymised] interview participants.

2.2 Interview Questions

Q.1. Outcomes focused procurement

- Do you understand what is meant by outcomes focused procurement?
- What do you perceive as the main barriers to achieving this approach (if any)?
- How can the CPD help you overcome them?

Q.2. Collaborative procurement

- To what extent do you apply collaborative procurement arrangements?

- What works well and what is more challenging?
- What support do you need to understand collaborative opportunities?
- Where would you normally go to find that support?

Q.3. Integration in procurement

- To what extent is procurement integrated with the rest of the organisation?
- What support do you need to elevate the role of procurement in the organisation?
- What are the barriers to integration?

Q.4. Lowest cost versus value

- One of the greatest challenges highlighted in the survey was moving away from lowest cost, how easy do you think it will be moving from MEAT to MAT in your organisation/category of spend?
- What more needs to be done by Welsh Government to help with this transition?

Q.5. Communication

- Communication has been highlighted as an area for improvement in the survey, how can CPD improve their communication with you?
- How best would you like to receive information and updates?

Q.6. Net Zero

- How knowledgeable and prepared are you with your procurement to meet the net zero targets set by Welsh Government? Which category of spend is most relevant to you?
- What help and support do you need?
- What role do you feel Welsh Government CPD team has in making this progress?

Q.7. Digitalised procurement

- How advanced is **digitalised procurement** in your department /organisation?
- *How can the CPD help you progress on this important agenda?*
- What are the barriers with digitalisation?

Q.8. Sustainable Procurement

- To what extent have you advanced in terms of embedding the four wellbeing ways into your procurement?
- Which do you find most challenging and how do you try to overcome that
- To what extent do you expect Welsh Government to support you?

Q.9. Action Plans

In 2021, the Minister asked leaders of public bodies to develop and publish action plans that align with the WPPS to support better procurement delivery of priorities at the local, regional, and national levels.

- In your organisation, what has worked and what has been most challenging?
- What help do you expect from the CPD team with strategy development (if any)?

Q.10. Closing question

- Are there any pressing issues that you would like me to highlight and share with Welsh Government that I have not included in this interview?

Each of the interview questions is now presented with the key findings and observations.

2.2.1. Outcomes focused procurement

- Many of the stakeholders struggled with this as the opening question, with one stakeholder describing it as “a woolly term” (WE6). Interview participants generally felt perplexed by this question and immediately linked it with concerns over measurement, but “*what are the outcomes and how do we measure them? It’s not one size fits all.*” (WE4); “*We are not great at measuring outcomes*” (FF1).
- While many interviewees related the outcomes to a sense of purpose, they emphasised that there needs to be greater “*clarity of purpose*” (TH2). Most stakeholders interviewed were unclear about what the purpose or outcomes might be. Some linked outcomes with the corporate strategy, but few linked outcomes with the well-being goals or gave any mention of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Community benefits were frequently mentioned by stakeholders, but many were unsure of the different terms being used and how to ‘unpack’ each one to help them understand the wider impact of procurement, or how these terms connect to each other.
- “*There is a concerning disconnect between social value outcomes and how they are defined by each public body in Wales. This means that SMEs quite often struggle to understand social value outcome requirements from buyers – they are expected to use different tools for measuring etc this issue is relevant to understanding Foundational Economy principles and supply chain management issues*” (TH8).
- The interview discussions confirmed there is an urgent need for local authorities and other public bodies to work in a more “*symbiotic way*” with suppliers, as they “*play a pivotal role*” in achieving outcomes-focused procurement (TH1).
- “*I think we were often quite fixed in our ways...I guess we need to try and do things differently and to be less prescriptive and to think more about outcomes and we’ll have some good examples of it where we’ve used things like competitive dialogue or competitive procedure with negotiation just to try and tease out. But I guess that is that’s probably not as common as we would like, because there is a little bit of fear about the complexity that comes with it*” (TH5).

- The challenges are not just with local authorities. *“In my experience with, certainly with the stakeholders that I've worked with, because a lot of people are still traditionally stuck in input based specification. Part of my role and my team's role is trying to educate our stakeholders and our customers into the thinking of you might get a better outcome if you specify in an output based way...and we have to prove that that works for a lot of our customers and convert them”* (TH8).

The role of the CPD

- One very measurable procurement outcome is the *“tangible cost savings...other [societal, environmental, and cultural] outcomes become difficult to measure...but that could be down to the inexperience of the [our] procurement team”* (MO3).
- Stakeholders emphasised that focusing on outcomes is an important priority area, but it requires the right mindset and the right tools – neither of which they feel they have yet in Wales. Stakeholders interviewed believed that the CPD are responsible and experienced enough to develop the [right] tools and to provide clarity on the preferred outcomes for Wales.
- *“Outcomes focused procurement relates to the deliverables that you get through the supply chain, the opportunities that they give you, that might be innovation, that might be student placements, that might be, you know, the broad brush of community benefits”* (MO3).
- *“One of the best things you can do for procurers if you want to get things done, you know more effectively it is to make the clients aware of the timescales, - we have a large range of internal clients. So that (lack of awareness of timescales) to me is a barrier and in terms of what Welsh Government some clear guidance in terms of notes (for non-procurement stakeholders) would be beneficial”* (TH4).

2.2.2. Collaborative procurement

- Collaborative procurement was perceived differently by stakeholders interviewed. Some understood the term, ‘collaborative procurement’ as more than organisation procuring jointly, whereas many stakeholders interviewed, referred to the collaboration between procurement and the supply chain.
- *“Yeah, I think sadly it's one of those things that sounds good in principle and if you analyse it, it has a lot of potential benefits, but I I'm yet to see anybody really realising those benefits without a lot of pain to go with it. The only examples...that I see, or I've heard of in recent times, have lessons learned...don't do it that way again”* (TU8).

- There was an acceptance and a willingness by many in the public sector that they need to collaborate, though many were unsure 'how' these arrangements are best managed.
- *"Before I joined this organisation, collaborative procurement was something that you talk about in a safe environment, but you'd never disclose anything... I think [it's] a fabulous thing for our sector and in the wider public sector is there are much better opportunities [for collaborative procurement]" (MO3).*
- Some stakeholders felt that the older models such as the Welsh Purchasing Consortium and National Procurement Service (NPS) left a legacy of associating collaboration with efficiency gains but importantly, many stakeholders interviewed were unsure whether these collaborative arrangements still exist. *"I don't know to what extent the Welsh Purchasing Consortium still exists or doesn't"* (TH4).
- Most stakeholders seemed to recognise the benefits of collaborative working, *"rather than dilute the market with two of us out to tender at the same time, we've come together to, to share and offer a larger opportunity for one provider...as our sector is more and more challenged, we are going to look at more collaborative procurement opportunities to deliver value, collective value for each [organisation] and for Wales"* (MO3).
- Some stakeholders felt that procurement collaborates internally more effectively compared with other departments in their respective organisations.
- Stakeholders interviewed from healthcare organisations felt proud that they are *"at the vanguard of collaboration"* across Wales (F11) much due to the rapid response to the Covid crisis which is evidence of this leadership.
- However, they admitted that while being good at collaborating within healthcare settings, they were not so good at collaborating with the wider public sector and accepted that much more effort was needed to understand the benefits that this way of working would bring to people living and working in Wales.
- They further emphasised that the procurement of health and social care is more specialised, and they didn't feel that the CPD and other public bodies understood it enough to collaborate effectively (TU1).
- Collaboration was also perceived as more challenging when it comes to procuring innovation, *"We try to solve our problems ourselves rather than going to market"* (F11).
- Health and social care stakeholders interviewed were keen to learn more about how they could use collaboration 'within the law' to innovate more.

The role of the CPD

- While stakeholders understood some of the benefits of collaborative procurement, others were completely put off due to poor past experiences. During the interviews we unpicked why that might be, and it was apparent that having clear guidance for managing collaborative arrangements is key, as is understanding when to, and when to not collaborate.
- *“In terms of support, particularly from the Welsh Government, they could provide a view as to as to the different parties that could potentially work together. They could look at, maybe even incentivising those parties to work together”* (TH4).
- *“...I have been part of collaborations where another local authority leading has not produced outcomes that included my local suppliers, and I think that bit is the bit that sometimes gets missed if I'm honest...The added value, early market engagement, supplier relationship management...I would want...to find a way of making sure that all local suppliers are involved, that's probably the bit that I think we lose , and also that your social value/wellbeing outcomes actually come back to you as well* (TH3).
- While collaborative procurement (i.e., more than one organisation procuring jointly) is a well-established concept, collaboration between procurement and the supply market is flagged an area which requires urgent support and guidance from the CPD.

2.2.3. Integration in procurement

- Despite prompts used, this question was the subject of frequent misinterpretation. Many interviewees referred to horizontal integration, across organisations in Wales - *“we have not made the most out of small country governance”* (F11).
- When discussing integration of procurement within the organisation, stakeholders perceived that one of the greatest challenges preventing integration was the misalignment of strategy within the organisation (TH6) and inadequate management information systems to inform decision making.
- *“Procurement in Wales is not integrated at all and more needs to be done by all in procurement (not just Welsh Gov) to improve the strategic position and understanding of early supplier engagement and notice of upcoming pipelines”* (TH1).
- Smaller procurement teams interviewed felt like the *“forgotten relatives...with no voice”* (MO3).
- *“Business areas don't engage early enough with procurement, and specifications and requests to go out to tender are provided with very little time to conduct an exercise.*

There isn't a seat at the top table, and I would say that's probably true of a number of smaller local authorities (TH3).

- *“There is a need to raise the profile of procurement due to the wider implications of poor procurement not understood within the organisation. Leaders don't realise how much trouble can be created by not being compliant – e.g., no contract management – breaches of spend – not aware of the process – compliance”* (WE7)

The role of the CPD

- This relates to the communications strategy going forward. Previous communications have largely been targeted at the procurement community. Going forward and based on the evidence collected in both the survey and the interviews, the CPD might consider relevant information and updates to non-procurement professionals and leaders.
- The procurement community agreed that the profile of procurement has been strategically elevated since the Covid pandemic. However, they feared that we are slipping in to 'old ways', rather the learning from the hard lessons during the pandemic period. They felt that the professional profile of procurement may be restricted by its title and the term commercial is not widely understood yet.

2.2.4. Lowest cost versus value

- Stakeholders felt sceptical about this question and one stakeholder described the current state as *“still a race to the bottom”* (TH1) where lowest cost wins, rather than pursuing wider value over and above in economic terms.
- It was felt strongly by multiple stakeholders that removing 'economic' from most advantageous tender (i.e., from MEAT to MAT) was simply removing a term and will not be enough to change procurement processes and behaviours.
- *“If however those contracting authorities have a best practice road map to follow and embed that weighing within their contracts the MAT value will deliver an exponential, foundational economic return that will far exceed any arbitrary / perceived savings made at/from the outset of a contract term”* (TH1).
- This question prompted wider discussion on the Procurement Act (2023) and stakeholders didn't perceive it as radical enough with some struggling to see the difference that the new legislation will have - or [in their view] needs to have.

The role of the CPD

- There was a consensus view by stakeholders interviewed that there needs to be a clear definition of the wider value expectations at the [Welsh] national level and this, stakeholders believe is the role of the CPD.
- *“The really big question is “what is value?” There would be a need to define value, because if you if it's something you can measure and score against, then it requires a definition and I would argue that most people might interpret value, reasonably, slightly differently depending on their context, and so having a document that talks about value, that defines value and explains it in the context of procurement I think would be massively helpful for all concerned”* (TH4).
- They expected guidance with developing regional and local definitions but raised concerns over measures featured heavily with this discussion – how and what do we measure – who decides what we measure?

2.2.5. Communication

- In contrast to the survey, many stakeholders felt that the information received by email from the CPD was adequate and most replied yes to receiving regular email updates from the CPD and central government.
- It was felt that since the pandemic period [Covid-19], communication has improved. There are now regular and large team meetings within Welsh Government which help raise awareness of procurement updates and fosters a network of support (WE6).
- However, some admitted to not reading the emails and the use of language was emphasised. *Language can be quite difficult for non-procurement people to interpret...I think we overcomplicate the language that we use* (TH6).
- *“Local authorities are kind of like little islands in a sense, there will be how we do it here (which will vary greatly from one authority to another) there will be good practice (shared) and, there will also be what’s coming out from Welsh Government in terms of guidance and training. Unless we are talking about legislation, you will still see very different working practice”* (TH3).
- *“...the new Procurement Act, which I think everybody’s a little bit nervous about, so early communication on the how rather than...what we now need”* (WE1).
- *“Direct one to one [communication] has always been extremely positive”* (TH7).

The role of the CPD

- One stakeholder commented that the CPD should be regularly communicating with executive leaders of anchor organisations rather than just procurement teams.
- Some feel the communication and support offered by the CPD was one way – i.e., prompted by the wider public sector asking for help, in which case they expressed that the support offered has been faultless.
- There were suggestions that the CPD was not proactive in “*reaching out*” (TH7), building relations and consulting with the wider public sector on a regular basis.
- The interviews raised a governance issue with some stakeholders interviewed being unaware of the role of the CPD, nor did they recognise its membership.
- Stakeholder suggestions included “*quarterly or monthly newsletters, blogs and podcasts, and that important messages can be strengthened through established networks and forums. Bringing together leaders of different organisations or sectors would bring greater learning opportunities*” (TH1).
- “*1 version of the truth in one place and in a timely manner... They just send everything out and so you have to do a deep dive to find out or work with a legal firm or your...solicitor...I don't think this applies to us, but does it?*” (MO3).
- “*I think emails is a good way, but I think they get lost...I don't think the title of them helps either. I don't think they are enough in your face to say you must read. This is important. I think [newsletters] need to be [communicated] through chief execs and directors of finance because directors of finance are responsible for the procurement function and then that's really key...that's where our messages are getting lost* (WE7).

2.2.6. Net Zero

- There was widespread concern at the delayed development to meet the net zero targets set by Welsh Government, “*lagging far behind*” (TH1) but another stressed the target was “*unachievable*”.
- Others emphasised that “*we don't understand it...Don't just leave it at procurement's door like other initiatives*” (TH7). “*There's so much that's expected of us to do. On top of everything else, I don't think anyone doing it properly unless they've got a full dedicated team*” (MO3).
- There was a consensus view that net zero is the responsibility of the whole organisation and stakeholders expect the CPD to take active leadership in developing measurement tools which are consistent across the Welsh public sector.

- It was suggested that more consultation with the private sector will speed up and improve this process.
- There were deep concerns about the ‘cost challenge’ and how some of the decarbonisation requirements would be funded - “*we have barely come to terms with EV...decarbonising our estates is expensive!*” (WE2) - the funding they felt must come from Welsh Government.
- The greatest concerns were over consistent measurement and Scope 3.

The role of the CPD

- Net zero and carbon reduction must be a mandate rather than a nice to do.
- There was a mixed picture in the procurement community – some who felt they were trailblazing in the development of tools and guidance, and others who hadn’t even started the journey and perceive it as another burden on decision making. The procurement community are seeking central direction with clear and easy to use tools and guidance from the CPD.
- Scope 3 was the greatest concern by even the most experienced in this area, and so should be the area of focus for the CPD team. Interview participants recognised the need to learn from the private sector going forward.
- The second major concern was investment. Where will the additional funding that is required come from, and they expect the CPD to communicate the answers.

2..2.7. Digitalisation

- Interviewees were familiar with a variety of platforms to support different stages of the procurement process but in terms of being fully digitalised, many agreed that “*procurement is lagging way behind [other functions] with technology*” (TH4)
- They perceived that the Welsh Government were more digitally advanced than the wider public sector. Interview participant (WE6) commended significant developments with central data capture for management reporting and decision making, but this position was not reflected on as well by local authority participants. Integrated digitalisation and use of data is not widespread in the wider public sector.
- Procurement and suppliers shared that they rely heavily on Sell 2 Wales, yet the capacity (2 people) to develop the platform and keep up with the innovations was both a concern and source of frustration felt by many.
- When the system experienced glitches, buyers were being advised to use email for receiving bids and for communicating with suppliers through the tender process.

- The greatest barrier noted by every stakeholder interviewed was lack of financial investment in digitalisation in Wales.
- Emphasis was made on the lack of succession planning and contract management. This point linked both to digital and the strategic profile development of procurement and should be a priority area for the CPD.
- WE6 noted instances where there were gaps between contracts leaving the public sector without supply for up to six months – this is of great concern when it relates to strategic services such as data management, storage, and disposal. It was suggested that basic contract management would prevent the issue or at least raise the warning to plan accordingly. Given the vast amounts of data utilised by all departments this could quickly create chaos and was of concern.

The role of the CPD

- *“...there needs to be more connectivity between the systems to provide us with Better Business intelligence” (MO1, MO2).*
- *“Central government, our central team needs to be more involved in that, and they need to be more innovative themselves in what we can do. But you know, we’ve tried and failed...I don’t understand why we don’t have a digital tool for Wales, [one] that we can all use with all this reporting and new requirements under the new legislation etc., there’s never been a greater time but the only thing I would say is [it has] got to be equal to all organisations and not just for a select few. A bit more collaboration may be required on this electronic AI in procurement because I think we got an opportunity to [use digitalisation to] really drive the profession forward” (TH7).*
- All interviewees felt it was the responsibility of CPD to ensure the appropriate digital infrastructure was in place and that the systems ‘talk to each other’.
- WE6 emphasised the need for influence and responsibility to drive this important agenda in Wales.
- Stakeholders interviewed expressed strongly that digital integration was and is critical to effective procurement, and they did not feel this has yet been developed and delivered effectively.

2.2.8. Sustainable procurement

- Observations of those interview participants was that they seek to ‘do the right thing’ and understand the wider implications of value for money.

- However, there was more scepticism over the term well-being which was referred to by one stakeholder as “tokenistic” (F11).
- For some, this question prompted in-depth discussions about the WCFG Act and how public bodies [still] struggle to apply the principles to procurement – *“I will go to my colleague or one of his colleagues just to ask advice on how I can relate it to what we’re procuring”* (MO1). *“Sustainability and well-being are often noted in tenders, but they are not clearly explained”* (TH1).
- A culture of well-being is still the most challenging to embed in procurement, easier to implement in some categories than others.

The role of the CPD

- There was a consensus view by those interviewed that embedding sustainability and defining well-being (societal, economic, environmental, cultural) was not the responsibility of the CPD team.
- *“Every one of us has got a responsibility for... [embedding sustainability], not only in the working day but in our life in general. And I think that’s where we are missing it...Why would we put that at Welsh Government’s door?”* (TH7).
- Stakeholders require more practical support with linking the Office of Future Generations guidance into more meaningful outcomes through procurement.
- *“I think for me is awareness raising and how can I say maybe sharing best practice and that you know critical friend...maybe encourage [us]. But look, we don’t share and support each other”* (TH7).
- An issue with language was also a point of concern raised here with different stakeholders adopting different phrases (social value, well-being, etc). They felt a national procurement strategy should bring more clarity in this.
- *“The Welsh Government are in that privileged position where they have complete oversight...and so if you want to talk about efficiency and effectiveness, they are in a position of significant influence...I think the more they can add (capacity and capability) the better because of their strategic position”* (TH4).

2.3. Action Plan

- While most interviewees felt they didn’t require support with strategic development, in the interview discussions, very few recognised the critical links between a strategy and an action plan.

- Only 4 of the 27 interviewees agreed that they have a procurement action plan.
- Many believed there was an organisational level action plan.
- Some stakeholders recognised other policy documentation as forming part of what they understand to be an action plan.
- Interview discussions revealed that most stakeholders are not aware of their requirements to develop and publish a procurement action plan – nor do they seem to recognise the value in developing one.

3. PHASE 3

3.1 The strategic role of public procurement in Wales

- Prior to the recommendations, there are key points to add about the strategic development of procurement in Wales, and linked to the strategic development, stakeholders noted missed opportunities that are worth underlining.
- Interview participants working in procurement firmly believed that the pandemic (Covid-19) helped to raise the profile of procurement and significant progress has been made since to improve the strategic position of procurement in the organisation.
- However, non-procurement stakeholders still described it as “*conservative*” (FF1) and, “*a standalone function that people only go to when they need something*” (TH2).
- There were multiple references during the interviews that procurement in Welsh Government felt “*siloes*” and they felt this needs addressing to accelerate progress elsewhere in the Welsh public sector. This point also relates to integration.
- Some public bodies have invested in procurement and seen the benefit in doing so - “*I have trebled the size of the team in four years, which was unheard of, and you know, whilst it's been difficult to recruit...if there's anything that demonstrates the influence and the shape that (Procurement) now has, this is it*” (MO3).
- Further, stakeholders stressed the urgent need for purpose driven collaboration for strategically elevating the role and scope of procurement within and across organisations in the Welsh public sector. Stakeholders interviewed, believed that the CPD should direct and guide public bodies to understand where collaboration will deliver most benefit and value.

3.2. Missed opportunities

- In both the survey and interviews, there was full agreement that Net zero, outcomes focused procurement and digitalisation are urgent priority areas that should be addressed by the Commercial and Procurement Directorate (CPD).
- Stakeholders felt they are wasting efforts to individually develop tools and guidance, and a centralised approach is more desirable. They felt this would help to build capacity, support, and the knowledge sharing that the wider public sector in Wales urgently needs.
- “*We are playing at it*” [carbon reduction and net zero] was reported by one stakeholder.
- Interview participants included stakeholders from public organisations which do not have devolved powers. This was emphasised as a large, missed opportunity for delivering the well-being impacts in Wales.
- “[net zero] *is probably not getting the attention that it needs...because we operate and feel like Central Government rather than the Welsh Government, even though we operate in Wales, we don't feel that pressure of oh, we know your part of control in achieving this target...You know, because of our scale and the fact that we do operate very much exclusively in Wales.... It just it would seem bonkers if we don't contribute to that target, wouldn't it?*” (TH8).
- Recruitment and wage inflation were two other major long term concerns by many stakeholders.
- While training programmes and support are being offered, the longer-term benefits of the investment were not yet fully realised. “*We get good people all trained up but then and we start to 'rob Peter to pay Paul', I lost a very good officer this week which is not good, and it be great if we could have a common salary scale or something to speak. There is something that's pulling people. I'm all for people progressing, but you know [as] soon as they've got their degree...they're gone. We get no time with them in the business to get the benefit from training people.* (TH7).

4.0 Recommendations

- Stakeholders firmly believe that Wales has the right policies in place, but during the interviews, they recognised that as a small nation, they should now focus on building closer working relations and fully optimise the benefits that small country governance can bring.

- This research has demonstrated that for those who already actively and regularly engage with the CPD, the support is faultless. However, the legacies of Value Wales, [Welsh] National Procurement Service (NPS), and the Welsh Purchasing Consortium remain, and many stakeholder participants were unsure about the procurement support being offered by the Welsh Government and the purpose and role of the CPD.
- Participants in the wider public sector made it clear that, more than ever they need central leadership and with the new legislation, the urgency around decarbonisation and digitalisation, they welcomed any support that could be offered. Many stakeholders stated they prefer direction rather than trying to ‘muddle’ their own way through change.

Taking into consideration the survey and interview feedback from 88 stakeholders representing 45 public bodies, the recommendations for the Minister and the CPD are as follows, listed in a suggested order of priority:

4.1 Governance and Integration

- A complete remarketing of the CPD team, clearly communicating its purpose and individual roles and responsibilities to the wider public sector in Wales.
- Develop the [Welsh] National Procurement Leadership Board to improve leadership and governance for strategically elevating the role of public procurement within and across organisations in the Welsh public sector.
- The Welsh Procurement Policy Statement and Action Plan will undergo a complete revision.
- Address the procurement capacity challenge in the CPD and the wider public sector. This has been reported as an urgent priority since 2007. The remaining recommendations in this report will be difficult to implement without this critical investment.

4.2 Digitalisation

- Consult with the wider public sector on challenges with digitalisation – fully understand the issues before designing and investing in the solution.
- Invest in a fully integrated digital platform for procurement ‘accessible to all’ that i) embraces innovative methods such as artificial intelligence, ii) captures data in a timely manner, iii) designs a system that alleviates the capacity challenges felt by all procurement professionals, and iv) trains individuals to use it well.

4.3 Net Zero

- Greater emphasis needs to be applied by the CPD that carbon reduction is mandatory, not 'a nice to have'.
- In consultation with procurement and non-procurement leaders in Welsh public bodies and the private and third sectors, develop the necessary tools and guidance for embedding net zero in procurement (this and digitalisation could be the first tasks for the National Leadership Board).

4.4 Sustainability

- Clearly define what is desired with value outcomes in Wales; many stakeholders feel this should be category specific.
- Utilise and build on the existing high-level national indicators (Future Generations Office) to develop category specific measures.
- Continue with the learning and development activity to help and support procurement professionals with the new legislation.
- Maintain collaborative relationships with the Future Generations Commissioner's office to ensure that sustainable priorities, the use of language, and messaging are aligned.
- Influence, lead, and listen to others outside of Wales to embrace the important sustainability goals that we are aiming for globally to protect our future generations.
- Succession planning: collaborate with key partners in schools, colleges, and universities to educate and inspire to make public sector procurement [and supply chain] the career of choice, not one you 'fall in to'.

4.5 Communication

- Develop a communications strategy using a more targeted approach to ensure optimal engagement with senior leaders of public bodies and those at the forefront of procurement activity.
- Develop a communications strategy for non-procurement leaders. The remit for procurement is greater than ever before in terms of delivering value, and the research has confirmed that a) the will from procurement professionals is there, but b) getting buy-in across the organisation isn't.

- Develop a communications strategy for public bodies that are based in Wales but do not have devolved powers. This applies to health and social care and many other government-led organisations. There are many missed opportunities for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and Welsh-based suppliers.

5.0 Closing Remarks

- Self-reported spend data from the Welsh Public sector (£10.8 billion) confirms that procurement spend is growing year on year, but with that comes more responsibility and opportunity to deliver better outcomes for Wales.
- It is clear from the interviews with stakeholders that the procurement community feels passionate and committed to continuous improvement. Stakeholders share a view that Wales has much to be proud of but there are urgent improvements to be made.
- Resources, skills, and capacity have been reported as concerns for decades. A lack of long-term investment in procurement is now at a breaking point and is a source of frustration for all.
- In this new Procurement Reform era, investment, leadership, knowledge, and effective communication will be key.
- It is hoped that the findings from this research and recommendations will help inform future decision making and investments in what is now a critical time for Wales, economically, socially, and environmentally.
- Stakeholders valued the opportunities to be part of the research and consultation to discuss the ongoing and emerging issues and challenges they face daily, weekly, monthly and annually.
- From a research perspective, this has been one of the most fulfilling exercises and a responsibility that has not been taken lightly. It is a responsibility to the government, to policymakers, to procurement professionals, and to those who gave up their time to contribute to this research-led report. In addition, consideration must be given to those people living and working in Wales whose lives may be affected by poor procurement decisions.

Acknowledgements

Postgraduate students, Dilyara Abilkhairova, Mitchell Patriarche, and Ashleigh Reed, were employed as part time research analysts whilst studying MSc Sustainable Supply Chain Management at Cardiff University. These are some of our future generation of leaders.

Appendix 1 Full list of participating stakeholder organisations

<p>Local Authorities Ardal Bridgend Caerphilly Cardiff Denbighshire and Flintshire County Councils - Collaborative Procurement Service Gwynedd Merthyr Tydfil Newport City Swansea Wrexham Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)</p>	<p>Welsh Government Commercial, Welsh Government Legal Services, Welsh Government Welsh Government</p> <p>National Bodies Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales Landscapes Nature and Forestry Division Welsh Government National Resources Wales (NRW) Property & Infrastructure Traffic Wales (North and Mid) Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales Visit Wales Welsh Revenue Authority Companies House</p>
<p>Emergency and Fire & Rescue Authorities Dyfed Powys Police Gwent Police Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service North Wales Police South Wales Police and Gwent Police</p>	<p>Education Cardiff University Coleg Cymoedd Coleg Gwent Qualifications Wales University of South Wales</p>

Other Centre for International Ltd Life DVLA Office for the Future Generations Commissioner Sell2Wales Sciences Hub Wales Scape Group WRAP Cymru	Health Cwm Taf University Health Board Hywel Dda University Health board NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership - Procurement Services Velindre NHS Trust
--	--

Appendix 2 – Survey Questions

Section 1 – Best Practice

Q1	The CPD leverage collaborative procurement activity in Wales to maximise long-term sustainable social and economic value outcomes from public spend.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>
Q2	The CPD is excellent at aligning its ways of working, and engaging, with stakeholders, to achieve innovative and sustainable procurement solutions .
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>
Q3	The CPD provides excellent service and support in helping organisations to deliver outcomes focussed procurements (in which payments to suppliers are tied to contract delivery performance).
Q4	I am aware of support from the CPD to enable framework design and development for the benefit of all, ensuring maximum contributions to the four dimensions of well-being, wherever possible.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>
Q5	The CPD provides excellent service and support to organisations seeking to better integrate procurement into their wider organisational processes.
Q6	I have received the necessary support from the CPD to deliver on policy areas through the appropriate tools, guidance, and training .
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>
Q7	The CPD provides excellent service and support toward building and maintaining Resilient Supply Chains in procurement.
Q8	I am aware of the supply chain resilience strategic tools and risk assessments to ensure procurement activity aligns with and contributes to the progressive procurement policy.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>
Q9	I am aware that the CPD is a signatory of the ethical code of practice and has published a modern slavery statement .
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Section 2 – Priority Policies

Q10	I am aware of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill that will establish Fair Work as integral to socially responsible procurement.
Q11	The CPD builds on and scales sustainable procurement best practice, to support the delivery of organisational well-being objectives.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>

Q12	The CPD provides excellent service and support towards the achievement of Welsh Government policy objectives relating to progressive procurement, such as the Foundational and Circular Economy.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>

Q13	The CPD provides excellent service and support to stakeholders seeking to embed sustainable procurement practices and processes.
Q14	I am aware of the toolkits on sustainability strategic tools, risk assessments, contract management, social value and whole life costing from the CPD.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Q15	The CPD is excellent at prioritising carbon reduction and Net Zero through sustainable procurement decisions.
Q16	The CPD provides excellent service and support to stakeholders seeking to prioritise carbon reduction and Net Zero.
Q17	I am aware of the CPD's Carbon Reduction plans, and that carbon reduction is a mandatory part of procurement tenders for WG contract over £5m from April 2022.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Q18	The CPD provides excellent service and support to achieve value-based procurement.
Q19	I am aware of the CPD's Value-based tools and risk assessments (e.g., MEAT to MAT) to ensure procurement activity aligns with and optimises long-term outcomes for Wales.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Section 3 – Profile & Governance

Q20	The CPD is excellent at raising the long-term standing and profile , of the procurement profession, as an enabler for policy across the Welsh Public Sector.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>

Q21	The CPD is excellent at providing support to stakeholders seeking to raise the long-term standing and profile of procurement.
Q22	I am aware of the development opportunities offered by the CPD for staff in my organisation to attain their CIPS professional qualifications .
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Q23	The CPD is an excellent critical friend, and has the appropriate governance to encourage benefits, efficiencies and savings through procurement and contracting.
Q24	The procurement process is well understood and consistently applied by Procurement Professionals in my team or those who deliver support to my team (whichever applies).
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Section 4 – Digital

Q25	The CPD is improving the integration and user experience of its digital solutions.
Q26	The CPD provides excellent support toward the achievement of the Digital Strategy for Wales .
Q27	I am aware of the CPD's Digital Action Plan and Digital Tools and Templates for procurement.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve these scores?</i>

Q28	The CPD provides excellent management information and data reports that are useful and accurate.
	<i>What changes or actions would improve this score?</i>

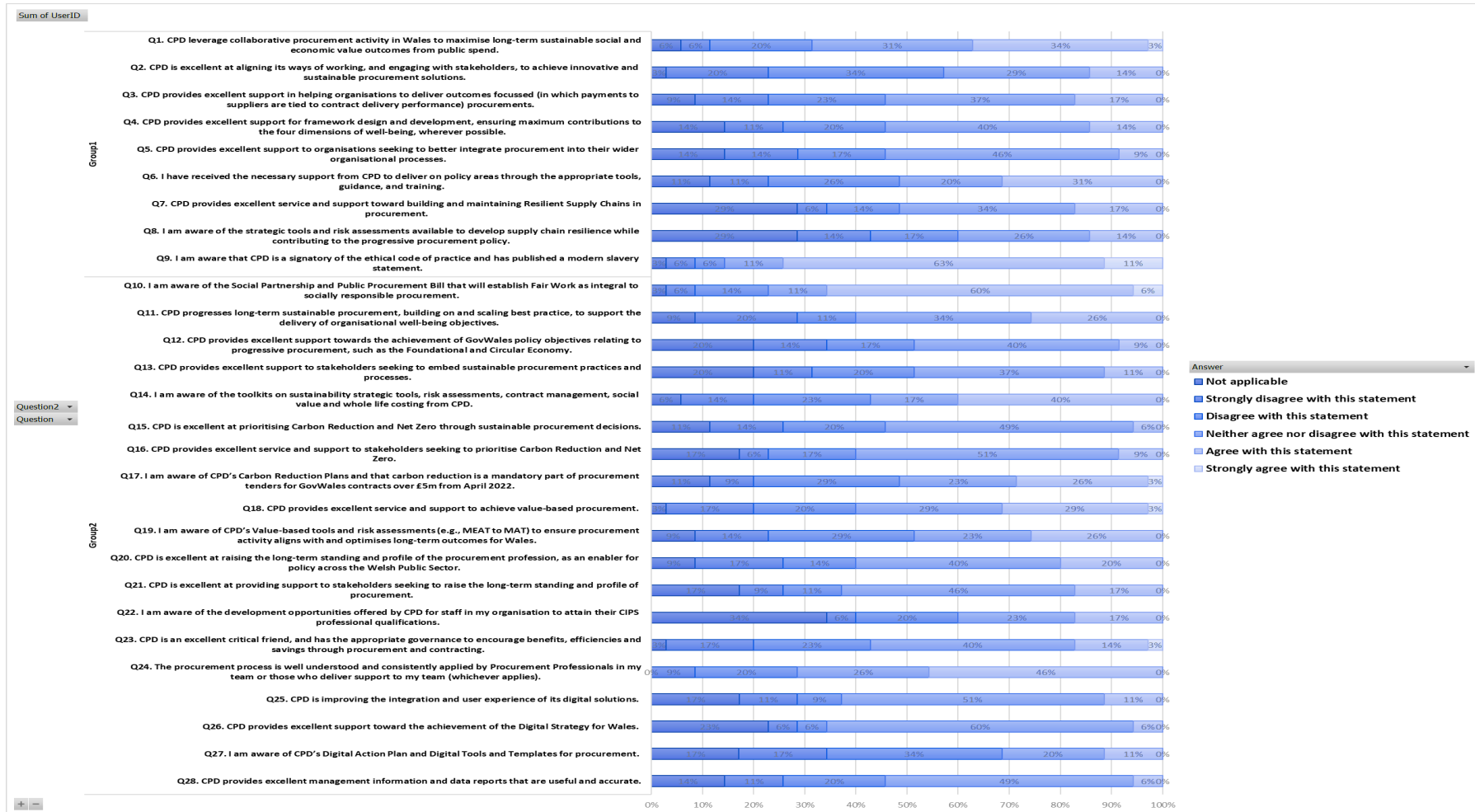
Section 5 – Strategy

Q29	I would welcome ministerial sponsorship of a National Procurement Leadership Board to oversee delivery of the Procurement Reform programme, advise on a national procurement strategy and to advise on the Welsh Government procurement objectives and business plan.
Q30	Would you like to be a member – if so, where should the CPD be prioritising support for improving your ability to deliver best practice in procurement for Wales?

Appendix 3 – Graph a) showing the ranging answers from Wider Public Sector (Ranging from Dark blue - Strongly agree / Light blue -Strongly disagree)



Graph b) showing the ranging answers from the Welsh Government (Ranging from Dark blue -Strongly agree / Light blue -Strongly disagree)



Appendix 4 - Interview Protocol Including Interview Questions

Email Invite

Dear XX

The Centre for Public Value Procurement, Cardiff University has been commissioned by the Welsh Government (Dept. Commercial and Procurement) to conduct a wellbeing check on the commercial procurement function in Wales - as perceived by internal and external stakeholders.

The commissioned work takes a two stage process by gathering evidence from i) a stakeholder engagement survey and ii) interviews – the analysis of which will inform the development of a renewed Procurement Strategy in Wales.

I am inviting you for an online interview via Teams which should take no longer than 25 minutes. Interviews will be recorded for the purposes of transcripts only. Transcribed interviews will be emailed to you for checking. You will be asked to sign a consent form at this stage. No identities will be revealed unless you give permission to do so.

The interview questions are themed around the ten principles of the Welsh Procurement Policy Statement which can be found here: [Wales procurement policy statement | GOV.WALES](#)

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Kindest regards,
Jane Lynch

.....

Online Interview [verbal] Introduction

Thank you for responding so quickly

This is the second part of a two stage research project, commissioned by John Coyne, Director of Commercial and Procurement, Welsh Government – abbreviated as CPD in the research.

The first stage was an online survey which you may have received and completed. Today we will run through 9 interview questions which will be transcribed so the Teams recording, and transcriptions buttons are on.

I know we could talk about these matters all day, and I deliberately didn't send the questions in advance of the interview as I don't want people overthinking them. It is important that you share your gut / immediate response to each topic and if you could aim for 2-3 minutes high level responses to each question that would keep us to time and help us to manage the maintain focus - and to speed up the transcribing of notes afterwards.

Following the interview, I will email you an anonymised and cleaned transcription document – your code is XX

I will also send you a project information sheet, and a confidentiality agreement / consent form with the interview transcript for checking. Please would you sign the consent form and email it back to me with the agreed transcript.

For ethical purposes, I wish to highlight that you are entering this research as a volunteer which means you can withdraw from the research at any time, or you can decline to answer a question for any reason.

Your responses will be coded so that only you or I will know who said what.

If you don't have any immediate questions, to start the interview, please for the recording would you share your name, role and organisation – thank you.

May I first ask if you a) received the Welsh Government survey and b) took part?

Let's start the themed questions – I include some prompts to help you respond

.....

Interview Questions

Q1. Outcomes focused procurement

- Do you understand what is meant by outcomes focused procurement?
- What do you perceive as the main barriers to achieving this approach (if any)?
- How can the CPD help you overcome them?

Q2. Collaborative procurement

- To what extent do you apply collaborative procurement arrangements?
- What works well and what is more challenging?
- What support do you need to understand collaborative opportunities?
- Where would you normally go to find that support?

Q3. Integration in procurement

- To what extent is procurement integrated with the rest of the organisation?
- What support do you need to elevate the role of procurement in the organisation?
- What are the barriers to integration?

Q4. Lowest cost versus value

- One of the greatest challenges highlighted in the survey was moving away from lowest cost, how easy do you think it will be moving from MEAT to MAT in your organisation/category of spend?
- What more needs to be done by Welsh Government to help with this transition?

Q5. Communication

- Communication has been highlighted as an area for improvement in the survey, how can CPD improve their communication with you?
- How best would you like to receive information and updates?

Q6. Net Zero

- How knowledgeable and prepared are you with your procurement to meet the net zero targets set by Welsh Government? Which category of spend is most relevant to you?

- What help and support do you need?
- What role do you feel Welsh Government CPD team has in making this progress?

Q7. Digitalised procurement

- How advanced is **digitalised procurement** in your department /organisation?
- *How can the CPD help you progress on this important agenda?*
- What are the barriers with digitalisation?

Q8. Sustainable Procurement

- To what extent have you advanced in terms of embedding the four wellbeing ways into your procurement?
- Which do you find most challenging and how do you try to overcome that
- To what extent do you expect Welsh Government to support you?

Q9 Action Plans

The Minister asked leaders of public bodies to develop and publish **action plans** that align with the WPPS to support better procurement delivery of priorities at the local, regional, and national levels.

- In your organisation, what has worked and what has been most challenging?
- What help do you expect from the CPD team with strategy development (if any)?

Finally, are there any pressing issues that you would like me to highlight and share with Welsh Government that I have not included in this interview?

Thank you for your participation and contribution to improving procurement in Wales.

.....

Email Draft – Post Interview

Dear XXX

Please find attached the anonymised condensed interview transcript for your perusal. Ensure you are ok with the content - please would you use tracked changes if you want to remove or add anything.

If there is a quote that you would like me to consider including in the final report, then please let me know if you would like to be identified or not. I will include anonymised quotes anyway.

Please also find attached the project information sheet and the consent form. The consent form needs signing. You can just type if you don't have an electronic signature. Please kindly return to me by Monday 25th March.

I will keep you informed of progress. The final report will be presented to leaders in Swansea on the morning of 17th April.

Thank you again for your valued contributions and support.

Kindest regards
 Jane Lynch

Appendix 5 – Coded Interview Participants

Number	Analysis Code	Date of Interview	Stakeholder Type	Director / Manager	Action Plan	Survey
1	TU1	19/03/2024	Wider Public Sector	M	No	No
2	TU3	19 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	Yes
3	TU4	19 March	Other	M	No	No
4	TU5	19 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	No
5	TU6	19 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	Yes
6	TU7	19 March	Other Public Sector	M	No	No
7	WE1	20 March	Wider Public Sector	D	No	Yes
8	WE2	20 March	Wider Public Sector	D	No	No
9	WE3	20 March	Wider Public Sector	D	No	No
10	TH1	3 April	Other	D	No	Yes
11	TH2	21 March	Welsh Government	M	No	No
12	TH3	2 April	Wider Public Sector	M	No	Yes
13	TH4	2 April	Wider Public Sector	D	Yes	YES
14	TH5	28 March	Wider Public Sector	D	Yes	No
15	TH6	21 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	NO
16	TH7	21 March	Wider Public Sector	D	No	YES/NO
17	FI1	22 March	Wider Public Sector	D	No	No
18	MO1	25 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	No
19	MO2	25 March	Wider Public Sector	M	No	No
20	WE4	27 March	Wider Public Sector	D	Yes	
21	WE5	27 March	Welsh Government	M	No	No
22	WE6	27 March	Welsh Government	D	No	No
23	WE7	27 March	Wider Public Sector	D	Yes	No
24	WE8	3 April	Wider Public Sector	M	No	Yes
25	MO3	2 April	Wider Public Sector	D	No	Yes
26	TH8	4 April	Other	M	No	No
27	TU8	9 April	Wider Public Sector	M	No	No
28	Yes	Holiday	Health	M		
29	Yes	Deferred	Health	D		
30	Yes	Deferred	Health	D		
31	Yes	Email returned	LA	M		
32	TU2	19 March tbc	Health	D		
33	MO5	tbc	LA	M		
34	MO4	Tbc	Other	D		

Appendix 6: Individual participant comments relating to the Ten Principles of the WPPS.

Principle	Survey Findings	
Leverage collaborative procurement activity in Wales to maximise long-term sustainable social and economic value outcomes from public spend	<p>Welsh Government Employee report <i>"Very few contracts are procured on all Wales basis where buying power could be consolidated and therefore improve value for money, in not only the cost of the contracts but also the cost of administering the contracts"</i>.</p> <p>Many WG participants had quite a bit to say on this matter, with very few believing that CPD maximizes long-term sustainable social and economic value from public spending. <i>"The focus [still] seems very fixed on short term and financial criteria"</i>.</p>	<p>The wider public sector highlighted the need for further improvement in communication. Participants would prefer a more collaborative approach when working with Welsh Government. Saying quote <i>"I have seen no evidence of Welsh Government Commercial Procurement leveraging collaborative procurement activity in Wales to maximise values and outcomes from public spend"</i>. They noted that greater collaboration would improve <i>"Visibility of Commercial activity"</i> and there needs to be better collaboration and sharing of best practices across <i>"LAs, WG, WLGA, and the wider WPS, fire, police, NHS."</i></p>
Integrate procurement into the heart of Welsh policy development and implementation	<p>Emphasis on <i>"Lack of staff resources has hindered this in recent years..."</i>. Polarised views on how procurement should be managed, <i>"We should not be doing procurement differently across the approx. 100 public sector orgs across Wales"</i> vs <i>"Procurement shouldn't [...]be a central service, procurers should be embedded within divisions, so they become category experts on what the division is procuring"</i>.</p>	<p>The Wider Public Sector reported they would <i>"benefit from better communication to improve support"</i> from CPD. <i>"It would be really useful to have contact points of all staff. Too often, a generic email is provided."</i></p> <p><i>"I am new to the role...If the public sector had contact details of staff associated with the different frameworks, this would be helpful. To my knowledge, this isn't available or at least I haven't found it."</i></p>
Progress long-term sustainable procurement, which builds on and scales best practice and sets clear steps that show how procurement is supporting the	<p>Consensus view that CPD provides excellent support for framework design and development, ensuring maximum contributions to the four dimensions of well-being. However, could improve on the measuring of impacts stating, <i>"I believe that when frameworks are designed and develop, they do their best to ensure maximum contributions to the four</i></p>	<p>There was a lot less qualitative feedback for this topic area compared with others. Many members of the Wider Public Sector were unaware of the framework to improve the four dimensions of well-being saying, <i>"no idea they did"</i>, but those who were aware acknowledged there is great support stating, <i>"Have received</i></p>

<p>delivery of organisational well-being objectives</p>	<p><i>dimensions of well-being, wherever possible but it falls down with measuring the impact of this".</i> Members believe that there has been significant improvement in the area of long-term sustainable procurement, building on and scaling best practices, to support the delivery of organizational well-being objectives stating, "<i>The directorate is progressive in terms of sustainable procurement, but could do much more</i>" and request increased standardization stating, "<i>Could be improved through: Standardised definitions and measures for specifications and standardised approaches to recording outcomes</i>".</p>	<p><i>excellent and practical support over the past few months".</i></p>
<p>Raise the long-term standing and profile of the procurement profession and its role as an enabler for procurement policy</p>	<p>Most participants believe that CPD is excellent at raising the long-term standing and profile of the procurement profession although more work can always be done. Multiple comments about awareness of the CIPS qualification with mixed views. Those aware are "<i>very grateful for this opportunity</i>" and believe it is "<i>a very well received and well publicised programme</i>". In contrast others are completely unaware of CIPS stating, "<i>no I am not aware of this</i>" and "<i>I wasn't aware of this</i>".</p>	<p>The wider public sector believes that the CPD is "<i>doing an excellent job at contributing to raising the long-term standing and profile of the procurement profession</i>" further acknowledging "<i>good support through the learning and development offering</i>". A few were still unsure where to find help and advice. Another participant commented, "<i>...disappointed CIPS training is now limited</i>".</p>
<p>Support WG policy objectives relating to progressive procurement, such as the Foundational and Circular Economy, through collaborative, place-based (whether national,</p>	<p>WG participants do not believe they are receiving the support from CPD required to build resilient supply chains with "<i>more resources needed to fully tackle this area</i>". "<i>Currently there are not enough staff [who] understand the supply chain and market</i>". Few participants are aware of the support available, "<i>I'm not aware of the tools [...] available for this</i>". Those participants who were aware felt "<i>far more could be done</i>" and did not understand the progressive procurement policy.</p>	<p>The Wider Public Sector has very little knowledge of how the CPD provides support toward building and maintaining Resilient Supply Chains. There is "<i>too little emphasis is given to local suppliers</i>" and participants who fed back they are aware of the strategic tools and risk assessments in place believe that "<i>It [still] isn't enough</i>."</p>

regional, or local) procurement activity which nurtures resilient local supply chains	They noted lack of communication.	
6. Act to prevent climate change by prioritising carbon reduction and zero emissions through more responsible and sustainable procurement to deliver our ambition for a net zero public sector Wales by 2030	Many participants were unaware of the WG Carbon Reduction Plan and believed that the £5m threshold should be lowered. Some acknowledge efforts made towards carbon reduction by CPD though lack of expertise and resources is noted by many. "We are requesting Carbon Reduction Plans for frameworks, but it is not very clear what we are supposed to do with them. We are not tracking CO2 emissions through framework activity to baseline and then monitor lack of quality data doesn't help. "[...] we are currently not skilled enough in this area to do this effectively".	Many wider public sector participants believe that the prioritising of Carbon Reduction and Net Zero has "made good progress" although many caution that it is quite a large and difficult task feeling further pressured by "conflicting priorities" stating, "I feel budget pressures are making it increasingly challenging". Further improvements can be made by "the sharing of good practice [which] needs to be better communicated and available to the rest of the public sector. Most of us are struggling to get our heads around how we tackle these major issues and need a central steer".
Align our ways of working and increase stakeholder involvement to support innovative and sustainable solutions through procurement	Most participants believe that CPD is not doing enough to engage with stakeholders and demand "more engagement with Stakeholders and [the] need to look for new collaborative opportunities". They feel that "...resources have been lost in this area and not replaced, limited support is available now." and there are not enough staff members to achieve the desired results.	The wider public sector participants believe there is "insufficient engagement from the Welsh Government" and request "More focussed and regular meetings, ideally, face to face that bring stakeholders together". Furthermore, participants feel "the resources for this have been published and shared but [they are not] aware of an ongoing programme - it feels [like a] one off".
Collaborate with stakeholders to promote equal opportunities and Fair Work in Wales	There is very little WG participants' awareness on the modern slavery statements published or where to find them, "I wasn't aware of this", and members would like to see wider publication on the matter.	The wider public sector participants recognise that these policies are important but stress they may be "slightly out of date". Although overall believe they are very important and relevant and work closely with them.
Improve the integration and user experience of our digital solutions and	WG participants are largely unaware of the tools in place and those that are aware of the tools find them "not user friendly" and "old and [out]dated. The whole	Most responses showed that participants were not aware of all the available tools. The wider public sector request to "make it easier to find frameworks. Communication

<p>applications, maximising the use of our procurement data to support decision making</p>	<p><i>delivery system for end to end procurement needs to be updated for the future. There shouldn't be toolkits it should all be embedded</i>". A lack of responses in this area can be demonstrative of a lack of knowledge.</p>	<p><i>needs to improve</i>". Members would like increased visibility and transparency from the CPD, with many noting that "<i>We don't receive anything</i>" or there is "<i>No sight of this</i>".</p>
<p>Promote value-based procurement which delivers optimum long-term outcomes for Wales</p>	<p>Members believe that there has been support put in place to deliver outcomes-focused procurements, although believe "improvements can be made in this area", members would like a "set process/ guidance in place to set KPI's/ SLA's which are linked to payment". "<i>Individuals are good but there are far too few of them to make a real impact</i>" and "<i>There is little pressure during my procurement exercises to make values-based considerations</i>". Improvements can be made "<i>through greater engagement by procurement in using their expertise to develop specifications, utilising a range of evaluation techniques and monitoring of outcomes</i>". Regarding the transition from MEAT to MAT many members are unaware of the program and are still using the MEAT with a member stating, "<i>I'm aware of MEAT as the specifications I work on use that approach for scoring, wasn't aware of MAT as I don't use that approach</i>". Overall, more communication and support are required to educate members on the tools and frameworks available and implemented.</p>	<p>While some members believe that the WGCP has provided support, others have "<i>seen no examples of this statement</i>" nor are we "...<i>aware that WGCP provides such support</i>." Furthermore, the Wider Public Sector has found "<i>limited support other than the publication of the framework guidance</i>". Overall, members are unaware of many of the tools and request further promotion of said tools.</p>