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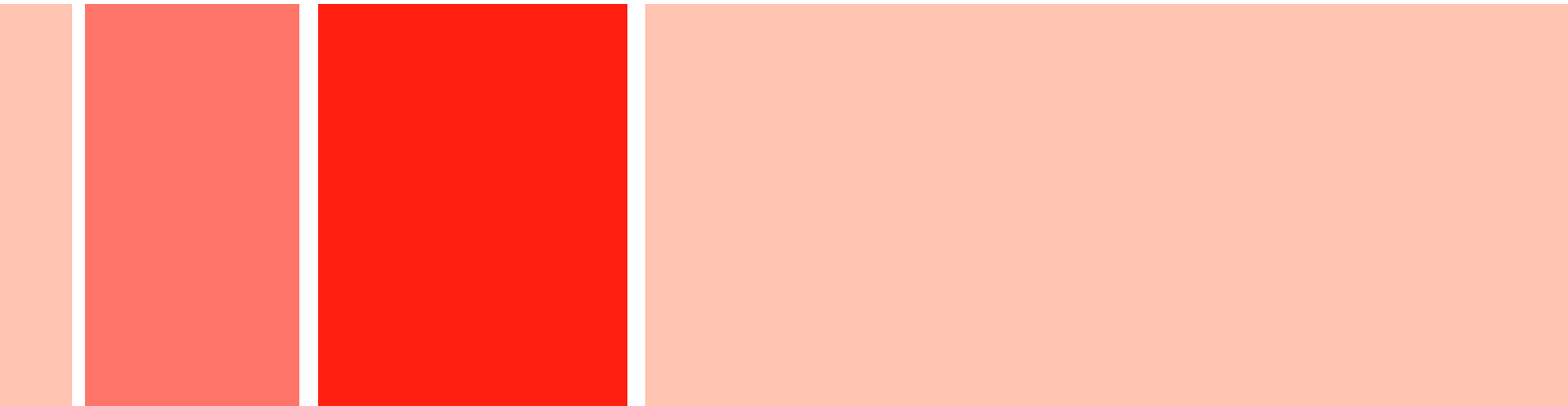


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# FINAL EVALUATION OF TRANSFORMING PROCUREMENT THROUGH HOME GROWN TALENT – FINAL REPORT



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ICF International



Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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## Glossary

Acronym	Definition
ABMU	Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University
ADSS	Association of Directors of Social Services
BCUHB	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
CIPS	Chartered Institute for Purchasing and Supply
CMI	Chartered Management Institute
CPF	Creative Procurement Forum
ESF	European Social Fund
HGT	Transforming procurement through Home Grown Talent
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PBPA	Procurement Best Practice Academy
SAIL	Secure Anonymised Information Linkage
SBRI	Small Business Research Initiative
SBV Ltd	Simply Best Value Limited
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SQuID	Supplier Qualification Information Database
TPEP	Trainee Procurement Executive Programme
WEFO	Welsh European Funding Office.
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association

## Executive summary

### Background

Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent (HGT) is an £11 million programme which ran from 2010 to June 2015 (supported by £5.7 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) Convergence Area Programme). Its purpose was to raise procurement skills and competences across the whole of the Welsh public sector and increase awareness of the value of these skills to support the challenges of delivering more for less.

The programme has been managed by Value Wales, a division of the Welsh Government which supports other organisations in the Welsh public sector and public services<sup>1</sup> to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of commissioning public services in Wales. There are five strands to the programme described in the blue box below.

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### The five strands of HGT

- **Strand 1 Leadership:** the establishment of forums, and delivery of awareness raising to key stakeholder groups to improve the status of procurement professionals in the public sector
  - **Strand 2 Training:** the delivery of a programme of short training courses to public sector professionals to increase the capability of procurement specialists and others
  - **Strand 3 Trainee Procurement Executive Programme (TPEP):** the design and delivery of a new programme of training and professional placements to develop a cohort of new entrants to procurement roles in the Welsh public sector
  - **Strand 4 Funding for e-procurement projects:** provision of grants for public sector organisations to develop their e-procurement practices
  - **Strand 5 Funding for innovation projects:** provision of grants for public sector organisations to pilot new approaches to procurement
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<sup>1</sup> In this report, 'public sector' will be used to encompass the Welsh Government and its agencies, local government, NHS organisations, and public services, such as the police and fire service and national park authorities.

## **Aims of the final evaluation**

In 2013, a mid-term evaluation of the HGT programme was completed. At this stage, three of the five strands were underway. The final evaluation builds on the findings of the mid-term evaluation. The main objectives for this evaluation are to:

- assess progress across all five strands of the evaluation and whether the programme's objectives have been met
- assess how the programme has actioned the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation
- understand the inputs, activities and processes which have made possible the outcomes achieved by the programme (reporting the key factors that have helped or hindered progress)
- assess the impact of the programme, to the extent that this is feasible to discern in the time since the activities have been implemented
- outline the main lessons learned in the delivery of this programme, and to make recommendations for the delivery of future similar programmes of work.

## **Method**

The methodology involved two stages. First, to develop the evaluation framework and the research tools a scoping stage of research was carried out which included consultation with programme stakeholders, a review of programme documentation and analysis of management information (MI). The following primary research and analytical tasks were then undertaken:

- semi-structured telephone interviews with 17 procurement leads from a sample of Welsh public sector organisations
- a short e-survey distributed to all beneficiaries of training in Strand 2 (for whom basic information such as an email address was available). There were survey responses from 206 people about 293 courses undertaken as part of strand 2. This represented nearly half (45 per cent) of those who received training in the second half of the programme (May 2013 – March 2015) for whom email addresses were available, and around one-third (32 per cent) of the courses undertaken in this time
- semi-structured telephone interviews with a sample of 11 of the Strand 3 trainees; a further six trainees provided written responses (a total



response rate of 61 per cent). Nine additional interviews were undertaken with trainees' former or current line managers or professional mentors

- short case studies on three of the organisations which have received grants from HGT to implement e-procurement or innovation projects (or in one case, both)
- telephone interviews with five individuals involved in delivering various aspects of the programme
- telephone interviews with four national stakeholders with an interest in the wider policy area
- analysis of the programme MI.

## **Main findings**

### *Background to the programme*

Improving procurement is a key issue for public services in Wales and underpins progress towards greater collaboration and shared services as well as increasing value for money and providing efficiencies and economies. It has been recognised that skills gaps and shortages exist in procurement within the public sector. The position and status of procurement functions within public sector organisations across Wales is also thought to vary. Stakeholders report that it is often situated in a position where it is difficult for it to influence organisations' strategic aims.

The design of HGT was informed by these and other contextual factors, not least Value Wales's other activities to improve procurement skills and collaborative procurement across the public sector. The five programme strands of HGT were expected to contribute to addressing these challenges. The HGT programme agreed a set of targets with WEFO which included the number of employed people the programme will support, the number of employers that will be supported in other ways, and the number of collaborative agreements made between public service bodies. In the first two years of the programme, the traineeship strand received most focus, and it was not until a new programme management team took over in 2012 that progress was made with the other strands.

At the same time that HGT has been delivered, several other contextual changes have taken place. These include the establishment of the new National Procurement Service in Wales and procurement fitness checks of organisations in parts of the public sector.

### *Strand 1: Leadership*

Strand 1 was one of the final sets of activities to be implemented by the HGT programme. It has provided £587,000 for several different activities. The aim of the strand was to raise awareness of the wider benefits that procurement can bring to organisations, and to generally raise the profile of the profession. The Strand has also been used to attempt to address some of the policy implementation challenges facing the policy area. A range of activities have been delivered under this strand:

- establishing the Creative Procurement Forum (CPF), which brings together three Welsh universities with a teaching and research background in this area with policy makers from the Welsh Government
- establishing the Procurement Best Practice Academy (PBPA), which will collect examples of good practice in procurement from organisations around the UK, develop and share them with other organisations that may benefit from them
- the development of a guidance document on joint bidding which aims to support SMEs to bid in consortia for public contracts and ensure buyers make these contracts suitable for such bids. Pilot projects to demonstrate the potential impact of the guidance have also been funded
- the expansion of Procurement Week and introduction of the Procurement Awards have been supported by HGT to encourage networking and commend high achievement.

HGT planned to deliver a set of awareness raising breakfasts for senior executives of public sector organisations. However due to a low level of interest from the target audience, and the generally low standing of procurement, these did not take place.

Evidence of the early outcomes of these activities are largely strategic in nature. The CPF and PBPA are thought to have strengthened links between academia, policy makers and procurement professionals. The demonstration projects for the joint bidding guidance are beginning to show evidence of supporting consortia of SMEs to access larger public contracts. The high profile activities (such as Procurement Week) have also brought innovative activities taking place in Wales to a wider audience.

Interviewees report that these would only have happened at this stage with financial support from the programme. There is also a widely-held perception that the position of procurement functions and specialists in the public sector

has improved over the lifetime of the programme. Key contextual factors are thought to have been the primary contributor to this (such as a growing political focus on procurement) as well as the HGT programme.

However, across this Strand, there are areas where the evidence of outcomes achieved at this stage is patchy, despite the high volume of activity since the Strand's inception. This includes the dissemination of the outputs of the PBPA, the likely future impact of the research being undertaken through the CPF and whether any alternative activities were undertaken instead of the awareness raising breakfasts.

### *Strand 2: Training*

Strand 2 has spent £971,000 on delivering a mixture of training courses, workshops and meetings for public sector workers, delivered by two separate contractors as well as Value Wales. Programme MI shows that across the course of the programme, 4,688 attendances at training workshops or meetings took place.

The training programme delivered covered a range of topics, with a focus on pre-tendering and tendering. At the point at which the evaluation took place, less training on skills related to post-tendering activities, which was one of the main identified skills gaps in the sector, had been delivered (although it was noted that in the last two months of the programme, more training was delivered in this area following findings of the procurement fitness checks).

Where demographic data for beneficiaries are available, it is clear that Strand 2 has reached a fairly representative group in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. Around half of beneficiaries are estimated to be in a specialist procurement role. Employers from across the public sector were supported although there is some evidence that NHS employers are underrepresented within the short course programme.

Survey findings suggest that:

- for over three-fifths of the courses (63 per cent), survey respondents made the decision to attend the course. Where this was the case, the primary motivation was to fill a skill gap (for nearly two-thirds – or 65 per cent – of the courses). At mid-term, this was less (41 per cent of survey respondents cited this reason). This may reflect the links between the competency framework and fitness assessment, and the training programme
- the training was, in general, well-targeted with survey respondents reporting that it was relevant to current challenges they faced (84 per

cent of responses), the wider work of their organisation (95 per cent) and to their future plans (87 per cent). Responses to whether the training filled a skill, competency or knowledge gap were less clear cut

- survey respondents were generally positive about the standard of delivery of the training; the HGT programme's own survey largely supported these findings. Stakeholders interviewed in other parts of the method were less positive about the delivery of certain aspects of the training programme, questioning the quality of delivery and its appropriateness for the beneficiaries. Related to this, some survey respondents reported that the style of delivery was too passive, the training was not well targeted for some of the participants (generally at a lower level than needed) and there were a few problems with the trainers' style or knowledge (including knowledge of specific areas of procurement)
- the training has impacted positively on beneficiaries' confidence in their job (61 per cent reporting this benefit); fewer respondents reported that the training had made them more productive (46 per cent) or allowed them to expand their job role (39 per cent)
- there is also less evidence that the training has impacted on their actions in the workplace. For example, only around a third (33 per cent) of respondents reported that the training course had expanded the role of specialist procurement staff in their organisations.

### *Strand 3: Trainee Procurement Executive Programme*

TPEP has been one of the major investments of HGT, and is an entirely new programme of activity (£2.83 million assigned with additional costs of management). The aim was to develop the skills of new entrants to the procurement profession through a programme of professional placements and formal training activities.

A total of 28 trainees have been recruited across four cohorts. Public sector organisations were asked to bid for a trainee to join them with placements supposed to be designed around a substantive project. These trainees have undertaken 86 such placements across 33 different public sector organisations, mostly in local authorities or Welsh Government. Over two-fifths (47 per cent) of the organisations hosting placements had a national remit while around a third of placements took place in organisations with a local remit in south and south east Wales.

TPEP trainees also undertook a programme of training alongside their secondments. This included CIPS levels 4 to 6 (although there is a substantial

drop-off in trainees' achievement of levels 5 and 6 while they were on the programme), Prince 2 and leadership and management training.

Trainees were supported by a line manager in the host organisation as well as the Professional Development Manager in Value Wales and a mentor in another organisation who was expected to monitor the trainees' training and development plans. In most cases, the monitoring arrangements of training and development through line management within the host organisation and the mentoring scheme were reported to work well.

However at least ten of the trainees left the programme before completing all of their placements or training courses. This was mainly because the trainees reported being concerned about the need to secure jobs before completion of the programme, particularly with the likely competition from the other trainees for similar roles at this time.

Despite this high level of non-completion, the research has found that TPEP has largely achieved its main aim of supporting new entrants into the public sector procurement profession. Twenty three of the 24 trainees who have left the programme (there are still four trainees currently on placement) are in permanent full-time procurement roles; 15 are employed by the Welsh public sector and three work in the utilities or housing sector in Wales. Qualitative evidence gathered from line managers and senior procurement leads suggests that many of these trainees are likely to progress well in their future careers into senior / leadership roles.

These outcomes have been achieved despite some reported issues with the delivery of the programme across its duration. These include: a lack of clarity over the goals of the programme when recruiting trainees and host organisations; a slow reaction to isolated incidences of poor placement experience and insufficient action taken where this was reported (in some cases); and insufficient matching between trainee and placement. For the final cohort of trainees, due to the timing of when these individuals joined the programme the funding will have run out before they have completed their CIPS training and placement.

#### *Strand 4: Funding for e-procurement projects*

Strand 4 has funded a set of projects which aim to implement e-procurement solutions to Welsh public sector organisations' purchasing activities. Funding for these projects ranges from around £25,000 up to £300,000 which is generally more than matched by the organisation's investment.

The funding has been used to either accelerate activity that would have taken place at some point in the future (as a result of government targets to increase

use of electronic procurement tools in Wales) or funded activity that would not have been supported to the same scale.

The projects supported by HGT have contributed to a range of strategic objectives which include more collaborative sourcing and procurement with other local authorities, supporting SMEs in providing services to public organisations, having more up-to-date and reliable information on what is being spent by the organisation, and having improved business intelligence.

The bidding process was relatively straightforward with substantial support being provided by Value Wales. After a period of openly advertising the programme, Value Wales had to approach organisations more directly to attract bids and also allowed bids in excess of £50,000. Despite a view by some stakeholders that more organisations could have benefitted from the grants to move forward e-procurement (which was also identified in the fitness checks), some senior procurement leads believed that the grants were not attractive as they were tied to specific solutions that were not supported.

Support from HGT is believed to be contributing to faster progress with e-procurement and achievement of its benefits. The recipient of by far the largest grant, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP), was able to demonstrate that the support had rapidly accelerated progress with enabling suppliers to e-trade, increased the number of staff across NHS Wales using e-tendering, improved the quality of data in the organisation's e-catalogue (leading to the more straightforward application of a category management approach), and increased the use of e-auctions (with cash savings made as a result).

#### *Strand 5: Funding for innovation projects*

Strand 5 was the final area of activity to be implemented starting in March 2014. This Strand has supported three projects. These were:

- the SAIL project at Swansea University, which procured IT companies to develop software which will assist in the planning, procurement and evaluation of health services. In this project, the NHS buyer has worked closely with potential suppliers to help them interpret and respond to their requirements.
- a project at BCUHB which is procuring a tool which can manage patient data more effectively for patients and staff. The HGT grant has been used to enhance the procurement process by funding a market engagement event and consultancy support for the use of SBRI resources.

- A further project at BCUHB relating to learning tasks after brain injuries commenced after the research had been completed.

Both projects expressed a strong rationale for bidding to the HGT programme for grant funding. While they had the majority of funding in place, the HGT grant enhanced the procurement processes. Owing to the complexity of what was being procured, both projects felt they needed to engage the market in a different way in order to get a response from potential providers that would meet their needs.

With this strong rationale in mind, it is unclear why there have only been three projects funded. The programme team reported advertising these opportunities both at national and regional events, and directly to heads of procurement. Despite this, neither organisation reported that they were made aware of the grants through Strand 5 advertising. Having identified the funding opportunity both teams reported that the bidding process was straightforward.

While all projects are incomplete and the HGT grant has been used to supplement other funding, project staff reported that the HGT funded activities have led to new relationships developing between the buyers and potential suppliers. Within the project teams, this has also challenged the traditional view of public sector procurement.

## **Conclusions**

### *Overview of the programme*

Five Strands of the HGT programme have been implemented. Aspects of the Strand 1 activity to raise awareness of the role of public sector procurement and to share best practice within the sector have been delivered successfully (the CPF, PBPA, Procurement Week, guidance document for collaborative bidding); other parts of this strand have not been delivered (awareness raising meetings with public sector leaders). The training for existing staff (Strand 2) and the traineeships (Strand 3) have been taken forward successfully, for the most part. Grants to assist public sector organisations to adopt and use e-procurement tools and to develop innovative approaches to procurement appear to have been more slowly and less widely taken up than expected (Strands 4 and 5).

The HGT programme has achieved most of its ESF targets except for the number of placements to take place (65 took place, not the intended 72), and the number of different staff who have taken part in the programme (823, not the intended 1,396). Given limited activity outside of Strand 3 in the first two years of the programme, this target was reported to be extremely challenging.

Gathering the relevant information from all training participants has also been problematic so not all the training that has taken place can be counted against these targets.

Looking beyond these targets, and across the five separate areas of activity delivered by the programme, it is evident that

- good practice ideas and new tools and guidance have been generated
- training participants have generally improved their knowledge and skills; many have applied what they have gained
- 25 of the 28 trainees have gone on to work in professional procurement roles, mostly in the Welsh public sector; many have the competencies and experience to progress into more senior procurement roles; and
- more public sector organisations utilise e-procurement solutions and several have experimented with innovative procurement activities.

There is also evidence of contributions the programme has made to the objectives of Priority 4 ESF funding through supporting public sector collaboration, and expanding the capacity and capability of the public sector; in this respect the programme has contributed to the goals of Welsh Government in this area. The programme's support for trainees and up-skilling public sector employees who are engaged in procurement is evidently contributing to building the capacity of the public sector workforce to be more effective, although there remain areas where significant progress is required.

The degree to which the programme has added value beyond that which would have been generated without the programme varies. For the small value grants awarded through Strands 4 and 5, they have generally made contributions to wider goals rather than being the key factor in their progression, except in the NHS where the grant was much larger and over a longer period; there are sub-sector gaps in the spread of Strand 2 training and Strand 3 placements; and the impact of the Strand 2 training on activities in the workplace varies with barriers in place to this occurring.

#### *Impact of the programme*

It was generally acknowledged by stakeholders and senior procurement leads that progress has been made towards addressing skills needs, recruiting new entrants, and enabling e-procurement. A set of factors which have driven this progress were identified. A growing political focus on procurement and the role it can play in contributing to other policy goals was reported to have drawn attention to the challenges and this may have created a more beneficial environment for progress to be made. The emergence of the National



Procurement Service and Procurement Board were also identified as influential in drawing attention to the challenges which HGT has sought to address. The work of Value Wales to carry out the fitness checks and develop the competency framework was also reported to be starting to have a positive impact as well as complementing the training and grants offered through HGT. Within this mix of political, institutional, and policy change, HGT was described as being “in the middle of it all, feeding the system”.

Despite this, much still needs to be done to see the difference envisaged in the Welsh Government’s strategy for procurement. In particular, there is still believed to be a general shortage of skilled procurement professionals in Wales and substantial skill gaps in the public sector staff who work in specialist procurement roles or have responsibilities for commissioning goods, works and services. There is also a variable degree of progress across the country across all the relevant indicators measures (as has been identified in the procurement fitness checks)

Stakeholders also describe a professional environment where insufficient focus is put into supplier development or engagement prior to a tendering process or on negotiation and contract management after a tendering process. Instead, driven mainly by compliance with regulation and its observance (often with misconceptions about requirements), most resources are expended on the tendering phase. This is thought to reduce the overall potential value of the procurement function to wider organisational outcomes.

#### *Lessons learned and recommendations*

There are a few ways in which each strand could be managed differently in future to improve effectiveness and the outcomes achieved.

In relation to **Strand 1**, there is likely to be value in continuing to support and promote the key activities established so far, as the CPF, Procurement Week and PBPA mature, their role in identifying and sharing best practice, and ensuring policy in this area is informed by evidence will grow. Other recommendations for action in this area are to:

- collect data on the impact of Procurement Week, for example, a participant feedback e-survey 6-8 weeks after the event would help to shape the future of this event
- track the use of the MSc dissertations and assess the impact they have on policy, the students themselves, and the institutions they are part of

- start assessing how the guidance document on joint bidding is used and by whom. This could start at the same time as the case studies on its usage are launched
- identify more appropriate means of engaging senior managers in all public sector organisations. This could include attending meetings they already go to (for example, ADSS / WLGA events).

In relation to **Strand 2**, there is a continued need for short course training among both specialists and non-specialists, and a high-level of agreement of where the main skill gaps are. Steps to take should include:

- structuring training into pathways / levels / specialists or non-specialists so that courses are better targeted and potential beneficiaries can identify the entry points for them and progression routes on to other courses
- developing a 'myth buster course' on EU regulations
- reviewing current materials and spreading courses throughout the year.

To increase the potential impact of any training delivered under Strand 2, further work should be done to understand the barriers that beneficiaries face to implementing change in their organisations following training. The CPF could be used to carry out this research.

In relation to **Strand 3**, the programme should make efforts to ensure that trainees still on TPEP are supported to complete their CIPS training and to find, employment. Efforts should also be made to:

- progress the fast track development of the 'graduates' of the scheme and any other recent CIPS level 4 achievers within the Welsh public sector
- set up alumni events such as talks, social events, more summer school/special training opportunities alongside funding support for staff prepared to study for higher level CIPS courses
- provide alumni with ongoing networking opportunities with senior procurement staff and director-level roles in the public sector. The aim here should be to highlight to the alumni, the continued progression opportunities within the profession.

In relation to **Strands 4 and 5**, the programme should provide access to change management funding to speed up implementation and grants for collaborative activity across sub-sectors or between them (or more importantly

to get in place permanent collaborative teams working on innovative/large scale purchasing within the sectors or in sub-regions).

In relation to any future programme of activity to build on the achievements of HGT:

- there remains a strong case for a follow-on programme to build on what has been achieved by HGT. In order for any future programme to be aligned with Welsh Government policy, the business case for such a programme should be structured around the areas of action established in the Wales Procurement Policy Statement
- the evidence from this evaluation suggests that there is a particular need for any follow-on programme to:
  - include a scoping phase which will allow the programme team to develop set of realistic targets, with a robust method in place for gathering participant information from programme inception
  - be the result of wide consultation with key stakeholders from across the public sector, the NPS and Procurement Board
  - focus resources on those organisations which are in most need (as identified by the fitness checks)
  - target organisations to get projects that can be grant aided given the resistance to taking up grants
  - prioritise engagement with senior public sector executives outside of the procurement profession. This should highlight the work of procurement professionals and areas they can potentially move into. The engagement should also include discussions on how they can support the development of more advanced career pathways for procurement professionals
  - deliver training which will support existing procurement staff to develop a more commercially-focused skillset (including a focus on contract management and engaging with a supplier base)
  - deliver training to non-procurement specialists who have responsibility for commissioning services and managing contractors
  - market the procurement profession to students and other potential new entrants, including those outside the public sector

- the evaluation has identified broad-based support for a follow-on programme to TPEP. Value Wales should build the following features into the design of a follow-on programme. It should:
  - consider whether to provide participants with an even wider mix of experience (including outside the public sector)
  - offer a further six months paid employment in Value Wales on completion of the programme while participants look for permanent employment (although retain sufficient flexibility within this to meet the evolving aspirations of trainees)
  - use learning from HGT to re-design any programme of extra training offered, ensuring that it is delivered at more appropriate times in participants' development.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This is the final report for the final evaluation of the Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent programme. It draws on evidence from primary research with the individuals and organisations who have directly benefited from training, secondments or grants from the programme and the organisations involved in managing and delivering the main funded activities. The study commenced in October 2014 and the fieldwork was completed in May 2015.

### **Background to the evaluation**

- 1.2 Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent (HGT) is an £11 million programme running from 2010 to June 2015 (with £5.7 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) Convergence Area Programme). Its purpose is to raise procurement skills and competences across the whole of the Welsh public sector and increase awareness of the value of these skills to support the challenges of delivering more for less.
- 1.3 The programme has been managed by Value Wales, a division of the Welsh Government which supports other organisations in the Welsh public sector and public services<sup>2</sup> to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of commissioning public services in Wales.
- 1.4 The programme has been delivered through five strands. In brief, a summary of the activities and main aims of each are as follows:
- Strand 1 Leadership: the establishment of forums, and delivery of awareness raising activities to key stakeholder groups in order to improve the status of procurement professionals working in the Welsh public sector
  - Strand 2 Training: the delivery of a programme of short training courses to procurement professionals which aim to increase the capability of procurement specialists and others working in the public sector
  - Strand 3 Trainee Procurement Executive Programme: the design and delivery of a new programme of training and professional placements which aims to develop a cohort of new entrants to procurement roles in the Welsh public sector

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<sup>2</sup> In this report, 'public sector' will be used to encompass the Welsh Government and its agencies, local government, NHS organisations, and public services, such as the police and fire service and national park authorities.

- Strand 4 Funding for e-procurement projects: provision of grants for public sector organisations to develop their e-procurement practices
  - Strand 5 Funding for innovation projects: provision of grants for public sector organisations to pilot new approaches to procurement.
- 1.5 Taken together HGT aims to address many of the skills and performance challenges facing the procurement profession in the public sector. Each strand has been included in this evaluation.

### **Evaluation aims and objectives**

- 1.6 In 2013, a mid-term evaluation of the HGT programme was completed. At this stage, three of the five strands were underway. The final evaluation builds on the findings of the mid-term evaluation. The main objectives for this evaluation are to:
- assess progress across all five strands of the evaluation and whether the programme's objectives have been met
  - assess how the programme has actioned the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation
  - understand the inputs, activities and processes which have made the outcomes achieved by the programme possible (reporting the key factors that have helped or hindered progress)
  - assess the impact of the programme, to the extent that this is feasible to discern in the time since the activities have been implemented
  - outline the main lessons learned in the delivery of this programme, and to make recommendations for the delivery of future similar programmes of work.
- 1.7 The Invitation to Tender (ITT) also establishes a set of research questions for each strand of activity within the programme. These are set out in 0.

**Table 1.1 Strand-specific research questions**

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#### **Strand 1: Leadership**

- Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to raise awareness of procurement and identify and disseminate best practice.
  - Have the activities under this strand been delivered as intended?
  - Has the target audience participated as intended?
-

- 
- What are the views of participants and other key stakeholders?
- 

### **Strand 2: Training Courses**

- Review the inputs and activities that have taken place under the short course programme to develop the procurement skills and capabilities of existing procurement staff.
  - Have the activities under the short course programme been delivered as intended?
  - Has the take-up of the short course programme been as successful as intended?
  - How successful has the short course programme been in developing skills and capabilities of existing staff?
  - What are the views of delegates of the short course programme?
  - What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?
  - How has the implementation of the recommendations following the mid-term evaluation review been taken forward?
- 

### **Strand 3: Trainee Procurement Executive Programme**

- Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to deliver the Trainee Procurement Executive Programme (TPEP).
  - Have the activities under TPEP been delivered as intended?
  - How successful has the process been for the trainees implementing what they have learnt in training into delivering projects?
  - What are the views of the TPEP students on the programme in terms of its delivery and benefits?
  - Have the inputs and activities lead to the desired results and outcomes over the short-term (identifying new talent for the procurement profession in Wales) and medium-term (progress of the graduates)?
  - What is the likelihood of achieving the intended long-term outcome – that the graduates will become the public service procurement leaders of the future?
  - What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?
-

- 
- How has the implementation of the recommendations following the mid-term evaluation review been taken forward?
- 

#### **Strand 4: Funding for e-procurement projects**

- Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to target change management and procurement management expertise in order to accelerate and expand the implementation of e-procurement
  - Have the activities to target expertise been delivered as intended?
  - Have the change management and procurement management experts been identified and reached as intended?
  - What are the views of the change management and procurement management experts that have participated in the e-procurement expansion?
  - How successful have these activities been in meeting intended outcomes?
  - What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?
  - How has the implementation of the recommendations following the mid-term evaluation review been taken forward?
- 

#### **Strand 5: Funding for innovation projects**

- Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to encourage innovation in public sector-procurement.
  - Have the activities been delivered as intended?
  - What are the views of those who have participated in the innovation initiatives?
  - How successful have these activities been in meeting intended outcomes?
- 

#### **Cross-cutting themes**

- Have the Participant Information form and Equal Opportunities form successfully captured relevant data required by the Welsh European Funding office (WEFO)?
  - What processes are in place for capturing the information received by the team from the above mentioned forms?
-



- 
- Has this information been utilised to measure the projects appropriate indicators?
- 

Source: Invitation to Tender

## Evaluation methodology

### *Key tasks*

- 1.8 This study has used a two-stage methodology. First, to develop the evaluation framework and the research tools a scoping stage of research was carried out which included:
- collection and analysis of programme documentation
  - assessment of the management information (MI) being collected (a list of documents and MI reviewed is in **Error! Reference source not found.**); and
  - scoping interviews with programme managers (3) to develop a more in depth understanding of the programme development and delivery.
- 1.9 Based on these scoping tasks, a logic model was produced for the entire programme which was used to develop an evaluation framework. This framework underpins the whole approach and informed all research tools. The logic model and evaluation framework are in 0.
- 1.10 Following agreement of the evaluation framework, the second stage commenced. The main research tasks were as follows:
- semi-structured telephone interviews with **17 procurement leads from a sample of Welsh public sector organisations**. Five interviewees were from local authorities, two from the NHS, five from Welsh government or its agencies, two from further or higher education, and three from other public services. Interviewees represented organisations across Wales including three from south west and mid-Wales, six from south and south east Wales, one from North Wales, and seven from organisations with a national scope. These interviews relate to all strands
  - a short e-survey distributed to **all beneficiaries of training in Strand 2** (for whom basic information such as an email address was available). The survey was distributed on the basis of the training course completed rather than the individual (so individuals who had completed more than one training course were asked to provide feedback on each course, rather than provide a composite view of all courses

undertaken). There were survey responses from 206 people in respect of 293 courses undertaken as part of strand 2. This represents nearly half (45 per cent) of those who received training in the second half of the programme (May 2013 – March 2015) for whom email addresses were available, and around one-third (32 per cent) of the courses undertaken in this time. The survey respondents are broadly representative of the population of training participants (e.g. gender, part of the public sector and whether they are in a specialist procurement role) – please see 0 for more details of the characteristics of the survey respondents. The achieved sample is accurate to 5 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level. This survey relates to strand 2<sup>3</sup>

- semi-structured telephone interviews with a **sample of 11 of the Strand 3 trainees**. Five interviewees were from cohort 1, two from cohort 2, three from cohort 3, and one from cohort 4. These interviews relate to Strand 3
- an additional **six of the Strand 3 trainees** provided responses to a set of questions emailed to them. In total 17 of the 28 Strand 3 trainees contributed (61 per cent). These survey responses relate to Strand 3
- interviews with the **current line manager or mentors** of the trainee. In total, nine of these interviews took place. These interviews relate to Strand 3
- short case studies on **three of the organisations which have received grants from HGT** to implement e-procurement or innovation projects (or in one case, both). These were undertaken in face-to-face visits. The case study sites were: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership; Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; and Swansea University. A **total of nine interviews** were conducted in the production of these case studies. These case studies relate to Strands 4 and 5
- telephone interviews with **five individuals involved in delivering various aspects of the programme**. These interviews cover all Strands
- telephone interviews with **four national stakeholders** with an interest in the wider policy area. These interviews cover all Strands

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<sup>3</sup> Beneficiaries attending meetings, workshops and other forums delivered within Strand 2 have not been surveyed. This is because the learning outcomes of such events are likely to be less discernible than the formal training courses delivered by Value Wales and contracted training providers.

- **analysis of the programme MI** to understand the main characteristics of the beneficiaries of Strands 2 and 3.
- 1.11 A full list of the organisations which have taken part and the topic guides for each research task are available in 0 and 0 respectively.
- 1.12 This study also builds on the mid-term evaluation<sup>4</sup>. The following steps have been taken:
- findings for Strands 2, 3, and 4, which were evaluated in the mid-term review are included in the final evaluation analysis. A comparison of the findings was undertaken, with key differences highlighted where possible
  - the Strand 2 survey in the final evaluation is based on the survey tool used for the mid-term evaluation, allowing some comparison of findings<sup>5</sup>.

#### *Methodological limitations*

- 1.13 There are three main limitations to this methodology which should be noted, although they do not compromise addressing the main research aims. These are as follows:
- the evaluation draws principally on qualitative evidence to make conclusions. In the main, this is sufficient to draw robust conclusions because of the number of interviews and the opportunities for triangulation (although it only allows a limited level of sub-sector analysis). However with Strands 4 and 5 in particular, due to their focus on particular organisations, only a limited level of triangulation is possible
  - the programme's profile in the Welsh public sector is dominated by TPEP and the training delivered in Strand 2 so it has been easier to obtain corroborative evidence of the benefits of these than the other strands. This is not necessarily surprising because the grants awarded in Strands 4 and 5 of the programme were targeted at particular organisations while some of the policy / strategy-level activities in

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<sup>4</sup> ICF GHK (2013), *Interim evaluation of Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent*. Available at: <http://gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/130722-interim-evaluation-transforming-procurement-through-home-grown-talent-en.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Comparison between the two surveys has to be treated with some care. In the mid-term survey, beneficiaries who had been on more than one course were asked to provide composite responses of their views on all the training they had received. In the final evaluation survey, responses were made on the basis of each course that was completed.

Strand 1 (such as the development of the Creative Procurement Forum) have been developed more recently

- it has not been possible to assess the additional impact of the HGT programme relative to a counterfactual / control group given that the programme has supported activities in local authority areas across Wales. This challenge was anticipated in the scoping phase, and an approach to assessing additionality qualitatively was adopted. In practice, this has involved asking interviewees to reflect on where they / their organisations might have been in the absence of the programme, how far they have progressed over the five year duration of the programme, and the extent to which this progress can be attributed to the programme relative to a range of other potential influences. These findings have been triangulated with views expressed in other research tasks in order to confirm them.

### **Structure of this report**

1.14 The remainder of this report is as follows:

- chapter 2 is a summary of the policy context in which the HGT programme was designed and has been implemented
- chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 present findings on Strands 1 – 5
- chapter 8 presents our conclusions, from addressing the evidence against the questions posed for the evaluation, and recommendations arising from these.

## **2. Background to the Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent programme**

- 2.1 This chapter describes the context in which the HGT programme was developed and implemented and sets out its rationale, objectives, funding and ESF targets. This chapter draws primarily on an analysis of programme documentation, and is supported by interviews across all the main fieldwork tasks.

### **Context of the programme and its rationale**

- 2.2 The Welsh Government, through the public services and agencies it funds, spends £5.5 billion a year on external goods and services.

“How we carry out this procurement, has a major impact on the value we gain from the expenditure and our ability to secure wider social, economic and environmental benefit for Wales”<sup>6</sup>.

- 2.3 In a context of tightening public sector budgets, in recent years the Welsh Government’s focus has intensified on how public organisations spend this money, and whether efficiencies and wider benefits can be found. Across Wales, and indeed the rest of the UK, there have been several reports outlining the challenges facing public sector procurement. In Wales, for example, the Simpson report<sup>7</sup>, which reviewed practices in local government, recommended developing greater collaboration and shared services at local, regional and national levels; developing the leadership capacity and culture of the procurement profession; and investing in the processes used for purchasing (in particular electronic solutions) to ensure that cost benefits could be realised.
- 2.4 Other reports have noted that there are significant skill and capacity issues to be addressed if purchasing is to be more cost effective<sup>8</sup>. Audit Scotland, for example, published a study which examined the impact of a set of activities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of activities to improve purchasing in the public sector. It found that the Scottish Government was taking several steps to improve skills in the area including: introducing a staff development programme, improving training opportunities with the Chartered Institute for Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), and introducing competency guidelines to help

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<sup>6</sup> E&I Procurement Taskforce (2011), *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-centred local services for Wales*

<sup>7</sup> Simpson, J (2011), *Local, Regional, National: What services are best delivered where?*

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Gershon, P (2004), *Releasing resources to the frontline: independent review of public sector efficiency*

public bodies to recruit staff in this area<sup>9</sup>. But identified that more had to be done for this to affect the bottom-line.

- 2.5 Much the same skill and capacity issues have been noted in Wales, and they are not new; since the Beecham Review, published in 2006, a common thread in public sector reform in Wales has been the need to enhance the efficiency and use of resources by public services. The Review reported that,

“Procurement and contracting skills are a key capacity constraint identified in the evidence.”<sup>10</sup>

- 2.6 However despite steps to improve procurement practices (including collaborations for purchasing in some sectors and for some types of goods and services, production of guidance to public services, and the development of the Welsh purchasing card), significant challenges remained in 2011. As reported by the Welsh Government’s Efficiency and Innovation Board<sup>11</sup>, there are:

- shortages of procurement specialists, particularly in local authorities
- weaknesses in drafting specifications and managing contracts; and
- overly complicated tendering processes which cost Welsh business £20 million per year, and act as a barrier to small enterprises.

- 2.7 The take-up of e-tools and use of xchangewales’ resources has been slow, and this has created a gap in capability between organisations that have invested in electronic solutions and those that have not. This gap reduces the likelihood of collaboration as well. It is also reported that:

“Procurement officers lack the influence, confidence, or position to challenge and drive change.”<sup>12</sup>

- 2.8 The McClelland Review of public procurement for the Welsh Government in 2012 highlighted many of the same problems. In a section on ‘procurement capability’, the Review examines the numbers of staff within designated procurement functions / departments, and the skill levels and professionalism of these staff. It concludes that against benchmarks developed in previous studies, in Wales “*there is a deficit in resources*”<sup>13</sup> in numerical terms

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<sup>9</sup> Audit Scotland (2009), *Improving public sector purchasing*, p. 28

<sup>10</sup> Beecham, J (2006), *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-centred local services for Wales*

<sup>11</sup> E&I Procurement Taskforce (2011), *Buying smarter in tougher times*

<sup>12</sup> E&I Procurement Taskforce (2011), *Buying smarter in tougher times*

<sup>13</sup> McClelland, J (2012), *Maximising the impact of Welsh procurement policy*, p. 29

(although this differs across the public sector<sup>14</sup>). In reviewing skill levels of staff, less than one-third of procurement staff in the public sector organisations in Wales were found to be members of CIPS (and not all members are fully qualified). The Review concluded that the position of the procurement function in relation to Chief Executives / Heads of Finance in public sector organisations has a significant impact on its effectiveness. In Wales, this position is variable.

- 2.9 Interviews with senior procurement leads found a high degree of agreement with the main policy documents on the challenges facing the procurement profession in the Welsh public sector. Most commonly these interviewees felt there was a skills shortage in the profession. For example, two interviewees reported that they have recently tried to recruit mid-level procurement officers but struggled to find suitable applicants.
- 2.10 A second very common theme to emerge from these interviews was that there are perceived to be skills gaps (in new applicants and the existing workforce), particularly in relation to a (broadly-defined) set of commercial skills, including contract management, post-tender negotiation, and using procurement for the achievement of broader strategic aims. Such gaps on occasions are filled by consultants.
- 2.11 The Welsh Government's response to the McClelland Review in December 2012 was a Wales Procurement Policy Statement which established nine principles to be adopted. This includes setting the status of procurement as being "*a strategic corporate function*" that is "*professionally resourced*" (with the adoption of the benchmark suggested in the McClelland Review of one procurement professional per £10 million of spending).
- 2.12 The Statement also set out the importance of collaboration, where possible:
- "Areas of common expenditure should be addressed collectively using standardised approaches and specifications to reduce duplication, to get the best response from the market, to embed best practice; and to share resources and expertise."<sup>15</sup>
- 2.13 The role of procurement in generating community benefit was also highlighted; the policy states that this should be an "*integral consideration in procurement*."

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<sup>14</sup> McClelland reported that the health services and the FE and HE sectors are the best resourced in terms of numbers of procurement staff relative to spend, whereas Value Wales and the local authorities are under-resourced.

<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government (2012), *Maximising the Impact of Welsh Procurement Policy - Wales Procurement Policy Statement*

2.14 The wider role of public procurement functions in helping to achieve strategic goals is also illustrated in 2013's Innovation Wales strategy. For example, Value Wales (which is the Welsh Government's procurement arm) is tasked with raising:

“Welsh public sector awareness of the scope to use innovative procurement to improve outcomes.”

2.15 It is clear, therefore, that since the inception of the HGT programme, the expectations of public sector procurement teams have grown alongside the policy strategy evident in the ambitions of the Welsh procurement policy statement and the establishment of the new National Procurement Service (NPS) for Wales.

2.16 In addition to HGT, a set of other complementary initiatives have been implemented by Value Wales in order to drive up standards in procurement within the public sector across Wales. Most significant to this evaluation are the following.

- procurement fitness checks of public sector organisations. In the response to the McClelland review, the Welsh Government committed to reintroduce capability assessments (or 'fitness checks') of all public sector organisations. This work has been completed for Welsh local authorities and is underway for Welsh NHS organisations. Each local authority was assessed against the Welsh Government Capability Model which included the following: procurement leadership and governance; procurement strategy and objectives; defining the supply need; commodity strategies and collaborative procurement; contract and supplier management; key purchasing processes and systems; people; and, performance management. On completion, each public sector organisation receives an individual report and set of recommendations for improving practice, as well as a set of suggested training activities delivered by the consortium delivering the Strand 2 training (led by SBV Ltd)
- competency framework. The development of a framework setting out the skills and competences required of procurement staff across Wales has been a long-term goal for Value Wales. A draft competency framework has been developed which sets out the five key skill areas for procurement professionals. These are: strategy and context of procurement; procurement and supply processes; supplier management; category management; and market management. Each of the skill areas is mapped against four levels of competence with the



specific aptitudes that an individual at this level should exhibit against each skill area. While not yet complete, the competency framework has been used to design the further programme of training funded by the HGT programme through Strand 2. Indeed the organisation delivering this training – SBV Ltd – has been involved in the design of the competency framework

- continued funding of professional and post-graduate qualifications. Value Wales funds CIPS programmes for staff working in the Welsh public sector each year. There is also funding available for Masters programmes at the University of South Wales.

### **Design and development of the programme**

2.17 Value Wales submitted its proposal for funding the HGT programme to increase the capacity and capability of procurement specialists in 2010. It fits with the Convergence Area's ESF programme's Priority 4. Priority 4 aims: *"To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services in the region"* and has two themes which are to:

- transform public services through more effective collaborative working: this theme aims to redesign public services to make them more efficient, effective and responsive to the communities they serve. Supporting collaborative procurement is a central part of this theme, including encouraging electronic procurement solutions, as is implementing sustainable procurement practices
- build the capacity of public service sectors to deliver higher quality services: this theme aims to develop the skills and capacity of the public service workforce. This includes addressing skills gaps, developing the skills of leaders and managers, and strengthening the capacity of social partners<sup>16</sup>.

2.18 The updated Business Plan for the HGT programme outlines that it aims to support the work of the Welsh Government's Public Service Leadership Group, the Procurement Board, and address several of the issues raised in the McClelland report around capacity and effectiveness<sup>17</sup>.

2.19 The programme is designed around five strands, the main activities of which are described in 0, as well as the logic model in Annex 2, which both highlight how each strand is designed as a solution to the challenges identified.

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<sup>16</sup> Welsh Assembly Government (2009), *European Structural Funds 2007-2013 Strategic Framework: Modernising and Improving the Quality of our Public Services (Making the Connections)*, p. 4 - 5

<sup>17</sup> Updated version of the Project Business Plan – 14 March 2013.

2.20 Stakeholders and senior procurement leads generally considered that, in broad terms, HGT had adapted to the changing context and that the most substantial investments – Strands 2, 3 and 4 – retain a good fit with ongoing challenges and key policy drivers. For example, they generally said that Strand 2 resources used to train specialist procurement staff were a particularly useful resource in the context of most public sector training organisations having very limited resources to invest in and source the specialist training of these staff. Similarly, the investments made by Strand 4 in supporting e-procurement were in line with wider policy to use this method to drive more collaborative and efficient procurement. Interviewees also recognised a good fit between the main recommendations of the McClelland Review and the design of HGT. A few interviewees questioned some of the key findings of this Review (such as the procurement professionals per pounds spent ratios).

**Figure 2.1 Aims and main activities of each strand**



### Programme targets

- 2.21 In the early stages of the programme, HGT agreed a set of targets with WEFO. 0 details these targets and the outputs achieved, as well as the progress made against them at the mid-term evaluation.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 2.1 HGT programme targets<sup>19</sup>**

<b>ESF Priority 4 Indicators</b>	<b>Targets for HGT programme</b>	<b>Progress at the mid-term evaluation</b>	<b>Progress at final-term evaluation</b>	<b>Variation against the target</b>
<b>Outputs</b>				
Total participants (employed)	1,396	328	823	<b>- 591<sup>20</sup></b>
Female participants – Strand 2	52 per cent	57 per cent	51 per cent	<b>- 1 per cent</b>
Key intervention group (Strand 2): <i>Public service managers</i>	50 per cent	<i>Unknown</i>	Unknown <sup>21</sup>	-
<i>Public service workforce</i>	50 per cent			
Dissemination initiatives <sup>22</sup>	20	4	20	<b>0</b>
Employers assisted or financially supported (through the Strand 3 placements) <sup>23</sup>	68	75	75	<b>+7</b>
Projects delivering 1 specialist training in sustainable		0	1	<b>0</b>

<sup>18</sup> These data were provided on 28 April 2015.

<sup>19</sup> The mid-term data were taken from the mid-term evaluation report.

<sup>20</sup> This deliverable relates to the number of different staff who have received training and attended workshops and meetings. Programme management has explained that the variation against this target is a result of an initial misapprehension that the programme did not have to collect Participant Information Forms and Equal Opportunities Forms from those who attended training.

<sup>21</sup> The programme team has not captured data relating to the separation between managers and workforce level

<sup>22</sup> This includes the 'Open for Business' events which Value Wales are running, and the meetings of the 'Corporate Procurement Steering Group' which includes the Heads of Procurement from all public sector organisations in Wales.

<sup>23</sup> This is the number of employers that have benefited from the HGT programme (all strands).

<b>ESF Priority 4 Indicators</b>	<b>Targets for HGT programme</b>	<b>Progress at the mid-term evaluation</b>	<b>Progress at final-term evaluation</b>	<b>Variation against the target</b>
development (this programme as a whole)				
<b>Results</b>				
Collaborative agreements between public service bodies <sup>24</sup>	10	0	10	<b>0</b>
Sub-regional workforce planning & development strategies (this programme as a whole)	1	0	1	<b>0</b>
Organisational learning and development strategies (this programme as a whole)	1	0	1	<b>0</b>
Participants completing courses - Employed <sup>25</sup>	1,047	743	1,544	<b>497</b>
Key intervention groups:				
<i>Public service managers</i>	<i>50 per cent</i>	Unknown	Unknown	-
<i>Public service workforce</i>	<i>50 per cent</i>	Unknown	Unknown <sup>26</sup>	-
<i>Female participants</i>	<i>52 per cent</i>		51 percent	<b>-1 per cent</b>
Secondment placements	72	29	65	<b>-7</b>

Source: Programme database

<sup>24</sup> Some of the projects being delivered by Strand 3 trainees aim to develop collaborative agreements between public sector organisations (usually a framework contract).

<sup>25</sup> WEFO has agreed that this deliverable relates to the overall number of training courses, workshops and meetings undertaken.

<sup>26</sup> The programme team has not captured data relating to the separation between managers and workforce level.

2.22 Particular organisations and groups of staff are eligible for this programme. These are:

- all public service organisations within the Convergence area in Wales<sup>27</sup>
- quasi-public sector organisations such as registered social landlords, third sector organisations which receive substantial public funds, and social enterprises operating under public procurement regulations
- public service leaders, including senior managers
- public service workers at all levels; and
- talented people who can be trained to provide future leadership in public service procurement.

### **Summary points**

2.23 This chapter has found that:

- improving procurement is a key issue for public services in Wales and underpins progress towards greater collaboration and shared services as well as increasing value for money and providing efficiencies and economies
- it has been recognised that skills gaps and shortages exist in procurement within the public sector. These are reported to be particularly acute in relation to commercial skills including post-tender negotiation and contract management. The position of the procurement function within public sector organisations across Wales is also reported to be variable. It is often not resourced or situated in a way to support the achievement of organisations' strategic aims
- the design of HGT was informed by these and other contextual factors. It was expected to address these challenges through the delivery of five project strands. These include activity to:
  - raise the profile of procurement among senior public sector leaders and link the function more closely to strategic objectives
  - deliver short courses in a range of key procurement-related topics to public sector workers

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<sup>27</sup> The business case for the programme highlights that eligibility extends to anyone undertaking activity which benefits the Convergence area. Given the far-reaching potential influence of procurement functions, this means that all public sector organisations in Wales are relevant. However, in applying for support from the programme, non-Convergence area organisations must clarify how the support will benefit the Convergence area.

- initiate a development programme for new entrants to the procurement profession
  - make funds available to public sector organisations to develop their e-procurement capabilities; and
  - make funds available to public sector organisations to pilot new approaches to procurement challenges
- the HGT programme has a set of agreed targets with WEFO which includes the number of existing procurement staff the programme will support, the number of employers that will be supported in other ways, and the number of collaborative agreements made between public service bodies. The programme has not achieved the target for total number of participants. This is reported by the programme team to be a result of a misconception at the point that targets were agreed, about the requirements of collecting participant data from the training participants
- at the same time as the HGT programme, several other contextual changes have taken place. These include the establishment of the new National Procurement Service in Wales, procurement fitness checks of public sector organisations, and the development of a competency framework setting out the skills required of procurement staff across Wales.

### 3. Strand 1: Leadership

- 3.1 This chapter presents findings on the rationale and main activities of Strand 1, before presenting analysis of the main outputs and outcomes it has generated to date. It draws on an analysis of programme MI, interviews with delivery partners, heads of procurement and national stakeholders.

#### **Rationale, development and outputs of Strand 1**

- 3.2 Strand 1 of HGT began in early 2014. Along with Strand 5 it was one of the final sets of activities to be implemented by the HGT programme team. In total, it has provided £587,000 for a range of activities.
- 3.3 The aim of the Strand was set out in its business case. Applicants for funding for initiatives delivered under this Strand must demonstrate how they: *“Raise awareness of the benefits of investing in professional procurement.”*<sup>28</sup> This aim stems from the perception that procurement professionals are often not in a strategically influential position within public sector organisations. This was reported by most heads of procurement interviewed. Typical comments included:
- “What department should it [procurement] sit in? It’s often not clear” and,  
“There is a need to get procurement recognised at senior levels for the value it can bring to the organisation.”
- 3.4 The public spending reductions taking place were thought to have heightened this challenge. But an interviewee from a local authority felt that cuts in expenditure have reduced opportunities for more imaginative or innovative procurement practices to develop, and for the function to extend into new areas.
- 3.5 Responding to the aim of raising awareness, the programme set out to design a set of initiatives which bring together stakeholders with an interest in public sector procurement to raise the profile of the function among senior public sector leaders. These initiatives are the:
- Creative Procurement Forum
  - Best Practice Academy
  - production of a guidance document on joint bidding
  - procurement week and procurement awards; and

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<sup>28</sup> Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent: Business case in support of application for funding awareness raising initiatives



- awareness raising breakfasts for senior public sector executives.

### *Creative Procurement Forum*

- 3.6 The Creative Procurement Forum (CPF) brings together three Welsh universities which were reported to have “*international standing*” in the area of procurement practice (Bangor University, Cardiff University and the University of South Wales) with policy makers from the Welsh Government (presented by Value Wales).
- 3.7 The CPF describes that its aim is to:
- “To champion the national significance of procurement and commend best practice in Wales: pursuing excellence in research and procurement practices; promoting procurement as a profession of choice; helping position Wales as a Centre of Competence for procurement.”
- 3.8 Interviewees also outlined that one of the underlying aims of the CPF was to encourage the universities in Wales to coordinate their activities (particularly in relation to research) more.
- 3.9 The CPF is facilitated by Value Wales using resources from the HGT programme. Programme stakeholders reported that the CPF has set itself a set of activities which map closely to the recommendations of the McClelland Report. This includes the establishment of the Procurement Best Practice Academy, and leading on the Procurement Week and Procurement Awards initiatives.
- 3.10 In addition to these initiatives, interviewees identified that the main output of this work so far is the development of a list of around 30 policy-focused research questions mapped against Welsh Government policy priorities which are being researched by postgraduate students working in this area (with Value Wales funding being used to support these students, rather than HGT funding). Dissertations addressing these questions are currently underway with the first due to be completed in 2015. In order to capitalise on the academic expertise in procurement in Wales, each university is supervising research in their particular expert areas.

### *Procurement Best Practice Academy*

- 3.11 The Procurement Best Practice Academy (PBPA) was a long-standing idea which academics and policy makers in this area were unable to act on owing to a lack of resources to fund its set-up. The Academy has received around £20,000 per year from HGT to fund its set up and management with the

Academy starting in January 2014. It is based in the University of South Wales.

- 3.12 The principles informing the PBPA were described by one interviewee involved in the initiative as:

“Academics get practice-informed research, while practitioners get access to more evidence based research.”

- 3.13 The Academy has undertaken two main activities so far towards achieving this principle:

- collecting examples of good practice in procurement from organisations around the UK, to develop and share them with others who may be able to benefit
- developing a network of members formed by an annual intake of ‘fellows’ who have demonstrated an area of expertise. There are currently 24 such fellows. By developing this ‘community of practice’ the Academy aims to provide expertise and consultancy support as well as enhance the quality of research taking place in relation to procurement.

*Guidance document on joint bidding*

- 3.14 Given the predominance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in Wales, ensuring that public contracts (including larger opportunities) are accessible to these organisations, is a key policy goal for the Welsh Government. HGT has funded the development of a guidance document on joint bidding which is targeted at both public sector buyers and suppliers. The aim of the activity is to support the wider work of Value Wales in policy development in the area.
- 3.15 The guidance aims to provide practical advice for buyers to write specifications which are more accessible to bids by consortia and to support suppliers in preparing joint bids for public contracts. The guidance includes an emphasis on buyers engaging with their markets prior to advertisement and ensuring that larger contracts are broken into smaller lots where practicable. These messages are consistent with wider Welsh Government policy. The project was led by a Value Wales project manager. The document was written by an external contractor.
- 3.16 The guidance was launched by the Welsh Government in November 2013 and is available online. Value Wales does not have data on the use of the guidance, by either buyers in the public sector or suppliers at this stage.

However the team has also been funded by HGT to develop demonstration projects to provide illustrative material of the potential benefit of the guidance document, and develop learning on how to engage SMEs in collaborative bidding to the public sector.

- 3.17 An external provider – ServQ – has been contracted to work with both suppliers (to support them to use the guidance to ensure the opportunity is accessible and appropriate for joint bidders) and potential SME providers (to support them to prepare appropriate responses) on 14 large public sector contracts. These contracts are worth a total of £750 million and cover a range of commodities and services markets.

#### *Procurement Week and Procurement Awards*

- 3.18 The aim of Procurement Week is to bring together experts from around the world to explore common challenges facing public sector procurement and engage an audience of practitioners. It began in 2012, and in its first two years, it took place at Bangor University. In 2014 and 2015, the initiative has received funding from the HGT programme which interviewees report has enabled the event to expand (and which has also necessitated a move to Cardiff).
- 3.19 Data provided by Bangor University state that there were over 800 attendances at the most recent Procurement Week and at the Procurement Awards (in 2015); 123 of the attendances were from foreign guests. No data have been provided on the total number of individual attendees, although this is likely to be substantially less, as interviewees identified that individual attendees often attended on more than one day (and also because the capacity of the venue was reported to be around 120).
- 3.20 Interviewees identified that the most recent Procurement Week programme included activities of relevance to the wider HGT programme and Value Wales's policy agenda. This included sessions on training the procurer of the future, EU procurement law and innovation in procurement.
- 3.21 The HGT programme has also funded the annual Procurement Awards which have taken place since 2013. The awards take place at the end of Procurement Week. The aim of the Awards was described as celebrating high achievement and innovation in public sector procurement in Wales.
- 3.22 Nominations were made by employers and shortlisted by a panel of judges from academia, the public sector, and private sector employers. 0 outlines the nominations at the 2015 event. It shows that there were a total of 37 nominations and that these were primarily from public sector organisations (24

of the nominations, about two thirds of the total). Nominations were also made by private sector organisations (11 nominations) and housing associations (two nominations).

**Table 3.1 Procurement Awards 2015 nominations**

<b>Award</b>	<b>No. of nominations (and sector)</b>
Innovation through Procurement award	3 (all public sector)
Corporate Social Responsibility award	3 (two private sector organisations, and one housing association)
E-procurement award	5 (all public sector)
Supplier of the Year award	3 (all private sector)
Most Progressive Public Procurement Organisation award	4 (all public sector)
Most Improved Supplier in Tendering award	2 (both private sector)
Young Professional of the Year award	4 (all NHS)
Procurement Collaboration award	5 (all public sector)
Community Benefits award	5 (3 private sector; 1 public sector; 1 housing association)
Outstanding contribution award	3 (2 public sector; 1 private sector)

Source: Programme data

#### *Awareness raising breakfasts for senior public sector executives*

- 3.23 The programme team originally aimed to deliver a set of awareness raising breakfast meetings for senior executives of public sector organisations. This part of the programme has not taken place. It was reported that this was because of a low level of interest from the target audience who have numerous competing demands on their time, and is a reflection of the generally low standing of procurement among the target group.

#### **Outcomes of Strand 1**

- 3.24 Given the more recent development and delivery of much of the activity carried out in Strand 1, interviewees were only able to highlight early outcomes of the work which has been undertaken and provide views on their added value.

*Creative Procurement Forum (CPF) and Procurement Best Practice Academy*

3.25 The CPF has been identified by some interviewees as a key legacy of the programme. It was reported that so far this Forum has:

- brought together expertise in procurement in higher education institutions across Wales, to coordinate their activities and resources more effectively (institutions which are otherwise competing for students and funding)
- capitalised on the reported strength of academia in procurement in Wales which was identified as having a particularly strong record of internationally-renowned research
- encouraged policy makers and academic experts to work more closely together. This is most evident in the use of Masters students' dissertations to conduct highly applied and focused pieces of research on the implementation of Welsh Government policy; and
- (in so doing) contributed to making the profession appear more attractive through engaging the Masters students in policy questions.

3.26 These achievements are thought to be consistent with an initiative of this nature at this relatively early stage of its development.

3.27 Interviewees reported that in the future they expected the Forum to improve policy development and implementation in the area. They also envisage that the Forum can go on to provide policy makers with an inexpensive source of consultancy and research support extending the use of this sort of research to parts of policy which otherwise would not receive this support. For example, interviewees outlined that the resource has been used to evaluate aspects of the procurement fitness check programme. The CPF also aims to reduce Welsh Government spending on consultancy fees from external organisations (although this is largely a by-product of this work, rather than its main aim).

3.28 Other interviewees envisaged a future role for the CPF as a:

“Think tank... a way of getting and sharing ideas” and “a means of making academia part of the fabric of policy making”.

3.29 There is also thought to be scope for the CPF to expand in future. For example, the best dissertations may be converted into PhD theses thereby increasing the depth of the research being undertaken.

3.30 However interviewees also commented that it was important that the CPF does not become “*too inward focussed*.” This was thought to be a potential risk as it develops, which would reduce its potential longer-term value to the

sector. Similarly, there is a risk that the research being undertaken through the CPF is not used in a systematic manner. Interviewees outlined that the initial research questions were derived from the policy agenda led by Value Wales. If the process is repeated, it will be necessary for this to continue to reflect the changed policy agenda.

- 3.31 Some evidence was provided of the outcomes generated by the Procurement Best Practice Academy at this stage in its development. These relate mainly to how the Academy has linked up with other Welsh Government activities. For example, the procurement fitness checks identified a weakness in one local authority in relation to the implementation of community benefit policies. Based on the findings of this assessment, one of the Academy's fellows was referred to the local authority to provide them with advice; the fellow was an expert in this issue. In general, though, it was unclear how systematic this process of dissemination was.

*Joint bidding guidance document*

- 3.32 The joint bidding guidance document is reported by stakeholders from Value Wales to have contributed to raising the profile of SMEs' access to public contracts in the last few years. An example of this raised profile is that following completion of the guidance document, a new steering group which monitors joint bidding in the public sector, was established. The group meets every two months and includes heads of procurement from the public sector, academics, supplier representatives, and policy makers. This steering group meeting has "*grown in momentum*" and interviewees attribute this partially to the development of the guidance document. It was also reported that

"The work helps with our [Wales'] reputation of working innovatively to solve major structural problems in public sector procurement".

- 3.33 Stakeholders also reported that the demonstration projects have begun to provide evidence of positive outcomes for SMEs with three of the demonstration projects so far attracting bids from consortia. One of these is setting up a framework agreement worth £125 million over two years for sourcing liquid fuel led by the NPS. A joint bid was submitted and ServQ has been advising the buyers on shaping their bid. Each of the demonstration projects has provided learning for the team, which will shape future activity in this area. For example, an NPS framework for car hire worth £20 million ended without any joint bids. After assessment the team reported that this was likely to be a result of an overly granular lotting strategy, by region and car type which meant there was limited economic advantage to joint bidding. The

steering group for joint bidding also aims to ensure that these sorts of lessons are not lost.

- 3.34 Interviewees believed that the programme funding was crucial to this piece of work. Without it, the document would not have been produced. The project required the funding to hire an external provider to undertake much of the research and drafting.

#### *Procurement Week*

- 3.35 A few senior procurement leads considered that Procurement Week had contributed to an increase in the profile of procurement, although they were unable to provide evidence of how this has translated into tangible responses from senior public sector leaders or interest and motivation in the sector.
- 3.36 Procurement Week was seen as an excellent example of “*Showcasing best practice widely*”, particularly through the procurement awards. The international element of the event was also seen as being of value, increasing the mix of good practice examples that were presented and raising the profile of Welsh procurement practice.

#### *Longer-term outcomes of Strand 1 activities*

- 3.37 Despite the emerging evidence that the activities funded in this part of the programme are starting to generate some of the expected short-term outcomes, few senior procurement leads were able to report that these had yet translated into the longer-term goal of enhancing the position of procurement staff within public sector organisations. This is perhaps to be expected given the likely cumulative and long-term nature of the impact of these sorts of actions. There is also difficulty in attributing benefit to particular actions given the range of other potential factors (including other strands of HGT) which may influence outcomes of this nature. Senior procurement leads recognised these difficulties.
- 3.38 However several interviewees perceived that the status of procurement teams / functions within public sector organisations has improved over the period in which HGT has been delivered. While this view was certainly not universal, evidence supporting this was cited by individuals working across the public sector. This included examples of procurement functions in public sector organisations which have:
- integrated more closely with finance and legal functions which have a higher organisational profile and close engagement in large scale and innovative procurement

- grown in status as a result of greater collaborative procurement in certain parts of the public sector (for example, the police)
- leaders who have become members of senior management teams; and
- used major procurement exercises to make the case for involvement in the future leadership of activities to achieve their organisations' strategic goals.

3.39 Rather than the activities funded through Strand 1 being the primary contributor to these outcomes (at this stage), a set of other contextual factors which had contributed to this were identified. The most common factor cited was that a growing political focus on the role of procurement teams / functions as a tool for achieving wider Welsh Government policy aims (such as community benefits, enablement of SMEs, and saving money) had been most influential in raising the profile of the profession. For example, several interviewees suggested that the Welsh Government's Ministerial statement on the impact of procurement policy had raised the profile of procurement. A typical comment was:

“There has been a greater acceptance that procurement is not simply a back office function. This has come from the top”

3.40 Strand 3 of the programme – which was the most high profile area of work – was also identified as a factor which had focused attention on procurement. The fact that a cohort of trainees had been funded and placed in public sector organisations across much of Wales had raised awareness of procurement as a profession, the skills shortage that many interviewees identified, and the need for these staff to move towards leadership positions. This viewpoint was summarised by one senior procurement lead:

“[TPEP has] Given procurement a higher status and made it much more of a profession than how it has been perceived in the past and this change in perception of the procurement profession will attract the best young talent.”

3.41 However it was also felt by a few interviewees that the limited extent to which Strand 1's activities have engaged stakeholders beyond the traditional procurement community had reduced its potential impact. In this context, the failure to host many meetings or engagement events with people from outside this profession – such as chief executives and service directors who were supposed to be invited to awareness raising breakfast meetings – may limit future impact.



## Summary points

3.42 This chapter has found that:

- strand 1 was one of the final sets of activities to be implemented by the HGT programme. It has used £587,000 for several different activities
- the business case for this Strand sets out a clear case for intervention. This is to raise awareness of the wider benefits that procurement can bring to organisations, and to generally raise the profile of the profession. In reality, the Strand has also been used to attempt to address some of the policy implementation challenges facing the policy area
- the activities delivered have sought to contribute to these aims but also appear to address some of the policy implementation challenges faced to improve procurement practice
  - the Creative Procurement Forum, which brings together three Welsh universities with a teaching and research background in this area with policy makers from the Welsh Government to “champion the national significance of procurement and commend best practice in Wales”. The Forum has been reported to have provided leadership to some of the other Strand 1 activities (described below). The main output of the Forum to date has been the development of around 30 applied research projects focused on policy issues identified by the Welsh Government and carried out by Masters’ students. As yet these are not complete and how they will be used is unclear so their value cannot be assessed
  - the Procurement Best Practice Academy has been supported by HGT to collect examples of good practice in procurement from organisations around the UK, and to develop and share them with other, primarily public sector, organisations that may benefit from them. The Academy has also developed a network of ‘fellows’ who demonstrate expertise in a particular area who can assist/advise public sector procurement activities
  - the development and publication of a guidance document on joint bidding to support SMEs to bid in consortia for public contracts. It also seeks to advise public sector buyers on the best way to structure contracts and tendering exercises to encourage bids

from such consortia. A set of pilot projects to test the guidance and develop case studies of its usage have also been funded

- the expansion of Procurement Week and introduction of the Procurement Awards have been supported by HGT. The former seeks to bring together procurement experts from Wales, the UK and abroad to network. There were around 800 attendances at the most recent event in Cardiff in 2015. The Procurement Awards were established to recognise high achievement by individuals and organisations in the field and provide a means of publicising these. At the most recent event, there were 37 nominations made (primarily from public sector organisations) across ten awards
- HGT originally planned to deliver a series of awareness raising breakfasts for senior executives of public sector organisations. These have not taken place because there did not appear to be an appetite for this type of activity from the target audience
- there is evidence of some early outcomes of the Strand 1 activities reported by interviewees:
  - the CPF has brought together expertise in higher education and coordinated research activities more effectively; its achievements at this stage are thought to be consistent with an initiative of this sort at this stage of development
  - activities linked to the joint bidding guidance have led to a greater focus on increasing SMEs engagement in large scale contracts and learning from the experience. The demonstration projects which have taken place so far have also started to attract (and award) contracts to joint bids
  - procurement Week and the Procurement Awards are generally seen as a good ways of showcasing best practice more widely and providing learning for procurement specialists
- however, across this Strand, there are areas where the evidence of outcomes achieved at this stage is patchy. This includes the dissemination of the outputs of the PBPA, the likely future impact of the research being undertaken through the CPF and whether any alternative activities were undertaken instead of the awareness raising breakfasts

- interviewees have reported that the activities could only have happened at this stage with financial support from the programme. They are likely to continue without it
- there is a widely-held perception, with some indicators cited by several interviewees, that the position of procurement functions and specialists in the public sector has improved over the lifetime of the programme. Key contextual factors are thought to have been the primary contributor to this, including an increased political focus on the value of procurement in achieving efficiency savings.

## **4. Strand 2: Training courses**

- 4.1 This chapter outlines the findings about Strand 2 of this programme. First, it presents a summary of the development and management of the training delivered under this Strand over the course of the programme and an analysis of the training offered. Second, based on a review of programme MI, it presents an analysis of the beneficiaries who have received training or attended workshops throughout the course of this programme. Third, it presents findings from a survey sent to all Strand 2 beneficiaries who have received training since the mid-term evaluation. This survey included questions on the delivery of the training and how it could be improved, why people took part, any impact the training has had on their knowledge and skills, and what impact this has had in the workplace. It is based on a similar survey distributed to Strand 2 beneficiaries of training and workshops undertaken as part of the mid-term evaluation. The chapter also draws on findings from the HGT programme's own training evaluation form distributed to beneficiaries on completion of the training between April 2014 and May 2015.

### **Development and management of the training and workshops**

- 4.2 Strand 2 has spent £971,000 on delivering mixture of training courses, workshops and meetings. The delivery of this Strand can be broadly divided into two stages, demarcated by re-tendering the training course programme midway through the programme which led to a new provider being appointed.
- 4.3 In the early part of the programme, staff in all public sector organisations in the Convergence area, along with organisations based outside this area that undertake work which benefits the Convergence area were eligible to participate. There were three types of training opportunity offered:
- a programme of short courses<sup>29</sup> delivered by PMMS. This training organisation had held a contract with Value Wales to offer training opportunities to Welsh public sector organisations since 2003
  - a programme of courses<sup>30</sup> developed by Value Wales' policy team which focused on topics of particular relevance to the Welsh public sector procurement workforce not covered by PMMS

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<sup>29</sup> The following courses are part of this programme: Commercial Awareness; Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) 2006 regulations; Conducting a Competitive Dialogue; Contract Management (offered over 1 or 2 days); EU Procurement Directives – Introduction to the 2004 Public Sector Directive and EU Compliant Supplier Selection & Contract Award; Exploring Terms & Conditions; Frameworks & Mini Competitions; Introduction to Procurement Course; Supply Chain Management (1 day); Procurement Policy; Specification Writing; Evaluation; Construction training, NHS Differences training; Introduction to Negotiation.

- any meetings involving public sector procurement staff at which collaborative procurement (which would be of benefit to the Convergence area) was discussed. In total, 40 different types of meetings were claimed.
- 4.4 The programme advertised the training opportunities using the “*usual routes*” of the weekly bulletin which is circulated around Welsh public sector staff and the sell2wales website. Heads of Procurement at all Welsh public sector organisations were also contacted by Value Wales and asked to suggest staff members to sign up to the training. The programme originally intended to offer only the PMMS short course programme. However at an early stage, it became clear that these courses were not being taken up to the expected level. This is thought to be because most public sector organisations had already accessed them before the HGT programme began. The mid-term evaluation found that awareness of the training available was quite low.
- 4.5 The contract for delivering training under Strand 2 was re-let in 2013 and a new provider – Strictly Best Value (SBV) Ltd – was appointed to lead a consortium of three training organisations, including one based in Wales. Following their appointment, the consortium developed a programme of courses in collaboration with Value Wales<sup>31</sup>. Once this was agreed, the team was then responsible for recruiting learners. However it was also noted that Value Wales played a large part in administering and recruiting to the training.
- 4.6 Most senior procurement leads were aware of the programme which suggests that the training was quite well-advertised and was of an appropriate content to interest the existing workforce. They generally commented that they were supportive of its goals and allowed their staff to attend the courses.
- 4.7 Throughout the programme all courses were offered in Welsh. Ability to deliver in Welsh was a key requirement for contractors, and all programme materials were offered in Welsh. Programme M1 shows that none of the training was delivered in Welsh. It is unclear if this is a result of a lack of demand or the promotion of the availability of Welsh medium courses.

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<sup>30</sup> A total of 24 Value Wales-designed short courses were delivered under Strand 2 covering the following topics: Community benefits; Supplier Qualification Information Database; training in other Welsh government specific e-procurement tools; public procurement and Welsh language.

<sup>31</sup> The following courses were delivered by the consortium led by SBV as part of the programme: Category Management Training, Introduction to EU Directives and Awareness of changes, Introduction to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement, Advanced to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement, Contract Management, Specification Writing, TUPE and Procurement, Negotiation, Competency Frameworks (use of), Developing Strategies for Commissioning, Category Management and Sourcing, Equalities and Diversity in Procurement, Preparing Business Cases, Procurement Awareness, Preparing for the New EU Directives, Strategic Sourcing, Specification Writing, EU Procurement Directive Training, Finance for the Procurement Officer, Developing Sourcing Strategies, Market Awareness, Analysis and Development, SQulD training, Stakeholder Relationships

## **Courses and attendance**

4.8 A complete list of the courses, workshops and meetings can be found in 0 with the number of eligible attendees at each. It shows that across the HGT programme:

- a varied range of training courses were available which cover the expected range of knowledge and skills needed for most stages of procurement, with some focusing more on knowledge than skills and vice versa
- the meetings and workshops cover working/project groups, forums, discussion groups, user groups and one to ones. It is not possible to discern from the titles to what extent these would each provide relevant knowledge and skills or contribute to collaborative procurement; and
- Value Wales, as the shaper of much of the relevant policy in Welsh procurement, has played a key role in delivering much of the training within the programme. This included courses specific to the Welsh context on community benefits, the Invest to Save fund, and SQUID.

4.9 The tabulation in 0 also illustrates that there are two distinct halves to the programme, defined by the change in provider to SBV from PMMS. 0 summarises the Strand 2 training activity delivered across the programme. It shows that:

- activity in the second half has been greater than in the first half. There were over three times the number of attendances in the second half of the programme than the first
- Value Wales had a substantial part to play in both parts of the programme, making up around 17 per cent of the courses
- the contracted providers made up around 38 per cent of provision
- meetings, workshops and other forms of awareness raising (i.e. non-formal/informal training) formed a substantial proportion of the programme and have been counted towards the ESF target (as they were in the mid-term evaluation).

**Table 4.1 Summary of the training activity delivered across the programme<sup>32</sup>**

<b>Phase of programme</b>	<b>Outputs delivered</b>
Pre-May 2013; lead provider PMMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 short training courses available, delivered by PMMS, These courses had a total of 309 attendances.</li> <li>• 27 short training courses available, delivered by Value Wales. These courses had a total of 361 attendances.</li> <li>• 40 different meetings with 689 attendances.</li> <li>• total attendances in this part of the programme were 1,359.</li> </ul>
Post-May 2013; lead provider SBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 short training courses available delivered by SBV. These courses had a total of 1,466 attendances between May 2013 and April 2015.</li> <li>• 15 short training courses available delivered by Value Wales. These courses had a total of 419 attendances between May 2013 and April 2015.</li> <li>• 58 different types of meeting, workshop, focus group and forum. There were 1,444 attendances between May 2013 and April 2015.</li> <li>• total attendances in this part of the programme were 3,329.</li> </ul>
Totals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• across the whole programme, the project database shows that a total of 4,688 attendances at training, workshops or meetings took place.</li> </ul>

Source: Programme database

- 4.10 The content of the programme was generally supported by senior procurement leads as being relevant. A few reported that the programme did not either offer a sufficient mix of training in the more commercial aspects of procurement or on the implementation of new approaches to commissioning.

<sup>32</sup> The data included in this table was taken from the programme database in April 2015 so that analysis could be undertaken to inform this final evaluation report. The programme team has identified that following this, a substantial volume of training was delivered in response to the procurement fitness checks. These data have not been captured.

“They had the what but not the how” (Senior procurement lead).

- 4.11 The programme delivered by SBV covered some of the same topic areas that were delivered by PMMS (contract management, negotiation, specification writing, EU directives, and TUPE regulations). The topic areas covered by SBV were wider and included category management, market awareness, analysis and development, and sourcing strategies. In addition, SBV delivered training on some of the policy issues covered by Value Wales in the first half of the programme (for example, on community benefits).
- 4.12 Although it is difficult to classify all the courses by stage of procurement (pre-tender, tender, or post-tender), the analysis suggests that, as indicated by some senior procurement leads and stakeholders, there has been less focus on post tendering (although it was noted that in the last two months of the programme, more training was delivered in this area following the findings of the procurement fitness checks). The programme of training has been grouped as follows:

**Table 4.2 Classification of courses by stage of procurement**

<b>Stage of tender</b>	<b>Courses</b>
Pre-tender	Developing Sourcing Strategies, Introduction to Category Management, Market Awareness, Analysis and Development, Preparing Business Cases, Sourcing Strategy, SQuID Training, Strategic Sourcing (Eight).
Tender	Developing Specifications, Specification writing, Advanced Creating Community Benefits through Procurement, Community Benefits Awareness Session, Community Benefits through Procurement, Creating Community Benefits through Procurement , Equalities and Procurement, EU Directives Major Changes , EU Procurement Directive Training, Introduction to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement, Introduction to EU changes and Awareness of Future changes Introduction to EU Directives, New EU Directives, Preparing for the new EU Directives, TUPE and Procurement (fifteen).
Post-tender	Contract Management Training, Negotiation, Supplier Relationship Management (three).
Other	Best Practice Group, Competency Framework Workshop, Introduction to Procurement, Procurement Awareness (four).

Source: ICF analysis of programme database



## **Beneficiary characteristics**

- 4.13 This section presents analysis of the programme database which has details of the 604 beneficiaries of Strand 2 who have completed Participant Information Forms at the time of writing.<sup>33</sup>

### *Gender*

- 4.14 There were more female beneficiaries of the programme than male – women accounted for 53 per cent of beneficiaries. However, females make up a larger proportion of the public sector workforce in Wales (63 per cent) than males<sup>34</sup>; so this might not be unexpected.

### *Age*

- 4.15 Beneficiaries ranged in age from 19 to 73 (as of 2015). Around 8 per cent of the beneficiaries were aged under 30 and so in the early phase of their careers. Over half (55 per cent) of beneficiaries were in mid-career (aged 30 – 49) while nearly one-third (30 per cent) were in their later career (over 50 years old).<sup>35</sup> This suggests a wide appeal and a focus on upskilling as intended. This age distribution is broadly in line with that of the wider UK public sector, although a recent estimate suggests that the programme has reached a smaller proportion of workers under the age of 30 than might be expected.<sup>36</sup>

### *Ethnicity*

- 4.16 Nearly three-fifths of beneficiaries (59 per cent) identified themselves as Welsh. The second largest group was British or English (36 per cent). Around 1 per cent described themselves as Black or Minority Ethnic.

### *Welsh language proficiency*

- 4.17 The majority of beneficiaries could not understand, speak, read or write Welsh. Thirty-three per cent could understand it, while slightly fewer could speak (26 per cent), read (24 per cent) or write it (22 per cent). In the 2011 census 19 per cent of the population in Wales spoke Welsh (there is no published data on writing and reading).

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<sup>33</sup> These data were taken from the programme database on 1 April 2015.

<sup>34</sup> From Annual Population Survey 2012, percentage of all workers employed in public sector

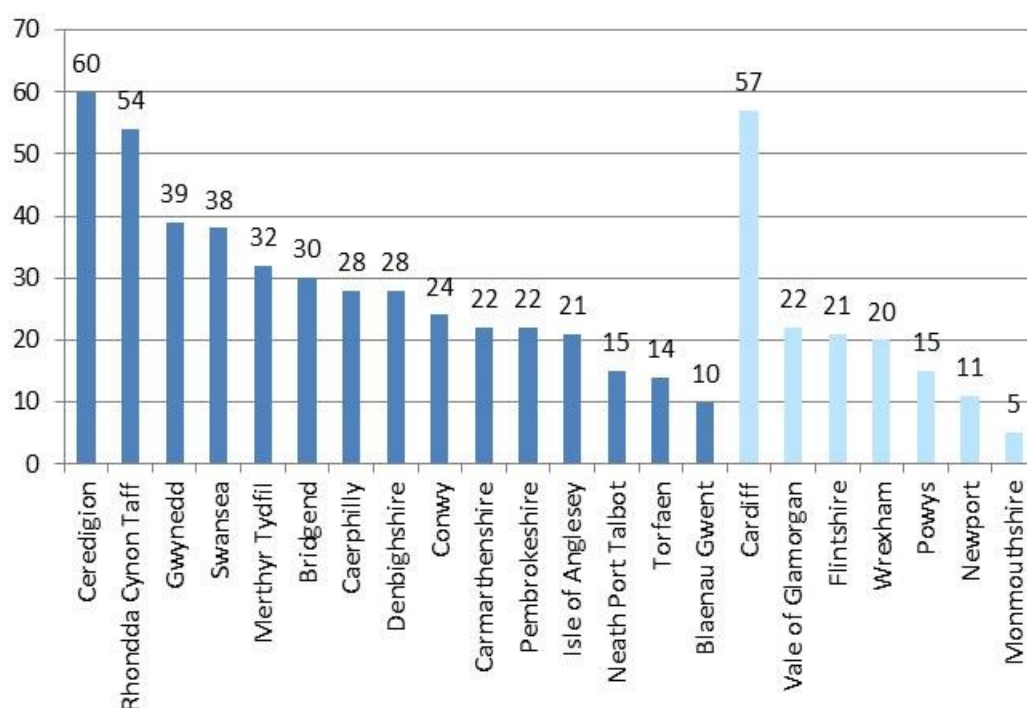
<sup>35</sup> A date of birth was not provided for 43 of those who attended training (7 per cent).

<sup>36</sup> Institute for Fiscal Studies (2014), *The public sector workforce: past, present and future: IFS Briefing note BN145* estimates that 16 per cent of the UK's public sector workforce was aged under 30 in 2012-13.

## Location

- 4.18 Beneficiaries of the training provided addresses (in the majority of cases, home addresses) in every local authority area in Wales, including those not in the Convergence area (indicated in pale blue). Rhondda Cynon Taff and Ceredigion supplied the highest number of participants, as was the case in the mid-term evaluation. These two LAs accounted for around one in five (19 per cent) of the beneficiaries of the programme.

**Figure 4.1 Number of beneficiaries in local authority areas in Wales<sup>37</sup>**



Source: Programme database

- 4.19 0 shows an analysis of the location of beneficiaries of training compared to the distribution of staff employed in the public sector in each local authority area. There are some local authorities with much higher than expected numbers of beneficiaries (Ceredigion for example) and a few with a lower than expected number of beneficiaries for example, Carmarthenshire. Most of the local authority areas with lower than expected proportions were in the non-Convergence area of Wales.

<sup>37</sup> Non-convergence areas highlighted in pale blue

**Table 4.3 Beneficiaries in local authority areas**

Local Authority	No. of beneficiaries	per cent total beneficiaries	per cent of total public sector workforce <sup>38</sup>	Percentage points difference
<b><i>Convergence area local authority areas</i></b>				
Ceredigion	60	10 per cent	3 per cent	7 per cent
Rhondda Cynon Taff	54	9 per cent	8 per cent	1 per cent
Gwynedd	39	7 per cent	4 per cent	3 per cent
Swansea	38	6 per cent	8 per cent	-2 per cent
Merthyr Tydfil	32	5 per cent	2 per cent	3 per cent
Bridgend	30	5 per cent	4 per cent	1 per cent
Caerphilly	28	5 per cent	5 per cent	0 per cent
Denbighshire	28	5 per cent	4 per cent	1 per cent
Conwy	24	4 per cent	4 per cent	0 per cent
Carmarthenshire	22	4 per cent	7 per cent	-3 per cent
Pembrokeshire	22	4 per cent	3 per cent	1 per cent
Isle of Anglesey	21	4 per cent	2 per cent	2 per cent
Neath Port Talbot	15	3 per cent	4 per cent	-1 per cent
Torfaen	14	2 per cent	4 per cent	-2 per cent
Blaenau Gwent	10	2 per cent	2 per cent	0 per cent
<b><i>Non-Convergence area local authority areas</i></b>				
Cardiff	57	10 per cent	13 per cent	-3 per cent
Vale of Glamorgan	22	4 per cent	3 per cent	1 per cent
Flintshire	21	4 per cent	4 per cent	0 per cent
Wrexham	20	3 per cent	4 per cent	-1 per cent
Powys	15	3 per cent	4 per cent	-1 per cent
Newport	11	2 per cent	5 per cent	-3 per cent
Monmouthshire	5	1 per cent	3 per cent	-2 per cent
<b>Totals</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>100 per cent</b>	<b>100 per cent</b>	

Source: Programme database

***Existing qualification levels***

- 4.20 Just over half (56 per cent) of beneficiaries held a qualification at NQF levels 4-6, with just over one-quarter (27 per cent) qualified to NQF Level 7 or 8. Very few beneficiaries had qualifications at NQF Level 3 (8 per cent), Level 2

<sup>38</sup> From Annual Population Survey 2012, percentage of all workers employed in public sector in Wales in each local authority area

(5 per cent), or below Level 2 (2 per cent). This also suggests that the training benefited qualified staff through upskilling.

- 4.21 0 shows that those with Level 2 or below qualifications tended to attend slightly fewer courses.

**Figure 4.2 Average number of courses undertaken**

Highest Level of Qualification held prior to intervention	Average number of courses
Below NQF Level 2	2.9
NQF 2	2.0
NQF 3	3.3
NQF 4-6	3.2
NQF 7-8	3.2

Source: Programme database

#### *Job role*

- 4.22 Half (50 per cent) of beneficiaries were employed in a job role with a specialist procurement function<sup>39</sup>. These specialists ranged in their levels of seniority from assistants to managers and heads of procurement. However, any analysis of role differences was not possible because job titles could not be used to determine role. In the mid-term evaluation, 43 per cent of beneficiaries worked in a specialist procurement role.
- 4.23 Those not employed specifically in procurement had a diverse range of roles – including quantity surveyors, project managers, engineers, finance managers / accountants, and HR staff – which would be expected given the wide range of public sector staff with commissioning and procurement responsibilities for the services they manage. These accounted for about 41 per cent of beneficiaries. 57 beneficiaries (9 per cent of the total) did not state their job role.

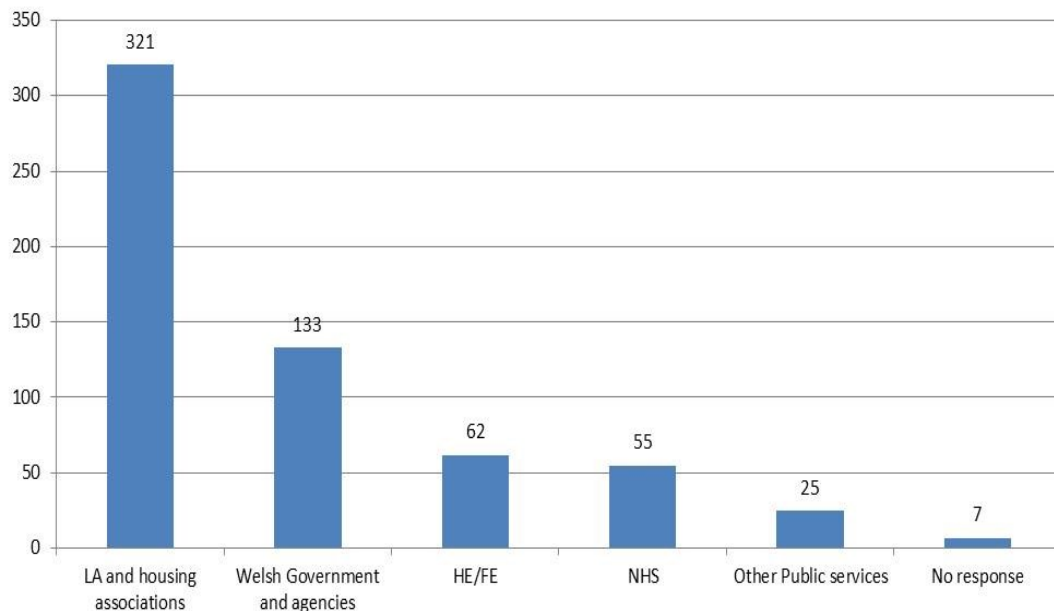
#### *Characteristics of employers*

- 4.24 Beneficiaries were principally employed by local authorities and housing associations (53 per cent) and the Welsh Government or Government Agencies (22 per cent). So far, 82 organisations have had employees go on training, workshops or meetings funded under Strand 2. Significant numbers

<sup>39</sup> Beneficiaries were identified as having a specialist procurement function if their job title contained any of the following words: procurement, buyer, contract, purchaser, commissioning

were employed by universities and FE colleges (10 per cent), the NHS (9 per cent) and other public services, such as the police or fire services (4 per cent). This is set out in 0 below.

**Figure 4.3 Beneficiaries by part of the public sector**



Source: Programme database

- 4.25 Interviewees involved in the management of the programme and the delivery of Strand 2 identified that accessing NHS employers to offer training was challenging. Figures from 2012 support this with employment in the NHS making up around 26 per cent of the public sector workforce at this time.<sup>40</sup> However, the NHS has centralised much of its procurement functions into one national body – NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – which may partially explain the apparent underrepresentation of this part of the public sector. It was also reported that early on in the programme, a specific grant was awarded to the NHS to undertake some tailored training. There has been no one available to comment on this grant in this evaluation.
- 4.26 In total, all 22 local authorities sent employees on the training, with the majority sending more than one although this varied significantly. Merthyr Tydfil (34), Ceredigion (28), Denbighshire (26) and Wrexham (25) sent the largest numbers. The three lowest local authorities were Vale of Glamorgan (seven), Flintshire Council (six) and Torfaen (three).

### **Beneficiaries' views of the training**

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pse/public-sector-employment/regional-analysis-of-public-sector-employment--2012/sty-wales.html>. [Accessed 27 May 2015].

### *Why beneficiaries decided to go on the training*

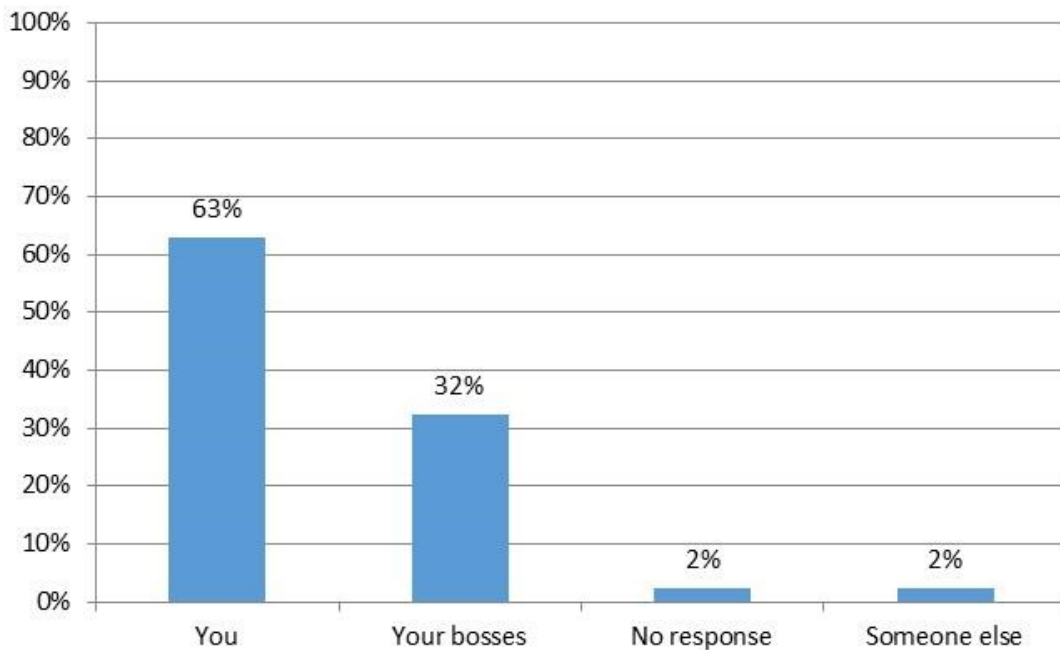
- 4.27 For just over three-fifths (63 per cent) of the courses, beneficiaries decided themselves to attend the course; nearly one-third (32 per cent) of the courses were attended by people who went on the recommendation of their line manager, and 2 per cent on the recommendation of someone else (0). These proportions are similar to those of the mid-term evaluation survey.<sup>41</sup>
- 4.28 Where beneficiaries decided themselves to attend a course (the case for the beneficiaries of 185 courses), for nearly two-thirds of these courses (120 or 65 per cent of the courses) the decision to attend was driven by wanting to fill a skills gap.
- 4.29 These findings indicate that more attended the training in the latter half of the programme because they had a skills gap compared with the first half of the programme.<sup>42</sup> This suggests that in the latter half of the programme the training was better targeted at the workforce's perceived skills gaps. This may reflect the links made between the competency framework and fitness assessments, and the programme of training developed through Strand 2.

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<sup>41</sup> In the mid-term evaluation, just under three-fifths (58 per cent) of beneficiaries decided themselves to attend the course; nearly one-third (29 per cent) went on the recommendation of their line manager, and 4 per cent on the recommendation of someone else.

<sup>42</sup> Only 41 per cent of mid-term survey respondents attended in order to address a skills gap.

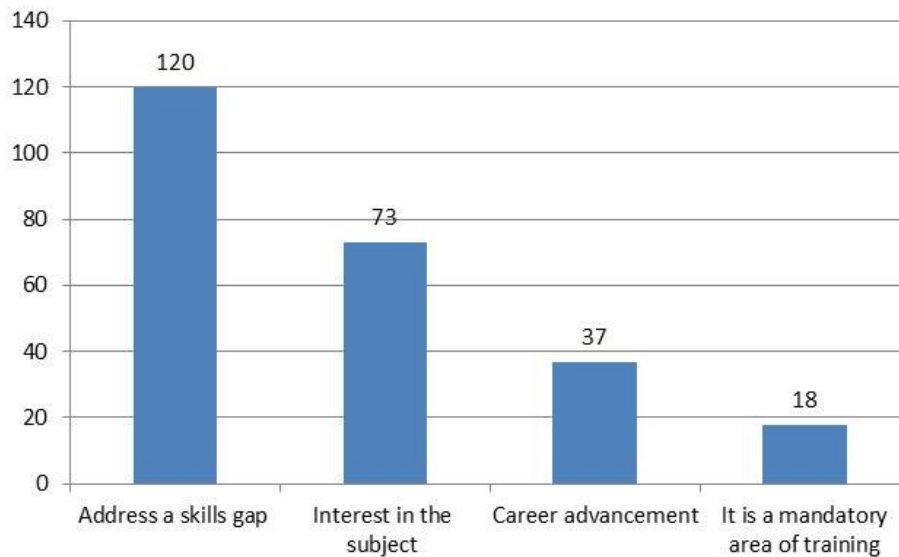
**Figure 4.4 Who made the decision for the beneficiary to attend the course?<sup>43</sup>**



Source Beneficiary Survey

n = 293

**Figure 4.5 Why did the beneficiary decide to do the course**



Source Beneficiary Survey

n = 185

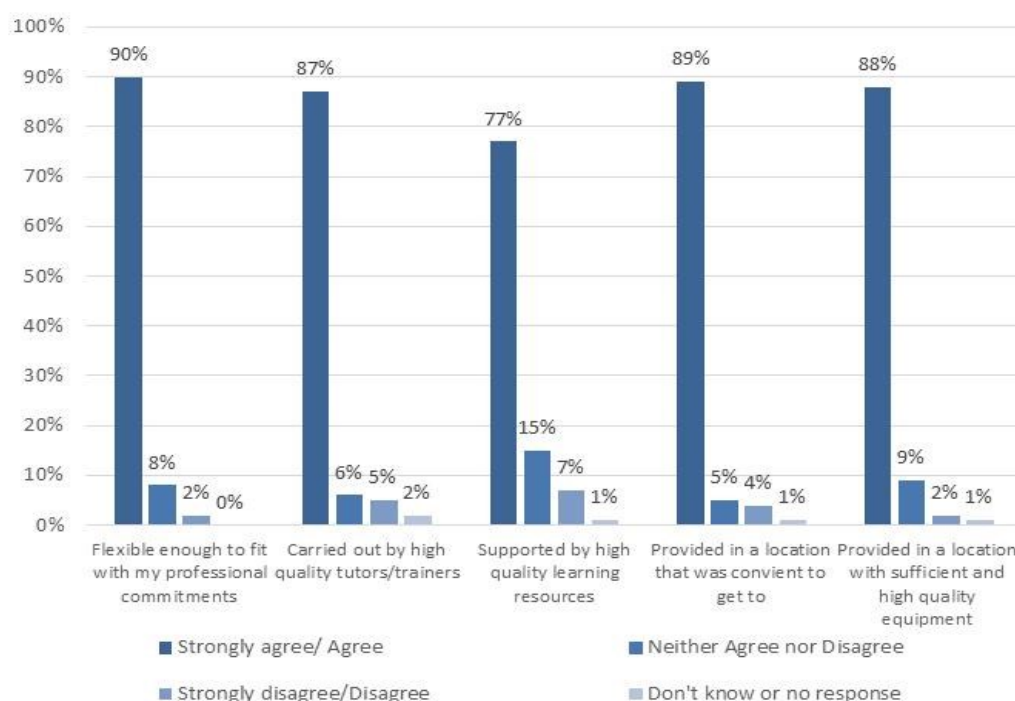
### *Delivery of training*

<sup>43</sup> All graphs in this chapter present data to two significant figures. Due to rounding, some of the data labels on graphs may not add up to 100 per cent.

4.30 Beneficiaries were generally positive about the delivery of the training, with all measures tested in the survey reporting levels of agreement or strong agreement of over 75 per cent and most over 85 per cent (see 0). In particular:

- the delivery is seen as highly flexible, allowing people to fit the training with their existing work commitments. Survey respondents agreed with this for nine-in-ten of the courses delivered
- similarly high proportions of courses were thought to have been delivered by high quality tutors or trainers (87 per cent of courses), delivered in a convenient location (89 per cent), and with high quality equipment (88 per cent)
- relative to the other measures, a smaller proportion of courses (77 per cent) were thought to have been supported by high quality learning resources
- the courses surveyed in the second half of the programme scored more highly against most measures than those in the first half of the programme<sup>44</sup>.

**Figure 4.6 Beneficiaries' perspectives on the delivery of training**



<sup>44</sup> Findings from the mid-term evaluation were as follows: 78 per cent thought delivery was flexible enough to fit with professional commitments; 86 per cent thought it was carried out by high quality tutors and trainers; 75 per cent that it was supported by high quality learning resources; 73 per cent that it was provided in a location that was convenient to get to; and 78 per cent that it was provided in a location with sufficient and high quality equipment.



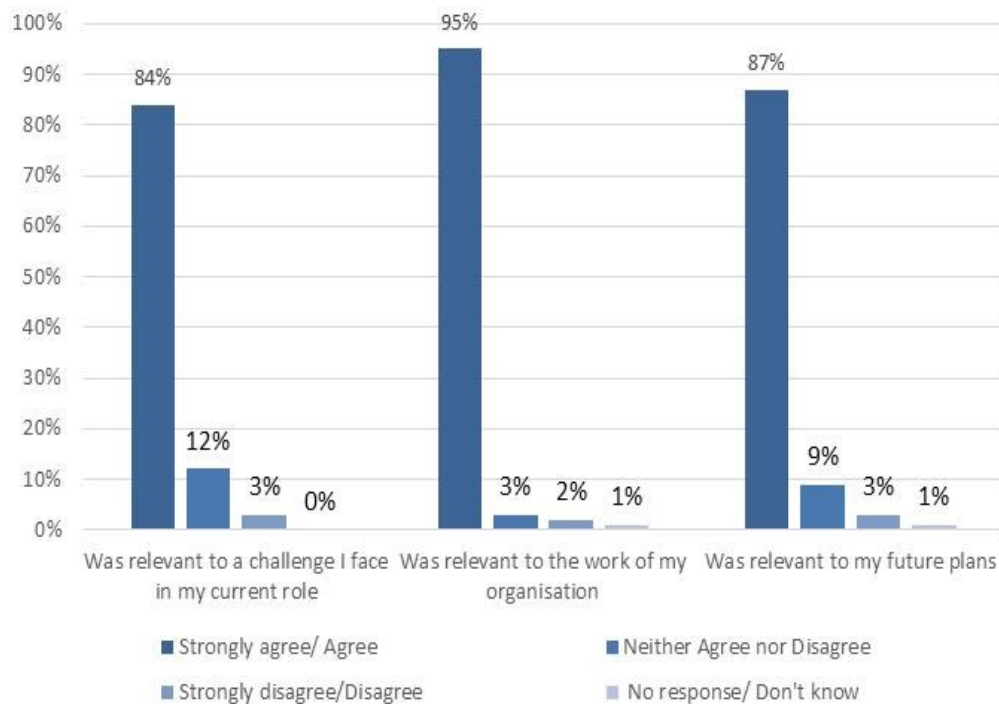
n=293

- 4.31 HGT's own post-training evaluation finds that most beneficiaries report that the course objectives were achieved. Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of those surveyed reported that the course objectives were completely achieved and nearly one third (30 per cent) reported that they were almost achieved. A similar proportion of beneficiaries reported that they were completely satisfied with the course design (60 per cent).
- 4.32 The post-training evaluation data also suggest that beneficiaries are generally satisfied with the skills and knowledge of facilitators. Over four-fifths (82 per cent) of beneficiaries reported being completely satisfied in this respect. Only 4 per cent of beneficiaries reported that they were either moderately, slightly or not-at-all satisfied with their facilitator's skills and knowledge.
- 4.33 The lowest scores were evident in relation to satisfaction with the venue for the training. A relatively small proportion of responses (55 per cent) reported being completely satisfied with the site facilities / venue.

*Relevance of the training*

- 4.34 Beneficiaries generally felt that the courses they attended were relevant to them, with over four-fifths of courses being reported to be relevant to their current role (84 per cent), future plans (87 per cent) and/or the work of their organisation (95 per cent). Very small numbers of responses (less than 4 per cent) were in disagreement with these statements (0). Across all three questions, higher scores were evident in the survey responses for the second half of the programme than the first.

**Figure 4.7 Beneficiaries' perspectives on the relevance of training**



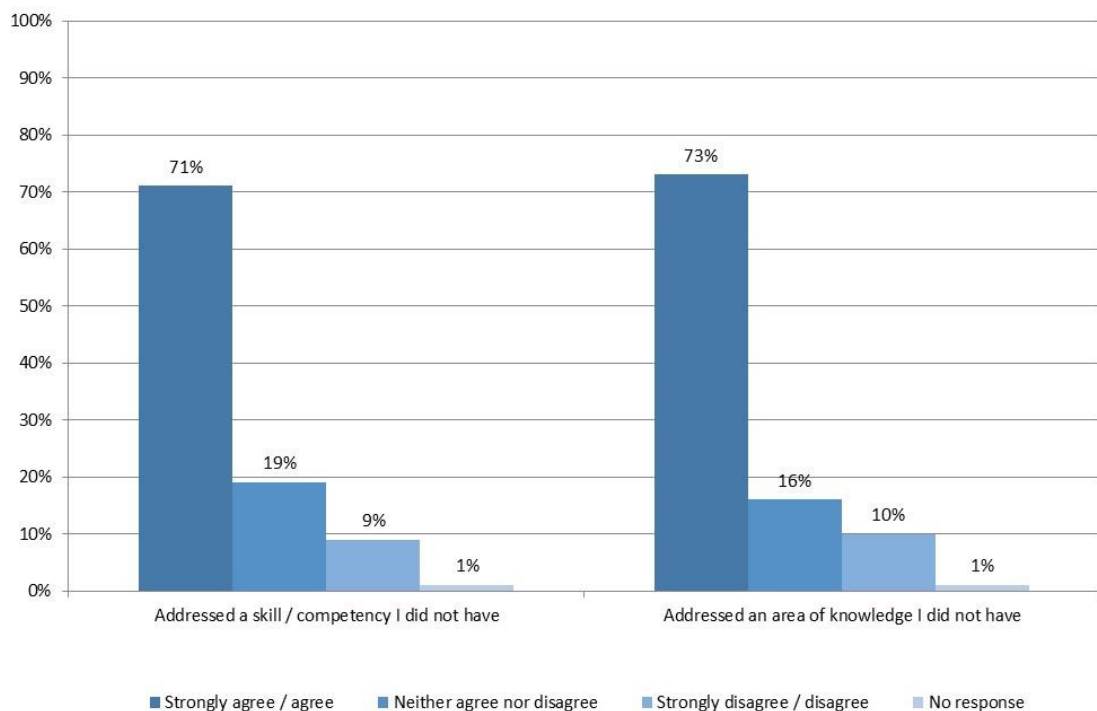
Source Beneficiary Survey

n=293

- 4.35 Responses to whether the training addressed a particular skill, competency or knowledge need were less clear cut. 0 shows that just under three-quarters of the courses were thought to have addressed a skill or competency (71 per cent) or area of knowledge (73 per cent) that the survey respondent did not have. Around one-in-ten respondents disagreed that the course had filled these gaps. When compared with the results of the survey of participants in the training in the first half of the programme, these results indicate that the training was better targeted to individuals' job roles. This may reflect the introduction of the competency framework and impact of the fitness checks.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Findings from the mid-term evaluation were as follows: 58 per cent of respondents thought the training addressed a skill / competency they didn't have and 67 per cent thought the training addressed an area of knowledge they did not have.

**Figure 4.8 Beneficiaries' perspectives on the areas of need the training addressed**

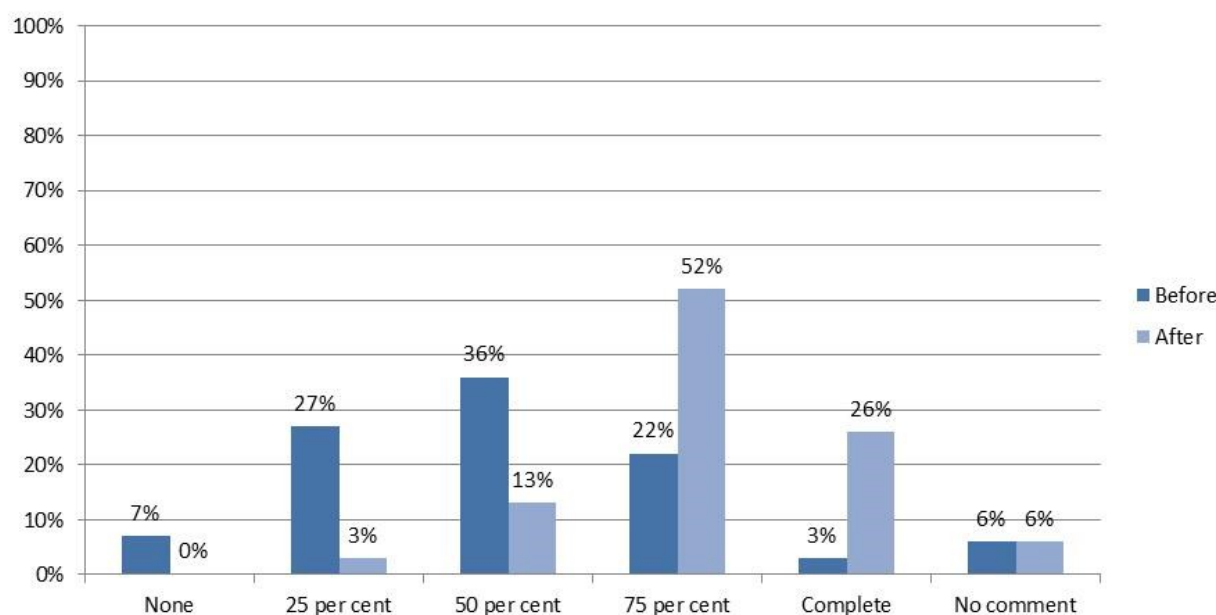


Source: Beneficiary Survey

n=293

- 4.36 0 sets out findings from HGT's own post-training evaluation forms. It shows a general improvement in beneficiaries' level of awareness before and after their training course. For example, the proportion of beneficiaries reporting a level of awareness of at least 75 per cent on a given subject, increased from 25 per cent of beneficiaries to 78 per cent.

**Figure 4.9 Beneficiaries' awareness levels before and after the training<sup>46</sup>**



Source: HGT internal course evaluations

n =293

- 4.37 However, some interviewees suggested that some of the training delivered in the latter half of the programme was not sufficiently suited to the needs of public sector employers. A few felt that some of the training was too generic (for example, not focused enough on the particular markets or categories that were relevant to the existing workforce). A few highlighted that the training was generally overly-focussed on policy and regulations rather than the commercial skills and understanding which were reported by several heads of procurement to be the key skills gap in the public sector procurement workforce.

#### *Suggestions for how to improve the training*

- 4.38 Feedback on how to improve training was provided for around fifty of the courses (around one-sixth of the total responses received). Three main themes – of a similar scale in the open responses – for improvement were evident in these responses:
- the style of delivery was too passive
  - the course was poorly targeted for some of the audience
  - issues with the training provider's style or knowledge.

<sup>46</sup> These data are taken from the HGT's post-training evaluation forms. The survey asked beneficiaries to identify their level of awareness in relation to the topic of the training, before and after the course.

4.39 These themes were found across 25 of the courses covered so clustering was not generally identifiable.

4.40 The first major theme was that the style of learning was not sufficiently active or engaging. Over use of presentational slides, a lack of practical examples, live demonstrations or opportunity to discuss and share experiences in groups were common comments. The subject matter of the courses which led to four of these responses were related to IT or processes (for example, SQuID).

4.41 The second theme identified that the level and content of the training course delivered was not relevant because the level of the course was either too high for the beneficiary or, more commonly, too low. Where it was too low, typical comments included:

“Going into more depth, the content was quite superficial and I felt that I knew most of the topics discussed before the course. It needed to go into more detail about the different methods available and the community benefits that could be included in contracts and which methods suit different types of contracts...” [Creating Community Benefits through Procurement]

“The course could focus more on finance in a procurement setting. The course felt to me to be a brief introduction to accountancy principles where I was hoping to receive guidance on how to evaluate financial information effectively in a competitive tendering situation and the challenges and how to overcome them when having to evaluate financials for example.” [Finance for the Procurement Officer]

4.42 Where the course was too in-depth or delivered too early in their career progression, typical comments included:

“The training was very good but pitched at too high a level for me. I needed a beginner's course but the course was pitched at purchasing professionals and there was an assumption that you already had a certain level of knowledge.” [Sell2Wales Training]

“It was aimed at people with good knowledge of SQuID rather than those that were not very familiar) which most of the people there weren't) - the trainer did address this to some extent.” [SQuID training]

“The training delivered was very disappointing. It was executed at far too high a level for the majority of the audience, with insufficient hands-on work. It was presented almost as an academic study.”  
[Contract Management]

- 4.43 The third theme identified was that some of the courses were adversely affected by the quality of the delivery itself, including (in a relatively small number of comments) that the trainer lack sufficiently detailed knowledge, including of the Welsh language.

### **Outcomes on learners, trainees and participant organisations**

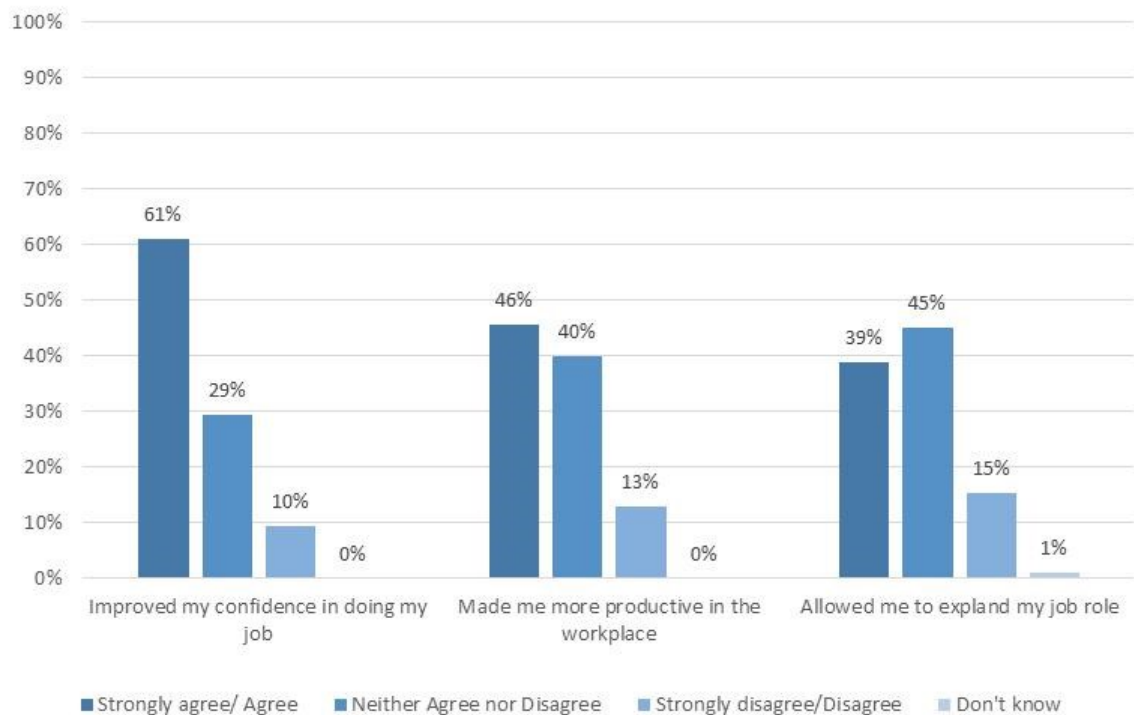
#### *Impact of training on knowledge, confidence and productivity*

- 4.44 0 shows that the biggest area of impact is on beneficiaries' confidence in their job. Just over three-fifths of beneficiaries (61 per cent) reported this. Smaller proportions of survey respondents thought that their productivity (46 per cent) had improved and that the course had allowed them to expand their role (39 per cent).
- 4.45 The analysis also suggests that whether the respondent works in a specialist procurement role or not has some effect on their response to these questions:
- 43 per cent of the specialist procurement staff agreed that the training has helped them to expand their role as opposed to 36 per cent of non-specialist procurement staff
  - 50 per cent of the specialist procurement staff agreed that the training has helped them to be more productive in the workplace as opposed to 43 per cent of non-specialist procurement staff.
- 4.46 Responses to the questions about confidence and productivity are around 10 percentage points higher than the equivalent responses in the mid-term survey.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Percentages for the mid-term survey were as follows: 53 per cent thought it improved their confidence to do their job and 38 per cent thought it made them more productive in the workplace.

**Figure 4.10 Impact of the training on beneficiaries' knowledge, confidence and productivity**



Source: Beneficiary Survey

n=293

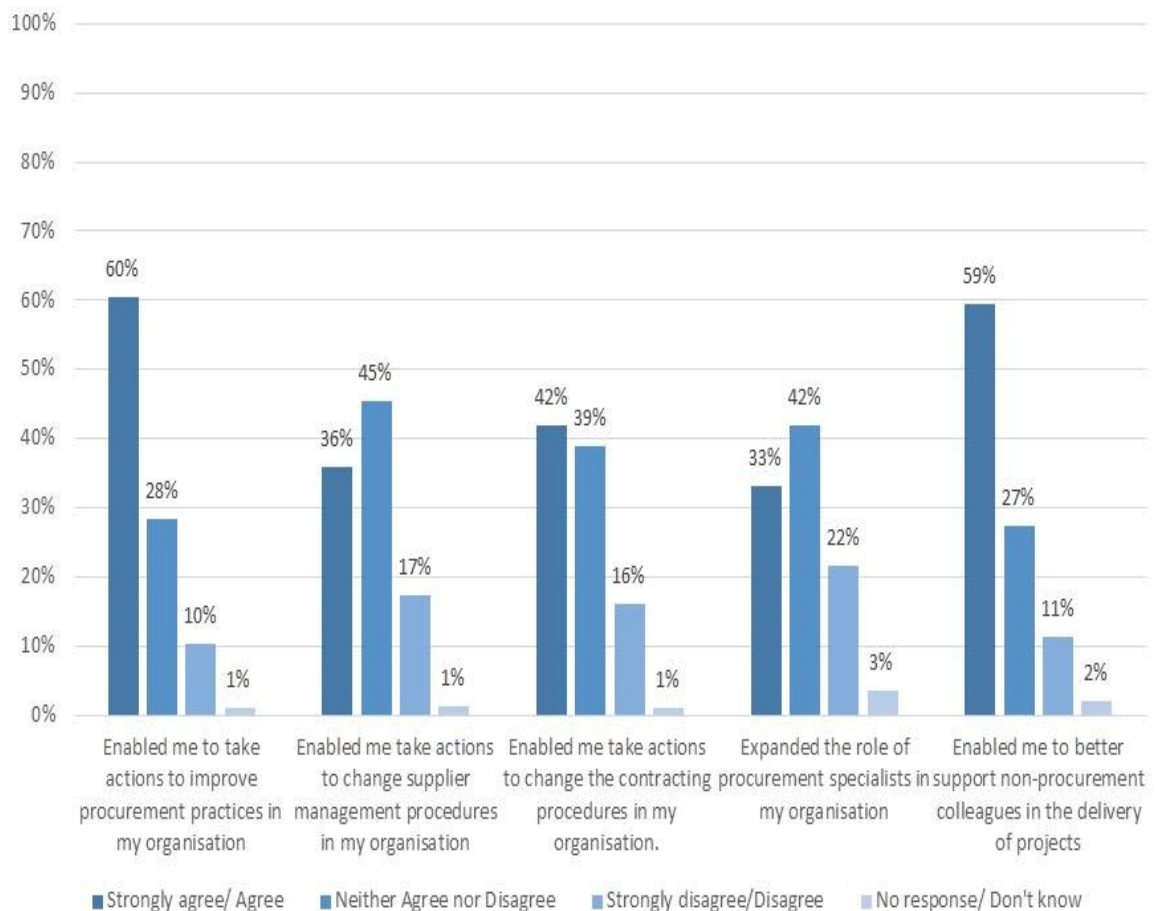
- 4.47 Survey respondents were also asked to describe what their main areas of learning had been. The most common courses for which positive comments were made were: Preparing for the new EU Directives; Creating Community Benefits through Procurement; and SQuID Training.
- 4.48 For Preparing for the new EU Directives, the main theme evident in the comments from beneficiaries was that the training had updated their knowledge in relation to regulations and how it affects their role. This was particularly important to a beneficiary who had been away from the public sector for a few years.
- 4.49 In relation to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement, responses were more diverse and included beneficiaries who reported that the course had raised their awareness about the importance of implementing this policy, through to more practical learning such as how to apply some of the principles.
- 4.50 For the SQuID Training, respondents suggested that they gained an overview of the tool, and transferring its manual use to the online solution.

*Impact of training on beneficiaries' actions in the workplace*

- 4.51 The survey asked beneficiaries to feed back about the impact of each course they had attended on: procurement practices within their organisations, management procedures, contracting procedures, whether there had been an expanded role for procurement specialists, and support of non-procurement colleagues.
- 4.52 0 shows that:
- the most significant types of impact related to the courses undertaken were actions to improve procurement practices in their organisation and to provide better support to their non-procurement colleagues
  - for the other impacts, there were relatively low proportions of beneficiaries who reported that the courses had affected their actions in the workplace including:
    - around two-fifths (42 per cent) of survey respondents reported that the training course had enabled them to take actions to change contracting procedures in their organisations
    - just over one-third (36 per cent) of survey respondents reported that the training course had enabled them to take actions to change supplier management procedures in their organisations
    - around one-third (33 per cent) of survey respondents reported that the training course had expanded the role of specialist procurement staff in their organisation.
- 4.53 These findings are consistent with those of the mid-term evaluation. This suggests that while the programme of training has had a greater level of impact on the attitudes and skills of beneficiaries, there has not been a proportionate rise in the impact of the training. This may reflect that beneficiaries face barriers in enacting some of the learning made on the training courses when they return to their day-to-day job role.



**Figure 4.11 Impact of the training on beneficiaries' actions in the workplace**



Source: Beneficiary Survey

n=293

4.54 Survey respondents were also asked to describe what they thought the impact of the training had been on their actions in the workplace. Relevant responses for over fifty courses were provided. These comments most commonly related to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement; Preparing for the new EU Directives; and SQULD Training.

4.55 There were five main themes evident in these responses (listed in descending order of prominence):

- making changes to tendering procedures
- making changes to other internal procedures
- increasing the use of or using procurement tools (particularly e-procurement tools) more effectively
- disseminating learning to colleagues; and

- changing approaches to contractor management.
- 4.56 Most commonly, participants reported that following attendance at a course, they made changes to tendering practices within their organisation. This includes using the community benefits clause in all tendering exercises; the use of SQuID as a default approach; and, providing better support to non-procurement colleagues who may be producing a specification. One participant reported that as a result of the training course they were:
- “Better able to challenge poor/incorrect procurement processes and offer advice on the correct processes required. Have already offered and been involved in advising on one high profile case since the training was completed.” [Introduction to Procurement]
- 4.57 Several participants also noted that, following award of tenders, the training had contributed to a changed approach to contract management. Typical comments here included:
- “Additional monitoring of Contractors I use through our new framework agreement and guide them with the Community Benefits they can offer during the contracts.” [Advanced Creating Community Benefits through Procurement]
- “We are attempting to make more use of electronic contract management.” [Contract Management]
- “Better understanding of good practice in contract management which supports my internal audit and procurement roles.” [Contract Management]
- 4.58 Another prominent theme in the survey responses was that beneficiaries had made changes to their internal procedures following the training. This includes greater compliance with regulations, matching internal procedures to reflect Welsh Government policies, and providing training to colleagues. For example one participant said:
- “Changes [have been] made to procurement processes in line with new Directives. [We are] also providing in-house training on contract management to ensure that end users are fully aware of audit trail that needs to be kept should they wish to exclude any suppliers based on past poor performance.”
- 4.59 The survey responses also indicate that training has led to an uptake of e-procurement tools. This includes online resources available through Value Wales and Sell2Wales. For example one participant said that:

“We are now using Sell2Wales for most of our purchasing. The course prompted me to familiarise myself with the website and user guides so I now know a lot more than I did regarding frameworks and Quick Quotes and I have helped senior staff with finding framework contract suppliers and using Quick Quotes.”

### **Summary points**

4.60 This chapter has found that:

- Strand 2 has spent £971,000 on delivering a mixture of training courses, workshops and meetings for public sector workers
- the delivery of this strand can be split into two, separated by a change in contractor around halfway through the programme. Value Wales also delivered training throughout the programme with training focused on the specific Welsh policy context
- programme MI shows that across the course of the programme, there were 4,688 attendances at training, workshops or meetings. There were three times as many attendances in the second half of the programme than the first
- the training programme delivered covered a range of topics, although analysis of programme MI and feedback gathered across the research suggest the topics focused on pre-tendering and tendering as opposed to post-tendering activity. One of the main gaps that senior procurement leads identified in the skills of their staff was commercial skills in contract management which was not addressed to the same extent. Key stakeholders reported that they felt that some of the training was too generic or overly-focussed on policy and regulations rather than the commercial skills and understanding which were reported by several heads of procurement to be the key skills gap in the public sector procurement workforce
- where demographic data for those attending the training are available, it is clear that the programme reached a representative group in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. Beneficiaries came from all local authorities in Wales. There are some local authorities with higher than expected numbers of beneficiaries (Ceredigion) and some with lower (Carmarthenshire, for example). Around half of the participants are believed to be in a specialist procurement role

- employers from the all parts of the public sector were supported by the training but NHS employers were underrepresented in this part of the programme.

4.61 A survey of those who attended the training found that:

- for over three-fifths of the courses (63 per cent), the survey respondents decided themselves to attend the course. Where this was the case, the primary motivation was to fill a skill gap (for nearly two-thirds – 65 per cent – of the courses). At mid-term, this was less (41 per cent of survey respondents cited this reason). This may reflect a better understanding of needs as a result of the competency framework and fitness assessments
- the training was, in general, well-targeted with survey respondents reporting that it was relevant to current challenges (84 per cent of responses), the wider work of their organisation (95 per cent) and to their future plans (87 per cent). There were lower positive responses to whether the training filled a skill, competency or knowledge gap
- participants were generally positive about the delivery of the training, with the survey findings showing the training was generally thought to have been flexibly delivered. The HGT programme's own survey largely supported these findings
- there were numerous suggestions made on how to improve delivery of the training in Strand 2. Themes which emerged include that the style of delivery was too passive, the training was not well targeted for some of the participants (generally at a lower level than needed) and there were a few problems with the trainers' style or knowledge (including knowledge of specific areas of procurement)
- participants on the courses in the second half of the programme were generally more positive about the benefits of the training than those who were surveyed in the first half of the programme.

4.62 In relation to the impact of the training, it was found that:

- the largest reported impact has been on survey respondents' confidence in their job with over three-fifths (61 per cent) reporting this benefit; fewer respondents reported that the training had made them more productive (46 per cent) or allowed them to expand their job role (39 per cent)
- around two-fifths (42 per cent) of respondents reported that the training course had enabled them to take actions to change contracting

procedures, just over a third (36 per cent) reported that it had enabled them to change supplier management procedures, and around a third (33 per cent) reported that the training course had expanded the role of specialist procurement staff in their organisations. These findings are consistent with those of the mid-term evaluation

- some participants were able to provide good examples of their application of the knowledge and skills they had gained on the training courses they attended.

## **5. Strand 3: Trainee Procurement Executive Programme**

- 5.1 This chapter outlines findings in relation to Strand 3, the Trainee Procurement Executive Programme (TPEP). It sets out the reasons why trainees applied to the programme and their views on the application process; details of the training and placements undertaken and the support they have received in undertaking these activities; and analysis of the impact of this programme on the trainees and the Welsh public sector. It is based on interviews with the trainees, line managers and mentors, senior procurement leads and analysis of programme MI.

### **Design of TPEP**

- 5.2 TPEP has been one of the major investments of the HGT programme with £2.83 million assigned, primarily for the salaries of the trainees and the cost of the training. Managing and administering the programme has also taken up a substantial proportion of the £1.1 million spent on project management across HGT (although given the varied roles of most HGT management staff, it is not possible to apportion this accurately).
- 5.3 TPEP was an entirely new programme of activity when introduced in 2011. The aim was to develop the skills of new entrants to the procurement profession through a programme of formal training towards qualifications and placements in Welsh public sector organisations. Places on the programme were openly advertised in 2011 and then through a selection process, involving interviews and an assessment day, a cohort of trainees was selected. These trainees were officially employed on Welsh Government fixed term contracts for the duration of the programme. A second cohort was recruited in 2012 through advertisement of the programme to existing Welsh public sector workers. Two further smaller cohorts of trainees were funded in 2013.
- 5.4 Value Wales advertised the programme to Welsh public sector organisations who were asked to submit bids to the programme to host the trainees on a year-long placement. The bids had to include details of a project that trainees would be responsible for, which would be of benefit to the organisation. The host organisations were also asked to:
- support or facilitate a collaborative procurement project involving two or more public service organisations realising measurable benefits
  - be based in the Convergence area, or have benefits linked to the Convergence area

- design a project with aims which support the principles of the Wales Procurement Policy statement
- deliver a collaborative procurement project which meets key Welsh Government policies on the use of SQulD, xchangewales tools and community benefits policy
- provide the trainee with a set of objectives at the beginning of the placement, and provide regular progress reports to the programme team
- be committed to developing the trainee's skills, and confirm that this commitment is in place for the duration of the placement; and
- sign a Memorandum of Understanding committing to the development of the individual while participating in the project.

5.5 The expression of interest that bidding organisations submitted needed to include:

- a summary of the project and how it benefits the Convergence area (which is why organisations from outside the Convergence area have been able to host placements)
- an outline of the benefits that the project will bring, including those that would not have been achieved without the trainee
- detail of the trainee's role, and the SMART objectives they would be expected to achieve; and
- the existing knowledge/skills the trainees would require and what they would learn.

5.6 Decisions on which projects should host a trainee were taken by the HGT Programme Board which considered:

- the alignment of the project with Welsh Government policy
- the potential benefits of the collaborative procurement project and scope for transferability of benefits
- the location of projects and the location of trainees; and
- the development needs of trainees and how these might be met by the placement.

5.7 Once on placement, line managers for the trainee are responsible for ensuring the quality of the placement. They set objectives for the trainee and these are agreed with the programme manager.

- 5.8 Trainees were supported by the Professional Development Manager in Value Wales, whose role was to provide support to all trainees through quarterly meetings to assess progress and to address any problems with placements (as well as being available to deal with queries in between). He reviewed the trainees' objectives for each placement and monitored progress towards these in the quarterly meetings, as well as keeping in contact with the trainees' line managers and deciding on where to move them for further experience.
- 5.9 Trainees were also allocated a personal mentor who is a senior procurement professional and is usually from a different organisation to where the trainee is on placement. Mentors and trainees are supposed to meet quarterly to catch up and discuss progress.
- 5.10 The Strand 3 manager has kept records of the type of activity that each trainee undertakes while on their placement. There are four categories of activity (e-procurement, policy support, supply chain, and tender or contract management) and the programme sought to ensure that across their placements, trainees undertook a mixture of types of project. The manager also kept a record of which part of the public sector the trainees were placed with a view to ensuring that they got a breadth of experience. There is no indication from interviewees that there was a regional or sectoral allocation of trainees in each year but bids were considered on their merits.

### **Reasons for applying**

#### *Trainees' feedback*

- 5.11 Twenty eight trainees were recruited onto Strand 3 of the HGT programme in four cohorts, the first in summer 2011 (12 trainees), the second in summer 2012 (11 trainees), the third in June 2013 (four trainees) and a final trainee joined the programme in July 2013.
- 5.12 Trainees' primary reason for applying was to secure a role in the Welsh Government. A career in procurement was rarely mentioned as the main driver. In several cases, trainees reported that they did not have a firm idea of what the programme would entail until later in the application process. The trainees generally had a low knowledge of procurement upon applying. While a couple of those interviewed had previous work experience in the area, most had recently left education and were looking for a 'graduate programme' which would lead to a career.
- 5.13 Other attractions included the opportunity to gain a range of qualifications. Also, for a couple of interviewees who were already working in the area in



lower level roles, the programme was seen as a route into more senior, strategic and higher value procurement positions.

#### *Line managers' feedback*

- 5.14 Line managers of trainees and the senior procurement leads interviewed were strongly supportive of the goals of TPEP. This also generally motivated them to participate in the scheme.

“We believed it was a good programme and that it had a lot to offer the public sector... [We wanted to] give a bit back and to offer support to Value Wales”

- 5.15 One of the main ongoing challenges they identified was a general shortage of procurement professionals and new entrants keen to progress. A typical comment was:

“One of our big problems is recruitment and retention... If I’m trying to get a professional procurement expert, or a reasonably advanced practitioner, I struggle.”

- 5.16 These interviewees also commonly reported that they welcomed the programme as a means of providing valuable extra resource to undertake high value added work that would otherwise not be possible:

“The investment has been very welcome to helping us see a project through”) or with the arrival of the trainee free up more senior staff to “undertake more challenging tasks that had been on the shelf for a while”.

- 5.17 In general, line managers’ views on the reasons for applying were consistent with those reported in the mid-term evaluation.

### **Training delivery**

#### *Data on training delivered*

- 5.18 The trainees completed a set of formal qualifications as they progressed through the programme. 0 shows that the trainees gained a total of 116 qualifications throughout the programme, an average of four qualifications per trainee. No trainee managed to complete all of the qualifications available while they were part of TPEP; five trainees completed only one qualification while on the programme. However if the trainees left early to enter employment in the Welsh public sector, the programme continued to support them to complete their professional training.

- 5.19 0 also shows that there was a drop-off in the completion of the CIPS qualifications. Two reasons have been identified for this drop-off in completion rates. First, several trainees left TPEP earlier than anticipated to pursue other employment opportunities (largely within procurement); as such, they did not complete their CIPS training within the programme. Second, some of the cohort 1 trainees already had the CIPS qualification on joining and so they did not need to undertake this course.
- 5.20 Trainees were also given the opportunity to attend a summer school led by the University of Bangor. This provided the chance to study a range of relevant academic topics as well as network with potential employers and researchers in the field.

**Table 5.1 Qualifications achieved by trainees**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Number of trainees achieving qualification while still part of the programme<sup>48</sup></b>
CIPS level 4	20
CIPS level 5	9
CIPS level 6	5
CMI level 3	12
ILM level 3	27
Prince 2 Foundation	23
Prince 2 Practitioner	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

*Short-term outcomes of training courses and views on their delivery*

- 5.21 Trainees' views on the training delivered as part of TPEP were fairly consistent with the findings for the mid-term review. At the core of the training programme are the CIPS professional qualifications. Trainees report that the CIPS training was challenging, and that balancing the studying with the other aspects of their placements required the support of their line manager. However it was generally deemed to be worth the investment of time.

<sup>48</sup> Trainees who left early to enter employment in the Welsh public sector continue to be supported to complete their CIPS training. The programme team reported that they expect most of the TPEP graduates working in the Welsh public sector to be supported to complete these qualifications.

5.22 CIPS provided a theoretical background to the placement activity (*“I was able to bring a degree of technical expertise back from the classroom to the role”*). A few trainees noted that CIPS was not public sector-specific in its content. However this was thought to be a strength, providing them with grounding in all areas of procurement, including those that they may not use regularly in public sector roles. These comments were supported by the senior procurement leads interviewed, a few of whom noted that one of the key skills challenges facing the Welsh public sector is the lack of experience or skills from outside the traditional public sector procurement area.

5.23 Several trainees and line managers commented that the CIPS training had come too early on in the development of the trainees to have the fullest impact, at least initially. However, as illustrated below, most of the knowledge gained was used later in the programme or in their job roles:

“Doing the theory without having the practical experience was a bit of a waste at first. But I did have a grounding as the placements developed.”

“CIPS is fast becoming an essential qualification required to progress as a procurement professional.”

5.24 The trainees were also able to access Prince 2 training and work towards the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) and Chartered Management Institute (CMI) qualifications. As shown in 0, most trainees achieved the ILM level 3 (96 per cent) and Prince 2 foundation (82 per cent) and practitioner (71 per cent) qualifications. There were quite consistent comments in trainee surveys and interviews about each of the main qualifications.

5.25 Trainees generally considered their Prince 2 training to have been useful in the longer-term rather than immediately. They also perceived that it was a qualification which would support their work and progression in the public sector and in the field of procurement.

“[It’s] Nice to have on the CV”

“I have used the PRINCE2 project management methodology on a recent procurement project”

5.26 The ILM and CMI training was generally felt to have been delivered too early, as the trainees were not generally responsible for managing other staff. However, similar to the other courses, it was noted that the learning would be likely to become more relevant as they progressed in their careers. A typical comment here was:

“ILM & CMI were used in securing a management role and demonstrating how I would put the theoretical understanding of managing teams into practice. It also helped whilst on the job in giving consideration to my management style.”

5.27 The main issues with the delivery of this training identified in the mid-term report were found in the further interviews. This includes:

- the lack of course provision in North Wales which had a significant impact on the accessibility to the training for those trainees based in the north. This was a particular issue for the longer courses such as CIPS. One trainee described choosing to follow an e-learning version of the course in order to complete it (which was reported to have affected the quality of the learning)
- the training not being timed to meet the skills needs and professional responsibilities of trainees. This was particularly the case in relation to the ILM and CMI training which sought to improve trainees' people and project management skills at a point in their career where these were not particularly relevant
- insufficient support for training or awareness of training days by the host organisation. This was thought to be a result of Value Wales not communicating the training components of the programme clearly enough with the host organisation (“There was moaning that I was away from the office so much”).

## **Placement delivery**

### *Data on placements delivered*

5.28 Trainees worked in 33 different public sector organisations. Two non-national organisations outside the Convergence area (Cardiff Council and Wrexham Council) had to demonstrate what benefit they would bring to organisations within the Convergence area.

5.29 0 shows that around three-fifths of placements (60 per cent) have been hosted in either local authorities or the Welsh Government. Two organisations (Value Wales and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership) hosted 23 placements

(over one quarter of the total placements). Fewer than one-in-ten placements were hosted by either an education provider / agency or one of the other public services.

**Table 5.2 Placement organisation types**

<b>Placement host organisation type</b>	<b>Number (and percentage) of placements hosted – at mid-term evaluation</b>	<b>Number (and percentage) of placements hosted – at final evaluation</b>
Local authority	12 (41 per cent)	28 (33 per cent)
Welsh Government and agencies	6 (21 per cent)	24 (28 per cent)
NHS	6 (21 per cent)	15 (17 per cent)
Other	2 (10 per cent)	8 (9 per cent)
Housing Association	0 (0 per cent)	5 (6 per cent)
Education provider / agency	1 (5 per cent)	3 (3 per cent)
Other public services	2 (10 per cent)	3 (3 per cent)
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>86<sup>49</sup></b>

Source: Programme database

5.30 0 sets out the geographical spread of the placements. The data show that:

- nearly half of the placements (47 per cent) were hosted in organisations with a national remit
- fewer than one-fifth of placements (19 per cent) were hosted by non-national organisations outside of the south and south-east Wales region; and
- an extended placement (counted as two placements in the programme database) took place in the Northern Ireland government.

5.31 A comparison of these data against the geographical data presented in the mid-term evaluation suggests that some remedial actions have been taken to

<sup>49</sup> This is slightly higher than might be expected for a programme of three placements for 28 trainees (a total of 84 placements might have been expected). The variation is due to some placements being terminated mid-way through due to the experience not matching the expectation.

address some of the gaps identified in the coverage. For example, at the time of the mid-term evaluation, only one placement had been undertaken in North Wales.

**Table 5.3 Placement organisation location**

<b>Placement host organisation location</b>	<b>Number (and percentage) of placements hosted – at mid-term evaluation</b>	<b>Number (and percentage) of placements hosted – at final evaluation</b>
National	14 (48 per cent)	40 (47 per cent)
South and south east Wales	9 (31 per cent)	28 (33 per cent)
North Wales	1 (3 per cent)	9 (10 per cent)
South west and mid Wales	5 (17 per cent)	7 (8 per cent)
Non-Welsh public sector	0 (0 per cent).	2 (2 per cent)
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>86</b>

Source: Programme database

- 5.32 Data have also been collected on the type of experience gained by trainees on their placements. The four target areas of activity for trainees' placements (e-procurement, policy support, supply chain, and tender or contract management) are also evident in these data however 0 shows that nearly half of the placements (45 per cent), for which data are available, focused on tender management. Ten of the eighteen identified types of experience were covered only once or not at all; it is unclear why this is the case.

**Table 5.4 Experiences gained by trainees on placements**

Type of experience	Number of occurrences
Tender Management (incl. OJEU)	23
Commodity Spend Analysis	6
Contract Management	5
Policy Team	4
Supply Chain Review	3
eProcurement Implementation	2
Policy & Process Improvement	2
Tender Management (Support)	2
Best Practice Implementation	1
eProcurement Project Support	1
Policy Development	1
Tender Management (Limited)	1
Limited Commissioning	0
Policy (Sustainability)	0
Project Support (Policies & Procedures)	0
Social Care Commissioning Report	0
Spend Category Data Analysis	0
Tender Management (excl. OJEU)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>

Source: Programme database

*Short-term outcomes of placements and views on their delivery*

5.33 Trainees reported that their placements supported them to build a set of more practical skills which complement the more technical skills and knowledge they developed in their training. Across the programme, the following areas of development were commonly reported:

- an understanding of the “general public sector tendering process” including writing ITTs and PQQs as well as the wider public sector environment (including the role of regulation and the EU)

- using the main electronic purchasing tools in the Welsh public sector. These skills were thought by one trainee from the first cohort to be: “A good starting point for someone with no tendering experience”
  - research skills to identify market characteristics and develop specifications
  - insight into particular Welsh policy issues, such as collaboration and community benefits
  - knowledge of particular markets (such as construction)
  - managing contracts and contractors.
- 5.34 Line managers reported that they had witnessed their trainees develop their confidence (for example, in chairing and participating in meetings), working as part of a team, writing and communication.
- 5.35 Some valued the insight gained in a range of areas of the public sector. As one trainee reported:
- “The secondments I undertook provided me with an introduction into public sector procurement from a variety of different perspectives; local government, central government, health, which new entrants would not experience in such a short time.”
- 5.36 But many felt that the programme had not given them a mix of experiences across the public sector although they had gained a wide range of skills.
- 5.37 Line managers and senior procurement leads also frequently commented on the impact that hosting a trainee had on their day-to-day work. This appears to have been particularly marked in small organisations, where an extra person could make a real difference. Typical comments in this regard include:
- “It allowed us to stop firefighting, to focus on more strategic planning and add value to procurement processes currently underway.”
- 5.38 Given the perceived value that trainees could bring to organisations, a few line managers and senior procurement leads mentioned that;
- “We were frustrated that we couldn’t get another one... we could really do with an extra resource due to the work coming from Value Wales and the National Procurement Service”.
- 5.39 There were concerns by a few interviewees over the transparency of the decision making process for assigning trainees to organisations with so many trainees allocated places in Value Wales.



## **Evidence of the impact of TPEP**

- 5.40 This section presents findings on the extent to which TPEP has generated the intended longer-term impact at this stage.

### *Progression of trainees into employment*

- 5.41 TPEP set out to establish a cohort of future leaders in Welsh public sector procurement. The destination of the trainees at this stage in their professional development is central part of any assessment of the overall success of the programme in achieving this aim. Analysis of the programme's database supported by findings from surveys and interviews with trainees indicates that:

- 25 of the 28 trainees (89 per cent) who began the programme are currently in permanent full time procurement roles, carrying out a range of functions including procurement officer, senior procurement officer, and category officer. Of these:
  - 15 are employed by the Welsh public sector
  - one works in the Welsh private sector
  - two work in the Welsh housing sector in Wales
  - five are employed by the UK Government (three of whom are located in Wales, and two are located in England)
  - two work in the utilities sector in Wales
- one trainee left the programme and there is no information on their destination. Two further trainees were still on the programme at the time of writing
- programme stakeholders reported that all trainees who moved into employment did so on higher salaries than they received while on TPEP, and that most live in Wales.

- 5.42 These data illustrate that the programme has had a good degree of success in guiding the early professional development of the trainees and supporting them to enter employment in the Welsh public sector. Given that securing a role in the Welsh public sector was one of the main reasons for many of the trainees to apply for the programme in the first place, this is perhaps unsurprising. As one trainee noted:

“I want to stay within the public sector. That's a priority really and preferably within the Welsh Government”).

5.43 However, given that the programme has been delivered at a time of reductions to public sector funding (with subsequent freezes in recruitment, including for procurement roles reported by interviewees in many organisations), it can be seen as a significant achievement that at present, most of the trainees have secured these sorts of roles. Senior procurement leads generally agreed with this assessment with some noting that the main weakness of the programme was that it was not large enough.

5.44 The high calibre of many of the trainees was also noted by interviewees. Several senior procurement leads commented that the programme had supported the development of procurement staff likely to progress well in their future careers. Some typical comments were:

“[I can] certainly see some of the trainees as the procurement leaders of tomorrow.”

“Very good talented people have come through... virtually all have gone into the public sector.”

5.45 The positive impact described by these data has been achieved despite the fact that at least ten of the trainees left the programme before completing all placements or training courses.

5.46 Indeed, the main reason that trainees gave for leaving the programme early was to secure full-time employment in procurement. A few interviewees noted that the perceived level of competition from their TPEP trainee peers would be substantially higher had they all completed the programme at the same time, and then been seeking jobs in competition with one another.

“[I thought that] In twelve months’ time there would be another 12 who had the same experience as me. You’d be putting yourself in to a very competitive market.”

5.47 A few trainees and senior procurement leads felt that the lack of progression planning or a guaranteed job role on completion of the programme encouraged non-completion which was not beneficial to either party in the long term.

“There are no jobs for anybody when we come out of it on the other side.”

5.48 The box below draws together the key factors that many trainees believed had helped their development and their commitment to progressing in the sector.

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## Factors identified by trainees to have helped them achieve goals of TPEP

- **A well-rounded CV**

Many trainees identified that being TPEP trainees had enabled them to access a suite of training courses that they would otherwise not have been able to. While a key finding in the mid-term evaluation (which was also identified in this round of fieldwork) was that some of the training was seemingly not relevant at the time (the ILM, CMI and to a lesser extent Prince 2 courses), several trainees in the final evaluation identified that the qualifications had helped them into employment, and that now they were more experienced, they had been able to use the skills they learned on these courses. *“The training says a lot on your CV... a lot of councils are aware of the Home Grown Talent scheme they seem to think it is an excellent opportunity.”*

- **Mentoring**

The trainees frequently commented on the value derived from the mentoring process. At minimum, the mentor was seen as a useful external “sounding board” or source of advice. At its most active, the mentor was able to provide crucial advice in the trainees’ future careers.

- **Summer school and other education and networking opportunities**

Trainees highlighted that the summer school provided a useful opportunity to network with the other trainees and potential employers and to learn from each other’s experiences.

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### *Additionality of TPEP*

- 5.49 Given the intensity and duration of the support provided by TPEP, interviewees attributed a high level of additionality to the programme. In most cases, TPEP has attracted individuals who previously have not considered a career in procurement. For these individuals, the programme’s generous offer of training and work experience in the Welsh public sector was a key factor in their decision; without it, a career in procurement would not have been likely to appeal.

“[On applying] I didn’t really know what procurement was to be honest... at [her previous employer] you don’t get much training. There wasn’t the money for it really. I guess the fact that they were offering so many different courses plus the CIPS qualification was the difference.”

- 5.50 Even for those trainees who had some experience or background in procurement (for example, those working in procurement support roles or those who had studied a relevant subject at university), the programme appears to have stimulated their career progression that would otherwise have not taken place (or at least more slowly).
- 5.51 Senior procurement leads and line managers also commented that while they may have tried to develop their own staff, or bring in new recruits over the period that the Home Grown Talent programme has run, they would not have been able to provide neither the training nor the support that has been given to the TPEP trainees.
- 5.52 In this context, there is ample evidence to suggest that, despite numerous teething problems, and a set of ongoing issues with delivery, TPEP has helped to accelerate learning – both formal and experiential – as well as supporting the development of an attractive CV for many Welsh public sector organisations.
- 5.53 However, as several interviewees have pointed out, there is a risk to the legacy of the programme if there were few roles in the Welsh public sector which want to use the procurement skills of the trainees and, in the longer term, provide opportunities for enhanced strategic roles for procurement specialists. For the most ambitious and skilled of the TPEP trainees, these roles are likely to be the end goal. If the labour market does not match their ambitions, there is a risk that in the longer-term, they will leave Wales or the public sector to pursue these jobs.

### **Management and delivery of TPEP**

- 5.54 Trainees identified that while they had some poor experiences, support from the HGT team was generally sufficient (with particular challenges identified to have taken place early and late in the programme). The fact that for much of the delivery period, the programme had a staff member focussed on supporting the trainees and having a first point of contact was valued. The line management arrangements which involved joint goal setting and assessment of progress between the host organisation and HGT generally worked well, although there were comments made about this being confusing on occasions.

5.55 However some common issues with the delivery of the programme throughout its duration were identified.

- **lack of clarity over the goals of the programme** when recruiting trainees and host organisations. Two dimensions were identified here:
  - a few trainees highlighted that they were not necessarily clear about what they were applying for when they made their initial application to the programme; its content only became clear when they were some way down the line of recruitment
  - a few trainees felt that their placement host organisation did not properly understand the goals of the programme and their responsibilities as hosts. Comments here included that host organisations had not set up the project for the trainees to undertake, or they were unaware of the training requirements trainees faced, and so expressed disappointment when they went on courses / study leave
- **slow reaction to poor placement experience and insufficient action where issues were identified.** While the majority of placements were identified to have been of a high quality, several trainees highlighted that they had a poor experience on a placement. These were mainly due to:
  - not being supported sufficiently by the host organisation or feeling isolated
  - not being provided with valuable work to do in the context of taking part in a programme designed to develop high-level skills in procurement; and
  - more practical concerns such as difficulty relocating

While in many cases, the programme team was able to take actions to address these issues, interviewees also noted that they felt that Value Wales were too close to the placement host organisation to take the strong actions required, or that replacement placements were not necessarily available to be taken up.

- **insufficient ‘matching’ between trainee and placement.** A few trainees felt that more could have been done to ensure that the types of activities to be undertaken on their placement matched their professional interests, previous experience and future goals

- for the final cohort, there are particular challenges which relate to the fact that the **funding will have run out before they have completed their CIPS training and placement.**
- 5.56 Comparing the interviews at the mid-term evaluation with those for the final evaluation, it is apparent that the challenges reduced as time progressed and that when there was a staff member assigned to support the trainees (as there was when the mid-term evaluation took place) interviewees perceived the support to be particularly good. The programme team also identified several steps taken to improve the support to the trainees following the mid-term evaluation. These included simplifying the application process for trainees, preparing profiles of each trainee to supply to new line managers ahead of the placement, and conducting preparatory and follow-up visits with line managers to agree and monitor objectives.

### Summary points

- 5.57 TPEP was one of the major investments of HGT, and was an entirely new area of activity. The aim was to develop the skills of new entrants to the procurement profession through a programme of secondments and formal training activities.
- four cohorts of trainees were recruited with 28 trainees taking part in total
  - public sector organisations were invited to bid to host a year-long placement setting out a project which they would ask the trainees to work on throughout. There were several criteria for the selection of these projects including that there would be collaborative working involving two or more public sector organisations
  - a total of 86 such placements were undertaken across the programme in 33 different public sector organisations. The majority have taken place in either local authorities or the Welsh Government. Over two-fifths (47 per cent) of the organisations hosting placements had a national remit while around half of placements took place in organisations with a local remit

- most organisations sought to host a trainee because they saw value in the programme and could identify project activities which they could not do with their current resources
- trainees were supported by a line manager in the host organisation, as well as the Professional Development Manager in Value Wales and a mentor in another organisation who was expected to monitor the trainees' training and development plans
- trainees also undertook a programme of training which included CIPS levels 4 to 6, Prince 2 and leadership and management training. Most did not complete CIPS levels 5 and 6 while they were on TPEP, although it was reported that some will go on to complete these qualifications
- at least ten of the trainees left the programme before completing all of their placements / training courses. This was mainly because they were concerned about the availability of jobs on completion, particularly with the likely competition from the other trainees for similar roles at this time.

5.58 In relation to the impact of the programme on trainees' skills, the organisations they worked in, and progress into public sector procurement roles, the research has found that:

- the programme has largely achieved its main aim of supporting new entrants into the public sector procurement profession. Twenty five of the 28 trainees are in full-time procurement roles; 15 are employed by the Welsh public sector, five are employed by the UK Government, four work in the utilities or housing sector in Wales and one works in the Welsh private sector.
- line managers and senior procurement leads have indicated that these trainees are generally of a high calibre. Many are likely to progress well in their future careers
- the programme has also been generally welcomed by the wider procurement profession, with the additional resource and the new entrants to the profession commented positively
- these achievements have been made despite the fact that many left early
- the programme has provided a high degree of additionality. Most of the trainees reported that they had not considered a career in procurement

before applying to TPEP. The substantial training and development input would also be very difficult to replicate without the programme.

5.59 The programme did face challenges which had some negative impacts on the success of their placements and trainees' experience of training. These are as follows:

- a lack of clarity over the goals of the programme was reported when recruiting trainees and host organisation. This included that a few trainees felt that their placement host organisation did not fully understand the goals of the programme or their responsibilities as host of secondments
- a slow reaction to poor placement experience and insufficient action where issues were identified which meant that some trainees reported feeling isolated, and not being provided with valuable work to do
- insufficient 'matching' between trainee and placement. A few trainees felt that more could have been done to ensure that the types of activities to be undertaken on their placement matched their professional interests, previous experience and future goals
- for the final cohort, there are particular challenges which relate to the fact that the funding will have run out before they have completed their CIPS training and placement.



## 6. Strand 4: Support for e-procurement projects

- 6.1 This chapter outlines findings in relation to Strand 4. It sets out the management of the Strand, a description of the main activities which have been funded, and the outcomes that have been achieved to date. It is based on interviews with the key project staff at four of the funded sites.

### Organisation and management of Strand 4

#### *The grants*

- 6.2 Strand 4 aimed to provide funding to Welsh public sector organisations to implement e-procurement solutions in their organisations. It has spent a total £2,287,000. It builds on the xchangewales programme which has developed e-procurement solutions in the Welsh public sector between 2008 and 2013 (and which is now called the e-Procurement Service or ePS) with an aim to help the Welsh public sector to move from paper to electronic procurement and have the tools to take advantage of collaborative and bulk purchasing. It was recognised that some public sector organisations were not e-enabled to access all Wales or local contracts which could save them money or reduce their transaction costs for purchasing and payment of invoices.
- 6.3 Six grants to five organisations were awarded under the HGT programme. In brief they are:
- **Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.** This project received £50,000 which was matched by the local authority. This funding was used to firstly undertake a review of procurement processes in each department of the local authority. This has been completed; the next phase of the project is to implement a new e-procurement system on a department-by-department basis. Training has also been delivered to suppliers on how to utilise the new system
  - **Conwy County Borough Council.** This project received £28,620 which was match- funded by the local authority. This funding has contributed to a £300,000 project being carried out by the local authority to implement an online system for requisitioning all goods and services procured by the council (replacing a paper-based system) and authorising invoices for payment. The funding from Strand 4 was used to backfill staff so that they can work on the project and to pay the software provider's fees for integrating the system with the accounting and payment systems. The new system was launched and after trialling

in one area of the Council's business was be rolled out over 18 months to the rest of the Council's departments

- **Denbighshire County Borough Council:** This project received £37,146 to implement xchangewales's e-Trading project. This includes the roll out of the e-trading hub, and the e-trading management system. The project will support Denbighshire's corporate objectives around making the council's systems more transparent and delivering efficiencies (through the reduction of transaction costs and reduction of 'maverick spend'). This project received a second grant at a late stage of the programme. This was for £38,000 and was given to support the organisation with technical integration; standalone e-invoices (including development to handle multiple suppliers and unexpected line items in Proactis); and internal integration work including amending interfaces for e-invoices, AP system adaptations and integration with P2P
- **Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council:** This project received £50,000. This was matched by the local authority with a further £20,000 accessed from the Welsh Government's Invest to Save fund. This project aimed to implement an electronic system for requisitioning all goods and services across all of the Council's directorates (replacing a paper-based system) and is similar to the Conwy project. The project has used external consultancy support to assist with delivery
- **NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP).** This organisation initially received £150,000 funding with an additional grant of £150,000 awarded to continue the initial work undertaken (in addition to match-funding from NWSSP). The funding was used to create an 'e-enablement team' of more than ten staff responsible for delivering support to Welsh Health Boards in implementing e-procurement technology, delivering support and training in the use of Oracle, and creating procurement-related business intelligence for NWSSP. The team was also responsible for the expansion of a central e-catalogue of suppliers to the NHS.

6.4 The first four projects were visited in the mid-term evaluation. Given the high level of ESF monitoring they have had over the period of the programme, it was decided that re-visiting them would not be required. An additional grant has been awarded to Denbighshire Council, although this was after the research.

### *Process of bidding*

- 6.5 Organisations were invited to submit business cases to Value Wales to access these funds. Organisations bidding had to provide equivalent match funding. This could be a direct cash contribution or the cost of internal management resources assigned to the project (or a mixture of both).
- 6.6 There were three eligibility criteria for the use of grants:
- support with the technical integration of organisations' internal tools with xchangewales' e-trading tools
  - assignment of project resources from internal staff to support e-trading; and
  - provision of specialist project expertise from an external party to support e-trading.
- 6.7 Value Wales had to approach organisations directly and ask them to bid, as openly advertising the opportunities did not generate a sufficient response. It is unclear whether the findings from the procurement fitness checks were used to steer investments; it is likely that the fitness checks took place too late to be used to identify organisations which could benefit in one of these ways.
- 6.8 Despite the direct approach taken by Value Wales and the fact that a considerable number of public sector organisations are reported by stakeholders to have made slow progress with e-procurement, there were relatively few bids. It was reported in the mid-term evaluation that many organisations lacked capability or capacity to put a bid together or identify the match funding. Many senior procurement leads interviewed as part of the final evaluation corroborated these findings.
- 6.9 The programme team reported that following the mid-term evaluation, the application process was simplified. This was partially successful, as a larger number of bids were received following this change (although it was not possible to fund most of these as they were received too late to be delivered within the programme period).
- 6.10 The mid-term evaluation also found that one of the main barriers to bidding for funding was the limit of £50,000 that was placed on projects. This was removed and the NWSSP's project was awarded a further grant. No other sector consortium came forward with a similar bid.
- 6.11 Once they had decided to bid and ensured that they were eligible, projects generally reported that they received sufficient support from Value Wales in the bidding process. This was even the case for an organisation which started

to write a bid and then decided against doing so. In this case, the main reason why the bid was not submitted was that the bidder did not have sufficient buy-in from the IT and procurement teams in advance of the process. In this case, the IT team had partially managed to resolve the problem that the organisation was considering bidding for HGT funding to address.

#### *Ongoing monitoring*

- 6.12 The mid-term evaluation found that there was very little direct contact from the HGT team after the funding was awarded. Partially based on the findings of the evaluation and the requirements of ESF programmes, it is evident that this has increased in the second half of the programme, with quarterly reports being requested from those who were funded.
- 6.13 The ESF audits required a substantial input from the grant aided organisations including the provision of timesheets, payslips and evidence of match funding. However it was noted by one organisation that the discipline of recording the resources put into these projects would be continued into other areas of their work.

#### **Rationale for bidding and key activities funded**

- 6.14 Strand 4 grants have been used in all cases to fund activities that the organisations found difficult to fund from their internal budgets. Senior procurement leads referred to the funding as providing a “*catalyst*” for high value-added work. They also said that by developing their e-procurement processes, organisations can make other strategic objectives more achievable. Among these were:
- more collaborative sourcing and procurement with other local authorities (which is viewed as being impossible to implement using paper-based systems because “we can’t aggregate any of our spending and police it”)
  - supporting SMEs in providing services to public organisations (for example, by having up-to-date profiles on e-catalogues which buyers can more easily access)
  - having more up-to-date and reliable information on what is being spent by the organisation, including what is committed; and
  - having improved business intelligence which would allow the aggregation of spending and opportunities to control purchasing which

together should bring down the costs of purchasing goods and services.

- 6.15 The funding also allowed the NWSSP to develop an e-enablement team to address difficult logistical challenges in this area over a longer period.
- 6.16 In the interviews with senior procurement leads, very few reported – unprompted – that e-enablement was one of the major challenges facing procurement in Wales. When prompted on this matter, the main challenge that was instead identified was that many of the policy statements and targets related to e-enablement set out by Welsh Government were difficult to translate into tangible actions. Barriers include being able to assign resources to these tasks and opposition to the products that were mandated.
- 6.17 This was thought to be one of the main reasons why organisations did not bid for grants under Strand 4.

#### **Outcomes achieved**

- 6.18 Interviewees who felt able to comment generally reported that progress had been made with e-procurement over the duration of the programme, and that HGT had made a small contribution to this through the grants.
- 6.19 There is evidence of positive outcomes achieved by particular projects. The recipient of the largest grant – NWSSP – has been able to demonstrate a range of valuable outcomes to their organisation. This includes:
- rapidly accelerating work to enable suppliers to e-trade, which has led to an increase in the number of invoices completed electronically (up to 295,000 annually as opposed to 115,000 annually before the project started)
  - increasing the number of staff across NHS Wales using e-tendering
  - improving the quality of data in the organisation's e-catalogue which will lead to the more straightforward application of a category management approach and reduction in maverick buying; and
  - an increase in the use of e-auctions with substantial cash savings being made as a result.
- 6.20 Other, largely strategic outcomes, evident across all funded organisations include a greater awareness of the importance of e-enablement among senior managers and faster progress towards full scale e-procurement and the benefits of this.

## Summary points

6.21 Strand 4 has funded a set of projects which aim to implement e-procurement solutions to Welsh public sector organisations' purchasing activities. Funding for these projects ranged from around £25,000 up to £300,000 which is generally more than matched by the organisation's investment.

- the funding has either accelerated activity that would have taken place at some point in the future (as a result of government targets to increase use of electronic procurement tools in Wales) or funded activity that would not have been funded to the same scale from the organisations' own resources. The funding has been described as a "catalyst" for high added value work
- the projects supported by HGT have contributed to a range of strategic objectives which include more collaborative sourcing and procurement with other local authorities, supporting SMEs in providing services to public organisations, having more up-to-date and reliable information on what is being spent by the organisation, and having improved business intelligence which would allow the aggregation of spending and opportunities to control purchasing
- the bidding process was relatively straightforward with substantial support being provided by Value Wales. After a period of openly advertising the programme, Value Wales had to approach organisations more directly to attract bids and also allowed bids in excess of £50,000. This did not yield any more bids apart from extending the NWSSP (and a later successful bid from Denbighshire Council). Despite a view by some stakeholders that more organisations could have benefitted from the grants to move forward e-procurement (which was also identified in the fitness checks), some senior procurement leads believed that the grants were not attractive as they were tied to specific solutions that were not supported
- support from HGT is believed to be contributing to faster progress with e-procurement and achievement of its benefits. The recipient of by far the largest grant, NWSSP, was able to demonstrate that the support had rapidly accelerated progress with enabling suppliers to e-trade, increased the number of staff across NHS Wales using e-tendering, improved the quality of data in the organisation's e-catalogue (leading to the more straightforward application of a category management approach), and increased the use of e-auctions (with cash savings made as a result).

## **7. Strand 5: Support for innovation projects**

- 7.1 This chapter outlines findings in relation to Strand 5. It sets out the management of the Strand, a description of the main activities which have been funded, and the outcomes that have been achieved to date. It is based on interviews with the key project staff at two of the funded projects and documentary material provided about the grants.

### **Organisation and management of Strand 5**

#### *Purposes of grants*

- 7.2 Strand 5 was the final area of activity to be implemented in March 2014. Programme MI suggests that it has spent a total of £275,000. No information has been provided on the number of other expressions of interest received.
- 7.3 The aim was to use grants to pilot innovative approaches in procurement on a small-scale which could then be used to improve procurement practice in future. The programme planned to link products developed with the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) to allow them to be shared more widely as well as to add value to this programme of activity. This was evident in both of the bids.
- 7.4 It was also the intention that outputs and learning from the strand would be used and shared by the CPF, the Procurement Best Practice Academy and in Procurement Week (key components of Strand 1). The business case for the Strand emphasises that it should address an element of the Welsh Government Procurement Policy Statement which sets out that the Welsh Government:

“Must use innovative, evidence based approaches to procurement to support the design and delivery of efficient and effective public services and to optimise the added value that is delivered to the economy and communities of Wales.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Maximising the Impact of Welsh Procurement Policy - Wales Procurement Policy Statement

### *Summary of supported projects*

- 7.5 To achieve these aims, this Strand provided grant funding of up to £50,000 to projects in public sector organisations. Three projects were supported in two separate organisations. In brief they were:

- **SAIL project at Swansea University**

The project involved Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University (ABMU) Health Board working with innovative IT companies (awarded contracts through a competitive tendering process) to develop IT software which uses data from the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) databank at Swansea University to assist in the planning, procurement and evaluation of health services. This is intended to drive service improvement through better measurement of the impact of procured services on patient outcomes.

The innovative aspect of the procurement process is that the NHS buyer would work with potential suppliers to help them interpret and respond to their requirements. This would be done in a much more proactive way than under normal circumstances, largely in recognition of the complex product they are seeking to procure. By carrying out the procurement in this way, the project team expected to be able to develop a much more suitable software tool in partnership with the supplier.

- **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)**

Clinical staff reported that an ongoing challenge for them was to reduce the replication of work carried out, particularly by nursing staff. Patients reported that they were often asked the same question by different staff. Staff reported that this is because they had no reliable means to record the responses to these questions or draw on other patient information sources.

The team at BCUHB had already secured SBRI funding to procure an IT tool which could more reliably and accountably record the relevant information. However, there were restrictions on what the SBRI funding could be spent on. For example, the team was not able to run a market engagement event or commission support from a procurement consultant using the SBRI resources. The HGT grant was used to fill these gaps with the expectation that this would enable a more effective procurement process to take place.



The second project supported at BCUHB was for £5,876 and contributed to a feasibility study relating to the planned North Wales Brain Injury Service. This project has not been covered in this evaluation as it was awarded after the completion of the research.

#### *Process of bidding and ongoing monitoring*

- 7.6 Both project teams emphasised that they were not aware of the availability of the grants through the Strand 5 advertising. This is despite the programme team reported marketing the funding opportunities through a range of national and regional forums, and directly to the heads of procurement of public sector organisations. The SAIL team, for example, was alerted about possible funding by the HGT programme team during discussions about placements for Strand 3. The process was facilitated by a face-to-face meeting with Value Wales staff to determine the feasibility of the project before deciding whether or not to bid.
- 7.7 Having found out about the grants both projects reported that the bidding process was straightforward. Project managers were able to fill in the form. They were both supported appropriately by the programme team as and when required (although both commented that the support was proactive as well as reactive). Neither team felt the process was particularly time-consuming.
- 7.8 The ongoing management of the funding by the HGT programme team and the monitoring requirements were also believed to be appropriate and both projects described the relationship as a partnership. The reporting requirements to the HGT team included needing to show timescales and progress details and timesheets for project staff to show evidence of match funding, none of which was felt to be overly onerous or time-consuming. One criticism was that the requirement to provide bank statements with all payments which had used HGT funding was made quite late leaving little time to provide it.

#### **Rationale for bidding and key activities funded**

- 7.9 Both projects identified a strong rationale for their projects as well as for the HGT grants. In both cases, the teams were delivering projects which aimed to use data more effectively to improve the experience of those who were using their services. They had the majority of the funding in place, but the HGT grants made key contributions to the success of their procurement.
- 7.10 Owing to the complexity of what they were procuring, both project teams felt that they needed to engage with the market in a different way to what they

would normally have done. The aim of this enhanced market engagement was to deliver a more thorough explanation of the services they required from potential providers and to work in partnership with them to develop more collaborative responses.

- 7.11 Both projects also emphasised that external expertise in procurement was required because of the complexity of what they were procuring. Neither had this in-house. For BCUHB, there was a need for clinical expertise to be involved in the procurement process as well.
- 7.12 In BCUHB's case, the HGT funding was therefore used to:
- hire a consultant with experience of working with and procuring services using SBRI funding (and extra capacity to support the existing procurement team)
  - run a supplier event
  - include a clinician on the project team; and
  - pay unanticipated fees (in this case for a solicitor).
- 7.13 For the SAIL project, the HGT funding was used to fund staff time to work more closely with a group of potential suppliers to explain their needs more clearly.

### **Outcomes achieved**

- 7.14 Both projects have not yet been completed. In the case of the SAIL project, they are in the demonstrator phase of their project until June 2015. Reflecting this, interviewees emphasised that they only had evidence of early outcomes and that the HGT grant had been used to supplement a larger funding pot. In the case of BCUHB, the team is working with two suppliers to develop the desired product, following an extensive period of engagement with the market.
- 7.15 Nevertheless, interviewees from both projects emphasised that the HGT contribution was critical to the progress made so far. In the case of BCUHB, the HGT grant enabled them to hire a consultant so that they were able to develop effective tendering documentation and *"frame the exam questions"* they were asking of potential suppliers. Similarly, the HGT funding enabled a clinical perspective to be included in the team which will ensure that the end beneficiary of any tool developed – the patients – will be central to the process. Other outcomes include the fact that relationships now exist between BCUHB and potential suppliers which may be useful in future marketing exercises.

7.16 For the SAIL project, interviewees emphasised that the project will save money for ABMU through better service planning. For the procurement process itself, involvement in the SBRI and HGT projects has challenged the traditional view of public sector procurement; as one project stakeholder reported:

“It does not have to be about buying a product off the shelf; it can be about partnership working with the commercial sector to develop solutions”.

7.17 This is one of the first times this principle has been put into practice in a procurement process at ABMU.

7.18 The tendering process they have been through has been a learning experience for the suppliers as well. It was reported by interviewees that even the unsuccessful suppliers have learned from the process and will be able to use this in future bids to the NHS or other clients. For staff at AMBU, in general, the process was reported to have

“Freed everyone up to work differently” and “there’s been a change from what we want to do, to what can suppliers do for us”.

7.19 They noted too that the process has helped innovative small companies to compete with larger providers. Two Welsh companies were successful in winning the demonstrator project from ABMU. They would not have been likely to bid had they used traditional procurement processes. The successful companies have gone on to win other contracts in the health sector and are looking to grow and develop their business as a result.

### **Summary points**

7.20 Strand 5 was the final area of activity to be implemented starting in March 2014. It has since invested £275,000 to pilot innovative approaches to procurement on a small scale.

- this Strand has only supported three projects. These were:
  - the SAIL project at Swansea University which procured IT companies to develop software which will assist in the planning, procurement and evaluation of health services. In this project, the NHS buyer has worked closely with potential suppliers to help them interpret and respond to their requirements
  - two projects at BCUHB. One is procuring a tool which can manage patient data more effectively for patients and staff. The HGT grant has been used to enhance the procurement process

by funding a market engagement event and consultancy support for the use of SBRI resources. The second, which is not covered by this evaluation, is supporting a feasibility study for a new brain injury service in North Wales.

- both projects included in the evaluation expressed a strong rationale for bidding to the HGT programme for grant funding. While they had the majority of funding in place for procurement, the HGT grant enhanced the procurement processes. Owing to the complexity of what was being procured, both projects felt they needed to engage the market in a different way in order to get a response from potential providers that would meet their needs
- with this strong rationale in mind, and the apparent efforts to advertise the project to heads of procurement, it is unclear why there have only been two projects funded. Neither project was made aware of the grants through Strand 5 advertising. Having identified the funding opportunity both teams reported that the bidding process was straightforward
- while both projects are incomplete and the HGT grant has been used to supplement other funding, project staff reported that the HGT funded activities have led to new relationships developing between the buyers and potential suppliers. Within the project teams, this has also challenged the traditional view of public sector procurement.

## 8. Conclusions and recommendations

- 8.1 This chapter presents an assessment of the programme in response to the research objectives set out in section 0. This informs a set of strand-specific and general recommendations for taking forward the programme in Value Wales's work and in the consideration of any future activities with similar aims by the Welsh Government and other parts of the public sector.

### Consideration of the strand-specific research questions

- 8.2 In the table below each of the research questions for the programme strands is addressed drawing on the findings presented from the research.

**Table 8.1 A consideration of the strand-specific research questions**

Research question	A summary of the evidence
<b>Strand 1</b>	
Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to raise awareness of procurement and identify and disseminate best practice. Have the activities under this strand been delivered as intended? Has the target audience participated as intended?	<i>Strand 1 has supported a mix of activities which aim to raise the profile of procurement and disseminate best practice. The PBPA, CPF and the guidance document on joint bidding have all made the expected level of progress. Each has taken place in the manner intended, in the timescales expected. The programme's support for Procurement Week and the Procurement Awards has also allowed these initiatives to expand substantially. The main intended activity which has not been delivered is the engagement with senior public sector stakeholders outside the area of procurement. This is a large gap given the central aim of the Strand to raise awareness; commonly it was noted that activities in this area have been quite focused on the procurement profession and that a broader focus would have been beneficial (including commissioners of services who may not necessarily consider themselves to be procurement specialists).</i>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
What are the views of participants and other key stakeholders?	<i>Senior procurement leads and stakeholders generally consider Strand 1 to have delivered most of the short term outcomes that would be expected at this stage. They corroborate that this includes: the generation and sharing of good practice, drawing in the Welsh research community and focusing Masters research on assessing procurement issues, and a raised profile of procurement skills (although difficult to quantify). They confirm that the programme has not increased engagement with senior executives in the public sector. They also confirm that this Strand has enabled the implementation of activities that are needed but which have lacked resources to put into action. The Strand is also likely to leave a programme legacy in the form of the CPF, guidance document for SMEs and the PBPA. While the longer-term impact of these initiatives may be substantial, there is little evidence of this as yet.</i>
<b>Strand 2</b>	
Review the inputs and activities that have taken place under the short course programme to develop the procurement skills and capabilities of existing procurement staff.	<p><i>Programme records show that Strand 2 has used around £971,000 to deliver training courses, awareness raising meetings and workshops with over 4,600 attendances; the programme database holds records for over 600 of these attendees. Even so, targets have not been achieved, partly owing to failing to collect the relevant documentation from participants. This may also be partly because training courses were not provided throughout the programme but largely in two tranches. Training was taken up by procurement specialists and others across the public sector but this was uneven.</i></p> <p><i>Feedback on the delivery of the training is generally positive with some improvement evident in the second half of the training programme over the first. Training has generally enabled most participants to learn new knowledge and skills. The courses have covered a mix of procurement skill areas ranging from pre-tendering such as drafting tender specifications to post-tender negotiation and contract management. However interviewees generally question the extent to which the training has equipped staff with high-level commercial skills.</i></p>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
Have the activities under the short course programme been delivered as intended? Has the take-up of the short course programme been as successful as intended?	<i>The programme has not managed to reach the target number of individual participants (816 have been recorded against a target of 1,396). This is despite the fact that the programme has exceeded the target for the number of courses that beneficiaries have completed (1,544 against a target of 1,047). There are several likely explanations: the original targets agreed were too high for the number of eligible procurement professionals working in the Convergence area; the programme has not sufficiently engaged with non-procurement professionals (around half of those engaged were not in specialist procurement roles); the programme has not sufficiently engaged with all parts of the Convergence area (the programme database shows that beneficiaries from several local authority areas were underrepresented including Torfaen and Carmarthenshire) or to the same degree with all sub-sectors within the public sector. The HGT Project team stated that the take-up was as high as anticipated, however Equal Opportunities Form and Participant Information Forms were not collected for all beneficiaries.</i>
How successful has the short course programme been in developing skills and capabilities of existing staff? What are the views of delegates of the short course programme?	<i>The training courses delivered by the programme have been successful in improving participants' confidence in their job, enabling them to take actions in the workplace and to better support their non-procurement colleagues. Fewer of the people trained have used the knowledge and skills gained to make changes in their workplace. For example, nearly three-fifths (56 per cent) of survey respondents reported that the training course had not enabled them to take actions to change contracting procedures in their organisations.</i>
What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?	<i>The changes made to the short course programme are believed by stakeholders and senior procurement leads to have made the programme of training more targeted on needs in the second half of the programme, with Value Wales actively ensuring they more closely matched the perceived skill needs of procurement professionals (as defined in the competency framework). Since the mid-term evaluation, there is evidence that the programme has focused</i>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
	<i>more closely on procurement specialists (they made up 50 per cent of the overall number of beneficiaries at the final evaluation, and 43 per cent at mid-term). In terms of the short-term outcomes generated by the training, there is some evidence to suggest that in the second half of the programme this has been more successful in improving participants' knowledge, skills, confidence in their job and productivity. There is also evidence that the training has been better targeted at employees' skill gaps. However, there is no evidence from the survey that longer-term outcomes (such as implementing the learning to make changes in their workplace) have been stronger in the second half of the programme. This may reflect the fact that the barriers to making changes in the workplace are the same.</i>
<b>Strand 3</b>	
Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to deliver the Trainee Procurement Executive Programme (TPEP). Have the activities under TPEP been delivered as intended?	<i>Strand 3 of the programme has funded and largely delivered a high-profile programme of work to recruit new entrants into the profession. Despite some delivery issues – which in part contributed to a substantial proportion of the trainees leaving the programme earlier than intended – TPEP has successfully supported the majority of trainees into employment in the Welsh public sector procurement profession. Many are likely to progress within these roles into more senior positions. For the remaining trainees who will not have completed TPEP once HGT is finished, there is a risk to their future progression, as their placements and training is likely to finish with no progression plan in place.</i>
How successful has the process been for the trainees implementing what they have learnt in training into delivering projects?	<i>There is good evidence to suggest that the mix of training courses that the trainees have undertaken provided them with useful skills which can be used in professional situations. While many commented that the training was not immediately useful (for example the ILM and CMI training were thought to have limited use at first), several of those who have progressed into permanent roles have identified examples of where the learning was used. The Prince 2 training</i>



Research question	A summary of the evidence
	<i>was valued as this methodology is commonly used in the public sector. Most trainees were able to cite numerous examples of using the CIPS training in the workplace. Equally, the placements provided most trainees with experience of collaborative procurement which has been recognised by some of the former trainees to have been of value in the new roles they have.</i>
What are the views of the TPEP students on the programme in terms of its delivery and benefits?	<i>In general trainees believe that the programme had enabled them to develop a stronger CV than they would otherwise have done in a traineeship in one organisation if these had existed. It had also led most of them to develop an interest in procurement as a long-term career option that they otherwise would not have chosen (most had previously not considered a career in this area at the point of applying). As a result, they largely attributed their current career position to the programme's inputs. However there were common concerns expressed by the trainees and their placement line managers and mentors about the delivery model which are believed to have affected the benefits expected. This includes limited action being taken where poor quality placements were identified (although the programme team did remove trainees from poor placements in some cases); poorly-timed training in relation to trainees' professional development; insufficient matching of placements with trainees' career aspirations, skills, and geographic location; and, a lack of clarity over employment options on completion of the programme.</i>
Have the inputs and activities led to the desired results and outcomes over the short-term (identifying new talent for the procurement profession in Wales) and medium-term	<i>Programme data show that so far around four-fifths of trainees have progressed into public sector procurement roles in the Welsh public sector. This can be attributed by the trainees and other interviewees to the programme's mix of training and work experience. Evidence collected from interviews with trainees, their line managers, and senior procurement leads also finds that many are committed to public sector careers if the opportunities are there for them to progress with several already progressing to roles which should enable further progression and a contribution to strategic procurement. For the remaining four trainees on the programme, there</i>

<b>Research question</b>	<b>A summary of the evidence</b>
(progress of the graduates)?	<i>is a risk that they will not be able to progress into relevant roles on completing the programme. At present, they report that once the funding finishes, they will not be able to return to their original roles, nor will their CIPS training be complete.</i>
What is the likelihood of achieving the intended long-term outcome – that the graduates will become the public service procurement leaders of the future?	<i>Interviews with senior procurement leads, stakeholders and line managers indicate that many trainees have the aptitude and ambition to progress into senior procurement roles. The programme has helped them to develop a CV which has enabled them to enter the profession and progress (often quite rapidly in a short time scale) at an early stage of their career. A few interviewees have said that for some of the most skilled and ambitious, their future progress will be limited more by the roles available to them in the Welsh public sector than their skills and ambition.</i>
What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?	<i>TPEP has made the expected level of progress between the mid-term and final evaluations by replacing students who left the programme with a new cohort. It is evident that the programme has recruited the target number of trainees (although efforts must be made to ensure that the final cohort are supported following completion of the programme), achieved a more even geographic spread of placements (more have taken place in North Wales than in the first half of the programme, for example), and ensured a wider mix of the type of organisations which have hosted placements (although a large proportion of placements have taken place in Value Wales for example). Stakeholders emphasised that steps were taken in the second half of the programme to improve placement selection and communication.</i>
<b>Strand 4</b>	
Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to target change	<i>Strand 4 aimed to provide funding to Welsh public sector organisations to implement e-procurement solutions in their organisations. The Strand distributed funding to public sector organisations requiring investment to catalyse activity in the area of e-procurement. Where this</i>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
management and procurement management expertise in order to accelerate and expand the implementation of e-procurement. Have the activities to target expertise been delivered as intended?	<i>has been done on a larger scale, with time set aside to allow development, the outcomes achieved are significant. There is limited evidence that the funding has been used to get collaborative work in sub-sectors off the ground except in the NHS and in Merthyr Tydfil</i>
Have the change management and procurement management experts been identified and reached as intended? What are the views of the change management and procurement management experts that have participated in the e-procurement expansion?	<i>There is limited evidence available from the few experts funded in the grants made about the role of the change management and procurement management experts in the delivery of this Strand. If several of the projects funded had employed change management people, there might be evidence of faster progress with implementation to achieve the benefits of e-procurement. In the NWSSP example, the funding allowed staff interested in service improvement and e-procurement to be brought together to address challenges in this area; this was identified as a key driver of the success of this project.</i>
How successful have these activities been in meeting intended outcomes?	<i>There is evidence that the grants have supported public sector organisations to push forward with e-enablement projects. This has led to positive outcomes in organisations including accelerating work to enable suppliers to e-trade, increasing the competence of staff to use e-tendering, and improving data quality and business intelligence available to support</i>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
	<i>procurement. The evidence though is that these are not being achieved on a wide scale since the programme has supported a small number of organisations.</i>
What has been the progress made on this strand between the mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation?	<i>In relation to the large grant awarded to NWSSP, there has been significant measurable progress in terms of the scope and success of the activities that the team has been able to achieve. Apart from this, one grant to Denbighshire Council has been made (although after the research was completed). There is limited additional evidence of outcomes for other projects.</i>
<b>Strand 5</b>	
Review the inputs and activities that have taken place to encourage innovation in public sector-procurement. Have the activities been delivered as intended?	<i>This Strand was approved for delivery following the mid-term evaluation report. It has made three investments to support larger procurement exercises to implement innovative procurement mechanisms crucial to the success of their ambitions; two are covered by this evaluation. In both of the projects included, the funding has allowed innovative procurement activities to take place that otherwise would not. These were innovative for the organisations (both were Health Boards). Feedback suggests this funding has not been well promoted and so it is unclear if there was an opportunity for a wider impact. It was the final Strand to be implemented; by leaving it late, the programme may have also limited the possible responses. It is also unclear the extent to which, at this stage, the innovative practice supported here has been shared (for example through the CPF or PBPA).</i>
What are the views of those who have participated in the innovation initiatives?	<i>In both cases, participants have valued the support from the programme, highlighting that bidding and project management requirements were proportionate to the funding awarded. Staff involved in both projects believe that the HGT support added value to the procurement activity they were already planning, filling gaps in the process which they could fund.</i>
How successful have these	<i>Both projects emphasised that the HGT support had been critical to the progress they had made</i>

Research question	A summary of the evidence
activities been in meeting intended outcomes?	<i>so far. For BCUHB, HGT support had enabled the project team to access more clinician input into the project, obtain external procurement expertise, and run a supplier event. For the SAIL project, the HGT input had helped them work more closely with suppliers (who were SMEs) and have a greater input into the product being developed. Both emphasised that the innovative processes used in the pre-tender stage had changed the way they worked with suppliers, and as such enabled companies who otherwise would not have been able to bid to win the contract (as they were SMEs).</i>

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### **Cross-cutting themes and general questions**

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Have the Participant Information form and Equal Opportunities form successfully captured relevant data required by WEFO? What processes are in place for capturing the information received by the team from the above mentioned forms? Has this information been utilised to measure the projects appropriate indicators?

*The programme team manages a database which provides sufficient data for meeting the data requirements of WEFO. Beneficiaries of grants awarded through the programme have also identified that they have met the data reporting requirements. Developing effective processes for collecting this sort of information from lots of organisations is challenging. Over the first two years of the programme, for example, very few participant information forms were collected which meant that the programme had to retrospectively gather this information where possible. The current HGT programme management team identified that they struggled to collect the relevant forms from all who have benefited from training / awareness raising sessions through HGT. This is likely to be because many of the project outputs come from workshops, meetings and other forums which would not generally be considered as training interventions and had a lot of different organisers (compared to the training which was largely delivered by one contractor or Value Wales). It was also reported that the detailed information required of participants discouraged many from responding to requests for the forms, thereby decreasing the response rate.*

*The indicators agreed with WEFO provide some useful evidence for understanding the overall impact of HGT (for example, it*

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**Research question****A summary of the evidence**

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*provides a framework for understanding the extent to which the programme has supported equal opportunities through collecting data on the characteristics of participants in the training). The programme team also took several steps to meet the cross-cutting theme requirements for sustainability. This included the trainees being encouraged to travel together, strand 2 training being delivered sub-regionally where possible, courses tailored to attendees' capabilities and abilities, and accessible public sector buildings used for delivery of training.*

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## **Overview of the programme's achievements**

- 8.3 Five Strands of the HGT programme have been implemented. Aspects of the Strand 1 activity to raise awareness of the role of public sector procurement and to share best practice within the sector have been delivered successfully (the CPF, PBPA, Procurement Week, guidance document for collaborative bidding); other parts of this strand have not been delivered (awareness raising meetings with public sector leaders). The training for existing staff (Strand 2) and the traineeships (Strand 3) have been taken forward successfully, for the most part. Grants to assist public sector organisations to adopt and use e-procurement tools and to develop innovative approaches to recruitment appear to have been more slowly and less widely taken up than expected (Strands 4 and 5).

The HGT programme has achieved most of its ESF targets except for the number of placements to take place (65 took place, not the intended 72), and the number of different staff who have taken part in the programme (823, not the intended 1,396). Given limited activity outside of Strand 3 in the first two years of the programme, this target was reported to be extremely challenging. Gathering the relevant information from training participants has also been problematic so not all the training activity that has taken place can be counted against these targets.

- 8.4 Looking beyond these targets to include the outputs and outcomes in the programme logic model, it is evident that:
- good practice ideas and new tools and guidance have been generated
  - training participants have generally improved their knowledge and skills; many have applied what they have gained
  - the majority of TPEP trainees have gone on to work in the public sector; many have the competencies and experience to progress into more senior procurement roles; and
  - more public sector organisations utilise e-procurement solutions and several have experimented with innovative procurement activities.
- 8.5 It is also evident that the programme has made a contribution to the objectives of Priority 4 ESF funding. Its support for workshops, skills training and enabling e-procurement are evidently contributing to public sector collaboration in procurement in many public sector organisations. In this respect too, the programme has contributed to the goals of the Welsh Government in improving procurement to achieve better value from

procurement and public funding for services. The programme's support for trainees and up-skilling public sector employees who are engaged in procurement is evidently contributing to building the capacity of the public sector workforce to be more effective, although there remain areas where significant progress is required. Participants have gained relevant knowledge and skills and the trainees have brought new entrants who are quickly gaining competences to work in the sector.

- 8.6 In the mid-term evaluation it was difficult to discern the impact the programme is having on the organisations which have participated in enabling collaboration and carrying out more effective purchasing. There is more evidence available to the final evaluation of progress in this area. HGT has also contributed to and worked well with other aspects of Value Wales' work in this area. There are examples of this across the programme, such as the procurement fitness checks identifying issues in organisations which the PBPA has aimed to address.
- 8.7 The degree to which the programme has added value beyond that which would have happened without the programme varies:
- for the small value grants awarded through Strands 4 and 5, they have generally made contributions to wider goals rather than being the key factor in their progression, except in the NHS where the grant was much larger and over a longer period
  - there are sub-sector gaps in the spread of Strand 2 training and Strand 3 placements
  - the impact of the Strand 2 training on activities in the workplace varies with barriers in place to this occurring.

### Implementation of the mid-term review recommendations

- 8.8 0 outlines the recommendations made about the HGT programme in the mid-term evaluation and an assessment of the extent to which they have been implemented.

**Table 8.2 Review of implementation of mid-term evaluation recommendations**

Mid-term recommendations	Review of implementation
In relation to <b>Strand 2</b> , the mid-term evaluation recommended that steps should be taken to ensure that:	<i>The picture here is mixed. Findings from the Strand 2 survey, interviews with key staff, and analysis of programme MI suggest that since the mid-term evaluation, training has reached</i>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training opportunities were available for all relevant organisations and staff within these organisations (including those that are not procurement specialists)</li> <li>• courses are more clearly marked for target learners</li> <li>• future training is focused on skill gaps identified by the competency framework</li> <li>• MI is collected which allows the analysis of appropriateness of take-up and the relationship between depth of training activity and learner outcomes; and</li> <li>• workshops better demonstrate action learning and contributions to networks and collaborative purchasing initiatives</li> </ul>	<p><i>a broader range of organisations and areas of the country, and has been more targeted at beneficiaries' skill gaps, implying that the offer is more closely attuned to the training needs of organisations (this may be due to the delivery agent more clearly targeting their offer, although this was not stated).</i></p> <p><i>The programme database has also allowed the survey to be completed for each course undertaken, rather than a composite view from learners who may have completed several courses whereas others had completed one. This has allowed a limited analysis of the impact of particular courses. However the programme database has not allowed sufficient interrogation of the impact of the wide range of workshops delivered. As a result, it is not possible to assess the impact of these.</i></p>
<p>In relation to <b>Strand 3</b>, the mid-term evaluation recommended that the programme team broaden the spread of organisations hosting placements, and ensure that they were all focused on productive activities for trainees. To achieve these goals, it was recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the process for selecting placement hosts should be explained to all potential bidders more clearly</li> <li>• fewer placements are hosted</li> </ul>	<p><i>The data for the final evaluation show that the Welsh Government and its agencies were the main hosts of trainees; Value Wales and NHS Shared Services Partnerships were the hosts of over one-quarter of trainees. Therefore the links between key organisations and TPEP remained in place following the mid-term evaluation. Programme stakeholders reported that new processes for managing the trainees were implemented following the mid-term evaluation. The bidding process was also made more transparent. However it is evident that the group of organisations involved has diversified. In total 33 different organisations hosted trainees</i></p>

<p>in Value Wales and a wider range of organisations be involved; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information about the placement and the trainee should be provided to placement organisations in advance of their arrival</li> </ul>	<p><i>compared to 18 at the mid-term evaluation. Moreover, a wider geographic spread of placements was evident, including in North Wales. Interviews with trainees, line managers and those involved with managing the programme also found some improvement in the degree to which placements were planned and supported.</i></p>
<p>In relation to <b>Strand 4</b>, the main recommendation was for the programme to award organisations larger grants and to advertise the opportunities more widely.</p>	<p><i>It is evident in the grant to NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership that awarding larger grants allows the achievement of much more ambitious goals. The flexible nature of the grant allowed staff with an interest in service improvement and e-procurement to be seconded into a core e-enablement team which led work in the area. Programme data suggest that only two further grants were distributed in the second half of the programme, which implies both a lack of demand and possibly an insufficient degree of marketing the opportunities. This was despite the programme team simplifying the bidding process which was reported to be one of the main barriers to bidding.</i></p>

## Factors affecting the outcomes achieved

- 8.9 Drawing on the interviews and survey responses as well as the analysis above to address the research questions, it is possible to identify what are the factors which have contributed to the achievement reported so far of the programme's outputs and outcomes. Some of these relate to the activities and how they were developed and delivered, and some relate to factors beyond the control of the HGT programme team. These are set out in 0.

**Table 8.3 Factors which have affected the achievement of HGT outcomes**

Facilitating	Hindering
<b>Strand 1</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strength of the Welsh universities in this area of study, particularly in relation to research</li> <li>• pre-existing innovative ideas such as the PBPA, with experts ready to lead on this</li> <li>• prior existence of Procurement Week, which HGT could add value to</li> <li>• Welsh Government political impetus which was reported to have done much to raise the profile of procurement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuing limited interest and engagement from public sector executives in the programme and wider procurement goals</li> <li>• the challenge of quantifying progress in this area, which reduces the ability of the programme to describe outcomes and impact to key stakeholders at this stage</li> </ul>
<b>Strand 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an appetite for funded training in procurement from staff working in the sector to address skill gaps with few opportunities provided by employers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hiatus in the availability of short courses</li> <li>• lower than expected demand for training from parts of the public sector (including the NHS and central government)</li> </ul>

Facilitating	Hindering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy changes and legislative changes which have generated a demand for training to improve procurement outcomes</li> <li>• work to develop a competency framework and carry out procurement fitness checks in parts of the public sector have clarified potential skills gaps and needs</li> </ul>	<p>and agencies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for some participants, an overly passive style of delivery and materials that were not good which may have decreased the depth of learning experienced</li> <li>• insufficient opportunities and resources in beneficiaries' workplaces to put learning into practice or to make the desired changes to existing practice</li> <li>• a lack of courses focused on post-tender skills (which is where gaps were frequently reported)</li> </ul>
<b>Strand 3</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• senior procurement leads and stakeholders supportive of the need for this strand because of a shortage of skilled and qualified procurement staff and opportunities for new entrants</li> <li>• shortage of staff in many public sector organisations to undertake collaborative procurement activities which meant that many organisations were keen to host a trainee</li> <li>• high profile of TPEP which means it is well-known by senior procurement staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the programme was unable to promise trainees employment upon completion coupled with trainees' perception that they will be competing against each other for limited full-time posts, which encouraged many not to complete their traineeship</li> <li>• a few poor placement experiences due to matching and inadequate support and direction in the host organisation which caused a few trainees to consider leaving the programme or finding the work unrewarding</li> <li>• long-term progression may be limited by the lack of strategically influential procurement roles available</li> </ul>

Facilitating	Hindering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high quality and commitment of many of the trainees</li> <li>• a comprehensive, advanced and desirable set of training courses which attracted high quality applicants</li> <li>• training which generally contributed to the goals of the placements</li> <li>• mentoring provision valued by trainees</li> <li>• support from HEIs, including the provision of a summer school for trainees which allowed them to network</li> <li>• a rounded professional experience and suite of training which contributed to the trainees developing high quality CVs; this, in turn, supported most into full-time employment in the Welsh public sector</li> </ul>	<p>without further organisational change and recognition of procurement skills throughout the public sector</p>
<b>Strand 4</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organisations with supportive senior teams able to move forward with e-procurement with more success with the grants</li> <li>• a supportive policy environment</li> <li>• larger grants enabling longer-term and more ambitious plans to be put in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need for organisations to provide and record match funding, and the high level of detail required for defrayment evidence</li> <li>• restrictive eligibility criteria which require projects to utilise particular tools</li> <li>• original limit to the funding</li> <li>• the need for bidders to get buy-in from numerous parts of</li> </ul>

Facilitating	Hindering
	<p>their organisation as e-enablement typically requires wide engagement; most would have benefitted from additional support for change management</p>
<b>Strand 5</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the ability of the HGT funding to be used to supplement other (larger) sources of funding</li> <li>the flexibility of the HGT funding which meant it could be used for a range of purposes (including funding of pre-tendering suppliers events and consultancy time)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the relatively small overall sums available meant the programme was inevitably only funding small proportions of larger projects</li> <li>the low awareness of this funding stream across relevant organisations may have reduced the number and quality of applications</li> </ul>

## **The impact of the programme**

8.10 It is generally acknowledged by stakeholders and senior procurement leads that progress has been made towards addressing skills needs, recruiting new entrants, and enabling e-procurement. A set of factors which has driven this progress was identified. A growing political focus on procurement and the role it can play in contributing to other policy goals was reported to have drawn attention to the challenges and this may have created a more beneficial environment for progress to be made. The emergence of the National Procurement Service and Procurement Board were also identified as influential in drawing attention to the challenges which HGT has sought to address. The work of Value Wales to carry out the fitness checks and develop the competency framework was also reported to be starting to have a positive impact as well as complementing the training and grants offered through HGT. Within this mix of political, institutional, and policy change, HGT was described as being *“in the middle of it all, feeding the system”*.

8.11 The programme has:

- contributed to an increased awareness of procurement among the wider public sector, although a limited level of engagement beyond procurement specialists may reduce the likelihood of the longer-term ambitions of procurement professionals having a higher status in public sector organisations being achieved
- supported specialist procurement professionals and other staff involved in procurement exercises to fill skill gaps. There is evidence that they have not been able to use the new learning in all cases to make improvements to procurement practice in their organisations
- developed a cohort of new procurement professionals working in the Welsh public sector. The evidence suggests that many are likely to progress into leadership roles using the skills developed in the TPEP programme
- supported public sector organisations to capitalise on the benefits of e-procurement solutions in isolated (albeit largely successful but ongoing) cases
- supported public sector organisations to develop approaches to procurement that they have previously not used. There is limited evidence to suggest that these approaches are innovative for the

Health Boards given the support but the learning needs to be shared and used by other public sector organisations.

8.12 Despite this, much still needs to be done to see the difference envisaged in the Welsh Government's strategy for procurement. In particular:

- there is still believed to be a general shortage of skilled procurement professionals in Wales and substantial skill gaps in the public sector staff who work in specialist procurement roles or have responsibilities for commissioning goods, works and services; and
- there is a variable degree of progress across the country across all the relevant indicators measures (as has been identified in the procurement fitness checks).

8.13 Stakeholders also describe a professional environment where insufficient focus is put into supplier development or engagement prior to a tendering process or on negotiation and contract management after a tendering process. Instead, driven mainly by compliance with regulation and its observance (often with misconceptions about requirements), most resources are expended on the tendering phase. This is thought to reduce the overall potential value of the procurement function to wider organisational outcomes.

### **Lessons learned and recommendations**

8.14 There are a few ways in which each strand could be managed differently in future to improve effectiveness and the outcomes achieved.

8.15 In relation to **Strand 1**, there is likely to be value in continuing to support and promote the key activities established so far, as the CPF, Procurement Week and PBPA mature, their role in identifying and sharing best practice, and ensuring policy in this area is informed by evidence will grow. Other recommendations for action in this area are to:

- collect data on the impact of Procurement Week, for example, a participant feedback e-survey 6-8 weeks after the event would help to shape the future of this event
- track the use of the MSc dissertations and assess the impact they have on policy, the students themselves, and the institutions they are part of
- start assessing how the guidance document on joint bidding is used and by whom. This could start at the same time as the case studies on its usage are launched



- identify more appropriate means of engaging senior managers in all public sector organisations. This could include attending meetings they already go to (for example, ADSS / WLGA events).
- 8.16 In relation to **Strand 2**, there is a continued need for short course training among both specialists and non-specialists, and a high-level of agreement of where the main skill gaps are. Steps to take should include:
- structuring training into pathways / levels / specialists or non-specialists so that courses are better targeted and potential beneficiaries can identify the entry points for them and progression routes on to other courses
  - developing a 'myth buster course' on EU regulations
  - reviewing current materials and spreading courses throughout the year.
- 8.17 To increase the potential impact of any training delivered under Strand 2, further work should be done to understand the barriers that beneficiaries face to implementing change in their organisations following training. The CPF could be used to carry out this research.
- 8.18 In relation to **Strand 3**, the programme should make efforts to ensure that trainees still on TPEP are supported to complete their CIPS training, and to find employment. Efforts should also be made to:
- progress the fast track development of the 'graduates' of the scheme and any other recent CIPS level 4 achievers within the Welsh public sector
  - set up alumni events such as talks, social events, more summer school/special training opportunities alongside funding support for staff prepared to study for higher level CIPS courses
  - provide alumni with ongoing networking opportunities with senior procurement staff and director-level roles in the public sector. The aim here should be to highlight to the alumni, the continued progression opportunities within the profession.
- 8.19 In relation to **Strands 4 and 5**, the programme should provide access to change management funding to speed up implementation and grants for collaborative activity across sub-sectors or between them (or more importantly to get in place permanent collaborative teams working on innovative/large scale purchasing within the sectors or in sub-regions).
- 8.20 In relation to any future programme of activity to build on the achievements of HGT:

- there remains a strong case for a follow-on programme to build on what has been achieved by HGT. In order for any future programme to be aligned with Welsh Government policy, the business case for such a programme should be structured around the areas of action established in the Wales Procurement Policy Statement
- the evidence from this evaluation suggests that there is a particular need for any follow-on programme to:
  - include a scoping phase which will allow the programme team to develop set of realistic targets, with a robust method in place for gathering participant information from programme inception
  - be the result of wide consultation with key stakeholders from across the public sector, the NPS and Procurement Board
  - focus resources on those organisations which are in most need (as identified by the fitness checks)
  - target organisations to get projects that can be grant aided given the resistance to taking up grants
  - prioritise engagement with senior public sector executives outside of the procurement profession. This should highlight the work of procurement professionals and areas they can potentially move into. The engagement should also include discussions on how they can support the development of more advanced career pathways for procurement professionals
  - deliver training which will support existing procurement staff to develop a more commercially-focused skillset (including a focus on contract management and engaging with a supplier base)
  - deliver training to non-procurement specialists who have responsibility for commissioning services and managing contractors
  - market the procurement profession to students and other potential new entrants, including those outside the public sector
- the evaluation has identified broad-based support for a follow-on programme to TPEP. Value Wales should build the following features into the design of a follow-on programme. It should:

- consider whether to provide participants with an even wider mix of experience (including outside the public sector)
- offer a further six months paid employment in Value Wales on completion of the programme while participants look for permanent employment (although retain sufficient flexibility within this to meet the evolving aspirations of trainees)
- use learning from HGT to re-design any programme of extra training offered, ensuring that it is delivered at more appropriate times in participants' development.

## **Annex A Documents and programme MI reviewed**

This annex contains a list of programme and strand-specific documents and MI reviewed in the preparation of this scoping report.

### **Programme level**

- Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent Business Plan – March 2013.
- Re-profiling spreadsheet.

### **Strand 1**

- Business case in support of application for funding awareness raising initiatives.
- Draft Competency framework.
- Creative Procurement Forum – Terms of Reference.
- Creative Procurement Forum – Advertising flyer.
- Creative Procurement Forum – meeting minutes.
- Procurement Best Practice Academy – forthcoming events.
- Procurement Best Practice Academy – advertising material.
- Background information on the Joint Bidding Guide.
- Procurement week attendance data.

### **Strand 2**

- Database of training courses delivered; Database of beneficiary details.

### **Strand 3**

- Database of collaborative agreements, dissemination initiatives, and savings and benefits accrued by trainees.
- List of trainees and the experience gained in placements.
- Trainee experience database.

### **Strand 4**

- E-procurement business case - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

- E-procurement Business Case - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.
- E-procurement Business Case -South Wales Police.
- NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – progress reports.
- NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – bid document.

## **Strand 5**

- Business case for activation of strand 5.
- Business case in support of the application for funding under the innovation strand – Swansea University.
- Business case in support of the application for funding under the innovation strand – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.
- MI for Small Business Research Initiative.

## Annex B Logic model and evaluation framework

Figure AB.1 Logic model



**Table AB.1 Evaluation framework**

<b>Element of logic model</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Tool / method of evidence collection</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	Evidence base for activities selected	<i>Scoping interviews; document and MI review; stakeholder interviews; interviews with / surveys of training beneficiaries.</i>
<b>Inputs</b>	Funding allocations and spend	<i>Document and MI review.</i>
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>An assessment of progress against the key targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strand 1: an assessment of the number of individuals engaged in awareness raising activities and their position within organisation; collation and analysis of key outputs of best practice academy and creative procurement forum</li> <li>• Strand 2: calculation of the number of short and longer up-skilling courses completed, and an assessment of the number of learners who have undertaken the training (including key demographic data)</li> <li>• Strand 3: assessment of the number of secondments completed, number of trainees, key areas of experience gained and training completed</li> <li>• Strand 4: a calculation of the funds allocated and spent, and the activities supported by this funding</li> <li>• Strand 5: an assessment of the main outputs of the two grants awarded and the research funded</li> </ul>	<i>Document and MI review.</i>

Element of logic model	Indicator	Tool / method of evidence collection
Short-term outcomes	<u>Strand 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>senior public sector leaders have improved awareness of the strategic goals that procurement functions can contribute to</li> <li>public sector organisations utilise some of the products / evidence generated</li> </ul>	<i>Interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations; interviews with delivery agents</i>
	<u>Strand 2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beneficiaries have improved knowledge and skills to apply in their procurement roles</li> </ul>	<i>Survey of Strand 2 beneficiaries; interviews with delivery agents; interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations</i>
	<u>Strand 3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beneficiaries entering the public service profession have a high level of skill and knowledge in relation to procurement and the potential to be promoted to management</li> </ul>	<i>Interviewees with TPEP trainees and line managers; survey of remaining TPEP trainees interviewees with TPEP trainees and line managers/mentors</i>
	<u>Strand 4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more public sector organisations utilise e-procurement solutions</li> </ul>	<i>Case study development for recipients of grants and consultancy support (from Strand 4 and Strand 5); interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations</i>
	<u>Strand 5</u>	<i>Case study development for recipients of grants (from Strand 4 and Strand 5); interviews</i>



Element of logic model	Indicator	Tool / method of evidence collection
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>funded research projects generate new and innovative ideas / approaches</li> </ul>	<i>with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations</i>
<b>Medium-term outcomes</b>	<u>Strand 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improved status of procurement functions in public sector organisations</li> <li>best practice ideas are used more widely across public sector – evidence of savings made, or reduced costs of goods and services</li> </ul>	<i>Interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations; telephone interviews with senior stakeholders.</i>
	<u>Strand 2:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beneficiaries use new skills / knowledge to operate more efficiently and effectively in their workplace</li> <li>fewer skills gaps in public sector organisations</li> </ul>	<i>Survey of Strand 2 beneficiaries; interviews with delivery agents; interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations</i>
	<u>Strand 3:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beneficiaries entering the profession use their high level skills to become leaders of the procurement profession in the public sector</li> </ul>	<i>Interviewees with TPEP trainees and line managers; survey of remaining TPEP trainees; interviewees with TPEP trainees and line managers</i>
	<u>Strand 4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public sector organisations provide evidence of savings made through adoption of e-procurement practices</li> </ul>	<i>Case study development for recipients of grants (from Strand 4 and Strand 5); interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations</i>
	<u>Strand 5</u>	<i>Case study development for recipients of</i>

Element of logic model	Indicator	Tool / method of evidence collection
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public sector organisations utilise the innovative ideas generated</li> </ul>	<i>grants and consultancy support (from Strand 4 and Strand 5); interviews with senior procurement lead of 22 public sector organisations; interviews with senior stakeholders.</i>
<b>Long-term impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increasing status of public sector professionals</li> <li>fewer skills gaps in the profession in Wales</li> <li>more public sector organisations utilise e-procurement tools</li> <li>resources are more efficiently spent</li> </ul>	<i>Across research tasks (particularly in the stakeholder interviews and interviews with senior procurement leads) we will look for early evidence of these longer term impacts having been achieved. Interviewees will be informed of key indicators we hope to assess, and asked to highlight evidence of change.</i>

## Annex C Organisations that contributed to the research

The following organisations were consulted as part of the research.

Bangor University
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
Cardiff City Council
Carmarthenshire County Council
E-Procurement Services
HEPCW
Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
National Procurement Service
Natural Resources Wales
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership
Pembrokeshire County Council
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Simply Best Value
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service
South Wales Police
Swansea University
University of Cardiff
Value Wales
Welsh Government

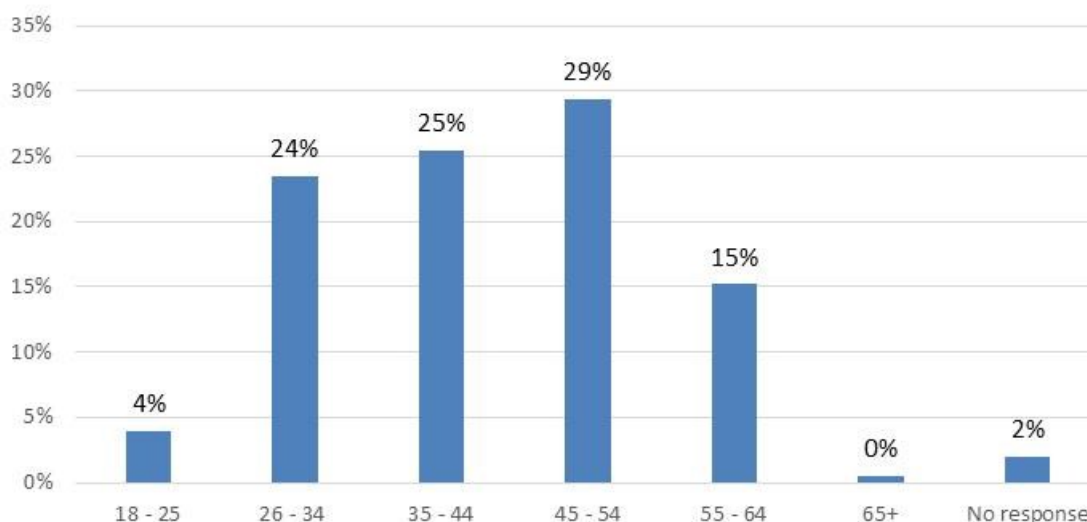
## Annex D Demographic profile of survey respondents

There were 206 individual respondents to the survey. They are broadly representative of the wider population of training participants (gender, part of the public sector and whether they are in a specialist procurement role).

### Age

Just under a third of participants were aged between 45 and 54 (29 per cent). Around a quarter of respondents were from each of the age groups 26-34 (24 per cent) and 35-44 (25 per cent). 15 per cent were aged 55-64 and 4 per cent were aged 18-25 (0).

**Figure AD.1 Survey respondents by age group**



### Gender, ethnicity and disability status of respondents

Just over half of respondents to the survey were female (52 per cent) and 48 per cent were male.

Around 91 per cent of survey respondents described themselves as White (Welsh; English; Scottish; Northern Irish; Irish; Gypsy or Irish Traveller). Twelve respondents did not state their ethnicity or preferred not to say; two identified as 'Black/ Black British', two as 'Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups' and one as 'other ethnic group'.

Almost all beneficiaries had no disability, with one respondent reporting themselves as having some disability. Nine individuals either did not give a response or preferred not to say.

## Employment

Just over half (51 per cent) of respondents worked in local government. Central government departments/ agencies supplied around 15 per cent of beneficiaries, whilst Further Education and Higher Education made up another 9 per cent. 6 per cent where NHS organisations and Public services/ quasi public sector bodies supplied around 5 per cent. 'Other' organisations accounted for a further 4 per cent. There were five respondents from emergency services. Nearly three-fifths of respondents did not work in a specialist procurement role (59 per cent).

Two-fifths of respondents had been in their role for five or more years (38 per cent), and around a third had been in their role for each of 1 – 3 years (33 per cent). 16 per cent had been in their role for less than a year and slightly less had been there for 3-5 years (12 per cent).

95 per cent of respondents were in full-time employment; 5 per cent were in part time employment.

## Courses undertaken

0 shows that the respondents to the survey have undertaken 31 training courses as part of Strand 2. The two largest courses represented in this survey are the Preparing for the new EU Directives (SBV) and Contract Management (SBV).

**Figure AD.2 Respondents by course / workshop undertaken**

Course	Number of participants
Preparing for the new EU Directives (SBV)	39
Contract Management (SBV)	37
SQulD Training (SBV)	31
Creating Community Benefits through Procurement (SBV)	22
Sell2Wales Training	22
Introduction to Procurement (SBV)	19
Introduction to Category Management (SBV)	10
Bribery Act Training Course	9
Specification Writing (SBV)	9
Advanced Creating Community Benefits through Procurement (SBV)	8

<b>Course</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
Introduction to EU Directives and Awareness of Changes (SBV)	7
EU Procurement Directive Training (SBV)	6
Negotiation (SBV)	6
Procurement Awareness (SBV)	6
Strategic Sourcing (SBV)	6
Sustainability Risk Assessment & Community Benefits Awareness session	5
Construction Excellence	4
eSourcing Champion Training (intermediate)	4
Other	4
TUPE and Procurement (SBV)	4
eAuction Training	3
eContract Management	3
eTendering Basics	3
Finance for the Procurement Officer (SBV)	3
Introduction to EU Directives (SBV)	3
SBV Pilot Course- Introduction to Competency Framework	3
The Full OJEU Process	3
Competitive Dialogue Training	2
Developing Sourcing Strategies (SBV)	2
Differences Training 12.3	2
Equalities and Diversity in Procurement (SBV)	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>

## Annex E Attendance at courses and meetings in Strand 2

**Table AE.1 Summary of attendance at courses, workshops and meetings in the first half of the programme (until May 2013)**

<b>Courses delivered by PMMS</b>	
Commercial Awareness	25
Competitive Dialogue	1
Contract Management	26
EU Compliant Supplier Selection & Contract Award	6
EU Procurement Directive	76
Evaluation (Procurement Passport Courses)	30
Exploring Terms & Conditions	9
Frameworks & Mini Competitions	2
Introduction to Negotiation	47
Introduction to Procurement	31
Passport to Procurement	0
Procurement Policy (Procurement Passport Courses)	24
Specification Writing (Procurement Passport Courses)	18
TUPE Essentials	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>
<b>Courses developed and delivered by Value Wales</b>	
CIPS Finance for Purchasers	5
CIPS Strategic Public Sector Programme Management	5
CIPS Strategic Supply Chain Management	5
CIPS Supply Chain Management in Practice	2
Community Benefits / Food / SRA Training	2
Community Benefits Operational Support Training	21
Community Benefits Training	78
Construction Training	0
Corporate Procurement Services Training	1
EIB Training	1
eSourcing Training	0
Invest 2 Save Training	0
Mentor Training	9

Merthyr Tydfil- Blended Training	6
NHS Differences Training	7
Public Procurement & Welsh Language	14
Sell2Wales Training	1
SQUID - Construction Training	4
SQUiD Construction Training Course	11
SQUiD SQUizard orientation	38
SQUID Training	88
SQUID Training - Consultants	28
SQUID Training - Generic	5
SQUID Training - RSL/Housing	5
The Full OJEU Process	23
Training with Perm Sec and Michael Hearty	1
Value for Money Training	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>
<b>Eligible meetings</b>	
All Wales Community Equipment Items	18
All Wales Customer User Group	10
All Wales FRS National Issues Committee Procurement Workstream	7
Collaborative Procurement Working Group	2
Community Equipment Items Task and Finish Group Meeting	33
CPPSG	19
Creative Procurement Forum	9
Customer Focus Group	2
Economic Impact Assessment Group	7
Efficiency and Innovation Board - Savings Workshop	69
ePayments SPGT Requirements Workshop	3
ESF Project Board	10
eSourcing SPGT Requirements Workshop	9
eTrading CUG	9
eTrading Customer User Group	5
eTrading SPGT Requirements Workshop	10
EU Directives Workshop	33
Home Grown Talent Assessment Centre	1



Home Grown Talent Project Board	1
ITEAS (III) Customer Focus Group	4
Market Position Statements	24
Media Agency Services Consensus Score	8
North Wales Construction Framework Workshop	8
Procserve Training	1
Project Bank Account Awareness Session	23
Project Review	2
South Wales Regional Event	24
Stationery and Paper Project	1
TPEP Assessment Centre	2
Trainee 1-2-1 / mentoring and support	88
Training Steering Group	4
Tyres Project Meeting	0
Value Wales Regional Network Event	38
Vehicle Hire Task & Finish Group	6
VFM Telecoms Customer Focus Group	10
VW Regional Network Event (South Wales)	55
Welsh Purchasing Card Customer User Group	28
Welsh Purchasing Consortium Officer Group Meeting	32
WG Open for Business	60
Working with Supported Businesses Workshop	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>689</b>
<b>Total courses, workshops and meetings</b>	<b>1,359</b>

**Table AE.2 Summary of attendances courses, workshops and meetings in the first half of the programme (from May 2013 until April 2015)**

<b>Courses delivered by SBV</b>	
Advanced Creating Community Benefits through Procurement (SBV)	15
Best Practice Group (BPG)	26
Community Benefits Awareness Session(SBV)	17
Community Benefits through Procurement(SBV)	11
Competency Framework Workshop	19
Contract Management Training (inc SBV)	173

Creating Community Benefits through Procurement (SBV)	30
Developing Sourcing Strategies (SBV)	17
Developing Specifications (SBV)	8
Equalities and Procurement	41
EU Directives Major Changes (SBV)	9
EU Procurement Directive Training (SBV)	3
Finance for the Procurement Officer (SBV)	14
Introduction to Category Management (SBV)	48
Introduction to Creating Community Benefits through Procurement (SBV)	7
Introduction to EU changes and Awareness of Future changes (SBV)	13
Introduction to EU Directives (SBV)	27
Introduction to Procurement (SBV)	418
Market Awareness, Analysis and Development (SBV)	16
National Library of Wales training (SBV)	37
Negotiation (SBV)	28
New EU Directives (SBV)	11
Preparing Business Cases	5
Preparing for the new EU Directives (SBV)	238
Procurement Awareness (SBV)	35
Sourcing Strategy (SBV)	14
Specification Writing (SBV)	41
SQuID Training(SBV)	110
Strategic Sourcing (SBV)	12
Supplier Relationship Management(SBV)	17
TUPE and Procurement (SBV)	6
<b>Total SBV</b>	<b>1,466</b>
<b>Courses delivered by Value Wales</b>	
Community Benefits Measurement Tool Briefing	7
Community Benefits Training	45
Community Benefits Workshop- North Wales 2014 guidance launch	50
Competitive Dialogue Training	8
Differences Training 12.3	14
eAuction Training	36
eSourcing Acceleration Project-Scoping Meeting	6

eSourcing Champion Training (intermediate)	17
eSourcing CUG	20
eSourcing Overview Meeting	3
Passport Specification Writing Course	8
Sell2Wales Training	131
SQuID Briefing Session	9
SQuID on Sell2Wales	6
SQuID Training:Use of SQuID	59
<b>Total Value Wales</b>	<b>419</b>
<b>Eligible meetings / workshops / focus groups / forums</b>	
Agency Staff meeting	9
Aggregated Mobile Telecoms- Customer Focus Group	12
All Wales Contract Planning	8
All Wales Fleet Procurement Group	11
All Wales Liquid Fuel Stakeholder Group	18
Bedlinog events with MTCBC	2
Benefits Development Group Workshop	29
Bribery Act Training Course	49
Caerphilly Seminar	16
Community Benefits Operational Training	114
Community Equipment Items meetings / events	25
Community of Practice for Community Benefits meeting	33
Concept Viability Forum	10
Construction Excellence	10
Creative Procurement Forum	28
eCM Requirement Meeting	8
eContract Management	21
ePayments CUG	47
eProgramme Management Training	6
ePS ePayments Evaluation Panel Meeting	7
ePS Training course: Contract Management	8
ESF Funding Review with Value Wales	5
eTendering Basics	29
eTrading Customer User Group	8

G-Cloud Buyer event	27
Guide to Outsourcing and TUPE	23
HGT Project Board Meeting	1
Legal Services Category Forum	12
Managed service for Agency Workers- Customer Forum Group	17
Mentor Meeting	1
Mid Term PMR	1
Minister visit to MTCBC for CCBC/MTCBC collaboration	1
National Procurement Service- Telecoms & Data Networks User Group Meeting	10
North Wales Regional Procurement Forum	11
NPS Category Forums	214
NPS Customer Focus Group	59
NPS Induction Day	4
Parc Taf Bargoed Procurement Strategy with MTCBC	1
PMMS- TUPE Training	28
Printer Consumables (III) Consensus Meeting	6
Procurement Awards and Procurement Week Discussion	2
Procurement Best Practice Academy Launch	13
Procurement Fitness Check: Local Government Workshop	12
Procurement Week	91
Project Bank Account Training( North Wales)	23
Public Service Leadership Group- Procurement Board	8
SEW Highways Framework Contractor Meeting	1
Stationery and Paper Category Forum	3
Supplier Briefing Session	9
Sustainability Risk Assessment & Community Benefits Awareness session	69
Trainee 1-2-1 / mentoring and support	95
Training Steering Group	13
Value Wales Community Equipment Items Customer Focus Group Meeting	9
Value Wales ePayments Customer User Group	50
Value Wales Regional Event	76
Wales Fire and Rescue Procurement Service	26
WFEPC meeting	14
Ystrad Mynach Fitness Equipment Procurement process catch-up	1

<b>Total Meeting / workshop / focus group / forum</b>	<b>1,444</b>
<b>Overall total (May 2013-April 2015)</b>	<b>3,329</b>
<b>Entire programme total</b>	<b>4,688</b>

## Annex F Topic guides for the main phase of fieldwork

This chapter includes the main research tools to be used in this evaluation. It includes a:

- survey for beneficiaries of training delivered through strand 2
- topic guide for telephone interviews with TPEP trainees
- topic guide for telephone interviews with TPEP trainees' line managers / mentors
- survey for TPEP trainees not engaged in telephone interviews
- set of indicative guidelines for telephone interviews with delivery agents
- topic guide for the case studies of grants awarded through Strands 4 and 5
- topic guide for telephone interviews with senior procurement leads in public sector organisations
- set of indicative guidelines for telephone interviews with six senior stakeholders.

### **Survey for strand 2 training beneficiaries**

#### *Personal details*

Name:

Name of employer:

Which part of the public sector do you work in?

Central government department or agency;

Local government;

an NHS organisation;

another public service / quasi-public sector body (e.g. police; fire services);

Other (please specify).

Job title

Do you currently work in a specialist procurement role?

If not, what is your role?

If yes, what area of procurement?

Length of time in current role?

0 – 1 years;

1 – 3 years;

3 – 5 years;

5+ years.

Which age group are you in?

18 – 25

26 – 34

35 – 44

45 – 54

55 – 64

65+

Which of the following training courses did you attend?

We have been provided with a full list.

If respondent has attended more than one, please provide a response for each separate training course.

*Quality and relevance of the training*

Who made the decision for you to go on this course(s)?

You

Your bosses

Someone else? If so, please specify.

If it was you that made the decision, why did you choose to do this course?

Career advancement

Interest in the subject

Address a skills gap

It is a mandatory area of training

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (using Likert Scale which is a five point scale from 'Strongly disagree' through to 'Strongly agree'):

The delivery of the training was:

Flexible enough to fit with my professional commitments

Carried out by high quality tutors

Supported with high quality learning resources

Provided in a location which was convenient to get to

Provided in a location with sufficient and high quality equipment

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (using Likert Scale which is a five point scale from 'Strongly disagree' through to 'Strongly agree'):

The training:

Is relevant to a challenge I face in my current role

Addressed a skill / competency I did not have

Filled a gap in my knowledge

Will enable me to do an upcoming task with greater confidence

Will enable me to complete a job I do with greater speed

Will enable me to complete a job I do with greater accuracy

How could this training be improved?

OPEN RESPONSE

*What was learned and how was it applied*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (Likert Scale):

Professional development – the training has:

Improved my confidence in doing my job

Made me more productive in the workplace

Allowed me to expand my job role

Please describe the main areas of learning.

OPEN RESPONSE

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (Likert Scale):

Actions – the training has:

Enabled me to take actions to improve procurement practices in my organisation

Enabled me take actions to change supplier management procedures in my organisation

Enabled me take actions to change the contracting procedures in my organisation.

Expanded the role of procurement specialists in my organisation



Please describe any actions you have taken as a result of the training.

#### OPEN QUESTION

##### *Equalities monitoring*

Which of the following describe how you think of yourself?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say.

What is your ethnic group?

White (Welsh; English; Scottish; Northern Irish; Irish; Gypsy or Irish Traveller)

Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African White and Asian; Any other mixed/multiple background – please specify)

Asian / Asian British (Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; Any other Asian background – please specify)

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (African; Caribbean; Any other black/African/Caribbean background – please specify)

Other ethnic group (Arab; Any other ethnic group – please specify)

Prefer not to say.

What is your full time employment status?

In full time employment

In part time employment

On maternity leave

## Interviews with TPEP trainees

### *Introduction*

Begin by introducing the evaluation, explaining, as necessary, that as the programme approaches its completion, it is necessary to assess the impact of the programme and its effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes.

We are therefore keen to get the interviewee's perspective on the value and effectiveness of the training and secondments they have received while part of the TPEP programme, and how what they have learned will be put into practice in the longer-term.

Explain that comments are provided on an anonymous basis and the views provided by participants will be treated in confidence.

We may also be interviewing people who have been interviewed previously. If this is the case, we will have to use the topic guide flexibly and focus more on the latter questions.

**Note for interviewer:** ensure that you are aware of the set of placements and the sorts of training that the trainee has been on as part of the programme.

### *Background and context*

#### Understanding the individual

As necessary/relevant, confirm or explore the following:

- previous work and academic experience prior to joining TPEP, and types of secondments / training undertaken to date. OR: discuss what they have been doing since the initial interview
- explore their previous training and qualifications: did they have previous specialist qualifications / training in procurement? If so, to what level? What sort of broader training have they had (i.e. not procurement-specific)?
- why they participated in the programme – explore how they found out about the programme, how they applied, and why they took part. What were their initial expectations about the programme? Did they have clear expectations? What were they hoping to achieve by participating in the programme?
- where are they now? What organisation employs them, what role are they carrying out, and how did they get the job?

### *Views on the secondments*

All trainees will have been on two or more secondments. Throughout, ask them to compare and contrast their experience on these secondments.

- Ask interviewees to describe their current and (if relevant) previous secondments
- What elements of your secondment / which secondment do you consider to have increased your knowledge / skills / competence? Which have not?
- What projects did you undertake while on secondment? How, in general, have these gone? What were the main points of learning?
- What, if anything, have you learned from your mentor / line manager / colleagues in the secondment organisation?
- What support have you received from the Home Grown Talent team (i.e. the programme itself, and the Professional Development Manager and Mentor)? How could this be improved?
- Overall, have the secondments delivered against expectations? If not, where were the gaps and how could these be addressed in future?

### *Views on the training delivered*

- Which elements did you feel were the most useful, relevant and applicable? Why? [Be able to prompt them with the training they have been on, if necessary]
- Were any elements less useful, appropriate or valuable? Why were they not relevant? Did they cover familiar ground?
- Explore the support they have received from their employer / secondment? Has this been sufficient? What more could have been provided? How supportive have line managers / colleagues / mentors been?
- Explore views on teaching and support arrangements– quality of teaching; time required to participate and complete assignments; support given by training provider. Compare and contrast against different training courses undertaken
- Overall, did the training deliver against expectations? If not, where were the gaps and how could these be addressed in future? What other areas of training do you think would have been beneficial?

- How relevant are the qualifications undertaken to the procurement profession? Probe to assess whether there are any changes taking place in the procurement profession

### *Impact of training*

Explore what has been / was learnt

- What have they learnt as a result of taking part in the courses?  
Explore:
  - specific procurement knowledge / skills / competence.
  - leadership and management skills.
- In what areas has the training made a positive contribution to their knowledge and understanding? How and why? If the influence has been limited, why has this been?
- Explore whether learning has been shared / disseminated and what the outcomes of this have been? Who has this been shared with? Probe as to whether this has been disseminated with procurement colleagues / colleagues outside of procurement / senior colleagues.

Explore if and how learning has been taken forward and applied

Both for trainees still on the programme, and those who have completed the programme and gone into new roles (in the public sector in Wales or elsewhere), explore:

- what examples are there of how learning from the CIPS qualification and the management qualifications undertaken has informed, influenced or impacted on individual practice and the organisation? Probe for concrete examples of changes made as a consequence of the training intervention. Possible prompts could be:
  - new relationships / methods used in managing suppliers / measuring their performance
  - contract development
  - management of risk.

For each example, discuss the following:

- the nature of the specific challenge or need that the individual or his/her organisation was facing

- how the interviewee has addressed or started to address the challenge – what has been the new approach or the shift in thinking?
- how did learning from the CIPS training contribute to the new approach or shift in thinking? What else helped?
- what has been the impact to date of the change (NB: Look for evidence or tangible detail to illustrate / explain the example)? Is there likely to be greater future impact?

- explore what is anticipated in the coming months in relation to progress with actions, further actions and expected outcomes
- what has enabled the translation of learning from the programme into improved practice and what has acted as a barrier? Where this has not happened, explore issues of capacity and opportunity and support from line managers / other staff and organisational barriers.

### *Impact of secondments*

Explore what has been / was learnt

Both for trainees still on the programme, and those who have completed the programme and gone into new roles (in the public sector or elsewhere), explore:

- what have they learned as a result of their secondments? Explore in relation to specific procurement knowledge and other skills / competencies. Please ask them to compare and contrast learning.
- if learning was limited on a particular secondment, please examine why this was the case.

Explore if and how learning has been taken forward and applied

- What examples are there of how learning while on secondment has influenced or impacted on individual practice and the organisation / on future secondments / in current employment? Probe for concrete examples of points of learning, and how this has been applied either to the project or to another area of procurement activity in the place they are working. Possible prompts could be:
  - skills acquired from working on projects during secondment
  - particular skills in relation to procurement (e.g. contracting, supplier management etc.)

- generic skills / competencies (e.g. project management).

For each example, discuss the following:

- the nature of the specific challenge or need that the individual or his/her organisation was facing
  - how the interviewee has addressed or started to address the challenge – what has been the new approach or the shift in thinking?
  - how did learning from secondment contribute to the new approach or shift in thinking? What else helped?
  - what has been the impact to date of the change (NB: Look for evidence or tangible detail to illustrate / explain the example)? Is there likely to be greater future impact
- explore what is anticipated in coming months in relation to progress with actions, further actions and expected outcomes
  - what has enabled the translation of learning from the programme into improved practice and what has acted as a barrier? Where this has not happened, explore issues of capacity and opportunity and support from line managers / other staff and organisational barriers.

### *Final questions*

Please conclude the interview by exploring whether taking part in the programme has influenced choices they have made in their career, whether it has focussed their minds on the public sector and procurement as a career, and – crucially – whether they think it has taken them beyond the entry level of an organisation (i.e. whether it has fulfilled the role of a graduate scheme).

Finally, please ask them to reflect on how the programme could have been better:

- how do you think the programme could better support people to achieve these career goals? Prompts:
  - management and support for trainees
  - secondments and projects undertaken
  - the mix of training undertaken
- are there any other comments on the role and value of the programme?

## **Interviews with TPEP trainees' line managers / mentors**

### *Introduction*

Begin by introducing the evaluation, explaining, as necessary that as the programme approaches its completion, it is necessary to assess the impact of the programme and its effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes.

We are therefore keen to get the interviewee's perspective on the value and effectiveness of the programme for the trainee they hosted / currently host on secondment (or whom they mentor).

Note that we are evaluating the programme, not the performance of individual participants or organisations. Explain that comments are provided on an anonymous basis and the views provided by participants will be treated in confidence.

#### **Note for interviewer:**

- some line managers are unlikely to have a thorough knowledge of the wider HGT programme. Please tailor the questions you ask accordingly and explain where their understanding fits with the wider programme
- the line managers are likely to have been closely involved in designing and managing a project for the trainee to carry out while they are on secondment. Please ensure you are aware of the sort of project this might be (see MI for strand 3 in the job folder)
- please ensure that you are aware of the other secondments the trainee in question has undertaken, and the set of training courses they have undertaken during the course of the programme
- we are asking trainees to provide us with the details of the line manager on their current or final secondment (for those who have left completed the programme) so they may not currently work with the individual concerned

### *Background and context*

#### Understanding the interviewee

As necessary/relevant, confirm or explore the following:

- the interviewee's role within the organisation (are they in a senior management role / procurement specific role?)
- establish when the trainee in question went on the secondment at their organisation

- the interviewee's role in relation to the trainee. Explore whether they have played a role in:
  - line management trainees (including appraisals, training, etc.)
  - designing and overseeing a 'project' for the trainee to undertake while on secondment
- explore the interviewee's awareness of the wider HGT programme. Examine whether they are familiar with:
  - the rationale for the programme
  - the other strands of the programme
  - or just the strand in which their trainee is / was involved

#### *Views on the programme*

Explore views on the programme:

- explore the rationale for why the organisation bid to be involved in the HGT programme. What did they hope to achieve by taking part?
- explore the rationale of the project that the trainee is involved in. What is the trainee's role on the project? How well is the trainee able to perform the role expected?
- explore views of how the secondment links with the training elements of the programme. Prompt to cover the CIPS training as well as the more generic leadership and management training they are undertaking. What is their view on the appropriateness of this training mix for future procurement staff?
- explore what support the trainee received from the HGT programme while they have been on secondment.

#### *Outcomes*

- what skills / knowledge improvements are / were evident as a result of the trainee undertaking the CIPS training? Prompts:
  - new relationships / methods used in managing suppliers / measuring their performance
  - contract / specification development



- management of risk
- What has the individual done / what did they do differently as a result of the training? Prompt for concrete examples. What further actions are expected in the future? Seek to corroborate the actions described by participants.
- What was the aim of the project that the trainee is undertaking / undertook while on secondment?
  - how did the project benefit the host organisation? Did it achieve the goals initially set?
  - how did the project benefit the trainee's skills, confidence or effectiveness in the workplace? What were the key skills gains?
- What has been the impact of the project on the team or the organisation? Explore:
  - improved personal or team performance
  - improved efficiency, effectiveness and quality (resulting in improved procurement processes)
  - financial savings

Seek evidence underpinning views.

### *Final questions*

- To what extent do you think the TPEP programme has helped to develop a new generation of procurement leaders?
- Have you / would you recruit any of the TPEP graduates?
- Explore how the interviewee thinks the design of the programme might be improved. Prompt for:
  - management and support for trainees
  - secondments and projects undertaken
  - the mix of training undertaken
- Are there any other comments you would like to make?

## **Survey questions for those TPEP trainees**

This short survey will be distributed to those trainees that were not involved in the in-depth telephone interviews. The survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete and is a set of mostly open questions.

### *Instructions to respondents*

This survey is one component of a wider methodology which seeks to evaluate the impact of the Transforming Procurement through Home Grown Talent programme. The Trainee Procurement Executive Programme is one of the strands of this programme. This survey will take 10 – 15 minutes to complete and asks for your views on the value and effectiveness of the programme as a whole, as well as the individual training and secondments. Explain that comments are provided on an anonymous basis and the views provided by participants will be treated in confidence.

### *Background to the individual*

- Have you completed the TPEP programme?
  - If yes:
    - when did you complete the programme?
    - who do you now work for?
    - what is your current role?
  - If no,
    - when do you expect to complete the programme?

### *Training*

For each of the main training courses delivered (Prince 2; ILM; CIPS training), the following four open questions will be asked:

- overall, how well do you think the training was delivered?
- what were your main points of learning?
- how useful has the training been in your future career or current / future secondments
- please provide examples of how this learning has been used, where possible?

### *Secondments*

For each of the secondments (up to three in total), the following four open questions will be asked:

- please provide a brief overview of the main project you worked on while on this secondment
- what were your main points of learning from this secondment?
- how has the learning from this secondment helped you in your future career or current / future secondments?
- please provide examples of how this learning has been used, where possible.

### *Final questions*

- To what extent do you think the programme has helped you reach your career goals to date?
- How do you think the programme could better support people to achieve these career goals?

### **Interviews with delivery agents**

This part of the method involves interviews with a mix of people involved in delivering aspects of the programme. As a result of the varied activities being carried out by the programme, each interview will need to be tailored to the individual in question.

As a result, developing a structured topic guide for this part of the fieldwork is not an appropriate approach. Below, we set out several high-level themes which will be covered in these interviews with a set of prompts below each.

#### *Understanding the interviewee*

As necessary/relevant, confirm or explore the following:

- the interviewee's role and the organisation's role in the programme
- the interviewee's role in relation to the HGT programme
- for interviewee's involved in delivery, explore how and why they got involved?

### *Rationale*

- Explore the interviewee's understanding of the rationale for this programme and whether they think that it has changed over the last 2 – 3 years. What do they consider to be the main skills / workforce needs of the procurement profession in Wales?
- Explore how the interviewee sees their part of the programme contributing to addressing this rationale

### *Programme management*

- Explore how the interviewee became involved in the programme?
  - What bidding process did they go through?
  - Ask interviewees to reflect on this process and whether they could recommend any improvements.
- Explore interviewee's views on the management of the programme and any unmet support needs from the HGT programme team and Value Wales.

### *Delivery*

- Explore the extent to which the interviewee was involved in designing their part of the programme, or whether they were provided with a prescriptive brief from the HGT team.
- Explore what activities / services the interviewee has been delivering as part of the programme.
- Explore interviewee's perspectives on the progress to date. Are they on schedule?
- Explore what factors have facilitated progress and what factors have inhibited progress.
- Explore whether there are any particular external factors which have affected delivery of their part of the programme? If so describe.
- Have any changes been made to the delivery model during the course of delivery? How could the programme / delivery model be improved?

### *Progress to date and outcomes*

- Explore the outcomes that the interviewee thinks their part of the programme has contributed to. Are these:
  - strategic
  - improved awareness of procurement at high levels
  - skills / knowledge gains
  - improvements in staff effectiveness in the workplace.
- Additionality: explore the extent to which the interviewee thinks that the outcomes generated might have been produced in the absence of the programme.
  - would there have been an alternative funder of their work?
  - would they have been able to achieve the same goals using a different means?

### **Case study interviews for Strands 4 and 5 grant holders**

#### *Introduction*

These interviews will be undertaken face-to-face as part of a case study visit to the organisations which have received funding through Strands 4 and 5 of the HGT programme. It is likely that we will interview a few staff on these visits including more senior staff, consultants who have been delivering the project, and some of the existing staff at the organisation. Therefore the topic guide below is an overview of the sorts of questions to be asked in these interviews.

Interviewers will have access to background information in relation to the bid prior to the interview (for example, a business case).

#### *Understanding the interviewee, organisation and reasons for bidding*

- Explore the interviewee's role and organisation.
- Explore the organisation's procurement function: number of staff; position; skills needs; status (in relation to the Board, for example).
- Explore the organisation's involvement with the project: when and how did they first hear about the programme? When did they bid? What did they bid for?

- What was the rationale for the project? What did they hope to achieve?
  - Greater efficiencies?
  - More collaborative working?
- Explore the reasons for why the bid took place now:
  - particular skill gaps
  - senior stakeholders in the organisation
  - links to strategic goals of the organisation
  - external drivers.

#### *Experience of bidding*

- Explore the interviewee's views of the bidding process: how time consuming was it? Were documents / bidding requirements clear?
- Did the HGT programme provide support when required?
- What more could the programme have done to support you?
- What did you learn from the process of bidding?
- How could the bidding process be improved?

#### *Experience so far*

- Ask interviewee to describe the implementation of their project to date
  - What progress have they made? Are they on track?
  - What have been the main challenges in implementing the project?
  - What are the desired outcomes of the project?
- Ask interviewees to describe the support they have received from the programme so far. This might include direct funding, support from consultants, or other technical assistance.
- Explore the role of consultants / any other grant-funded inputs from the HGT programme: what value have they added? How have they supported the existing staff / team members?

- How has funding been used and what has it enabled the interviewee to do what they otherwise would not have?
- What other support would have been useful?

#### *Achievements to date*

- If the project is at an advanced stage of implementation, explore what the impact of the project has been to date. Prompts:
  - impact on the procurement process
  - new skills for existing staff
  - new partnerships / collaborations between organisations
  - efficiencies in undertaking procurement exercises
  - impacts on the links with suppliers.
- If desired outcomes have not yet been achieved, explore why this is. If it is a result of delays, prompt to understand what the problems have been, and how these have been / could be overcome. Is there anything further that the HGT programme could contribute?
- If the project is still at an early stage of delivery, prompt to understand what the desired outcomes are; when these are likely to be achieved; and any potential issues there may be
- Explore whether there have been any efforts to ensure there is a legacy

### **Interviews with senior procurement leads in public sector organisations**

#### *Introduction*

Begin by introducing the evaluation, explaining, as necessary that as the programme approaches its completion, it is necessary to assess the impact of the programme and its effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes.

We are therefore keen to get the interviewee's perspective on the value and effectiveness of the programme across all of the activities their organisation has been involved in.

Explain that comments are provided on an anonymous basis and the views provided by participants will be treated in confidence.

**Note for interviewer:**

- be prepared to prompt the interviewee about all of the possible activities that their organisation has been involved in. Based on an assessment of the programme MI, there will be a few preparatory notes available to interviewers detailing the involvement of staff
- introduction emails will have been sent to interviewees detailing the content of the discussion. They will highlight, in particular, the need to collect qualitative evidence of any change in the longer-term outcome indicators (reduced skill gaps, more staff per pound spent, more efficient purchasing, for example)
- please ensure you have read the 'Fitness Check' on the organisation in question if this has been completed

*Understanding the interviewee*

As necessary/relevant, confirm or explore the following:

- the interviewee's role within the organisation
- the extent to which they are responsible for procurement policy and activity in their organisation
- the interviewee's knowledge of the HGT programme, and its constituent activities
- the interviewee's understanding of the programme activities that their organisation has been involved in [prompt if necessary].

*Baseline / rationale for taking part in the programme*

- explore what they consider to be the main skills / workforce needs of the procurement profession in Wales?
- Explore the organisation's main current challenges in relation to procurement. Prompt – if necessary – in terms of:
  - resources
  - skills
  - strategic positioning / status of procurement function
  - policy context (Welsh / UK government).



- Explore the extent to which their organisation has engaged with the programme. What stopped them from engaging further?

*Programme design and delivery*

- Depending on the interviewee's understanding of the programme, explore how the HGT programme fits with the wider strategic and policy agenda around procurement, and the training needs / skills gaps of the target group / participants?
- Explore what other activities / initiatives / policies there are which seek to address the same / similar challenges to the HGT programme.  
Probe to cover:
  - local / organisational initiatives
  - other regional / national initiatives (and anything covering the rest of the UK)
  - initiatives covering particular parts of the public sector (for example, the NHS).
- How does the HGT programme fit with / complement / detract from these initiatives?
- Explore the interviewee's views on the design of the programme [and prompt by describing programme, if necessary]:
  - are there any gaps?
  - how should the programme adjust its content and targets?
- If the interviewee has knowledge of the detail of the training courses delivered under this programme, examine whether they think this is a suitable set of training:
  - examine fit to rationale;
  - whether there are any gaps;
  - whether some training courses should be given greater / lesser focus?
- Explore the interviewee's knowledge of the management of the programme.

- What have been the main strengths / weaknesses of the approach taken by programme management?
  - How well do you consider that each Strand has been managed?
- How well do you consider that the programme has undertaken commissioning, monitoring and management of suppliers?

*Outcomes achieved*

- Explore the interviewee's views on progress and successes so far in terms of:
  - reaching target outputs
  - engaging with target beneficiaries
  - developing the skills of existing staff
  - developing a new cohort of procurement leaders
  - raising the profile of procurement across the public sector in Wales
  - generating innovative solutions to key procurement challenges
  - supporting public sector organisations to utilise:
    - e-procurement solutions
    - collaborative purchasing activities
    - new approaches to purchasing
  - supporting public sector organisations to attract SMEs
  - supporting public sector organisations to undertake sustainable and bulk purchasing.
- Explore the interviewee's views on progress towards longer term outcomes. For each of the below, ask for evidence that this has been achieved, or whether they think it will be in future:
  - improved status of specialist procurement staff in the public sector
  - specialist procurement staff contributing to a wider range of activity in their organisation

- a greater number of procurement professionals per pound spent
  - a reduction in skill gaps in their organisations
  - e-procurement being used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of procurement functions
  - more sharing of innovative solutions across the public sector.
- **Additionality:** explore the extent to which the interviewee thinks that the outcomes generated might have been produced in the absence of the programme.
  - Would there have been an alternative funder of their work?
  - Would they have been able to achieve the same goals using a different means?
- Explore how well the various strands of the programme have worked together: Have they reinforced / added value to one another?
- Explore the interviewee's appetite for a follow-on programme / new set of publically-funded support. Where should the focus lie? How should it be delivered / managed?
- Are there any other comments?

## **Interviews with senior stakeholders**

### *Introduction*

Begin by introducing the evaluation, explaining, as necessary that as the programme approaches its completion, it is necessary to assess the impact of the programme and its effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes.

We are therefore keen to get the interviewee's overview perspective on the value and effectiveness of the programme across all of the activities they are aware of and how far the programme has addressed the challenges in procurement identified in 2010.

Explain that comments are provided on an anonymous basis and the views provided by participants will be treated in confidence.

**Note for interviewer:**

- Be prepared to prompt the interviewee about all of the possible activities that HGT covers.
- You will have been sent to interviewees detailing the content of the discussion.
- Please ensure you adapt the interview questions to reflect their role and organisation.

*Understanding the interviewee*

As necessary/relevant, confirm or explore the following:

- the interviewee's role within their organisation
- the extent to which they have been involved in any way in the development and delivery of the programme (e.g. advice, programme board membership)
- the reason for their interest in the success of the programme
- the interviewee's knowledge and understanding of the programme, and its constituent activities.

*Programme design and delivery*

- Explore how far they believe that the programme and its strands have addressed and fits the wider strategic and policy agenda around procurement in Wales; consider the training needs / skills gaps in the public sector workforce as well as procurement specialists, the awareness and standing of procurement, the level of collaboration, and the effective use of e-procurement in relation to each of the strands of activity in the programme.
- What could have been done better to meet the policy agenda to improve procurement and/or to reflect changes in this over the period 2010-15? What were any gaps?
- Explore what if any other activities / initiatives on procurement there are which seek to address the same / similar challenges to the HGT programme. Probe to cover:
  - local / organisational initiatives

- other regional / national initiatives (and anything covering the rest of the UK)
  - initiatives covering particular parts of the public sector (for example, the NHS).
- How does the HGT programme fit with / complement / detract from these initiatives? If it does not fit/complement, explore what could have been done to remedy this and what could have prevented it?
- Explore their perception of awareness of the programme activities and what evidence they have to support this. Explore if they perceive continuing support for the programme and buy-in from the procurement community and public sector leaders responsible for achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness.

#### *Outcomes achieved*

- Explore the interviewee's views on how far the programme has contributed to the wider agenda for improving procurement in Wales in terms of each of the following, i.e. has it made a difference to what would have been done by VW and the different part of the public sector:
  - engaging with target beneficiaries
  - developing the skills of existing staff
  - developing a new cohort of procurement leaders
  - raising the profile of procurement across the public sector in Wales
  - generating innovative solutions to key procurement challenges
  - supporting public sector organisations to utilise:
    - e-procurement solutions
    - collaborative purchasing activities
    - new approaches to purchasing
  - supporting public sector organisations to attract SMEs
  - supporting public sector organisations to undertake sustainable and bulk purchasing

- providing knowledge of good practice in procurement to embed in public sector organisations.
- Explore any evidence they have which would support their view
- Explore whether the programme has provided added value/other benefits by bringing areas of the public sector together or new collaborations, for example
- What activities will/will not be sustained? What will be the legacy of the programme?

*Current and future needs*

- Explore the extent that the remaining challenges and future challenges could be met through a future programme. What would be the same? What would be new? What should be priorities? How should delivery be adjusted? Seek evidence to support proposals and reasons for these.
- Explore the interviewee's appetite for a follow-on programme / new set of publically-funded support. Where should the focus lie? How should it be delivered / managed?
- Are there any other comments?